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**From:** Ronald Tober  
**To:** 'Sanford Murata'; 'Terry Shook'  
**CC:** Hamayasu, Toru; 'Simon Zweighaft'; yadao@InfraConsultllc.com  
**Sent:** 4/20/2008 3:25:14 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Full Planes, New Trains, and Fewer Automobiles.....

Sanford:

I hope you don't mind my intruding on your email exchange with Terry Shook and allow me to share a few thoughts with you about the Honolulu rapid transit project. I understand and appreciate your concern about costs.

As you may know, I had the honor of chairing the five person Technology Selection Panel which recently recommended steel wheel/steel rail technology to the Mayor and City Council. I've made three trips since February to Honolulu on this assignment and appeared twice before the Council's Transportation and Public works Committee, most recently on April 3rd. I also have nearly 40 years of experience in working for urban transit systems here in the US including stints as either the COO or CEO of transit systems in Miami, Seattle, Cleveland and most recently here in Charlotte. My experience also includes five years in Boston as the Chief Operations Planning Officer for the multi-modal Boston transit system.

In all of my years working in the transit business I have never seen a situation that was so ripe for making an investment in an urban transit rapid transit system as Honolulu represents. The existing Honolulu bus system is one of the most heavily utilized transit systems in the US. It has one of the highest per capita usage levels of any US transit system behind only NYC and Chicago. The corridor that would be served by the proposed rapid transit line already has over 100,000 passengers a day using the existing bus system on congested city streets. Honolulu is either the 4th or 6th most densely populated city in the US depending on how you measure density. Honolulu is the only city amongst the 12 most densely populated US cities that does not currently have a rail rapid transit system in operation today. And of course, the geography thru Honolulu and Waikiki is already heavily developed with virtually no opportunity to add additional roadway capacity without spending an amount of money that would probably make the rapid transit capital investment look small.

All of this says to me that the Honolulu rapid transit line will be incredibly successful in transporting people and will easily achieve and most likely exceed the 95,000 daily riders predicted for the line. Many of these riders will be former bus system riders which means that The Bus will be able to reduce its bus service in the center city area reducing the cost of operating and subsidizing the bussystem as well as reducing vehicular traffic, air pollution, energy consumption. Since the rapid transit line that the City Administration is planning to build will be fully automatic, it will not incur the same level of operating costs (due to much lower labor costs) in the future as rapid transit systems in most US cities. The operating subsidy for the line should be minimal and it might even turn a profit (Note: The Sky Train rail system in Vancouver, BC, which is very similar in design to what the City is planning, makes a healthy profit each year now.). Rapid transit, particularly steel wheel/steel rail transit, is much more cost efficient in moving the large volumes of people that travel in this corridor today and are likely to be travelling in the years ahead. It is entirely possible, even probable, that the capital investment in rapid transit will result in the City of Honolulu having to spend less on transit operating subsidies than it does today measured in equivalent current dollars.

Myself and three other members of the Technology Selection Panel selected steel wheel/steel rail as the right technology for Honolulu to invest in. The fifth member, Prof. Prevedouros, wanted the money spent on additional roadway investments.

We four selected rail technology for the following reasons:

- . Rail is a proven technology that has by far the greatest number of in-service systems today. There are a large number of suppliers in the rail business which enhances flexibility and minimizes costs over time.
- . Mag-lev has only one urban application in operation today and is not proven enough for application in Honolulu.
- . Mag-lev and monorail are proprietary applications with a limited number of suppliers in business today which raises concerns about long-term costs and support.
- . Rail has the best long-term operating performance characteristics including the higher passenger carrying capacity; better ride quality; noise impacts comparable to other technologies; better energy efficiency; lower air quality impacts; and lower long-term costs, both operating and replacement costs.

In selecting rail, our goal was to minimize the risks involved in building and operating a rapid transit system for Honolulu while selecting the technology that best meet the City's needs. Modern rail technology is a far cry from the elevated rail lines in New York City, Chicago and elsewhere. It is quiet, smooth and efficient. It will continue to evolve and improve in the years ahead. And it will help Honolulu continue to grow and prosper in the years ahead.

I hope that you will see fit to support Mayor Hannemann and the City staff in their efforts to bring modern rapid rail transit to Honolulu. The City lost a golden opportunity to build a rapid transit system back in the early 1990's when it would have been much cheaper to do so. I'd hate to see that happen again.

I welcome your reaction to what I have set forth herein.

Ron Tober  
Charlotte, NC