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Sherry

We have held further discussions with the City of Honolulu's Department of Transportation Services (DTS) and were provided the following information:

The City Council's earlier vote on December 22, 2006, identified a general "fixed guideway" LPA (for the entire 30+ mile alignment) with the decision for options at two locations - (1) the western terminus and (2) an alignment extending near the Honolulu International Airport or the Salt Lake community) - to be determined by Mayor Mufi Hannemann's Administration. The Council's vote on February 21<sup>st</sup> followed the presentation of recommendations by the Hannemann Administration to identify the initial **minimum operable segment (MOS)**. As noted in the article below, the Council essentially amended the Administration's recommendations from the floor and procedurally now must wait minimally six days before proceeding with further formal action, which is anticipated next week (Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>).

DTS staff further informed us that on the basis of prior testimony and information entered into the record, the concept of "fixed guideway" excludes the notion of a bus component as no designs include any on/ off ramps or by-pass lanes). The anticipated 2/27/07 vote is expected to result in the identification of a 20 mile MOS extending from the western end of Oahu and ending at Ala Moana Center. This vote is anticipated to conclude the Council's action on the alignment for now. Honolulu politics suggest that the respective council members will be intimately involved in the details of station location, etc. The City expects to forward a request for approval to enter preliminary engineering in April/May.

Under separate cover with a website link, I will forward information about the Hawaii DOT's recent efforts to advance a public-private partnership to construct a toll road system that some in the media interpreted as the State's highway alternative to the City of Honolulu's fixed guideway project, which is NOT the case.

Thanks!  
Leslie

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Residents divided on route for transit

By Curtis Lum and Gordon Y.K. Pang

Advertiser

2/23/07



"I think local people could and should benefit more than the tourists. Then the tourists can use their rental cars and get around the island."

Daniel Fullenwider | 29, Makakilo

"I think it's more populated in this area. But I see the other argument also. I think anywhere mass transit goes would be beneficial. I just hope the city will keep it cost-effective that it clears the congestion on the highways."

David Glassman | 44, painter from Salt Lake

"I think it would make more sense to double-decker the highway because people won't get out of their cars."

Al Matsuyama | 55, salesman from Mililani

"Most of the people coming here come on tours and they and their luggage are transported from the airport to their hotels and back. It's a very efficient system and transit is not going to do anything to improve it."

Charles Ferrell | Honolulu

Just as the City Council is divided on the new route for the city's proposed fixed-guideway transit system, so are O'ahu residents and the visitor industry.

By a 5-4 vote, the council on Wednesday gave preliminary support to a 20-mile route that would begin near the planned University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu campus and end at Ala Moana Center. But the council threw in a last-minute twist by dumping a proposal to run the system to Honolulu Airport in favor of a route along Salt Lake Boulevard.

"If you look at major cities — London, Budapest, Miami — those cities have mass transit that connects with the airport," said Salt Lake resident Mark Langenbacher, a 59-year-old college teacher. "If we don't have a stop at the airport, that's insane. Tourism's our lifeblood, and we're just putting the screws to tourists by not giving them access."

Debate on the city's new mass transit route centers on whether it's best to meet the needs of Salt Lake residents or travelers and airport employees.

Edward Arakaki of Salt Lake said he's happy with the City Council's decision to reject Mayor Mufi Hannemann's preferred alignment in favor of a route that moves through Salt Lake Boulevard.

"This is going to be a transit line for the people who live here, and who lives at the airport?" said Arakaki, 57. "How many residents go to the airport on any given day?"

But Mililani resident Christine Benevides, waiting for a ride after her plane arrived from the Big Island yesterday, said it makes more sense to her for the transit line to connect to the airport.

"I don't go to Salt Lake, but I come to the airport a lot," she said. "Rather than leave my car and pay for it, I would hop on the transit line."

Tourism executives said they were surprised by the council's last-minute switch.

"We supported the alignment along the airport because it provided access to a fairly large employment area," said Murray Towill, president of the Hawai'i Hotel & Lodging Association. "It looked like that would generate the greatest ridership."

#### VOTE 'SHORTSIGHTED'

Regardless of the route, Towill said he was "happy to see that the project is moving forward."

Mike Paulin, Aqua Hotels & Resorts owner, said he was surprised that the City Council "disregarded" the visitor community and the people who work in the airport area.

"I have not been to a 'big-league city' in recent years where there is not a rail extension into the commercial center of town and that's Waikiki," Paulin said. "I thought (the council's decision) was very shortsighted, very strange."

Nina Tunoa, 40, a cargo clerk for one of the airlines at the airport, agrees.

Tunoa said she gets dropped off or catches a ride on TheBus to get to and from work at least three times a week. The Waipahu resident said she would take the transit line if it went through the airport.

"If it came to the airport, it would help people like us," Tunoa said, as she waited for a ride. "There are a lot of employees that work at the airport."

Councilman Romy Cachola, whose district includes Salt Lake and the airport, prompted the change in the planned route Wednesday when he said he would not vote for the transit plan if it did not pass through Salt Lake.

#### RESIDENTS PLEASED

Mililani resident Ellen Demchok, 54, said she would ride mass transit if it took her to her job as a pharmacy technician at the Salt Lake Longs.

"If there's a get-off point here, that would be wonderful for me," she said yesterday at the Salt Lake Shopping Center.

Salt Lake resident David Lao, 50, pointed to the moped he rides for his daily commute to his job as a computer technician Downtown. "I tried driving, I tried TheBus, I tried everything," Lao said, adding that he's found the moped is most convenient for him.

But he will convert to being a transit rider, Lao said, adding that he was thrilled when he saw the front page of yesterday's Advertiser and saw the route had been changed to move through Salt Lake. "You don't need to take care of anything, like parking," he said. "You just jump on it."