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| **From:** | Longo, David (FTA) |
| **To:** | Rogoff, Peter (FTA); McMillan, Therese (FTA); Carter, Dorval (FTA); Welbes, Matt (FTA) |
| **CC:** | Biehl, Scott (FTA); Borinsky, Susan (FTA); Day, Elizabeth (FTA); List-FTA-TCA; Jackson, Brian (FTA); Steinmann, Richard (FTA); Lynch, Ryan (FTA) |
| **Sent:** | 2/28/2010 7:29:24 AM |
| **Subject:** | Honolulu Advertiser - Resolution on rail issues near - Federal transit official trying to reach deal so final EIS can be released |

Posted on: Saturday, February 27, 2010

# Resolution on rail issues near

## Federal transit official trying to reach deal so final EIS can be released

Advertiser Staff

The Federal Transit Administration expects to resolve issues holding up the release of the final environmental impact statement for the city's rail project soon, according to Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann and City Council Chairman Todd Apo, who met yesterday with FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff.

During the meeting in Washington, D.C., Rogoff told the two that he "is working quickly and aggressively with the Federal Aviation Administration to reach a resolution on the rail alignment through the airport," according to a news release issued by the city yesterday.

The FAA is reviewing the project's impact on runway protection zones among other issues. The city had expected to start construction on the planned $5.3 billion East Kapolei to Ala Moana route in December, however, that date has been delayed by a prolonged federal review.

The city recently notified visitors to the rail project's Internet site that construction was expected to start in "late 2010." The city now says that the update was erroneous. Construction is scheduled to begin sometime this year, the city said without being more specific.

Whenever a final environmental impact statement is released, it will go to Gov. Linda Lingle for her review. At that point, Lingle plans to conduct an independent analysis of city tax revenue forecasts that are the basis of the project's financial plan. Her concern is that the project could hurt the state's finances if it fails.

Lingle has suggested the city consider building the rail partially at street level to cut costs, given tax collections for the rail have been less than anticipated. Hannemann has said that a review of street-level rail would delay the project by one to two years. Delays are expected to cost $100 million a year, Hannemann has said.