HONOLULU HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT
Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Update on HHCTCP and DEIS

Location: FTA Region IX Office, San Francisco, CA

Attendees: **FTA:** Leslie Rogers, Ed Carranza, Ray Sukys, Ted Matley
RTD: Faith Miyamoto, Phyllis Kurio, Susan Robbins, Judy Aranda
PB: Lawrence Spurgeon

Purpose of Meeting: To update FTA Region IX on: 1) the general status of the project, 2) to discuss issues related to Section 106, Section 4(f), ROW, 3) describe format of the DEIS, and 4) schedule and distribution of the DEIS' administrative draft.

The main discussion items are summarized below.

1. Locally Preferred Alternative – L. Spurgeon gave an overview of the events that led to the City Council's action to select the LPA and to define the First Project as following the Salt Lake alignment from East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center. The DEIS will evaluate the First Project in detail and the project's extensions (at the north and south end) are evaluated in the *Cumulative Effects* section of the document. The Build Alternatives presented in the DEIS will be the Salt Lake alignment, the Airport alignment, and the Airport & Salt Lake alignment. L. Spurgeon stated that the project is defined in the 2030 regional plan and that most of the funding has been identified. R. Sukys expressed concern that the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan (ORTP) is not financially constrained because it identifies the LPA instead of the First Project. P. Kurio stated that RTD will check with Oahu MPO and if necessary, the next update of the ORTP will incorporate the necessary revisions.
2. Ridership – L. Rogers asked about ridership between the Salt Lake and Airport alternatives. L. Spurgeon responded that essentially the Airport Alternative was one minute shorter and involved longer trips from 'Ewa to downtown whereas the Salt Lake (SL) alignment represents shorter trips to downtown, has less riders and is $20 million less expensive. Both alternatives are very close in cost effectiveness.
3. Airport Improvements – Construction of a parking structure is currently underway. Due to this improvement, the Airport alignment has been shifted closer to this structure for improved interface. The City is coordinating with the HDOT Airports Division.
4. Project Refinements – the following design changes were described:
    - Airport alignment has been shifted, as noted above.

AR00076750

- UH West Oahu (UHWO) Station: Station near Ho'opili development was shifted closer to UHWO campus to provide improved access to future campus development.
- Discussion is underway between RTD and US Army on property transfer near _____.
- Ala Moana Station – station profile has been lowered from 70' to 40' – 50'. Track grade is approximately 7 percent.

5. PE Application – E. Carranza asked what will be the federal New Starts Project. P. Kurio stated that the PE application would be for the Salt Lake alignment, assuming steel wheel/steel rail technology. FTA staff asked whether the City Council had made a decision on technology. L. Spurgeon discussed the City Council's actions to date on technology selection and noted the DEIS will describe steel wheel/steel rail as the technology. R. Sukys stated that the PE application can only be for the fundable project

   In response to FTA's inquiry, P. Kurio stated RTD plans to submit its application for entry into PE this summer. R. Sukys stated that FTA has not yet concurred with the forecast results. L. Rogers wanted a firm date for submittal of the request to enter PE. R. Sukys stated that it is not unusual for an application deadline to slip if forecast issues are not resolved. L. Rogers emphasized their desire to move this project along and noted that there does not appear to be any artificial constraint for advancing the project into PE.

6. Forecast Review – FTA Headquarters staff will be meeting with RTD and PB staff next month on the forecast and "Making the Case" document. FTA stated that this is a critical review and the possibility exists that "something could go wrong". Issues normally surface on this type of review.

7. Risk Analysis – E. Carranza stated that FTA is currently discussing whether to conduct a risk analysis, which would take about three months to complete. If an analysis is undertaken, it would be done prior to entry into PE. FTA stressed the importance of being clear on: scope, schedule, budget and technology. They also stated that it would be good to have the finance plan available. E. Carranza recommended that RTD submit any updated information it may have because such information may affect FTA's decision.

8. FTA Visit – The FTA Administrator will be visiting Honolulu sometime around August 10 to August 15th. L. Rogers will likely accompany the Administrator on this trip.

9. Airport Spur – L. Spurgeon described the possible operational scenarios of the Airport Spur and noted the Mayor's desire to build the spur as part of the Salt Lake Alternative if funding can be identified. Possible funding options are:

   - Capture 10 percent of the GET surplus that is currently retained by the state for administrative purposes.
   - Airport Special Fund.

The DEIS briefly describes the Airport Spur as a possible phasing option. However, no specific evaluation has been conducted on this option other than as part of the overall Salt Lake & Airport Alternative. If the spur were to be built as part of the Salt Lake Alternative, the Lagoon Station would not be built, which in turn would reduce dwell time.

FTA asked about the possibility of support for the Airport alignment rather than the Salt Lake alignment. L. Spurgeon responded that to change direction now would require a City Council resolution to amend the First Project or guidance from the City Corporation Counsel on whether the spur could be added without council action.

L. Spurgeon expressed desire for the DEIS to be able to cover the impacts of the spur so that it could be covered in the FEIS. One possibility is to have all Build Alternatives be included in the FEIS. R. Suyks stated that FTA would be amenable to amend the ROD for a design alternative as long as the full Airport Alternative is studied. He cited the Oakland Airport Connector project as an example of an amended ROD due to a design alternative. R. Sukys stated FTA preference is to avoid preparing a Supplemental EIS, if possible. E. Carranza stated that if the spur option is realized later on, the modified New Starts project re-rating would be needed.

10. Section 106 – RTD is in process of completing the eligibility forms. The DEIS will have a recommended Determination of Effects but will unlikely have SHPD's concurrence. (Note: The latest is that we won't have a recommended Determination of Effects in place by the Draft EIS. It will be in the Final EIS.).

    L. Spurgeon mentioned that the Downtown station has been redesigned and moved approximately 70' Kokohead in order to reduce visual impact to the Dillingham Transportation Building. The AIA had expressed concern over the Bishop Street view corridor.

11. Maintenance Facility – The City is currently working with Hawaii Homelands to process a land transfer with the US Navy. The City will identify other land for this exchange, which has yet to be identified. There appears to be no major show stoppers for exchange of this former drum site, which is considered excess federal land. The US Navy has cleared the property for contaminated soils.

12. Right of Way – F. Miyamoto stated that RTD plans to notify affected property owners, by letter, on potential acquisition prior to release of the DEIS and public hearing. RTD also plans to follow these letters with person calls to each property owner. FTA mentioned they would be agreeable to processing certain "hardship" cases under a Categorical Exclusion with FTA's concurrence prior to issuance of a ROD. R. Sukys asked if project right-of-way needs would affect easements on private property. RTD did not have an answer.

13. DEIS Status – S. Robbins stated that the DEIS follows the standard format for EISs. Appendices, in CD format, will include the conceptual engineering plans, ROW acquisition properties and construction plans. The CD will be attached to a hardcopy of the document. R. Sukys stated that a hardcopy of the entire

AR00076752

document, including the appendices, should be made available at all libraries and other public places noted in the distribution list. L. Spurgeon responded that hard copies of the DEIS will be distributed to all regional libraries within the State.

R. Sukys asked how the DEIS will address the construction plans. L. Spurgeon explained the thought process behind not detailing construction plans in the DEIS. R. Sukys took a "wait and see" approach but would probably defer to the City.

14. Schedule – RTD plans to submit the DEIS for FTA review on the week of August 4th. R. Sukys stated FTA does not require outside counsel to review the document prior to submittal to FTA. R. Sukys will coordinate with F. Miyamoto for wording of the transmittal letter. FTA requested the following number of bound copies and distribution:

    FTA Headquarters – 3 copies (overnight mail).

    FTA Region XI – 3 copies

    Send copies to Joe Ossi who will, in turn, distribute to Liz Zlasko and Ron Fisher.

15. Cooperating Agencies – No formal signoff will be done. R. Sukys stated the level of agency coordination will be reflected in the agencies' comment letters.

16. The possibility of briefing FTA on the DEIS in August was discussed. E. Carranza suggested the briefing coincide with a PMOC meeting in San Francisco after L. Rogers returns from Honolulu.

AR00076753