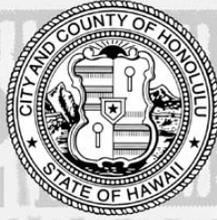


NEWS RELEASE



Office of the Mayor

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 29, 2011

HONOLULU RAIL PROJECT ACCEPTED FOR FINAL DESIGN PHASE

(Thurs., Dec. 29, 2011)—Mayor Peter Carlisle today announced that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has accepted the Honolulu rail transit project into Final Design – the final phase of the project’s development before executing a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) with the FTA. In a letter from FTA Regional Administrator Leslie T. Rogers, the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) was advised of the favorable decision in writing.

“This is great news for Honolulu,” Carlisle said. “We are grateful to Senator Inouye and to our congressional delegation for their strong support. Entering into final design also allows us to begin the process of working toward our full-funding grant agreement with FTA, which solidifies the \$1.55 billion in federal funds we expect to receive. We remain on track to complete that process next fall.”

“I appreciate the approval from FTA for Honolulu rail transit to enter final design,” said Senator Inouye. “This is significant and demonstrates the continued support for the federal share of \$1.55 billion. I will continue to work hard with the City to ensure we obtain the full funding grant agreement this year.”

The Honolulu rail transit project’s entry into final design demonstrates the FTA’s continued acknowledgement that the project is progressing through the various FTA requirements toward a federal contribution of \$1.55 billion. As is the case with all projects that progress through the Final Design process, FTA Regional Administrator Rogers noted that the Honolulu project’s financial plan will be subject to an even more intensive review before FTA enters into an FFGA with HART.

“Today’s announcement is a significant milestone and another positive step toward providing Oahu residents and visitors with more affordable, efficient, and environmentally responsible transportation options,” said Congresswoman Mazie Hirono, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. “Since day one, the Obama Administration has recognized the importance of building up public transportation systems as a way to create jobs, connect people with local businesses, and build a strong foundation for a 21st century economy. This project has ongoing support from the Administration and members of Congress in both parties. I look forward to continuing to work with the rest of our Delegation, Mayor Carlisle, and HART to ensure that federal support continues and the project stays on schedule and on budget.”

“I’m glad to see the project continue to make progress, as it represents not just transportation alternatives for residents of Oahu, but also much-needed jobs and support for

Hawaii's economy," said Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa. "Like many others, I look forward to seeing the final design and how it addresses the unique needs of the Honolulu urban corridor."

"I had the opportunity to meet with FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff earlier this year to personally assure him of the Council's support for this project," said Honolulu City Council Chairman Ernie Martin. "I am pleased with the FTA's announcement and look forward to seeing construction start next year."

"This approval serves as further confirmation that required steps have been properly followed and that the FTA believes this project should continue to move forward," HART Board Chairwoman Carrie Okinaga said. "It also means that the FTA has approved our updated financial plan and that the project remains on sound financial footing, which is good news for taxpayers. The HART board will continue to do its part to ensure that the project is completed on time and within budget."

As previously announced by Senator Inouye, the Fiscal Year 2012 Transportation Appropriations measure includes a total of \$510 million for those transit New Starts projects that will enter into an FFGA in calendar year 2012. When Honolulu enters into an FFGA with the FTA, it will become eligible for a portion of these funds in the year ahead.

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Media Contact: Jim Fulton, Mayor's Office, 768-6928.