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[WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...]

HSB

Impact statement in works for North Shore bypass road

Question: What ever happened to the proposal to build a bypass for Kamehameha Highway on the North Shore so that traffic doesn't back up near Laniakea Beach?

Answer: The Legislature has budgeted \$1.2 million for an environmental impact statement on the proposed bypass or highway realignment, and the study should get under way soon.

The new road would jog inland and run parallel to the current highway through pasture and agricultural land, mostly owned by Kamehameha Schools. The idea has strong backing from residents frustrated by traffic and from environmental planners concerned with erosion along the coastline.

Traffic regularly grinds to a halt as beach-goers stream across the road to view sea turtles at Laniakea. During high surf, waves and sand sometimes wash onto the highway.

The project area covered by the environmental study reaches from Haleiwa to Waimea Bay, according to Tammy Mori, spokeswoman for the Department of Transportation. Parsons Brincker-

hoff was chosen as consultant and is in contract negotiations to clarify the scope of the study, she said. That process should be completed in November or December so work can begin.

"We're ready to get started," said Gil Riviere, chairman of the North Shore Neighborhood Board's Traffic and Transportation Committee. "Everybody in the community is very ready to get this thing moving."

The city acquired a three-acre parcel of land mauka of Kamehameha Highway to build parking and restrooms at Laniakea. If the road were moved inland of that parcel, beach-goers could get to the shore without walking across the highway. An expanded beach park would also allow the shoreline to move with the seasons without threatening the highway.

This update was written by Star-Bulletin reporter Susan Essoyan. You can write us at What Ever Happened to... Honolulu Star-Bulletin, 500 Ala Moana, Suite 7-210, Honolulu 96813; e-mail cityeditors@starbulletin.com or call 529-4747.