June 20, 2006

Mr. Cliff Slater
Honolulutraffic.com
PO Box 15502
Honolulu, Hawaii 96830

Subject: Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project Scoping Comments

Dear Mr. Slater,

Mahalo for submitting comments during the scoping process for the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project. You comments, along with over 500 others, were reviewed and considered during the development of the final purpose and need, alternatives being evaluated in the Alternatives Analysis, and scope of environmental analysis for the project. The outcome of the scoping process is summarized in the scoping report which is available for review at the project website www.honolulutransit.org. All of the comments received during the scoping process are included in the appendices to the report, and also may be downloaded.

The No-build, Transportation System Management, Managed Lanes and Fixed Guideway alternatives will be evaluated in detail in the Alternatives Analysis. Once the Alternatives Analysis is complete, sufficient information will be available to select the optimal alternative for the corridor. A two-lane reversible option for the managed lane alternative, matching what you have proposed, has been added to the range of alternatives being evaluated in the Alternatives Analysis.

Project costs and operating revenues will be estimated as part of the financial analysis completed during the alternatives analysis process. Ridership forecasts are currently being developed to support the Alternatives Analysis. Transit travel time and reliability will be major factors in evaluating the performance of the various Alternatives.

Environmental and social impacts and benefits of each proposed alternative will be addressed in the Alternatives Analysis and draft Environmental Impact Statement. They will be considered in the comparison of overall costs and benefits of the project alternatives.

The Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project is evaluating one aspect of island-wide transportation needs in coordination with the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization, which is responsible for integrated transportation planning. The Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project analysis is meant to evaluate project alternatives that may be constructed within the authorization of Act 247, enacted by the Hawaii state legislature in 2005. The act prohibits the construction of a non-transit project with the authorized excise-tax surcharge. Projects with the purpose of providing roadway mobility for automobiles and commercial vehicles are outside of the authorization of Act 247; therefore, they will not be considered for the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project.

Comments on how information was presented, comments were collected, and how the scoping process was conducted were reviewed and will be considered during future phases of the public involvement process. The project team has begun an extensive public information process to provide project details prior to selection of a locally preferred alternative (LPA). Public feedback will be solicited prior to selection of the LPA.

A transit system is only a portion of the entire transportation system. While the transit system will reduce the number of drivers on congested roadways within the corridor, the corridor is expected to continue experiencing growth in travel demand. The transportation corridor between Kapolei and the University of Hawaii at Manoa will continue to experience substantial traffic congestion; however, congestion in the corridor is expected to decrease somewhat after the system opens, and grow at a reduced rate after that time because of automobile trips diverted to transit. Travel demand projections will be developed for the Alternatives Analysis.

Sincerely,

MELVIN N. KAKU
Director