

Public Involvement Overview

December 2010

Hotline Calls	7
Website Comment Sense Submissions/Inquiries	9
Community Outreach	
Speakers Bureau	1
Neighborhood Boards	6
WOFH Outreach	0
Events	0
TV/Radio Appearances	0

Speakers Bureau:

- Friday, December 17 AACE Meeting

Neighborhood Board:

- Wednesday, December 1 Makakilo/Kapolei Neighborhood Board
- Thursday, December 2 Downtown Neighborhood Board
- Tuesday, December 7 Waianae Neighborhood Board
- Thursday, December 9 Salt Lake Neighborhood Board
- Thursday, December 9 Ewa Neighborhood Board
- Tuesday, December 21 Nanakuli Neighborhood Board

December 2010 website and hotline comments

Submission Method	Submission Date	Submission Content/Notes
Website	12/05/10	I like your website.
Information Line	12/06/2010	Wanted to know when construction will be completed on the project.
Website	12/06/2010	1. Can you explain why your top four reasons that the rail transit will help Oahu? 2. Where will the money to pay for the transit come from? If there are multiple can you please explain the percentages from each party that contributes to the payment for the rail? 3. What is the expected amount of people that will ride the rail? If these expectation are not met what are the future plans for the rail?
Website/ Information Line	12/07/2010	I am looking at a property to purchase on Dillingham/Kamehameha Hwy directly across from the prison. Can you tell me if the rail will be running down the middle of the street so no properties will be condemned or will there be a possibility of the rail condemning properties that border the road/hwy?
Information Line	12/10/10	When will construction start?
Website	12/17/2010	hello there in honolulu hi, i just saw some of the people who don't want to see the rail system to be built. why can't they understand this?, who is paying them for not wanting it there any way?. i hope you saw the news paper in the star on friday news paper. i want people there i will ride the rail system. i just wish i could be one of your gofor to go get thing you want to get. i am haveing a hard time to get others to drop the rent there, i am a veteran from vietnam war. but the va/gov the money i will lost if i did work for you for life.
Website	12/24/2010	I believe that the rail project is a GROSS misuse of funds given Honolulu, O'ahu, Hawaii, and the United States' current economic situations. I believe that the rail project should be stopped immediately. I dislike the 'snow job' that many politicians are now doing to the people of O'ahu. The project will benefit the developers, contractors, builders, etc. much more than it will benefit the average man, woman, or child. Your websites, brochures, etc. show only one side of the story. You give the good without the bad. It saddens me that there is no profit in stopping the rail, only building it, so the other side of the story doesn't get told. I'm sure that if the people of Hawai'i knew the real deal, they would run away from this project faster than you can blink.
Information Line	12/27/10	When will ground be broken?
E-mail/ Information Line	12/28/10	I'm Mark Jacobi from Wisconsin and and wants to know if there are any union carpenter jobs. majacobi@peoplepc.com sent same information via website.

Submission Method	Submission Date	Submission Content/Notes
Information Line	12/28/10	Has in-depth question about maps and project. Would like someone to call.
Information Line	12/28/10	He wants to know if we have any displays up or if there's something physical he can look at for information on the rail. He's living here but is from Korea.
Website	12/29/10	Where will the route go on Farrington? Is there a map?
Website	12/29/2010	hello. i like to know this who? is the main person who is getting ready to start seting up the rail project of building the rail system for oahu/honolulu of the hole area it is going to go thru ? i want the person name please. i do hope you like this from me i am the person who likes your way of build the rail system for people.

* Submission Content / Notes have not been edited for spelling grammar. All e-mails, information line calls, and website comments are included in this list except for mailing list requests.

DAILY JOURNAL

News Sports Opinion On the Record Lifestyle Etc. Classifieds Search About Us Subscribe! Sign-In E-Edition



Melinda Henneberger Editor in Chief

POLITICS DAILY

Harry Potter and the Teen Love Triangle: 'It Could Always Have Gone Either Way'

[Read More](#)

www.politicsdaily.com

Lingle-commissioned review of Honolulu rail transit plan raises serious concerns

HERBERT A. SAMPLE Associated Press

First Posted: December 02, 2010 - 10:44 pm

Last Updated: December 02, 2010 - 10:44 pm

AAA

[Share / Save](#) [f](#) [t](#) [+](#)

HONOLULU — An analysis of Honolulu's proposed rail transit system that Gov. Linda Lingle commissioned outlines concerns about the project's financial viability.

The 135-page report by the Infrastructure Management Group Inc., released Thursday by the state Department of Transportation, contended that general excise tax receipts that are dedicated to the rail system are likely to be almost a third lower than forecast by the project's current financial plan.

It said the project is likely to require more than \$1.7 billion in additional capitol and operating subsidies from the city over 20 years than is assumed by the financial plan. It also claimed that ridership is likely to be lower than estimated.

In a statement, Lingle did not comment on the report's findings, but said she had transmitted the study to Gov.-elect Neil Abercrombie, Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle, city council Chairman Nestor Garcia and the Federal Transit Administration.

"I am confident these officials will appreciate the need to fairly assess the economic impact of this proposed rail project on Hawaii taxpayers today and for generations to come," she said.

The governor added that the state Office of Environmental Quality Control has not completed its review of the project's environmental impact statement, which requires a governor's signature before major federal funding can begin.

Lingle has three days left in her term before Abercrombie takes over at noon on Monday. She previously has said the decision whether to sign the environmental impact statement may have to be left to her successor.

Abercrombie, a longtime supporter of the rail project, said after last month's election that the governor's financial report is irrelevant to his decision on the environmental document because the system's financing is the city's responsibility, not the state's.

"If the EIS is done correctly, then it's the obligation of the executive to sign it," he said.

Laurie Au, a spokeswoman for Abercrombie, on Thursday said he plans to meet with Carlisle and his team to review the report. Abercrombie was in Washington Thursday meeting with President Barack Obama and other



We also have more stories about:
(click the phrases to see a list)

People:

- Barack Obama (969)
- Linda Lingle (17)
- Neil Abercrombie (30)

Subjects:

- Environmental impact assessments (4)
- Municipal governments (909)
- Local governments (1082)
- Environment (1147)
- Industrial products and services (1355)
- Environment and nature (1368)
- Industries (3769)
- Business (6533)
- Government and politics (7226)

Places:

- Honolulu (309)
- Hawaii (448)
- United States (29822)
- North America (30043)

recently elected governors.

"Governor-Elect Abercrombie's decision on the rail transit system's environmental impact statement will be based on the criteria required by the law," she added.

There was no immediate comment from Carlisle's office.

The report contended that general excise tax revenues are "most likely" to grow at a rate that is about 30 percent lower than the project's financial plan.

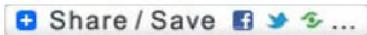
As for subsidies from the city, the study concluded that at least \$1.75 billion more will be needed from the general fund over 20 years than is now estimated.

If construction and operating costs unexpectedly rise, or if what the report called "optimistic" assumptions about federal funding do not materialize, the city could be faced with adding a total of \$4.5 billion over two decades, the analysis claimed.

Increasing the duration or the size of the GET surcharge dedicated to the rail project could mitigate those concerns, it added.

The study also said that ridership of the system is "likely to be substantially lower" than the current forecast, which it said relied upon an "unprecedented and unrealistic growth" in transit utilization in a city that has one of the highest such rates in the nation.

It also claimed that a number of major, unrelated expenses could crimp the city's ability to adequately support the rail project, including pension liabilities and \$5.4 billion in court-ordered sewer modernization plans that must be finished over the next 25 years.



Add New Comment

Type your comment here.

Showing 0 comments

Sort by Popular now [Subscribe by email](#) [Subscribe by RSS](#)

All content copyright ©2010 Daily Journal, a division of Home News Enterprises unless otherwise noted. All rights reserved. Click here to read our privacy policy.

Site design, web hosting, and technical services provided by **Screaming Eagle Media**.

Daily Journal

Center Grove standouts will play at Division I level

It's a scene that has played out repeatedly on basketball courts in and around Johnson County the past few winters: point guard Jonny Marlin weaving his 5-foot-10 frame through traffic and pinpointing a pass to teammate Andy Smeathers.

Source: Local News
Published: 2010-12-03 04:42:46 GMT

12 hours ago · via RSS Graffiti

Daily Journal

Center Grove standouts will play at Division I level

It's a scene that has played out repeatedly on basketball courts in and around Johnson County the past few winters: point guard Jonny Marlin

932 people like Daily Journal

Governor Lingle releases financial report on Honolulu rail

Posted: Dec 02, 2010 10:34 PM

Updated: Dec 03, 2010 1:13 AM

By Mari-Ela David - [bio](#) | [email](#)

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - It's a reality check for rail. Honolulu's mass transit plan is going to cost a billions of dollars more than initially thought, according to a non-partisan study commissioned by Governor Lingle.

She vowed to double-check the project's true price tag, and those numbers are now in.

The 135-page report challenges the city's numbers for rail.

Honolulu transportation leaders say the project will cost \$5.5 billion.

But according to the findings, Honolulu's financial picture is inaccurate.

Let's start with the big number.

\$14.5 billion dollars is how much Oahu taxpayers would pitch in over 30 years under the report's worst case scenario. The best case scenario is \$9.3 billion.

"We have to reconsider the premise of rail, the cost of rail," said Cliff Slater, who's long opposed rail.

The report adds more weight to his argument, especially since the Lingle Administration says it's an independent team, not a group that's chosen sides, that did the number-crunching.

The State Department of Transportation hired the consultant firm, Infrastructure Management Group (IMG) to conduct the study.

Slater says Hawaii's newly-elected leaders can't ignore facts.

"They're going to have to come to grips with the numbers and disagree with the numbers instead of disagreeing with the personalities of the people who wrote it," said Slater.

Here are the nuts and bolts of the report:

The General Excise Tax (GET), which helps cover the cost of rail, won't be enough. GET revenue could be 30% lower than the city predicts.

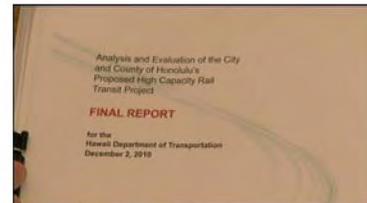
IMG says the Honolulu can make up for the shortfall by either raising the tax or extending it for up to 19 years.

"Definitely tax increases. There's no way around that," said Slater.

The report also predicts that ridership and revenue from fares will be lower than the city



A rail system visualization



Governor Lingle's Assessment of the rail project



Cliff Slater



The numbers were crunched by a non-partisan group



Nestor Garcia

 [Click image to enlarge](#)

estimates, and the city will be dangerously in debt.

The study is now sitting on the desks of Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle, Honolulu Council Chair Nestor Garcia and governor-elect Neil Abercrombie.

In a statement, Lingle says, "I am confident these officials will appreciate the need to fairly assess the economic impact of this proposed rail project on Hawaii taxpayers today and for generations to come."

"They need to know the truth, the simple plain unvarnished truth," said Slater.

IMG says another money factor to consider is that the rail project will be competing with Honolulu's other large financial obligations, such as unfunded pension, health care liabilities for retirees, and the sewer and wastewater upgrades that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has ordered.

In a statement, Abercrombie's spokesperson said, "Governor-Elect Abercrombie is in Washington, D.C. and is planning to meet with Mayor Carlisle and his team to review the financial report. Governor-Elect Abercrombie's decision on the rail transit system's environmental impact statement will be based on the criteria required by the law."

By law, the Office of Environmental Quality Control has to review the rail's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), then send it to the Governor for approval.

Governor Lingle says she still hasn't received the final version.

Copyright 2010 Hawaii News Now. All rights reserved.



All content © Copyright 2000 - 2010 WorldNow and KHNL/KGMB, a Raycom Media station. All Rights Reserved.

For more information on this site, please read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).

>

New Report on Honolulu's Rail Project Raises Issues



Reported by: [Brianne Randle](#)

Email: brandle@khon2.com

Last Update: 12/02 9:12 pm

[Print Story](#) | [ShareThis](#)

Outgoing Governor Linda Lingle says she has given the City, and incoming Governor a 116-page final report her administration has compiled about the financial impact of rail.

The review highlights over a half-dozen key findings.

At the top of the list - that the project will likely cost \$1.7 billion more than what was expected.

"Everything in Hawaii runs over budget, that's just the way things are," says Steve Kitterman, Salt Lake resident. "Yeah, it doesn't sound like a good deal to me."

"I think the original estimates were under estimated on purpose, but I think we have to spend the money to go ahead and build it," says Calvin Date, Waipahu resident.

The final report also finds that tax revenues for the project will be about 30 percent lower than forecasted in the current financial plan.

Rail usage and fare revenue are also likely to be substantially lower according to the report.

"It's probably gonna be like the Las Vegas monorail where less people rode like were projected also," says Date.

Governor Lingle's office says while the project would receive some federal funding, Hawaii taxpayers would pay for most of the cost to build, operate and maintain the rail system.

In a statement Lingle says: "I am confident these officials will appreciate the need to fairly assess the economic impact of this proposed rail project on Hawaii taxpayers today and for generations to come."

"We've been talking about this the last 20 years, and if we had done this 10 years ago it would have been half of the cost it is now," says Paul Scott, Kailua resident.

"I was petty much against the whole thing, don't want to pay for it don't want to ride it," says Kitterman.

Governor Lingle still has not received the final environmental impact statement on rail, so cannot sign off on the project.

That means it will likely be up to incoming Governor Neil Abercrombie.

In a statement from his spokeswoman: "Governor-Elect Abercrombie's decision on the rail transit system's environmental impact statement will be based on the criteria required by the



law."

Mayor Peter Carlisle says he has not yet read the report and couldn't comment.



We are here to help you.



- Home
- Weather
- Local News**
- Hawaii Going Green
- Investigates
- News Archive
- Mixed Plate
- Most Popular
- Slideshows
- As Seen On KITV
- u local
- Holiday
- Project Economy
- National News
- Politics
- Traffic
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Food
- Health
- About KITV
- Irresistible

Get Headlines Sent To Your Email Or Phone

Enter E-mail

GO

MARKETPLACE

- Half Off Hawaii
- Pau Hana
- Adopt a Family
- Values in Paradise
- Hawaii Experts
- Small Business
- Auto
- Dating
- Jobs
- Real Estate
- House & Home
- Education
- Travel
- Grow Your Business

SEARCH [Search]

Site Web Yellow Pages GO

Hot Topics: 1/2 Off Hawaii | Holidays | 'First Love' | u local

As Seen On KITV

Homepage > HONOLULU NEWS

Financial Study Warns Rail Project Costs To Rise

Independent Review Flags Higher Costs, Lower Ridership

Catherine Cruz KITV4 News Reporter

POSTED: 9:26 pm HST December 2, 2010
UPDATED: 5:47 am HST December 3, 2010

- Email
- Print
- Comments (6)
- Recommend
- SHARE

Shared on Facebook

- Kilauea Lava Swallows Home
47 people shared this.
- New Boozy Treat: Alcohol Infused Whipped Cream
183 people shared this.

Order IntelliGo now
and get the first month **FREE**
Call 643-2337

CLICK HERE

OCEANIC TIME WARNER CABLE
THE POWER OF YOU



HONOLULU -- A state-funded financial study of Honolulu's rail project cautions about higher costs and lower ridership.

Gov. Linda Lingle released the results of the study Thursday providing copies to Gov.-elect Neil Abercrombie, City Council Chairman Nestor Garcia and Honolulu's new Mayor Peter Carlisle.

The mayor wants to sit down with Abercrombie next week to review the report.

"Anyone would be concerned paying more. You have to consider of the source. Is it credible or not?" said Mayor Peter Carlisle.

Abercrombie is in the nation's Capitol and should be back in the islands Friday.

Garcia is traveling in Texas. He told KITV, he too wants to see how the firm arrived at the numbers.

The study cost \$350,000 and was prepared by the Infrastructure Management Group.

The study cautions that the general excise taxes being collected may be 30 percent lower than expected and that the alternative would be to continue charging the tax over a longer period, or raise it substantially.

Reaction from residents just finding out about the potentially higher costs was mixed. Kelly Roy isn't too happy since she frequents the two places where the train won't go, the University of Hawaii Manoa campus and Waikiki.

"If I am not going use it, I don't want to pay for it." said Roy.

More Stories:

- 2 Killed In Kaukonahua Road Crash (KITV.com)
- Herbalife Millionaire Claims Marriage Con (KITV.com)
- Hawaii Welfare Recipients Spend Thousands In Other States (KITV.com)
- Kona Victim Describes Stabbing Attack (KITV.com)

Selected for you by our sponsor:

- Flying Away from All-in-One Fares (Inside Edge)
- Recession Still Felt on 401k Savings (MainStreet.com)

Most Read Most Watched Most Commented

- Herbalife Millionaire Claims Marriage Con
- Kona Victim Describes Stabbing Attack
- Financial Study Warns Rail Project Costs To Rise
- Coach Says App Helped Save Player's Life
- » More Most Popular

Pictures In The News

- Top 10 Electronic Faux Paus
- Nissan Rolls Out Leaf Electric Car
- 'Walker, Texas Ranger' Now Real Ranger

One small business owner said while he doesn't like to hear about higher taxes He was impressed with what a rail system did for Barcelona, Spain.

"It is a completely different thing. It is a fantastic tourist destination You can get millions of more people in there.It would be a huge a financial boon in the long run for Honolulu, ultimately," said Ted Mays.

Others seemed resigned to having to bite the bullet.

"I have lived in Tokyo for seven years and mass transit there and trains are very efficient. No one likes new taxes, but with the traffic situation here on Oahu, I think it is a necessary evil, I don't think it is going to get better. It is now going to get worse with time." said Randy Grahams.

Lingle had hoped to release the environmental impact statement along with the financial analysis before leaving office. The EIS is still not complete, but the financial study was hand delivered to the lawmakers Thursday. Copies are also being provided to the Federal Transit administration and Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.



[Honolulu Deals](#) Amgen Daily Deals 15-90% Off Restaurants, Spas, Events and More! Broadcast social.com

[Fly Hawaiian Airlines](#) Say Aloha to Online Airfare Deals. Phoenix to Hawaii - from \$426* RT. www.HawaiianAir.com

[Personal Loans](#) Pay Monthly - Limited Time Poor Credit OK - Apply Now! www.LoanPersonal.com

Recommend

Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

Ads by Google



Your Comments

(6)



CloseUsername:

Password:

Confirm password:

Email:

First name:

Date of Birth: MM · DD · YYYY ·

By using Local Voices I agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Log in with your u local account or join.

[Join](#) | [Forgot Password](#)

Username Password

Or log in using another provider



500 characters remaining

(Log in to add a comment)

Share on Facebook

Share on Twitter

The following are comments from our users. This is not content created by KITV.com.

By posting your comments you agree to accept the [Terms of Use](#)

Letters to the Editor

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 02, 2010

Use rail money for the homeless

Construction of an elevated rail transit system would solve only a very small part of Honolulu's traffic congestion. The system would cost \$5.5 billion and create temporary construction jobs. Operation and maintenance of the system would be very expensive and, like TheBus, require that the government subsidize most of the passengers' ticket costs.

The homeless population is growing. Many of the homeless have no place to erect their tents; soon, even the sidewalks will be off-limits.

The government should forego construction of the rail system and use the money to provide housing for the homeless. Any leftover money should be used to pay for the federally required sewer system upgrades. This would greatly reduce, if not eliminate, the need to charge property owners for the upgrades.

Robert Thomas
Honolulu

Hawai'i Free Press

"The untold story, the unspoken opinion, the other side."

Front Page Search Articles About HFP

Current Articles | Archives | Search

Friday, December 03, 2010

Full Text: Rail Financial Plan Assessment Report

By News Release :: 182 Views :: Oahu News, Oahu Politics, Hawaii State News, Hawaii State Politics



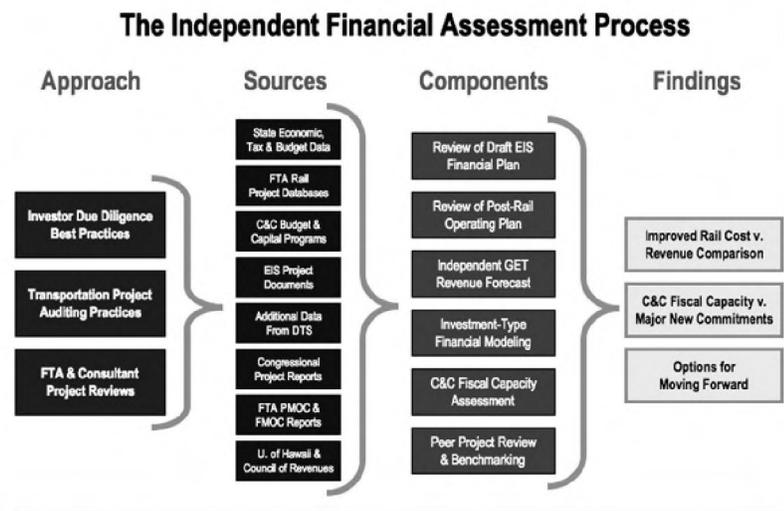
Financial Plan Assessment, Feasibility and Fiscal Implications of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project prepared by Infrastructure Management Group, Inc. in conjunction with the Land Use and Economic Consulting Group of CB Richard Ellis and Thomas A. Rubin

1. Study Overview

The Honolulu High Capacity Rail Transit Project is one of the largest proposed transit projects in the country. Its budget dwarfs the New York Second Avenue Subway Phase I and the Washington Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. Of the 43 projects listed in the Federal Transit Administration's ("FTA's") Annual Report on Funding Recommendations, the only projects with larger dollar values are the New York Long Island Rail Road East Side Access and the New Jersey Access to the Region's Core, which was recently canceled by the New Jersey governor due to its cost overruns.

In light of Honolulu project's size compared to the population served by it, Governor Linda Lingle requested that the Hawaii Department of Transportation procure an independent financial review. Infrastructure Management Group, Inc. ("IMG"), in conjunction with the Land Use and Economic Consulting Group of CB Richard Ellis ("CBRE") and Thomas A. Rubin (together, the "IMG Team") was tasked by the Hawaii Department of Transportation to evaluate the rail project's financial plan, including revenues and costs, the post-rail operating plan, and the fiscal implications for Honolulu.

In addition, the IMG Team examined the financial performance history of other relevant transit rail projects relevant to Honolulu's plans. The diagram below summarizes the analytic process.



FULL TEXT: http://www.honolulutraffic.com/Final_Report_Honolulu_Rail_Transit_Financial_Plan.pdf

RELATED: [Rail plan is \\$1.7B short, EIS still incomplete](#)

Links

- 00000 TEXT "follow HawaiiFreePress" to 40404
- 0000---JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST---))))
- 000---RSS FEED Latest 25 articles---)))
- 00---TWITTER Hawai'i Free Press---))
- 33 Minutes
- 40 Days for Life Honolulu
- 50 Voices of Statehood
- A Conservative Estimate
- A New Beginning
- ABCDEF Group Samoa
- Accuracy in Media
- ACT for America-Honolulu
- Akaka Bill Reading List
- Alliance Defense Fund
- Aloha Family Alliance
- American Thinker
- Angel Group
- Antonio Gramsci Reading List
- Assoc for Improved Healthcare on Maui
- Barack Obama Reading List
- Big Government
- Big Hollywood
- Big Journalism
- Big Peace
- Broken Trust
- Castaway Conservative
- Catholic Homeschoolers of Hawaii
- Center for Global Food Issues
- Children's Rights Institute
- Christian Homeschoolers of Hawaii
- City Journal
- Cliff Slater's Second Opinion
- Coffee Break
- Concerned Women For America Hawaii
- Conservative Forum for Hawaii
- December 7 Battlefields at risk
- Drudge Report
- E Māua Ola i Moku o Keawe
- Educate 808
- Fix Oahu!
- Free and Living Conservative
- From the Right
- Front Page Magazine
- Get Off Your Butts!
- Global Warming "Scientists" Email Files
- God, Freedom, America
- GovernorLindaLingle.com
- Grassroot Institute



Mayor claims state's rail review is flawed

Posted: Dec 03, 2010 6:48 PM
 Updated: Dec 03, 2010 10:21 PM

By Tim Sakahara - [bio](#) | [email](#)

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - Even before Mayor Peter Carlisle read the report he already had his doubts about the accuracy of the findings.

"The second it was seen red flags went off all around town," said Mayor Carlisle, during a press conference in his office.

That's because he says a contributor to the report was a man named Thomas Rubin.

"This guy is always against rail," said Carlisle. "Therefore it is no surprise the report is a predetermined, anti rail rant."

The report found the project would require \$1.7 billion more than expected. In order to make up the difference taxes would need to be raised over a longer period of time.

But Carlisle says that's not true. The General Excise Tax is 99 percent on track and has raised \$580 million since 2007.

"Spending a third of a million dollars for this shoddy, biased analysis and is an appalling waste of tax dollars," said Carlisle, about the report which was initiated by Governor Linda Lingle's office.

That said, is Carlisle worried that any of the negative findings in the report will come true and people will say I told you so?

"Not in the slightest," Carlisle said bluntly.

And he says there's virtually no chance of the rail project stopping now.

"Well there's a chance, we could get struck by lightning, we could all die tomorrow but do I think there is a reasonable likelihood that this thing that has been voted on by the people, is recognized as a critical infrastructure that we need here on the island of Oahu, not going forward, no," responded Carlisle.

Not everyone who listened in on the mayor's comments was as convinced.

"If we're going to be stuck with some of these bills it's going to be really tough," said Ann Kobayashi, Honolulu City Councilmember. "Money is still a concern."

"We must not believe the city's numbers," said Panos Prevedouros, University of Hawaii, Manoa engineering professor.

Panos Prevedouros says if the figures in the report come true the rail would cost nearly \$10,000 per person to build. He and others worry the project could bankrupt the state.

"Stop it. We don't need it and cannot afford it," said Prevedouros. "It is obvious that the system



Mayor Peter Carlisle



Thomas Rubin



Rail system visualization



Panos Prevedouros

[Click image to enlarge](#)

is very expensive, it has the potential to become outrageously expensive and there is not enough money for it."

Carlisle also criticized the report because he says Prevedouros was contacted for his input. Prevedouros admits he was asked about some information and provided a link to his blog, but overall spent less than an hour on the report.

As for other reactions to the financial report, Senator Daniel Inouye's press secretary Peter Boylan wrote, "Senator Inouye remains committed to the rail transit project and will continue to work to secure the necessary federal funding. For too long, too many of Oahu's residents have been forced to battle gridlock to and from work. The rail transit project will help Hawaii decrease its dependence on imported fossil fuels by providing an alternative to driving and by decreasing traffic congestion on Oahu."

As for Governor Linda Lingle, her last day in office is Monday. Her press secretary Russell Pang said she will leave the analysis of the report to the people who will make the decisions on the project.

On that note Mayor Carlisle says he plans to speak with Governor-elect Neil Abercrombie about the rail project in the very near future. Carlisle says he wants to move forward with ground breaking as soon as possible.

Copyright 2010 Hawaii News Now. All rights reserved.



All content © Copyright 2000 - 2010 WorldNow and KHNL/KGMB, a [Raycom Media](#) station. All Rights Reserved.
For more information on this site, please read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).



- Home
- Weather
- Local News**
- Hawaii Going Green
- Investigates
- News Archive
- Mixed Plate
- Most Popular
- Slideshows
- As Seen On KITV
- u local
- Holiday
- Project Economy
- National News
- Politics
- Traffic
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Food
- Health
- About KITV
- Irresistible

SEARCH Site Web Yellow Pages

Hot Topics: [Adopt A Family](#) | [Top Baby Names](#) | [Week In Review](#) | [Holidays](#) | [u local](#) [As Seen On KITV](#)

Homepage > HONOLULU NEWS

Mayor Blasts Critical Rail Report

Consultant To Governor Said Project May Be Unaffordable

Daryl Huff KITV 4 News Reporter

POSTED: 5:48 pm HST December 3, 2010
 UPDATED: 9:51 pm HST December 3, 2010



HONOLULU -- A financial study of Honolulu's rail project was rejected as "biased" Friday by Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle.

Carlisle today accused the administration of Gov. Linda Lingle of basically hiring an anti-rail activist to lie about the financial stability of the rail project. The report said the city may not be able to afford the \$5.2 billion dollar project because money from taxes and the federal government will not come in as expected and the city was too optimistic about long-term costs and ridership.

Carlisle said the report's conclusions were wrong.

"Spending a third of a million dollars for this shoddy, biased analysis is an appalling waste of our tax dollars," Carlisle said in a late-afternoon news conference a day after the report was distributed by the governor.

Carlisle said Infrastructure Management Group, which was paid \$350,000 for the review, was not independent or objective, as the governor suggested. Carlisle said the lead author has a national reputation as a hired gun against any rail project that comes along.

"It is no surprise the report is a predetermined, anti-rail rant," Carlisle said.

Carlisle said the report's pessimistic revenue projections have already been proven wrong with more than \$580 million in excise taxes collected -- about 99 percent of what was originally projected.

The report said ridership was also overestimated by the city. Carlisle said he's confident about the city's ridership modeling.

"It has been looked at by the very best minds," Carlisle said, "people who are genuine experts, people who don't have ideologies, people who want to make sure it works."

Shared on Facebook

- Honolulu City Lights, Part 1**
39 people shared this.
- New Boozy Treat: Alcohol Infused Whipped Cream**
186 people shared this.



More Stories:

- Carlisle Adds To Administration (KITV.com)
- City Parks Director Quits, Citing 'Lack of Support' From Mayor (KITV.com)
- Hawaii Mayors Want To End Furloughs (KITV.com)
- Councilman Rod Tam Pleads Guilty To Theft Charges (KITV.com)
- Selected for you by our sponsor:
- The Myth of the Massive Retirement Nest Egg (Currency)
- Don't let a Christmas tree be the cause of holiday tragedy. Learn a simple trick to protect your family. (Safety At Home)

Most Read Most Watched Most Commented

- Lingle's Administration Moving Out
- Police Charge Man In Hit-And-Run Crash
- Local Christmas Tree Sales Are Mixed
- State Extends Trial Period For Controversial Buoys
- [» More Most Popular](#)

Pictures In The News

--	--	--

Get Headlines Sent To Your Email Or Phone

MARKETPLACE

- Half Off Hawaii
- Pau Hana
- Adopt a Family
- Values in Paradise
- Hawaii Experts
- Small Business
- Auto
- Dating
- Jobs
- Real Estate
- House & Home
- Education
- Travel
- Grow Your Business

Carlisle said his own prior skepticism about the project's costs and route has been overcome by what he's seen since he became mayor.

"I saw the light," Carlisle said, "and have been smitten by it because of what I have seen and have heard."

The council's leading rail skeptic, Manoa Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi, sat in on Carlisle's press conference. She said the new report should not be ignored.

"The money issue is one that is always going to be hanging over us," she said.

Carlisle said he planned to share his confidence with Gov.-elect Neil Abercrombie, who also received the report. Carlisle said he wants ground broken on construction as soon as possible

Copyright 2010 by KITV.com All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Recommend

One person recommends this. Be the first of your friends



Your Comments

(9)



CloseUsername:

Password:

Confirm password:

Email:

First name:

Date of Birth: MM · DD · YYYY ·

By using Local Voices I agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Log in with your u local account or join.

[Join](#) | [Forgot Password](#)

Username Password

Or [log in using another provider](#):



500 characters remaining

(Log in to add a comment)

Share on Facebook

Share on Twitter

The following are comments from our users. This is not content created by KITV.com.

By posting your comments you agree to accept the [Terms of Use](#)

1 2 »

- [ginny \[Profile\]](#)
Member

This Was Printed From Pacific Business News

PBN biz blog

Carlisle dismisses Lingle's rail report

Pacific Business News - by Curtis Lum

Date: Friday, December 3, 2010, 5:32pm HST - Last Modified: Friday, December 3, 2010, 10:43pm HST



- Curtis Lum
- Reporter
- Email: clum@bizjournals.com

Gov. [Linda Lingle](#) left a parting holiday gift with the [City & County of Honolulu](#), a present that Mayor [Peter Carlisle](#) stamped "damaged goods."

Late Thursday afternoon, Lingle released a [116-page financial review](#) of the city's proposed \$5.5 billion [Honolulu Rail Transit Project](#). The [report](#) came out just days before the governor was set to step down after two eight-year terms in office.

Lingle ordered the financial analysis, which cost taxpayers \$350,000, because she wanted to know what the financial impact of the rail project will be on residents here.

The report, which was conducted by [Infrastructure Management Group Inc.](#), was critical of the city's financial plan for the rail project. It referred to city rail planners as being part of a "rookie" agency when it came to developing such a large project.

At a press conference Friday afternoon, Carlisle struck back and said the report was seriously flawed and a waste of taxpayer's money. He characterized the study as a "predetermined, anti-rail rant."

"Spending a third of a million dollars for this shoddy, biased analysis is an appalling waste of our tax dollars," Carlisle said.

He pointed to several conclusions in the report, and said they were "erroneous" and "inaccurate."

The IMG study estimated the cost of the project over a 20-year period would be at least \$1.7 billion more than the city's projected \$5.5 billion price tag. IMG also reported that revenues from the special [general excise tax surcharge](#) would be 30 percent lower than what the city is projecting, and the only way the project could overcome the financial problems would be to increase the surcharge between 24 percent and 76 percent, or to extend it by five to 19 years beyond the expiration in 2022.

Carlisle's response? "You should always consider the source."

He said a "prominent member" of the IMG review team was **Thomas Rubin**, who Carlisle described as a "nationally known, anti-rail activist." He accused Rubin of turning to Panos Prevedouros, a local rail opponent who ran against Carlisle in the race for mayor, for information on the project.

Carlisle said there was nothing in the report that he agreed with, and said the analysis would not delay the city's plans to get the project under way as soon as possible.

The mayor said he will speak with Gov.-elect **Neil Abercrombie**, who will be sworn in on Monday, and then will come up with a timetable for the project.

Carlisle said he spoke briefly with Lingle, and said the result of their conversation was, "We don't agree."

In dismissing the IMG report, Carlisle proclaimed that the rail project is alive and kicking.

"Today, we are on the verge of being able to begin construction on Honolulu's long-awaited rail project," he said.

This Was Printed From Pacific Business News

Next Article: [Hotels 64.9% full; room rates climb](#)

Carlisle to comment on analysis of Honolulu Rail Transit Project

Pacific Business News

Date: Friday, December 3, 2010, 2:24pm HST

Honolulu Mayor **Peter Carlisle** will discuss the findings of a [financial analysis](#) on the proposed [rail transit system](#) at a press conference set for 3:15 p.m. Friday.

Gov. **Linda Lingle** called for the independent analysis of the city's proposed \$5.5 billion, 20-mile rail system to determine the economic impact the project will have on taxpayers. Among the findings in the report, which was released Thursday, the study said the project could cost at least \$1.7 billion more than the city is estimating.

Carlisle said Thursday he would withhold comment on the report until he had the opportunity to read it.

We will add Carlisle's remarks here later in the day.

Next Article: [Hotels 64.9% full; room rates climb](#)

This Was Printed From Pacific Business News

Lingle delivers financial assessment for Honolulu Rail Transit Project

Pacific Business News

Date: Friday, December 3, 2010, 10:36am HST - Last Modified: Friday, December 3, 2010, 3:40pm HST

Hawaii Gov. **Linda Lingle** said she has [sent copies](#) of the independent financial analysis of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project to local and federal government officials.

Lingle sent copies to Mayor **Peter Carlisle**, [City Council](#) Chair **Nestor Garcia** and Gov.-elect **Neil Abercrombie**, as well as to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and to the Federal Transit Administration, according to a statement from the governor's office.

The financial analysis is aimed to give an assessment of the overall financial impact of the rail project to Hawaii taxpayers; though the project would get federal funding, taxpayers would pay most of a rail system's building, operation and maintenance costs.

The financial analysis was conducted by the [Infrastructure Management Group Inc.](#) with assistance from the Land Use and Economic Consulting Group of [CB Richard Ellis](#) and independent transit finance and accounting expert **Tomas A. Rubin**. The report, which took three months to complete, cost approximately \$350,000 and was paid through the state's Highways Fund, according to the statement.

80.0°F



Friday, December 03, 2010

D-R HORTON
America's Builder
WWW.DRHORTON.COM

Be Home for the Holidays!

Monthly payments starting from: **\$1,672***

Luau's
at Parker Ranch

3 & 4 Bedroom Single Family Homes from the mid **\$300,000's**(fs)
5 Homes Ready!
Call Today!
(808) 887-1246 Sales Office

PUALANI ESTATES
AT KONA

3 & 4 Bedroom Single Family Homes from the high **\$300,000's**(fs)
2 Ready Now!
Call Today!
(808) 331-1500

Be Home for the Holidays! [CLICK HERE](#)

Gov. Linda Lingle releases state-funded study

By B.J. Reyes

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 03, 2010

4 retweet [Share](#) 42 [0 Comments](#)

1/2 OFF [BUY NOW](#)
Q Laser Center

Latest News/Updates

- [Obama in Afghanistan: no terror 'safe haven'](#) - 06:53 a.m.
 - [Opinions divided on building the Thirty Meter Telescope at Mauna Kea](#) - 02:22 p.m.
 - [Male student propositioned and grabbed by man on UH campus](#) - 03:44 p.m.
- [View All | Breaking News >](#)

-- ADVERTISEMENT --

THE PERFECT GIFT SALE

IN-STORE!
with a Macy's Card or savings pass

EXTRA 20% OFF
sale & clearance prices
15% OFF select depts.
exclusions apply.

SHOP NOW >
FREE SHIPPING ONLINE

the magic of **macy's**

-- ADVERTISEMENT --

The proposed 20-mile rail transit system is likely to cost the city an additional \$1.7 billion over the next 20 years, raising the total price tag to at least \$7 billion, according to a state review of the project's finances.

Conflicting estimates of rail system's cost

The report's state analysis of the city's rail transit project sees a much higher total price tag. City estimate: **\$5.269B** is "substantial risk" that the \$1.7 billion difference: additional cost could grow to **\$1.725B** For the complete state rail report, go to <http://www.scribd.com/doc/44620236> billion.

Gov. Linda Lingle, who leaves office Monday, commissioned the report at a cost of \$350,000 from the state Highway Fund.

"If construction and operating costs replicate the experience of many peer projects in cities without previous rail development, or if the optimistic federal fund assumption is not fully realized, this new and additional funding requirement (\$1.7 billion) could grow to nearly \$4.5 billion," the report said.

The report was prepared by Infrastructure Management Group Inc. and CB Richard Ellis, and says it "goes substantially beyond" the periodic reviews undertaken by the Federal Transit Administration.

Additional costs are expected to come from major rail repair and equipment replacement expenses not factored into the original plan, according to the report.

Also, money from the state's general excise tax dedicated to the rail system is likely to be about 30 percent lower than forecast, while ridership also is "likely to be substantially lower" than currently

CLICK HERE FOR EXCLUSIVE eCOUPONS
Hawaii's first and largest organization and storage store.

FREE TOTE
with any purchase.

simplyorganized
organization made simple

Columns

- [Facts of the Matter](#)
Richard Brill
 - [On Politics](#)
Richard Borreca
 - [Wood Craft](#)
Ben Wood
- [View All | Columns >](#)

Blogs

- [Volleyshots](#)
NCAA matches 12-3 (schedule & early results)
 - [Volleyshots](#)
Yes, KFVE is broadcasting 2nd round
 - [Fashion Tribe](#)
Fashion incubator close to
- [View All | Blogs >](#)

RELATED STORIES

[Train opponents cheer prediction of cost overruns](#)

Sponsored by Papa John's Hawaii. Order Now!

forecast, the report says. It notes that the project will be competing with other financial obligations for the city, including unfunded pension and retiree health care liabilities and increased costs related to compliance with a consent decree to improve the city's waste-water and sewage systems.

Financial challenges could be overcome by increasing the size or duration of the half-percent GET surcharge on Oahu that goes to fund the rail project, the report stated. The GET surcharge is set to expire in 2022.

Copies of the state report, which is not part of the official federal approval process, were delivered yesterday to Gov.-elect Neil Abercrombie, Mayor Peter Carlisle, City Council Chairman Nestor Garcia, the FTA and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.

Carlisle administration officials said the report was received yesterday afternoon but that the mayor had not had time to review it in detail. Carlisle pledged his support for rail the day he was sworn in. He traveled to Washington, D.C., in his first week in office in October to meet with FTA officials and affirm the new administration's commitment to seeing the rail project through.

Lingle had been waiting for the results of this study before she signed off on the rail project, but now that decision will be left to Abercrombie. The governor's approval of the rail project's environmental impact statement, or EIS, is needed before the project can proceed.

Abercrombie has said Lingle's financial review would have no bearing on his decision to sign off on the environmental study. The final EIS is being reviewed by the state Office of Environmental Quality Control and has yet to reach the governor's desk. Abercrombie said he would review only whether the EIS was conducted properly, saying he believes it is the city's responsibility to weigh the merits and finances of the project.

Abercrombie is in Washington for the annual meeting of the Democratic Governors Association. A spokeswoman said he planned to meet soon with Carlisle to review the report.

"Gov.-elect Abercrombie's decision on the rail transit system's environmental impact statement will be based on the criteria required by the law," spokeswoman Laurie Au said in a statement.

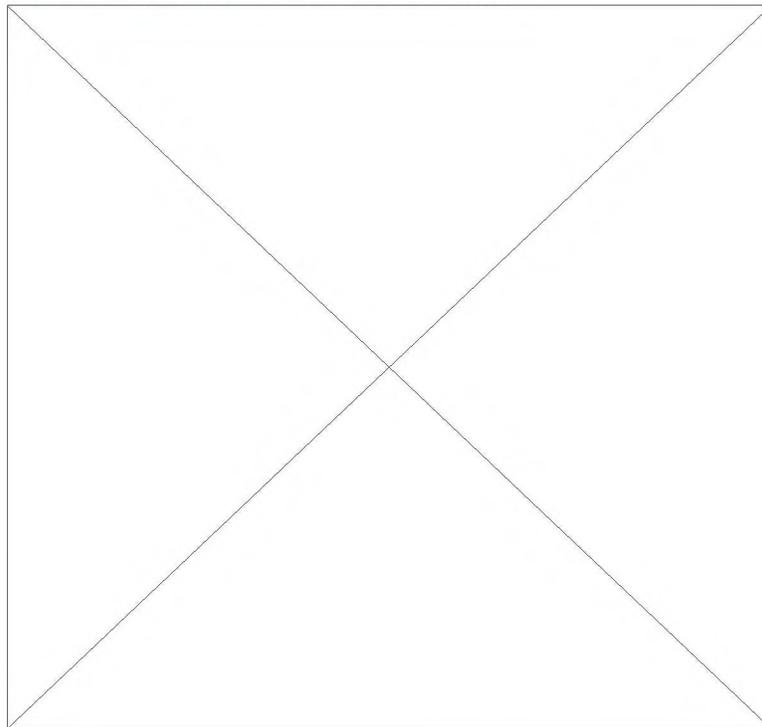
The rail project was spearheaded by former Mayor Mufi Hannemann, Carlisle's predecessor, who did not return a telephone message seeking comment last night.

Hannemann had said the rail project was among the most scrutinized in the country, noting that federal transit officials and independent reviews commissioned by the city all had given the project high marks.

"The FTA has already performed several rigorous independent financial reviews and risk assessments of the project," Hannemann said before leaving office in June to run for governor.

Lingle ordered her financial analysis last spring to determine whether the rail project was feasible given the state's economic struggles. She said she wanted an objective assessment because the project is being financed by Oahu taxpayers as well as the federal government.

[Executive Summary - Honolulu Rail Transit Financial Plan Assessment](#)



honolulu PULSE

- ▶ [NPR names IZ 'a great voice'](#)
- ▶ [Fashion Tribe: HiFi 2011 fundraiser](#)
- ▶ [Pepper concert moves to Aloha Tower](#)
- ▶ [In the Mix: 2010 Mai Tai Rumble finals](#)
- ▶ [The Deadbeats to open for Common in January](#)

Calendar of Events »
More Entertainment Coverage »

Find us on Facebook

Honolulu Star-Advertiser

Like

2,601 people like Honolulu Star-Advertiser

Rebecca Thomas Candy Gale Terry-Lin
Tami John Ron Makima Kim

Free Tax Strategies Guide
2010 Fed. & Hawaii tax laws. Request your 16 page brochure today
www.eabuck.com

U.S. Railway project
traveling from coast to coast in High-Speed. Powered by Siemens!
Siemens.com/High-Speed-Rail

Hawaii Bankruptcy Lawyer
Ed Magauran - Regain your life Now.
Free No-Obligation Consultations
www.EdmHawaii.com

Ads by Google

Print Email Comment | View Comments Most Popular Save Post Retweet

Subscribe to the Honolulu Star-Advertiser:
Monday-Sunday

Train opponents cheer prediction of cost overruns

By Michael Tsai

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 03, 2010

Opponents of the proposed Honolulu rail project welcomed the financial analysis commissioned by the Lingle administration as validation of many of their concerns last night.

Former mayoral candidate Panos Prevedouros called the analysis, prepared by the Infrastructure Management Group Inc., "a good reality check" for those who want to see the city proceed with its rail plan.

Prevedouros, a University of Hawaii professor of civil engineering and an outspoken opponent of the rail project, said he was not at all surprised that the analysis found the rail system would likely cost \$1.7 billion more than stated in the current financial plan.

Prevedouros said the analysis was consistent with the 2009 Federal Transit Authority report prepared by the Dallas consulting firm Jacobs Engineering Group, which placed the estimated cost of Oahu's 20-mile system at \$5.29 billion but also indicated that there was a chance that the cost could reach or exceed \$8.1 billion.

"(Jacobs) did not have a stake in the game. They were just reporting a number," Prevedouros said. "They're experts in getting it right, and they said there was a high chance of overruns. I would trust them more than I would trust advocates of the project."

Prevedouros said the results of the latest analysis should give lawmakers pause as they consider whether and how rail should proceed.

"They may have to assess more taxes if they want to proceed because the money that was promised by the feds isn't there anymore," he said. "It's a different Congress. This will give them pause. It's a perilous path heading forward."

Cliff Slater, one of the project's most outspoken critics,

said the report was more pessimistic than his projections of general excise tax collections but is more optimistic than he is that federal money will be available.

Slater said he was impressed with the depth of the study and was encouraged by how closely it reflected what he and other rail foes have said for years.

For example, the analysis found the city's ridership projections to be overly optimistic, arguing that they relied on "unprecedented and unrealistic growth" in mass transit use in Hawaii.

Slater has criticized what he called the city's use of outdated population projections and called unrealistic its assumption that transit use will jump from 6 percent to 7.4 percent. "That's a change in market share that has never happened in any 20-year period," he said.

"The city will have to take a different tack in how they deal with us," Slater said. "Usually they just attack us personally, but this report was prepared by heavyweights, so they're going to have to argue the substance of it. I'm hoping it will force the authorities to get away from the hype and deal with the truth."

ADVERTISEMENT

Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99 from 19^{+s/h}

ProFlowers[®]

Order ONLY at proflowers.com/happy or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

Posted: Saturday, December 4th, 2010 7:01 AM HST

Carlisle: Skeptical report is an 'anti-rail rant'

By Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle is calling a report that voices skepticism about the city's proposed rail transit project a "predetermined anti-rail rant."

Carlisle heavily criticized the analysis on Friday, calling it shoddy and biased.

The study, which was released Thursday by the state Transportation Department, raised serious concerns about the \$5.5 billion project's financial viability.

It was commissioned by Gov. Linda Lingle, who transmitted it to Carlisle, Gov.-elect Neil Abercrombie, the Honolulu city council and federal officials. She has not commented on its findings.

But Carlisle called the report's \$350,000 price tag an "appalling waste" of taxpayer funds.

Letters to the Editor

For Saturday, December 4, 2010

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 04, 2010

Prevedouros was right about rail's huge cost

Former mayoral candidate Panos Prevedouros was correct when he said that the cost of rail will bankrupt the city of Honolulu.

The latest estimate for the cost of the rail system is now an additional \$1.7 billion over the next 20 years.

Great! Let's send the bill to our children and grandchildren to pay for!

Rick LaMontagne
Volcano

December 6, 2010 Last Update: 12/06/2010

 Search

[Blog](#) | [Contact](#) | [Contributors](#) | [NG in the News](#) | [News from Other Sites](#)

[HOME](#) | [ECONOMICS](#) | [POLITICS](#) | [URBAN ISSUES](#) | [SMALL CITIES](#) | [DEMOGRAPHICS](#) | [SUBURBS](#) | [HOUSING](#) | [2010 BEST CITIES RANKING](#)

HONOLULU RAIL COSTS BALLOON, RIDERSHIP PROJECTIONS CALLED HIGH

by [Wendell Cox](#) 12/05/2010

Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle [has released](#) an independent analysis of the proposed Honolulu rail program to the public and to elected officials. The report was commissioned by the state Department of Transportation. Infrastructure Management Group, CBRE Richard Ellis and Thomas A Rubin performed the equivalent of a "due diligence" report on the project, and according to the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, indicated that the project [would rise in cost](#) by \$1.7 billion to \$7.0 billion for the 20 mile long line.

In addition, the consultants indicated that operating subsidies could be substantially higher than forecast, and that the city of Honolulu could become saddled with heavy debt by the project. Further, the consultants [noted](#) the likelihood that ridership projections might not be met.

Post-rail transit system usage and fare revenue are likely to be substantially lower than that projected in the current Financial Plan, since the Plan's projection would require an unprecedented and unrealistic growth in transit utilization for a city that already has one of the highest transit utilization rates in the country.

The findings of cost escalation and over-projection of ridership have been noted as a fairly routine occurrence in [international infrastructure research](#).

Note: Honolulu rail project planning documents indicated greenhouse gas emission reductions as a benefit of the project. Demographia [published](#) an analysis indicating that the impact on greenhouse gas emissions either a marginal increase or a marginal decrease depending upon performance. It was projected that any reduction would have been at costs per ton many times above international standards.

» [Login](#) or [register](#) to post comments | [Email this Blog entry](#) | [ShareThis](#)

Subjects: [Hawaii](#) | [rail](#) | [transit](#) | [transportation](#)

FEATURED CONTENT



[View all subjects](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO NG ARTICLES

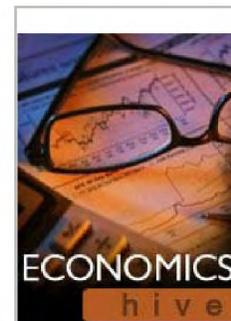


[Subscribe to Articles feed](#)

Or, get articles by email:

 Enter your email address

ADVERTISEMENT



[Can two negative externalities make a positive impact on society?](#)
[Natural disaster? It's capitalism's fault ...](#)
[Why did global trade fall so much during the Great Recession?](#)
[The Zero Deficit Line](#)
[Positivity: Rep. Smith-New women veterans' bill says abortion is not health care](#)
[Three lovely, encouraging stories](#)
[Connecting the dots, telling the boss](#)
[Read more...](#)
[Advertise here](#)

JOIN NG NETWORKS

Letters to the Editor

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 06, 2010

Encourage use of TheBus

Let's assume that rail will cost too much, as reported in the Star-Advertiser ("Cost will balloon, rail report finds," Dec. 3). Drop rail and take the money and fix our potholes.

Let's also agree that TheBus is the best transit system in the U.S., as its "Best Transit System" awards tell us. Let's encourage more people to use TheBus and leave their cars at home a couple times a week.

Fixing potholes and more people riding TheBus are both good for Honolulu streets.

Another thing: Don't let people drive without auto insurance, which is estimated at a whopping 30,000 cars or more daily. This could easily be implemented. Require a double swipe at the pumps: first with a plastic card from the driver's auto insurance company verifying the driver's auto is insured. If insured, the driver's credit card is the next swipe. This completes the gas pumping. No insurance, no gas.

Imagine our streets without potholes and excessive traffic. Action anyone?

Bill Haig
Honolulu

Letters to the Editor

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 06, 2010

Rail study co-writer is rail critic

The presence of Thomas A. Rubin as a co-author of newly released rail finances report is important information for the public to know when trying to decide if the report is, in fact, objective and unbiased ("Cost will balloon, rail report finds," Star-Advertiser, Dec. 3).

In a June 2008 story from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, he is described as "a prominent rail transit critic backed by two conservative think tanks," and "is best known for studies that oppose light rail and commuter trains and promote public buses in Los Angeles and elsewhere."

The Reason Foundation, one of the two conservative think tanks, lists five contributions on its author page for Thomas A. Rubin: All five are anti-rail pieces (<http://reason.org/authors/show/748.html>).

In local terms, this is like asking Panos Prevedouros or Cliff Slater to write an objective evaluation of the rail transit finances. Both are experts, but with clear and active political positions.

I have my own doubts based on data from the city's budget reports and would love to see a comprehensive unbiased accounting of the rail funding plan. It is unfortunate that we still do not have one.

Andrew Kato
Kakaako



Trouble in Paradise: Hawaii's Affordable Housing Conundrum

HKS Student Helps Honolulu Secure Grant in Transit-Oriented Development

By Kate Hoagland - December 7, 2010
Ash Center

With its picturesque island beaches, festive and colorful luaus, and a summery climate year round, many view Hawaii as the ultimate tropical paradise. "There is no question that Hawaii is a beautiful place," said Jim Secreto, HKS MPP 2011. "But the experience that tourists have while visiting Hawaii masks the very real, day-to-day struggles of the people that live there."

Secreto explored issues of affordable housing and transit-oriented development for the city of Honolulu this past summer as an Ash Center Summer Fellow in Innovation. His work with a team of dedicated staff resulted in the city securing a \$2.3 million joint grant from the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development to further improve transit-oriented development in the region.

"This is wonderful news for our community, and it reflects the hard work and cooperation of many people," said Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle in a recent press release. "We are committed to making sure rail transit and transit-oriented development projects are done right, and this grant will be a big help."

Third Most Expensive Home Ownership Market in the U.S.

According to Secreto, living the American dream in Hawaii's tourist-driven economy is often much more difficult for the average Hawaiian. The state has the third most expensive home ownership market in the U.S., just below the New York City neighborhoods of Manhattan and Brooklyn. Land is at a premium in Hawaii—over 900,000 residents live on the Island of Oahu where Honolulu is located, an area half the size of the full state of Rhode Island. Median home prices far exceed the necessary salaries to pay such prices, forcing many area residents to find more affordable options far outside of the city with long commute times to work.

According to the city's 2008 High-Capacity Transit Corridor Environmental Statement, residents struggle with some of the worst commute times in the country—peak-travel can take up to 47 percent longer than most cities due to high traffic congestion. Moreover, housing and transportation costs make up nearly half (45 percent) of the living expenses of most Honolulu residents.

"How is the person that is cleaning your hotel bedroom or serving you drinks at the Waikiki bar going to live the American Dream?" said Secreto. "That's where the rail corridor can provide opportunities."

The Elements of a Winning Grant Application

Honolulu has recently broken ground on a high-capacity rail corridor transit project to be completed in 2019 which would build 20 miles of rail lines connecting the western side of the Island to the city center. By 2030, the majority of Honolulu's jobs and population are expected to be along this corridor. With the rail project underway, the city of Honolulu has taken this timely opportunity to evaluate ways to make the city more livable for its residents. As part of this effort, Secreto and his colleagues' winning grant application requests funding to improve Honolulu's economic competitiveness by increasing opportunities for affordable housing and public transport.

The application outlines several activities that the grant funds:

- A newly-created consultant would enhance coordination and collaboration between the public and private sectors to streamline



print

Related Links

> [About the Ash Summer Fellowship in Innovation](#)

> [Policy Analysis Exercise Travel Grants](#)

regulatory processes and roster improvements in zoning and financial credits.

- The grant also proposes authoring a strategic plan on how to build or increase affordable housing near the transit lines. The plan would look at renovating existing properties, reclaiming vacant properties for adaptable reuse, and building new housing.
- Most importantly, the grant establishes the framework for a catalytic demonstration project. Local developers, nonprofits, and financial institutions would collaborate to map out the feasibility of building affordable housing along the transit line. Such a project would show how creative public and private partnerships could not only reduce the development time, but also cut the overall cost of development. Innovative tools such as low-income tax credits, affordable housing subsidies, and expedited permitting could be evaluated as alternative means for cutting costs.

From the Real World to the Classroom

For Secreto, his Summer Fellowship in Innovation taught him much about how to innovate at a local level and how possible it is for cities to improve the lives of their citizens. "I think my overlying takeaway was that you can make an impact in your community and that can be transferable anywhere," said Secreto. "I would not have had this experience without Ash. Not only is the grant going to have amazing consequences for the people of Honolulu, the experience is also shaping my own career path."

Secreto's work kicks off an ongoing relationship between the city of Honolulu and the Ash Center. Harvard Kennedy School students are encouraged to apply for Policy Analysis Exercises (PAE) in the spring semester to assist with the city of Honolulu's transit-development work.

[Learn more»](#)

79 John F. Kennedy Street | Cambridge, MA 02138 | T: 617.495.0557

Copyright © 2010 The President and Fellows of Harvard College | Report Copyright Infringements | E-mail Web Administrator

Rail success relies on wise vetting

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 07, 2010

Everybody involved in the proposal to build a rail project in Honolulu needs to take a deep breath and then review the facts in clear view of the taxpaying public.

The release last week of a financial analysis commissioned by Linda Lingle during the waning months of her administration added another fear factor to the already scary \$5.5 billion price tag for the 20-mile elevated rail project. It doesn't seem to be the dispassionate review of the numbers that Lingle promised, but neither should it be shelved without serious comment, as the city seems inclined to do.

The analysis, conducted by Infrastructure Management Group Inc. and CB Richard Ellis, showed a cost overrun of about \$1.7 billion, and that the revenue from the general excise tax surcharge on Oahu may not raise as much of the local financing as previously believed.

Further, the report continued, the federal financing could come in lower than anticipated and construction costs could go higher, leaving taxpayers holding a larger bill.

Mayor Peter Carlisle seems to have completely dismissed the report. He simply asserts that the projections of diminished tax revenues and increased costs are inaccurate, period.

He has a rational basis for healthy skepticism: Among the members of the consultants team was Thomas Rubin, an Oakland transit analyst known widely as an opponent of fixed rail. A cursory search of the Web turns up volumes of Rubin's publications and general advocacy for bus systems over rail. The phrase once used by Rubin that Carlisle found objectionable was the opening line taken from one of his 2004 addresses: "Bus is good; rail is bad."

Lingle contended that an independent review of rail finances was necessary. Even those who agree with her

would have to admit that Rubin's association with this report diminishes its credibility as an unbiased assessment that's worth the \$350,000 spent on it.

However, Carlisle needs to conduct a more detailed and public discussion of this report than has happened so far. The IMG Inc. analysis presents a view competing with the city's own financial models, and although the particulars may be too technical for general consumption, the taxpayer deserves to have at least a general explanation of why the latest critique is, as the mayor asserts, completely worthless.

Gov. Neil Abercrombie has pledged to sign off on the project's environmental impact statement on its own merits – the financial aspects are generally not required to be covered in an EIS, in any case. He should move ahead on that.

But the state also has a compelling interest in the successful, efficient development of the state's costliest public works project, and Abercrombie should at least assess this latest report. Done correctly, the rail can expand transportation capacity and help direct development density in the urbanized center and preserve open space. Taxpayers and the leaders they elect have made a commitment to rail, and they deserve every confidence that this investment is being made in the most deliberate way possible.

ADVERTISEMENT



Send flowers
for any occasion

Bouquets \$19⁹⁹
from 19^{+s/h}

ProFlowers[®]
Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Letters to the Editor

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 09, 2010

Rail debate sounds familiar

During the mid-1960s, I lived in northern California. The debate about a transit system in the Bay Area began in 1947. BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) was narrowly approved by the voters in 1962 and was completed in 1972.

At that time, there was ongoing and ferocious debate in the local newspapers on the merits of BART. Many of the same arguments against Honolulu's proposed rail system were used against the BART system at that time: No one would use it; it will cost too much; it will not reduce peak traffic. The daily weekday rider use for BART in November 2010 was more than 350,000. Those 350,000 riders could not imagine a world with rail transit.

John Dracup
Waialua

Letters to the Editor

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 09, 2010

Somebody please stop rail project

More than 130,000 of us voted against Honolulu's rail project. Now, as expected, it appears the cost overrun may be substantial. It seems that those who proposed the project were concerned primarily with getting it built and gave little or no thought to operating and maintaining the behemoth. And, of course, it will destroy much-valued scenery and views. Operating personnel would have to be on duty 24 hours a day, even during those hours when there would be few riders. This is costly. And there is no substantial evidence of actual ridership during peak hours.

Somebody stop this thing and come up with a light rail system that we can afford.

Bob Frye
North Shore



Friday, December 10th, 2010 | Posted by [Greg Wiles](#) | [Print This Article](#)

Rail Critics Say State Report Will Go To Feds



BY GREG WILES

A state study that casts doubt on financial projections for the city's rail transit project may yet be used in examining the project despite being lambasted by Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle as shoddy and biased work.

Two well-known opponents to the city's proposed rail project say they believe the report released last week will carry more weight at the Federal Transit

Administration, which has federal oversight of the project, and in Congress, where a Republican-controlled House of Representatives is looking for ways to cut spending.

Moreover, City Council member Ann Kobayashi said she hopes the report done by Bethesda, Maryland-based Infrastructure Management Group Inc. will receive an airing before the council meeting or that an independent community group calls for a forum to more fully discuss the study.

"I think there should be a hearing on it with both sides giving their opinion," said Kobayashi. "We shouldn't put it on a shelf."

The report was roundly criticized by Carlisle last week, who said the \$350,000 study contained erroneous projections and that an "anti-rail" activist helped in preparing the analysis. He questioned the credibility of the report, which found the project could cost \$1.72 billion more than the city has projected over the next 20 years.

The report also said the costs could be as much as \$4.5 billion more than city estimates under another scenario and raised other questions about how the project would be funded.

Carlisle this week said his administration believes the city's financial plan for rail is solid, but that the city will examine the IMG study so that it can answer questions about it if raised.

"We're going to do our due diligence and do our own analysis of their report to point out

things the city and the mayor have issues with,” said City spokeswoman Louise Kim McCoy.

The release of the report was one of the last acts of Gov. Linda Lingle before she left office, with the study receiving a cool reception from some rail proponents who believed Lingle disliked the rail project and had ordered the review to slow or derail it.

Last week Carlisle criticized the report and vowed to push ahead with rail, which city studies show is the best solution for relieving traffic congestion along a 20-mile route between Kapolei and Ala Moana Center.

City studies have identified the elevated rail project as being superior to alternatives such as a managed lane system or building so-called “hot lanes” that buses and cars paying tolls could use.

The rail system was found to be superior to alternatives in reducing commuter delays and rush hour traffic volume while producing less pollution and using less energy. The project has won the support from Hawaii’s Congressional delegation and in the past has been favored by now Gov. Neil Abercrombie, who must sign off on an environmental impact statement before the project moves forward.

Lingle wasn’t seen as fully backing the project and turned off some rail backers when she ordered the financial study.

The report doesn’t pass judgment on the project feasibility but examines whether the project finances by scrutinizing it in a way that lenders or bond agencies might. In that respect the executive summary reads like a stock prospectus, focusing attention on potential financing pitfalls or other issues that might jeopardize its economics.

CARLISLE DEFENDS CITY ESTIMATES

The findings call into question the city’s financial projections, prompting Carlisle to strongly defend the city’s estimates and say the author’s motives were questionable.

But observers and some rail opponents believe the report will be of interest to the project management oversight and financial management oversight contractors that advise the Federal Transit Administration staff.

Rail opponents said the fact that the state and not an anti-rail group sponsored the report, along with FTA consultants’ desire to review analyses so their own critiques are more precise, means the report will find an audience outside of Honolulu Hale.

“They can kill the messenger with me and get away with it,” said Cliff Slater, who has been a persistent and vocal opponent to the rail project.

“But they can’t do that with IMG and CBRE.”

Slater noted the Infrastructure Management Group, or IMG, and report team member CB Richard Ellis are national firms whose work can’t be easily dismissed.

IMG is in the business of advising municipalities and states on managing and financing

infrastructure projects and counts among its current engagements a role as the lead financial advisory firm to the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

IMG also has worked in the past with the U.S. Transportation Department's Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act Joint Program Office to arrange financing for projects.

Rail opponents said the FTA would most likely want to consider what's in the report if the project moves to a full funding agreement and goes before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Ignoring the IMG study might prompt committee members to question why the numbers had not been reviewed.

The committee's leadership is changing with Republicans coming into power in the House and will be headed by Florida Rep. John Mica. The congressman is known as a proponent of cutting government spending and once expressed doubts about funding a high-speed rail project in Florida.

Panos Prevedouros, who ran against Carlisle for governor with a stop-rail platform, said he will make sure Congress receives the IMG report.

"It's a significant data point," said Prevedouros, who also is contemplating a lawsuit against the project involving environmental law.

"There's the bridge to nowhere. This is heavy rail on a tiny island."

The FTA last year signaled that the city would have to sharpen its financial plan if it expects to meet its financial standards for moving the project into a final design phase. That includes more work looking at cost increases, possible revenue shortfalls and competing demands for funding sources.

Kobayashi noted the FTA's desire to see a better financial plan from the city and said she'd like to see what others think of the report. She said the city needs to have a good financial plan if it is to avoid floating bonds because federal funding isn't coming in on a hoped-for basis. Under a FTA Full Funding Grant Agreement any revenue shortfalls or cost overruns are paid for by the local government.

Accordingly there should be a hearing or forum on IMG's report for its findings can be discussed further. "So that taxpayers know what's happening," said Kobayashi, who favors Honolulu building a light-rail project instead of a so-called heavy rail system that's elevated.

"I'm sure IMG did an unbiased and as complete a study as they could."

MOST LIKELY SCENARIO

The IMG report said city costs would escalate under what it deemed to be the most likely scenario for the project. It estimated rail construction, operations and maintenance would be \$1.72 billion more than the city's \$5.27 billion estimate.

The IMG said in some cases it went along with city projections and in others it came up with its own models, forecasts and funding estimates. The report includes the work of at least two

other consultants, with analysis also being provided by the Land Use and Economic Consulting Group of CB Richard Ellis and transit expert Thomas A. Rubin.

The findings included:

- Revenue from the 0.5 percent General Excise Tax surcharge will fall short by roughly \$800 million primarily because CB Richard Ellis' models show a 4 percent growth rate in the revenues rather than the 5.4 percent used in the city's model.
- Bridge financing will be needed while waiting for \$1.55 billion in New Starts funding from the federal government.
- The debt required to finance the project might push the city's annual debt service above budget guidelines. The city is also facing a large worker pension and retiree healthcare liability.
- Honolulu could overcome some of the financial issues by extending or increasing the temporary General Excise tax surcharge.
- Funding from a federal Bus Discretionary Fund most likely will be \$166.4 million compared to the \$419 million envisioned.
- Construction costs will be \$200 million higher, while operation and maintenance costs will also be higher than the city estimates.
- Ridership growth is unrealistic given Hawaii's already high use of public transit already.

Report critics have raised a number of questions about the study.

Carlisle and others have questioned the GE Tax projections that were done by CB Richard Ellis and said the tax take is close to being on track with its own projections despite an economic downturn during the past two years.

Some proponents contend the study should have used six-year tax growth predictions from Hawaii's Council on Revenues rather than correlating Hawaii economic growth rates to U.S. GDP growth and applying this to taxes over a 30-year period.

The authors also have been criticized for not having a better understanding of Honolulu and its potential for more transit ridership. They also are dinged for not adjusting construction prices lower in a scenario that contemplates slow economic growth.

ANTI-RAIL PROPAGANDA

The city has called the report suspect because IMG included Rubin, an Oakland, California-based transit consultant, as part of the report team. Carlisle called Rubin a "nationally known anti-rail activist."

In the past Rubin has submitted papers to the Reason Foundation, a Libertarian think tank, that favor busways over rail transit systems. Among papers he has authored is one in 1996

titled “Why Rail Will Fail,” which pointed out flaws in a long-range Los Angeles County plan that favored a rail project.

Rubin also spoke with Prevedouros during the preparation of the report, leading Carlisle to proclaim the IMG report was a pre-determined rant against the project.

City Council candidate Bob McDermott said the project is critical for his district and criticized Rubin’s inclusion on the IMG team. McDermott issued a statement dismissing the report and saying it appeared to be “anti-rail propaganda that has been purchased from a known purveyor of anti-rail propaganda.”

Rubin supporters said his berth on the IMG team was based on his extensive expertise in mass transit and knowledge about rail operations as well as databases used by the FTA.

Rubin’s past experience includes serving as controller-treasurer for the Southern California Rapid Transit District in Los Angeles and founder of the transit practice for Deloitte Haskins & Sells.

Rubin’s also done consulting and auditing work for more than 100 transit operators, local governments, transit unions and the U.S. Department of Transportation, according to court testimony he gave as an expert witness in 2008. Rubin testified that among his past work were technical analyses of long-range transportation or project plans by several cities, including the City and County of Honolulu.

The IMG report said Rubin’s work was limited to helping review Honolulu’s financial plan, providing information on other transit projects, and assessing projected operating costs, revenues and service assumptions for the project.

IMG was responsible for most of the financial analysis, including coming up with three scenarios – base, best and downside cases. It also led the financial plan and peer transit project review, while CB Richard Ellis performed the GET surcharge analysis and helped in the current plan review.

Author: [Greg Wiles](#)

Greg Wiles is a Hawaii journalist, formerly of The Honolulu Advertiser, who writes for Hawaii Reporter.

Like

Be the first of your friends to like this.

[Share / Save](#)    **Short URL:** <http://www.hawaiireporter.com/?p=26851>



Author: [Greg Wiles](#)

Greg Wiles is a Hawaii journalist, formerly of The Honolulu Advertiser, who writes for Hawaii Reporter.

[Greg Wiles has written 21 articles for us.](#)

- [Home](#)

From the Pacific Business News:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/print-edition/2010/12/10/states-rail-consultant-lashes-out-at.html>

State's rail consultant lashes out at mayor

Premium content from Pacific Business News - by Curtis Lum

Date: Friday, December 10, 2010, 1:00am HST

The head of the Maryland consulting firm that was hired by the state of Hawaii to review Honolulu's proposed rail transit finances defended the results of the study, saying it was done "to be entirely constructive."

Steve Steckler, chairman of Infrastructure Management Group Inc., responded to criticism of the financial review last week by Mayor **Peter Carlisle**. The mayor blasted the 116-page report, which said the project could cost taxpayers at least \$1.7 billion more than the city's \$5.5 billion price tag.

Steckler also criticized the city administration, which he said did not cooperate with his firm during the preparation of the report.

Former Gov. Linda Lingle ordered the study because she said she wanted an objective assessment of the financial impact of the rail project on taxpayers. At \$5.5 billion, the 20-mile rail project would be the costliest public works project in state history.

A spokeswoman for Gov. Neil Abercrombie, who was sworn into office on Monday, said he could not comment on the report because he has yet to read it.

Carlisle said last week that the report was "shoddy" and was nothing more than a "pre-determined, anti-rail rant." He also said that the state wasted public funds by paying IMG \$350,000 to do what he said was supposed to be an independent financial analysis of the rail project.

Carlisle said the \$1.7 billion cost overrun projection, as well as the determination by IMG that revenue from a special general excise tax surcharge for the project will fall short, are inaccurate and "erroneous."

Steckler said the report was never intended to second-guess the city's decision to develop a rail system, nor did IMG say that the project was not financially feasible. He said the report concluded that "the current financial plan should be improved and that the city will need additional resources to complete and operate the rail system."

Steckler said there was no hidden agenda when Lingle and the state Department of Transportation hired IMG to do the review.

"The only requirement ... throughout was that the study be conducted in a manner consistent with this public investment perspective," Steckler said. "We were left alone to do our work."

Carlisle also was critical of consultant **Thomas Rubin**, who was hired by IMG to participate in the review. Carlisle said Rubin is a nationally known anti-rail activist who makes a living criticizing rail projects.

Steckler said Rubin was selected because of his understanding of transit agency accounts and performance data. Rubin was asked to review the rail's operating plan and had nothing to do with the general excise tax forecast or financial analysis of the project, Steckler said. (Rubin could not be reached for comment.)

"We find it curious that the mayor has focused his criticism on a subcontractor who had nothing to do with the financial analysis," he said.

Steckler said the GET review portion of the study was done by CB Richard Ellis, which he described as "well-regarded internationally for its understanding of local economic development activity and finance."

Steckler said his firm has conducted financial audits or served as advisers to many transportation systems, including the U.S. Department of Transportation and the California High Speed Rail Authority, and does so independently of the client or agency involved in the project.

"The independence of our assessments is critical because public and private investors, underwriters and lenders — and taxpayers — rely on our work to guide their investment decisions," Steckler said. "To characterize Infrastructure Management Group Inc. as anti-rail is unsupported."

He said one of the biggest problems IMG faced when preparing the report was what he said was "open hostility" from the city's rail project staff. Steckler said his firm sent a request for information on Sept. 7, but did not receive any information until the end of October.

He also said the city blocked IMG's attempts to meet with Parsons Brinckerhoff, which has an \$86 million contract from the city to provide engineering and environmental work for the project.

"In all our years of doing these kinds of independent financial assessments, neither I nor our financial staff has ever run into anything like the hostility and blocking of access to data, models and consultants that we faced with the city of Honolulu," Steckler said.

A spokeswoman for Carlisle declined further comment.

Carlisle said last week that the city is "on the verge" of being able to begin construction, although he did not provide a timetable on when work could start. The project is still awaiting the governor's approval of a federal environmental impact statement.

Local contractors are looking to the rail project and the hundreds of jobs it would provide as a boost to the construction industry in 2011. A prolonged delay would add to what is otherwise projected to be another lean year in construction.

Roger Peters, executive vice president and general manager of dck pacific construction, which is not involved in the rail project at the present time, said he was discouraged by the IMG financial report, but he's hopeful that the city can move ahead with the project.

"We think that'll be a great boost to the economy in Hawaii, not only for construction, but for a lot of different things," Peters said.

clum@bizjournals.com | 955-8001



Letters to the Editor

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 10, 2010

Poll result suggests few now support rail

On Monday, the Star-Advertiser online poll asked readers if they had changed their position on rail after the new higher-cost projection was released, and 41 percent said yes.

Higher costs for rail would not convince any anti-rail people to change their mind and now support it; therefore, all those who changed their minds must have been previous supporters of rail who have turned against it, suggesting that there are very few rail supporters still standing -- perhaps 15 percent, if we assume the community had been evenly split on the question.

Dennis Callan
Honolulu

Jonh Serikawa (Member758) | Manage Account | Sign Out

Follow Civil Beat: [f](#) [t](#) [r](#)

Saturday, December 11th, 2010

HONOLULU CIVIL BEAT

Honolulu, HI 9:18 AM

Today Honolulu Hawaii Education Land Money Company Blog Daily Archive Topics Discussions Events

Print Email Twitter Like 6 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

City Responds To Civil Beat on Tax Revenues for Rail

By Mark Scheibe, Deputy Project Manager | 12/11/2010

Editor's Note: *The City of Honolulu issued this memo to Civil Beat in response to its article Friday, [Civil Beat Analysis: City's Rail Tax Plan Optimistic](#). The article explored the differences between the city's perspective on tax revenues to pay for the project and the projections of a consultant hired by the state. Civil Beat invited the city to respond.*



Honolulu Rail Transit Division

The IMG Report includes the summary statement "GET revenues are most likely to grow at a compounded rate that is approximately 30 percent lower than the forecast included in the current Financial Plan."

The report further states "the GET tax growth is unlikely to grow beyond a 4 percent compound growth rate over the forecast period, well below the 5.4 percent in the current Financial Plan."

The IMG Report paints a picture of two competing forecasts, theirs and the one presented in the August 2009 Financial Plan. Amazingly, the IMG Team, while working for the State of Hawaii, ignored the source of forecasts specifically prepared for the Governor and the Legislature, by the State's Council on Revenues. If the IMG Team had explored this source they would have discovered that the Council on Revenues most recent report forecasts state general fund tax revenues for FY 2011 through FY 2017 will grow at a compound rate of approximately 6.7 percent per year, certainly more than 4 percent per year.

Further, other than creating several charts showing how historical GET revenues compared to the certain economic variables (employment, population, etc.) it does not appear that the IMG Team completed any statistical analyses to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between GET and these economic variables. Rather, to generate its forecast of GET surcharge revenues, the IMG Team appears to have merely selected a historical period of time, calculated the compound annual growth rate of GET revenues over that historical period of time, and then extrapolated that calculated growth rate to every year of its forecast.

Regardless of their actual methodology, however, the IMG Report's discussion of GET growth rates draws a comparison between the Hawaii economy and the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Report describes a forecast of U.S. GDP from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), which "is expected to average between 4% and 4.5% for the next ten years" in order to support their 4 percent growth rate conclusion. In reality, the most recent forecast of nominal GDP published by the CBO in August 2010 shows average annual growth over the next ten years (2011 to 2020) of 4.7%, even exceeding 6% in the short term (2013 and 2014) during CBO's projected timing of an economic recovery.

In contrast to a nebulous process that may or may not be tied to U.S. GDP, for the GET forecast used in the August 2009 Financial Plan complex statistical analyses were performed that tested data on the historical GET tax base against several economic variables in order to identify which had the greatest explanatory power, and the degree of that effect. These data combined with independent forecasts of economic variables (e.g., retail spending, hotels and lodging spending, etc.) were used to create the Financial Plan's forecast for the GET surcharge revenues.

DISCUSSION: *Join the discussion about the rail project's financial plan and read what others have to say about it in our [discussion of rail finances](#).*

Have feedback? Suggestions? Email Us!

About Us | Contact | Terms of Service | Privacy Policy | FAQ | Membership

Copyright © 2010 Peer News LLC. All rights reserved.

All purchases subject to Hawaii and City and County of Honolulu General Excise Tax of 4.712%.

WAKE UP TO THE HONOLULU CIVIL BEAT!

Never Miss a Beat! Buy a \$0.99 Trial Today!

Media



Related Content

Articles

- IMG Chairman Defends Rail Report Independence
- Civil Beat Analysis: City's Rail Tax Plan Optimistic
- Carlisle: "Shoddy" Outside Rail Report Is "Biased"
- Lingle Rail Consultant: 'Bus Is Good. Rail Is Bad.'

Primary Topic Pages

Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

Related Topic Pages

Honolulu Planning

Discussions

Discussion: Honolulu Rail

Letters to the Editor

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 11, 2010

Honolulu can't afford BART-style rail system

I have ridden the BART system from Concord to San Francisco many times and recognize it as a great people mover in a highly congested area of California. BART has extended service in all directions covering many miles.

How can we compare a system like that to what will be a 20-mile ride on this small island costing billions of dollars ("Rail debate sounds familiar," Star-Advertiser, Letters, Dec. 9)?

How do the experts expect a population of less than a million to sustain this billion-dollar train? Go figger!

B.J. Dyhr
Honolulu

Print Email Twitter Like Be the first of your friends to like this.

Rail Critic Responds to Civil Beat on Tax Revenues for Rail

By Cliff Slater | 12/13/2010

Editor's Note: Cliff Slater of Honolulutraffic.com provided this commentary to Civil Beat in response to its article Friday, *Civil Beat Analysis: City's Rail Tax Plan Optimistic*. The article explored the differences between the city's perspective on tax revenues to pay for the project and the projections of a consultant hired by the state.



Kimberly Lee

The Governor's Report on rail transit finances predicts the city's funds from the 0.5 percent General Excise Tax (GET) surcharge on Oahu will not generate the money needed for the project.

"The prediction that there will be less money raised from the GET tax is wrong," Mayor Carlisle said in response.

The following excerpts all reference the June 2010 Final EIS financial plan, which is unchanged to date and is linked below:

The FTA's Financial Management Oversight Contractor (FOMC) wrote in its September 2, 2009 review, that if it applied the Council on Revenues (COR) forecasts through 2015 and the City's forecasts thereafter, the City would need to reduce its forecast tax collections by \$322 million. For the category Capital Cost Estimates, Planning Assumptions, and Financial Capacity the FOMC rated the City Low. They added that, "The major factors contributing to this rating are: (i) material downside risks to the GET surcharge revenue forecast, and consequently the inability to cover all debt service cost; (ii) no net debt capacity; and (iii) lack of information to substantiate the City's capacity to absorb a material amount (up to \$535 million) of cost risk."

In an August 12, 2009, letter to FTA, the City acknowledged FTA's requirement that it obtain a waiver from the City's Administrative Policy restricting the debt financing to 20 percent of the City's annual budget. It is also required to engage an independent financial professional for the GE Tax revenue projections. The City has not done that yet.

The FTA's letter giving permission for the City to enter the Preliminary Engineering phase contained the following statement: "Some elements of the current financial plan may not fare well in the stress tests that FTA will apply to evaluate robustness. These elements include the projected revenue stream from the General Excise Tax, the diversion of FTA Section 5307 funds from ongoing capital needs of the bus system, and the increasing share of the City's annual budget that is required to fund the transit system. *Were this plan submitted today in support of a request to advance the project into final design, its weaknesses would likely cause FTA to deny the request.*" (emphasis added)

Clearly the FTA and its FOMC both doubt that the City will actually collect the \$3.5 billion it projects. Let's review the logic of the FOMC in its calculation of a \$322 million shortfall:

We followed the FOMC's comments above in restating the City's forecast to reflect the COR's forecasted rate of growth for GET revenues, and using the City financial plan's forecasted growth rates from that point forward.

The latest COR forecast we have is their May 27, 2010, forecast shown in the table below. We calculated the percentage change. Note that this is a statewide forecast for GE Tax collections but Honolulu tracks the statewide GE Tax collection and the common usage is to use the statewide data.

COR's statewide GE tax revenue forecast as of 5/27/2010

Budget year	Total Tax	Percentage change
2009	\$2,417,580	
2010	\$2,424,236	0.3%
2011	\$2,717,157	12.1%
2012	\$2,777,039	2.2%

WAKE UP TO THE HONOLULU CIVIL BEAT!

Never Miss a Beat! Buy a \$0.99 Trial Today!

Media



Related Content

Articles

City Responds To Civil Beat on Tax Revenues for Rail

Civil Beat Analysis: City's Rail Tax Plan Optimistic

Primary Topic Pages

Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

Related Topic Pages

Honolulu Planning

Hawaii General Excise And Use Tax

Discussions

Fact-Checking Rail's 2 Financial Analyses

2013	\$2,947,647	6.1%
2014	\$3,123,119	6.0%
2015	\$3,281,768	5.1%
2016	\$3,491,927	6.4%

Source: http://www6.hawaii.gov/tax/cor/2010gf05-27_with0601_Rpt2Gov.pdf

We find the 2011 COR forecast not to be credible. We are seven months into the City Rail Fiscal Year (April to March) and Y-T-D we are at -2.7 percent. We have made an educated guess and used an increase of +1.9 percent (see in table as the olive cell) but even that is going to require a significant turnaround in the last five months of the 2011 fiscal year.

The blue cells show the percentage increases forecast by the COR. The brown cells reflect the percentage increases used by the City in its Final EIS, which can be confirmed at http://www.honolulutransit.org/library/files/summary%20cash%20flow%20tables_10aug09_v1.pdf

Calculations of City collections of the 1/2% GE tax increase						
Fiscal year	Our calculation		City forecast		\$ diff.	
	Millions \$'s	% change	Millions \$'s	% change		
2007	\$48	Actual	\$13	Per Final EIS	\$35	
2008	\$169	Actual	\$161	Per Final EIS	\$8	
2009	\$164	Actual	\$164	1.9%	\$0	
2010	\$162	Actual	\$164	0.0%	-\$2	
2011	\$165	1.9%	\$174	6.1%	-\$9	
2012	\$169	2.2%	\$186	6.9%	-\$17	
2013	\$179	6.1%	\$202	8.6%	-\$23	
2014	\$190	6.0%	\$214	5.9%	-\$24	
2015	\$199	5.1%	\$225	5.1%	-\$26	
2016	\$212	6.4%	\$236	4.9%	-\$24	
2017	\$223	5.1%	\$248	5.1%	-\$25	
2018	\$235	5.6%	\$262	5.6%	-\$27	
2019	\$248	5.3%	\$276	5.3%	-\$28	
2020	\$261	5.4%	\$291	5.4%	-\$30	
2021	\$276	5.5%	\$307	5.5%	-\$31	
2022	\$290	5.2%	\$323	5.2%	-\$33	
2023	\$227	N/A	\$253	N/A	-\$20	
2009-23 Total	\$3,200		\$3,525		-\$325	

Council on Revenues 9/1/09 forecast for 2009-2015 and FEIS forecast 2016-2023
The COR forecast is statewide and thus an approximation of City tax collections.

The COR forecast is statewide and thus an approximation of City tax collections. Our forecast tracks almost to the dollar the amount computed by FOMC; it is \$325 million less than the City currently forecasts.

DISCUSSION: *Share your thoughts about the debate over the difference over projections of how much revenue the city's 0.5 percent general excise tax will raise to pay for rail.*

Have feedback? Suggestions? Email Us!

[About Us](#) | [Contact](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Membership](#)

Copyright © 2010 Peer News LLC. All rights reserved.

All purchases subject to Hawaii and City and County of Honolulu General Excise Tax of 4.712%.

Current rail plans rife with problems

By Kioni Dudley

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 13, 2010

We've never gotten this far with rail. Now that we have, we are seeing things that are extremely serious problems. The government is intent on barreling ahead, fearing that if we veer in any way from the original plan, the whole project might fall off the track. But it's far better to correct the problems now than to cast them in cement. The millions of dollars the city has already spent on rail already are nothing compared to the billions we might save with changes to the plans.

Starting with downtown problems: Who really wants a noisy, elevated monstrosity with third-floor, "floating football field" stations, and long lines of graffiti-covered pillars running through the middle of our beautiful city? Who wants downtown views to the ocean destroyed? We need to get back to conceptual stage, and work out a "rail plus" system that contributes to the city, rather than destroys it.

At the other end of the line, in Kapolei, the rail ignores the traffic problems it was supposed to solve. Instead it benefits developers. The current route cuts a wide swath across our most valuable farmland, 1,500 highly productive acres, land we need for fresh produce, and land future generations will need for survival. Rail is being used as a wedge to force urban land designation for that property, with the goal not just of covering it with housing but of placing on it two transit-oriented developments (dense mini-cities surrounding rail stations), raising its value astronomically for developer-owner, D.R. Horton.

Those hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars could, instead, go to the people of Hawaii, if the lucrative transit-oriented development (TOD) was moved onto the University of Hawaii West Oahu (UHWO) property where it logically belongs.

The rail should start at a UHWO station, and head makai (south) through a university-owned TOD, then down to join the Oahu Railway & Land (OR&L) line, where it can serve the residents of Ewa and Ewa Beach on its way to the city. There currently is not one single rail parking stall planned for the 80,000 people

expected to live in the Ewa area. They will drive under the tracks on their 2 1/2 -hour commute to the city, further clogging the freeway for everybody.

Rail in the sky itself is a problem. Each piling will go 60-100 feet below the surface. Columns above ground will be 30-90 feet high, with spans laid across the tops. Many of the skilled workers needed for this will have to come from the mainland.

By contrast, rail on the ground requires going only 2-3 feet below the surface. It can be built entirely by local workers, following the OR&L right-of-way, which is government owned, 40 feet wide, and crosses only five streets in the 10 miles between UHWO and the stadium. It provides beautiful views of the water, serves every shopping area along the route, and would become a major tourist attraction during nonpeak hours.

Further, if the OR&L route were used, citizens would be spared years of massive traffic tie-up on busy Farrington Highway and Kamehameha Highway and merchants along the route would not be driven out of business. The OR&L right-of-way never has been seriously studied.

Rail poses another extremely serious problem -- too much job creation. Amazing, but true. Table 4-35 of the Rail Environmental Impact Study promises 81,175 new jobs over the next 10 years. That's 53,000 jobs more than our local work force can fill, 53,000 more workers that will need to be brought from the mainland. With families, that's 150,000 more immigrating people. Why are we building a rail for 87,300 round-trip riders if building it will cause a population increase of 150,000, with all of the needs

ADVERTISEMENT



Send flowers
for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99
from 19^{+s/h}

ProFlowers[®]
Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

they will bring? What are we doing to ourselves? What are we doing to our island?

*Reg White, vice president, Paradise Cruise Ltd.
Tom Youngblood*

The governor of New Jersey has just called a halt to its half-finished tunnel to New York City because it would bankrupt the state. Our citizens have a similar fear.

We genuinely do need the rail, or something. But so many huge problems have become apparent. We need to back up, restudy the whole picture and get rail right. Until we do, we need to bring all rail activities to a halt.

This commentary was signed by these 38 people:

- Dustine Aiu*
- Z. Aki, Hawaii Imiloa Movement*
- Jim Anthony*
- David E. Ashworth*
- Anthony Becker*
- Harmony Bentosino*
- Pamela Boyar, Haleiwa Farmers Market*
- Victoria Cannon*
- Tom Coffman*
- Hartson Doak*
- Doris Dudley*
- Kioni Dudley*
- Bel Santa Elena-DeGracia*
- Estrella Estillore*
- George Evensen*
- Jon K. Faurot*
- Nalei Faurot*
- Mark Fontaine*
- Robert D. Ford, USN (Ret.) captain*
- Charles A. Fox*
- Danielle Guion-Swenson*
- Steve Hanneman*
- Laura Horigan*
- Tere Hunt*
- Pua Iuli*
- Pearl Johnson, League of Women Voters planning committee chairwoman*
- Dan Loucks*
- Cheryl Loucks*
- John Luan, engineering manager (Ret.)*
- Michael Madix*
- Nada Mangialetti.*
- Antya Miller*
- Lucille Morelli*
- Geoffrey Paterson, AIA emeritus*
- Glenn Oamilda*
- Ben Shafer*

ADVERTISEMENT



ADT **FREE** Home Security System!

PROTECT YOUR HOME

As an extra to you for parts and activation with only a \$99 installation fee and the purchase of alarm monitoring services. Terms & Conditions apply.

CALL NOW and receive a **FREE** wireless remote control with **PANIC BUTTON!**

\$850 Value!

1-877-246-7519
Mon-Fri 9am - 10pm - Sat 9am-7pm - Sun 11am - 6pm EST

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Special election will fill Apo's City Council seat

By **B.J. Reyes**

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 13, 2010

In addition to the usual holiday cards and mail-order catalogs filling mailboxes this time of year, Leeward Oahu voters also will be finding ballots for the special election to fill the City Council seat vacated last month by Todd Apo.

How to vote

- » **By mail:** Ballots were mailed last week and must be returned to the City Clerk's office by 6 p.m. Dec. 29.
- » **Walk-in voting:** Vote at City Hall and Kapolei Hale, today through Dec. 27. There is no voting on Friday (a furlough day) or Sundays.

THE SEAT

The special election fills a vacancy created when City Council Chairman Todd Apo resigned to become public affairs manager in Hawaii for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.

THE DISTRICT

City Council District 1 comprises Ewa, Ewa Beach, Honouliuli, West Loch, Kapolei, Kalaeloa (Barbers Point), Honokai Hale and Nanakai Gardens, Ko Olina, Nanakuli, Waianae, Makaha, Keaau and Makua. city council More staradvertiser.com

expected to be known.

After the election is certified, the winner would be sworn in next month.

Names appearing on the ballot are Tom Berg, Kioni Dudley, Jason T. Espero, Mel Kahele, Celeste (Lacaden) Lacuesta, Chris Lewis, Matthew LoPresti, James K. Manaku, Rose Martinez, Bob McDermott, John P. Roco, Patty Kahanamoku Teruya, Gary Kahinano Velleses and Victoria (Cissy) Yuen.

Although she says she is not running in the race, Teruya's name appears on the ballot. City Clerk Bernice Mau said Teruya did not withdraw prior to the Nov. 19 filing deadline.

Like many races of this sort, the result is likely to come down to name recognition, Milner said.

Only McDermott has elected legislative experience, having served three terms in the state House until 2002, when he ran for Congress. He lost to U.S. Rep. Patsy Mink, who died after the primary but still won in the general election. Ed Case won a special election to fill the term.

McDermott is touting his experience and qualifications in the race.

The rest of the field includes first-time and former candidates, along with various neighborhood board members, community activists and organizers.

Dudley and Kahele have already faced charges of carpetbagging by another first-time candidate, LoPresti, who at a recent Hawaii Public Radio forum

ADVERTISEMENT



HEARTLAND QUALITY
OMAHA STEAKS
SINCE 1917

SAVE
up to **64%**
to

Plus, get
3 FREE Gifts Special Code: **45069ZWN**

To order: www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71
or call 1-877-586-4455

The race features 14 candidates running for a truncated term of just two years. "This is American democracy at its best," said political scientist Neal Milner.

Ballots were mailed to about 47,000 voters last week, and walk-in voting begins today at City Hall and Kapolei Hale. The deadline to return ballots to the City Clerk's office is 6 p.m. Dec. 29, when results are

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

said he moved into the district on Sept. 10. LoPresti filed a challenge to their residency with the City Clerk's office, claiming they do not live at the addresses listed with the nomination papers. He also has visited his rivals' residences with a camera to document his claims.

Mau said her office is investigating, but she could not comment on any timetable.

"It is a time-consuming process, and we are doing the best we can to make sure that we do a thorough job," she said.

Dudley, an agriculture advocate from Makakilo and former Republican candidate for lieutenant governor, said he spent a month searching for a candidate who would represent many of his own concerns. Finding none, he moved into the district.

Kahele said he also has represented the concerns in the area through community involvement, even though as a resident of Makakilo he lives outside District 1. He changed his voter registration to Ewa Beach in time to file for the vacancy.

Both noted Makakilo was carved out of Council District 1 in the last reapportionment. LoPresti called their defenses disingenuous to voters.

Moving into a district is common in elections, but politics expert Milner said it "smacks of ambition."

"There's nothing wrong with it," Milner added, "but it doesn't exactly pass the smell test for voters, so you've got to work real hard to convince them that there's some reason why they should choose you, even though you just moved into the district."

TOM BERG



Age: 46

Profession: Administrative services manager, state Rep. Kimberly Pine

Other experience: Ewa Neighborhood Board vice chair/chair Legislative Committee; Oahu Resource and Conservation Development Council Ewa director

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

For 11 years I worked at the state Capitol to bring people and their positions on various issues to the table to formulate win-win solutions; from strengthening homeowners' rights in community associations to expanding options for transportation solutions, serving the public and protecting their assets are my accomplishments.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

Goods and services are trapped on the H-1. We plan our lives around traffic. The city should apply for the tax-exempt bonds offered by the federal government to transform unused easements into drivable lanes without the need to raise taxes. Let's get back into the road-building business.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

I will hold the line and not raise any taxes -- vote no to property tax increases. The private sector hasn't been getting raises for years and is often faced with taking pay cuts. It is time government live within its means and freeze all pay hikes for itself.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

ADVERTISEMENT

DON'T DELAY

Get Proven, Proactive
IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION



LifeLock
#1 In Identity Theft Protection*

Call Now 1-877-670-1746

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

The desalination plant slated for Kalaeloa has been put off and should be completed. Since Ewa is the site for treating sewage well beyond its own borders, the Ewa community should get compensated for having to cope with the Honouliuli Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion. Water quality must be protected.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

Prefabricated modular housing units are the most affordable and can be constructed to withstand hurricane winds. Land designated for step-up type housing to include mobile park type operations will offer many working homeless families affordable housing. Revisit utilizing decommissioned ships and safe zones for emergency shelter.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

Lobby the state to pass legislation for Special Purpose Revenue Bonds so real estate developers can build the roads first and pay off the bonds with revenue from homes eventually sold. For H-1, the managed lanes concept that competed with the rail can still be built. Finish the Leeward Bikeway and expand it.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

I favored shipping waste that was unable to be burned for energy to the mainland and would perfect that operation to get the best contract possible for the taxpayers. Waimanalo Gulch resembles a broken treaty for the surrounding residents and this must be brought to a conclusion.

KIONI DUDLEY



Age: 71

Profession: Retired educator (high school and university)

Other experience: Founded Friends of Makakilo; organized Save Oahu Farmland Alliance; Named "Hero of Agriculture, Food, and the Environment" by Hawaii Ag Conference 2010.

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

Knowing the problems. Forty years of involvement in government decision making, testifying, writing books and newspaper commentaries, doing television programs, organizing citizens. Twelve years on Kapolei Neighborhood Board, serving District 1. Intervenor for the people before the Land Use Commission; temporarily saving the Ewa farmlands. Doctorate in pre-contact Hawaiian culture.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

Our greatest threat is losing the Ewa agricultural land now farmed by Aloun. Future generations cannot survive without it. The planned Hoopili development would bring freeway traffic to gridlock, with more than a two-hour commute each way.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

I would hold off raising property taxes until the economy has recovered and people feel it less. User fees can transfer a good part of the burden to tourists. Carefully selecting fees that least affect local people can raise money while causing the least stress to our people.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade

ADVERTISEMENT

Send flowers for any occasion
 Bouquets \$19.99 from \$19.99^{+s/h}
 ProFlowers®
 Order ONLY at proflowers.com/happy
 or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

An unrecognized obstacle: Besides costing billions, sewer and street work will create 40,000 jobs. Rail will create 87,500. New green jobs, housing construction, etc. will create tens of thousands more. This month, we have 28,000 jobless. We will import 130,000 workers; 350,000 people, 260,000 cars just to fill the jobs.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

The city must stop trying to sell its affordable rental projects to for-profit entities. At the same time, families in housing that can afford mainstream homes should be "encouraged" to move on up, freeing the rentals for others. More help should be found for people one check away from homelessness.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

Double the 1,000 park-and-ride stalls at UH-West Oahu serving H-1 traffic. No parking whatsoever is planned for Ewa and Ewa Beach traffic coming up Fort Weaver Road. Start Rail at UH-WO and head makai to join the OR&L line, with a station and park-and-ride in Ewa.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

Herhof GMBH treats solid waste using a Mechanical Biological Treatment that recovers high purity recyclable products and produces an alternative fuel for power plants. It could consume all current trash, and over decades could swallow all of the material in landfills. The city is studying it.

JASON T. ESPERO



Age: 25

Profession: Waikiki Health Center, shelter coordinator

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

I come from a family who is involved in public service. I bring passion, enthusiasm and a desire to serve and better our community. Currently, I work with the homeless and I believe that my direct experience working with the homeless and knowledge of the issue will help to find viable solutions.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

Job creation and ending homelessness are top issues in our district. I will support smart development in Ewa, Kapolei and Koolina and ensure that permits and zoning decisions for new businesses are approved in a timely manner. With homelessness, I will work with the city, state and developers to build more low-income housing.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

With the high cost of living in Hawaii and many families and residents living paycheck-to-paycheck, I understand that every dollar in our bank account is valuable. The last thing I would want to do is raise property taxes and fees to balance the budget. We must prioritize our expenses and work collaboratively as a community to find viable solutions.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

ADVERTISEMENT



FREE Home Security System!

PROTECT YOUR HOME

CALL NOW and receive a **FREE** wireless remote control with **PANIC BUTTON!**

At no cost to you for parts and activation with only a \$99 installation fee and the purchase of alarm monitoring services. Terms & Conditions apply.

\$850 Value!



1-877-246-7519

Mon-Fri 9am - 10pm - Sat 9am-7pm - Sun 11am - 6pm EST

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

Improving and fixing our sewers and waste-water treatment systems are something we have to do. The biggest challenge that we will face will be the cost. Turning to the state and federal government for assistance is a way we can address this issue.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

Homelessness is a very complex issue that needs to be dealt with on a case by case basis. Many of our homeless have a fixed and limited income. We need to build more low-income housing. I also support the "Housing First" model to house our most at-risked homeless. Lastly, we need more support for mental health and substance abuse services. In the short-term, I am open to the idea of a tent city or safe zones.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

I am a supporter of a rail-transit system on Oahu. I believe rail will help alleviate traffic and also provide a lot of opportunities for residents. The benefits of building rail outweigh the costs. Another idea that I believe will help relieve traffic congestion is having a ferry that runs from Ewa Beach to downtown.

What could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

It's important that we manage our waste correctly. Investing in recycling is a great way we can divert our waste away from the landfill. I support setting up recycling containers around downtown and shopping centers. Also, with a third boiler being built at H-POWER, it will help to reduce our waste into our 'aina.

MEL KAHELE



Age: Not provided

Profession or current employment: Not provided

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

Leadership skills and a deep understanding of how government works are the result of my job experiences. Living in Leeward Oahu for more than 37 years has given me a deep understanding of our challenges and opportunities, and love and respect for the people of our community.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

Traffic congestion is clearly the biggest problem facing District 1. The planned rail system will help to reduce the traffic problem, but we must also look at other solutions such as increasing and improving our already effective bus system.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

Raising real property taxes should be the absolute last resort. A comprehensive review of user fees is necessary. The main focus should be to make all city programs more fiscally efficient and effective. The challenge is, "How can we do more with less?"

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

The biggest obstacle by far is the astronomical cost of the required upgrade. Special revenue bonds should be issued to pay for the upgrade. A step-up increase in sewer fees is unavoidable to pay down the new debt service. Any delay will cost us more in the future.

What attempts should be made to help the city's

ADVERTISEMENT

DON'T DELAY

Get Proven, Proactive
IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION



LifeLock
#1 In Identity Theft Protection®

Call Now 1-877-670-1746

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

homeless population?

We must take a two-pronged approach. First, better organize our response to the current problem. This would include a more coordinated effort working with state and federal authorities. Second, the long-term solution will be to find ways to encourage job creation and economic development.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

Besides the rail, the city should encourage greater job creation in the Leeward area to get more cars off the highways in the morning and afternoon. And, where possible, city workers should be given telecommuting opportunities.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

The city should seriously investigate alternative technologies to recycle or convert waste into energy. In addition, there are numerous businesses and technologies that are recycling waste into fertilizers and building materials. Eliminating landfills would decrease the potential of long-term health effects of nearby residents.

CELESTE (LACADEN) LACUESTA



Age: 53

Profession: Semiretired

Other experience: Ewa Beach Neighborhood Board member

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

Over the years I have been a part of, or am apart of, many different issues and am capable of seeing these issues get resolved.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing

District 1, and what would you do about it?

The biggest problem facing District 1 is the increase in taxes. I would find solutions that could compromise all issues relating to the tax increase.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

I feel that raising the taxes would not resolve anything. In fact, I feel that it would make the economical problems that we have today worse.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

Lack of money. We need to think outside of the box. No more tax increase. A city-controlled or state lottery for only taxpaying workers and retirees that live in Hawaii.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

We need more steady jobs and self-help homes.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

One solution would be to move some business to the west side so that the flow of traffic is not all in one direction. Another solution would be to have lane dedicated to the buses during traffic so that people will be more inclined to ride the bus to work than use their car.

ADVERTISEMENT

HEARTLAND QUALITY
OMAHA STEAKS
SINCE 1917

SAVE
up to **64%**
to

Plus, get
3 FREE Gifts

Special Code: **45069ZWN**

To order: www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71
or call 1-877-586-4455

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

Invest in an eco-safety incinerator.

CHRIS LEWIS



Age: 54

Profession: Recreation director, Villages of Kapolei

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

I have spent the last 20 years working in the Nanakuli, Waianae and Kapolei communities and I have lived in Ewa Beach since 1999. I fully participate in my residential community and have a strong track record of successfully delivering quality programs to each of the communities I have served.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

The development of quality jobs in the community will serve District 1 well. Jobs, and job-training support would allow district residents to work closer to home and be a part of the community at all times. Tax support for entrepreneurial zones, and incentives for business are a must.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

The city needs to determine which parts of the budget can be serviced using grants, which parts could be developed into revenue generating services, then finally, determine which parts are vital to us all and for which we must all share the cost of maintaining. We should then act accordingly.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

The biggest obstacle to implementing the waste-water consent decree is a lack of financial preparation for such an expensive task. Fees on products and services, that while convenient cause environmental sins, would allow us to raise revenues while promoting environmental stewardship.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

Addressing the issue of homelessness requires an understanding that there is no single cause for it, and therefore no single solution. Developing affordable workforce housing will assist our working families, while supporting mental health and drug rehabilitation efforts can add another level of impact to the issue.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

Rail, in conjunction with enhancements of TheBus, and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) are necessary for relieving traffic congestion. Providing jobs on the west side, especially those in walkable communities, will reduce the need to drive into town and make better use of the rail as it rolls out as planned.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

Curbside recycling is a good first step towards lessening our landfill needs. I also believe that H-POWER should be expanded and other waste reducing technologies like plasma gasification be considered. Dis-incentivizing the use of non-biodegradable, non-reusables such as single serving plastic containers and plastic bags should also be explored.

ADVERTISEMENT

**Send flowers
for any occasion**

**Bouquets \$19.99
from \$19^{+s/h}**

ProFlowers[®]
Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

MATTHEW LoPRESTI



Age: 36

Profession: Assistant professor of philosophy and humanities at Hawaii Pacific University

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

I am a highly educated, commonsense problem solver with the type of can-do attitude needed in our community. I care about our problems because I am a working man with a working family who understands that what we need in Leeward Oahu are fresh ideas and not repeat candidates or career politicians.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

Traffic, but a long-neglected problem is that most of my district lives in a "food desert." The Ewa Plain has only one store that sells fresh produce, yet there are plenty of fast food and liquor stores. The Leeward Coast also faces this problem, resulting in increased childhood obesity and diabetes. I would ensure health-oriented community planning.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

For an economy so dependent on tourism there's little we can do except weather the storm. This means reducing expenses, not raising taxes -- which should always be a last resort. Streamlining departments, such as merging EMS and the Fire Department can save money. Consolidations should occur only if proven to be cost effective without compromising the quality of service.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

Cost. I support responsible use of our precious water

resources, such as xeriscaping and bringing the same incentives to bear for water catchments and low-flush toilets currently offered for solar-powered hot water heaters.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

Women and children are the largest homeless demographic, and kicking them from place to place is not only inhuman and degrading, it does nothing to address homelessness. I would ensure that the city partners with non-governmental (including faith-based) programs to provide them with training and oversight through coordinating outreach programs lead by professional social workers.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

I'm 100 percent in favor of mass transit and TOD. Any new transit corridor must be elevated, otherwise all we'll get is more gridlock. Long-term operating and maintenance costs haven't been adequately factored into selecting which technology gives us the best rail for the best price. I'll ensure a fair evaluation of all technology and costs.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

Reduce solid waste by phasing out single-use items and increasing recycling. Our limited land and financial resources are not wisely spent on buying and burying (or shipping) bulky Styrofoam containers and plastic grocery bags. Incentives to phase out such solid waste will reduce environmental damages and

ADVERTISEMENT



FREE Home Security System!

PROTECT YOUR HOME

CALL NOW and receive a **FREE** wireless remote control with **PANIC BUTTON!**

At no cost to you for parts and activation with only a \$99 installation fee and the purchase of alarm monitoring services. Terms & Conditions apply.

\$850 Value!



1-877-246-7519

Mon-Fri 9am - 10pm - Sat 9am-7pm - Sun 11am - 6pm EST

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

our long-term cost of living.

JAMES K. MANAKU



Age: 64

Profession: Full-time neighborhood member, N.B. No. 36.

Other experience: Transportation chair for Neighborhood Board 36, member of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization, Honolulu Community Action Program's Leeward council chair.

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

My willingness to make a difference in our communities. My public service as a neighborhood board member and a concerned parent and grandparent addressing the many issues and concerns within my community for the past 25 years. I would welcome the opportunity to work hard as a District 1 council member.

What do you think is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

My first concern is regarding the lack of oversight on curbing of uncontrolled development in Council District 1. Second would be homelessness and third would be to preserve farming.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

I believe there are other means regarding the city's budget shortfall and would welcome to share it with the rest of the counsel.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

The biggest obstacle the city is facing is due to uncontrolled development that overload our systems that in turn creates sewage spills, hence, the many lawsuits that take away needed tax revenues.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

After working with various groups and organizations, I found that zoning plays a role. Such as rezoning and spot zoning and would welcome the opportunity to address this issue.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

First is to curb the uncontrolled development. Development shouldn't be allowed or accepted until the traffic that they create will not create congestion.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill in Honolulu?

As I've testified many times: Recycling, composting and trash-to-electricity would reduce the need for large landfills.

ROSE MARTINEZ



Age: Not provided

Profession: Medical technologist; legislative aide/community liaison, state House of Representatives

ADVERTISEMENT

DON'T DELAY

Get Proven, Proactive
IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION

 **LifeLock**
#1 In Identity Theft Protection*

Call Now 1-877-670-1746

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

Other experience: Health care professional; public health advocate; school teacher

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

My diverse work experience, educational background and direct involvement with the community provided me with the passion for public service and the commitment to serve the community. ...

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

Residents have expressed so many concerns regarding traffic and congestion, water and sewage fees, neglected parks, waste management, homelessness etc. All of these concerns direct to economy, if there is a stable economy, all these issues can be addressed, so my priority will concentrate on building the economy. West Oahu being the fastest growing community in the state right now is home to future developments that can strengthen the economy.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

I am against raising property taxes, but would be open to opening the dialogue of reducing waste such as duplicate services between the state and the city as well as explore potential for increased user fees for increased revenue generation.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

We must start talking about an overhaul of our current system, as transit-oriented development will require greater capacity in order to allow high density residential growth. We must look for a feasible way to do this by seeking private-public partnerships that will share the cost of upgrade.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

I will support the establishment of the new City Housing Authority and will work to ensure that the office is adequately staffed and maintained to work together to bring ideas and solutions to the table to provide more affordable housing, more rental unit developments, and integration of existing programs like emergency safe zones and Housing First project to provide transitional programs.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

I will support the mass transit project that would alleviate traffic congestion, since Honolulu rail transit project has been voted by the community I will support the construction that is fiscally responsible and believe that this is a long-term solution to alleviate congestion and traffic particularly in my district where commuters wait the most in traffic.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

Recycling is a must. I would work to completely phase curbside recycling to the whole county, find incentives to encourage the establishment of more local recycling companies, and work with businesses and condominium associations to try and encourage them to recycle as well. ...

BOB MCDERMOTT



Age: 47

Profession: Executive director, U.S. Navy League, Honolulu Council

ADVERTISEMENT



SAVE
up to **64%**
to

Plus, get
3 FREE Gifts



Special Code: **45069ZWN**

**To order: www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71
or call 1-877-586-4455**

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

Other experience: State legislator, Honolulu Civil Service commissioner, USMC officer, distribution manager, Royal Kona Coffee; and educator

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

I served three terms in the state House of Representatives and thoroughly understand the legislative process. As a Civil Service commissioner, executive, author and former Marine Corps officer I am experienced and qualified. I've lived in Ewa Beach for eight years and know my district's issues and the priorities of our community.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

District 1 and Leeward Oahu have not had the kind of infrastructure improvements enjoyed by the rest of the island. This has led to disproportionate problems with traffic congestion and park maintenance. The lack of commuter options has made rail transit and an emergency bypass road the leading issues in our district.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

Our people cannot afford increases in taxes and fees. Property taxes should be tied to the consumer price index and not be allowed to fluctuate wildly with boom and bust of the real estate market.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems, and how would you address it?

The obstacle is cost. The city has reached an agreement ... to stretch the process of complying with the consent decree over a relatively long time. This will mitigate the financial impact and give us time to develop positive communications with the EPA. Repairing collection systems should be the priority over enhanced treatment.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

I support consistent enforcement of the laws while providing assistance to those who need it. We should focus on supporting families with children displaced by the lack of affordable housing, and by partnering with private sector to incentivize the building of truly affordable, entry-level homes.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

We must start building the rail system. Not only will this provide the long-term alternative for our daily commuters, but also the economic stimulus for the construction industry to get our people back to work. Secondly, we need a fully functional Leeward bypass road with community approval.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

We must continue to increase the diversion rate to the landfill. We can do this with more efficient recycling, expediting the expansion of H-POWER and considering new technologies and strategies. Ideas like recycling plastics into fuel, ash from H-POWER used in concrete and asphalt as aggregate and solid municipal waste exported as refuse derived fuel pellets are among things we should investigate.

JOHN P. ROCO



Age: 45

Profession: Self-employed counselor

ADVERTISEMENT

**Send flowers
for any occasion**

**Bouquets \$19.99
from 19^{+s/h}**

ProFlowers[®]
Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

Other experience: Former hotel worker and produce (of Waianae) sales on the mainland

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

I know traffic. Many times, I stared at the old OR&L (Oahu Railway and Land Co.), wondering why not use available resources. "I do the legwork." I look for the "best bang for the buck," finding solutions helping more people, for much less -- looking beyond the "facade" for better ways for all of us.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1, and what would you do about it?

The biggest problem is "disconnect" of lawmakers. So many oppose the fireworks ban, which only recognizes exceptions of the Chinese culture. But aren't there many people of other cultures who have responsibly used fireworks while hurting no one? Blanket laws penalizing everybody are wrong -- we need focus and better differentiation.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

Do not spend \$5.5 billion, hiring out-of-state (as new head of "elevated" "heavy rail" transit authority). Instead: "at grade" "light rail" with Hawaii workers' know-how, combined with Oahu Bike Plan. Save 4/5 of \$5.5 billion, balancing the budget with no tax increases, and employing people from Hawaii.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and waste-water treatment systems and how would you address it?

Biggest problem is a "beyond budget" rail system and raising taxes for it becomes more of a priority than taking care of basic sewer and wastewater treatment. Buying a \$250,000 Ferrari when your budget affords a \$50,000 Ford leads to ignoring city sewer problems. We need to spend responsibly and budget accordingly.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

Frank Fasi's "safe zones" became drug and alcohol mayhem. Out-of-state homeless increases are skyrocketing. We need safe zones, but anticipatory of all wrongs before, while partnering with many groups active with the homeless. Then in humanitarian and dignified manner, require processing the homeless into these "safe zones."

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

The OR&L to Nanakuli with "at grade" "light" rail would be 30 miles (beyond 20 of "elevated" "heavy" rail), combined with the Oahu Bike Plan would cost 1/5 of \$5.5 billion while reaching more people -- traffic decreased for those who live furthest, decreases traffic for ALL OF US.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

At a Japanese school and also in Taiwan, food scraps are collected and immediately transported to farm fields for fertilizer -- an excellent process of using nutrients to make better produce. Such innovation and problem-solving needs to be researched and executed with Honolulu city good will and partnership.

VICTORIA (CISSY) YUEN



Age: 54.

Profession: Unemployed

Other experience: kumu hula for Halau Te Haa Lehua;

ADVERTISEMENT



FREE

Home Security System!

PROTECT YOUR HOME

As no cost to you for parts and activation with only a \$99 installation fee and the purchase of alarm monitoring services. Terms & Conditions apply.

CALL NOW and receive a FREE wireless remote control with PANIC BUTTON!

\$850 Value!

1-877-246-7519

Mon-Fri 9am - 10pm - Sat 9am-7pm - Sun 11am - 6pm EST

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

Former aide at state Legislature and City Council with more than 20 years of experience.

landfill.

What qualifies you to be on the City Council?

Four generations of my family have resided in District 1 for many years. I have a deep and sincere Aloha for this district's communities and families. It is important that even while we are faced with challenges during a tough economy, that we continue to strive to build a strong foundation for our families. I hope to be able to help in planning it's future, while embracing the legislative process as a Council member.

What do you feel is the biggest problem facing District 1 and what would you do about it?

Unemployment. The state of Hawaii and City & County of Honolulu governments need to work in partnership with private sector businesses to on-the-job training programs and job placement opportunities.

How do you feel about raising property taxes and other fees to balance the city budget?

Against increasing property taxes and city fees.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing the city in implementing the consent decree to upgrade city sewers and wastewater treatment systems and how would you address it?

Financing the consent decree. Remedy: International businesses need to invest in Hawaii to infuse new money into Honolulu.

What attempts should be made to help the city's homeless population?

Provide job opportunities and coordinate health and social services provided by government agencies and non-profit organizations.

What solutions would you offer to relieve traffic congestion?

Promote current use of carpooling, city bus service and other mass transportation services. Plan for future mass transportation means.

What more could the city do to reduce solid waste and lessen the need for a landfill?

City government and business community need to promote and encourage consumer recycling. City needs to review technologies to lessen the need for

HOW TO VOTE

>> **By mail:** Ballots were mailed last week and must be returned to the City Clerk's office by 6 p.m. Dec. 29.

>> **Walk-in voting:** Vote at City Hall and Kapolei Hale, today through Dec. 27. There is no voting on Friday (a furlough day) or Sundays.



THE SEAT

The special election fills a vacancy created when City Council Chairman Todd Apo resigned to become public affairs manager in Hawaii for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.



THE DISTRICT

City Council District 1 comprises Ewa, Ewa Beach, Honouliuli, West Loch, Kapolei, Kalaeloa (Barbers Point), Honokai Hale and Nanakai Gardens, Ko Olina, Nanakuli, Waianae, Makaha, Keaau and Makua.

STAR-ADVER

ADVERTISEMENT

DON'T DELAY

Get Proven, Proactive

IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION

 **LifeLock**
#1 In Identity Theft Protection*

Call Now 1-877-670-1746

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Less rant, more rationale needed on cost of rail transit

By David Shapiro

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 15, 2010

I finally found some time to spend with the 138-page financial analysis of the \$5.5 billion Oahu rail project that former Gov. Linda Lingle released on her way out the door.

I can't vouch for the conclusions by Infrastructure Management Group Inc. that transit tax revenues could be 30 percent below city projections, costs could exceed estimates by \$1.7 billion or more and ridership assumptions might be overly optimistic.

But the analysis is measured in tone, with ample supporting data, and isn't the "anti-rail rant" that Mayor Peter Carlisle described in his own rant the day after the \$350,000 study came out.

He called it an "appalling waste" of taxpayer dollars because one of the consultants has favored buses over rail -- as did the city's primary rail contractor, Parsons Brinckerhoff, when the company advised former Mayor Jeremy Harris on bus rapid transit.

Carlisle now says the city is analyzing the IMG study, but it appears more for the purpose of refutation than a serious attempt to see whether there is anything to be learned.

IMG isn't the first to question whether the city is raising enough to pay for rail from the half-cent excise tax imposed in 2007 -- especially with the \$1.5 billion federal share less certain because of Republican gains in Washington.

It's a fair question to ask what Plan B is if the city comes up short, but the administration has avoided a straight answer.

Carlisle said excise tax collections for rail are 99 percent on target, which if true is only because the city trimmed its original projections by \$300 million and made up the difference by diverting money from TheBus and Handi-Van -- funds that eventually could

have to be covered by the general fund and property taxes.

Even with the lowered projections for tax collections, the city had to use a fiscal year ending in March for transit tax accounting to make its numbers line up.

Such manipulations are exactly what make people suspicious that the city is being overly optimistic and that there are hidden costs -- and taxes -- down the road.

If the IMG conclusions prove valid, the current half-cent excise tax for transit would need to be raised by 24 percent to 76 percent or extended five to 19 years beyond its 2022 expiration to finish paying for the 20-mile commuter line between Kapolei and Honolulu.

Carlisle made clear during the campaign that he supported rail, and that's fine; nobody expected him to reverse policy.

But we did expect him to elevate the discussion to a more respectful tone. It's disappointing that the new city administration, like the old, is responding to contrary views on rail with name-calling as a first resort.

David Shapiro can be reached at volcanicash@gmail.com or blog.volcanicash.net.

ADVERTISEMENT



Send flowers for any occasion
Bouquets
 from **\$19.99** +s/h
ProFlowers
 Offer ONLY available at:
proflowers.com/happy
 or call 1.877.804.1133

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™



Honolulu



Sandi Yara

Honolulu Rail Transit gets GREEN light

December 16th, 2010 7:54 pm HAST

Do you like this story?

Like

Be the first of your friends to like this.

Slideshow: Rail

WOW ... This evening (December 16), we found out that Governor Neil Abercrombie accepted the Final EIS for the Honolulu Rail Transit project.

Good news for the many rail supporters who were put on hold for such a long time by the former administration (which left office on December 6).

Moving relatively quickly, Governor Abercrombie signed off on the EIS which is a giant step forward and will result in the City finally being able to break ground, create jobs move us toward a solution that will ease the traffic for thousands of West Oahu residents.

Related articles

This is an excerpt of a statement issued by Governor: The role of the state in this step of approving the environmental impact statement for Honolulu's rail transit system is to ensure that all economic, social and environmental risks have been properly addressed under law. After a thorough review by and consulting with the state Office of Environmental Quality Control, I conclude the City and County of Honolulu has met these obligations. I continue to support a transit system in Oahu. Projects associated with it will be central to Oahu's future development.

According to Mayor Peter Carlisle in a news release, "The rail project EIS has been done prudently and is in

- Clarifying the Transit Authority Charter Amendment question
- Saving nearly \$9500 a year using public transportation
- Americans view transit as better option than driving

Popular articles

1. [Holiday gifts for winter motorcyclists](#)
2. [Audi is hot, sales in U.S. soar](#)
3. [Kyle's Corner \(FYI\) Volkswagen gunning to be number one - can anything stop it?](#)
4. [Airline taxiway incidents raise concerns](#)
5. [Easyriders Bike Show and Tour – a builder with no regrets](#)
6. [Hyundai Sonata finalist for North American car of the year](#)

Popular slideshows

1. [Paso Robles Car Show returns: Photos of 2007](#)
2. [Photos from the Black Hills, Carhenge, the prairie, Pawnee Grasslands](#)
3. [Road to Beijing Nightmare](#)
4. [Sights from the Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument](#)
5. [Chrysler Thomas Special wins top bid at RM's Meadow Brook Auction](#)

Most commented articles

1. [No Radar needed in Ohio - For Speeding Tickets](#)
2. [Second aircraft involved in Lebanon ET409 crash](#)
3. [Ford Windstar recall list](#)
4. [Video: 7-year-old steals car to skip church](#)
5. [Ethiopia claims Lebanon has tainted ET409 inquiry](#)
6. [CAR Views: Why aren't people buying more fuel-efficient vehicles?](#)

compliance with state environmental law.”

In a nutshell - Honolulu Rail Transit is a 20-mile elevated rail line that will connect West Oahu with downtown Honolulu and Ala Moana. The system features 200-foot-long electric, steel-wheel trains capable of carrying more than 300 passengers each. Trains can carry more than 6,000 riders per hour (One 300-passenger train can relieve the freeway of 200 cars every three minutes during morning rush hour).



Honolulu



Sandi Yara

My "personal" Rail poll

December 16th, 2010 6:48 pm HAST

Do you like this story?

Like

Be the first of your friends to like this.

Related articles

In Civil Beat recently, the following was poste ...

The Governor's Report on rail transit finances predicts the city's funds from the 0.5 percent General Excise Tax (GET) surcharge on Oahu will not generate the money needed for the project.

"The prediction that there will be less money raised from the GET tax is wrong," Mayor Carlisle said in response.

Popular articles

Just to see if residents felt the same way, I contacted a few people and asked for their comments and this is the unedited feedback I got.

Waikikiresident, F.F. ... I agree with the mayor. We need the rail system no matter what, for the good of our city and state. Sure it will have cost overruns but most major projects have them. We can somehow manage when the time comes. Opponents are like those who still insist that Obama is a foreign-born and they won't change their minds no matter what.

SaltLakeresident, L.V. ... I somewhat agree on the basic statement that the tax collected will not generate the money needed. The more time passes, the higher the costs. Although the increase in costs are expected, but at what rate of increase/inflation? My opinion – too little, too late.

concerns

5. [Easyriders Bike Show and Tour – a builder with no regrets](#)
6. [Hyundai Sonata finalist for North American car of the year](#)

Popular slideshows

1. [Paso Robles Car Show returns: Photos of 2007](#)
2. [Photos from the Black Hills, Carhenge, the prairie, Pawnee Grasslands](#)
3. [Road to Beijing Nightmare](#)
4. [Sights from the Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument](#)
5. [Chrysler Thomas Special wins top bid at RM's Meadow Brook Auction](#)

Most commented articles

1. [No Radar needed in Ohio - For Speeding Tickets](#)
2. [Second aircraft involved in Lebanon ET409 crash](#)
3. [Ford Windstar recall list](#)
4. [Video: 7-year-old steals car to skip church](#)
5. [Ethiopia claims Lebanon has tainted ET409 inquiry](#)
6. [CAR Views: Why aren't people buying more fuel-efficient vehicles? UPDATED!](#)

Hawaii Kai resident, M.D. ... I fully support Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle's response to Governor Lingle's poorly procured \$350K report on rail from IMG. I agree that the report is a biased, anti-rail rant that has the fingerprints of two well-known anti-rail activists that have contributed to a predetermined slant against the Honolulu rail project. We need to move forward with this important transportation infrastructure project that will improve the quality of life for many O`ahu residents and alleviate traffic.

Kāneoheresident. S.F. ... I don't appreciate the fact that I will be paying more in GE Taxes for something I will probably never use. I'm sure if a rail system were built to connect Kaneohe to Kailua, a lot of people living in the leeward and downtown areas would probably feel the same way.

From Pearl City resident, W.S. ... Although I won't be around to see it completed, I'm for rail and I'm glad to see they are also thinking about how seniors and the handicapped can use it too. There is no room for more roads. Rail is the only answer and the GET and government funding will see the project through.

Waipio resident, J.S. ... Governor Lingle should be ashamed of herself in using \$350,000 in state funds to create a poorly constructed report that is extremely biased against the city's rail project. That money could have gone to resolve other important state issues in a time that critically state-funded social and educational services are being cut. The responsibility of the Governor is to evaluate the final environmental impact statement of the project to ensure that it meets all of the environmental concerns as outlined by HRS Chapter 343. An audit of the rail financial plan is not the duty of the Governor and thank God that Abercrombie will move forward with ensuring that rail becomes a reality for Honolulu residents."

As for myself ... I cannot see any other alternative but to get the rail project going. It's long overdue and traffic into town from the west side will only get worse as more and more of the former sugar cane lands are converted into residential communities. When the second city is fully realized and

more resort projects are completed, people living in Honolulu with jobs on the west side will appreciate having the rail option available to them too. If the GET does not generate the needed funds, other options – including creative fundraising will prevail. There is no way this project can wait another 20 years.

This was just a small sampling of Oahu's population. Opinions are varied but, thankfully, the project moves forward.



MEMBER CENTER: Create Account | Log In

SITE SEARCH WEB SEARCH BY Google™

Go

HAWAII NEWS NOW

KGMB KHNL

Job Link Now Real Estate Just Pay Half Spa Card Health Connections Perfect Home Coupons Mobile Holiday Gifts Home News Sunrise Hawaii Five-0 Weather Sports Video What's On Contests Lifestyle America Now Contact Us



Email Share | Print Text Size

Abercrombie OKs environmental review on rail

Recommend 7 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends. Posted: Dec 16, 2010 6:30 PM Updated: Dec 16, 2010 11:04 PM

By Brooks Baehr - bio | email

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - Just ten days after taking office Governor Neil Abercrombie has given the city's rail project the state's blessing.

Thursday Abercrombie signed the final Environmental Impact Statement on Honolulu's 20-mile rail line that will run from Kapolei through downtown Honolulu to Ala Moana.

Abercrombie concluded that economic, social and environmental risks have been properly addressed under law.

In a letter to Wayne Yoshioka, city Director of Transportation Services, Abercrombie said, "I find that the mitigation measures proposed in the environmental impact statement will minimize the negative impacts of the project."

By approving the EIS Abercrombie put the rail project back on track.

Former Governor Linda Lingle said she would not approve the EIS until an independent financial review, paid for by the state, was complete. On December 3, three days before Abercrombie replaced Lingle as governor, she announced the review's findings. It estimates rail will cost at least \$1.7 billion more than the city's estimated \$5.5 billion price tag.

Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle is not deterred by the state's cost projection.

"I am pleased and enthusiastic to announce I have a copy of the final environmental impact statement for the Honolulu rail transit project signed by governor Neil Abercrombie clearing the way for the project to move forward," Carlisle said during a hastily called press conference early Thursday night.

The Federal Transit Administration needs to issue something called a Record of Decision, and the Honolulu City Council needs to grant a shoreline management permit before work on the project can begin.

Carlisle said both things can happen before February and he hopes work on the project can begin early next year.

"There's a long way to go from here to putting a shovel in the ground," said Cliff Slater, head of honolulutraffic.com, a citizens group that promotes alternatives to rail. Slater maintains rail is still in jeopardy.

"The EIS is the first part of the thing. There are all kinds of things that it has to go through yet before we get to the point where the FTA is going to commit," Slater added.

Slater said money is the biggest obstacle. The city is expecting \$1.5 billion from the federal government, but Slater said that money is no guarantee now that cost-cutting republicans control congress.

Hawaii's construction industry is eager for the work to begin.

"I would like to take the time, the Hawaii Building and Construction Trades Council and many of its affiliates in attendance this evening would like to reassure the mayor and the people of the city and county of Honolulu that we will deliver a quality project on time and under budget," said Buzzy Hong, of the Hawaii Building and Construction Trades Council.

Copyright 2010 Hawaii News Now. All rights reserved.

Comments

Terms of Use: We welcome your participation in our community. Please keep your comments civil and on point. Notify us of any inappropriate comments by clicking the "Mark as Offensive" link. You must be at least 13 years of age to post comments. By submitting a comment, you agree to these Terms of Service

You must be logged in to leave a comment. Login or register



From the Health Channel



- FSA changes to hurt public
Health reform faces legal fight
FDA on breast milk sharing
1 in 6 hit by food poisoning
Money can't buy happiness





MEMBER CENTER: Create Account | Log In

SITE SEARCH WEB SEARCH BY Google

Go



Job Link Now Real Estate Just Pay Half Spa Card Health Connections Perfect Home Coupons Mobile Holiday Gifts Home News Sunrise Hawaii Five-0 Weather Sports Video What's On Contests Lifestyle America Now Contact Us



Email Share | Print Text Size

Gov. Abercrombie approves Honolulu Rail Environmental Impact Statement

Recommend One person recommends this. Be the first of your friends
Posted: Dec 16, 2010 6:30 PM
Updated: Dec 16, 2010 6:30 PM

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - Gov. Neil Abercrombie has signed off on the Environmental Impact Statement for Oahu's rail project.

He concluded that economic, social and environmental risks have been properly addressed under law.

Mayor Carlisle is holding a press conference Thursday night.

The governor released the following statement:

"The role of the state in this step of approving the environmental impact statement for Honolulu's rail transit system is to ensure that all economic, social and environmental risks have been properly addressed under law. After a thorough review by and consulting with the state Office of Environmental Quality Control, I conclude the City and County of Honolulu has met these obligations.

I continue to support a transit system in Oahu. Projects associated with it will be central to Oahu's future development.

Now is our opportunity to strengthen our commitment to ensuring that the project is done right, without delay, and with a vision of Oahu's future clearly in mind. Unresolved issues will need to be addressed with dispatch.

The City and County has the lead responsibility in the implementation of this project. I pledge continuing open communication at the state level with the city authorities and communities across Oahu and all the islands."

We'll have the latest information on this story tonight on Hawaii News Now starting at 9 p.m.

Copyright 2010 Hawaii News Now. All rights reserved.

Comments

Terms of Use: We welcome your participation in our community. Please keep your comments civil and on point. Notify us of any inappropriate comments by clicking the "Mark as Offensive" link. You must be at least 13 years of age to post comments. By submitting a comment, you agree to these Terms of Service

You must be logged in to leave a comment. Login or register

Echo 0 Items

Admin



See what the stars hold for you



- Check your daily forecast
- Daily love horoscopes
- Daily career horoscopes
- Your finances, by sign
- Zodiac dating guide

AIEA COLLISION CENTER

98-107A Lipoa Place
Aiea, HI 96701
485-5700

The first name in quality auto repairs.

Governor Abercrombie Approves Rail EIS

Last Update: 6:41 pm

[Print Story](#) | [ShareThis](#)

Governor Abercrombie's statement:

The role of the state in this step of approving the environmental impact statement for Honolulu's rail transit system is to ensure that all economic, social and environmental risks have been properly addressed under law.

After a thorough review by and consulting with the state Office of Environmental Quality Control, I conclude the City and County of Honolulu has met these obligations.

I continue to support a transit system in Oahu. Projects associated with it will be central to Oahu's future development.

Now is our opportunity to strengthen our commitment to ensuring that the project is done right, without delay, and with a vision of Oahu's future clearly in mind. Unresolved issues will need to be addressed with dispatch.

The City and County has the lead responsibility in the implementation of this project. I pledge continuing open communication at the state level with the city authorities and communities across Oahu and all the islands.

We'll have the latest on this story on the KHON2 News at 10 p.m.



Governor Abercrombie Signs-Off on Final Rail EIS



Reported by: [Brianne Randle](#)

Email: brandle@khon2.com

Last Update: 12/16 9:39 pm

[Print Story](#) | [ShareThis](#)

Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle called a late press conference Thursday to say the City has the green-light to go ahead with rail.

"I have a copy of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Honolulu's Rail Transit Project signed by Governor Neil Abercrombie, clearing way for project to move forward," he said.

The City anticipates the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will now issue a record of decision to allow the City to break ground.



"Yes we did, we told Santa we wanted a train for Christmas, and he delivered," says Buzzy Hong, Executive Director Hawaii Building and Construction Trades Council.

Hawaii's building and construction industry says thousands of unemployed workers could get back to work. The City has already awarded 2 construction contracts for the project.

"We will deliver a quality project on time and under budget," said Hong.

"If my friends for the Union have done this, I will do my best to hold their feet to the fire," said Mayor Carlisle.

"Absolutely not on time and not on budget-time and time again because that's the experience throughout the nation," said rail opponent Panos Prevedourous.

Opponents say there are still more hurdles ahead before the 5.5 billion dollar rail projects starts rolling.

"One, lack of money. Where is the money? A lawsuit. Hawaiian and others - Oahu burial council, historical preservation," said Prevedourous.

"The FTA has already told the City their forecast for GE Tax collections is unacceptable," said Cliff Slater, rail opponent.

The City's position is that the rail transit financial plan is sound, and multiple government partners have pledged funding.

"I'm convinced that if we don't do it now, we won't do it for decades and it will cost us far more money," said Mayor Carlisle.

"But the question I have for Peter Carlisle is show me the federal money," said Prevedouros.

Mayor Carlisle said he's confident the rail project will move forward by early next year.



- Home
- Weather
- Local News**
- Hawaii Going Green
- Investigates
- News Archive
- Mixed Plate
- Most Popular
- Slideshow
- As Seen On KITV
- u local
- Holiday
- Project Economy
- National News
- Politics
- Traffic
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Food
- Health
- About KITV
- Irresistible

SEARCH Site Web Yellow Pages

Hot Topics: [Adopt A Family](#) | [KITV4/DirectTV](#) | [Year In Review](#) | [u local](#)

[As Seen On KITV](#)

Homepage > HONOLULU NEWS

Gov. Approves Rail EIS

City Plans Ground Breaking For Train Soon

Catherine Cruz KITV4 News Reporter

POSTED: 10:09 pm HST December 16, 2010
 UPDATED: 10:31 pm HST December 16, 2010

-
-
-

HONOLULU -- Honolulu's rail project has scaled a major hurdle with Gov. Neil Abercrombie signing off on the Environmental Impact Statement.

Mayor Peter Carlisle made the announcement Thursday adding that he expects to get a record of decision from the Federal Transit Administration very soon.

The city administration called a last minute news conference yet managed to have on hand business and union leaders, and key developers.

"It will change the way we do business in Hawaii certainly in this county," said First Hawaiian Bank president Don Horner.

"This represents a milestone for everyone in the West Oahu Kapolei area. It brings hope to a new generation of people that there will be connectivity and transportation for where the houses are," said Davie Rae of Kapolei Property Development.

But it was Buzzy Hong, the head of the Metal Trades Council who put the development in the context of the season.

"Yes we did. We asked Santa for a train for Christmas and he delivered," quipped Hong.

Mayor Carlisle says the city has awarded two rail contracts so far this year, with two more planned for next year. The mayor hopes to have construction crews off the bench and working on rail very soon.

"We believe that by summer we will have in the neighborhood of 2000 jobs," said mayor Carlisle.

Union leader Hong made this very bold promise:

"We'd like to assure the mayor and the city and county of Honolulu that we will deliver a quality project on time and under budget," Hong said.

Council chairman Nester Garcia said before the city administration breaks ground it has to secure a shoreline management permit from the city council. That is set to happen on Jan. 26th with five new council members on board.

Copyright 2010 by KITV.com All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

Shared on Facebook

- Cul-de-sac Lights Up Kapolei**
142 people shared this.
- 92-Year-Old Woman Finishes Marathon**
991 people shared this.

The Adult Learner Program offers:

- Flexible Schedules
- Convenient Locations
- Personal Attention
- Online Classes

Hawaii Pacific University
[Click Here For More Info](#)

More Stories:

- Two Council Candidates Face Residency Challenges (KITV.com)
- Andy Irons' Widow Gives Birth (KITV.com)
- Shipping Companies Under Scrutiny For Illegal Fireworks (KITV.com)
- New Tax Assessments Concern Honolulu Property Owners (KITV.com)

Selected for you by our sponsor:

- The 20 Worst Charities in America (MainStreet.com)
- Hyundai Tops 500,000 U.S. Sales For The First Time In Its History (Hyundai News)

Most Read Most Watched Most Commented

- Property Owners Concerned About Tax Assessments
- Inmate Claims Trauma From Cellmate's Suicide
- 92-Year-Old Marathon Finisher May Have Broken Record
- FBI Arrest Couple In Prison Ponzi Scheme
- [» More Most Popular](#)

Pictures In The News

- Larry King: His Biggest Gaffes**
- 'Pink Panther' Director Blake Edwards Dies**
- Techie Kids' Toys For Every Age Group**



Abercrombie's EIS approval green-lights rail construction

By Star-Advertiser Staff

POSTED: 06:28 p.m. HST, Dec 16, 2010

Gov. Neil Abercrombie has approved an environmental impact statement for Oahu's rail transit project, a step that will allow construction on the \$5.5 billion project to begin.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye had said the state could lose a promised \$1.55 billion in federal funds if construction doesn't begin soon on the 20-mile, east Kapolei to Ala Moana elevated rail line.

Abercrombie's predecessor, Gov. Linda Linge, had declined to sign off on the EIS until an independent financial review was performed.

That review was released last week. It said the project could cost \$1.7 billion more than projected and that tax revenues and ridership could fall short of expectations.

But Abercrombie and new Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle said they believe the project remains on sound footing. Abercrombie signed off on the EIS and forwarded it to the mayor's office, Abercrombie spokeswoman Donalyn Dela Cruz said.

Abercrombie issued this statement:

"The role of the state in this step of approving the environmental impact statement for Honolulu's rail transit system is to ensure that all economic, social and environmental risks have been properly addressed under law. After a thorough review by and consulting with the state Office of Environmental Quality Control, I conclude the City and County of Honolulu has met these obligations.

"I continue to support a transit system in Oahu. Projects associated with it will be central to Oahu's future development.

"Now is our opportunity to strengthen our commitment to ensuring that the project is done right, without delay, and with a vision of Oahu's future clearly in mind. Unresolved issues will need to be addressed with dispatch.

"The City and County has the lead responsibility in the implementation of this project. I pledge continuing open communication at the state level with the city authorities and communities across Oahu and all the islands."

ADVERTISEMENT

Get a **FREE ADT-Monitored Home Security System.***

(With \$99 customer installation and purchase of ADT alarm monitoring services. See important terms and conditions below.)

Call Now! 1-877-835-8373

SECURITY CHOICE

ADT Authorized Company

*\$99.00 Customer Installation Charge. 36-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$35.99 per month (\$1,295.64). Form of payment must be by credit card or electronic charge to your checking or savings account. Offer applies to homeowners only. Local permit fees may be required. Satisfactory credit history required. Certain restrictions apply. Offer valid for new Security Choice - An ADT Authorized Dealer customers only and not on purchases from ADT Security Services, Inc. Other rate plans available. Cannot be combined with any other offer. **\$100 VISA® Gift Card Offer. \$100 VISA Gift Card is provided by Security Choice and is not sponsored by ADT Security Services. Requires mail-in redemption. Call 1-888-407-2338 for complete restrictions and redemption requirements.

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

Letters to the Editor

For Thursday, December 16, 2010

Current rail plan appears to be financially unsound

Mayor Peter Carlisle is now saying he is reviewing the state's financial analysis after initially proclaiming the report "biased and an appalling waste of taxpayer money."

He also stated that the findings of the state study "are contrary to independent financial reviews conducted by the Federal Transit Administration which say the project's financial plan is sound."

The state's report clearly points out that the FTA's Independent financial consultant, Jacobs Consultants, raised similar concerns in its assessment:

"First, it is questionable whether the city can afford the growth in subsidies presented in this financial plan, which require a higher portion of the general fund and highway fund revenues than has historically been the case. Second, the subsidies could be yet higher due to optimistic assumptions regarding operating cost growth for all services. Third, the projected cash balances of the public transportation system fund, inferred from current cash plus investments and the forecasted balanced budget, fall below the (standard) that would be needed to support a higher rating. Finally, there is some prospect that the project's O&M costs could be understated ..."

The question is not rail or no rail, but what rail can we afford? Hopefully, the mayor will consider the cost and the size of the debt that he intends to place on the people of this county in his blind pursuit of a project that by all indications is not financially sound.

Barry Fukunaga
Former chief of staff for Gov. Linda Lingle



Letters to the Editor

For Thursday, December 16, 2010

Let's see mockup of a rail station

Bravo to Kioni Dudley and others for the Island Voices commentary on what a huge mistake the rail project will be ("Current rail plans rife with problems," Star-Advertiser, Dec. 13). Add my name to the list of signers supporting their views. I call for a plywood mockup of a section of the Honolulu rail, with a football-field-size station, to be built for all the public to view. Then let's take another vote. This would be prudent, especially in light of the recent cost study that shows projected costs estimated to rise to \$7 billion, if not more.

Bob Schieve
Haleiwa



- Home
- Weather
- Local News**
- Hawaii Going Green
- Investigates
- News Archive
- Mixed Plate
- Most Popular
- Slideshows
- As Seen On KITV
- u local
- Holiday
- Project Economy
- National News
- Politics
- Traffic
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Food
- Health
- About KITV
- Irresistible

Get Headlines Sent To Your Email Or Phone

Enter E-mail

GO

MARKETPLACE

- Shirokiya Holidays
- Half Off Hawaii
- Pau Hana
- Adopt a Family
- Values in Paradise
- Hawaii Experts
- Small Business
- Auto
- Dating
- Jobs
- Real Estate
- House & Home
- Education
- Travel
- Grow Your Business

SEARCH

Search

Site Web Yellow Pages

GO

Hot Topics: Adopt A Family | Obama Visit | KITV4/DirecTV | Year In Review | u local

As Seen On KITV

Homepage > HONOLULU NEWS

Rail Decision Called 'Hasty'

Some Environmentalist Say EIS Is Still Incomplete

Daryl Huff KITV 4 News Reporter

POSTED: 6:03 pm HST December 17, 2010
UPDATED: 9:34 pm HST December 17, 2010

- Email
- Print
- Comments (16)
- Recommend 2
- SHARE



HONOLULU -- Some environmentalists are questioning whether Gov. Neil Abercrombie thoroughly reviewed the Honolulu rail project's environmental impact statement before approving it Thursday.

With construction now possible before the end of next month, the governor said the EIS has met requirements of the law to study all economic, social and environmental risks be properly addressed.

But Donna Wong, president of Hawaii's Thousand Friends, a group opposed to heavy rail transit, said she wonders how the governor can be so sure the requirements were met I after just 11 days in office.

"From our perspective, it's incomplete," said Wong. "There are a lot of pukas."

Wong's group submitted comments challenging the study's findings on everything from the project's affordability to impact on small animal habitats. She said she doesn't know if those comments were ever reviewed and points out the governor's new administration did the review without having hired either a transportation director or director of the Office of Environmental Quality Control, which administers the environmental review process.

"There has been a hasty approach to this project all along," Wong said.

City officials said ground could be broken before February on the first third of the right-of-way, from East Kapolei to Pearl City. Construction and design contracts have already been awarded, but the city said Friday officials have not stopped listening to public concerns. As the project moves east toward Ala Moana, the said, each neighborhood will be asked for input on station design and plans for redevelopment around them.

Environmentalists said they hoped the public will join them at the meetings and be heard.

Shared on Facebook

- Honolulu Marathon Could Have World Record**
303 people shared this.
- Cul-de-sac Lights Up Kapolei**
158 people shared this.

The Adult Learner Program offers:

- Flexible Schedules
- Convenient Locations
- Personal Attention
- Online Classes

Hawai'i Pacific University
Click Here For More Info

More Stories:

- Forecasters Say Brace For Heavy Rains (KITV.com)
- Washington Place Falls Into Disrepair (KITV.com)
- Russian Rocket Crashes Down Near Hawaii (KITV.com)
- Dog The Bounty Hunter Nabs Suspected Jewelry Thief (KITV.com)
- Selected for you by our sponsor:
- Is Exercise Good for the Common Cold? (EverydayHealth.com)
- Hyundai Announces Prices For All-New Sonata 2.0t Turbo (Hyundai News)

Most Read Most Watched Most Commented

- Washington Place Falls Into Disrepair
- 1 Killed, 1 Injured In Oahu Crashes
- Kailua Residents Prepare For Presidential Visit
- Rail Decision Called 'Hasty'**
- » More Most Popular

Pictures In The News

- Senate Advances Bill To Lift Gay Ban
- Cuddly Stuffed Germ Toys Catching On
- Amelia Earhart May Have Died A Castaway

"People in the communities have no idea what is going to happen to them," Wong said.

The governor's press secretary, Donalyn Dela Cruz, said the EIS got a very thorough review, first by the Lingle administration and then by Abercrombie's staff.

An approved EIS doesn't mean there won't be impact -- it just means all the potential impacts have been studied.

Copyright 2010 by KITV.com All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Recommend

2 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends.



Your Comments

(16)



CloseUsername:

Password:

Confirm password:

Email:

First name:

Date of Birth: MM - DD - YYYY

By using Local Voices I agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Log in with your u local account or join.

[Join](#) | [Forgot Password](#)

Username Password

Or log in using another provider



500 characters remaining

(Log in to add a comment)

Share on Facebook

Share on Twitter

The following are comments from our users. This is not content created by KITV.com.

By posting your comments you agree to accept the [Terms of Use](#)

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [...4](#) »

- [BubothOwl](#) [[Profile](#)]

Member
 Dec. 18, 2010 8:13am HST
[BubothOwl](#)
 Inappropriate



West Oahu?? How the east Oahu?? This is small project that will cost billions to do. And I am willing to wager that Randy68 doesn't use the bus system. Sound like an union man. People like Randy68 only think about building a rail

The Bank of Hawaii Hawaiian Airlines Visa Signature® Credit Card wants you to Enter to WIN a trip to see

ellen
the ellen degeneres show

Click Here to Enter

From the Pacific Business News:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/print-edition/2010/12/17/now-is-time-for-carlisle-to-defend-his.html>

Now is time for Carlisle to defend his rail-project numbers

Premium content from Pacific Business News

Date: Friday, December 17, 2010, 1:00am HST

In the weeks since former Gov. Linda Lingle's bombshell report questioning the financial viability of Honolulu's proposed rail transit project was released, most of the time and energy has been spent in very unproductive ways.

Honolulu Mayor **Peter Carlisle** blasted the report, calling it "shoddy" and nothing more than a "pre-determined, anti-rail rant." He also said, as Curtis Lum reported in last week's print edition, that the state wasted precious dollars by paying Infrastructure Management Group Inc. \$350,000 to generate the 116-page document.

He did dispute the report's assertions that the state's largest-ever public works project will cost \$1.7 billion more than the city's projected \$5.5 billion price tag, that general excise tax revenue for the project will be less than originally estimated, and that ridership will be lower than predicted. But he didn't say why he thinks the data is wrong.

And IMG Chairman Steve Steckler's response to the fallout from his report continued to do nothing but divert attention from what the focus should be. Instead of explaining the numbers in his report, Steckler spent most of his time complaining about the lack of cooperation his team received. He said IMG faced "open hostility" from the city's rail project staff.

"In all our years of doing these kinds of independent financial assessments, neither I nor our financial staff has ever run into anything like the hostility and blocking of access to data, models and consultants that we faced with the city of Honolulu," he told Lum.

Meanwhile, the merits of the report itself continue not to be discussed.

Without scuttling the project, we need reassurance. That's what leaders provide. Can Oahu really afford a 20-mile rail line extending from Kapolei to downtown? Voters have said they want it, and PBN has editorialized in favor. But, if the price tag really is closer to \$7.2 billion than \$5.5 billion, a bunch of us would want the opportunity to cast our votes again, or at least see a revised financial model.

If Carlisle and company are confident of their data, they should start focusing their time and energy on a clear defense of their numbers. That, more than anything else, will put an end to the need for damage-control efforts following the project's shellacking at the hands of IMG.

Name-calling is what those acting out of fear and a position of weakness typically resort to. Now is the time for Carlisle to move beyond that by admitting to mistakes or miscalculations, if there have been any, and reassure a concerned public that rail is still the transit solution Oahu can afford. If, on the other hand, he realizes that Oahu cannot afford the rail project that has long been envisioned, now is the time to speak up and tell the people on our most populous island what other options he has for moving them forward. Name-calling only wastes a lot of time and energy, and it isn't getting us anywhere.

From the Pacific Business News:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/blog/2010/12/rapid-transit-love-train-picks-up-speed.html>

Rapid Transit love train picks up speed

Pacific Business News - by Curtis Lum , Pacific Business News

Date: Friday, December 17, 2010, 12:49pm HST



- Curtis Lum
- Reporter
- Email: clum@bizjournals.com

All aboard!

With the signature of Gov. **Neil Abercrombie** on the final environmental impact statement for the city's rail project, it now can be said that every key local government official who has a say in the project has hopped on the [Honolulu Rapid Transit](#) love train.

In a well-orchestrated public relations blitz, press releases relating to Abercrombie's approval of the [EIS](#) were sent out by his office, Honolulu Mayor **Peter Carlisle**, and U.S. Sen. **Dan Inouye**, within minutes of each other. Inouye's statement was blasted to media outlets a little past midnight in Washington, D.C.

Inouye applauded the governor's long-awaited signature on the document. Abercrombie pledged his continued support for the 20-mile, \$5.5 billion project. And Carlisle thanked Abercrombie, former mayor **Mufi Hannemann**, the City Council, Hawaii's congressional delegation, the state Legislature, labor and business organizations, the Federal Transit Administration, and just about everyone who supports the rail project.

It was, in a sense, a love fest.

But the project must still receive many other government approvals, including a record of decision by the [Federal Transit Administration](#), and overcome possible legal challenges from rail opponents. There also are the [lingering questions](#) that were raised in an [independent financial analysis](#), which said the project could cost [\\$1.7 billion](#) more than the city is projecting.

But Abercrombie's signature removed a major obstacle that was erected by former Gov. **Linda Lingle**, who refused to sign the EIS until the financial analysis was completed.

Carlisle is hoping to keep everything on track for a possible ground breaking on the project next spring. The city anticipates awarding [two more large contracts](#), including one for the actual train system, in the next few months.

So it appears that the train is a rollin'. How many stops it encounters along the way before it actually carries its first passengers are yet to be seen.

Reporter Curtis Lum can be reached at 808.955.8001 | clum@bizjournals.com

Governor signs off on review of rail

Abercrombie's approval will put the environmental study process back on track

By Gene Park

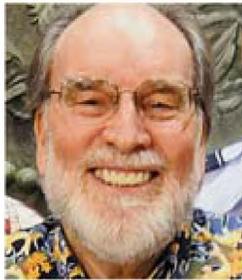
POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 17, 2010

[City scrutinizing state's financial report on rail](#)

[Honolulu Rail Transit | Final EIS](#)

Gov. Neil Abercrombie's signature on the rail transit environmental impact statement once again sets wheels in motion for environmental review of the projected \$5.5 billion system.

Various agencies will need to sign an agreement regarding effects on historic sites. Then the Federal Transit Administration will issue a so-called "record of decision," ending the environmental process and clearing the way for the project's groundbreaking.



Neil Abercrombie:
He had promised that a financial analysis would not affect his decision

"Now is our opportunity to strengthen our commitment to ensuring that the project is done right, without delay and with a vision of Oahu's future clearly in mind," Abercrombie said yesterday in a statement after signing the document sometime after 5 p.m. "Unresolved issues will need to be addressed with dispatch."

The document was given to the state for approval in

June, but former Gov. Linda Lingle did not sign off on the project because of concerns about the project's financial foundation. The environmental process typically does not include analysis of financial viability, only a review conducted by the state Office of Environmental Quality Control.

While on the campaign trail, Abercrombie had promised he would sign the impact statement regardless of the financial analysis.

"My acceptance of the statement is an affirmation of the adequacy of that statement under the applicable laws," Abercrombie wrote in a letter to city Department of Transportation Services Director Wayne Yoshioka.

"I find that the mitigation measures proposed in the environmental impact statement will minimize the negative impacts of the project."

The city now needs the FTA, the state Historic Preservation Division, the National Park Service, the Navy and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to sign a "programmatic agreement."

"It's being finalized and we're getting ready for signatures from all the parties," said Toru Hamayasu, general manager for the city's Rapid Transit Division.

After the record of decision, the FTA will issue a "letter of no prejudice," which gives the city permission to spend city money without jeopardizing any possible influx of federal funds.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye praised yesterday's signing.

"This is even more important as the fight for federal

ADVERTISEMENT

DIRECTV has more of what you want to watch!

Switch today!

1-888-778-0985

NO EQUIPMENT TO BUY!
NO STARTUP COSTS!

Offer ends 2/29/11. Credit card required (except in MA & PA). New approved customers only (lease required). \$19.95 Handling & Delivery fee may apply. Applicable use tax adjustment may apply on the retail value of the installation. Call for details.

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

Star Advertiser

funds intensifies," he said.

The next step for the city administration would be to approach the City Council and apply for a Special Management Area permit. The permit is required by law to ensure projects adhere to coastal zone management policies, including height restrictions, preservation of archaeological sites and ensuring adequate public shoreline access.

Hamayasu said the project does encroach into Special Management Areas due to its proximity to Pearl Harbor. The public will be notified 20 days before the City Council holds a hearing, which is expected to occur in January.

Mayor Peter Carlisle yesterday said he plans to break ground on the project "early next year." Carlisle has previously forecast a March groundbreaking.

Last year the city awarded Kiewit Pacific Co. a \$483 million contract to build the first third of the project, from East Kapolei to Pearl City. Joint venture Kiewit/Kobayashi won the \$195 million contract to build a maintenance and storage facility in Waipahu.

Carlisle said the city will award two more contracts early next year: one for the second phase of the route, which runs from Pearl City to Aloha Stadium; and another for a core systems contractor to supply train vehicles and manage the control center.

"Certain other aspects, the people who are opposed to rail, their forces will be set in motion by what we're doing," Carlisle said. "But I'm very confident after having spoken with the corporation counsel that we will be able to move forward early next year."

Cliff Slater, a vocal opponent of the rail system, said he believes the FTA will be given pause by Lingle's financial analysis, conducted by Infrastructure Management Group Inc. and CB Richard Ellis.

"While it may not be perfect, it is done by two very well-regarded firms," Slater said. "And the FTA can't ignore that. They can demonize us and get away with it, but they can't do it with these guys."

IMG's report states the city would need about \$1.7 billion more to cover a projected revenue shortfall, much of which stemmed from the project's delay and lower revenues from a special excise tax surcharge.

The city yesterday presented a detailed refutation of the IMG report, stating that:

» The report ignored the state Council on Revenues' general fund tax revenue growth projection of about 6.7 percent a year, much higher than either the city's or IMG's projections;

» The first-phase contract to Kiewit came in \$90 million less than what the city had expected to spend; thus

» The project's delay should have little, if any, effect on capital costs. The only aspect that may affect cost is the acquisition of property, which could not happen until a record of decision is issued. But the city said property values have shown little change since 2009, when the city last conducted a financial analysis on the project.

ADVERTISEMENT



DIRECTV has more of what you want to watch!

**NO EQUIPMENT TO BUY!
NO STARTUP COSTS!**

Switch today!

1-888-778-0985

Offer ends 2/29/11. Credit card required (except in MA & PA). New approved customers only (lease required). \$19.95 Handling & Delivery fee may apply. Applicable use tax adjustment may apply on the retail value of the installation. Call for details.

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Letters to the Editor

For Friday, December 17, 2010

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 17, 2010

Don't start over with rail

After reading the [commentary by Kioni Dudley](#) and associates, I can agree with some of their points, particularly about the route and the elevated waterfront. I could even agree with the final conclusion, if it were actually possible to stop and start over. But that is not the case. Stopping means there is no starting over, unless you consider maybe -- and a big maybe -- starting over in 15 or 20 years.

There were major design flaws with the construction of our current freeway system, such as the Middle Street merge and a too-narrow corridor through downtown, but there'd be no freeway system now if we'd stopped development until we thought we'd solved all the problems. Can anyone imagine Honolulu without our freeways?

Sam Gillie
Honolulu

Letters to the Editor

For Friday, December 17, 2010

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 17, 2010

Ho'opili will help traffic

As a longtime resident of Leeward Oahu, I understand the traffic problems firsthand and was appalled to see the distortion of truth in Kioni Dudley's commentary ("[Current rail plans rife with problems](#)," Star-Advertiser, Island Voices, Dec. 13).

D.R. Horton and its Ho'opili development are cited in the commentary. Ho'opili seeks to lower automobile dependency through the creation of a transit-oriented development that will use rail and other transportation options within the community. Ho'opili is planned to have several rail transit stops as well as bus routes within the community, which will help to alleviate traffic from West Oahu.

Ultimately rail is an opportunity for Hawaii's next generations. I have a 7-year-old daughter whose future will be greatly and positively affected by rail and transit-oriented development.

Georgette Stevens
Makakilo



[Home Page](#)
[KPUA Program Schedule](#)
[Election Coverage](#)

Today's KPUA Program Schedule:

07:00AM Golf Club Radio Show
 w/Danielle Tucker
 Golf Club Show
[Click here for showtimes](#)
 & complete program lineup.

NEWS LINKS

[National News](#)
[World News](#)
[Sports](#)
[Business](#)
[Strange Reports](#)
[Entertainment](#)
SPORTS LINKS
[NCAA Tournament](#)
[San Francisco Giants](#)
[San Francisco 49ers](#)
[Oakland Raiders](#)
[University of Hawaii](#)
[ESPN](#)

OUR STATIONS

[KWXX](#)
[B-97](#)
KPUA
 1145 Kilauea Ave
 Hilo, Hawaii 96720
 PH: 808 935-5461
 FAX: 808 935-7761



[Back to Hawaii News index](#)



Posted: Saturday, December 18th, 2010 6:00 AM HST

Honolulu fires back at critical rail analysis

By Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — The City of Honolulu is firing back at an analysis that raised concerns about its proposed commuter rail project.

Then-Gov. Linda Lingle commissioned the analysis earlier this year. Issued Dec. 2, it said Honolulu may be underestimating the amount of city subsidies the project will need and overestimating the number of riders it'll attract.

City officials on Thursday released their response, which contends the report's financial assertions were not adequately substantiated, more relevant data were not considered, and incorrect figures and assumptions led to unsupported conclusions.

The city also says economic indicators used by the state were ignored, and that federal transit officials have already found the project to be financially sound.

National News

[Series of storms bears down on California](#)
[Obama pushes for nuke treaty ratification](#)
[Police surround Colo. home where shooting happened](#)
[Obama: DREAM act vote 'incredibly disappointing'](#)
[Calif's 3rd-largest city new medi-pot battleground](#)

World News

[US, Venezuela at odds on ambassador, Chavez powers](#)
[Iranian president calls recent nuclear talks good](#)

Sports

[Packers rule Rodgers out for Pats, Flynn to start](#)
[Presidential change-up on Obama at Heat-Wizards](#)
[Vonn wins World Cup downhill in France](#)
[Spain's Belmonte Garcia wins 3rd gold in Dubai](#)
[Lawyers seek to keep players from Bonds' trial](#)
[Drew Brees is the AP's Male](#)

Business

[Summary Box: Dow has third straight winning week](#)
[Stocks end week flat; Obama signs tax bill](#)
[How the major stock indexes fared Friday](#)
[Oracle reports profit jump, bucking industry fears](#)
[Research in Motion profit jumps 45 percent](#)
[Discover 4th-qtr profit up as](#)

[Print](#) [Email](#) [Twitter](#) [Like](#) Be the first of your friends to like this.

Week 33: The Facts About Rail Costs and Extraordinary Overtime

By John Temple | 12/18/2010

We do things differently at [Civil Beat](#).

If you want an example of what I'm talking about, all you need to do is look at [Michael Levine's](#) recent [articles](#) examining the claims about the cost of Honolulu's [proposed rail project](#). The city has pegged the price at one level. A consultant hired by former Gov. [Linda Lingle](#) said it will probably cost \$1.7 billion more. Whom to believe?



The traditional way news organizations answer such a question is by telling you what the two sides say, and maybe why. I call that "he said, she said" journalism. They leave the work of sorting things out to you.

At Civil Beat, we've become known for our Fact Checks. It's a different approach to serving our readers. And it doesn't only come in the form of the Fact Checks, with their bottom line grades running from True to Screaming Lie.

Michael's work is a good example of how we take the fact checking approach much further and apply it to our daily reporting. We do the work to tell you what makes sense. In the case of the disparity in rail estimates, we spent hours reviewing and understanding the source documents both sides relied on to come to their estimates and talked to experts in the field. The purpose: To reach a bottom line.

That's what Michael has done with regard to three critical differences between the estimates and what you'll see more of next week when we wrap up our series. We don't pull punches. Michael found that the city is wearing rose-colored glasses, but he also found that the consultant made a \$227 million error.

Here are three examples of his work:

- [Civil Beat Analysis: City's Rail Tax Plan Optimistic](#)
- [Civil Beat Discovers \\$227 Million Error in State Consultant's Work](#)
- [Civil Beat Analysis: Honolulu Estimate for Federal Funding to Run Rail Questionable](#)

[Nanea Kalani's](#) examination of the outsized overtime claims at the [Hawaii Department of Public Safety](#) is another example of this approach.

I found it jaw-dropping when she told me after analyzing data we obtained using the state's open records law that there were five employees who claimed to have worked more than 2,000 hours of overtime. Not in their lifetime. Not over a decade. In one year. There's got to be something wrong with that picture. And I think when you read Nanea's stories you'll see what I mean.

- [A Surcharge on Safety: Outsized Overtime at the Department of Public Safety](#)
- [A Surcharge on Safety: Union Contract and Turnover Blamed for Overtime](#)
- [A Surcharge on Safety: As Overtime Piles Up, Department Caps Sick Day Use](#)
- [A Surcharge on Safety: Five Employees Claimed Over 2,000 Hours of Overtime](#)
- [A Surcharge on Safety: 93 Employees Logged at Least 1,000 Overtime Hours](#)
- [A Surcharge on Safety: Sheriffs Earning More Than Hawaii's Chief Justice?](#)

To the credit of the folks who've been running the agency, they didn't shy away from talking with us about how they ended up paying out so much money. You might not be surprised that they blamed a labor contract.

Finally, I hope you noticed something new on Civil Beat this week. There's a certain sensibility to what we do in our Kaimuki newsroom. I like to think of it as smart, edgy and provocative. We cut to the quick. Now we're going to apply that approach to more topics and more stories. We're going to be casting a wider net, drawing your attention to other stories you shouldn't miss about Honolulu and Hawaii. Here are three examples from this week:

- [McCain Mocks Polynesian Voyaging Society](#)
- [UH Prof Punished for Profanity](#)

WAKE UP TO THE HONOLULU CIVIL BEAT!

Never Miss a Beat! Buy a \$0.99 Trial Today!

About the Author

John Temple
Editor



[Articles / John Temple](#)
[Topics / John Temple](#)
[Discussions / John Temple](#)

Media



Related Content

Primary Topic Pages

[Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project](#)
[Hawaii State Government Budget](#)
[Hawaii State Government](#)

Discussions

[Discussion: Week In Review](#)

- [New Honolulu Zoo Director Quit San Francisco Job After Tiger Killed Visitor](#)

We're a different type of news source. We're not here to accept what we're told and pass it on to you.

We're here to check out what we hear and look into what people don't want to talk about but is important for all of us to consider as we try to make this an even better community.

DISCUSSION: *Share your thoughts about our work this week and read what others have to say about it in our [Week in Review discussion](#).*

Have feedback? Suggestions? [Email Us!](#)

[About Us](#) | [Contact](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Membership](#)

Copyright © 2010 Peer News LLC. All rights reserved.

All purchases subject to Hawaii and City and County of Honolulu General Excise Tax of 4.712%.

Governor clears hurdle for rail project

December 19, 2010

Save | 

HONOLULU (AP) - Gov. Neil Abercrombie on Thursday signed an environmental impact report on Honolulu's commuter rail project, one of the final steps the \$5.5 billion proposed system was required to meet before construction can begin.

In a statement, Abercrombie said that after a thorough review by the state Office of Environmental Quality Control, he had concluded that the project had addressed all economic, social and environmental risks.

Honolulu officials said in a statement that with Abercrombie's signature, the city anticipates that the Federal Transit Administration will issue a "record of decision" that will permit groundbreaking.

"Moving forward with rail transit creates much-needed jobs for our communities, provides long-term traffic relief and offers a dependable transportation alternative." Mayor Peter Carlisle said in a statement.

Start now on setting up authority for rail transit

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 19, 2010

Prospects for Honolulu's rail transit system advanced last week with Gov. Neil Abercrombie affixing his signature to the environmental impact statement prepared for the \$5.5 billion, 20-mile project. Reasonable people might describe this as a sign that rail is finally picking up steam, especially since this is a plan that dates back seemingly to the steam-engine era.

But rail-backers, don't pop the champagne corks yet. There's so much more to do to realize a successful project that this is not the time to lose focus. Among the many next steps confronting the city, the one that probably deserves the greatest attention in the coming weeks is to put the right people at the controls.

Namely, the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation, a new semi-autonomous agency the voters empowered in November, should be constituted.

The rationale for putting a transit authority in charge of a massive undertaking like this is straightforward. The resolution to create the agency through City Charter amendment, proposed by the City Council last year, asserted that the authority "would have the ability to make decisions more quickly because of its singular focus: the success of the rail transit system," unfettered by the range of public and political concerns that occupy the City Council. Voters passed the amendment in November, which means the city should move to organize the agency governing board of 10.

Some political influences over the quasi-independent authority remain, however. Three of the nine voting members are named by the mayor, three by the Council. The directors of city and state transportation departments make the seventh and eighth members; these eight people choose the ninth. The director of the city Department of Planning and Permitting sits on

the board as the 10th (but nonvoting) member.

That's a fairly involved process, so the mayor should be making his picks. When the new Council is seated in a few weeks, the selection of the remaining key members should be among the top items in the order of business.

It's important to have oversight soon. City officials say a programmatic agreement over the treatment of historic sites along the route is on the brink of final approval, and when that's done the city can get the initial permits in place for the first, \$483 million segment of work on the West Oahu guideway. Once the Federal Transit Administration signs off on the "record of decision" - the ultimate green light that's expected to flash early next year - ground can be broken and the long-awaited creation of needed jobs can begin.

Even with the authority up and running, however, the public-review phase of the planning has only just begun. The law requires the transit authority to conduct some of the key elements of its work - fixing and adjusting rates and adopting a budget - only after public hearings. The authority must report to the mayor how public money is spent, and that must happen with full disclosure to the taxpayers supporting the project. The planning of transit-oriented development at each stop must reflect the needs of residents through whose communities the train will pass.

This is the most expensive public works project the city has undertaken, and although it's been endorsed by a slim majority of voters, skepticism that the city can carry it out efficiently is still running strong. At this important juncture, elected leaders must

ADVERTISEMENT



SAVE
up to **64%**
to

Plus, get
3 FREE Gifts

Special Code: **45069ZWN**

To order: www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71
or call 1-877-605-0496

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™



demonstrate their commitment to getting the job done with transparency and professionalism. Making the transit authority a priority concern would be one way to gain public trust.

ADVERTISEMENT

Get a FREE ADT-Monitored Home Security System.*
(With \$99 customer installation and purchase of ADT alarm monitoring services. See important terms and conditions below.)

Call Now! 1-877-835-8373

SECURITY CHOICE
ADT Authorized Company

ADT AUTHORIZED DEALER

*\$99.00 Customer Installation Charge. 36-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$35.98 per month (\$1,295.64). Form of payment must be by credit card or electronic charge to your checking or savings account. Offer applies to homeowners only. Local permit fees may be required. Satisfactory credit history required. Certain restrictions apply. Offer valid for new Security Choice - An ADT Authorized Dealer customers only and not on purchases from ADT Security Services, Inc. Other rate plans available. Cannot be combined with any other offer. **\$100 VISA® Gift Card Offer: \$100 VISA Gift Card is provided by Security Choice and is not sponsored by ADT Security Services. Requires mail-in redemption. Call 1-888-407-2338 for complete restrictions and redemption requirements.

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

Civil Beat Conclusion: Honolulu Rail Report 'Shoddy,' 'Biased' — and Right?

By [Michael Levine](#) 12/22/2010

Editor's Note: *After three months of work, a state consultant in early December released a report reviewing Honolulu's financial plan for its proposed \$5.5 billion rail project. Civil Beat evaluated the key differences in four earlier articles:*

- [Construction revenue](#)
- [Construction costs](#)
- [Operating revenue](#)
- [Operating costs](#)

Today we publish our conclusion. A [discussion](#) of the topic has already begun.

Just because something is "shoddy" and "biased" doesn't mean it's wrong.

Case in point, the independent financial report on [Honolulu rail project](#) that was blasted by Mayor [Peter Carlisle](#). Consultants warned the project could cost taxpayers an additional \$1.7 billion over the next 20 years. Carlisle [derided the finding](#) and questioned the integrity of its authors.

But a [Civil Beat](#) investigation of the study and the city's own financial projections determined there's good reason to believe taxpayers could be on the hook for more than they have been led to believe.

To some degree, however, Civil Beat found that Carlisle was right.

Midweek

A Conservative Christmas

December 22, 2010

Dear Santa,

I hope you are well.

I would like the following for this Christmas, please.

Stop this insane rail project here in Honolulu. The Lingle administration recently released an independent financial analysis of the current rail project, and the findings were disturbing. Yes, there were some who blew a gasket when they learned that one of the contributors was found to support buses over trains, but supporters are not addressing the substance of the report. Where is the step-by-step refutation of the findings? Sure, you can shoot the messenger, but what about the message?

Santa, we cannot afford this transportation project that will not alleviate congestion on our roadways at the estimated price tag of \$7 billion and more. Maybe you could let us use Donner and Blitzen to begin an aerial commuter sleigh system? It would be more feasible to do that than what's on the books now.

While we're talking about transportation, would you please deliver upon Honolulu improved road conditions? I can see why you fly everywhere you go. You know, for years and years we have had to tolerate some of the worst roads in the nation. Potholes, chasms, rough patches and, well, just deplorable conditions have plagued us, seemingly, since King Kamehameha. Please, bestow upon our governmental transportation authorities the wisdom and the will to finally provide drivers a halfway-decent road system. And while we're chatting about it, toss some of that wherewithal to the taxpayers who are being shafted by the aforementioned governmental agencies. Look, they're paying for a product and service. If taxpayers received the same quality from a store or vendor, they would-n't stand for it.

Speaking of stores, would you please urge some of our big-box retailers from pulling a TSA on customers leaving their establishment? OK, I'm not sure if someone has ever been groped trying to leave the store, but it's still one of the most irritating policies. From the customer standpoint, you choose to spend your hard-earned cash at their place and then, when you are leaving, you are asked to present your "papers" while some officious security officer scans your purchase before allowing you to go on your way. Santa, I can only imagine what you would have to go through if you got your haul at Brand X.

The justification is to prevent loss, thereby keeping costs to consumers down. Fine. But let's be honest. There is more theft by employees and their friends/family than the everyday customer.

Don't penalize your paying customers while you have to primarily deal with those on your payroll.

Santa, there are so many other things I would appreciate for Christmas this year. True two-party representation in Hawaii, the Warriors to beat Tulsa, to fit into a pair of size 36 pants, serenity and joy for my wife and kids, the elimination of any commercial dealing with performance, regularity or personal hygiene, and a magnum of Veuve Cliquot Rose, to name a few.

At the very least, I wish for people to remember that Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the son of God. It's a day of promise and real hope and an opportunity to give thanks for all our blessings.

Santa, thank you for doing such good work, and give my best to the elves and Mrs. Claus.

*Mele Kalikimaka,
Rick Hamada*

Star Advertiser

December 22, 2010

Old right-of-way unsuitable for rail

The "rightness" or "wrongness" of rail transportation on Oahu aside, the commentary by Kioni Dudley and others on Dec. 13 completely ignored the fact that the remaining portion of the Oahu Railway and Land Company right-of-way (ROW) is totally unsuitable for use by a modern commuter rail system ("[Current rail plans rife with problems](#)," Island Voices, Star-Advertiser).

The existing ROW consists of a strip of land about 13 miles long and 40 feet wide between Lualualei Naval Road and Fort Weaver Road. In many places it is much narrower than 40 feet due to encroachment and construction.

This 1890s-designed and -built ROW was to support a single-track, 3-foot narrow gauge railroad, not a standard gauge (4 feet, 8 1/2 inch) double-track system.

Also, the ROW is listed on both the state and national registers of historic places.

That portion of the old ROW between Fort Weaver Road and Pearl City is used as a bike path and transits an environmentally sensitive wetlands area. There is no usable ROW east of Pearl City.

Attempting to use the existing ROW between Nanakuli and Ewa is akin to building Hawaii's version of Alaska's "bridge to nowhere."

Mr. Dudley was made aware of these and other facts well prior to publication of his letter.

J.A. Livingston
Historian, Hawaiian Railway Society



Honolulu light rail prospects look positive

23 December 2010



USA: Hawaii's newly-elected Governor Neil Abercrombie has signed the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Honolulu's proposed \$5.3bn light rail project, clearing the way for final approval from the Federal Transit Administration.

The 32 km elevated line was stalled when Abercrombie's predecessor, Linda Lingle, refused to approve the FEIS because of questions over financing and environmental issues. Specifically, Lingle implied that there might not be sufficient local tax revenue to complete construction. But the new governor promised to sign the document if he found it had been completed according to law and let the city worry about the finances.

'The rail project EIS has been done prudently and is in compliance with state environmental law', said Mayor Peter Carlisle. 'Moving forward with rail transit creates much-needed jobs for our communities, provides long-term traffic relief and offers a dependable transportation alternative that starts us on the right path toward our preferred future.'

Several contracts have already been awarded for the project, including a \$195m design-build order for a depot and maintenance centre, a design pact for three stations and a \$483m contract with Kiewit Pacific Co to build the first 10.5 km section of the route. The next step will be receipt of a Record of Decision from the FTA, which is expected very soon.

Related News:

[First contract awarded for Honolulu light rail](#) - 26.10.09

<- Back to: News

Social bookmarks: 

Star Advertiser

December 23, 2010

Rail cost likely underestimated

Everyone seems to be putting in their two cents about the rail system; why not two cents more? But this is a view from a slightly different perspective, one of human psychology and critical thinking.

Consider that a multitude of past public projects have rarely, if ever, come in under budget. One intriguing reason is that the planners were blinded by the illusion of knowledge. Under this bias, planners overestimate what they know and are overconfident that their conclusions are accurate. Humans in general underestimate what major projects will cost and how long it will take to complete them. This is especially true of novel projects like this rail system. This bias is not an indictment against building this thing. Given our limited space and the amount of traffic growing each year, we indeed need a public transportation system. What is suggested is that the project includes a small body of individuals who will remind the planners that their initial estimates are probably wrong and to expect problems. This will keep the planners grounded, and then, hopefully, they will institute contingency plans.

Then press the planners to compare this project with other similar projects to realistically gauge the length of building this thing.

Last, this small body would remind the planners that all of us, even the experts, are prone to error.

Build this thing, but build with your best thinking.

Mike Taleff
Honolulu

Star Advertiser

December 23, 2010

Rail will put folks back to work

Our construction industry is suffering and so are its members. I and thousands of other construction workers like me need to get back to work.

We've been barely hanging on. Many of us have been on the bench for so long, we can't pay our bills and feed our families. We are losing our homes and everything that we have worked so hard for.

By signing the rail EIS, Gov. Neil Abercrombie just gave us hope that we can get back on the job.

Thank you to all who made this happen. Now we have a chance to get back to work and make a living.

Joseph Klug
Waianae

Star Advertiser

December 24, 2010

Don't let rail degrade Oahu's natural beauty

The governor's approval of the environmental impact statement for the Honolulu transit project does not absolve the city from doing all it can to minimize the impacts of the project. In fact, it is a challenge to move forward in a way that protects our priceless home.

This especially includes countless decisions that must be made during construction that will have potentially devastating effects on viewplanes, street trees and the very character of neighborhoods and communities along the route of the elevated guideway.

If this project is truly to be built with the least possible damage, it is up to our city leaders to make it happen.

It would be a tragic mistake to build a transit system that degrades our island's incomparable beauty, the quality of life of its residents and its appeal to visitors.

The Outdoor Circle urges residents to encourage our new mayor and the reshaped City Council to get on the right path and stay there, and to make the kinds of transit decisions that are best for the long-term future of this island.

Bob Loy
The Outdoor Circle, Honolulu

From the Pacific Business News:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/print-edition/2010/12/31/oahus-rail-project-will-dominate.html>

Oahu's rail project will dominate transportation landscape

Premium content from Pacific Business News - by Curtis Lum , Pacific Business News

Date: Friday, December 31, 2010, 1:00am HST

TRANSPORTATION – *OUTLOOK SUNNY: This industry expects next year to be better than 2010. Sales will increase. Expansions are planned.*

Rail.

It's the transportation project that will dominate 2011 and years to come.

The City & County of Honolulu plans to break ground on the 20-mile, \$5.5 billion Honolulu Rail Transit system early next year, although no date has been announced. The city also expects to award eight rail-related contracts totaling \$1.5 billion in 2011, said rail spokeswoman **Jeanne Mariani-Belding**. So far, three contracts worth \$682.5 million have been awarded.

In February, the city anticipates naming the winning bidder to build and operate the trains for the system, Mariani-Belding said. There are three joint ventures — each with at least one local contractor — vying for the contract, which is valued at \$600 million.

The rail system will be the most expensive publicly funded project in state history. Supporters of the project say it will create 10,000 jobs annually once construction begins, but it has not been without controversy. Earlier this month, a consultant hired by then-Gov. Lingle issued a report questioning whether Oahu could afford the project.

There are other important projects or studies planned for 2011 that will have a long-term impact on transportation infrastructure in the state.

Brian Gibson, executive director of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization, said his agency is conducting two major studies that are set to be completed next year.

The first is the long-range transportation plan for Oahu that will look at possible projects and issues for the next 25 years. The plan is updated every five years and is crucial because only listed projects can receive federal funding, Gibson said.

One of the projects that made the 2006 long-range plan was the \$104 million H-1 Freeway improvement project from the Middle Street tunnel to the Vineyard Boulevard off-ramp.

Gibson said the updated plan, which is due in April, will contain a combination of new construction as well as maintenance work.

"What we've heard from the public and what we understand from our data is that the needs really are in maintenance, keeping what we have in good working condition," Gibson said.

The state receives about \$140 million annually in federal transportation funds. Gibson said the amount of money Hawaii has been allocated has not changed much during the past six years.

The second major project that the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization is overseeing is a "climate change adaptation" study. Gibson said the report will look at the possible impacts climate change will have on transportation assets here.

He said the study will identify transportation-related assets, such as highways and the airport reef runway, to determine whether they would be affected by a rise in sea level. Gibson said these issues need to be known now so government officials can begin to develop plans to deal with the potential problem.

"The climate change project is really important for us as we do long-range transportation planning because if it looks like a certain transportation asset, whether it's the airport, or one of the harbors, or a highway, is very vulnerable to being under water in 50 years, then we need to start the process of asking ourselves what do we do about it," Gibson said.

He said the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization will advertise for a consulting or engineering firm next year to conduct the study. The report is due by the end of September.

Major Oahu transportation projects for 2011

- Honolulu Rail Transit, \$5.5 billion
- H-1 Freeway/Middle Street tunnel improvements, \$104 million
- Kapolei Parkway, Kunehi Street to Kamokila Boulevard, \$18.5 million
- Kamehameha Highway, Kawailoa Stream bridge rehabilitation, \$13.8 million

- Vineyard Boulevard improvements, \$11 million

Source: PBN research and Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

clum@bizjournals.com | 955-8001

Honolulu Rail Transit Project



H O N O L U L U R A I L T R A N S I T P R O J E C T

566-2299 | www.honolulustransit.org

Agenda

- Project Overview
- Federal Process
- Project Background & Next Steps
- Finances
- Contracts
- Benefits of Rail
- Station Design

20-Mile Route East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center



Operating Details

When will trains run?

- From 4 a.m. to midnight
- Every 3 minutes during morning & afternoon rush hour
- 6 minutes at mid-day
- 10 minutes at night

How fast will trains travel?

- Over 55 mph top speed;
30 mph average with stops

What can I bring on the train?

- Luggage, surfboards and bicycles on train during non-peak hours



Operating Details

How much will a ride cost?

- Same as TheBus; one way transfers valid on both

How do I get to a rail station?

- Bus circulators will connect communities to the fixed guideway system
- Every station will have bus stops, bike racks and sidewalks
- Four park-and-rides totaling 4,100 spaces



Federal Process

- Local Funding
- Alternatives Analysis
- Environmental Documentation – EIS
- Preliminary Engineering
- Final Design
- Full Funding Grant Agreement
- Construction

Project Background

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| July 2005 | State's Enabling Legislation for Transit-Dedicated Tax |
| August 2005 | City Ordinance enacted the Transit Tax (Ordinance 05-027) |
| August 2005 | Alternatives Analysis Initiated |
| October 30, 2006 | Alternatives Analysis Report submitted to City Council |
| November & December 2006 | Public Hearings on the Alternatives Analysis |

Project Background (cont.)

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Dec 2006 | City Council selects Locally Preferred Alternative as a fixed guideway system from Kapolei to UH Manoa and Waikiki |
| Jan 2007 | GET surcharge collection began |
| Feb 2007 | City Council recommends East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center via Salt Lake Boulevard as First Construction Project |
| March to April 2007 | EIS Scoping |

Project Background (cont.)

- Feb 2008 City Council and Mayor appoint a technology panel; the panel selected a steel-wheel on steel-rail system
- Nov 2008 Draft EIS released
- Voters support a City Charter for steel-wheel on steel-rail system
- Feb 2007 City Council recommends East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center via Salt Lake Boulevard as First Construction Project

Project Background (cont.)

Nov 2008
to Feb 2009

Draft EIS comment period

Feb 2009

City Council recommended
changing the route to serve the
Airport

June 2010

Final EIS released

June to Aug
2010

Final EIS review period

Dec 2010

Final EIS review and
acceptance by Governor

What's Next

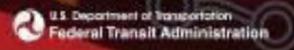
- Record of Decision from Federal Transit Administration
- Special Management Area (SMA) Permit
- Groundbreaking
- Creation of Transit Authority (HART)



Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION

- East Kapolei
- Ulu West Oahu
- Honolulu
- West Loch
- Waipahu Transit Center
- Leeward Community College
- Pearl Highlands
- Pearlridge
- Alifan Stadium
- Pearl Harbor Naval Base
- Honolulu International Airport
- Lagoon Drive
- Middle Street Transit Center
- Kalihi
- Kapalama
- Hahaione
- Chinatown
- Downtown
- City Center
- Kalihi
- Ala Moana



JUNE 2010

Where to Find Final EIS

- Project website: www.honolulustransit.org
- City library & Department of Transportation Services
- All state libraries
- Order free DVD by calling 566-2299 or e-mailing info@honolulustransit.org

What is a Transit Authority?

- Focused on the success of the rail system: planning, construction, operation, maintenance, and expansion
- Appointed board of business and transit leaders
- Manage rail's budget, fares and maintain financial status

Transit Authority

- Voters approved a Charter Amendment for the formation of a transit authority
- The City will establish the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) on July 1, 2011
- Semi-autonomous, responsible for the planning, construction, operation, maintenance, and expansion of the City's fixed guideway mass transit system

PROJECT BUDGET

(in Year of Expenditure Dollars)

• Base Cost Estimate	\$3,791 million
• Contingency	\$1,329 million
• <u>Finance Charges</u>	<u>\$398 million</u>
TOTAL	\$5,513 million

Finances On Track

- \$18.5 million in GET collected in 2010
- GET surcharge revenue is 99.6% of target collection
- Independently reviewed by local business leaders
 - Business Roundtable
- Design - Build proposals \$150 million less than projected

FTA NEW STARTS FUNDING



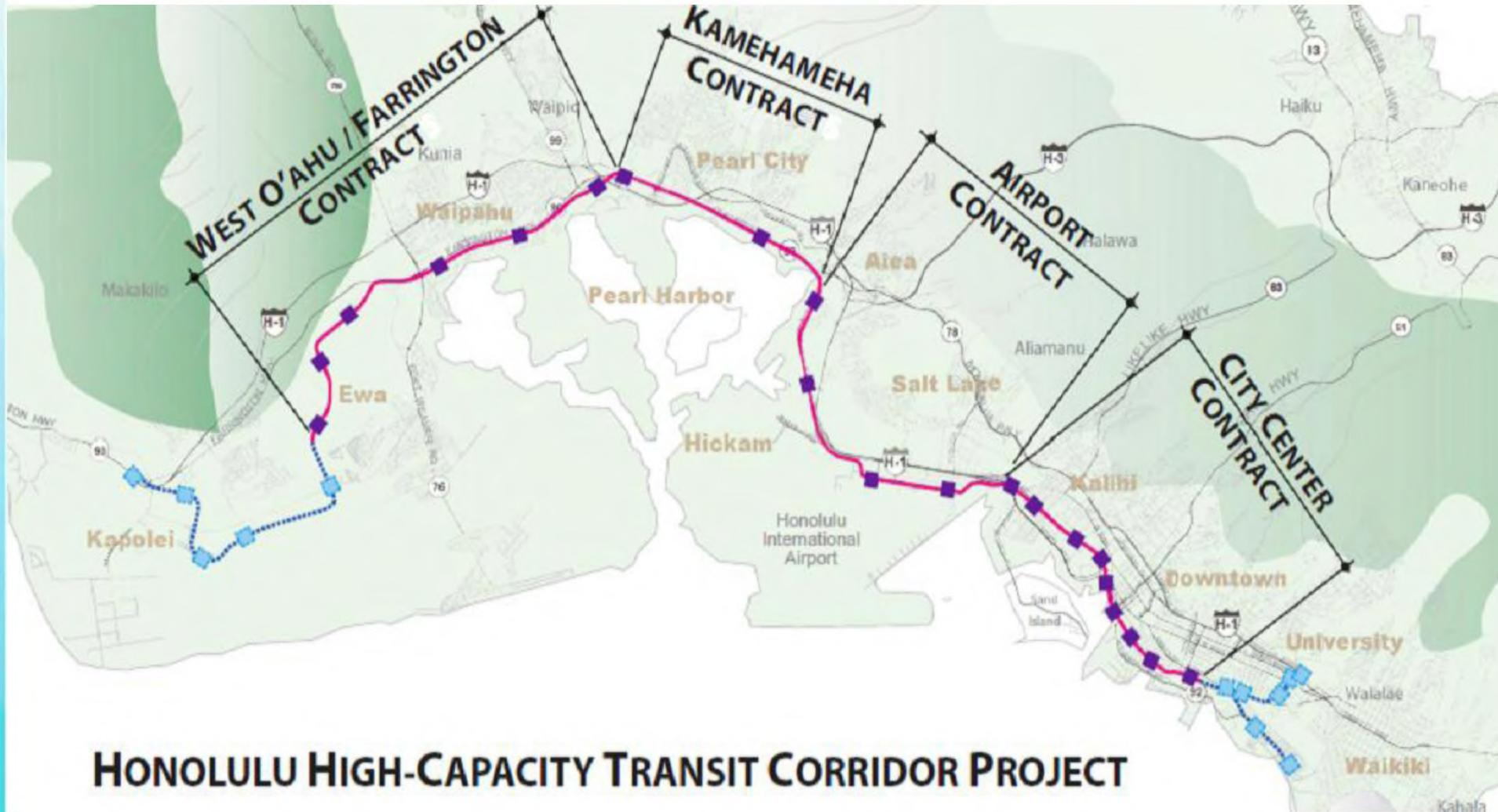
- FTA has agreed to consider a funding request from the City & County of Honolulu of \$1.55 billion

FEDERAL FUNDING

- **Federal Funds to Date**
 - \$4M in federal stimulus funds awarded
 - \$65M appropriated by Congress including \$30M in FY2010
 - \$55M included in FY2011 Federal Budget



CONTRACT PACKAGING



HONOLULU HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT

20-MILE ROUTE

EAST KAPOLEI TO ALA MOANA CENTER

Maintenance & Storage Facility

Design-Build
Navy Drum Site Near LCC

4 Parking Facilities

Design-Bid-Build
E. Kapolei
UH West Oahu
Pearl Highlands
Aloha Stadium

Airport

Design-Bid-Build
Open early 2018

Center

Design-Bid-Build
Spring 2019

Awarded West Loch, Waipahu
Transit Center, and Leeward
Community College

West Oahu

D
Op
nd

Separ

Contracts

CONTRACTS

3 Design-Build (DB) Contracts

- 2 Guideway (WOFH & KH)
- 1 Maintenance Facility

12 Design-Bid-Build (DBB) Contracts

- 8 Station Contracts (1-3 stations each)
- 2 Utility Relocation
- 2 Guideway Construction

1 Owner Furnished Materials & Equipment (OFM&E) Contract

- Plants and Shrubs

CONTRACTS

8 Management Services Contracts

- Program Management Support Consultant (PMSC)
- General Engineering Consultant (GEC)
- Construction Engineering & Inspection (CE&I)
 - WOFH Station Group (6 Stations)
 - Kamehameha Station Group (3 Stations)
 - Airport Station Group (4 Stations)
 - City Center Station Group (7 Stations)
 - Airport Utilities and Guideway
 - City Center Utilities and Guideway (including Ala Moana Station)

CONTRACTS

1 Design-Build-Operate-Maintain (DBOM) Contract

- Core Systems

1 Manufacture Install Maintain Contract

- Elevator/Escalator

CONTRACTS AWARDED

Contract	Awarded To	Amount	Under Budget
WOFH Design-Build	Kiewit	\$482 million	\$90 million
Maintenance and Storage Facility	Kiewit/ Kobayashi	\$195 million	\$60 million
West Loch, Waipahu Transit Center, and Leeward Community College Station Design	HDR/Hawaii Pacific Engineers	\$5.5 million	

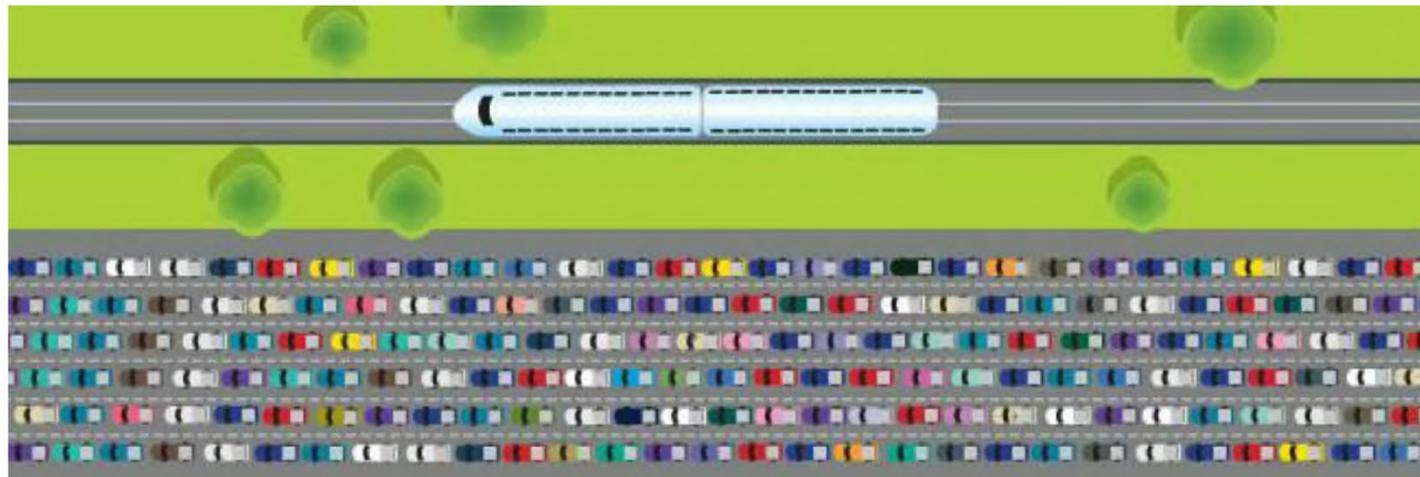
Economic Benefits

- Creating about 10,000 jobs a year
- Rail will be Hawaii's single largest job creator
- Supports Kapolei as urban center
- Redevelopment around stations



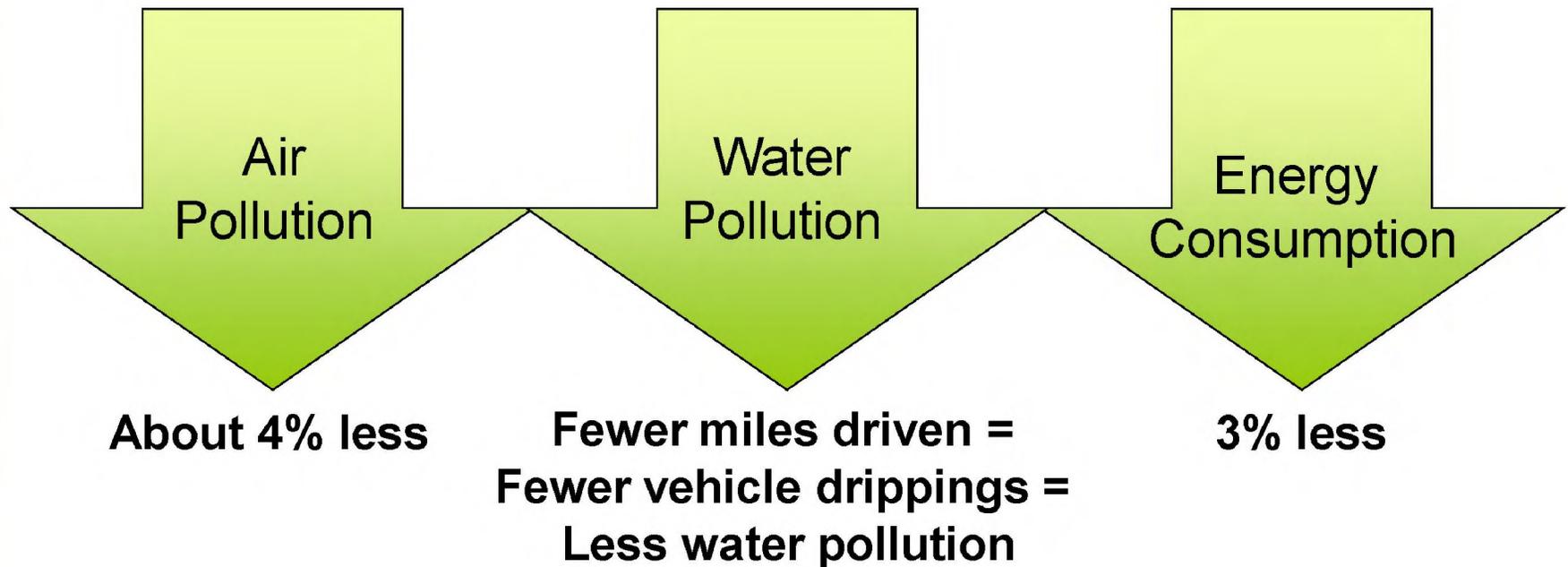
Transportation Benefits

- Estimated 116,000 average weekday ridership in 2030
- Reduced traffic delay by 18% in 2030
- Estimated 40,000 fewer vehicles on the road in 2030



Environmental Benefits

- REDUCED because of rail:



Data source: Final Environmental Impact Statement, June 2010

What Could Elevated Rail Look Like in Honolulu?

Crossing Nuʻuanu Stream



Pearlridge Station Rendering



East Kapolei Station Rendering



Canopy Design for Stations



Artist Rendering

Station Platforms



Artist Rendering

IMG Report

- Cost “Ballooned” by **\$1.7B**

\$ 405M Added to Rail Capital Cost (+8%)

\$ 505M GET Shortfall

\$ 155M Rail O&M and Rehab Cost for 20 Yrs

\$ 560M Bus Costs

\$ 100M Fare Shortfall

\$1,725M

Consider the Source

- Transit financing is not IMG's main business
- GET forecast by CBRE, "A global real estate and project development advisory group".
- Thomas Rubin – "Bus is good, Rail is bad".

Mahalo!





West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

SHAFT TESTING PUBLIC NOTICE TO MOTORISTS (As of December 12, 2010)

The City & County of Honolulu and Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. want drivers to know that preliminary engineering field work continues along Farrington Highway in Waipahu as part of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Shaft testing work will require a continuous full closure from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on December 13 of Farrington Highway between the two intersections at Old Fort Weaver Road loop.

The detour will route traffic onto Old Fort Weaver Road from both directions, passing through a stop-controlled intersection. Appropriate signs will be displayed to notify motorists in advance and an off-duty police officer will be at the intersection during peak hours.

In addition, soil sampling work will be conducted next week (December 12-19) along the Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway median and shoulder between Acacia Road and Kualakai Street.

Soil sampling work will require some daytime lane and intersection closures Sundays through Fridays between 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for both westbound and eastbound lanes. One lane of traffic in each direction along Farrington Highway will remain open during the work.

For additional information, visit Honolulustransit.org or call the Honolulu Transit's information line at 566-2299.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

SHAFT TESTING PUBLIC NOTICE TO MOTORISTS (As of December 19, 2010)

The City & County of Honolulu and Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. want drivers to know that preliminary engineering field work continues along Farrington Highway in Waipahu as part of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Shaft testing and soil sampling work will be conducted next week (December 19-26) along the Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway median and shoulder between Acacia Road and Kualakai Street.

Work will not require lane closures. Due to the holidays there will be no lane closures between December 18, 2010 and January 2, 2011.

For additional information, visit Honolulustransit.org or call the Honolulu Transit's information line at 566-2299.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

SHAFT TESTING PUBLIC NOTICE TO MOTORISTS (As of December 26, 2010)

The City & County of Honolulu and Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. want drivers to know that preliminary engineering field work continues along Farrington Highway in Waipahu as part of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Shaft testing and soil sampling work will be conducted next week (December 26, 2010 - January 2, 2011) along the Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway median and shoulder between Acacia Road and Kualakai Street.

Work will not require lane closures. Due to the holidays there will be no lane closures between December 18, 2010 and January 2, 2011.

For additional information, visit Honolulustransit.org or call the Honolulu Transit's information line at 566-2299.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

SOIL TESTING PUBLIC NOTICE TO MOTORISTS (As of December 5, 2010)

The City & County of Honolulu and Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. want drivers to know that preliminary engineering field work continues along Farrington Highway in Waipahu as part of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Shaft testing work will require a continuous full closure 24 hours on December 7 of Farrington Highway between the two intersections at Old Fort Weaver Road loop.

The detour will route traffic onto Old Fort Weaver Road from both directions, passing through a stop-controlled intersection. Appropriate signs will be displayed to notify motorists in advance and an off-duty police officer will be at the intersection during peak hours.

In addition, Soil sampling work will be conducted next week (December 5 - 12) along the Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway median and shoulder between Acacia Road and Kualakai Street.

Soil sampling work will require some daytime lane and intersection closures Sundays through Fridays between 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. for both westbound and eastbound lanes. One lane of traffic in each direction along Farrington Highway will remain open during the work.

For additional information, visit Honolulustransit.org or call the Honolulu Transit's information line at 566-2299.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

Traffic Update
Week of December 5, 2010
Kiewit Preliminary Engineering Field Work

Traffic Impacts:

- Crews will be working 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. along Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway on the median and shoulder with potholing activities. Potholing allows Kiewit to locate existing utilities.
- Crews will be working 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. along Farrington Highway between Old Ft. Weaver Road Loop intersections on the shoulder with soil testing activities.
- Test shaft demo work will require a continuous full closure (24 hours) of Farrington Highway between the two intersections at Old Fort Weaver Road loop on December 7.

Kamehameha and Farrington Highway Traffic Plan:

- Work will require lane closures from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and shoulder work signage/cones along the side of the road to delineate work area.
- One lane of traffic in each direction along Kamehameha Highway, and Farrington Highway will remain open.
- Along Farrington Highway between Old Ft. Weaver Road Loop intersections the two lane highway will be counter flowed using one lane from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Detour Traffic Plan:

- Farrington Hwy detour to Old Fort Weaver Road Loop will be 24 hours a day. The detour will route traffic onto Old Fort Weaver Road from both directions, passing through a stop-controlled intersection. Appropriate signs will be displayed to notify motorists in advance and an off-duty police officer will be at the intersection during peak hours.

Contact Us:

For more information, community members can visit honolulutrainsit.org or call the information line at 566-2299.

Summary:

Last year, Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. was awarded the contract to build the first 6.5 miles of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project from East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands. The City and County of Honolulu recently issued a notice to proceed to Kiewit for design and pre-engineering activities including surveying and potholing to locate existing utilities and exploratory soil sample borings in East Kapolei and along Farrington Highway in Waipahu. During the pre-engineering field work, crews will be working on Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway along the median and shoulder lanes. Kiewit continues safety, public information and environmental training for all Kiewit staff, craft, subcontractors and consultants related to the project. Kiewit and the City continue with community relations efforts by keeping the public informed of lane closures and possible impacts.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

Traffic Update
Week of December 12, 2010
Kiewit Preliminary Engineering Field Work

Traffic Impacts:

- Crews will be working 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. along Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway on the median and shoulder with Pre-Engineering Soil Sample and Testing activities.
- Test shaft demo work will require a full closure between 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. of Farrington Highway between the two intersections at Old Fort Weaver Road loop on December 13.

Kamehameha and Farrington Highway Traffic Plan:

- Work will require lane closures from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and shoulder work signage/cones along the side of the road to delineate work area.
- One lane of traffic in each direction along Kamehameha Highway, and Farrington Highway will remain open.
- Along Farrington Highway between Old Ft. Weaver Road Loop intersections the two lane highway will be counter flowed using one lane from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Detour Traffic Plan:

- Farrington Hwy detour to Old Fort Weaver Road Loop will be from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. The detour will route traffic onto Old Fort Weaver Road from both directions, passing through a stop-controlled intersection. Appropriate signs will be displayed to notify motorists in advance of detour.

Contact Us:

For more information, community members can visit honolulutrainsit.org or call the information line at 566-2299.

Summary:

Last year, Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. was awarded the contract to build the first 6.5 miles of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project from East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands. The City and County of Honolulu recently issued a notice to proceed to Kiewit for design and pre-engineering activities including surveying and potholing to locate existing utilities and exploratory soil sample borings in East Kapolei and along Farrington Highway in Waipahu. During the pre-engineering field work, crews will be working on Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway along the median and shoulder lanes. Kiewit continues safety, public information and environmental training for all Kiewit staff, craft, subcontractors and consultants related to the project. Kiewit and the City continue with community relations efforts by keeping the public informed of lane closures and possible impacts.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

Traffic Update
Week of December 12, 2010
Kiewit Preliminary Engineering Field Work

Traffic Impacts:

- Crews will be working 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. along Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway on the median and shoulder with Pre-Engineering Soil Sample and Testing activities.
- Test shaft demo work will require a full closure between 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. of Farrington Highway between the two intersections at Old Fort Weaver Road loop on December 16.

Kamehameha and Farrington Highway Traffic Plan:

- Work will require lane closures from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and shoulder work signage/cones along the side of the road to delineate work area.
- One lane of traffic in each direction along Kamehameha Highway, and Farrington Highway will remain open.
- Along Farrington Highway between Old Ft. Weaver Road Loop intersections the two lane highway will be counter flowed using one lane from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Detour Traffic Plan:

- Farrington Hwy detour to Old Fort Weaver Road Loop will be from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. The detour will route traffic onto Old Fort Weaver Road from both directions, passing through a stop-controlled intersection. Appropriate signs will be displayed to notify motorists in advance of detour.

Contact Us:

For more information, community members can visit honolulutrainsit.org or call the information line at 566-2299.

Summary:

Last year, Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. was awarded the contract to build the first 6.5 miles of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project from East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands. The City and County of Honolulu recently issued a notice to proceed to Kiewit for design and pre-engineering activities including surveying and potholing to locate existing utilities and exploratory soil sample borings in East Kapolei and along Farrington Highway in Waipahu. During the pre-engineering field work, crews will be working on Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway along the median and shoulder lanes. Kiewit continues safety, public information and environmental training for all Kiewit staff, craft, subcontractors and consultants related to the project. Kiewit and the City continue with community relations efforts by keeping the public informed of lane closures and possible impacts.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

Traffic Update
Week of December 19, 2010
Kiewit Preliminary Engineering Field Work

Traffic Impacts:

- Crews will be working 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. along Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway off the highway with Pre-Engineering Soil Sample and Testing activities.

Kamehameha and Farrington Highway Traffic Plan:

- Work will not require lane closures. No lane closure closures between 12/18/10 to 1/2/11.

Contact Us:

For more information, community members can visit honolulustransit.org or call the information line at 566-2299.

Summary:

Last year, Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. was awarded the contract to build the first 6.5 miles of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project from East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands. The City and County of Honolulu recently issued a notice to proceed to Kiewit for design and pre-engineering activities including surveying and potholing to locate existing utilities and exploratory soil sample borings in East Kapolei and along Farrington Highway in Waipahu. During the pre-engineering field work, crews will be working on Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway along the median and shoulder lanes. Kiewit continues safety, public information and environmental training for all Kiewit staff, craft, subcontractors and consultants related to the project. Kiewit and the City continue with community relations efforts by keeping the public informed of lane closures and possible impacts.



West O'ahu/Farrington Highway Guideway Contract

Traffic Update
Week of December 26, 2010
Kiewit Preliminary Engineering Field Work

Traffic Impacts:

- Crews will be working 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. along Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway off the highway with Pre-Engineering Soil Sample and Testing activities.

Kamehameha and Farrington Highway Traffic Plan:

- Work will not require lane closures. No lane closure closures between 12/18/10 to 1/2/11.

Contact Us:

For more information, community members can visit honolulustransit.org or call the information line at 566-2299.

Summary:

Last year, Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. was awarded the contract to build the first 6.5 miles of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project from East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands. The City and County of Honolulu recently issued a notice to proceed to Kiewit for design and pre-engineering activities including surveying and potholing to locate existing utilities and exploratory soil sample borings in East Kapolei and along Farrington Highway in Waipahu. During the pre-engineering field work, crews will be working on Kamehameha Highway and Farrington Highway between Acacia Road and Kualakai Parkway along the median and shoulder lanes. Kiewit continues safety, public information and environmental training for all Kiewit staff, craft, subcontractors and consultants related to the project. Kiewit and the City continue with community relations efforts by keeping the public informed of lane closures and possible impacts.

PETER CARLISLE
MAYOR



PRESS STATEMENT
Mayor Peter Carlisle, City and County of Honolulu
December 3, 2010

Regarding the “Analysis and Evaluation of the City and County of Honolulu’s Proposed High Capacity Rail Transit Project” Final Report Prepared by Infrastructure Management Group, Inc. for the Hawaii State Department of Transportation

Today, we are on the verge of being able to begin construction of Honolulu’s long-awaited Rail Project.

It has been reported that the cost of Honolulu’s Rail Project will be increased by \$1.7 billion dollars. This is inaccurate.

The Infrastructure Management Group’s (IMG) report does not say that rail is going to cost more. The report erroneously predicts that we are not going to be able to raise enough money from the half-percent General Excise Tax (GET) rail surcharge.

The prediction that there will be less money raised from the General Excise Tax is wrong.

In fact right now, in Honolulu, the GET revenue is 99% on track. So far, we have collected more than \$580 million since we began collecting the tax in 2007.

The IMG report also erroneously assumes that ridership will be lower than projected because so many people ride the bus now that there will be nobody left over to ride the rail.

Model forecasting indicates that the more people who ride the bus, the more people will ride the rail.

The IMG report was bought and paid for by the State Department of Transportation, supposedly as an independent financial review. There are many reasons to be suspicious of the credibility of this review.

First you should always consider the source. A prominent member of the review team, Thomas Rubin, is a nationally known anti-rail activist.

He advocates that the “Bus is good, Rail is bad.” He travels across the country and has written numerous articles opposing rail projects. This guy is always against rail.

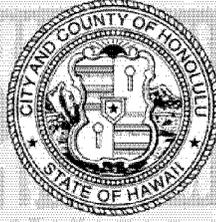
In keeping with his documented hostility against rail, he turned to Panos Prevedouros for information. Prevedouros is neither a licensed engineer nor a transit expert. Just like Rubin, he is also an ardent anti-rail activist.

Therefore, it is no surprise the report is a predetermined anti-rail rant.

Spending one-third of a million dollars for this shoddy, biased analysis is an appalling waste of our tax dollars.

###

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 16, 2010

MAYOR CARLISLE ANNOUNCES GOVERNOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT

Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle today announced the acceptance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Honolulu Rail Transit Project by Gov. Neil Abercrombie, clearing the way for the project to move forward.

With the governor's acceptance of the project's Final EIS on the state level, the City anticipates that the Federal Transit Administration will issue a Record of Decision (ROD) that would allow the City to break ground on the rail transit system.

"Moving forward with rail transit creates much-needed jobs for our communities, provides long-term traffic relief and offers a dependable transportation alternative that starts us on the right path toward our preferred future," said Carlisle.

The EIS, which had been submitted to the State Office of Environmental Quality Control, identifies environmental, community and economic benefits and impacts of the rail system as well as mitigation procedures for addressing these issues.

"The rail project EIS has been done prudently and is in compliance with state environmental law," Carlisle added.

The Honolulu Rail Transit Project is a 20-mile elevated rail system connecting East Kapolei with Ala Moana Center. There are 21 stations in communities including Waipahu, Pearl City, Aiea, Kalihi, Chinatown, Downtown Honolulu and Kakaako. There will also be stations at activity centers such as UH-West Oahu,

Leeward Community College, Pearl Highlands, Pearlridge, Aloha Stadium, Honolulu International Airport and Honolulu Community College.

The City has already awarded two construction contracts for the project: one for the first phase of the elevated rail guideway from East Kapolei to Pearl City; and the other for the train storage and maintenance facility in Waipahu. The city is scheduled to award two more contracts next year for the second phase of the rail route from Pearl City to Aloha Stadium and for the “core systems,” which consists of the train vehicles and the control center for the rail system.

“Many people contributed to this important journey,” Carlisle said. “I want to thank Gov. Abercrombie for accepting the project’s EIS, the former mayor, the City Council, Hawaii’s Congressional delegation, the state Legislature, labor and business organizations, the Federal Transit Administration and other federal partners who have helped us and pledged funding.”

-30-

Media contact: Louise Kim McCoy, Mayor’s Office, 768-7798