



# Evaluation Report

February 2014

## Implementing Complete Streets

*Honolulu City & County*

*Kāne'ohe and Liliha  
Community Walk Audits*

Facilitated by Dan Burden

Sponsored by the  
Healthy Hawai'i Initiative



*Report prepared by the Healthy Hawai'i Initiative  
Evaluation Team*

University of Hawai'i  
Lehua Choy & Jay Maddock



*Photos courtesy of the Walkable and Livable  
Communities Institute*

Samantha Thomas & Dan Burden



## Key Findings

### Overview

- To further the implementation of state and county Complete Streets policies, Dan Burden, a national expert in walkability and active living communities, provided assistance to several O'ahu communities in December 2013. Specifically, Dan led two community walk audits in Kāne'ohe and Liliha and met with elected officials from Waimānalo and Wai'anae.
- A selected sample of participants from the walk audits and meetings were interviewed to find out if they found the activities to be helpful and to identify ways to continue moving forward with Complete Streets implementation.

### Community Walk Audits

- A combination of local elected officials (state and county), community members, and government agency staff attended each community walk audit; the **Kāne'ohe** walk audit had 9 participants and the **Liliha** walk audit had 19 participants.
- All participants found the walk audits to be valuable opportunities to experience the built environment conditions and discuss ways to improve pedestrian safety. Although good recommendations were made during the walk audits, government agency staff need to evaluate what is feasible and elected officials need to pursue funding.

### Meeting with Elected Officials

- Through meeting with Dan Burden, elected officials were engaged in determining ways to implement Complete Streets policies in their communities. The **Waimānalo** community needs to work with the State Department of Transportation to make their town safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. The **Wai'anae Coast** community needs help engaging community members in a process for developing Complete Streets projects.

### Next Steps for Complete Streets Implementation

- Participants feel that it is highly important to "complete the streets" in their communities. In addition to making physical improvements, participants see widespread **community education** as a critical next step for implementation.
- Participants support the use of Tobacco Settlement Special Funds for activities, such as walk audits, to build healthy communities. However, other **funding** sources are needed to enhance the built environment through both short- and long-term projects.

## Implementing Complete Streets

Two walk audits in Kāneʻohe and Liliha were held on December 13, 2013, to identify areas of concern and discuss opportunities for implementing state and county Complete Streets policies. Additionally, two meetings with elected officials to discuss Complete Streets initiatives for the Waimānalo and Waiʻanae Coast communities were held on December 13 and 17, 2013, respectively. These activities were facilitated by Dan Burden, a national walkability expert and Director of Inspiration and Innovation at the Walkable and Livable Communities (WALC) Institute.



*Community walk audits help to identify areas of concern for pedestrians, bicyclists, bus users, and motorists of all ages and abilities*

## Community Partnerships

Funding for Dan Burden's visit was provided by the Healthy Hawai'i Initiative (HHI), State Department of Health. The activities were organized in close partnership with elected officials, including: (1) Senator Jill Tokuda and Representative Ken Ito for the Kāneʻohe walk audit; (2) Councilmember Carol Fukunaga, Senator Susie Chun Oakland, and Representative Takashi Ohno for the Liliha walk audit; (3) Senator Laura Thielen and Representative Chris Lee for the Waimānalo meeting; and (4) Representative Karen Awana for the Waiʻanae Coast meeting. Other key partners in carrying out the activities included the City & County of Honolulu (C & C) Department of Transportation Services (DTS) and the Liliha Neighborhood Board.



*Participants discuss their observations on the Kāneʻohe walk audit*

## Walk Audit Participants

A total of 28 people attended both the Kāneʻohe and Liliha community walk audits. In addition to the elected officials previously mentioned, government agency staff and community members participated in the walk audits. The Liliha walk audit had more participants, including George Atta, Director of the C & C Department of Planning & Permitting; Mark Garrity, Deputy Director of the C & C Department of Transportation Services; and Harrison Rue, Administrator for the C & C Transit Oriented Development Program.



### Kāneʻohe Community Walk Audit

- 2 Community Members
- 2 Elected Officials
- 1 Aide to Elected Official
- 2 C & C Dept. of Transportation Services
- 1 State Dept. of Health
- 1 State Dept. of Land and Natural Resources

---

**9 Participants**



### Liliha Community Walk Audit

- 3 Community Members
- 4 Liliha Neighborhood Board Members
- 3 Elected Officials
- 2 Aides to Elected Officials
- 2 C & C Dept. of Transportation Services
- 1 C & C Dept. of Planning & Permitting
- 1 C & C Transit Oriented Development
- 1 State Dept. of Health
- 2 University of Hawaiʻi

---

**19 Participants**

## Meetings with Elected Officials

The purpose of the Waimānalo meeting was to discuss Complete Streets opportunities along the section of Kalanianaʻole Highway running through Waimānalo town. Senator Thielen was particularly interested in finding ways to address the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vulnerable groups (i.e., children, older adults, and people with disabilities). Senator Thielen and Representative Lee were joined by Bruce Coppa, Governor Abercrombie’s Chief of Staff, and State Department of Transportation (DOT) leaders (Director Glenn Okimoto, Deputy Director Jadine Urasaki, and Highways Administrator Alvin Takeshita). The meeting helped to clarify challenges around DOT implementation of Complete Streets projects; however, specific solutions to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety were not developed. DOT declined to participate in a planned technical walk audit in Waimānalo for DOT staff, so it was cancelled. DOT did agree to share the 2014 scope of work for Kalanianaʻole Highway with the other meeting participants. DOT was also asked to share plans being generated for the next phase of work in 2016 to allow for community feedback on Complete Streets opportunities while still in the design phase.

The meeting to discuss Complete Streets initiatives for the Waiʻanae Coast community was an opportunity for Representative Karen Awana to discuss concerns over pedestrian safety issues along Farrington Highway. Follow-up help was requested in engaging the public, the State Department of Transportation, and other stakeholders in future Complete Streets implementation activities.

## Evaluation Components

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Complete Streets implementation activities, follow-up interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of participants. A program evaluator and HHI staff member attempted to follow-up with all elected officials and selected community members and government agency staff. The follow-up interviews were administered either through brief phone calls, face-to-face meetings, or email, depending on the preference of the participant. A standard set of questions were asked.

Multiple attempts to reach participants were made by phone or email in January 2014. Overall, 12 out of 14 contacted people agreed to do the follow-up interviews, for a participation rate of 85.7%. This report summarizes the main findings from the follow-up interviews.



*Walk audits enable participants to see neighborhood conditions from a pedestrian perspective.*

## Evaluation Results

### *Was participating in the activity worthwhile?*

All of the walk audit participants found it to be a worthwhile endeavor for two primary reasons:

- Observing and experiencing the neighborhood conditions first hand;
- Bringing together the right combination of participants—elected officials, community members, government agency staff, and a nationally-recognized walkability expert—to discuss concerns and potential solutions.

The meetings were worthwhile for most of the participants, as well. They viewed the meetings as an opportunity to draw upon Dan Burden’s expertise, validate their frustrations, and identify ways to move forward with Complete Streets implementation.

### *What will you do differently as a result of participating?*

Participants were asked to share one thing that they will do differently as a result of participating in either the walk audit or meeting. Some general responses included shifting ways of thinking about the issues and considering the feasibility of suggestions offered. Specific changes also included:

#### **Kāne‘ohe**

- Support Kāne‘ohe Elementary in implementing solutions to deal with school traffic and improve physical conditions.
- Work with developers to ensure sidewalks are present in the redevelopment of Windward City Shopping Center.

### Ways in which participants found the walk audit to be worthwhile:

It was great that the City, State, and community were together to exchange ideas, knowledge unique to the area provided by residents, and new perspectives from folk who were not as familiar with the area.

Our neighborhood board has been concerned with pedestrian safety for a while, but usually it’s talked about in response to an incident, when a pedestrian gets hurt. The walk audit allowed a proactive discussion rather than being reactive.

See and experience firsthand what’s going on in the community. Good to talk with someone like Dan Burden who has extensive experience and is familiar with solutions from across the county.



*Walk audit participants stop to discuss possible ways to improve the intersection of Liliha and Judd Streets*

## Liliha

- Set-up additional walk audits that cover different areas in the community and hold them at other times/days.
- Further study the possibility of including a roundabout at Pauoa and Nu‘uanu.

## State Department of Transportation

- Compel DOT to fill the Bike Coordinator Position, which has been vacant for three years.
- Work with DOT through the legislative budget process for Complete Streets projects.

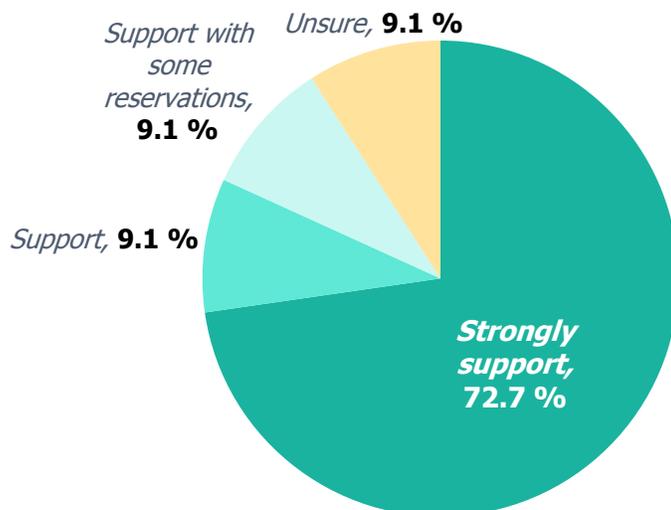
### *How important is it to "complete the streets" in your community?*

Participants were asked to rate how important they felt it was to “complete the streets” in their communities using a 10-point scale (*1 = low importance to 10 = high importance*). All respondents felt that it was highly important to complete the streets in their communities: the average rating was 9.5 (SD = 0.8). Most respondents gave it the maximum rating, including five out of six (83.3%) of elected officials.

### *Do you support the use of Tobacco Settlement Special Funds for activities to create healthier communities?*

Because Dan Burden’s visit was funded by HHI using Tobacco Settlement Special Funds, participants were asked if they supported using the funds for this type of work focused on creating active, healthy communities. The majority *strongly support* the use of funds for this purpose (*Figure 1*), which again includes five out of six (83.3%) elected officials. One respondent cited the need for transparent use of the funds to enable public awareness of how the money is being used.

**Figure 1. Support for Using Tobacco Settlement Special Funds for building healthy communities (n=11)**



### *Do you have any suggestions for improving these activities?*

Participants offered several suggestions for improving the walk audits, which are summarized below.

#### Ways to Improve Future Walk Audits

- **Preparation:** Provide safety vests for all participants; inform participants to be prepared for possible rainy conditions. Strategically plan for times and dates that will allow participants to address specific issues or concerns (e.g., school traffic).
- **Video record:** Consider bringing a video camera or GoPro to capture some of the events that happen along the route.
- **Focus on health:** The Department of Health should continue to promote walk audits as a way for building walkable, healthy communities.
- **Education:** If time allows, give a brief educational presentation prior to starting the walk audit to bring new participants up to speed on walkability and Complete Streets concepts.
- **Participation:** Make sure to invite the leaders of key departments because the presence of directors and division and branch chiefs helps to get their buy-in for Complete Streets initiatives.
- **Leadership:** A national expert is not necessarily needed to lead future walk audits. However, there should be some gravitas behind the leader; it could be a Councilmember or Transportation or Health official.

## Next Steps

---

Participants expressed a firm desire to continue the Complete Streets implementation work, building on what was achieved through the December 2013 walk audits and meetings. They are looking forward to receiving the written recommendations from the WALC Institute and continuing the partnership work with HHI. Participants intend to take action on the WALC Institute recommendations by assessing their feasibility and further discussing how to implement some of the improvements. Furthermore, they recognized that short-term fixes needed to occur in parallel with longer-term solutions.

The need for **community education** around Complete Streets was identified as a next step by many of the participants. Participants felt that educating community members about Complete Streets concepts and benefits would help to establish broader support and advocacy for implementation. Ideas about ways to educate community members included recruiting a well-known person to serve as a champion and developing a campaign to address poor driving behaviors (e.g., rushing from place to place, driving while texting). Sharing more about the process of implementing Complete Streets projects would help the community understand why it takes so long to make actual physical improvements. Additional community-specific next steps are listed below.

### Kāneʻohe

- A valuable component of the walk audit was observing the traffic induced by parents picking up their children when school was let out. Participants would like to engage school stakeholders and the public in developing and applying solutions for Kāneʻohe Elementary.
- One respondent wants to see that recommendations from the walk audit are incorporated into the redevelopment of Windward City shopping complex, particularly ensuring that there are sidewalks, along with stormwater drainage and repaving.
- In addition, as a result of the walk audit, the Department of Transportation Services has submitted a work order to repaint the faded crosswalk markings that were observed at one intersection.



*Participants stopped at Kāneʻohe Elementary to talk with school officials and observe the traffic generated by student pick-up*

## Liliha

- Additional walk audits in the Liliha community are desired. The Neighborhood Board can help to identify areas in which future walk audits would be useful, including some of the more residential sections. More residents should be included to gather additional community input and suggestions. Furthermore, conducting walk audits during different days and times would be informative.
- Elected officials will pursue city and state funding for Complete Streets improvements. Of particular interest was a long-term project that would create a pathway along Nu‘uanu Stream below Kuakini Street, down to Vineyard Boulevard. Also, the community needs short-term demonstration projects to help show the community tangible changes and enhance their understanding of how the physical changes are connected to pedestrian safety.
- Gather and share data about traffic and pedestrian safety incidents to help plan future efforts. The Neighborhood Board is interested in seeing more data about high-risk pedestrian areas, commuting patterns, and community demographics (e.g., what proportion of Liliha residents are elderly?).
- Involve the C & C Bike Coordinator in future audits and workshops so that more of a bicycling perspective is integrated into the discussion.

## Wai‘anae Coast

- The community would like help from the Healthy Hawai‘i Initiative in planning future walk audits and community presentations that will help to address concerns around safety, access, and connections.



*Officials from the Departments of Planning & Permitting and Transportation Services stop to discuss conditions along Liliha Street*

### Additional participant comments:

It's a good idea for DOH/Healthy Hawai'i Initiative to promote more of these types of activities as a way of getting more communities involved in solving neighborhood traffic/pedestrian safety issues. Having a health focus rather than a transportation focus makes a big difference.

Dan Burden has ideas to share that are outside of the box, based on what he sees in other areas. It was good for the elected officials to be there so they hear (and see) the concerns of their constituents. Also, having DPP and DTS leaders there helps to get their buy-in so they can change the status quo.

Need to build community awareness and share what goes behind making the actual physical changes. It's not easy although the concept is good.

## Waimānalo

- Participants expressed a desire to work with the State Department of Transportation to influence the scope of work being done in Waimānalo. This could be done in several ways, including helping to offer educational opportunities and finding solutions through the legislative budget process. Dan Burden's ability to speak in both technical and layman languages was appreciated, and it would be helpful for participants to receive his recommendations in layman's language.