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MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR



April 15, 2008

HAND DELIVERED

Ms. Laura H. Thielen, Chairperson
Department of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawaii
1151 Punchbowl Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Ms. Thielen:

Your letter printed in yesterday's edition of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin indicates surprisingly that you are in favor of providing the City with access through DLNR property located at the makai/Diamond Head corner of Farrington Highway and North-South Road for the route of the City's fixed guideway transit project, but that you have yet to receive a joint development proposal for this parcel from the University of Hawaii-West Oahu (UHWO). Your letter indicates that you have been in discussions with UHWO about this parcel since November 2007.

You seem to not be aware from your discussions with UHWO that the City had already notified UHWO twice in writing, on October 2 and November 7 of 2007, that it had become necessary to forgo a route through the subject parcel as a result of the inability of UHWO or any other State agency to provide unconditional authorization in a timely manner for City use of this parcel.

Nevertheless, in light of your public comments regarding such a route, the City is willing to reconsider an alignment through this parcel to the vicinity of the UHWO campus again if DLNR can provide a firm commitment by Monday, April 21, that it is in full support of authorizing unconditional City use of the parcel for this purpose.

Realigning the route once again to accommodate your preference would delay completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this project. The City is willing to make such a sacrifice, but time is of the essence. We need a firm commitment on this issue if we are to propose that the City Council amend the Public Infrastructure Map to support this alignment. A council committee hearing on this matter is scheduled for April 22. Since you indicate you have been in discussions with UHWO since November of 2007, we trust there has been ample time for you to make a decision.

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The City made clear to UHWO from the start of our discussions regarding this project nearly two years ago that a preferable alignment would directly serve the UHWO campus. However, UHWO has consistently opposed our efforts to locate a transit station on the campus, or even adjacent to it.

It should be noted that the route preferred by UHWO does not include a station on, or adjacent to, the campus, but would instead locate a station at the planned commercial development near North-South Road. To accommodate this alignment, the City would also require a firm commitment for access through the State property to be developed by Hunt Development Group, located to the west of the DLNR parcel, across North-South Road. The alignment would enter the State/Hunt property from the west side of North-South Road and exit to the south, near the planned Kroc Center.

While the City does not consider this route optimal, we are willing to accommodate such an alignment if all State entities and development partners, including DLNR, can come together in a timely manner and speak in support with one voice.

You should know that the City has not experienced meaningful results with DLNR on several fronts, to wit: the proposed transfer of the Haiku Stairs to DLNR; the agreement on the Kuakini Street extension; closure on the Kawaiuli Marsh issue; and the maintenance of DLNR-owned trees along Round Top Drive. I am hopeful that your very public proclamation of willingness to help your fellow state agency, the university, could signal a major breakthrough for UHWO's desired transit route.

We look forward to receiving a clear response from you by April 21 that will either convey your firm commitment to providing the unconditional City access that is necessary for a route through the DLNR parcel, or your inability or unwillingness to provide this necessary commitment in a timely manner. We remain fully cognizant that final authorization could require action by the Board of Land and Natural Resources, but we need written assurance of your firm commitment in the meantime.

Should you need further information regarding this matter, please contact City Department of Planning and Permitting Deputy Director David Tanoue or Department of Transportation Services Chief Planner Toru Hamayasu.

Yours truly,



Mufi Hannemann
Mayor

cc: Councilmember Todd Apo
Councilmember Rod Tam
Mr. David McClain, President
University of Hawaii