

Meeting Minutes of the
Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization
POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 29, 2005 at 12:00 p.m.
in the City Council Committee Room
Room 205, Honolulu Hale
530 South King Street, Honolulu, Hawaii

Members Present:

Councilmember Nestor Garcia, Chair	Representative Joseph Souki
Representative Marilyn Lee (Vice Chair)	Senator Will Espero
Councilmember Romy Cachola	Senator Lorraine Inouye
Councilmember Ann Kobayashi	Senator Brian Kanno
Councilmember Gary Okino	Rodney Haraga (DOT Director)
Representative Mark Moses	Edward Hirata (DTS Director)

Member(s) Absent: Councilmember Charles Djou

Guests Present:

Dennis Galolo (Clmbr Cachola staff)	Joe Magaldi (NB #12 (CAC, Chair))
Francisco Figueiredo (Clmbr Djou staff)	David Aki (NB #25 (CAC))
Robert Sato (Clmbr Okino staff)	Mike Golojuch (NB #34 (CAC))
Mandie Pearson (Sen Fukunaga staff)	Alan Suwa (Castle & Cooke)
Maigee Chang (Sen L. Inouye staff)	Wes Frysztacki (CBT)
Julia Tsumoto (DOT (TAC))	Frank Genadio (CBT)
Henry Eng (DPP)	Steve Perliss (CBT)
James Burke (DTS (TAC))	Gale Treiber (Hawn. Railway Society)
Toru Hamayasu (DTS (TAC, Vice Chair))	Mike Leidemann (Honolulu Advertiser)
Brian Suzuki (DTS)	Dick Kaku (Kaku Associates)
Gareth Sakakida (HTA (TAC))	Bernadette Young (NB #15)
CC Curry (IACCO (CAC))	Maryrose McClelland (Maka O Kalihi-Uka)
Mindy Norris (LOTMA (CAC))	Michael Costa (Teamsters Local 996)
Charles Carole (NB #10 (CAC, Vice Chair))	David Pagan

OMPO Staff Present: Gordon Lum (Executive Director), Shevaun Low, Lauren Brennan, and Pamela Toyooka

Chair Nestor Garcia called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

I. MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 16, 2004 MEETING

Representative Joseph Souki moved and Senator Lorraine Inouye seconded that the minutes of the

December 16, 2004 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was unanimously carried.

Chair Garcia invited City Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) Director Henry Eng to sit at the table with the Policy Committee members.

II. CAC MEMBERSHIP REQUEST

Gordon Lum stated that the Waianae Coast Neighborhood Board (NB) #24 had attended the required four meetings in a 12-month period and had requested Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) membership. Mr. Lum noted that a representative from the neighborhood board will be identified once the board is appointed to the CAC.

Edward Hirata moved and Representative Marilyn Lee seconded that the Waianae Coast NB #24 be appointed to the CAC. The motion was unanimously carried.

III.A. ORTP: 2030 BASELINE CONDITIONS

[Senator Brian Kanno arrived at 12:07 p.m.]

OMPO's consultant, Dick Kaku of Kaku Associates, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan (ORTP) 2030 Baseline Conditions.

Mr. Hirata asked why the H-3 was not identified as a congested roadway on the "Locations of Significant AM Peak Congestion – Year 2030" slide. Mr. Kaku responded that the travel demand model forecasted that the H-3 will still have some available capacity in the year 2030 and so it was not identified as congested in the AM peak period.

Representative Mark Moses asked why there would be a 30% increase in travel time to the Primary Urban Center from Kapolei, when the population and jobs in West Oahu are growing by 25%. Mr. Kaku clarified that the travel models have also forecasted a 32% increase in the average length of a trip in the year 2030. The chart highlights these congested roadways in the Year 2030.

[Councilmember Romy Cachola arrived at 12:25 p.m.]

Councilmember Gary Okino asked why the congestion from the Kaneohe, Kailua, and Hawaii Kai areas are not shown as increasing. Mr. Kaku responded that congestion from Windward Oahu and East Honolulu are expected to increase by up to as much as 20 minutes to Downtown Honolulu. The net increase in travel time is not as significant from these areas as it is from Kapolei, where travel time is expected to increase by more than 60 minutes to Downtown.

Mr. Lum added that "AM Peak Travel Time" refers to a 2-hour peak period from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. He noted that it is possible for the worst travel time to exceed 60 minutes – for example, during a 15-minute period of this two-hour peak period – and for the other hour and 45 minutes to be considerably less than 60 minutes. For the purposes of the analysis, the average within the two-hour peak period is used.

III.B. ORTP: PUBLIC'S LIST OF PROPOSED PROJECTS

Mr. Kaku gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Identification of Potential Transportation Improvements.

[Rodney Haraga arrived at 12:28 p.m.]

Councilmember Okino asked at what point the major projects (such as rail and ferry) will be assessed. Mr. Kaku described the screening and evaluation processes that have been developed. He noted that the evaluation of proposed rail and ferry projects will be included in the analysis of strategic plan alternatives (SPA), the evaluation of which is expected to be presented to the Policy Committee in the Summer of 2005.

Mr. Lum noted that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations state that, in order for a project to be included in the regional transportation plan (RTP), the funding should be reasonably available. However, the FTA has interpreted this requirement to mean that, given Honolulu's past history on rail projects, in order for the federal government to feel that the funding for a project is reasonably available, the local funding must be firmly established (i.e., a taxing mechanism must pass at the Legislature and at the City Council). This point will be raised again with FTA, because OMPO does not agree with FTA's interpretation of the regulation.

In response to Representative Moses' question, Mr. Kaku stated that evaluation of the effectiveness of the proposed projects that pass the initial screening is expected to be completed in the Summer of 2005. The results will be presented to the OMPO Citizen Advisory, Technical Advisory, and Policy Committees. Regional public meetings will be held after the evaluation has been completed; and by April 2006, a recommended plan endorsed by the Policy Committee is expected.

In response to a question by Councilmember Cachola regarding the development of a rail project, Mr. Hirata stated that the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) will be starting the alternatives analysis (AA) on July 1, 2005; it will take approximately 18 months to complete the AA, which includes the draft environmental impact statement (EIS). Upon completion, DTS will begin preliminary engineering and the final EIS. It is expected that it will take about three years to complete the final EIS, and that construction of a rail system could begin in 2012.

Mr. Hirata asked if the plan would also look at transportation systems management (TSM) projects. Mr. Kaku responded that TSM projects will be evaluated and are expected to be included in the 2030 ORTP.

Senator Will Espero asked if a Council vote to raise the excise tax for transit use would meet FTA's requirement. Mr. Lum responded in the affirmative. Councilmember Okino asked if the Council's action to approve the excise tax is incumbent upon the completion of the AA and the EIS. Mr. Lum responded the City may approve the excise tax for transit use independently of the AA and EIS processes. Mr. Lum added that the FTA has said that the County can complete the AA and EIS, but federal funds will not be made available for the preliminary engineering until the local funding mechanism is in place and the rail project is included in the ORTP.

Representative Souki asked if there would be a cost benefit analysis of rail. Mr. Kaku responded that the

ORTP is an evaluation of Oahu's transportation system. He noted that a detailed assessment of rail will be addressed by the City's AA and draft EIS process. Including a rail project in the ORTP allows the City to move forward in terms of planning for and meeting the requirements of the rail system.

In response to a question from Councilmember Okino, Mr. Kaku stated that, without an excise tax increase, a rail project could not be included in a fiscally-constrained ORTP.

Mr. Hirata noted that many of the projects proposed conflict with one another and some do not make sense.

Mr. Hirata moved that the consultant prioritize the list of proposed projects and report back to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Kaku explained that the initial screening analysis will eliminate those projects that do not make sense. The evaluation of SPAs will analyze the remaining projects using the travel models. At this point in the evaluation process, Mr. Kaku felt that it did not make sense to prioritize the entire list of projects.

Mr. Hirata withdrew his motion.

Chair Garcia would like the following questions considered as the development of the 2030 ORTP progresses:

- What are the differences between the 2030 and 2025 plans? Identify fundamental shifts (e.g., policy shifts).
- Because Honolulu is a major port, what effect does the 2030 plan have on the movement of goods, persons, and services to those on the Neighbor Islands?
- What does the ORTP do relative to the Oahu TIP and the State TIP?

IV.A. TIP: CAC'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FYS 2006-2008

Joe Magaldi, Chair of the OMPO CAC, stated that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Subcommittee of the CAC had met over the past several months. Their recommendations were presented to and approved by the full CAC. The CAC recommended that the list of proposed FYs 2006-2008 TIP projects be passed on to the City DTS and the State Department of Transportation (DOT) for their review and consideration.

Mr. Lum stated that OMPO is in the process of developing the FYs 2006-2008 TIP. This document will hopefully take effect on October 1, 2005. As an early public involvement activity, the CAC wanted to make their recommendations known to the City and State while they are in the process of developing their project lists for inclusion into the TIP. The CAC, as well as the public, will have another opportunity to comment on the draft FYs 2006-2008 TIP once it is developed. In anticipation of the Policy Committee's action on this agenda item, the list has already been submitted to DOT and DTS.

Testimony

Frank Genadio (Committee for Balanced Transit (CBT))

Mr. Genadio added to the justification for the Makakilo Drive Extension to H-1 (second access) project. The University of Hawaii (UH) will be opening the West Oahu campus in the Fall of 2008. An extension of Makakilo Drive would drop right down to the North-South interchange and make it more accessible to the UH. Also, the H-1 interchange should be a full cloverleaf, so that the residents from Waianae can come in and use the UH West Oahu campus, and exit on the way out.

IV.B TIP: STATUS OF OAHU RAILWAY AND LAND REPAIR TRACKS PROJECT

Senator Espero disclosed that he is a member of the Hawaiian Railway Society (HRS). The HRS would like to ask the State DOT what the status is of the use and occupancy agreement. The HRS feels that they have been getting the "run around" in terms of this occupancy agreement.

Mr. Haraga did not have the information with him. He stated that he would give Senator Espero the requested information this afternoon.

Gayle Treiber, HRS member, was asked to speak. He stated that he came to the Policy Committee in September 2003 to ask that they approve a project to obtain ties to repair the tracks; this request was approved in the FY 2005 component of the TIP (\$40,000 in federal funds; \$10,000 in in-kind services (volunteer labor)). The project was held up, pending the resolution of a use and occupancy agreement. At that time, the HRS was told that the agreement would be resolved by April 2004. Mr. Treiber added that the HRS had met with a DOT staff member, Michael Amuro, in June 2004. They had come to an agreement, via handshake, that the project would be a go once the use and occupancy agreement was signed by both sides. Mr. Haraga stated that he would take care of this.

Chair Garcia stated that an update of this item could be added as an agenda item at the next meeting. Mr. Haraga stated that he would get back to Senator Espero this afternoon.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Garcia stated that a concern was being raised regarding Senate Bill 532. Mr. Lum explained that Senate Bill 532 would allow the CAC Chair to be a voting member of the Policy Committee.

Testimony

Charles Carole, Neighborhood Board # 10 (CAC Vice Chair)

Charles Carole stated that bill could be amended to add DPP and the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to the Policy Committee.

Representative Joseph Souki stated that the bill had been referred to the House Committees on Transportation and Finance, and had not been reported out.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:28 p.m.