



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

State Senator Pohai Ryan

(SENT VIA EMAIL 6/19/11)

June 19, 2011

Wayne Yoshioka
Director
Department of Transportation Services
City & County of Honolulu

RE: My opposition to a median strip on Kuulei Road, Kailua

Dear Director Yoshioka,

Thank you very much for coming to our community in the evening hours to address concerns about the Kuulei Road project. I commend you for your professional manner in which you addressed our meeting participants. You have a very calm demeanor and present a very sincere way in communicating with residents and I appreciate your participation. I also want to thank your staff and contractors for providing information and attending the meeting as well.

Your follow up meeting will be coordinated by the office of Council Member Ikaika Anderson at his request and I feel it is a good idea and more appropriate at this juncture. Please keep me informed of any updates, changes or further meetings. Thank you again for accommodating our community.

I also would like to share with you my thoughts about this particular project based on my experience as a former parent of Kailua Elementary School students, and based on my interviews with Kuulei business owners and residents who frequently utilize the sidewalks and crosswalks of this area and from information I learned at the meeting. I understand that my comments are for consideration only as well as the final decisions rest with your department, so your patience and serious consideration is most appreciated.

The City & County recently repaired the sidewalk fronting the businesses on the north side of Kuulei Road. Any changes would appear to be wasteful and unnecessary. I agree with KUDTF that Kailua Road became much safer for pedestrians after the median project was completed. I base this on my own observations and experience as a former tenant of Kailua Shopping Center. I witnessed a major improvement for pedestrian safety after the trees and median strip was installed. But, I don't think this will work for Kuulei Road because the variables and conditions are not the same. I don't support installing a median strip with or without trees in the center of Kuulei Road at this time for these reasons;

1. Access for emergency vehicle pass through on Kuulei road would be impaired. The height of the trees will eventually pose a problem and require constant upkeep; creating a cost burden to the City for maintaining sufficient height and width clearance of branches.

Representing Senate District 25

Hawaii Kai, Waimanalo, Keolu Hills, Lanikai and Kailua

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2. Fire Chief Silva submitted a letter expressing his concerns as well for emergency vehicles and apparatus on the fire trucks.
3. The ability for delivery trucks to turn into McDonald's and Al Phillips Cleaners and petroleum trucks into Kuulei 76 service station will be prohibitive. Re-routing trucks cannot be done on Uluniu Street because the street is narrower and the turns are sharper. This will greatly impede on the businesses creating a negative impact on their ability to conduct business.
4. Cars turning into Kailua Elementary School will create traffic challenges greater than what already exist during high peak hours.
5. Mr. Canaveri of KUDTF suggested that the sidewalk fronting the school be made more user friendly for pedestrians and bicyclist by widening it to twelve feet is a great idea. As long as I have lived in Kailua I have never seen the parking on this side of the street fully utilized.
6. Mr. Caneveri also suggested that possibly creating beautiful wide crosswalks that are somewhat decorative with red brick surface and brightly painted borders so that people can really see the crossing areas. In addition, adding fashioned light fixtures and a pedestrian crossing light at the McDonalds (Aulike and Kuulei) crossings. The same can be done at the Maluniu Ave. and Kuulei Rd. crosswalk.
7. Other people in the meeting also suggested lighted crosswalks like some of the military bases have here should be considered. I think this would be especially useful at the McDonld's crosswalk sites.

Based on all the information I've seen and learned, I will support a design that; 1) does not include a median strip 2) widens the sidewalk on the school side of Kuulei Road 3) creates wider, more stylish and safer crosswalks at Aulike St. and Kuulei Rd. and at Kuulei Road and Maluniu Ave. that include upgraded crosswalk lights.

I know you have a lot of suggestions that you will consider and put together the best and safest design for Kuulei Road. Ultimately it is the experienced Engineers and Planners of your department who will make the final decision. I hope you can take serious consideration of my suggestions when finalizing your designs.

It's been great working with you and your staff and support people!

Sincerely,



Senator Pohai Ryan

(Sent via email)

Cc: Council Member Ikaika Anderson

Representative Chris Lee

Leigh Prentiss, President Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle

Chuck Prentiss, Chairman Kailua Neighborhood Board & members

David Curry, Chairman KUDTF

Helen Walker, Resident and advocate for Kuulei Road Businesses

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