29 December, 2008

To:
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Subject: Comment on Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) "Honolulu High-capacity transit corridor Project", Issue : False and misleading DEIS statement on "Improve Corridor Mobility".

Fact:
Para. 1.8, pg. 1-20 states that transit improvements are needed to improve corridor mobility "because motorists and transit users experience substantial traffic congestion and delay at most times of the day.....Average speeds on the H-1 Freeway are currently less than 20 mph.... and will degrade even further by 2030."

Discussion:
The 2006 Alternative Analysis and DEIS propose Rail transit be built which will **worsen** traffic congestion on H-1 after the Rail is built. The City Alternative Analysis , Table 3-12, shows that there will still be 17,500 vehicles per hour in 2030 on the H-1 (full rated capacity = 9,500 vehicles per hour) at Pearl City **AFTER** the $7.0 Billion Rail is built and operating.

The DEIS Screenline Volumes for the 2030 Salt Lake Build Alternative Table 3-20, shows that with the Salt Lake Build Alternative AT Screen line "D" :
- Kalauao Koko Head bound : Observed (forecast) Volume - AM Peak = 18,910 vehicles per hour (vph).
- Facility 2030 Capacity - AM Peak = 14, 650 vph - Reference: Table 3-12 Alternative Analysis.

Result: There will be 4,260 vph above the facility (H-1 + HOV + Zipper + Kam+ Moanalua) capacity at Kalauao which indicates a Level of Service (LOS) F AFTER the Salt Lake Rail is built. This conclusion is consistent with the conclusion using the numbers from the City's Alternative analysis report. With rail, the above numbers show congestion will WORSEN after the $7.0 Billion Full build out Rail is completed.

The $7.0 Billion Steel wheel on steel rail transit system is NOT a cost effective means of providing improved mobility. A fully-elevated, steel-wheel rail transit system can move only 6,000 commuters (4000 standees, 2000 seated) per hour during peak travel periods while the 2030 commuter demand for RAIL will reach 15,600 commuters per hour, according to Table 3-12 of the Alternative Analysis. Similarly, Table 3-20 of the DEIS shows traffic overload on H-1 during peak travel periods.

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Conclusion: The $7.0 Billion Steel Rail is not cost effective to substantially reduce or eliminate the bottlenecks on H-1 and will REDUCE MOBILITY which is contrary to the goal of the DEIS.

Recommendation: Reject the Steel Wheel on Steel Rail transit system and select other more cost effective transit systems which will improve mobility. Cost effective transit systems which will have the capacity to eliminate H-1 congestion include Managed Lane Alternative, BRT, EzWay or two highway bypasses around the H-1 bottlenecks at Pearl City and at Middle Street merge.

Respectfully,

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