To: Land Use Commission  

Date: September 2, 2020  

Re: LUC Agenda Item # A11-794  09-10-20  Under/Overpass to Kihei High School

The Kihei Community Association (KCA) has long advocated for a safe intersection design for the new Kihei High School at Pi’ilani Hwy and Kulanihakoi St. We are laser-focused on designing an intersection and campus access that promotes the highest level of safety and efficient traffic flow. The roundabout and underpass together are the two best ways to maximize this.

KCA appreciates that the state Department of Transportation (DOT) has acknowledged that a four-lane roundabout with HAWK pedestrian signals and right hand turn-out lanes is the best solution to keep the intersection safe and traffic moving at a reduced speed.

As a condition of the original EIS in 2013, the State Land Use Committee “requires that a pedestrian overpass or underpass be constructed before the opening of the first phase of Kihei High School”. This ruling was re-affirmed by the LUC in 2019.

In accordance with the affirmed condition, KCA continues to advocate for a pedestrian underpass at Waipuilani gulch where there is already a tall clearance and wide breadth of land. This solution has been recommended in the original Kihei High School EIS and numerous pedestrian/traffic studies that have followed.

The most recent pedestrian/traffic studies conducted for this intersection recommend using the existing underpass while disfavoring the construction of an overpass as they are expensive and rarely used.

The Department of Education (DOE) has pigeon-holed itself by only looking at an expensive overpass and not pursuing the Waipuilani Gulch underpass option as recommended. This may be partially due to the stubbornness of the DOT to not look at underpasses as pedestrian walkways.

Now that the DOT has confirmed that the intersection will be a roundabout, the DOE is seeing this as an opportunity to circumvent the original condition to provide a safe overpass or underpass. The DOE clings to outdated data and says the underpass or overpass is not warranted. This is incorrect.
KCA encourages the LUC to stand firm in its ruling to require a grade separated pedestrian crossing (GSPC). KCA also encourages DOE and DOT to work on the already existing underpass at Waipuilani gulch. This is the path forward, literally. Safety remains our utmost concern.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Moran, President
Kihei Community Association
Waipuilani Gulch underpass on July 26, 2020 – The day of Hurricane Douglas

KCA and Goodfellow Bros. inspect Waipuilani Gulch underpass
KCA and Goodfellow Bros. inspect Waipuilani Gulch underpass

Existing underpass and pedestrian pathway at Waipuilani Gulch
Waipuilani Underpass as recommended in Kihei High School Final EIS 2013

Waipuilani Underpass – Kihei HS - Pedestrian & Bike Connection Plan. Pacific Rim Land 2012
Waipuilani Underpass – Kihei HS - Pedestrian & Bike Connection Plan. Pacific Rim Land 2012
Waipuilani Underpass as recommended in Kihei High School Pedestrian Route Study by Dan Burden, as commissioned by DOE
Examples of underpass pedestrian bikeways in gulches

Boulder, CO

Four Sisters, IL

North Shore, IL

Hilton Head, IL

Lima, OH

Boulder, CO

Elsinburg, WA  Before Construction

After Construction