

Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, 6 June, 2006, **Location:** DTS and telephone conference
1:00p.m. (HST)

Subject: Environmental Justice (EJ) coordination meeting with FHWA

Attendees: Vince Mammano, Jodi Chew, Liz Fischer, FHWA
Faith Miyamoto, Phyllis Kurio, Kenneth Banao, Strather Ing, DTS
Lawrence Spurgeon, Veronica Chan, PB

Summary:

- The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how to locate “communities of concern” (minority and low-income populations), determine potential disproportionate and adverse impacts to them, and document consideration of EJ and Title VI concerns. The results reported in *Environmental Justice in the Planning Process: Defining Environmental Justice Populations* (OMPO, March 2004) are being used to develop a community profile of the study corridor as described in the project methodology.
- PB provided background on the project indicating that the project development process would consist of an Alternatives Analysis (AA), followed by a Draft EIS for the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Currently, the focus is on the AA that would be used as a screening tool for the selection of the LPA and is not a full disclosure document.
- FHWA indicated that if FHWA funds are involved, then HDOT should also be involved. Rey Domingo is the head of the HDOT Civil Rights Division. DTS has met with Ben Gorospe in regards to EJ for the proposed project. DTS stated that FHWA and HDOT will each be receiving invitation letters to be cooperating agencies.
- FHWA indicated that if the project changes from how it is currently identified and described within the current STIP (2006-2008), the project may be delayed due to nonconformance (SAFETEA-LU requires states to have STIPs that meet the new requirements identified in the law effective 1 July 2007. If the STIP is not compliant by that date, no major amendments may be made until the STIP is compliant with SAFETEA-LU requirements). DTS stated that the Project’s preliminary engineering phase is included in the FY 2007 component of the current STIP.
- PB proposed the following evaluation method for the HHCTC project [as shown in the EJ Analysis Flow Chart (handout)]:
 - 1) Analyze low income or minority EJ areas as reported by OMPO. PB indicated that it understood that, in the past, FHWA suggested that OMPO’s *Environmental Justice in the Planning Process: Defining Environmental Justice Populations* (March 2004) (www.oahumpo.org/T6EJ/Final2001/2004Update.pdf) be used for baseline conditions for projects on Oahu. PB will be using the OMPO identified minority and low income EJ areas.
 - 2) Analyze existing linguistically isolated households using the threshold identified in the methodology. FHWA will provide additional resource information on literacy data. (FHWA subsequently provided the following information: The web link to FHWA’s recent publication, “How to Engage Low-Literacy and Limited-English-Proficiency Populations in Transportation Decisionmaking”:

www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/lowlim/index.htm; FHWA's Public Involvement pages with interesting ideas, practices, and case studies: www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/pubinv2.htm and www.planning.dot.gov/technical.asp#pub; and Florida DOT's Public Involvement Handbook for outreach techniques, www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/pubs/public_involvement/pubinvolve.htm.)

- 3) Refine the preliminary results of census data with qualitative analysis ("secondary assessment") based on other existing data sources and local knowledge.
- FHWA suggested that the title of the flowchart should be revised from "Environmental Justice Analysis" to a broader and more encompassing title because there are other elements in the flowchart, in particular those items going beyond EJ, such as the linguistic community analyses, that address the unique needs of Oahu. The flowchart should also distinguish those elements that are not defined as EJ.
 - FHWA asked whether DTS was analyzing station sites with respect to transit oriented development (TOD) to support the needs of economically disadvantaged communities. Transit oriented development offers opportunities to connect and develop communities and for DTS to work more closely with staff in City/County land use planning.¹
 - FHWA stated that DTS should consider ADA guidelines as the proposed elevated structures would be accessible by elevators and stairs. In the event that an elevator breaks down, non-mechanical alternatives must be available. Furthermore, elevators add maintenance and cost factors.
 - FHWA stated that bike and pedestrian access should also be considered. Access to stations from outside facilities (crosswalks, etc.) should be addressed.
 - DTS reiterated that the AA would probably not provide a fine level of detail to address FHWA's recommendations regarding the elevators and bike and pedestrian access. DTS' target date to complete the AA is October 31, 2006.
 - FHWA asked what steps have been taken so far to outreach to linguistically isolated populations. PB indicated that during the scoping process, ethnic newspapers and media outlets were provided with a translated advertisement to announce. Service providers, churches, and ethnic markets were provided with translated newsletters with information on how to request translated material. The next step will be a feed back loop to the public outreach team to identify which languages are the most important and where. The goal will be to match those future transit stops with the appropriate translation media and services. The Speakers Bureau members have been distributing translated materials, if necessary. However, all questions have been asked in English so far and no translation services have been necessary during the Speakers Bureau presentations. FHWA suggested that DTS provide Speakers Bureau presentations to agencies, such as HDOT, for informal discussion and dissemination to the agency staff. These staff members are often active members of the community

¹For examples, see: www.transitorienteddevelopment.org, www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm45.htm, www.rtd-denver.com/Projects/TOD/index.html, <http://transitorienteddevelopment.dot.ca.gov>, www.newurbanism.org/index.html, www.mbtacom/projects_underway/tod.asp, www.smartergrowth.net/issues/landuse/tod/index.html, www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/transit/tod/.

and can provide conduits for dissemination of information.

- FHWA suggested that both HDOT highway planning and design branches be involved in discussions. Ron Tsuzuki (HWY-P) and Dean Nakagawa (DOT-STP) are potential contacts. Discussions with the Harbors and Airports Divisions have already occurred so that the transit project can be coordinated with any planned changes. HDOT is being invited to be a cooperating agency. A similar invitation is being extended to FHWA.
- FHWA indicated that HDOT should be included in every discussion in which FHWA and FTA have been invited. HDOT is responsible for planning level analysis, while FHWA has oversight responsibilities. After receipt of the requests to be cooperating agencies, the teams should meet and talk about the project and study approach.
- DTS recognizes HDOT's role related to highway planning analyses and FHWA's oversight of HDOT. However, the HHCTCP's AA is currently under FTA's jurisdiction and oversight. HDOT would not necessarily be included in discussions between DTS and FTA when such discussions focus on transit-related aspects/requirements under FTA's authority.

Actions Required: 1. DTS to coordinate with HDOT on cooperating agency status and involvement.
2. DTS to set up a Speakers Bureau presentation for HDOT.

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Meeting Attendees