DRAFT

Subject: Tom Papandrew & Amy Blagriff notes from meeting of November 9, 2006
To: Ad Hoc Transit Working Group (AIA, APA, ASLA & ULI, City and Consultant Team)
Date: November 14, 2006

The initial meeting of the Transit Working Group was held Thursday, November 9, 2006 at the AIA office on Merchant Street. Attached is a list of the attendees with their e-mail addresses. Tom Dinell and Tom Witten notified us that they are interested and willing to serve on this committee but they were unable to attend today's meeting. We have not been able to confirm John Whelan's willingness to work on this committee (he has been traveling) but think he would be an asset to the group's efforts.

After short introduction of everyone in the meeting, Toru Hamayasu, Chief of the Transportation Planning Division of the Department of Transportation Services for the City and County of Honolulu, made a brief presentation on the current status of the 'transit project.' He pointed out that they still don't have a project as the City Council still needs to vote on the four alternatives currently before them. In brief these alternatives are:

1. No Build Alternative
2. Transportation System Management Alternative
3. Managed Lane Alternative
4. Fixed Guideway Alternative

Toru noted that the City administration wants the City Council to vote on an alternative place this year. The sense of urgency is not only tied to securing the initial federal funding but also to next year's potential funding of the project. In addition, every year of delay cost us approximately $120 million.

The city is advocating for Alternative 4, the Fixed Guideway Alternative. In approving this alternative, the administration wants to see the alignment alternative selected which would also generally establish station locations. Apparently the Council wants to separate some of these discussions and votes and look at more alternatives.

When asked what we could do to support the 'transit' alternative – Toru said that we could speak out against Bill 83 which proposes to delay the implementation of the ½ per cent excise tax to the end of next year rather than implement it in mid-year. This would effectively cut the funding by $150 million as the tax sunsets on the same date regardless of the start date. The first reading on this bill is next week – November 15, 2007. The next vote would be on Bill 79 slated for hearing before the end of the year.

A number of questions were asked about the phasing, some of the 'urban design' considerations (overhead, underground, at grade) and so forth. General concensus was that although we (AIA) will strongly support the implementation of a rail transit system (the Fixed Guideway Alternative) for the City of Honolulu – we do have concerns and conditions that go with this support. These

concerns as the proposed rail project moves into the design, preliminary engineering and EIS phase are about at grade and above-grade plans for rail and its impact on adjacent communities and urban design considerations.

Other issues of note:

- Nov 15 - 10am. Council will meet to discuss Bill 83 (Charles Djou) which postpones tax collection for Mass Transit until August 2007 or later. Toru Hamayasu, City and County, considers this bill anti-rail and welcomes support from Allied organizations such as ours to defeat it. He said the selection of alternatives must include a funding package to insure Federal matching support of local mass transit.

  Note: Toru explained this also means that alignment would need to be pre-determined (decided now) in order for a cost estimate to be put forward (again to secure matching funds. Toru believes the alignment could be changed at a later date -- it was not entirely clear how easily such a change would be.)

- Follow-up needed: RUDC Committee will submit testimony on bill 83 with AIA EXCOM approval. The committee discussed reiterating that Honolulu AIA strongly supports rail and the associated GET increase to fund... we don't believe that it is advisable to delay the collection of the tax as this may jeopardize the overall funding for the project. We do have concerns as the proposed rail project moves into the design phase and EIS.. about at grade and above-grade plans for rail and its impact on our community and design considerations.

- December 7 - Bill 79 on selection of alternatives and alignment including proposed costs... to be heard by City Council.

- Note: Right now this bill does not include station selection which is not ideal.. still to be determined is if different architects would be hired to design different stations or one architectural firm would design for all of the stations (like DC).

- Follow-up needed: Again, RUDC should prepare and submit testimony -- after securing EXCOM/BOD approval. As before, mention concerns about design and EIS with strong support of rail....

- Within the next 1 - 1 1/2 months: Toru recommended AIA Honolulu write a letter to the Dept Head(s) to help shape the contracting process and how architects are integrated into future planning and execution of this rail project.

- Next meeting date for committee. We discussed time frame to meet again. –every two or three months? It was suggested that for the next several months, it may be well to meet monthly. Attendees definitely supported having City present in addition to consultants. Consensus among attendees seemed to favor having AIA Honolulu and other allied organizations submit testimony for the Nov 15 and Dec 7 meetings. (Since the leaders of all the allied organizations were not present, it seems unlikely we could get joint testimony

for the Nov meeting -- possibly could do for the Dec meeting with RUDC assistance in moving it forward

- If testimony is being considered for Nov 15, of course, we need to act soon so we could secure EXCOM approval. At Honolulu AIA last Oct EXCOM, they did approve the idea of having RUDC testify on behalf of the chapter -- following our Chapter and National policies.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Papandrew (with thanks to Amy Blagriff for her input)