



# DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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## MINUTES

### **Standing Committee on Transportation Meeting**

Location: Virtual via Zoom and 1010 Richards Street, Room 118

Date: July 10, 2024

Time: 10:10 a.m.

PRESENT: Violet Horvath, Chairperson; Gerald Ohta, Teri Spinola-Campbell, Charlotte Townsend, Board Members; Elizabeth Pearson, Bryan Mick, Sue Radcliffe, Staff

GUESTS: Donald Sakamoto, Leelynn Brady, Tosa Lobendahn

- I. Chairperson Violet Horvath called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m.
- II. Committee members, staff, and guests introduced themselves.
- III. Chairperson Violet Horvath reported no written public testimony was submitted.
- IV. The Committee approved the May 7, 2024, meeting minutes (M/S/P Townsend/Spinola-Campbell).
- V. Unfinished Business
  - A. Review of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Plan of Action and Proposed 2024-2025 Plan of Action

The Committee did not have any suggested changes to the Plan of Action.
- VI. New Business
  - A. Standing Agenda Items

#### Public Transit and Paratransit

Bryan Mick reported that the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Transportation Services (DTS) has stated very few riders applied for the low income paratransit fare. When fare increases have been previously proposed, many riders indicated they are on low fixed incomes and any increase will be challenging for them. It is likely that most riders are not aware of how to apply for this new low income fare. DTS will hopefully do public service announcements and DCAB may be able to assist in disseminating the information.

Bryan Mick reported that DTS Director Roger Morton seems to be in strong support of conducting a Taxi Voucher Program for paratransit riders as recommended in their own consultant's reports. He urged the Committee on Accessible Transportation to advocate the City Council to include funds for such a program during the next budget cycle. Committee member Charlotte Townsend agreed the Director is supportive, but it has been tricky to decide when is the right time to request additional funds. DTS has done outreach to the public and Council, so perhaps next year is the time. Bryan Mick added that an important point to keep emphasizing the taxi voucher program is it would be cost effective for the City and County of Honolulu versus transporting riders on The HandiVan.

Bryan Mick reported that the Department of Health (DOH) had received an inquiry from the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) about transportation service provider regulations specifying where wheelchair users must be picked up and dropped off. Some riders are being dropped off curbside and calling 911 to request HFD's assistance to get into their residences. DCAB replied that it would depend on the type of transportation service provider, but paratransit is curb to curb. Committee member Charlotte Townsend mentioned that many of the long time HandiVan drivers would voluntarily exceed the required curb to curb service and help people to their door. Newer drivers may not provide this extra service though. In the past she knows there were people too heavy to get out of a public pool without assistance from HFD. However, if the numbers are rising or certain individuals are doing this daily, she can understand HFD's concern. Committee member Teri Spinola-Campbell asked if the union and collective bargaining ever impacted the service HandiVan provided. Committee member Charlotte Townsend replied that if a driver got hurt while providing service beyond the requirements the union would definitely express their concerns. Committee member Teri Spinola-Campbell added this is not that different from other scenarios that HFD responds to that aren't an immediate life or death situation. The Committee asked staff to contact HFD for more details, such as the frequency, trend lines, geographical areas, barriers involved (stairs, slope, etc.), HFD vehicle types involved, names of the involved transportation service providers, and HFD's preferred response. Committee Chairperson Violet Horvath added that once again, the root issue of this is not enough accessible housing.

### Streets and Highways

Bryan Mick reported the Federal government's report [Ensuring American leadership in Automated Vehicle Technologies: Automated Vehicles 4.0](#) was included in the Committee's packet. DCAB has not weighed in on self-driving vehicles yet, but it seems highly likely that these types of vehicles will be common in the near future. The Committee may wish to discuss what the pros and cons are and the proper role of government in

both spurring innovation and regulating safety. The Committee agreed that this technology will positively impact people with certain types of disabilities, but it is very important that driver and pedestrian safety is put ahead of all other considerations. Bryan Mick observed that part of the challenge in rolling out this technology is how differently the public reacts to an accident involving a driverless vehicle versus a vehicle with a driver. Even if the statistics show a much lower accident and/or fatality rate for driverless vehicles, that rate needs to be as close to zero as possible to maintain public support. Elizabeth Pearson commented she would be curious to see if prior technological safety features, like lane departure warnings, has led to a measurable decrease in accident and fatality rates. Bryan Mick added that the Vision Zero Report, later in the agenda, identifies three (3) major factors in pedestrian-automobile crashes: speed, inattentiveness, and impairment. Self driving vehicles should eliminate all three (3) of those factors.

Bryan Mick reported that this Committee had previously discussed roundabouts. They are one of the safety features that the Federal Department of Transportation recommends. They can be built with Vision Zero and Complete Street principles in mind, but that would need to be part of their design process. It is important that pedestrians with disabilities are specifically considered in the design phase. Committee member Charlotte Townsend commented one of the biggest issues is when foliage around or in them is not maintained and ends up blocking the sight lines for and of pedestrians using mobility aid devices.

Testimony: Guest Donald Sakamoto commented that the State is building a roundabout in Kahaluu and has admitted they are doing the minimum to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### Pedestrian Mobility and Built Environment

Bryan Mick reported that the Committee packet included the City and County of Honolulu's Vision Zero Action Plan. Vision Zero is a policy statement that zero pedestrian deaths due to collisions with vehicles is achievable through a combination of approaches. The timelines included in the Action Plan indicates that this is the year they will provide recommendations for safer street guidelines, projects, and legislation. DCAB has adopted the Guiding Principles on the Mobility and Safety of Pedestrians with Disabilities. Those will help staff respond quickly to any proposals, but the Committee may review them as well. The Action Plan had an interesting breakdown of crashes by age, and it turns out that drivers 15-34 are overrepresented in crashes involving a fatality. But the bias many people have is when hearing an older driver crashed is to wonder if there should be a maximum age limit to drive or if retesting and/or medical exams need to happen more frequently as people age. The data indicates similar questions ought to be asked for younger drivers. The Action Plan also refers to the "twenty is plenty" campaign,

which advocates that speed limits be no higher than 20 mph on residential streets. This is because the fatality rate for pedestrians increases dramatically for every 5 mph over 20 mph a vehicle is traveling when involved in a collision.

Testimony: Guest Donald Sakamoto commented that he is worried about electric bicycles hitting pedestrians as they travel fast and are much quieter than a moped. He also has concerns with the proposal last session to repeal the State's jaywalking law.

#### Air Transportation and Airports

Bryan Mick mentioned that staff is unable to attend the Universal Access in Aviation Biennial Conference, but hopefully the State Department of Transportation is participating.

The full Board formed a Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) which will perform a site visit of the new autonomous passenger shuttle "Miki" at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport. The visit is planned for July 11, 2024; the PIG will submit its report and recommendations to the Board.

#### Update from Standing Committee on Parking

Bryan Mick reported that he and DCAB Executive Director Kirby Shaw met with the State Department of Law Enforcement (DLE). DLE will remind its officers to issue citations for accessible parking space violations at State lots, and also to clarify that should they encounter a violation at a county or a Title III parking lot, they are authorized to issue a citation. DLE asked DCAB to provide a presentation on the parking program to its incoming officers. DLE suggested DCAB also meet with the State Department of Land and Natural Resources as they have enforcement officers who travel around the State as part of their job duties.

A meeting was also held with Honolulu Police Department (HPD) officer Skye Ah Nee, who recently became the administrator of their Volunteer Special Enforcement Officer (VSEO) Program. She informed DCAB that HPD (uniforms and VSEOs) have issued two hundred seventy eight (278) citations for accessible parking space violations this year, which is an increase from the thirty three (33) that were issued statewide the prior year. She is trying to recruit new VSEOs, ideally people who are comfortable with writing citations. DCAB is also trying to meet with the Honolulu Chief of Police to stress the importance of the VSEO program.

#### VII. Open Forum

Guest Leelynn Brady from Aloha Independent Living Hawaii explained she is organizing a group to participate in a process known as a "community of practice." The goal of this community of practice is to identify and disseminate

accessibility strategies and to increase awareness and adoption of assistive technology and mobility on demand transportation systems and create greater access to transportation for people with disabilities and older adults. The group will be applying for a grant. If you would like to participate, please contact her.

Guest Donald Sakamoto commented that he would like a future agenda to include a discussion on the proposal to build a second base yard for HandiVan on the westside. A consultant recommended this many years ago but the City and County of Honolulu does not seem to be making much progress.

VIII. The next meeting will be Friday, September 13, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

IX. The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/  
BRYAN K. MICK