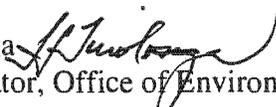




**STATE OF HAWAII**  
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December 15, 2010

**TO:** The Honorable Neil Abercrombie  
Governor of Hawai'i

**FROM:** Herman Tuiolosega   
Acting Administrator, Office of Environmental Quality Control

**SUBJECT:** Analysis and Determination of Acceptability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

The Office of Environmental Quality Control, pursuant to Section 11-200-23, Hawai'i Administrative Rules, has analyzed the subject Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) and determined its acceptability. Based on the analysis set forth below, it is our recommendation that you accept this document pursuant to Section 343-5(b), Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

**A. BACKGROUND**

**Project:** Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

**Location:** East Kapolei to Ala Moana

**TMK:** Multiple tax map keys

**Proposing Agency:** City and County of Honolulu, Department of Transportation Services, 650 South King Street, 3rd Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813.

This is a project by the City and County of Honolulu, Department of Transportation Services on the Island of O'ahu, State of Hawai'i. The Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project Final EIS is intended to provide decision makers and the public with information on the Project's environmental impacts and benefits. The Final EIS identifies current and future needs to address mobility and travel reliability issues, to support transportation and land use planning policies, and to improve transportation equity in the study corridor in the City and County of Honolulu, O'ahu, Hawai'i. This Final EIS identifies the Preferred Alternative,

which consists of a 20-mile elevated guideway in the corridor between East Kapolei and Ala Moana Center that includes transit stations, park-and-ride facilities, a maintenance and storage facility, and other ancillary facilities to support the transit system. This Final EIS addresses agency and public comments on the Draft EIS and documents the transportation effects and potential impacts on the natural and human environment, including effects on land use and economic activity; communities and neighborhoods; visual and aesthetic conditions; air quality and energy; noise and vibration; hazardous materials; natural resources; water quality; and archaeological, cultural, and historic resources. The Final EIS also includes documentation of measures to avoid and minimize effects on the natural and built environments and includes mitigation and other measures. Financial implications for construction and operation of the transit system are also evaluated.

The Final EIS identifies mitigation measures that go beyond compliance with applicable rules, regulations, and requirements. The mitigation measures have been developed to avoid, minimize, rectify, or reduce the Project's potential adverse environmental impacts. Mitigation measures have been considered throughout the Project planning process and incorporated into the Project design and construction plans.

## **B. PROCEDURE**

1. The notice of availability of the Final Environmental Assessment-Environmental Impact Statement Preparation Notice (FEA-EISPN) for this project was published in the December 8, 2005, edition of *The Environmental Notice*. The publication started the administrative 30-day public comment and consultation period for the project which ended on January 9, 2006. During the comment/consultation period, two public scoping meetings were held at the following locations:
  - a. Neil S. Blaisdell Center, Pikake Room, 777 Ward Avenue, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., December 13, 2005. This hearing was attended by an estimated 450 people.
  - b. Kapolei Middle School Cafeteria, 91-5335 Kapolei Parkway, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., December 14, 2005. This meeting was attended by an estimated 200 people.

In addition, 528 comment submissions were received via mail, website, telephone, and from scoping meetings. The public comments and consultation letters were reproduced in Draft EIS.

2. The notice of availability of the Draft EIS for this project was published in the November 23, 2008 edition of *The Environmental Notice*. The Draft EIS comment deadline was January 7, 2009. During the statutory 45-day public comment period, five public meetings were held at the following locations:
  - a. Kapolei Hale, 1000 Uluohia Street in Kapolei, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Saturday, December 6, 2008. This hearing was attended by 33 people; 11 testimonies were given and two comment forms were placed into comment boxes. A written letter was also handed to a court reporter as a comment.

- b. Neal S. Blaisdell Center, Hawai'i Suite, 777 Ward Avenue in Honolulu, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday, December 8, 2008. This hearing was attended by 79 people; 26 testimonies were given and 10 comment forms were placed into comment boxes.
- c. Salt Lake District Park, 1159 Ala Liliko'i Place in Honolulu, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 9, 2008. This hearing was attended by 59 individuals; 25 testimonies were given and five comment forms were placed into comment boxes.
- d. Filipino Community Center, 94-428 Mokuola Street in Waipahu, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 10, 2008. This hearing was attended by 45 people; eight testimonies were given. No comment forms were placed into the comment boxes.
- e. Bishop Museum, 1525 Bernice Street in Honolulu, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Thursday, December 11, 2008. This hearing was attended by 11 people; three testimonies were given. No comment forms were placed into the comment boxes.

In a addition, 586 comments in the form of letters, Project website, emails, and oral or written testimony at the public hearings were provided by Federal agencies, state agencies, county agencies, community organizations, and private individuals. Of the 586 comments received, 183 comments were timely received under the National Environmental Policy Act, and the remaining 403 comments were timely received under Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The comments, as well as the point-by-point responses to each, were prepared by the City and County of Honolulu, Department of Transportation Services. These comments and their corresponding point-by-point responses are reproduced in the Final EIS, Appendix A and the Errata to Appendix A.

3. The notice of availability of the Final EIS for this project was published in the July 08, 2010 edition of The *Environmental Notice*.

**The OEQC determines that this document is in compliance with the filing requirements of Chapter 200 of Title 11, Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR), (Environmental Impact Statement Rules) and with Chapter 343, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS).**

### **C. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT CONTENT**

The Final EIS for the Honolulu High-Capacity Corridor Transit Project contains or incorporates by reference the following:

1. Summary sheet
2. Table of contents
3. Statement of purpose and need for action
4. Project description
5. Discussion of known alternatives to the proposed action
6. Description of the environmental setting

7. A statement of the proposed action's relationship to the land use plans, policies, and controls for the affected area
8. A statement of probable impact on the environment
9. Relationship between local short-term uses and enhancement of long-term productivity
10. Disclosure of all irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources
11. Discussion of all probable unavoidable adverse environmental effects
12. Description of mitigation measures to minimize impacts
13. A summary of unresolved issues
14. A list of organizations and individuals consulted in the DEIS process
15. Reproductions of all substantive comments and responses made during the DEIS review period

**The OEQC determines that the content requirements of the Environmental Impact Statement, as specified in Sections 11-200-17, and 11-200-18 of the HAR, (Environmental Impact Statement Rules), have been fulfilled.**

#### **D. RESPONSES TO COMMENTS**

The proposing agency has responded in a point-by-point manner to all substantive comments made during the public comment and review period of the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project. The comment letters, as well as the point-by-point responses to them are included in the Final EIS.

**The OEQC determines that this Environmental Impact Statement has fulfilled the public review requirement of Chapter 200 of Title 11, HAR, (Environmental Impact Statement Rules).**

#### **E. UNRESOLVED ISSUES**

There are two unresolved issues with the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project:

1. The receipt of permits, approvals, and agreements.
2. The receipt of Federal funds from Section 5309 New Starts Program.

#### **F. MITIGATION MEASURES**

The mitigation measures proposed in the environmental impact statement will minimize the negative economic, social and environmental impacts of the Project. Therefore, we recommend that the City and County of Honolulu, Department of Transportation Services direct the implementation of the mitigation measures disclosed in the statement or comparable mitigation measures at the discretion of the permitting agencies. The mitigation measures are listed in a separate document which is attached to the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Final EIS acceptance letter.

#### **G. SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

If there is a major or substantial change to the proposed activity, or if different environmental impacts are anticipated, a further supplemental environmental impact statement shall be prepared in addition to this Final EIS for the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project.

Any further supplemental environmental impact statement shall be reviewed in accordance with Chapter 343, HRS, and Chapter 200, of Title 11, HAR.

#### **H. DETERMINATION**

**The OEQC determines this Final EIS to be acceptable under the procedures established in Chapter 343, HRS and its implementing HAR.**