

After years of delays, Lahaina bypass to start up by August

By **CLAUDINE SAN NICOLAS**
Staff Writer

LAHAINA — Long stuck in neutral, the first phase of the Lahaina bypass shifts into first gear in August.

The contractor for the \$48 million project and state transportation officials reported last week that work is expected to start in August with a targeted completion in November 2008.

"The most important thing is that it started," said police Capt. Charles Hirata, commander of the Lahaina Patrol District. "It represents progress."

Phase 1A of the bypass is labeled a "mini-bypass" to provide a new two-lane connection from Lahainaluna Road to an extension of Keawe Street — a separate project to be completed by Maui County.

Major components of Phase 1A include:

- A 350-foot concrete bridge across Kahoma Stream, a single span with a specially designed inverted arch for support. There are also roadway shoulders and an open railing to provide mo-

ALSO SEE . . .

- Potential environmental issues may complicate bypass extension
- Illustrations of bypass construction

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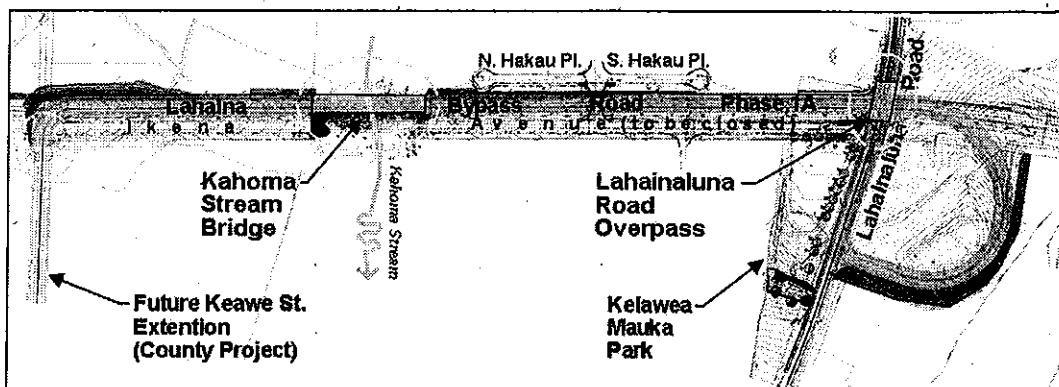
torists with unobstructed views of the mountain and ocean sides.

- Turning Lahainaluna Road into an overpass above the bypass highway, with on-ramps and off-ramps. The overpass includes a 123-foot single span, concrete arch and frame bridge, roadway shoulders, sidewalks and concrete railings.

- Sound walls on both sides of the bypass to block traffic noise from the surrounding Kelaweia Mauka subdivision.

Another public meeting will be scheduled in July, when officials expect to have 80 percent of the design completed for public inspection.

See BYPASS
on Page A4



Wilson Okamoto Corp. Illustrations

A single looping off-ramp (above) will provide access to Lahainaluna Road from the Lahaina bypass. An aerial photograph helps to show where Phase 1A of the Lahaina bypass will run.

Bypass

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A key component to the mini-bypass usage will be the extension of Keawe Street, a project that county project engineer Joe Krueger guaranteed this past week would be completed in time to connect with the state bypass.

According to Krueger, 95 percent of the Keawe Street design has been completed. The only work left is designing the transition off the mini-bypass and into a 90-degree curve onto Keawe.

Money is already in place for Keawe Street, with the county forking out approximately \$1.5 million and \$4 million coming from the Federal Highways Administration. Krueger said the county is wrapping up a required environmental assessment on the Keawe Street project to fulfill federal funding requirements.

Bids may go out by September. Once a contractor is selected, the half-mile extension of Keawe Street would take an estimated six to eight months.

"I think it's going to relieve a lot of traffic," Hirata said about the mini-bypass and Keawe Street.

This particular phase of the Lahaina bypass aims at providing traffic relief for Lahainaluna Road, the only access to three public schools in the area — Princess Nahienaena Elementary, Lahaina Intermediate and Lahainaluna High School.

After a bidding error and legal

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'It's going to happen. It's going to happen now.'

— Bob Pure,
of Lahaina Bypass Now

sus on it.

"It's going to happen," Bob Pure of Lahaina Bypass Now assured skeptics at the Lahaina Civic Center meeting who noted that talk about the project began in the late 1960s. "It's going to happen now."

Representatives of Hawaiian Dredging Construction and its engineering contractor, Wilson Okamoto Corp., and the state Department of Transportation participated in the informational sessions that included details on road closures.

Motorists were alerted that Ikena Avenue, Liloa Street and Kaakolu Street (all roadways off Lahainaluna) would be closed shortly before and during construction. Access into the areas will be on Kalena Street and Kulalua Street.

One of the first elements of construction work will be the creation of a temporary detour road off Lahainaluna around the Ikena Avenue right-of-way that was acquired by the state nearly 20 years ago.

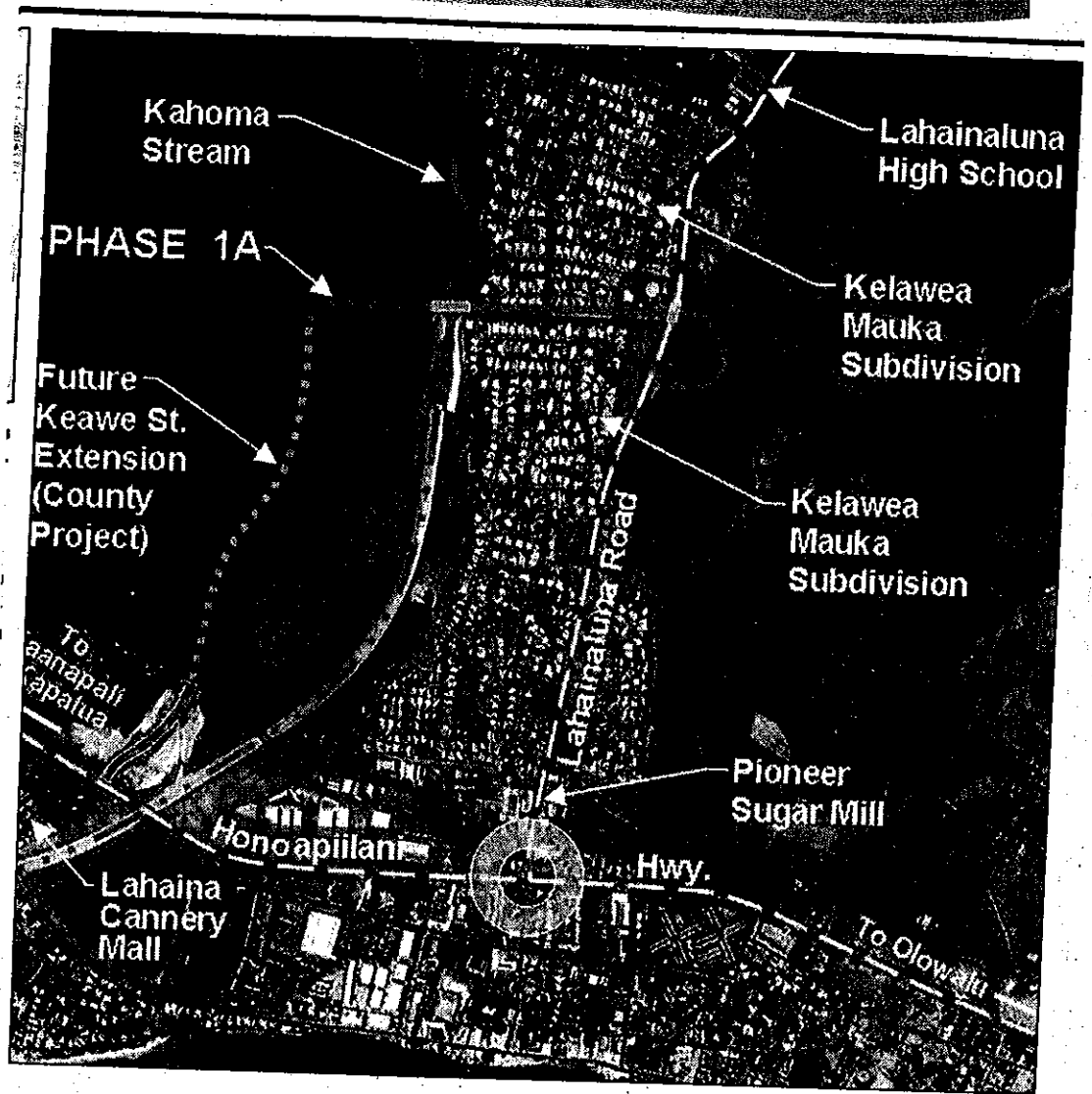
Public questions and comments about the Phase 1A project design may be sent by May 10 to: Misako Mimura, project manager; Hawaii Department of Transportation; Highways Division-Design Branch; 601 Kamokila Blvd., Room 688; Kapolei 96707.

Plans for the Lahaina bypass show a route from Launiupoko to Honokowai to allow traffic to avoid congestion on the highway

disputes forced cancellation of a contract for Phase 1A two years ago, Hawaiian Dredging Construction Co. won the contract last year after the DOT negotiated a \$4 million contract reduction from \$52 million to \$48 million. The work involves construction of only 3,300 feet of roadway but includes the Kahoma bridge, Lahainaluna overpass and other major elements that add to the cost.

"It looks fairly small in length," state Deputy Transportation Director Brennon Morioka acknowledged to a crowd of about 50 people attending a DOT community meeting Wednesday. "But it will have a major impact."

Recognizing that the bypass is long overdue, Morioka cited efforts of the Lahaina Bypass Now community group as having a significant role in helping transportation officials inform West Maui residents about the project and building community consen-



through Lahaina and the Kaanapali Beach Resort. Plans are already under way to start Phases 1B1 and Phase 1B2 – both to continue the bypass south of the Lahainaluna Road connection. Work on the next phases would start following completion of Phase 1A.

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