

Kailua Urban Design Task Force
<http://www.kailuaurbandesign.org/>



March 27, 2012

Wayne Y. Yoshioka, Director
City and County of Honolulu
Dept. of Transportation Services
650 S. King Street, 3rd Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Mr. Yoshioka:

Re: Proposed Ku`ulei Road Improvements in Kailua

The Kailua Urban Design Task Force (KUDTF) appreciates the efforts of the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) to prepare more detailed concepts regarding the installation of median strips on Ku`ulei Road and other improvements potentially funded by the Federal Safe Routes to School program. KUDTF provides the following response to recommendations presented by DTS at the community meeting held at Kailua Elementary School on January 31, 2012.

A. Proposed Measure: Implement Sidewalk Improvements that would include 1) reconstruct AC sidewalk fronting school/park, 2) remove trees along edge of Ku`ulei Road, and 3) plant new trees along school property.

KUDTF Response: The membership does not concur with this recommendation. We believe the existing mature Kamani trees are an important visual and aesthetic element along Ku`ulei Road. We recognize that some of the existing tree roots impact the adjacent sidewalk. Rather than remove all the trees, we believe that removal of 2 or 3 select trees, proper trimming, and installation of bio-barriers around the remaining trees is a preferred action. This should be conducted under the guidance of a professional arborist. Following installation of the bio-barriers, a new concrete sidewalk should be installed. Combined, these improvements would provide for a smooth and safe pedestrian experience adjacent to the school and retain the existing landscape theme that is important in this part of Kailua.

To further improve on the above recommendation, KUDTF requests that DTS discuss with the Department of Education (DOE) and the school Principal the potential to move the existing fence line in from the street by 2 to 3 feet. We believe there is room between the fence line and the Rainbow Shower trees on the school property that would allow for a wider sidewalk to further enhance the pedestrian environment at this location.

B. Proposed Measure: Install traffic signal at the intersection of Ku`ulei Road and Aulike Street.

KUDTF Response: Based on the analysis conducted by DTS, KUDTF concurs with the recommendation and agrees it will make this intersection much safer for pedestrians crossing

Ku`ulei Road. [Note: It will be important to make this a carefully synchronized traffic signal so as not to force backing up traffic into Kailua's main intersection at Oneawa Street / Kailua Road.]

C. Proposed Measure: Install Partial Raised Medians in Ku`ulei Road that would 1) not remove on street parking, 2) maintain access to all properties, and 3) allow for easier maneuvering for fire and police vehicles during emergency calls.

KUDTF Response: KUDTF concurs with the DTS recommendation to construct medians that do not obstruct access to any properties and accommodates the need for rapid response for emergency vehicles. For many years, KUDTF members have monitored the use of parking stalls on the elementary school side of Ku`ulei Road. We do not concur with the community's assessment of their importance to retail operations, but understand there is community support for these stalls to be retained. We therefore concur with the DTS recommendation.

D. Proposed Measure: Plant low, easy to maintain shrubs and smaller trees within the median.

KUDTF Response: KUDTF concurs with the DTS recommendation and believes the planting of smaller trees, as opposed to the large canopy trees that are planted in medians on Kailua Road, is the preferred action in the medians on Ku`ulei Road. Studies have shown that even small trees in a median reduce speeds on roadways such as Ku`ulei Road. The addition of easy to maintain shrubs would reduce the desire of some people to jaywalk, so we support the DTS proposal for bushes and smaller trees.

KUDTF sincerely appreciates the opportunity to comment on the DTS proposals and look forward to working with your staff and members of the community to reach a decision that promotes a safer, more pedestrian friendly, aesthetically pleasing and cohesive environment along a primary roadway in Kailua Town.

Sincerely,

Board Members, Kailua Urban Design Task Force

cc: Councilmember Ikaika Andersen (via email)
Senator Pohai Ryan (via email)
Representative Cynthia Thielen (via email)
Representative Chris Lee (via email)
Kailua Neighborhood Board (via email)
Lanikai-Kailua Outdoor Circle (via email)
Ms. Helen Walker (via email)
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