

## Community Workshop 4 Meeting Notes

## WAIPAHU NEIGHBORHOOD TOD PLAN

March 27, 2009

City and County of Honolulu

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*The following is a brief summary of the comments and questions from the Community Workshop 4 for the Waipahu Neighborhood TOD Plan held on March 18, 2009. Workshop 4 focused on presentation of the Public Review Draft Plan.*

- What is the anticipated % of total new housing that would be affordable housing?
  - The Public Review Draft (PRD) Plan seeks to maintain the existing number of affordable housing units
  - The PRD Plan also recommends that 20 percent of all housing projects involving more than 29 units [for sale and rental] shall be affordable at 80 percent of the areas AMI.
  - As a community benefits bonus for developers who provide 25percent affordable housing [80 percent of the areas AMI] an increase of FAR from 2.5 to 3.5; and a increase in building height from 60' to 90' (in the Leoku TOD Special District)
- How do peds, bikes, buses – multimodal access the central station areas?
  - The new transit stations are part of a larger inter-modal transportation network that should be created in the surrounding neighborhoods. New streets, paths and trails should be developed in order to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, park 'n ride drop-offs, buses, and local through traffic.
- What market studies support the proposed mix and plan locations?
  - The appendices of the PRD Plan include a report entitled “*Transit-Oriented Development, Waipahu: Overview of Market Analysis and Economic Impacts*”
- The VMWP presentation came across as possible “design” guidelines, in addition to zoning overlays, is this correct?
  - The existing design guidelines included in the *Waipahu Town Plan* and *Waipahu Livable Communities Initiative* should act as the design guidelines for the Waipahu TOD Special Districts, with the exception of the minor changes listed in the PRD Plan.
- Where are the school sites?
  - The PRD Plan recommends that Schools are permitted in both the TOD and TIZ Precincts. New schools sites would need to be identified based on future need.
- Not enough civic components, these can be catalysts
  - The Central Oahu SCP identifies the area surrounding the planned Farrington/Mokuola station as a Regional Town Center, an area which serves as a center for shopping, civic activity, and municipal services for the region. The PRD Plan builds off of these principles.
- What are the ideas for peds crossing Farrington?
  - The transit stations are being designed with mezzanine levels and elevated crosswalks on both sides of Farrington Highway to access the station.
- The information flashed on the screen was dim and difficult to see and therefore challenging to follow. Clearer projection would be helpful.

- Where will the rail barn be located? Can the area next to the soccer field be used for this purpose?
- Will the station center be at Farrington and Leoku? How many businesses will be displaced? Will the Waipahu Professional center be completely affected?
  - The PRD Plan is a framework for future community growth and improvements. Individual developments will occur based on the decisions of the existing property owners.
- When will we expect to see transformation of ¼ mile to ½ mile radius of the transit stations in Waipahu? What is the timeline since the first increment of rail is projected to be completed in 2013. Which we believe Waipahu will be in.
  - The PRD Plan describes phasing scenarios for the station areas. Phase Two focuses on private redevelopment of larger properties within ¼ mile of the transit stations. As shown in other places, redevelopment will typically occur in areas closest to the amenity of transit first and then filter out to the periphery of the station area. Private redevelopment is most likely to occur on currently vacant properties, large properties (greater than 1/2 acre) and properties owned by more progressive developers. There is no set timeline as individual developments will occur based on the desires of the existing property owners.
- What will happen to businesses that will be affected by the new development? Meaning if your business falls in the projected plan and it will no longer be operating how it is currently being used? We have a long term lease what will happen to our livelihood?
  - The PRD Plan is a framework for future community growth and improvements. Individual developments will occur based on the decisions of the existing property owners.
- How are you going to get rid of the mangroves near Pearl Harbor. Will Chocolate Beach be clean enough to swim, fish, etc.? Will people be safe on the new trail?
  - The PRD Plan places a strong emphasis on connecting the waterfront to Waipahu. Details of Pearl Harbor restoration and access are out of the scope of this current project.
- Will there be better security for homes near public paths?
  - The best security for pedestrian and bicycle paths is active community use. Other design features including attractive fencing and lighting can be used to increase safety along the path.
- Farrington Highway is still a Highway. What are the impacts to Farrington Highway from all of the proposed changes to achieve the TOD goals? IE How will “traffic calming” measures impede the efficient flow of traffic in Farrington Highway? How do these concepts interrelate without negatively impacting Farrington Highway as a major traffic mover?
  - A major element of the Plan includes the creation of an urban transit boulevard along Farrington Highway near the proposed station. The two-block long urban transit boulevard will have the elevated transit line in the center median, through-traffic lanes on either side of the transit line, separated lanes for local traffic and drop-offs, wide sidewalks and parking adjacent to new mixed-use buildings.
- How does the “gateway office” development at the corner of Farrington Highway and Fort Weaver Road impact that intersection?

- The “gateway office” development would be greatly enhanced by its location adjacent to the transit station. It is anticipated that many employees would arrive via transit, thereby lessening traffic impact in the area.
- Is there a Financial plan for floodway revitalization? How does this impact Kapakahi Stream restoration?
  - The PRD Plan stresses the need to fund and initiate studies to remove portions of Waipahu from the Floodway District. Options include: extend a portion of the Waikele Stream concrete channel makai to the mangrove, Connect Kapakahi and Waikele Streams, Improve the flow of Kapakahi Stream by widening the drainage box under Farrington Highway in conjunction with daylighting a portion of Kapakahi Stream fronting the Waipahu Festival Marketplace.
- What is the prioritized development plan that will guide all the proposed changes? Especially for that which requires private funding?
  - TOD implementation starts with a vision, cultivated from broad-based public input, and proceeds to strategic station-area planning backed by appropriate zoning and regulations, as well as policy incentives. The implementation section of the PRD Plan includes a summarization of sections from a report by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) entitled: *Transit-Oriented Development in the United States: Experiences, Challenges, and Prospects (2004)*. This report includes a survey of transit agencies, local planning agencies, developers and banks and lenders on what they see as the most productive tools and strategies for TOD implementation.
- Is Farrington Highway a state highway? Are the street trees the property of the state? Did you speak to State DOT?
  - Farrington Highway is a State Highway. We have met with the State DOT at various times during the planning process.
- Can Farrington really be widened to be developed in the way envisioned in the powerpoint?
  - A major element of the Plan includes the creation of an urban transit boulevard along Farrington Highway near the proposed station, but it doesn't have to be part of the Farrington Highway right-of-way per se. It could be a separate, but-well-coordinated project. The two-block long urban transit boulevard will have the elevated transit line in the center median, through-traffic lanes on either side of the transit line, separated lanes for local traffic and drop-offs, wide sidewalks and parking adjacent to new mixed-use buildings.
- Have you considered the ground conditions to consider the building heights as portrayed?
  - The building heights proposed in the PRD Plan are within the ranges of existing building heights in the area. Analysis of localized conditions will occur on a site by site basis when private development proposals occur.
- Are the apartments in the Pupuole Street area to be redeveloped to become consistent with the vision as portrayed?
  - The PRD Plan includes the principle “provide mixed-income housing.” This principle emphasizes a mixture of housing choices around the transit station which include a variety of price options, housing types, and unit sizes to support a wide range of household types such as singles, small and large

families, empty nesters, students and seniors, but the redevelopment decision is for the landowners to make.

- Are TODs being discussed or negotiated with developers of Waipahu Neighborhood Plan? Have property owners been notified of purchasing of their properties? If not when?
  - The PRD Plan is a framework for future community growth and improvements. Individual developments will occur based on the desires of the existing property owners. There are no City plans to purchase properties for TOD.
- For the proposed “mini parks,” who will maintain these parks?
  - This will be negotiated when private development projects occur in the neighborhood.
- When will the zoning be changed?
  - Zoning will not be changed until after the Plan is approved by City Council. Following approval, the City will create the TOD Special Districts (zoning overlay districts) based on the Plan’s recommendations.
- Who will oversee / regulate these changes in Waipahu?
  - Zoning will continue to be administered by the Department of Planning and Permitting.
- Will the new buildings around the station be financed by the City or by private funds?
  - Implementation mechanisms are still being reviewed and could include financial incentives offered to the private developer or landowner.
- What incentives could the City offer to attract private developers to implement the TOD Plan?
  - The PRD Plan includes a section on implementation and incentives that have been used in other cities to stimulate private redevelopment.
- Will there be a guidebook/guidelines to guide development that will take place?
  - The existing design guidelines included in the Waipahu Town Plan and Waipahu Livable Communities Initiative should act as the design guidelines for the Waipahu TOD Special Districts, with the exception of the minor changes listed in the PRD Plan.
- Isn’t high density bad? Doesn’t that mean tall buildings?
  - Higher density doesn’t necessarily mean taller buildings. While taking advantage of more efficient use of land, allowing higher density transit-oriented development can provide more walkable, healthier, economically vibrant neighborhoods, safe bicycling environments, convenient access to daily household needs and enhancement of local character.
- What do you mean “Old Town” concept? Are these the buildings of the 1950’s?
  - The Farrington / Mokuola station area reflects Waipahu’s heritage as a former sugar plantation town with an impressive collection of cultural and community resources including the Filcom Center, Hawaii’s Plantation Village, the Leeward YMCA, the Waipahu Library and Hans L’Orange Park. This area also contains a number of attractive historic buildings, mostly along Waipahu Depot Road and Waipahu Street. With a few exceptions, the “Old Town” area is generally low-rise in character and contains a wide range of uses. The historic sugar mill smokestack, now incorporated into the Leeward YMCA, is a landmark for the “Old Town” area.

- As for the historical buildings what are the specific guidelines when you said “strengthen them?”
  - The existing design guidelines included in the Waipahu Town Plan and Waipahu Livable Communities Initiative include recommendations on improving historic buildings in Waipahu and ensuring that new buildings and existing building renovations follow these guidelines.
- Multilevel parking structures are needed. Employees currently fight for parking during work week.
  - Parking structures may be encouraged to be developed by private property owners to help support overall neighborhood parking needs.
- Farrington/Leoku Station needs a park and ride for Kunia, Ho’opili, Waipahu, Ewa commuters.
  - The PRD Plan recommends that the City identify possible locations for temporary transit parking within both station areas.
- Will the Neighborhood Plan be built at the same time as the rail project or will it be built before/after rail?
  - The PRD Plan is a framework for long-term community growth and improvements. “build-out” of the Plan will occur based on the decisions of the property owners.
- What is TOD re-zoning? What does that mean?
  - TOD Zoning refers to changing or overlaying regulations atop existing zoning. It is focused on helping to achieve the Community’s vision for the station areas by adapting the regulations for new development.
- Why are you displacing single-family homes at Mokuola Station?
  - The City is not displacing single-family homes in any way. The plan specifies that areas of preservation include all single-family neighborhoods within the station areas.
- The raised platform down Farrington Highway looks 16’ to 24’ feet above the road. What will that do to the businesses along Farrington? A on grade system will allow people to see all the businesses and help advertise the stores and cost ½ the cost of a raised system.
- The development along the raised track, will it kill the retail due to the lack of contact? (contact with the trains and people?)
  - It is anticipated that the rail stations will prove an economic benefit to existing businesses in Waipahu.
- When will property owners be notified of eminent domain proceedings? Or there properties is needed for TOD development?
  - TOD is created by private land owners and developers. There are no plans for the City to buy land for TOD.
- We need to get some kind of assurance that the City’s DTS will provide at least one parking area as discussed at Tuesdays meeting.
  - The PRD Plan recommends that the City identify possible locations for temporary transit parking within both station areas.

- Do you have plans for the abandoned 29 acre City refuse land below Waipahu Depot Street, and Kapakahi Stream? It remains idle from 1992, filled with grass and weeds. Its most ideal for a passive park bordering on Pearl Harbor, similar to Blaisdell Park at Pearl City. The City has not provided for a large quiet recreation park for the burgeoning Waipahu community.
  - The PRD Plan recognizes areas such as Pouhala Marsh and the Pearl Harbor Historic Trail have the potential to be important amenities for residents. Currently the most under utilized resource in Waipahu is the Pearl Harbor shoreline.