

## Public Involvement Overview

March 2010

	Month
Hotline Calls*	22
Comment Sense Submissions/Inquiries**	13
Speakers Bureau	
Presentations/ Coffee Hours/ Community Displays & Events	18
Neighborhood Boards	10
Community Updates/Mayor's Town Meetings/ RTD Workshops	0
TV/Radio Appearances	1

\*Calls directly to the hotline 808.566.2299

\*\* Includes all comments/inquiries via Project website from the end of the official DEIS comment period on February 6, 2009 to the end of the month.

## March 2010 website and hotline comments

Submission Method	Submission Date	Submission Content/Notes
Website	03/01/2010	I am the Manager of Architecture and Art at Sound Transit in Seattle Washington. What is your telephone number? I am trying to reach someone in your organization about station design.
Website	03/04/2010	I am doing a research project about the rail system coming to honolulu for my chemistry class. I have a few questions about the rail. I am wondering how we will be able to construct such a thing. I believe that there will be an increase in taxes for our state, and i would like to know how much it would increase? Also i was wondering how the rail would be powered? I hear that it was powered by electricity from renewable sources. What kind of renewable resources? Hopefully you will reply to me k12rokop@ksbe.edu. I appreciate you listening to this and hope to hear from you soon. Much aloha, Dunbar
Website	03/09/2010	Where in East Kapolei is the station being proposed?
Website	03/11/2010	Have the rail vehicles (rolling stock) been released for quotation as of yet?
Website	03/11/2010	We are an acoustical consulting firm working on a new project located along Halekauwila Street in the Downtown area along the proposed rail line. We need exact distances for our acoustical analysis of the rail line impacts. Would it be possible to obtain blow-up drawings showing the rail line's proposed exact location? I am in possession of RP022 but need more detailed drawings to determine distances to our project. Thanks for your help! -Peter
Hotline	03/25/2010	Paraphrased: Don't want rail, why are you sending newsletters. Shut it down. People are paying for it and will never use it (.wav file of call stored)
Hotline	03/25/2010	Paraphrased: Thought this was the Department of Transportation line not the streetcar line. Should get Mufi out of office. 690-6344. (.wav file of call stored)
Website	03/27/2010	We are thinking of moving to Honolulu and we are very excited to hear of the rail system. Is the project on schedule for this year? Has groundbreaking began?
Hotline	03/29/2010	Please remove me from the mailing list I am moving to Las Vegas because I am not paying for this rail.

\* Submission Content / Notes have not been edited for spelling grammar. They appear as written. Mailing list requests and non material comments are not shown above. Only comments/inquiries/suggestions are shown.

# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Monday, March 1, 2010

## City's sights on Kapolei

*Company wants to trade 34 acres of prime land for road*

By **Gordon Y.K. Pang**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

The city would get 34 acres of prime land in Kapolei in exchange for building a key, milelong section of Kapolei Parkway that has been the responsibility of Kapolei Property Development.

If it goes through, the deal would make the city a key player in the development of the core of downtown Kapolei because it would have the authority to decide who and what gets built there.

A memorandum of agreement has already been drafted and signed by KPD officials. Mayor Mufi Hannemann will sign it assuming the City Council approves accepting the parcels the city would obtain in the deal.

Factoring the value of the land to be received and the cost of constructing the road, the city would net an estimated "positive benefit" of \$24.1 million, according to city documents.

The plan was mentioned by Mayor Mufi Hannemann during his State of the City speech last week and is outlined in a resolution calling for the City Council to approve the takeover of the parcels.

Hannemann said the city would be able to speed up the construction of the critical roadway with the help of federal dollars while entering public-private partnerships on the properties it receives in the deal.

The road is both a significant improvement for the area's motorists and a crucial component in the development of the fledgling Kapolei.

For KPD, the deal means it can shed the responsibility of building that section of the road as it is required to do as a condition of land use approvals it received to develop portions of the region.

Kapolei Property Development is the successor company to the Estate of James Campbell and the master planner for the region.

Resolution 10-49 will be before the Council Budget Committee at its meeting at 9 a.m. Wednesday.

The city would have the option of selling or leasing the property. Revenues from the sale of those lands would be required to be deposited into the city transit fund, assuming the \$5.5 billion rail project proceeds by 2016.

Approximately 13 of the 34 acres that would be acquired already have been designated for a mass-transit station. The other 21 acres consist of seven parcels which, like the proposed mass-transit station, are along the segment of Kapolei Parkway that the city would build.

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Six of the parcels comprise the six properties between the new state judiciary building to the west, and Kunehi Street, nearly to Fort Barrette road on the east side.

The seventh parcel is the lot between Kapolei Parkway and the city's Kapolei Hale.

In addition to the 34 acres, KPD will turn over to the city 17 more acres in lands under future roadways, including the section of Kapolei Parkway to be built by the city.

The appraised value of the combined 51 acres is \$60 million while the city has estimated the cost of constructing the portion of Kapolei Parkway at \$35.9 million.

The city expects to obtain about \$10.4 million from the federal government for the construction of Kapolei Parkway and portions of several side roads. KPD has already completed design of those roadways.

"We believe this agreement's a win for the city, for Kapolei Property Development and the community," said Theresia McMurdo, KPD's vice president of public affairs.

"It allows for Kapolei Parkway to be built, and allows for the continued development of Kapolei," McMurdo said.

Council Budget Committee chairman Nestor Garcia said the exchange could be extremely beneficial, especially if the impending rail line comes through Kapolei Parkway in the second phase of the transit project.

The first phase calls for the rail line to end in East Kapolei near the proposed campus of the University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu.

"If it is ... then those lands become candidates for transit oriented development along the rail line," Garcia said.

There's also the benefit of expediting Kapolei Parkway's extension to the Judiciary Building, which is expected to be open soon.

Garcia said he expects the administration will put in funding for the road construction when it submits its budget to the council tomorrow.

"I think it's good idea," he said.

Reach Gordon Y.K. Pang at [gpang@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:gpang@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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**Mom Dilemma #36:**  
Your daughter insists on wearing her princess costume to the grocery store. Allow it or not?

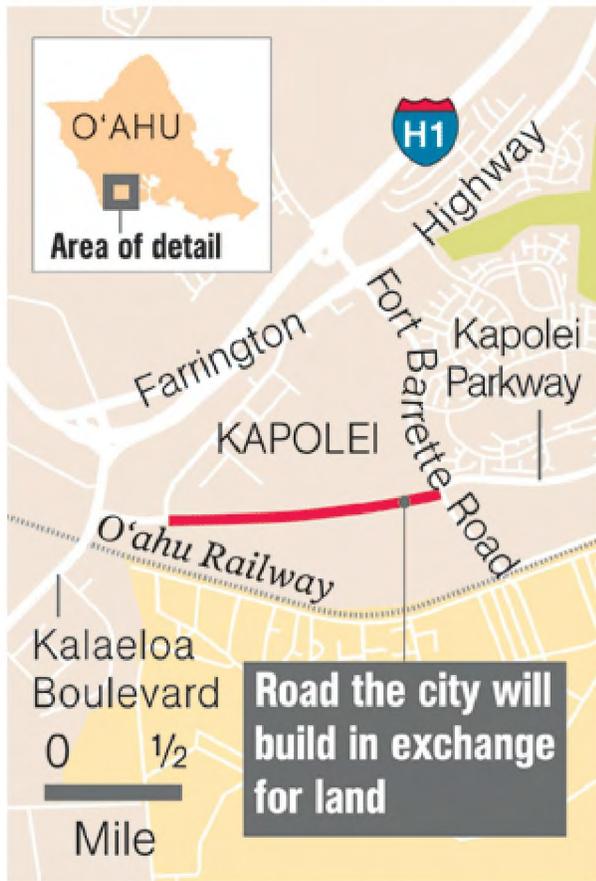
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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 1, 2010  
</pacific/stories/2010/03/01/daily10.html>

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Monday, March 1, 2010, 2:10pm HAST

### Honolulu gas prices rise 3.7 cents

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Honolulu's retail gas prices rose an average of 3.7 cents per gallon over the past week to \$3.35 per gallon on Monday.

It was slightly higher than the national increase of 3.4 cents per gallon in the past week to \$2.70 per gallon, according to HonoluluGasPrices.com.

Honolulu prices were 96.9 cents per gallon higher than the same day a year ago, and the national average was 78.6 cents per gallon higher.

The price-tracking company expects a further increase in prices as summer approaches.

"A major reason for the rise is that refiners will soon begin maintenance to prepare for the summer driving season, cutting into supply," said Patrick DeHaan, GasBuddy.com senior petroleum analyst. "Some areas of the country are already moving towards more expensive, cleaner-burning summer fuels, boosting prices at the pump."

GasBuddy.com operates more than 200 live gasoline price-tracking Web sites, including HonoluluGasPrices.com.

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# honoluluadvertiser.com

Updated at 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 2, 2010

## Some to see hike in property tax rates under Honolulu mayor's new budget

Advertiser Staff

Only owners of residential properties they don't live in are to see a hike in their property tax rates, under the \$1.83 billion operating budget for the coming year that was released by Mayor Mufi Hannemann today.

The plan is about 1.2 percent larger than the current year's budget.

The spending plan sets the real property tax rate for the newly created nonhomeowner classification at \$3.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Hannemann said he believes those who own second property are more available to absorb an increase. He said he wanted to protect owner-occupants from tax increases, and also believes hiking taxes on commercial, industrial and agricultural properties would be detrimental to the economy.

The rate is lower than the old improved residential classification rate, which was \$3.75 in 2006, the mayor said.

The change for an owner of a typical single-family home in the nonhomeowner classification is expected to be 49 cents more per month, according to the proposed budget, according to data provided by the administration. A change of 25 cents more per month is expected for the owner of a typical condominium in the nonhomeowner classification.

The homeowner rate would remain at \$3.42 per \$1,000 of assessed value, no other classification rates would change, and no additional taxes or fees were proposed.

"The increase is driven largely by predetermined costs such as previously arbitrated pay raises for police and firefighters, negotiated pay raises for bus drivers, and other work force costs," said a news release from the mayor's office.

The budget assumes 21 to 24 day furloughs of certain city employees, and continued 5 percent pay cuts for cabinet members. Certain other employees not covered by collective bargaining agreements will also receive 5 percent pay cuts.

The plan includes \$14 million for specialized public-safety requirements of hosting the 2011 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation conference. The city is hoping to receive federal reimbursement for all or a portion of these costs.

Of the separately proposed \$2.1 billion capital improvement project budget, \$1.3 billion is for the city's \$5.5 billion mass transit project. That would be in addition to the \$1 billion already authorized for this year.

It also designates \$493 million for sanitation upgrades and \$124 million for street repairs.

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Hannemann is proposing a new Nanakuli regional Park and using part of the recently closed Waiupe Elementary School in East Honolulu for a senior center.

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The advertisement features the USA TODAY logo at the top left, followed by the word "AutoPilot" in a large, bold, black font. To the right of "AutoPilot" is a blue airplane icon. Below the title, a smartphone displays the app's interface, which includes a "USA TODAY Meeting" section for Sep 21, 2009, and a list of travel items such as "A6 BNA to IAD Landed" and "73+ Washington (AD) Partly Cloudy". To the right of the phone, the text reads "The new travel app for iPhone® and iPod touch®". Below this, it says "Presented by: Hampton" with the Hampton logo. At the bottom right of the ad, a blue box contains the text "SEE HOW IT WORKS »".

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 2, 2010  
[/pacific/stories/2010/03/01/daily28.html](#)

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Tuesday, March 2, 2010, 4:46pm HAST | Modified: Tuesday, March 2, 2010, 4:59pm

# Honolulu budget would tax absentee owners

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann's proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1 would raise the real property tax rate for non-owner-occupied homes and condominiums.

The city would create a new class of taxpayers for investors and owners of second homes, setting the real property tax rate for the newly created class at \$3.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Owner occupants would continue to pay \$3.42 per \$1,000 of assessed value, with no additional taxes or fees levied.

"Given these difficult economic times, it is incumbent upon government to not add to the burdens of our residents who may be threatened with financial difficulties," Hannemann said Tuesday.

The 2011 spending plan includes a \$1.8 billion city operating budget, 1.2 percent higher than the current year's budget, which is driven largely by previously arbitrated pay raises for police and firefighters, negotiated pay raises for bus drivers, and other work-force costs.

The plan also includes \$14 million, which could be reimbursed by the federal government, for specialized public safety requirements for the 2011 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation conference.

The budget is based on furloughs of certain city employees and 5 percent pay cuts for cabinet members and other workers not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

In addition, the plan is based on the city continuing to receive the transient accommodations tax collected by the state, which accounts for about \$41 million annually.

A separate \$2.1 billion capital improvement project budget carves out \$493 million for sanitation upgrades, \$124 million for street repairs and \$1.3 billion for the city's rail transit project.

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# Lingle wants consultant to look into rail financing

[By Star-Bulletin staff](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Mar 02, 2010

The state is drafting a request seeking a consultant to study the financing of the city's \$5.5 billion rail transit system once the final numbers are presented.

Gov. Linda Lingle yesterday said her office did not know how much the consultant would cost.

"We're drawing up the (request) right now to hire an independent financial consultant in order to analyze whatever the city ends up (with) as its final financial plan," Lingle said. "We need to get that under way now.

"We'll choose someone who has some organization that has an expertise in the financing of transportation."

Lingle met last week with federal transportation officials in Washington, D.C., while she was there for a meeting of the National Governors Association. She said she informed Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood of her plan to have the independent analysis done.

The city is awaiting the Federal Transit Administration's completion of its review of the final environmental impact statement for the project. Final approval of the EIS rests with Lingle, who says she will not do so until she can see an independent review of the system's financial plan.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann, after meeting with Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff, repeated that the federal agency is on board with the project and has included \$55 million—of a promised \$1.55 billion—for Honolulu in the president's budget.

#### Find this article at:

[http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100302\\_Lingle\\_wants\\_consultant\\_to\\_look\\_into\\_rail\\_financing.html](http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100302_Lingle_wants_consultant_to_look_into_rail_financing.html)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

# MidWeek

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## Letters To The Editor

March 03, 2010  
By Midweek Staff

### Two campuses?

Dan Boylan actually has at least 12 regular readers, as I don't believe he knows about me.

Professor Boylan is about half right in his assertion about East Honolulu folks not giving "a rip" about their West Side citizens. I am constantly amazed at the lack of interest people all over this island have in their neighboring communities. People in Pearl City tell me they haven't been to the Windward side in years! I live East, but have rarely ventured beyond Red Hill - what's over there except the stadium? Ko Olina might as well be Maui for as often as I'll drive "all the way" over there. Kids here don't even seem to date anyone outside their own 'hood. Geographically undesirable.

But I digress. I agree with Mr. Boylan that we all need to accept rail for the West Side. We have all voted for the same idiots in City Hall and the state Capitol, who've given us no choice but to improve transit alternatives from the ewa side into town. I accept that.

But what I don't get is the whole UH-West Oahu concept. In what other state of a population our size do two major public universities sit 30 miles apart? Besides, won't rail between that place they call "Kapolei" and UH-Manoa tend to alleviate the commuter/traffic problem? If we absolutely must concede to only having a commuter population attending university, maybe we should consider shuttering beautiful Manoa, selling it off, and putting all our eggs into UH-West, building a first-rate new campus. But two campuses? I don't see it.

*Kate McIntyre*  
*Hawaii Kai*

# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Wednesday, March 3, 2010

## \$2.1B would go to fix infrastructure

By **Gordon Y.K. Pang**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Mayor Mufi Hannemann is proposing a \$2.1 billion capital improvement budget for next year, the largest ever introduced by a Honolulu mayor.

Hannemann said he is subscribing to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt approach to tackling a bad economy. "When the economy is slow, you pump the economy with infrastructure work," he said. "These are all essential infrastructure work that needs to be done."

More than half of the CIP budget, \$1.3 billion, is targeted for the city's planned \$5.5 billion mass transit project. That's on top of \$1 billion that is being released for the project this year.

The budget also calls for nearly \$400 million in sanitation projects, including \$142 million for solid-waste facility expansion, \$139.5 million in force mains for the Ala Moana Wastewater Pump Station, \$90.7 million for a Kāne'ohe /Kailua force main project and \$23.6 million for improvements at the Kailua Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Other infrastructure projects proposed include:

- \$185.5 million for West O'ahu traffic improvements.
- \$77 million for rehabilitation of streets across the island.
- \$17.7 million in bus and Handi-Van acquisitions.
- \$17.1 million for a new Alapa'i Transit Center and Alapa'i Transportation Management Center.

- \$9.9 million for police and fire equipment purchases.
- \$5 million to replace the Wai'anae Police Station.
- \$4.5 million for a new East Kapolei Fire Station.

Hannemann also is proposing a senior community center at the former Wailupe Valley School in East Honolulu and a new Nā nākuli Regional Park.

Reach Gordon Y.K. Pang at [gpang@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:gpang@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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Posted on: Wednesday, March 3, 2010

## **No oversight seen for transit excise tax**

How can the taxpayers on O'ahu get through the public relations firewall that surrounds the Hannemann administration's rail project?

What has caused the delay in the final EIS?

Why will it take months to finish the final EIS?

How much money is needed to fix the problem or problems?

Did the city make early mistakes that now have to be corrected?

There is no oversight built into the laws that allowed the Hannemann administration to tax us for 15 years. My family and yours will pay approximately \$400 per year in transit excise tax for 12 more years. The city has spent more than \$100 million on rail. Who exactly got the money? Was the money well spent?

Can't some government agency force the mayor to tell us how he is spending our taxes?

*John Brizdle  
Palolo Valley*

# Honolulu Weekly

## If you build it, they will leave

Mar 3, 2010

Rising sea levels will continue to destroy beaches essential to tourism. Property tax increases could raise already-high housing prices above what residents can afford, forcing them to leave Hawaii. How will such changes affect the number of people on Oahu, the number of cars on the roads, the tax base, the need for the current rail plan and the ability to pay for it?

Observations about many huge projects lead to several predictions: There will be cost overruns; the project will stall and not be completed, leaving the site in shambles; project leaders will have moved on to other ventures; not all of the 4,000 promised new jobs will go to local residents.

Even if this project is completed, will it be suitable for the decades ahead? Flexibility is a key to survival, but the elevated rail will set Oahu's future in concrete. A standard cartoon depicts gangsters on a pier with their victim's feet encased in cement. I fear the victim is the Hawaii taxpayer, about to be pushed by rail planners into an ocean of debt.

David Swift  
Honolulu

# MidWeek

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## Letters To The Editor

March 03, 2010  
By Midweek Staff

### **Just move already**

At the end of Dan Boylan's column "The Border Dividing Two Honolulu" he states, "Simply put, the majority of East Honolulu's citizens don't give a rip about their fellow citizens residing west of Red Hill." As a resident of central Honolulu, I couldn't agree more. A few decades ago, the city decided to establish the "second city" of Kapolei. I thought at the time this could be folly, as East Honolulu residents would have to commute to West Honolulu, and more detrimentally, those moving to West Honolulu would have to commute through narrow corridors to the primary employment centers of Central Honolulu.

Sometimes I watch the traffic reports on the news channels, and I really don't have any sympathy for those complaining about being caught in a long commute. If you really want to cut your commute time, then move closer to where you work! There may be some trade-offs, but if you really hate the long commute, then move! Otherwise, quit your complaining! (Not sure if rail transit would really be a solution, but possibly.)

*Joshua Kay*  
*Makiki*

# llind.com

## [Responses show rail a very hot topic](#)

March 3rd, 2010 · [Politics](#)

Hmmmm. [Honolulu's mayor has proposed a](#), \$1.8 billion city operating budget and nearly as much in a separate \$1.3 billion CIP line for the rail project.

I would call that an attention-getter!

Here are several items for the rail file, a series by a Canadian group critical of Vancouver's SkyTrain, which is the model for Honolulu's system.

They start with a basic question:

Why after three decades of unprecedented investment in public transit has SkyTrain been rejected by transit planners around the world, even after an unprecedented sales program including being showcased at Vancouver's Expo 86?"

In other words, if this all elevated "automated light metro" type of rail is so great, why have most cities opted for light rail instead?

They have a strong perspective, but they raise many legitimate questions which make for interesting reading.

"Debunking the SkyTrain myth"

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

[Part 3](#)

[Part 4](#)

[Part 5](#)

One issue that keeps coming up is the added complexity of the all-automated system and the effects of aging and maintenance.

When we mentioned to friends from Vancouver that Honolulu is modeling its system after the SkyTrain, they had a quick response:

It's automated. So when it stops, it stops for a long time. And it stops for a long time quite often.

Everyone knows that here in Hawaii, state and local governments are much better on building than on maintaining.

Deferred maintenance on the SkyTrain, like the Washington D.C. metro system, is blamed for current problems.

D.C. depends on escalators, as Honolulu's planned stations do. What happens to aging escalators? A visit to Honolulu Airport provides a quick answer.

In any case, the "Debunking" series provides lots of food for thought.



## City aims to furlough workers 2 days a month

The mayor's plan also would raise property taxes for nonoccupants

By [B.J. Reyes](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Mar 03, 2010

As many as 5,200 county workers face the likelihood of two furlough days a month starting in July, although Mayor Mufi Hannemann says he is asking agencies to come up with a schedule that prevents city offices from closing twice a month.

"We're going to try to keep everything open and maintain some level of service," Hannemann said. "It may not be what you normally see, but that's the first goal."

Furloughs are part of Hannemann's proposed budget for the 2011 fiscal year, which begins July 1.

Hannemann unveiled his \$1.82 billion operating budget, which increases spending over the current year by 1.2 percent but also calls for the furloughs and an increase in property taxes for property owners who do not live in their dwellings.

The increase is due largely to negotiated salary increases and fringe benefits for police and firefighters as well as \$14 million needed upfront to prepare the city for next year's Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation conference.

Discounting those items, the city's budget actually decreased 1.8 percent, Hannemann said. He described his spending plan as "lean and balanced."

"It's hard for me to believe that someone would take a whack at this budget," Hannemann said, "because I think everyone was expecting us to raise real property taxes big time."

Hannemann's budget instead focused tax increases on a new property tax class established by the Council last year at the administration's request. The "homeowner" class allows the city to set separate rates for owner-occupants and those who do not live in their properties.

Nonoccupant homeowners would face a rate of \$3.72 per \$1,000 of property value, compared with the current \$3.42 for owner occupants. Tax rates for **Sanitation**

### **FOLLOW THE MONEY**

*Mayor Mufi Hannemann has unveiled a separate \$2.1 billion capital improvement project budget. A look at where some of that money is going:*

#### **Transit**

- » \$1.3 billion: Honolulu High Capacity Transit Project
- » \$17.7 million: Bus and Handi-Van acquisition
- » \$17.1 million: Alapai Transit Center and Alapai Transportation Management Center

all other classes of property — commercial, hotel/resort, industrial, agricultural — would remain unchanged.

Hannemann said the new tax rate targets speculators, investors and other higher-income property owners.

On average, nonoccupant homeowners with a single-family home or a condominium would face increases of 49 cents per month and 25 cents per month, respectively, according to estimates provided by the administration.

"I find it very difficult for a person in that income bracket to say they can't afford another 25 cents or 49 cents a month to their tax bill," Hannemann said.

There also would be no increase in user fees, after the administration set higher rates last year for bus fares, zoo admission prices, public golf greens fees, public parking meters and other items.

The budget now goes to the City Council, which has until June 9 to make changes and pass the bill. The Council would have to approve the proposed nonoccupant homeowner tax rate.

Council Chairman Todd Apo called the mayor's proposal a good starting point.

"I'm a little concerned about ... only changing the property tax for the nonhomeowner classification," he said. "I think the upside that we saw is there's the opportunity for all taxpayers to see some relief."

Council Budget Chairman Nestor Garcia said he plans to work with the administration to get a clear understanding of how many property owners would be affected.

"Until we get that explained to the satisfaction of the members, I'm not sure where we're going with the nonhomeowner classification," Garcia said.

The mayor also unveiled a \$2.1 billion capital improvement projects budget that places an emphasis on the planned rail transit system and sanitation/waste-water treatment.

Of the CIP budget, \$1.3 billion is planned for the \$5.5 billion rail transit system.

- » \$142.8 million: Solid Waste Facility expansion
- » \$139.5 million: Ala Moana Wastewater Pump Station Force Mains No. 3 and 4
- » \$90.7 million: Kaneohe/Kailua Force Main No. 2
- » \$23.6 million: Kailua Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements

#### **Highways and Streets**

- » \$77 million: Rehabilitation of streets
- » \$185.5 million: West Oahu traffic improvements at various locations

#### **Public Safety**

- » \$9.9 million: Police and fire equipment and acquisitions
- » \$5 million: Replacement of the Waianae Police Station
- » \$4.5 million: East Kapolei Fire Station

*Source: Office of the Mayor*

#### **Find this article at:**

[http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100303\\_City\\_aims\\_to\\_furlough\\_workers\\_2\\_days\\_a\\_month.html](http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100303_City_aims_to_furlough_workers_2_days_a_month.html)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

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Posted on: Thursday, March 4, 2010

## As planned, rail will kill Waipahu

*Old Oahu railway could solve many problems with now-approved rail route*

Rail, as planned, does almost nothing to solve existing traffic problems on the west side of O'ahu.

The first station is in a wide-open area planned for a huge shopping center and hotel. It will have 900 parking stalls for rail commuters.

The second station is also in open fields where the University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu campus will rise. Just blocks from the freeway, it has the potential to draw thousands of riders, but it will have only 1,000 park-and-ride stalls. The 142,000 town-bound drivers on the freeway during rush hour won't even notice the difference.

The third stop is in the middle of 1,500 acres of productive farmland, land that clearly must be saved for our future survival. This station would serve only the Ho'opili development.

The fourth stop finally reaches civilization. Just a block inside of Waipahu from Fort Weaver Road, it is situated perfectly to take thousands of cars off the road from 'Ewa, 'Ewa Beach, Village Park and Royal Kunia, saving them another 90 minutes of travel into the city. But this station does not have even one stall for parking.

Let's get it straight, then. This rail is not being built to solve current traffic problems. It actually is not even for us. It is being built to benefit developers. The traffic problems it will solve are future problems, yet to be caused by people yet

to move into homes yet to be built.

We voted for rail. We are paying for it every time we make a purchase. And we have been misled.

The rail, as planned, will destroy Waipahu.

Overhead stations the size of floating football fields will dominate each end of town. Rain and red dirt will discolor the massive elevated concrete spans and supporting columns. Graffiti will turn it all into a monstrous eyesore, condemning Waipahu to perpetual third-class status.

Through the years of construction, traffic in Waipahu will be a nightmare. Only one lane in each direction of Farrington Highway will be open during rush hour. Already choked with afternoon traffic, Waipahu will have major, debilitating traffic jams. Pearl City and 'Aiea will experience much of the same.

None of this has to happen. Use of the old Oahu Railway and Land right-of-way can solve everything. If the rail follows the OR&L route, it can run at surface level at least to the stadium, still using the "steel wheels on steel rails" that we voted for, but using light rail. The right-of-way runs along the water providing a beautiful ride; encounters only a few crossroads in the 12

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miles from Kapolei to the stadium; is already cleared of iwi; and is owned by the government.

If the rail began at UH-West O'ahu, and headed makai to the old OR&L line, it could serve H-1 and Kapolei just as well. The OR&L line then runs just below 'Ewa. A park-and-ride at Fort Weaver Road would bring rail service to 'Ewa and 'Ewa Beach. Next stop, Depot Road in Waipahu, then up behind Leeward Community College.

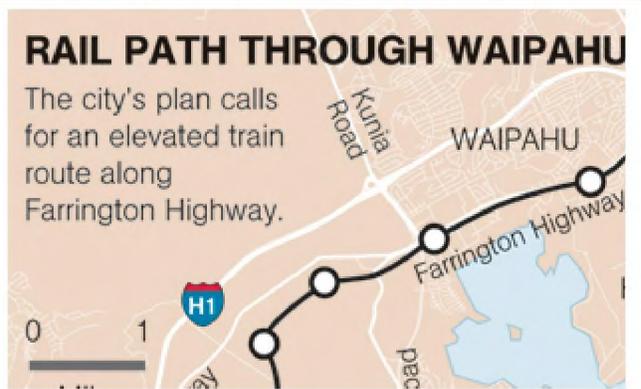
Through Pearl City, it would run just a block or so below the current route, with stops at Pearl Kai, the stadium, and entrances to Pearl Harbor. The OR&L route serves every shopping area, recreation area, and employment center on the west side.

Why was the OR&L route never seriously considered? Because it didn't run through the Ho'opili development. Plans for Ho'opili, however, recently were dealt a potentially fatal setback by the Land Use Commission.

The mayor recently announced that completing rail's final environmental impact statement will take until year's end. There is time now for changes. Write to the mayor ([mayor@honolulu.gov](mailto:mayor@honolulu.gov)) and ask him to support light rail, at grade, using the OR&L right of way from Kapolei to the stadium.

*Kioni Dudley, a retired educator, is the president of the Friends of Makakilo. He wrote this commentary for The Advertiser.*

...



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## Coconut Wireless Fireworks Ban Fizzles and Lingle Switches Course on the Akaka Bill

by Jacob Shafer

write the author

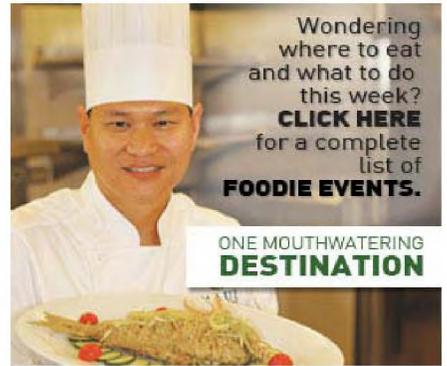


March 03, 2010 | 02:42 PM  
HYPER LOCAL

Publisher Tommy Russo parses the tsunami scare, and the coverage of it, in his Publisher's Note. I'll add one, sillyish note: I know the Civil Defense sirens are tested on the 1st of every month (as a colleague pointed out, it's a great/horrible way to play an April Fools joke on a fresh-off-the-plane friend), but couldn't they have taken the day off on Monday? I mean, the sirens got a pretty decent workout two days before, and despite small notices in The Maui News and on the County Web site, I'm guessing Maui officials fielded a few jittery phone calls that morning....

### LOCAL

It's never good when reporters lose their jobs or when the number of local media outlets shrinks. But, good or not, both of those things will happen once the deal between the Honolulu Star-Bulletin and the Honolulu Advertiser is consummated. In case you missed it, Oahu Publications, which owns the Star-Bulletin, announced plans last week to buy the Advertiser from publishing giant Gannet. Unless someone steps forward to buy the Star-Bulletin (which Oahu Publications had to put up for sale because of anti-trust regulations), the two papers will merge and the bloodletting will commence. Of course, if/when Honolulu becomes a one-daily newspaper town it'll be far from unprecedented—hell, some mid-sized and even big cities are at risk of becoming no-daily newspaper towns. (Again, see Tommy's piece for a discussion of the way news is changing, and a reference to a new Oahu media company that I'm sure is watching this story with great interest.)... For the last couple months, I've been speculating that Gov. Lingle's efforts to stall the Oahu rail project might be motivated, in part, by the fact that its main champion, Honolulu



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Mayor Mufi Hannemann, could face Lt. Gov. Duke Aiona in the gubernatorial election. Apparently I was wrong. Discussing her recent trip to Washington, D.C., Lingle said she "looked [Transportation] Secretary [Ray] LaHood in the eye and I told him that I wanted him to understand there are no politics involved from my side of this." And, as we all know, it's impossible to look someone in the eye in Washington and lie to them.... Last week, the House of Representatives passed the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act (aka the Akaka Bill) 245-164; it now heads to the Senate, where it's died repeatedly over the past decade. It may have more momentum now—President Obama has promised to sign it if it lands on his desk. But the bill still has its detractors, including Gov. Lingle. In a statement issued before the House vote, Lingle had this to say: "For more than seven years, my administration and I have strongly supported recognition for Native Hawaiians and supported the Akaka Bill. We have supported a bill that would set up a process of recognition first, followed by negotiations between the Native Hawaiian governing entity, the State of Hawaii and the United States. Once that was completed, it would be followed by the Native Hawaiian governing entity's exercise of governmental powers and authorities. Amendments made to the bill in December 2009 turned that process around....Ultimately...the current draft of the bill is not one I can support." Note the repeated use of the word "recognition." It's the same logic that underlies the Apology Resolution—we'll acknowledge you, we might even say we're sorry, just don't expect us to give you any actual power.... The two Democrats vying to fill Neil Abercrombie's vacated 1st District seat, state Senate President Colleen Hanabusa and former Rep. Ed Case, appear to have differing views on the special election, which will cost an estimated \$1 million. Hanabusa says we can't afford it, while Case says it's necessary to bolster Hawaii's small Congressional delegation. Ironically, the candidate who probably likes the special election the most is Republican Charles Djou, who's painting himself as a hard-line fiscal conservative in keeping with his party's national re-branding effort. Djou wouldn't have a prayer in a head-to-head matchup with either Hanabusa or Case in November, but could sneak in if his opponents split the vote. (For a longer look at all three candidates, see page 7.).... If you were worried about the government taking away your fireworks, worry no more: SB2365, a bill that would have imposed "a total [statewide] ban on consumer fireworks except for permitted religious or cultural purposes," has sputtered like a Ground Bloom with a wet fuse. The legislature is still considering creating a task force to study the issue, which is another way of saying we'll all be choking on sulfur come Independence Day....

#### NOT LOCAL

Hawaii averted disaster this week, but Chile didn't. As of this writing the death toll from the 8.8-magnitude quake and its many aftershocks stood at nearly 800, with millions more injured or displaced. As we heave a collective sigh of relief, we should also extend a hand. The Red Cross [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) is a good place to start.



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Posted on: Thursday, March 4, 2010

## Hawaii's tab for Superferry rises another \$218,000, to tow barge

*Towing barge out of Maui harbor will cost taxpayers \$218,000*

By **David Waite**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Hawai'i taxpayers aren't done yet paying for the failed Superferry project.

The state Department of Transportation's Harbors Division has awarded a \$218,000 contract to Healy Tibbitts Builders Inc. to tow a state-owned barge, which had been used to load vehicles on and off the now-defunct interisland ferry, from Maui's Kahului Harbor to Honolulu.

Deputy director of harbors Michael Formby said the \$10 million barge Manaiakalani is being moved primarily so it can be better protected from the sea conditions at the Kahului port, where it is battered by storm surges.

In addition, Hawaii Superferry stopped paying insurance on the barge after filing for bankruptcy in May, he said.

"Our primary concern was to make sure that it is stored in a protected harbor, and we have extra berthing space here (at Honolulu Harbor)," Formby said.

Irene Bowie, executive director of the Maui Tomorrow Foundation, said members of her organization will be happy to see the barge leave. Maui Tomorrow was one of the groups

that sued the state in 2005 for failing to do an environmental impact statement on Hawaii Superferry and the \$40 million in ferry-related improvements at four state harbors.

Superferry shut down last March after the state Supreme Court ruled the company couldn't operate without the environmental review.

Had an EIS been required, the ferry owners might have been required to build on-board loading ramps and likely would have learned of surge problems within the state's north-facing commercial harbors, Bowie said.

"All of this goes toward the Superferry fiasco. We'll be glad to have the last remnants leave Kahului," she said.

The state already has spent nearly \$3 million on repairs and improvements to the Kahului barge and mooring system. Healy Tibbitts, which designed and built the barge, was paid \$414,000 last year for structural repairs.

Formby said the marine construction firm was the only company to submit a bid for the towing contract. The original bid was more than twice the current contract price, but the DOT was able to negotiate it down, he said.

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The barge is structurally sound, Formby said, but Healy Tibbitts must take a number of steps to prepare the vessel for its voyage, including hooking up a "bridle chain" to which a tow line will be attached, and securing any loose equipment.

The company has been given until April 8 to finish the job.

The barge relocation was in the works long before last weekend's tsunami scare, Formby said. There were concerns that potential surge predictions of six feet or more would have damaged the vessel and other harbor facilities.

There are no potential buyers on the horizon for the Maui barge or for a second one docked in Honolulu that was supposed to have been used at Kawaihae Harbor. Mention has been made of possibly using them as work barges or converting one or both to a floating drydock, according to Formby.

Meanwhile, there continues to be interest among some government officials in re-establishing interisland ferry service, albeit on a much smaller scale.

"We know from the Superferry experience that would require at least an environmental assessment and possibly a full-on environmental impact statement," Formby said.

Bowie said Maui Tomorrow "long ago asked for a final tab" of taxpayer money spent in connection with the Superferry project but has never received a complete answer from state officials.

"I think it's ironic that Gov. (Linda) Lingle wants to look so closely at the EIS for O'ahu's rail system, but her office allowed the Superferry to go through all along without one," she said.

Reach David Waite at [dwaite@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:dwaite@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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Updated at 9:16 a.m., Thursday, March 4, 2010

## Repair work on H-1 School Street ramps finished

Advertiser Staff

The state Department of Transportation said that highway improvements and repair work on the H-1 Freeway School Street on-and-off-ramps were completed ahead of schedule.

The DOT said the \$2.53 million project repaired and extended a retaining wall on the mauka-side of the west-bound on-ramp that had been structurally compromised by soil pressure from the nearby hillside. Drainage improvements were also made near the School Street off-ramp to eliminate water ponding problems at the base of the ramp.

Ramps were closed for eight months of construction by Paradigm Construction LLC.

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Updated at 1:19 p.m., Thursday, March 4, 2010

## Statewide average gas price unchanged from last week at \$3.41 a gallon

### Advertiser Staff

The average price for a gallon of gas statewide was \$3.41 this week, unchanged from last week, according to the AAA Hawaii Weekend Gas Watch.

Honolulu's average price was \$3.32, unchanged from last week and a month ago. It was up 95 cents from the same time a year.

Hilo's average was \$3.45, down five cents less from last week. It was two cents higher than last week and 93 cents more than a year ago.

Wailuku's average was \$3.81, one cent higher than last week, two cents higher than last month and \$1.20 higher than at the same time last year.

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## Cameras assess driving patterns

A city project aims to boost the efficiency of 800 traffic signals

By [Katherine Nichols](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Mar 05, 2010

The video cameras poised at intersections might be new to certain neighborhoods, but they are part of an ongoing, islandwide Traffic Signal Optimization Project.

The city started collecting and analyzing data between two and three years ago, according to Wayne Yoshioka, director of the Department of Transportation Services.

The extensive process involves setting up cameras to record the number of cars waiting and turning at each intersection, as well as the number and pace of pedestrians trying to cross the street.

Data collection, analysis and implementation is conducted by neighborhood and is currently taking place in Kapolei, Mililani, Kaimuki and downtown Honolulu, among other locations.

The multiyear project to optimize all 800 signalized intersections on Oahu is expected to last well into 2012.

City officials do not notify neighborhoods in advance because they do not want people to alter their normal patterns.

"We want to record the conditions as they normally occur," said Yoshioka. "Otherwise we would be optimizing an atypical situation."

They also take a hiatus from data collection during the summer because traffic patterns differ so much from the regular school year. In addition, traffic signals vary depending on the day of the week and the time of day. "That's why it takes so long, because they have to analyze all of these different time periods," he said.

Once the data has been collected and studied, each signal must be prepped for programming. Then the consultants — the project was outsourced after a request for proposals was issued — must verify its effectiveness in the field. "Our goal is to make sure it is phased correctly so it's most efficient," said Yoshioka.

Most of the cameras are remotely operated, but occasionally the city must assign someone to watch over the equipment so it is not stolen. The estimated cost of the four phases is \$2.2 million.

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Posted on: Sunday, March 7, 2010

## For rail, 3rd time must be the charm

Listening to the ongoing debate on the city's rail-transit project, it reminds me of that tried and true phrase, "The more things change, the more they remain the same."

The reasons why rail transit is strongly needed today are identical to the reasons the late Mayor Frank Fasi tried to bring rail to Honolulu in the early 1980s and early 1990s: fighting traffic congestion and increasing mobility. The lessons from the past on rail can also help us avoid repeating the same mistakes today.

As a member of the 1992 selection committee for the then-proposed Honolulu Rapid Transit System, I was involved in selecting the technology, the route and the contractor who would have implemented and operated the rail system.

Just like today's Honolulu rail-transit project, the 1992 selection committee determined that an elevated steel-on-steel rail system would best suit our island's transportation needs.

And just like today's rail planners, we studied the feasibility of a rail line that was partially elevated and partially on surface streets. It became obvious that running the train on the surface streets would have many negatives, including being slowed by the same traffic delays as cars and buses, or slowing cars and buses if it had a dedicated ground level right of way.

We also certainly did not intend rail to be some type of slow-moving streetcar as some local architects are proposing today.

There is one significant difference however, between the current rail project and the 1992 effort: the local share of funding for today's rail

project is already in place, with \$460 million collected so far, according to the city.

Why is this important? According to Federal Transit Administration head Peter Rogoff, the Honolulu rail project's local funding puts us in a much stronger position for the \$1.55 billion in planned federal funding. This was the lesson learned following the short-sighted 1992 vote by five City Council members who shot down the local transit funding, and hence the transit system and any federal support that went along with it.

This is not the first time we watched the federal funding for rail slip away. In 1980, a rapid transit fixed guideway system was planned for O'ahu, with the federal government footing up to 80 percent of the costs for eligible cities like ours. But under Mayor Eileen Anderson, the administration killed rapid transit, and that federal money went to other fortunate cities.

In 1992, the feds were funding 50 percent of the cost of many rapid transit systems. When the City Council took that infamous vote not to provide city money for Honolulu's commuter train, rail died a second death. Again, the federal funding for our rail system went elsewhere.

Now comes what may be our third and final

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opportunity at making rail happen. Based on its geographic restrictions, Honolulu is a perfect fit for rail transit: a strip city between the mountains and the sea where West O'ahu and Honolulu are connected by mainly by one freeway.

This is the perfect place for a "spine" rail route that can be integrated with bus service to shuttle in passengers from each community.

I don't believe there is a country or city in the world that has opted to get rid of an existing rail system. Instead, rapid-transit systems are being expanded and extended to meet demand. Can they all be wrong?

We have gone through the selection process in excruciating detail twice now. The technology and route are basically the same as 1992. It's time to move on and get a rapid-transit system for Honolulu. And yes, a rapid-transit system will cost money, but the bottom line is we can't afford not to build it.

*Donald Clegg served as city land utilization director under Mayor Frank Fasi and now works as a planning and permitting consultant, but has no business ties to the current rail project.*

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March 7, 2010

## Contractor-linked donations soar in Hawaii gubernatorial campaign

### Watchdog groups say loopholes in pay-to-play law exploited

*BY RICK DAYSOG*  
*Advertiser Staff Writer*

Five years after state legislators approved a law aimed at curbing pay-to-play politics, donors linked to state and city contractors are again pouring big money into major political races.

An Advertiser study of more than 2,300 contributions made during the second half of 2009 found that employees of government contractors, their subcontractors and relatives of company officials gave more than \$300,000 to Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann and gubernatorial candidate and former U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie.

About half of that money came from people working for firms who are helping to build the \$5.3 billion mass-transit system.

State law bars contractors from contributing directly to candidates running for state or county offices. But these donations are allowed because they were made by subcontractors, company employees and their relatives.

Hannemann, who is expected to declare his candidacy for the governor's race later this year, received \$208,000 from donors linked to government contractors, or nearly 20 percent of the amount he collected between July and December.

Abercrombie took in \$88,700, or about 10.6 percent of his total collections during the last six months of 2009 from people linked to firms that have contracts with the state or city. Lt. Gov. James "Duke" Aiona received \$4,215, or 1.7 percent.

Craig Holman, a campaign finance expert at Public Citizen, a Washington, D.C.-based consumer advocacy group, said that while the donations are legal there are plenty of concerns.

"This strongly suggests that in order to compete for a government contract you have to give campaign contributions," Holman said.

That's a charge the campaigns deny.

Elisa Yadao, spokeswoman for Hannemann's gubernatorial exploratory committee, said the campaign has gone through "extraordinary efforts" to ensure that they complied with all of the campaign spending requirements.

She said the campaign has received support from a broad spectrum of the local business community.

"This is indicative of people who believe in Mufi's leadership, his experience ... and (that he) can be a capable and a strong leader going forward," Yadao said.

City officials have said that they closely follow state procurement laws in issuing bid and nonbid contracts and that awards for professional services contracts must go through a two-step process that's intended to take politics out of the selection process.

A review committee that includes three civil servants must first evaluate the top proposals, which are then sent to a separate committee that makes the final selection.

## who's donating

Abercrombie officials point out that their candidate, as a member of Congress, has no say in the way state and city contracts are awarded.

Bill Kaneko, chairman of the Abercrombie campaign, said donors linked to government contractors represent a small portion of Abercrombie's contributors, who include people in the health care industry, the financial services, legal, nonprofit and high-tech sectors.

Nearly half of the 1,200 contributions received by the Abercrombie campaign since July were for less than \$100, reflecting Abercrombie's grassroots support, he said.

"Neil has over 40 years in public service," Kaneko said. "His support spans a spectrum of diverse groups."

Aiona, a Republican candidate for governor, said that very few of his campaign contributions are coming from special interests. Nearly 950, or about 78 percent of Aiona's total contributions, during the second half of 2009 were for \$100 or less.

"It's all about grass roots," he said.

Architects and engineers figure prominently in the contractor-related donations.

Executives at R.M. Towill Corp. contributed \$27,000 to Hannemann's campaign during the second half of 2009. Since 2005, the engineering firm received nearly \$30 million in state and city work, including a \$4.9 million subcontract on the city's mass-transit project.

The company has also been the target of several investigations into illegal campaign contributions.

In 2004, the company's president, Russell Figueiroa, and the company's former chairman, Donald Kim, pleaded no contest to misdemeanor charges of making illegal campaign contributions to former Honolulu Mayor Jeremy Harris' campaign.

Figueiroa also paid a \$50,800 fine to the state Campaign Spending Commission in 2006, although the fine came with no admission of wrongdoing.

Figueiroa said he supports Hannemann because of what he stands for but declined further comment.

Another contractor that's linked to a large number of donations is Community Planning & Engineering Inc., which has received more than \$20 million in state and city contracts since 2004.

## pickard family

State campaign spending records show that Abercrombie collected more than \$26,000 from employees of Community Planning & Engineering Inc. and their relatives.

Company president Joe Pickard and his wife, Elissa, each donated \$1,000 to the Abercrombie campaign in December. His mother, Beatrice Pickard, donated \$4,000 while his father, Tom Pickard, gave \$2,100. Brother Walter Pickard contributed \$4,000 during the same period.

Joe Pickard did not return calls to his office.

Abercrombie officials said that the Pickards' contributions were originally made to Abercrombie's Congressional campaign some time ago. But they were later moved to his gubernatorial campaign

after the campaign received permission from the couple to do so, said Abercrombie spokeswoman Laurie Au.

About \$360,000 of the \$400,000 in leftover money in Abercrombie's Congressional account was moved to his gubernatorial campaign after donors agreed to do so, she said.

Bob Watada, former executive director of the state Campaign Spending Commission, said the large number of donations from employees of city and state contractors to the Hannemann and Abercrombie campaigns underscore a major loophole in the state's pay-to-play ban.

The law bars any company receiving work from the state or the city from making direct contributions in local elections.

But it allows executives and employees of government contractors and their relatives to donate to local politicians so long as they are not reimbursed by the companies.

## earlier scandals

The law was enacted in 2005 in response to the campaign finance scandals involving Harris and other Democrats.

More than 30 local engineers, architects and other donors pleaded no contest to misdemeanor charges of violating the state's campaign law between 2003 and 2005 while another 90 architects, engineers and other donors paid out more than \$1.8 million in fines to the state Campaign Spending Commission for making illegal donations.

Holman said it's troubling that such a large proportion of campaign donations are again coming from people linked to government contractors.

He said that anytime a campaign receives more than 10 percent of their money from a single source, it raises questions about the candidate's independence. When a candidate receives more than 20 percent from a single group, it raises questions of whether a culture of pay-to-play exists, he said.

Political corruption scandals in New Jersey, Connecticut and, most recently, Illinois with disgraced former Gov. Rod Blagojevich, involved donations from local contractors that accounted for 20 percent to 25 percent of his campaign money, he said.

Holman said he expects the amount of contractor-connected givings to grow in Hawai'i unless state officials address the loopholes in the system.

"You're going to see this spiraling," he said.

## easing restrictions

Tightening up Hawai'i's pay-to-play law, however, is not high on state lawmakers' agendas. This session, state Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and a candidate for lieutenant governor, introduced a bill to loosen the restriction on government contractor contributions by limiting the ban only to contractors who receive non-bid contracts from the state and city.

Contractors that take part in competitive bidding on state and city jobs would be allowed to donate to political races under this bill.

Karamatsu, D-41st (Waipahu, Village Park, Waikele), said several small state contractors, such as physicians and human services providers who work for the state under contract, expressed concerns that they can't contribute to candidates because of the law. Karamatsu said none of the big contractors talked to him about the bill.

"I feel for some of the small contract workers who can't participate," Karama-tsu said. "Competitive bidders should be able to participate because they have to make bids that are the best and lowest."

The measure made it to the floor but was recommitted to the Judiciary Committee, diminishing its chances of passing this session. House members recently passed a version that exempts contractors receiving \$50,000 or less in state or city work from the ban.

Nikki Love, executive director of Common Cause Hawaii, which opposes the measures, said weakening the ban will "open the door for more donations" from special interests.

"If I give \$25 to a candidate, it won't be as much as the \$6,000 from a city or state contractor who can clearly afford it," she said.

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## Letters to the Editor

For Sunday, March 7, 2010

### City response on rail was public disservice

Ordinarily, one would not expect to see an exchange go beyond two articles. But rail transit is the biggest project the city has ever undertaken, and it's crucial that our leaders and our people be really informed. The article by city Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka ("[Using old OR&L path for rail not practical.](#)" Star-Bulletin, Island Commentary, Feb. 25) was a real disservice to the discussion.

Readers should know that I really have spent a great amount of time researching this. I've walked most of the Oahu Railway & Land right-of-way. I've passed my work by about 20 American Institute of Architects members and their rail experts, receiving input. I haven't fudged on anything, or neglected to say things that are important. These are the facts, as honestly as they can be put forward. I think it is important for the discussion to continue.

Dr. Kioni Dudley  
Makakilo

*(Editor's note: This letter prefaced a [new commentary](#) submitted to counter Mr. Yoshioka's piece, which had rebutted [Mr. Dudley's original piece.](#))*

Monday, March 8, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### Mayor encourages open discussion

Councilmember Charles Djou's shrill and inaccurate criticism of Mayor Hannemann's public outreach for rail is misleading ("Honolulu rail-transit schedule slips again," Feb. 21). The mayor has always encouraged open discussion of rail and has sought ways to get the community involved in this landmark project.

In February, he held two major public events: the Mayor's Youth Summit brought together nearly 300 young people from 30 schools, while the mayor's public forum at the state Capitol provided an update on the economy and rail.

The city previously has held workshops on transit- oriented development and rail station design. On March 30, the city will conduct a Pearl Highlands Transit Station design workshop at 6:30 p.m. at Highlands Intermediate School. On April 6 and 7, the Department of Planning and Permitting will host a symposium on transit-oriented development, featuring national experts on TOD and how to encourage community participation in the process.

The mayor has encouraged the use of innovative social media tools such as Twitter (@HNL\_RTD), Facebook and YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/honoluluonthemove>) to reach as much of the community as possible.

Along with providing accurate and timely updates on the rail transit project, we will continue our efforts to nurture an open and productive dialogue on this project.

*Wayne Yoshioka*

*Director, Department of Transportation Services, City & County of Honolulu*

Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 8, 2010  
</pacific/stories/2010/03/08/daily6.html>

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Monday, March 8, 2010, 1:12pm HAST

### Honolulu gas prices remain stable

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Honolulu's average retail gasoline prices rose just 0.8 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$3.32 per gallon on Monday.

That compared with the national average, which climbed 4.8 cents per gallon in the past week to \$2.74, according to HonoluluGasPrices.com.

Prices are 93 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, while the national average is 80.9 cents per gallon higher.

HonoluluGasPrices.com is a part of GasBuddy.com, which operates more than 200 live gasoline price-tracking Web sites nationwide.

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## Letters to the Editor

For Monday, March 8, 2010

### **Elevated rail is the way to go**

To oppose elevated rail routes as planned by the rail system engineers is an insult to their profession.

Elevated routes are not subject to stopping for anyone, there's no gridlock, and they stop only to discharge and pick up passengers. This is a swift way to travel. And that's what the people of Oahu really need; a step closer to living in paradise.

Bernardo P. Benigno  
Mililani

## Letters to the Editor

For Monday, March 8, 2010

### **Rail, UH repairs separate issues**

I am writing in response to Daniel J. Bogert's letter ("Repairs at UH are shovel ready," Star-Bulletin, Feb. 24). As a former student of Brigham Young University-Hawaii, I completely understand UH-Manoa students' desire to get more funding for the university to improve their educational experience. However, they have to understand that funding for school and funding for transit are two separate things. Opposition to funding transit will not make the Federal Transit Administration relocate the money to their school. In other words, they are not talking to the right people to get their concern resolved.

Moreover, higher education and mass transit should work together, not against each other like enemies. When transit improves, UH students will most certainly enjoy the convenience and access made available through the rail extension, which, in general, will be a plus to their campus experience.

Annie Wong

Utah communication and public involvement coordinator, Murray, Utah

# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Wednesday, March 10, 2010

## 67% back results of Isle rail study

Advertiser Staff

More than two-thirds of people surveyed support making a decision on whether to build rail based on an existing environmental study, according to a poll released yesterday.

The poll, conducted by OmniTrak Group Inc., found that 67 percent of respondents feel that a decision on building a mass transit system should be based on the city's current environmental impact statement.

Twenty-two percent want the state to conduct its own study of the rail project's financial plan, according to the poll sponsored by the Hawaii Business Roundtable and the Pacific Resource Partnership union trade group.

Gov. Linda Lingle plans to conduct a thorough review of the project's financial plan and to look into whether alternatives were adequately considered. Lingle has said she is concerned that the project could jeopardize state government finances if it fails.

However, Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann wants Lingle to quickly review and approve the rail project's environmental impact statement once it is eventually delivered to her.

Construction of the \$5.3 billion, East Kapolei to Ala Moana rail project was to begin in December 2009 but has been indefinitely delayed by a prolonged federal review.

The telephone survey of 700 adults was conducted Feb. 12-22.

The poll's margin of error is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points.

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Updated at 4:53 p.m., Wednesday, March 10, 2010

## Governor calls rail survey question

### Advertiser Staff

Gov. Linda Lingle today dismissed the findings of a People's Pulse survey indicating that more than two-thirds of residents oppose conducting another rail transit study, calling the question used in the survey "poorly worded and misleading" and questioning the credibility of the survey's sponsors.

"The vested interest shared by the People's Pulse Survey co-sponsors Hawai'i Business Roundtable and Pacific Resources Partnership resulted in a poorly worded and misleading survey question," Lingle said in a new release issued this afternoon.

Lingle noted that the question failed to acknowledge her obligation to review and approve the final Environmental Impact Statement, which is currently awaiting release from the Federal Transit Authority.

"Under the law, the Governor must review the final EIS to ensure that it satisfactorily describes all impacts on the environment, economic and social welfare, and cultural practices; incorporates an objective review of opposing alternatives; and responds to each substantive comment received during the draft EIS process.

The release reiterated Lingle's intention to conduct an independent analysis of the project's financial plan.

The survey question read: "The City and County of Honolulu last year has already spent \$3 to 5 million [sic] on an Environmental Impact Statement for the fixed rail mass transit project. The EIS was submitted to the Federal Transit Authority last year. Now the State says it wants

to do its own audit of the mass transit's financial plan. Overall, which do you favor?

- Making a decision on a fixed rail transit system based on the current EIS
- Having the State commission a new study on transit's financial plan
- Don't know

According to the survey, 67 percent of residents favored making a decision based on the current EIS; 22 percent wanted a new study; and 11 percent did not know.

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# Honolulu Weekly

## Westside story

March 10, 2010

Not to start an east side vs. west side war over rail, but I notice the anti-rail letters the Weekly publishes come from people living in Hawaii Kai, the Windward side and town.

I can't believe the *Weekly* and its readers' lack aloha for west side residents and the traffic nightmare we endure. Those of us who live in Pearl City, in Waipahu, in Kapolei, in 'Ewa Beach and the Leeward Coast endure punishing weekday commutes to work or school. Either we get up early and start our journey before sunrise, or we waste an hour or more inching along H-1 or the highway.

And heaven help your evening commute to the west side if you have a late work meeting or classes. When it happens to me, sometimes I just surrender and buy dinner in town instead of sitting in traffic for an hour or more. On those evenings, I miss eating with my family, but don't want to needlessly waste gas and put wear-and-tear on our car fighting traffic.

That is why I want the rail. Yes, it is a big investment in our transportation system, just like the investments our community made to widen Kalaniana'ole Highway or build H-3. Those improvements brought a better quality of life for everyone in those areas.

I believe that Westside residents deserve the same consideration for our commutes and our quality of life. I know the *Weekly* and its audience have aloha for us. So please, support the rail.

Joe Lee  
Hawaii Kai

# Midweek

March 10, 2010

## The way of BART

In regard to Paul Miller's letter on rail transit funding, he says that BART funding is based on ZIP codes. Now, I grew up in San Francisco during BART creation and construction, and I never heard of that. Furthermore, the History and Facts section of the official BART Web site mentions nothing about ZIP codes. What I remember is that it was county-based. If you lived in a BART county, you paid the BART tax, even if BART didn't serve your particular community yet. Mindful of this, BART set up an express bus service to connect outlying communities in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to BART. Eventually some (Pittsburgh, Pleasanton) received BART extensions while others (Antioch) still wait.

*Dexter Wong  
Waialae*

## Letters to the Editor

For Wednesday, March 10, 2010

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Mar 10, 2010

### **AIA downplays rail safety issue**

In recent forums and media interviews, the American Institute of Architects has not provide all the facts when discussing safety of a light rail system that operates on ground level.

A reason the city selected an elevated system is to avoid possible collisions with other vehicles.

The Phoenix light rail system that opened last year and runs on the ground, faces this problem. There have already been 52 documented collisions between trains and cars, according to the Arizona Republic. In addition, half of the Phoenix collisions occurred along a 1 1/4 -mile stretch running through downtown Phoenix. This is identical to the AIA proposal of operating at ground level through downtown Honolulu.

Train reliability is another issue. Service in Houston was halted for hours last month after a bus collided with an at-grade train.

The reality is that a street-level system will have serious safety issues to contend with.

Harvey Berliner

Honolulu Rail Transit Project, deputy project officer for design and construction

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## Census Fears and Birther Demands

by Jacob Shafer

write the author



March 10, 2010 | 12:36 PM  
HYPER LOCAL

The MauiTime office has fielded several calls and e-mails from residents concerned about the Census. Not so much making sure they fill it out correctly, but rather—at least in the case of one irate man—accusing a Census worker of criminal trespass. I've never understood why people are so suspicious of the Census; yes, the government is gathering information about you, but if you think the only time they do that is once every ten years you are, to put it mildly, naïve. And the nice thing about the Census—as opposed to, say, warrantless domestic wiretapping—is that it actually benefits everyone. Adequate governmental representation (meaning we have an adequate number of representatives, not that the ones we have are necessarily adequate) and fair allocation of federal funds both hinge on accurate population counts. If you still need convincing, you can learn more at a series of islandwide promotional events that'll run through March 15; visit [www.2010census.gov](http://www.2010census.gov) or call Hawaii liaison Roberta Wong Murray at 960-1252 for details....

### LOCAL

Press releases only tell half the story, part 8,473: This week the Neil Abercrombie camp slung some mud at Abercrombie's Democratic opponent, Mufi Hannemann, in the form of a media dispatch about, you guessed it, the Oahu rail project. The release calls on Hannemann "to remain as mayor in the public's best interest to ensure that Honolulu's proposed rail project gets off to a proper start." Nowhere is it mentioned that Hannemann abandoning his gubernatorial aspirations would also be in Abercrombie's best interests, though I suppose it's implied.... Speaking of Abercrombie: Last week I mentioned the upcoming special election to replace him, and the fact that some—including candidate and state Senate President Colleen Hanabusa—have questioned whether we can afford the \$1 million price tag. I also noted an irony: the guy who's probably rooting hardest for the special election is the only conservative in the race, Honolulu Councilmember Charles Djou. That's

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because, while Djou wouldn't stand a chance in a head-to-head matchup with either Hanabusa or former Rep. Ed Case, he could sneak in if the two Democrats split the vote. Well, add Hawaii Republican Party Chair Jonah Kaauwai to the list of Tea Party-placating small-government advocates who's willing to abandon his principles in the name of winning an election. "Is \$1 million a lot of money? Yes it is," Kuuwai said in a release posted on the state GOP Web site. But wait, he's not done asking and answering rhetorical questions: "Is the Congressional representation for half of Hawaii necessary? Absolutely." Funny thing is, though Kaauwai goes on to take predictable shots at the free-spending Dems and their union pals, he's making essentially the same argument Case has made repeatedly. Even Hanabusa, while she's expressed reservations about the cost, has said she understands the importance of maintaining Hawaii's Congressional delegation. To sum up: Kaauwai is pretending the Democrats oppose the special election—a conservative position—so he can attack them for being...not conservative? My head hurts, and it's only March.... Up until now, I'd never thought about the strain the "birthers" are surely putting on Hawaii record-keeping agencies. (If by some miracle you don't know who the birthers are, stop reading now and take a long walk on the beach. Trust me.) Then I read quotes in the Honolulu Advertiser from Hawaii Department of Health spokesperson Janice Okubo about how her office gets 40-50 requests for Obama's birth certificate every month (see By the Numbers on page 7). Morbidly curious, I called Okubo to learn more. She confirmed the number and told me that because of furloughs and other cutbacks they've got just two staff members handling the requests (among other, relevant duties). That's not the worst of it: "The majority of the requests," Okubo said with a laugh both weary and exasperated, "are coming from about four or five people." Never mind the fact that, per state law, birth records are only available to certain people for specific reasons not including "I believe the President of the United States was born in Africa"—the birthers will not be daunted! To paraphrase Margaret Mead: Never doubt that a small group of committed, insane citizens can make life difficult for the rest of us.... So there's this persistent Internet meme where YouTubers take a clip from the movie Downfall, in which Hitler's advisors bring him bad news and the Führer goes unsurprisingly apeshit, and change the subtitles to make it about other, more trivial things. (Example: "Hitler reacts to Brett Favre Playing for the Vikings.") This week, a couple readers gave me a heads-up about "Hitler Reacts to the Hawaii Superferry," which was posted in October 2009 by CaptainNemo999. Best line: "I waited and waited for the crowds to thin out and the prices to drop, but look at me now! I'm [screwed]!" My first thought was: Hey, this might unite folks on both sides of the issue. Then I read the bickering (some of it intelligent, to be fair) in the comments section, and I realized that not even Hitler trumps the Superferry....

**NOT LOCAL**

I know the Oscars are old news by now, but in keeping with this week's movie-themed feature (page 12), I wanted to note how cool it was to see a journalist—Mark Boal, who was imbedded in Iraq in 2004—win Best Original Screenplay for The Hurt Locker. For a profession that's taken a beating of late, it was a nice moment.



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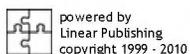
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# City of Honolulu buys Nova Bus vehicles

THE GAZETTE MARCH 11, 2010 3:02 PM

Nova Bus Corp. of St. Eustache has gone surfing for business in Hawaii.

The city of Honolulu has placed a \$10-million order for 24 Nova LFS buses, with options on additional vehicles.

The low-floor buses will be built at the Nova Bus assembly plant in Plattsburgh, N.Y. and delivered later this year to Honolulu and Oahu Transit Services.

Since opening that factory last June, Nova Bus has been awarded contracts totalling more than \$120 million from transit authorities such as MTA/New York City Transit and CT Transit.

Nova Bus' presence in New York has led to the creation of more than 250 direct jobs and five times as many indirect jobs through productive relationships with at least 150 suppliers.

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## City of Honolulu partners with Nova Bus

ST-EUSTACHE, QC, March 11 /PRNewswire/ - The City of Honolulu has placed an order valued at \$10 million for 24 Nova LFS buses, with options on additional vehicles. The buses will be assembled in Nova Bus' upstate New York plant and delivered in late 2010.

The City of Honolulu and Oahu Transit Services are keenly customer-focused, and Nova Bus is proud to partner with them in enhancing their fleet, which provides over 72.5 million rides annually to the community of Honolulu.

Nova Bus President and CEO Mr. Gilles Dion welcomed the news, stating, "The Nova Bus team is thrilled to have the opportunity to collaborate with an innovative organization like the City of Honolulu. We realize the pivotal role public transit plays in their community, and we will work diligently to make this partnership a mutual success."

Since opening its facilities in Plattsburgh, NY, Nova Bus has been awarded contracts totaling over \$120 million from transit authorities such as MTA/New York City Transit and CT Transit. Nova Bus' presence in New York has led to the creation of more than 250 direct jobs and five times as many indirect jobs through productive relationships with over 150 suppliers.

"The city of Honolulu's decision to purchase buses from Nova is a huge win for the North Country," said U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer. "This contract will strengthen Nova's bottom line, provide job security to its workers and act as an economic shot in the arm for the region. Having Nova's buses on display in new markets will be great for its business and great for Upstate New York."

Congressman Bill Owens added: "This is great news for the city of Plattsburgh and the entire North Country. I would like to congratulate Nova Bus and the many members of our community for their efforts to bring jobs to the region. Many of us have worked for many years at job creation, which is my number one priority in Congress."

The Nova LFS is engineered around a unique stainless steel structure, which presents a distinct advantage in areas where corrosion is a significant concern, such as Honolulu. The bus is designed with riders in mind, with large, 360-degree windows for maximum natural light, and wide doors and aisles for easy access.

### About Nova Bus

Nova Bus is a leading provider of sustainable transit solutions in North America, including hybrid buses, high-capacity vehicles and integrated intelligent transportation systems. The company relies on a team of more than 1,100 experts driven by the challenges of public transit with regard to mobility, safety, and productivity. Nova Bus is part of the Volvo Bus Corporation. For more information regarding Nova Bus products and services, please visit [www.novabus.com](http://www.novabus.com)

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 11, 2010  
</pacific/stories/2010/03/08/daily37.html>

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Thursday, March 11, 2010, 12:22pm HAST

### City spends \$10M on new buses

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

The City and County of Honolulu is spending \$10 million on 24 new Nova LFS buses expected to be delivered in Hawaii later this year.

The buses are being built at the Nova Bus plant in Plattsburgh, N.Y., a city near the Canadian border.

The city's **Oahu Transit Services Inc.**'s fleet of about 600 buses provides more than 72.5 million rides annually in Honolulu.

The Nova LFS buses are built around a stainless steel structure, which helps resist corrosion, particularly in places such as Honolulu, Quebec-based Nova Bus said in a news release.

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 11, 2010  
[/pacific/stories/2010/03/08/daily41.html](#)

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Thursday, March 11, 2010, 2:50pm HAST

### Hawaii drivers pay slightly more for gas

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Hawaii's gas prices rose slightly this past week, according to AAA Hawaii.

The average gas price on Thursday was up by a cent a gallon statewide, averaging \$3.45 a gallon, compared to a week ago.

The average gas price in Honolulu, \$3.34 per gallon for regular unleaded, was two cents more than last week, and 97 cents higher than a year ago.

The average gas price in Hilo on the Big Island was \$3.48 a gallon, three cents less than last week and \$1.16 more than at the same time last year.

Meanwhile, the average price in Wailuku on Maui was \$3.82 a gallon, a penny more than last week and \$1.20 more than last year.

"Although still fundamentally weak, the economy offered glimmers of a recovery during the past seven days, which was enough to create enthusiasm among oil investors," said Chris Olvera, AAA Hawaii's acting branch manager.

AAA Hawaii Weekend Gas Watch is a weekly snapshot of gas prices statewide. Prices are calculated from fleet vehicle credit card transactions at more than 100,000 stations around the country, including Hawaii.

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# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Thursday, March 11, 2010

## Lingle rejects poll favoring rail EIS

*Survey reports 67% don't want another mass-transit study*

Advertiser Staff

Gov. Linda Lingle yesterday dismissed the findings of a People's Pulse survey indicating that more than two-thirds of residents oppose conducting another rail-transit study, calling the question used in the survey "poorly worded and misleading" and questioning the credibility of the survey's sponsors.

"The vested interest shared by the People's Pulse Survey co-sponsors Hawai'i Business Roundtable and Pacific Resources Partnership resulted in a poorly worded and misleading survey question," Lingle said in a news release.

Lingle noted that the question did not acknowledge her legal obligation to review and approve the Honolulu rail project's final environmental impact statement, which is awaiting release from the Federal Transit Authority.

The release also reiterated Lingle's intention to conduct an independent analysis of the city's financial plan for its \$5.3 billion rail system.

The survey question read:

The City and County of Honolulu last year has already spent \$3 to \$5 million on an environmental impact statement for the fixed rail mass-transit project. The EIS was submitted to the Federal Transit Authority last year. Now the state says it wants to do its own audit of the mass transit's financial plan. Overall, which do you favor?

- Making a decision on a fixed rail-transit system based on the current EIS
- Having the state commission a new study on transit's financial plan
- Don't know

According to the survey, 67 percent of residents favored making a decision based on the current EIS; 22 percent wanted a new study; and 11 percent did not know.

The poll was conducted by OmniTrak Group Inc.

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Posted on: Thursday, March 11, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### **How is state paying for project study?**

Interesting. Per the governor, we have furlough Fridays, so no school, no education for our keiki, since no money. And state income tax refund checks have to be delayed, since no money.

But we have money to spend on an independent assessment on the rail project?

This is surely not politically or personally motivated, even though the feds are perplexed with her decision on this, and of course the feds have no clue on transportation projects, right?

What was Lingle's stand on rail when we had the money in good times?

When she is out of office, she should try commuting at rush hour from the Leeward side to town and back. Then she can say rail will not help alleviate or reduce traffic.

*Brian Chong  
Honolulu*

# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Friday, March 12, 2010

## Lingle urged to fast-track rail plan

### Advertiser Staff

Thirteen of the 25 state senators yesterday sent a letter to Gov. Linda Lingle urging her to review and accept the final environmental impact statement for the Honolulu rail-transit project in a timely manner.

The EIS is still being reviewed by federal agencies and has yet to be given to Lingle.

A similar letter signed by 39 members of the state House of Representatives was sent to Lingle on Feb. 10.

The city needs Lingle's approval before it can proceed with construction of the \$5.3 billion East Kapolei-to-Ala Moana train line.

The final version of the environmental study was expected to be given to Lingle in December, but has been delayed by an extended federal review. The city has provided Lingle with a draft of the study.

Lingle has said that once she receives the final environmental impact study, she plans to conduct an independent analysis of the city tax revenue forecasts that are the basis of the project's financial plan.

Lingle has said her decision to have the city's forecasts analyzed was prompted in part by lower-than-anticipated tax revenues, which are needed to pay the city's portion of the project's costs.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann has urged Lingle to sign off on the EIS quickly so the project can move forward and create new jobs.

The 13 senators who signed the letter: Mike Gabbard, Will Espero, Clarence Nishihara, Michelle Kidani, Suzanne Chun Oakland, Gary Hooser, Brickwood Galuteria, Roz Baker, David Ige, Jill Tokuda, Bobby Bunda, Norman Sakamoto and Shan Tsutsui.

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Posted on: Monday, March 15, 2010

## Hawaii rail project may not create as many jobs as city predicts

*Some economists say city is using outdated numbers*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Thousands of people will get jobs working on Honolulu's planned \$5.3 billion rail project if construction proceeds as planned. However, how many jobs will be created by the state's largest public works project and when they'll be created remain guesswork.

The city predicts the project will boost employment by 10,166 jobs in each of the nine years it takes to build it, including direct jobs, jobs for suppliers and indirect jobs, such as at the lunchwagon that sells meals to workers.

Hawai'i, which is grappling with its worst economy in decades, could use a major infusion of jobs. Honolulu had 15,000 fewer jobs in the fourth quarter when compared with the prior year's period, according to state labor statistics.

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann, who has made rail a priority of his administration, is using the promise of rail jobs — 4,000 this year and a peak of 17,000 direct and indirect jobs in 2013 — to bolster support for building the 20-mile East Kapolei to Ala Moana elevated train.

However, those job figures may be inflated, according to some local economists.

The city's job estimates are based on 2002 formulas. If the city's job estimates were restated using the most recent 2005 job creation formulas, the job estimates would be about one-third lower, said Sumner LaCroix, a University of Hawai'i economics professor. The transit project would still create thousands of jobs and have a significant impact on the local economy, he said.

However, "the bottom line is it's substantially less" jobs than expected, said LaCroix, who's also a research associate for the UH Economic Research Organization. "We're not saying the transit project isn't going to create jobs. It's just the numbers that are being used are overstated."

Additionally, the city's estimate of new local jobs could be overstated because the calculation includes spending for items such as vehicles assembled on the Mainland, interest, insurance and land purchases, which have little impact on the local job market, LaCroix said.

A study released last year by UHERO predicted the city's rail project will generate a peak of 2,000 direct jobs in 2014. That's less than half the jobs predicted by the city.

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Currently, between 200 and 300 people are working full-time or part-time on the project — a figure that includes city employees and those working for contractors.

## thus far, 350 jobs

So far, only about 350 future construction jobs can be directly connected to the project. That's the peak number of people that Kiewit Pacific has said it would employ during construction of the first 6.5 miles of guideway from East Kapolei to Leeward Community College. Kiewit was awarded the biggest transit contract so far — \$483 million — in October.

The city's estimate that more than 10,000 jobs will be created comes from the use of job multipliers. Job multipliers are a standard way of predicting job creation using a project's budgeted costs. The multipliers are customized for industry sectors and are based on studies of the relationships between various industries. The state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism determines the job creation multipliers used by the city.

The rail project's draft environmental impact statement released in the fall of 2008 predicted the project would create a total of about 22 direct, indirect and induced jobs for every million dollars spent, using job multipliers from a 2002 base. If the multiplier for 2005 is used, the number of jobs per \$1 million spent drops to about 16. Indirect jobs are those created by suppliers while induced jobs are created as a result of spending by those working on the rail project.

According to the city's calculations, which were based on non-inflation adjusted costs of \$4.13 billion, the rail project would create an average of 4,240 direct jobs, 1,847 indirect jobs and 4,079 induced jobs over the nine-year project.

Those projected job creation figures drop to 3,332 direct jobs, 1,710 indirect jobs and 2,154

induced jobs, based on the the 2005 job multipliers , which were released by the DBEDT in August 2008. That's the most recent job multipliers available from the state.

The difference between the two estimates is 2,970 total jobs a year.

## job estimates

The job estimates in the city's draft environmental report were prepared by transit contractor Parsons Brinckerhoff. PB's Deputy Project Manager Mark Scheibe said the job estimates will be updated in a final environmental impact study that will be released later this year. Those updated estimates will be in line with the 10,100 or so jobs previously predicted, Scheibe said.

The updated job estimates also will be based on different multipliers than those released by the state, he said.

"Partially because that (lower state job multiplier) didn't seem to make a lot of sense, we actually looked at some other sources ... and looked at a range of different multipliers and that's what you'll end up seeing when the (final environmental impact statement) comes out," Scheibe said. "They'll be generally in the same

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range as in the" draft environmental impact statement, he said.

Paul Brewbaker, a local economist with TZ Economics, said the 2005 job multipliers suggest the rail project may generate fewer jobs than originally anticipated. However, the city's estimates still could be achievable, he said.

That's because neither the 2002 or 2005 economic formulas reflect the current economic environment in which there's a surplus of labor ready to fill jobs.

"Anything today, any project, public or private, would have a greater impact on jobs and more would be created than when everybody was employed and income was growing at it's potential full employment rate," Brewbaker said. "There is no other time in the last century, other than the Great Depression, where these multipliers are closer to being meaningfully correct.

"If there was a moment to believe these estimates, this would be it."

## hard to compare

Construction activity on the project would peak around late 2012 and early 2013, according to the city's timeline.

About \$910 million, or \$101 million a year, of the project's costs will go toward construction labor costs.

Just how the city's rail jobs forecast compares to jobs created by the H-3 Freeway project is unclear. That's because the state did not track the number of jobs created by the \$1.3 billion, 16-mile freeway, which opened in 1997. The state Department of Transportation can only say that the project employed "thousands of construction workers" during the 37-years H-3 Freeway was planned and built.

The city's estimate that rail will create an average 4,240 direct jobs annually is only about 1,000 jobs shy of the number of construction workers employed by Boston's \$14.6 billion "Big Dig," which was the nation's most expensive highway project. At it's peak, that project employed about 5,200 construction workers, according to an August 2004 article in The Boston Globe.

Just when construction on the transit project will begin remains unclear. The city had planned to break ground in December, however, that date has been indefinitely delayed by a prolonged review of the project's environmental impacts.

Meanwhile, the state continues to set aside money to pay for the project via a half-percentage point general excise tax surcharge on O'ahu. That 15-year tax began in 2007 and through the first three years generated a net \$460 million for the city, according to state Department of Taxation figures.

That excise tax is costing the state jobs, LaCroix said.

"The extra excise tax is a drag on market activity," he said. "People are finding that their budget doesn't go as far so they're cutting back just a little bit.

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"What that means is some businesses don't get that spending. If you want to look at the jobs created by the project, you have to subtract out the jobs that have been lost from the effect of the excise tax."

At the same time it's difficult to gauge the future economic benefits of the mass transit project once it's completed, including so called "transit oriented development" projects, Brewbaker said. Those are projects that could lead to redevelopment and increased property values around train stations.

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 15, 2010  
[/pacific/stories/2010/03/15/daily9.html](#)

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Monday, March 15, 2010, 10:54am HAST

### Honolulu gas prices rise again

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Honolulu's average retail gas price rose 5.3 cents per gallon in the past week, to \$3.37 per gallon Monday.

That's more than the national average, which rose 3.6 cents per gallon in the past week to \$2.78 per gallon, according to HonoluluGasPrices.com, part of GasBuddy.com, which operates more than 200 live gasoline price-tracking Web sites.

Prices on Monday were \$1 higher than the same day a year ago and 6.7 cents per gallon higher than a month ago. The national average was 88.2 cents per gallon higher than a year ago and 16.7 cents more per gallon over the past month.

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# Star Bulletin

March 15, 2010

## **Mayor must see rail plan through**

On March 9, Mayor Mufi Hannemann made a comment to KITV after he was questioned regarding a gubernatorial bid: "I still don't feel that the time is right and appropriate to put my personal agenda ahead of the business of the people."

If you are elected to public office by the people, the business of the people should always come before your personal agenda. I would like to know how there can be a right time for Mayor Hannemann to put his personal agenda ahead of the \$5 billion-plus rail project he championed, which is the most significant and expensive project in the history of Hawaii.

Honolulu's rail transit project is in the hands of whoever is mayor. Mufi Hannemann should stay committed to it, ensure its success, and help ease Honolulu's traffic problems while also stimulating the local economy.

If he follows this honorable course, I have no doubt that his future political ambitions will be achieved and the business of the people will have come first.

Adam Vokac  
Honolulu

# Honolulu Advertiser

## rail transit

### **Dudley's solution is just common sense**

Kioni Dudley deserves tremendous applause for his commentary suggesting that the light rail be on the route of the old Oahu Railway train from Kapolei to the stadium. ("As planned, rail will kill Waipahu," March 4).

Imagine the savings since the land is owned by the government. This sounds like common-sense logic.

Take this one step further and use the savings to extend the route on the railroad right-of-way along the Wai'anae Coast with a terminus in Makaha, which would create jobs for folks in this neighborhood right in their own backyard. This would give these commuters an efficient and timely way to get to their jobs in central O'ahu and to Waikiki.

Can you imagine 50 percent fewer cars coming out of Wai'anae that currently add to the congestion on the H-1?

*Bob Schieve*

*Hale'iwa*

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Posted on: Tuesday, March 16, 2010

by The Advertiser.

## Only one company bid to manage Hawaii rail project

*InfraConsult LLC of Arizona signs on again, for \$36.7M over 5 years*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

A \$36.7 million contract for Honolulu's planned train project failed to garner any competition.

Under the five-year deal, Scottsdale, Ariz.-based InfraConsult LLC will provide project management oversight on the \$5.3 billion project — a role the company has played since March 2007.

The latest contract is the third-largest deal to date on the transit project following a \$483 million contract awarded to Kiewit Pacific in October and an \$86 million contract awarded to Parsons Brinckerhoff in August 2007.

Terms of the InfraConsult contract were negotiated directly between city and company officials after no other bidders sought the contract, according to documents obtained last week through a Freedom of Information request

City transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka said Honolulu complied with state laws meant to ensure that the cost of the InfraConsult contract was fair and reasonable.

The solicitation for the professional services contract was posted on a city Web site on Aug. 12, and it was publicized in three newspaper ads on Aug. 21, 23 and 24. An ad also was placed on Aug. 31 in the industry trade publication Passenger Transport. InfraConsult was the only company to submit a proposal by a Sept. 11 deadline, and a contract with the firm was signed on Nov. 19.

It is possible that no other companies thought they could compete with InfraConsult, Yoshioka said. "I'm guessing that the other guys figured that these guys were so familiar with it that it would be hard for them to take the role," he said.

InfraConsult won its initial contract in 2007 after only one other firm bid to provide project oversight services. Under terms of its latest deal, InfraConsult will help the city manage the planned project and oversee other contractors, including Kiewit and Parsons Brinckerhoff. That's the same role the firm had already been providing under an \$11.5 million contract awarded to InfraConsult in March 2007.

InfraConsult was formed in summer 2006 by three former Parsons Brinckerhoff executives. Two previously had worked on Honolulu transit

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projects.

Parsons Brinckerhoff is a New York-based engineering firm active in Hawai'i since the 1960s. It had a major role in designing the H-3 Freeway.

Perceptions of contract favoritism between the city, Parsons Brinckerhoff and InfraConsult were partially behind a probe of rail contracts conducted last year by the city auditor. That audit found that contracts awarded to Parsons Brinckerhoff and InfraConsult complied with procurement laws.

The audit also said the city needs to improve the way it documents commuter rail contract awards to improve transparency and public confidence in the project.

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 10:00AM Rush Limbaugh  
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 01:15PM [College Basketball](#)  
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**HAWAII NEWS**

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Posted: Tuesday, March 16th, 2010 4:49 AM HST

**How many jobs would rail project generate?**

By Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Just how many jobs would Oahu's planned \$5.4 billion, 20-mile rail transit project generate?

Mayor Mufi Hannemann says 4,000 this year and a peak of 17,000 direct and indirect jobs in 2013.

However, the city's job estimates are based on 2002 formulas.

University of Hawaii economics professor Sumner LaCroix says if the city's job estimates were restated using the most recent 2005 job creation formulas, the job estimates would be about one-third lower.

He says the transit project would still create thousands of jobs and have a significant impact on the local economy.

LaCroix is also a research associate for the UH Economic Research Organization. A study released by the group last year predicted the city's rail project will generate a peak of 2,000 direct jobs in 2014.

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# Star Bulletin

## **Stop rail or we will all go down**

Thank you, Joseph DeMarco, for your on-spot letter of March 13 ("Tap the rail fund to tackle deficit," Star-Bulletin). Our state deficit is \$1.2 billion? How much is in the rail fund?

It's a slam dunk, and we'd better hurry up before our schools, infrastructure and social services implode.

We will all go down. Stop this Mufiasco.

MJ Culvyhouse  
Kaneohe

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Posted on: Wednesday, March 17, 2010

## Hawaii excise tax may rise to 5% if move in Legislature succeeds

*2 committees agree to raise it 1 percentage point through December 2012*

By **Derrick DePledge**  
Advertiser Government Writer

State senators yesterday moved toward a general excise tax increase to help with the state's budget deficit after finding that targeted tax hikes on businesses would likely be passed on to consumers and could undermine economic growth.

The Senate Economic Development and Technology Committee and the Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee agreed to increase the general excise tax by 1 percentage point through December 2012.

The tax, the state's largest source of revenue, would rise from 4 percent to 5 percent — 5.5 percent on O'ahu because of a surcharge to finance Honolulu's mass-transit project. The increase could raise about \$500 million a year to

help close the state's \$1.2 billion budget deficit.

Senators said they were concerned about the impact on the poor, since the general excise tax is regressive, and said they would provide a state earned-income tax credit. The tax credit would reduce the amount of GET revenue available to pay off the deficit.

"Good tax policy, I've always been taught, is as broad a reach as possible, and you try to make it fair across the board," said state Sen. Rosalyn Baker, D-5th (W. Maui, S. Maui), the chairwoman of the Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee.

The committees' decision creates a potential rift with Senate and House leaders, who have downplayed a GET increase as an option to pay down the deficit and who say they doubt they have the two-thirds' votes necessary to overcome a veto by Gov. Linda Lingle even if a bill were to pass.

The Republican governor and majority Democrats in the House have offered budget drafts that do not rely on a GET hike to close the deficit.

State Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, D-14th (Hālawā, Moanalua, Kamehameha Heights), the chairwoman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, questioned why the senators would move the proposal to her committee.

"My interest is to try to balance the budget and to make sure that our solutions are realistic and, at the end of the day, we're not going to be left

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with a vetoed measure that we can't override," she said.

State Senate President Colleen Hanabusa, D-21st (Nānākuli, Mākaha), said she will wait to see how the Senate Ways and Means Committee deals with the issue.

"I'm not sure that we have the votes to override a veto on that," she said.

State House Speaker Calvin Say, D-20th (St. Louis Heights, Pālolo Valley, Wilhelmina Rise), also said he believes a GET increase lacks support in the House.

## house version

The Senate passed a GET hike last session to help finance public education and tax credits for the poor and middle class, but the bill did not advance in the House. The bill remains alive as an option this session, however, no matter the fate of the new proposal in the Senate.

"I don't want to go down a path where I don't have the 34 votes to override," Say told The Advertiser's editorial board, referring to the two-thirds' vote of the 51-member House required to overcome a veto.

Many lawmakers say they believe a GET hike will be politically difficult in an election year without the buy-in among community leaders. The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii is expected to discuss the different tax options at a board meeting tomorrow. The Hawai'i Government Employees Association, the state's largest public-sector union, has urged lawmakers to adopt a GET increase to help avoid further cuts to state programs.

Several economists have also told lawmakers that temporary tax increases and diverting money from special funds should be part of the plan to close the deficit. Economists have noted that 38 percent of the general excise tax is paid by tourists, so residents would not absorb the

full burden of a GET increase.

But the Tax Foundation of Hawaii argues that raising the GET, because of its pyramiding characteristic, could have a "devastating impact" on the state's economic recovery. The foundation's officials say taking money from special funds and curtailing tax credits would be better options.

"I guess the question for the broader community is when you look at the alternatives that are in front of you, and the impacts on business and on the consumer, you just have to sort of ask them, 'How would you rather we solve this problem?' " asked state Sen. Carol Fukunaga, D-11th (Makiki, Pāwa'a), the chairwoman of the Senate Economic Development and Technology Committee.

## other tax options

The House moved a menu of tax options over to the Senate to help with the deficit, but Senate committees are narrowing those options before the bills reach the pivotal Senate Ways and Means Committee.

Fukunaga and Baker swapped the GET increase for a House proposal to generate \$100 million a year by eliminating GET exemptions on a range

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of business activities and imposing a 1 percent GET on those activities.

Fukunaga also substituted her Streamlined Sales Tax Project — which would collect use taxes owed on consumer mail-order catalog and Internet purchases — for a House proposal to defer high-technology investment tax credits in the program known as Act 221.

Fukunaga also held a House bill that would reduce Act 221 tax credits.

Baker's committee held a House bill that would have increased insurance premium tax rates, while Baker and the Senate Health Committee tabled a House bill that would have imposed an insurance premium tax on the Hawaii Medical Service Association and Kaiser Permanente.

HMSA and Kaiser warned lawmakers that the insurance premium tax would be passed on to businesses and would raise already escalating health care costs.

Fukunaga said many of the House tax options would create "severe long-term economic impacts" on businesses and were not as preferable as a temporary GET increase.

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Posted on: Wednesday, March 17, 2010

## Honolulu rail route too close to runways, may have to shift

*City, state, federal officials will discuss options today*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

The city's planned route for a new \$5.3 billion rail system runs too close to runways at Honolulu International Airport, and that has become a major sticking point holding up the project.

City, state and federal officials will meet today to discuss how the train can serve Honolulu International Airport without encroaching on airspace that's reserved for airport operations.

The current route down Aolele Street through Ke'ehi Lagoon Park will need to be moved mauka or will require changes to the airport including runway alterations, according to government officials .

The airport issue could delay the city's release of a final environmental impact statement, which is needed before construction can begin.

The delay "could be anything from probably a

week from now to getting delayed three to six months," said City Council Chairman Todd Apo, who was one of four council members briefed on the issue by the Federal Transit Administration last week in Washington, D.C. "If the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) says you've got to move your rail line, then there will probably need to be a change to the rail EIS, which will add three to six months and possibly more depending on what issues are crossed when you go on to that analysis."

Possible route changes as well as the impact of alternate routes will be discussed at today's meeting between the state Department of Transportation, FAA, FTA and the city.

Under current plans the elevated train track and a station planned for the intersection near Aolele Street and Lagoon Drive would be about four stories tall and less than 1,000 feet from airport runways. That encroaches on a runway airspace buffer created to keep buildings and other obstructions from affecting airplane operations, said state transportation Director Brennon Morioka.

"The current plan that goes down Aolele does impact the runway protection zone," he said. "Basically you can't construct in the runway protection zone.

"This is a structure that would be just as high as the (nearby highway) viaduct, but it would be much closer to the runway."

The city planned to break ground on the rail

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project last December; however, that was delayed by a prolonged review of the project's environmental impacts. The airport issue is now the main hang-up preventing the release of the project's final environmental impact statement.

## timeline up in air

Once the EIS is finished, it must be approved by Gov. Linda Lingle before the city can start construction on the East Kapolei to Ala Moana project.

How long it will take to address the airport concerns and when construction on the project can begin depends on how soon the environmental impact study is released. That in turn depends on whether the city will need to change the current route in the airport area.

The FAA today will give the city the results of a preliminary review of the impacts of five possible rail alignments on airport operations, said FAA spokesman Ian Gregor. The agency would not disclose the routes considered or their airport impacts.

"We'll submit formal comments on the project's environmental impact statement within the next few weeks," Gregor said in an e-mail yesterday. "Until then, we cannot comment publicly on our preliminary review."

The City Council voted to divert the path of the train from Salt Lake to the airport in January 2009. That change added about \$220 million to the cost of the project, but was expected to generate higher ridership and greater community acceptance.

Options that the city could pursue to mitigate the train's airport impacts include moving the train's route closer to or on top of the Nimitz viaduct. The city also may be able to stick with the currently planned route, if the state is willing to make changes at the airport such as extending the length of the opposite ends of affected runways.

Whether to allow the city to build in the runway protection zone is up to the state, the FAA said. The state said what happens next depends on what the city decides to do, based on today's meeting.

"We're helping (the city) with that evaluation so that they have all the information they need to help them make a well-informed decision on which route is going to be best for this area," state transportation director Morioka said "How much editing that needs to be done in the final EIS in this area really depends on what choices are made so that's part of the process we're going through right now."

City transportation director Wayne Yoshioka was unavailable for comment yesterday. However, it appears the city is not expecting to alter the train's route. Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann on Saturday said the rail project was in the "home stretch" of the environmental impact study process.

"It is our expectation that no more studies or analyses will be needed after the meeting (today), since this issue will have been thoroughly examined," Hannemann said in a news release. "All parties are committed to completing the FEIS (final environmental impact

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statement) for release. We are optimistic that, shortly after the conclusion of the airport issue, the FTA will authorize the release of the FEIS."

## still major issue

Council members Romy Cachola and Ann Kobayashi, who also met with the FTA last week, said their impression was that the runway protection zone encroachment remains a major, unresolved issue.

"It's a big issue in the sense that we were told that without the FAA signing off, nothing will happen," said councilman Romy Cachola. The city "has to do something to correct it."

The airport issue as well as mitigation of the train's impact on mauka to makai views and historic sites still need to be addressed, Kobayashi said.

"For the (environmental impact study) this airport thing has to be settled," she said. "It'll be awhile. You can't just rush into things."

Today's meeting is closed to the public, and no City Council representative will attend.

Council member Ikaika Anderson, who also met with the FTA last week, said he unsuccessfully sought permission from the Hannemann administration to have the council represented at today's meeting.

"The administration did say they would share the results of that meeting and any documents that come out of it," Anderson said. "The reason that the council wants transparency on this issue is so that the public trust remains there ... so that the public has trust in its government."

Reach Sean Hao at [shao@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:shao@honoluluadvertiser.com)

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## CITY'S PLANNED TRANSIT SYSTEM ENCROACHES ON RUNWAY'S AIRSPACE

### POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- Move route farther from the airport
- Make changes to runway

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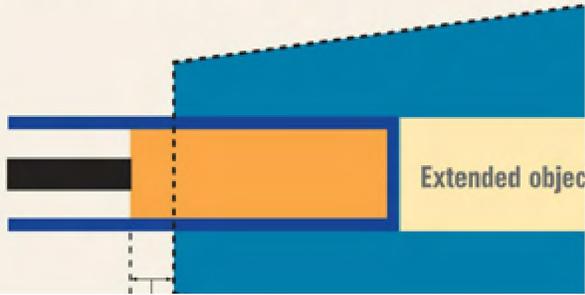
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Updated at 1:48 p.m., Wednesday, March 17, 2010

## Nonbinding legislation calls for Maui rail study

Associated Press

HONOLULU — A state House committee is considering two nonbinding measures that call for a study of a light-rail system on Maui.

The bills, HR 52 and HCR 101, state that the island can develop a mass transit system before extensive development begins rather than afterward.

They also contend the rail transit proposal on Oahu is a good example of the problems that can be encountered when a region is already overdeveloped.

The measures ask Maui County and the state to study the costs of constructing a light-rail system that would connect the Kahului-Wailuku, Kihei and Lahaina areas.

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LETTERS

# Face the facts

MAR 17, 2010 | [SHARE](#)

In recent forums and media interviews, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) is not providing all the facts when discussing the safety aspect of a light rail system that operates on ground level.

As one who oversees safety and security issues for the Honolulu Rail Transit Project, one reason the city selected an elevated rail system is to avoid potential collisions with other vehicles.

The Phoenix light rail system that just opened last year—and runs on the ground—faces this problem. In its first year of service, there have already been 52 documented collisions between trains and cars, the *Arizona Republic* newspaper reported. In addition, half of those weekly Phoenix collisions occurred along a 1.25-mile stretch running through busy downtown Phoenix. This is identical to the AIA proposal of a train operating ground level through downtown Honolulu. Train reliability is another issue. Service in Houston was halted for hours last month after a bus collided with an at-grade train. Nine people were hurt; fortunately, none of the injuries was life-threatening. The reality is that a street-level system like the AIA proposal will have serious safety issues to contend with. Honolulu’s elevated rail system is the “gold standard” when it comes to reliability, speed and safety. This can only be accomplished with an elevated train separated from the traffic below.

*Harvey Berliner, P.E. Honolulu Rail Transit Project Deputy Project Officer for Design and Construction*



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## LETTERS

# Stay on track

MAR 17, 2010 |



On March 9, Mayor Hannemann made a comment to KITV after he was questioned regarding a gubernatorial bid, "I still don't feel that the time is right and appropriate to put my personal agenda ahead of the business of the people." If you are elected to public office by the people of Hawai'i, the business of the people should always come before your personal agenda. I would like to know how there can be a right time for Mayor Hannemann to put his personal agenda ahead of the \$5 billion-plus rail project he championed, which is the most significant and expensive project in the history of Hawaii.

No one can argue that Honolulu's rail transit project is in the hands of whoever is mayor. Mufi Hannemann should stay committed to the rail project, see that it gets implemented successfully, and help ease the traffic problems of Honolulu while also stimulating the local economy. If he vacates the mayor's seat, there can be no assurance on the success or even completion of rail in Hawai'i.

If Mayor Hannemann sees his rail project to fruition and ensures it is widely successful, I have no doubt his future political ambitions will easily come to him; if he follows this honorable course, the business of the people will have come first.

*Adam Vokac Honolulu*



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## Concerns Over Rail Encroaching on Honolulu Airport Runways

Reported by: Gina Mangieri

Email: [gmangieri@khon2.com](mailto:gmangieri@khon2.com)

Last Update: 3/17 7:39 pm

In a matter of train versus plane, transportation officials met Wednesday to try to resolve federal concerns over Honolulu's planned rail system being too close to Honolulu airport runways.

The feds can't release the rail's final environmental impact statement for the governor's review until the FAA's airport concerns are resolved.

At issue is an airport spur of the Honolulu rail line that would encroach on a safety zone buffer past the end of Honolulu International Airport's runways.

"The FAA in October popped their head up and said we're concerned about our runway protection zone and how this system impacts it," said City Managing Director Kirk Caldwell.

The concern is holding up the final environmental impact statement release from the feds.

"We need to work through it, we're not gonna go afoul of runway safety," said Todd Apo, the Honolulu City Council Chair.

This and other updates were presented to the Citizen Advisory Committee of the island's Transportation Planning Committee, while a meeting in Honolulu between federal, state and county officials continued to work toward solutions.

"I went to Washington to ask FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff to bring the parties together, and that is exactly what he has done," said Mayor Mufi Hannemann.

FAA and the State Department of Transportation are working on options including moving the rail line one block mauka.

"If it's that small, it's probably not a huge delay because a lot of the impacts would be the same," said Apo.

Another option, push the rail out much farther than that.

"If it were something like taking the rail line on the other side of the viaduct, OK, probably a longer story," said Apo.

Also on the table, extend the runway on the makai end, which would then move the safety buffer, too.

As for the final solution and how long it will take to resolve?

"I wouldn't want to speculate. I think we will continue to work with the FAA in addressing their concerns, and when they are satisfied then we'll go forward," said Caldwell.

Even after the flight matter is fixed, the governor has said she still wants to do a thorough independent financial review in addition to her read of the final EIS.





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# City Officials Discuss Changing Rail Route With FAA

## Rail Transit Line May Be Too Close To Honolulu Airport Runways

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POSTED: 4:30 pm HST March 17, 2010  
UPDATED: 5:01 pm HST March 17, 2010

**HONOLULU, Hawaii** -- Officials from the Federal Aviation Administration met with city and state representatives today to discuss possible changes to the city's rail transit plan.

The meeting was held at the FAA facility at the airport control tower, and was closed to the media.

There is concern about a proposed rail transit station at the corner of Lagoon Drive and Aolele Street. The city plans a four story transit stop there. But the FAA said it is too close to an active runway, and encroaches on the FAA's controlled area.

"The FAA is now raising questions that would address this runway zone. Our rail is going to be in that zone with many warehouses, streets, and other structures. Of course on an issue like this, talking about runways, roads and the end of the runway, they're going to want to look at the blueprints," said city Managing Director Kirk Caldwell.

The meeting lasted late into the afternoon.

"At least as it's been described to me it should not be a major delay. I think it's moving the rail line one block mauka," said city councilman Todd Apo.

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Posted on: Thursday, March 18, 2010

## Hawaii revving up to era of electric cars

*But hurdles remain in goal to put thousands of plug-ins on Isle roads*

By **Greg Wiles**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

People attending Hawaii's biggest new-car show will be greeted by a Hawaiian Electric Co. display in what may mark the dawn of the era of the electric car.

Besides the usual spotlighting of the latest car models and improvements, the show figures to offer a glimpse into types of electric cars that are expected to increasingly dot Hawaii's roadways over the next few years and decades.

HECO has signed on as a sponsor of the First Hawaiian International Auto Show and will be among exhibitors touting the coming age of electrics. There will be an expensive electric roadster, an electrified version of a Mini Cooper, as well as companies that install charging stations.

"It's no longer theory, or some science fiction thing," said David Rolf, executive director of the Hawaii Automobile Dealers Association, which

helps sponsor the annual new car event. "The dream becomes reality."

The show may prove to be a demarcation point of sorts as the state applies the brakes to petroleum use and looks to become a renewable energy showplace. It's well known that Hawaii gets about 90 percent of its energy from petroleum, making it the most vulnerable state in the nation for crude oil price spikes.

Gov. Linda Lingle has set in motion a plan to wean Hawaii from oil, setting a goal of getting 70 percent of its energy from clean sources by 2030 — 40 percent in renewable electricity generation and another 30 percent in energy efficiency.

What's not as well known is that electric vehicles play a big role in the plans. There are estimates that as much as two-thirds of petroleum use here goes to transportation, including jet fuel, gasoline and diesel.

One projection done for the state estimated there will be as many as 10,000 electric cars on the roads here in the next five years and 43,000 in a decade. That's out of a census of more than a million vehicles.

The estimates are subject to much debate since electric car prices, the cost of gasoline and electricity as well as available charge stations and the economy all figure into the formula. Battery life, weight and charging capability also enter into the computations.

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But the state thinks the trend line for the cars is headed in one direction — up, especially so given longer-term forecasts for higher oil prices.

"It's not a question of will it happen; it's a matter of how quickly it will happen," said Maria Tome, manager of the state's Renewable and Transportation Energy Program within the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism.

## cost comparisons

Just the fuel cost portion of the equation is a compelling argument for electric vehicles, or EVs. Tome notes that the average Hawai'i car getting 20 miles per gallon and driven 10,000 miles a year has gasoline costs of \$1,750.

An electric vehicle driven the same distance using 6 cents of electricity per mile would cost \$625 a year with recharging at 25 cents per kilowatt hour. The electric car owner would save \$1,125 a year over the fueling costs for a conventional car with an internal combustion engine.

From a policy perspective, there are a trunk full of other reasons to adopt EVs that move the state toward its energy independence goals.

Many experts think charging of EVs will take place mainly overnight at home — something that helps provide an outlet for energy produced by the wind farms, ocean buoys and ocean thermal energy conversion projects envisioned for the state.

Otherwise the electricity these generate during the low-energy-usage early morning hours might be wasted.

"For us, it's not just the effect of having a more diverse energy mix to keep our transportation sector moving," Tome said. "It also has potential to use renewable energy that otherwise might not be used."

Those are among the selling points for EVs. But putting this into practice will have its challenges.

For starters, there is no major auto manufacturer selling EVs in the state and there won't be for months. Even then, some people might back away from EV purchases, given the sticker shock that they will experience.

There are exotic electrics in Hawai'i, with four people owning the pricey Tesla roadsters. There also are the stripped down, neighborhood electrics that look like big city cousins of golf carts.

## small-car market

For now, many of the designs that are edging toward production are smaller cars. Nissan, which may make a marketing announcement during the First Hawaiian show, has a car called the Leaf that's based on its Versa subcompact model.

Chevrolet's heralded Volt is a four-seater that is along the lines of a Chevy Malibu in terms of size, according to John O'Dell, editor of GreenCarAdvisor.com, which tracks developments in alternative fuel vehicles as part of Edmunds.com.

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The Volt is a so-called extended-range vehicle that combines a 40-mile battery, or less than what many people drive on a daily basis, with a fail-safe should the battery run out. At that time a gasoline-powered generator kicks in to feed electricity to the motor.

That solves some of the cost and weight problems with the lithium-ion batteries that are being used in most cars. But there may be another problem for buyers: No prices have been released but the car is thought to be in the \$40,000 price range.

There is a \$7,500 federal tax credit that can be applied, and the state is contemplating enacting a grant and rebate program to soothe some of the EV pricing sting.

"It's not an inexpensive car," said O'Dell, noting that maintenance costs for the EVs are typically much less than for conventional vehicles.

The Leaf is talked about in the high-\$20,000 to low-\$30,000 price range, though Nissan hasn't said what the cost will be. Drivers will not only have to change their fueling habits (typically recharging every night), but also how they view car pricing by including fuel costs.

A study released by management consulting firm Accenture earlier this month found that more than half of people polled in the U.S. and Canada said they would not pay more for an EV or hybrid vehicle.

Half said they wanted charging to take only 20 minutes, or much less time than the several hours that most plug-in systems take. Only 5 percent said they were likely to buy an electric car in the next two years, though the percentage went up to seven in 10 when it came to a hybrid.

### support is key

Still, a recent report done by Deutsche Bank

Securities for Wall Street investors came out bullish on EVs.

"We continue to believe that the market underestimates the potential for growth in this segment ... particularly in markets that are supported by EV-friendly government policies and independent infrastructure companies focused on growing the penetration of such vehicles," said the report.

It noted battery costs are coming down faster than expected as performance of the batteries increased.

The report was good news for an increasing number of companies vying to install charging stations or infrastructure, a necessary component to the adoption of EVs.

It's believed tens of thousands of such sites will be needed, ranging from charging hardware installed at homes to those available in parking lots at office buildings and shopping malls.

HECO's booth will showcase Coulomb Technologies, GoSmart, AeroVironment and Control Technologies .

It also will feature Better Place, a high-profile Silicon Valley company that promises to set up a

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system whereby subscribers won't have to worry about the battery cost of their cars.

Better Place will pay for those units if customers agree to a subscription plan akin to buying mobile phone minutes — so much for so many minutes.

For drivers who come close to draining the 100-mile range of the batteries, there will be some battery-swap stations where freshly charged batteries can be loaded into cars.

Better Place spokeswoman Julie Mullins declined to say what these costs might be for its plans or the status of talks with U.S. carmakers for models using its battery system.

The company has been making progress with its model in Denmark and Israel and has been targeting Hawai'i as one of the first markets it serves. Mullins said the company intends to start putting in charge sites by the end of this year and have a "mass deployment" of the sites in 2012.

O'Dell said the Better Place model might work for a market like Hawai'i, but may not make sense in some Mainland areas where people drive farther. He said it may be that some people buy EVs as a second car to be used by the household member who has a limited commute.

He also expects a number of alternatives to be tried as the EV era progresses.

There will be people that will drive conventional hybrids that don't plug in and other hybrids that have plug-in capability.

There also will be the extended-range cars like the Volt and pure battery EVs. Down the road there also may be hydrogen fuel cells to run cars with electric motors.

"We're going to have 20 to 30 years where every one of these things is on the road," O'Dell said, noting after that the market will probably settle

on two or three types of vehicles.

But all of it has to start with drivers getting more comfortable with the concept of EVs.

"One of the beginning challenges to getting electric vehicles on the street is getting customers to understand and want them," said HECO spokesman Peter Rosegg.

"It's not going to happen if we don't start."

Reach Greg Wiles at [gwiles@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:gwiles@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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Posted on: Thursday, March 18, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### Governor's race

#### **Hannemann should stay, complete rail**

On March 9, Mayor Hannemann made a comment to KITV after he was questioned regarding a gubernatorial bid: "I still don't feel that the time is right and appropriate to put my personal agenda ahead of the business of the people."

If you are elected to public office by the people of Hawai'i, the business of the people should always come before your personal agenda.

I would like to know how there can be a right time for Hannemann to put his personal agenda ahead of the \$5 billion-plus rail project he championed.

No one can argue that Honolulu's rail transit project is in the hands of the mayor. Hannemann should stay committed to the rail project, see that it gets implemented successfully, and help ease the traffic problems of Honolulu while also stimulating the local economy. If he vacates the mayor's seat, there can be no assurance on the success or even completion of rail in Hawai'i.

If Hannemann sees his rail project to fruition and ensures it is widely successful, I have no doubt his future political ambitions will easily come to him; if he follows this honorable course, the business of the people will have come first.

*Adam Vokac  
Honolulu*

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Updated at 11:53 a.m., Thursday, March 18, 2010

month and are 87.9 cents higher than year-ago levels. On Oct. 23, 2008, prices averaged \$2.8215 a gallon.

## State average for gasoline up 2 cents to \$3.47 a gallon

### Advertiser Staff

Hawaii's average price for a gallon of regular gasoline rose by two cents from last Thursday to \$3.47, according to AAA Hawaii's Weekend Gas Watch.

The average price in Honolulu is \$3.37, three cents more than last week, six cents more than last month and \$1 more than last year.

In Hilo, the average was \$3.47, a penny less than last week, six cents less than last month and 96 cents more than last year.

In Wailuku, the average was \$3.84, two cents more than last week, a nickel more than last month and \$1.23 more than last year.

Nationwide, motorists are paying the highest prices for gasoline since October 2008, the Associated Press reports.

The national average hit \$2.7999 a gallon, according to AAA, Wright Express and Oil Price Information Service.

Prices have now jumped 18.9 cents in the past

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## Improvements Underway for Kamehameha Highway in Pearl City & Aiea

Reported by: Brianne Randle

Email: [brandle@khon2.com](mailto:brandle@khon2.com)

Last Update: 3/18 11:46 pm

During a town hall meeting at Pearl City Elementary School, State, City and Government leaders had no qualms over whether Honolulu's planned rail system will happen. Despite a hick-up over the project's Environmental Impact Statement with regards to the airport.

"Our plans for our community are predicated on the fact that rail is gonna come in," said Rep. Mark Takai (D) Pearl City. "Our community is anticipating that the project will come thru."

Improvement projects in the Pearl City and Aiea area along Kamehameha Highway are taking into account where a future mass transit route will go.

"The plan is have the rail come down the median so it would be silly to do stuff in the median when you know that's where you're going to be coming down," said Wayne Yoshioka, City Transportation Services Director.

Instead the focus is on traffic signal improvements, adding chain link median fencing, and adjusting turn lanes.

"It's more affordable, simple, quick fix type things that I think when you add things up it really tends to make a difference," said Brennon Morioka, State Transportation Department.

Representative Takai says Kamehameha Highway is one of the most heavily traveled roads on Oahu.

The community also called for the need for landscaping along the highway, but that will have to be delayed.

"When we thought about what we would be doing and what would potentially be torn up as a part of rail we worked with them understanding this is something that can be done later," said Morioka.

"To make sure there's not a situation where they come in and do a project and we come in and tear it up," said Yoshioka.

The future of rail isn't stopping the State from addressing other traffic troubles now. Construction is set to begin later this year to



Improvements Underway for  
Kamehameha Highway in

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add a PM contra-flow to the H-1 freeway. And by 2011, they hope to add a fourth lane to one of the state's worst bottle necks- Middle street merge.

There's no timetable on when the airport issues with the rail project will be resolved. But Mayor Mufi Hannemann said he hopes the project will break ground this year.

Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 18, 2010  
[/pacific/stories/2010/03/15/daily37.html](#)

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Thursday, March 18, 2010, 12:43pm HAST

### Hawaii gas prices edge upward

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Hawaii's average gas prices were two cents higher on Thursday than they were a week ago, according to AAA Hawaii.

The statewide average for a gallon of unleaded was \$3.47 this week.

Gas prices for Hawaii metro areas were as follows:

- In Honolulu, regular unleaded sold for \$3.37 a gallon, up three cents from the previous week and \$1 from a year ago.
- In Hilo on the Big Island, regular unleaded sold for \$3.47 a gallon, a penny less than last week, but 96 cents more than the previous year.
- In Wailuku, Maui, gas was \$3.84, up two cents from a week ago and \$1.23 more than last year.

"The biggest factor in determining the trend in oil and retail gasoline prices has been and will continue to be expectations over the international economy," said Chris Olvera, AAA Hawaii's acting branch manager. "While prices have risen, they haven't done so at the same pace we typically see in the spring. The slow pace of the economic recovery here and abroad may continue to moderate the traditional spring-early summer price climb."

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## Rail line route raises airport safety issue

The FAA is looking at potential effects of several rail positions

By [Gary T. Kubota](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Mar 18, 2010

City, federal and state officials met on Oahu in an attempt to resolve a question about whether the proposed rail transit line intrudes into a safety zone at the Honolulu Airport.

City Managing Director Kirk Caldwell said officials with the Federal Aviation Administration and Federal Transit Administration met yesterday to discuss the proximity of the rail line to the Diamond Head-mauka side of the airport.

FAA spokesman Ian Gregor said his agency is providing an analysis about several rail alignments' potential effect on airport operations.

Part of the proposed 20-mile rail line runs along Aolele Street and would stop at a four-story station at Lagoon Drive, less than 1,000 feet from the end of runways 22 right and left, and encroaching on the airspace buffer zone, government officials said.

Officials said while there are other buildings such as warehouses in the area, the station would be as high as the freeway viaduct and closer to the runway.

Caldwell said Mayor Mufi Hannemann met with FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff two weeks ago and discussed the need to resolve the airport alignment issue, prompting the meeting yesterday.

 City's rail project may be too close to airport



The FAA says the city's rail transit plan runs too close to an active runway.

[ [Watch](#) ]



"It's all about good news here," Caldwell said. "The good news is by talking, we think there will be a resolution and we can then move forward."

Caldwell said "midlevel" officials were meeting to resolve the issue.

"I don't think it's back to the drawing board," Caldwell said. "This is a facts-driven process at this point."

Caldwell said he didn't want to speculate whether the alignment would change.

He said the City Council voted to move the route to the airport to make it a viable mass transportation system.

Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi said she, along with some other Council members, met with federal transit officials in Washington, D.C., last week.

Rogoff told them his department was going to try to address the issue of the airport safety zone, Kobayashi said. "He sounded like he wanted the project to keep moving," she said.

**Find this article at:**

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Posted on: Saturday, March 20, 2010

## Honolulu officials knew year ago that rail route too close to airport

*City was warned more than a year ago that route runs too close to airport runways*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

City officials were warned as early as January 2009 of the need to formally notify the Federal Aviation Administration that a planned commuter rail line could run too close to the Honolulu International Airport.

Construction of the \$5.3 billion rail system was supposed to begin last December but is being delayed in part because the route may be too close to an airport runway and might endanger the operation of aircraft. The city cannot begin construction on the project until the airport issue is resolved.

On Wednesday, city, state and federal officials met to discuss moving either the train's route or the affected runway.

If the route has to be moved, it could push back the start of construction by up to six months.

On Jan. 29, 2009, state transportation director Brennon Morioka wrote his counterpart at the city, Wayne Yoshioka, saying the city should file what is known as a Form 7460 with the FAA to ensure that the elevated train complies with runway obstruction height limits.

On Feb. 2, 2009, Moses Akana, an FAA air traffic support specialist at the Honolulu airport, e-mailed the city comments on the train's environmental impact study. He said that an aeronautical study must be done before construction starts to ensure there's no impact on airport flight operations.

The airport issue must be resolved before the project's final environmental impact statement can be released. Gov. Linda Lingle then must approve the study before the city can start construction.

Lingle yesterday said the city will need to change plans to address the airport airspace issue.

"The FAA will not sign off on it because the rail impedes one of the runways," she said yesterday following a speech to the Pearlridge Rotary Club. The city has "known this all along," Lingle added. "They've been told this."

"They're going to have to alter their plan because they cannot impede the operations of the Honolulu airport."

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Yesterday, the FAA said the city still has not filed the Form 7460.

## City hasn't filed

The city yesterday said the FAA form doesn't need to be filed until a later date.

"The form does not need to be filed at this time, as it is not a requirement of the environmental process and has not been noted as such by the FAA in any discussions regarding the current evaluation of the rail guideway in the vicinity of the airport," the city said in a written response yesterday to an inquiry for this story.

"Nonetheless, the city has completed an airspace analysis of the (environmental impact statement) alignment to ensure that FAA clearance requirements are complied with."

The statement added: "The city has also discussed the results informally with the FAA to help in identifying appropriate mitigations needed to clear the runway protection zone."

The city has said the current complications are a result of newly adopted federal aviation regulations. The city also said that the FAA did not raise its concerns until October.

However, the FAA this week said that there were no new regulations implemented that would affect Honolulu's rail project. The FAA would not comment on whether the city's failure to file a construction notice sooner could have helped address the current airspace issues.

The FAA said the filing of proposed construction forms is integral to the agency's review of potential airspace impacts.

"Anyone who wants to build a structure near an airport must file a 7460 form so that the FAA can do an airspace study of the project," FAA spokesman Ian Gregor said in an e-mail. "The study determines whether the project could pose hazards to air navigation and, if so, whether the hazards could be mitigated."

"Ideally, the airspace study for the project and the (environmental impact statement) would be done at the same time," he said.

The FAA said it was notified by a city consultant late Thursday that the required forms will be filed for all of the project alternatives.

## Delay possible

The city council voted in January 2009 to divert the path of the train from Salt Lake to the airport. That change adds about \$220 million to the cost of the 20-mile East Kapolei-to-Ala Moana project, but was expected to generate higher ridership and greater community acceptance.

Under current plans, the elevated train track and a station planned for the intersection near Aolele Street and Lagoon Drive would be at least four stories tall and less than 1,000 feet from airport runways. That encroaches on a runway airspace buffer imposed to keep buildings and other obstructions from affecting airplane operations.

How long it will take to address the airport concerns and when construction on the project can begin remains unclear.

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Options the city could pursue to mitigate the train's airport impacts include moving the rail route closer to or on top of the Nimitz viaduct. The city also may be able to stick with the currently planned route, if the state is willing to make changes at the airport, such as extending the length of the opposite ends of affected runways.

If the city has to change the train's route, it could take another three to six months to complete the train's environmental impact study, City Council Chairman Todd Apo said earlier this week. An environmental impact study of airport changes, including moving one runway, would take longer, but would not necessarily delay the release of the train's final environmental impact study, Apo said.

Whether to allow the city to build in the runway protection zone is up to the state, according to the FAA.

However, airports that allow unmitigated construction in a protection zone could jeopardize the availability of future federal funds for airport improvements.

During the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, the Honolulu airport received more than \$21 million in FAA airport improvement grants.

City Council member Ikaika Anderson yesterday said he was told by city administration officials that the council will be provided with an update on the airport issue.

"They're comfortable that the project will move forward, and upon more information being available, the mayor's office plans to brief the appropriate City Council committee," Anderson said. "We're going to keep on top of this. We will get back in touch with them again next week and try to see if we can nail them down as to when they're going to brief the committee."

Reach Sean Hao at [shao@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:shao@honoluluadvertiser.com)

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## LOCAL NEWS

Posted on: Saturday, March 20, 2010

# Serving up plenty of finger pointing

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By David Shapiro

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The ongoing game of "Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire" between the governor and the state auditor highlights our "FLASHback" on the week's news that amused and confused. But first:



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- Honolulu Councilman Rod Tam was recorded as casting an "aye" vote on a council resolution that censured him for abusing his meal allowance. I don't think they heard correctly. What he really said when he raised his hand was, "Check, please."

- The proposed \$5.3 billion O'ahu rail system hit a possible snag because the route runs too close to Honolulu Airport runways. The city will try anything to get this train to take off.

- It turns out that the rail project may not produce as many local jobs as advertised. At this point, Mayor Mufi Hannemann is just hoping it'll produce one job: governor.

- Gov. Linda Lingle is working hard to beef up her Republican credentials as she nears the end of her term with an eye toward national politics. From now on, she wants to be called Linda W. Lingle.

- State agriculture inspectors tracked down and captured a lone coqui frog that was disrupting the tranquility of a Mānoa neighborhood. These are the guys President Obama should be sending after Osama bin Laden.

- Legislators are encouraging Obama to build his presidential library in the state of his birth. They figure it would give kids someplace to

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Posted on: Sunday, March 21, 2010

## Tax revenue for rail falling short this year

*Financing not meeting even lowered forecast*

By **Sean Hao**

Tax collections needed to pay for Honolulu's planned \$5.3 billion train are slipping below the level forecast for the current fiscal year.

The city expects to raise a net \$164 million, or about \$13.7 million a month, in the 12 months ending June 30. However, through the first eight months of the fiscal year monthly collections from the half-percentage-point tax averaged \$13.1 million, according to calculations based on state Department of Taxation figures.

During the next four months the city needs to collect an average of nearly \$14.9 million a month to meet its tax revenue target.

Construction of the 20-mile East-Kapolei-to-Ala-Moana train was supposed to begin last December but has been delayed by a prolonged federal review of environmental impacts.

Through the first eight months of this fiscal year, transit-tax collections are down 1.6 percent to

\$104.6 million, compared with the same period a year earlier. In February the transit tax generated \$13 million, which was down 2.3 percent from February 2009.

The city had initially expected to raise \$198 million this fiscal year, but that forecast was reduced last year when the slowing economy took a toll on tax collections.

State tax collections overall have fallen amid declining visitor arrivals and rising unemployment.

The accuracy of the city's tax revenue projections and the viability of the transit project's financial plan will be the subject of an upcoming review by Gov. Linda Lingle.

Separately, the Federal Transit Administration has recommended that the city obtain an independent forecast of transit tax revenues from a source familiar with the Hawai'i economy. The tax revenue estimates used in the city's most recent publicly available train financial plan were prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff, which has a city contract to conduct preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies.

Reach Sean Hao at [shao@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:shao@honoluluadvertiser.com)

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## Letters to the Editor

For Sunday, March 21, 2010

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Mar 21, 2010

### **Debate time is over: Build rail**

A lot of recent discussion has been about how rail will provide many jobs and help our economy, and I'm all for that. But let's not lose sight of why we need rail: our traffic problem.

For someone who commutes from Central Oahu, we desperately need some traffic relief. I, for one, am tired of spending three hours of my day heading to town for work and back home.

It's become more than just about traffic, but about spending less time with family as our traffic worsens each year.

So let's stop this ongoing debate about rail and get on with building it already.

Rossier Ines  
Wahiawa

# THE MAUI NEWS

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## Data: Taxes short to fund proposed train

POSTED: March 22, 2010

HONOLULU- Figures provided by state tax officials are indicating the amount of money being collected in taxes is falling short of the amount needed to pay for Honolulu's planned 20-mile train.

According to calculations based on state Department of Taxation figures, a half-percentage-point tax collected by Honolulu has pulled in an average of \$13.1 million a month during the first eight months of the fiscal year.

The city had expected to raise a net \$164 million, or about \$13.7 million a month, in the 12 months ending June 30.

The city's tax revenue projections and the transit project's financial plan are expected to be reviewed by Gov. Linda Lingle.

Construction of the \$5.3 billion East-Kapolei-to-Ala-Moana train was supposed to begin last December, but has been delayed by a federal review of potential environmental impacts.

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- 02:00AM Wall Street Journal This Morning
- 04:00AM First Light
- 06:00AM America In The Morning with Jim Bohannon
- 09:00AM Community Forum
- 10:00AM Rush Limbaugh
- 01:00PM Dr. Dean Edell
- 02:00PM Sporting News Radio with Monty
- 05:00PM Sports Byline with Ron Barr
- 07:00PM Coast to Coast

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Hilo, Hawaii News, Sports, & Information

Monday, March 22, 2010

# HAWAII NEWS

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Posted: Monday, March 22nd, 2010 4:53 AM HST

## Figures show tax money for new train falling short

By Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Figures provided by state tax officials are indicating the amount of money being collected in taxes is falling short of the amount needed to pay for Honolulu's planned 20-mile train.

According to calculations based on state Department of Taxation figures, a half-percentage-point tax collected by Honolulu has pulled in an average of \$13.1 million a month during the first eight months of the fiscal year.

The city had expected to raise a net \$164 million, or about \$13.7 million a month, in the 12 months ending June 30.

Gov. Linda Lingle is expected to review the city's tax revenue projections and the transit project's financial plan.



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Construction of the \$5.3 billion East-Kapolei-to-Ala-Moana train was supposed to begin last December.

It has been delayed by a federal review of potential environmental impacts.

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 22, 2010  
</pacific/stories/2010/03/22/daily2.html>

# PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Monday, March 22, 2010, 9:03am HAST

## Honolulu gas prices unchanged

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Honolulu's average gas prices remained unchanged from a week ago on Monday despite a spike in crude oil prices.

The city's retail gasoline prices averaged \$3.37 a gallon Monday, the same as a week ago, according to HonoluluGasPrices.com, part of GasBuddy.com, which operates more than 200 live gasoline price-tracking Web sites.

However, prices are \$1.03 per gallon higher than a year ago and 6.2 cents per gallon more than a month ago.

By comparison, the national average rose 2.8 cents per gallon in the last week to \$2.81 per gallon. The national average increased 14.6 cents per gallon during the last month and is 86.7 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

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Posted on: Tuesday, March 23, 2010

## City-FAA beef not reassuring

Might as well put the shovels back in the shed. Things aren't looking too hopeful for dirt to be turned anytime soon for O'ahu's commuter rail project.

Another bureaucratic collision with the federal government was reported last week by The Advertiser's Sean Hao, who found that the Federal Aviation Administration had alerted the city more than a year ago about the need for an airspace study.

The study must be done to ensure that the elevated rail line doesn't interfere with the safety zone around runways.

Conflicting accounts from the FAA and the city about the scope and timing of the study aren't reassuring.

The city says that it adequately addressed the issue of runway incursion months ago.

But the FAA says the city hasn't filed the required paperwork and that the agency has yet to make a determination on whether the rail line punctures the runway safety bubble. The city replies that it's too early to file the reports since construction of the rail line won't start near the airport for years.

And so it goes in the politicized, polarized planning for the rail.

City officials say they've got it all handled; detractors, lately including Gov. Linda Lingle, relish every chance to pick at the plan.

Tough for the average taxpayer to know who to believe.

A leisurely timetable won't help Mayor Mufi Hannemann, who is counting on a successful start to the rail project to fit seamlessly with his gubernatorial campaign schedule. You can count on him aggressively pushing for that first shovel of dirt to be turned.

And maybe he's right.

But it's tough to separate the mayor pushing for rail from the mayor pushing to be governor.

It's also tough to separate the governor looking out for the public's best interest from the governor trying to trip up a political antagonist.

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Updated at 7:18 p.m., Tuesday, March 23, 2010

## Lingle prepares to launch study of Honolulu rail project

Advertiser Staff

The state of Department of Transportation today started the search for a consultant to conduct an analysis of the cost and revenues estimates for Honolulu's planned elevated commuter rail.

The scope of work includes an analysis and evaluation of the capital costs to build the project as well as the operating and maintenance cost projections prepared by the city.

The work also will include an analysis of the accuracy of the projected tax revenue sources needed to fund what will be the state's most expensive public works project ever.

"We have an obligation to the residents of this state to perform an objective assessment of this project since Hawai'i taxpayers, not the federal government, will bear the costs," said Gov. Linda Lingle in a news release. "Claiming that this project will create jobs does not relieve us of our duty to make sure we can afford it over the long term."

Mayor Mufi Hannemann questioned why Lingle is

going through with her analysis when the Federal Transit Administration is examining the project's finances.

"If she's going to go through this silly exercise, all I say to her is, 'Do it quickly, and make sure you explain to the legislators and the public how much it's going to cost and where that money is going to come from,'" the mayor said tonight at a rally for his potential campaign for governor.

Lingle has said her decision to have the city's forecasts analyzed was prompted in part by lower-than-anticipated tax revenues, which are needed to pay the city's portion of the project's costs.

The city had planned to break ground on the \$5.3 billion 20-mile East Kapolei to Ala Moana rail in December. However, construction had been indefinitely delayed by a federal review of environmental impacts as well as the train's impact on runway safety zones at the Honolulu International Airport.

Firms seeking the contract must submit their qualifications by an April 6 deadline. Interested firms will need to submit documentation on their expertise, prior work products, and their ability to complete the work within three months of the issuance of the final financial plan for the project.

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Posted on: Wednesday, March 24, 2010

## Don't blame rail delays on Lingle

*Mayor, city must take responsibility for missing target*

By David Shapiro

For months, Mayor Mufi Hannemann has made like Gov. Linda Lingle was the one holding up the final environmental impact statement and the start of construction on the \$5.3 billion O'ahu rail project.

He engaged a war of insults over her intent to conduct an independent review of rail finances before signing off on the EIS.

He got legislators in both houses to sign letters pressuring the governor to give rapid approval to the plan.

He trotted out former state transportation directors and held a rally in the Capitol auditorium to highlight the jobs and dollars Lingle is supposedly costing Hawaii's faltering economy.

But behind the orchestrated effort to cast blame Lingle's way, the fact is that she had absolutely nothing to do with the mayor's failure to meet his December target for starting construction on

the 20-mile commuter train from Kapolei to Ala Moana.

The final EIS is being held up at the federal level and hasn't yet reached Lingle's desk for review. And it's starting to look like even money on whether she'll ever see it before she leaves office at the end of the year.

The city has repeatedly described the federal issues with the EIS as minor, but one of the more significant matters is the train's route potentially running too close to a runway at Honolulu International Airport.

This is certainly not a dealbreaker for rail, but it appears that either the train or the runway may have to move and that issue could take months to resolve.

The city administration would be well advised to focus its attention on settling this rather than putting up political smokescreens to shift the blame for the mayor's inability to get his signature initiative started on time as he revs up his campaign for governor.

No matter how they spin it, the delay in getting the EIS approved by the feds and starting construction is on Hannemann and the city at this point and not Lingle and the state.

The city's soft-pedaling of the routing problem actually gives impetus to the governor's desire for an independent financial review to see if there's fudging on how the train will be financed.

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With revenues from the city's half-cent rail excise tax coming up short month after month, there's a real question about whether it will raise enough to pay the city's share of \$4 billion or more, depending on cost overruns.

If we're going to have to increase this tax or come up with other ways to finance rail, we should know up front rather than after 10 miles of track have been laid.

While not endorsing Lingle's study, the Federal Transit Administration has also recommended an independent forecast of future transit tax revenues.

Lingle yesterday started the search for a consultant to perform the financial review and set an application deadline of April 6, so she's moving briskly to get the work done before she leaves office.

The city's financial plan for transit was laid out in the preliminary EIS she received and its soundness can be studied at the same time the runway issue and other unresolved federal concerns are hashed out.

*David Shapiro, a veteran Hawai'i journalist, can be reached by e-mail at [dave@volcanicash.net](mailto:dave@volcanicash.net). His columns are archived at [www.volcanicash.net](http://www.volcanicash.net). Read his daily blog, Volcanic Ash, at [volcanicash.honadvblogs.com](http://volcanicash.honadvblogs.com).*

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Posted on: Wednesday, March 24, 2010

## Honolulu ponders fly-over ramp, other fixes for H1's Lunalilo jam

*Officials weighing 7 possibilities; work still years away*

By **Will Hoover**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Left-hand fly-over ramps, dedicated right turns, and even an underground tunnel are among the options being considered to curb congestion along one of the state's most traffic-clogged corridors — the freeway area around the Lunalilo on-ramp in the heart of urban Honolulu.

Major construction proposals to untangle the H-1 Freeway snarl could cost from \$85 million to \$172 million, and take up to a decade to begin, according to the director of the state Department of Transportation.

Area legislators say residential side-street traffic has escalated since 2005 when the DOT began coning off the Lunalilo on-ramp as a way to address the freeway congestion problem.

Tomorrow, legislators in the area will host a community briefing in which DOT director Brennon Morioka will map out seven options covered in a feasibility study focusing on the traffic mess.

"We've got too many cars at this one location coming onto the freeway trying to go west, and we've got too many cars at the same time at the same location trying to get off going in the west direction," Morioka said.

"So you get all this weaving and people merging left and right, and that's the reason why people slow down. And that's how you create that bottleneck. ... Because people slow down when they're merging."

### Angry Complaints

The DOT began coning off the Lunalilo on-ramp five years ago as a way to keep morning traffic flowing on the freeway.

But Sen. Carol Fukunaga, D-11th (Makiki, Pāwa'a), said she and other area legislators have been besieged with complaints from residents in the surrounding area as well as motorists who use the on-ramp.

"The Punahou-area users complained that there was a lot more traffic on surface streets in the morning," Fukunaga said. "And people who could no longer access the Lunalilo on-ramp started going up to Prospect and then curve around School Street to get onto the freeway."

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A traffic study done before the Hawai'i Convention Center was built in Waikī kī advised the state and city to work together to fix the cross-over problem at the Lunalilo on-ramp. In 2006, citing that study, Fukunaga and other area legislators asked the DOT to consider a capital improvements project that would permanently solve the problem.

That led to the feasibility study, which was finished recently after 2 1/4 years. Fukunaga said now it's time to seriously think about a permanent solution, "because if you're just going to do this temporary solution and block people from getting on, you are in fact adding to the congestion on the surface streets in the surrounding area."

Fukunaga favors the \$110 million left-hand fly-over ramp to Vineyard Boulevard because she believes it is the simplest, most practical of the four major construction options.

The most expensive alternative is a left-hand tunnel exit to Vineyard that would improve interstate and surface travel, ease congestion at the on-ramp, and shave 1.7 minutes of travel time for motorists traveling from University Avenue to Pali, according to the study.

One option that Morioka doesn't favor is to change nothing and simply continue coning off the Lunalilo on-ramp daily. That's not only ineffective, but costly in the long run, he said.

"We're trying to look for something that would help 24 hours a day as well as reduce our operation costs, because it costs us money to do the coning every morning. We have to pay crews to put out those cones and then to remove them."

He said the community meeting is meant to be informational — a way to let residents know what the study's findings are.

"There's no decisions on what option we're going to choose," he said.

## More Studies

Morioka said the state would need to do an environmental impact study on each of the options before any work could begin. He said funding for the project would come from either state or federal highway funds. Actually implementing whatever option might be chosen could take up to a decade.

Fukunaga disagrees with that conclusion.

"It's not as drawn out as Brennon makes it out to be," Fukunaga said. "His administration is going to be long gone by the time it's finished. But I think ... the residents in the area would appreciate a permanent solution to this problem."

She said the project would also qualify for federal funding that would pay for 90 percent of the costs.

Reach Will Hoover at [whoover@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:whoover@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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## \$110 MILLION PLAN FOR TROU

A feasibility study covers seven options to help price from \$85 million to \$172 million. Sen. Carol Bouleva alternative because she believes it



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Posted on: Wednesday, March 24, 2010

## Honolulu rail financing will get extra scrutiny by governor

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Gov. Linda Lingle set in motion yesterday the process to review the city's financial plan for constructing a \$5.3 billion elevated commuter rail line, which could further delay the start of the project.

The state began the search for a consultant to conduct the analysis of the cost and revenue estimates for Honolulu's new rail system. That analysis could take up to three months and won't begin until the city releases an updated financial plan for the project.

The state's timetable, and the city's inability to meet its own deadlines for the release of the project's final environmental impact statement, means it's unlikely construction on the transit project will begin until this summer or possibly fall.

The city had planned to break ground on the 20-mile East Kapolei-to-Ala Moana line in December, however, that has been delayed

indefinitely by a federal review of environmental impacts as well as concerns about the train's impact on runway safety zones at Honolulu International Airport.

The city earlier warned that a one-year delay would add \$100 million to the cost of the project.

"We have an obligation to the residents of this state to perform an objective assessment of this project since Hawai'i taxpayers, not the federal government, will bear the costs," Lingle said in a news release. The city expects the federal government to contribute about \$1.55 billion to the project.

"Claiming that this project will create jobs does not relieve us of our duty to make sure we can afford it over the long term," Lingle said.

Last night, Mayor Mufi Hannemann questioned why Lingle is going through with her analysis when the Federal Transit Administration is examining the project's finances.

"If she's going to go through this silly exercise, all I say to her is, 'Do it quickly, and make sure you explain to the legislators and the public how much it's going to cost and where that money is going to come from,'" he said at a rally for his potential campaign for governor.

The city needs the governor's approval of the project's final environmental impact study to go forward with the train.

Lingle has said her decision to have the city's

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financial plan analyzed was prompted in part by a drop in the tax revenue needed to pay the city's portion of project costs. She previously stated that her analysis would begin after the project's final environmental impact study is released. However, transportation Director Brennon Morioka yesterday said the analysis will be conducted once the project's final financial plan is submitted to the FTA.

That updated financial plan won't be part of the environmental impact study, but will be submitted in the city's application to enter the final design phase of the project. The city had expected to seek to enter final design in April, under a project timeline released last summer.

"When the governor is going to look at the final (EIS) she wants to view it in the context of how the final alternative jibes with the city's ability to pay for construction of the rail facility as well as the city's ability to maintain and operate the rail transit program looking forward into the future," Morioka said.

The state will attempt to choose a firm to analyze the rail project's financials as quickly as possible, he said. "We know that the city has some sense of urgency in getting this done and so we too want to be collaborative in the process."

Firms seeking the state contract to conduct the study must submit their qualifications by an April 6 deadline, according to the request for qualifications issued yesterday.

The work will include an analysis of the city's projected costs of building the project and operating and maintaining the rail. The firm hired also will analyze city estimates of transit tax revenue needed to fund the rail.

*Advertiser Staff writer Derrick DePledge contributed to this report. Reach Sean Hao at [shao@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:shao@honoluluadvertiser.com) or 525-8093.*

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Posted on: Wednesday, March 24, 2010

## Airport transit station

### City, FAA in contact about runway zone

The March 20 article "Rail problem flagged in '09" paints an inaccurate picture of the city's communications with federal airport officials and the state Department of Transportation about the airport's runway protection zone for the rail route and Lagoon Drive station.

We have been in regular communication for several years with the Federal Aviation Administration and HDOT about Honolulu International Airport, the rail route and station.

In fact, the city did an airspace analysis of the rail route and Lagoon Drive station and provided it to HDOT in May 2008 and the FAA in mid-2009. Our analysis was based on the Airport Layout Plan, an official document that describes the airport's existing and future physical characteristics. The Airport Layout Plan showed a substantially smaller runway protection zone than that is now required.

Neither the FAA nor HDOT at the time commented about conflicts with the runway protection zone in our airspace study. The issue was actually brought up by a Federal Transit Administration consultant. When we were made aware of this in mid-2009, we moved promptly

to work with the agencies to address it. HDOT Director Brennon Morioka agreed with the city's proposed solution in a letter dated Nov. 3, 2009.

In addition, it is far too early to file the Form 7460 with the FAA because the rail system's final design details are still being developed. Design details will not be completed near the airport for several years.

The FAA requires the form to be submitted at least 30 days prior to construction. Needless to say, we intend to follow all FAA instructions and submit the form in advance of rail construction.

Additionally, this form is not required before completing the environmental impact statement for the rail system.

Finally, we are troubled by Gov. Lingle's comments in the article. She states that the FAA will not sign off on our mitigation plan for the airport. To be clear, the governor was not at any meeting between the city, HDOT and the FAA when this matter was discussed.

Furthermore, Mayor Hannemann and FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff are in constant communication. The mayor and administrator, with support from their technical and professional teams, are working on a timely resolution to this issue that all parties can agree on soon.

*Wayne Y. Yoshioka  
Director, Department of Transportation Services,  
City and County of Honolulu*

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## **November 2009 Letter to Federal Transit Administration Outlines Concerns About Rail Route's Possible Interference with Honolulu Airport Runway**

*Governor Says She Still Has Not Received Environmental Impact Statement from the Mayor, Despite Him Pressuring Her to Sign It Since Last August, Governor Slams Business Community and Media Advocating for the Project Saying They Have Not Done 'Due Dilligence'*

By Hawaii Reporter Staff, 3/24/2010 9:55:57 AM

This is a November 2009 letter from Department of Transportation Director Brennon Morioka to the Federal Transit Administration outlining concerns about the Honolulu rail route's potential interference with the airport runway at the Honolulu International Airport.

See the letter here: [Letter to FTA from Brennon Morioka](#)

The City and County of Honolulu is proposing to built a \$5 billion rail line from Kapolei through downtown Honolulu, but may have to reroute the rail or pay to move the runway.

The city's indecision on what to do about the rail is slowing down its ability to produce a full Environmental Impact Statement, according to Gov. Linda Lingle.

Some Hawaii lawmakers and Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann have been pressuring Lingle to sign off on the EIS as she is required to do before it can go forward, but this morning on the Rick Hamada Show on KHVH News Radio she expressed doubts about the expense and technology of the project.

She also stated that she does not yet have a copy of the rail EIS to approve or disapprove, so for the mayor to say she does, is simply false.

She also said that some of the very lawmakers pressuring her to sign off on a document she has never seen and isn't even complete, are the same ones who lashed out at her administration for giving the Hawaii Superferry an EIS exemption for a much smaller project.

The governor also slammed the Hawaii Business Roundtable and the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii along with many in the media for pushing for the project, when they haven't done their due diligence. She says the city has not considered all technology, such as a ground level rail over a more expensive and intrusive elevated rail, and the city isn't being forthcoming with all the problems the project is running into, such as being too close to the airport runway.

Reach Hawaii Reporter at <mailto:Malia@hawaiireporter.com>

[Transportation & Rail...](#)

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 24, 2010  
</pacific/stories/2010/03/22/daily19.html>

## PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Wednesday, March 24, 2010, 10:07am HAST

# City will acquire 34 acres in Kapolei

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

The City and County of Honolulu is acquiring 34 acres of land in Kapolei from Kapolei Property Development, an arm of the **James Campbell Co.**

In exchange, the city will reconstruct Kapolei Parkway and resurface Kamokila Boulevard, at an estimated cost of \$35.8 million.

The city and Kapolei Property Development were scheduled to sign an agreement to transfer the lands Wednesday afternoon.

Approximately 21 acres were previously dedicated to the city under prior zoning and are restricted to government use. Kapolei Property Development will remove the encumbrance it placed on the lands, allowing the city to sell, lease or build on the property, which potentially could generate \$38.1 million.

Proceeds will go to the general treasury to provide more police and fire services and help maintain public parks, according to the city.

Kapolei Property Development also will give the city an additional 13 acres of unrestricted land in the area. Proceeds from the sale, lease or building on that land will go into the transit fund and potentially could generate another \$21.9 million, the city said.

The parcels are on both sides of Kapolei Parkway, with most of the land next to D.R. Horton Schuler Division's Mehana subdivision and the Kapolei Court Complex that opened this year. On the opposite side of the street, one of the parcels adjoins the Foodland-anchored Kapolei Village Center, which broke ground this year.

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## State audit to delay rail project by 3 months

Mayor Hannemann calls an additional review of the costs "a silly exercise"

By [Star-Bulletin staff](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Mar 24, 2010

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann's plans to break ground on the city's \$5.5 billion rail transit line will be delayed by at least three more months after the state moved ahead with plans to conduct an independent financial analysis of the project.

The state has formally posted a notice to find a consultant to analyze the city's estimated costs to build, operate and maintain the rail system to connect Kapolei to Ala Moana.

"We have an obligation to the residents of this state to perform an objective assessment of this project since Hawaii taxpayers, not the federal government, will bear the costs," Gov. Linda Lingle said in a news release. "Claiming that this project will create jobs does not relieve us of our duty to make sure we can afford it over the long term."

The governor must approve a final environmental impact statement for the transit project. The EIS is now undergoing review by the Federal Transit Administration.

At a fundraiser and rally yesterday for Hannemann's expected campaign to run for governor, the mayor questioned the need for the review, calling it a "silly exercise."

 [Hannemann hints at gubernatorial run](#)



Thousands of Hannemann supporters gathered at the Neal Blaisdell Exhibition Hall to hear the Honolulu mayor talk about the race for governor.

[ [Watch](#) ]



"I would only say to her, make sure you do it quickly and make sure you explain to the Legislature and the public how much it is going to cost and where the money is going to come from," Hannemann said.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Transportation said the cost of the study, expected to take three months, is not available yet because the state will negotiate with the selected consultant on the fee. The money will come from state highway funds.

"The financial plan will be reviewed in conjunction with the final EIS, both as quickly as possible but in a responsible manner," said transportation spokeswoman Tammy Mori.

In his State of the City speech last month, Hannemann touted the economic benefits of rail, saying it will help the city out of its financial problems by creating an average of 10,000 jobs a year while pumping \$300 million into the economy.

**Find this article at:**

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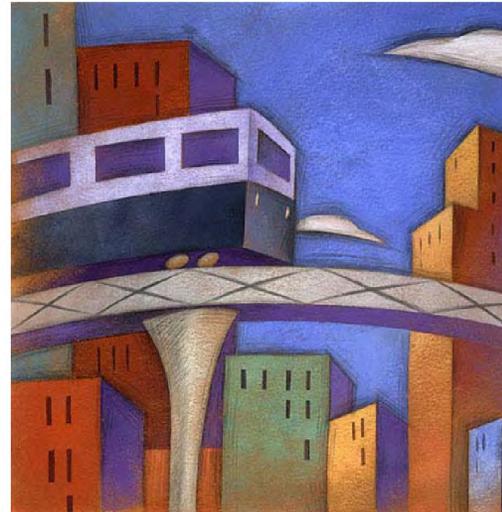
## DIARY

# No end in sight for federal rail approval

*City officials cite airport violation with or without rail*

ADRIENNE LAFRANCE

MAR 24, 2010 | [SHARE](#)



With each delay along the way, the City's mantra about its multibillion-dollar rail proposal remains unwavering.

"We're still on target," said Mayor Mufi Hannemann on Saturday, following last week's multi-agency meeting that could lead to an alteration in the

20-mile rail system's route. "These delays happen. I'm told that in every city throughout America, it happens this way."

While Hannemann described this part of the process as the "home stretch" before the Federal Transit Administration's authorization of the project's Federal Environmental Impact Statement, FTA officials suggest the document's release is not imminent.

"It was never the plan that this technical meeting would result in the immediate release of the FEIS," wrote FTA spokesman Paul Griffo in an e-mail. "FTA will continue to work with Honolulu city and county officials to help achieve our mutual goal to complete the environmental work necessary to move the High-Capacity Corridor project forward."

FAA officials are also rejecting the City's claim, printed in a news release from the mayor's office March 13, that "newly adopted federal aviation regulations have made the review more complex."

"Anything that says the delay is due to new FAA regulations [is] just flat-out wrong," said FAA spokesman Ian Gregor.

The closed meeting last week brought together officials from the City, the State Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration and the Federal Transit Administration.

"The meeting helped to identify the technical issues that need to be worked on," said Honolulu Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka.

"There are little issues that are overwhelming to overcome, so we'll let the technical staff work on it and we'll give them the space to do that."

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Among these issues is the rail line's possible encroachment on Runway Protection Zones at Honolulu International Airport—a possible public safety issue that Yoshioka says extends beyond the rail project.

“We found that, even if we weren't there, they would still be in violation of the RPZ,” said Yoshioka. “We were the ones who alerted the airport that they were already in violation.”

Yoshioka says the airport's alleged violation comes as a result of the same regulations changes the City cited in its news release.

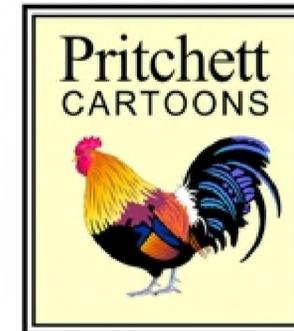
“In 2007, the FAA increased the length of the Runway Protection Zone,” said Yoshioka. “Our consultant found that the airport is in violation of that required RPZ.”

Officials from the FAA and the State Department of Transportation did not return the *Weekly's* repeated requests for comment on Runway Protection Zones.

With regard to the rail project, Hannemann said the City has been in talks with Federal Aviation Administration officials about possible problems with the route's positioning near the airport for years, but had to wait until the Federal Transit Administration gave City transit planners the go-ahead to meet on how best to address technicalities.

“This is not an FAA document,” said Hannemann of the Federal Environmental Impact Statement. “This is an FTA document. If FTA raised these kinds of concerns, we'd be in deep trouble, deep trouble. But we're not.”

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And while they won't elaborate on what they're exploring—Honolulu Managing Director Kirk Caldwell says to do so would amount only to “speculating” at this point—City officials say there are now several options on the table.

“We'll do whatever it takes to ameliorate the concerns,” said Hannemann. “As long as—if there's going to be additional expense—it can be justified.”

The City won't publicly set a target-date for the project's groundbreaking, once slated for late last year, but Hannemann said it's a priority to prevent further delays.

“These processes are long and drawn-out by nature,” said Caldwell. “We're not going to rush the process any more than we already are.”

Without disclosing when the long-awaited FEIS might be made public, officials will say it will be at least years before construction can begin.

“This thing would be under construction near 2014,” said Yoshioka. “We're not even close to that now.”

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Posted on: Thursday, March 25, 2010

## City closes land deal with Kapolei

*Parkway will be finished in exchange for 6 properties*

By **Gordon Y.K. Pang**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Mayor Mufi Hannemann yesterday signed a deal that gives the city ownership of 34 acres of prime land in downtown Kapolei in exchange for completing a one-mile stretch of Kapolei Parkway.

The deal represents a major shift in the development of the "Second City" because the city overnight becomes a major player in the area. The six properties are in the vicinity of Kapolei Hale and the new Kapolei Judiciary complex, and include a musubi-shaped parcel that's designated as a site for a major transit center for buses and the proposed \$5.3 billion rail transit project.

"I believe future city councils, future mayors, will be very pleased with this transaction," Hannemann said.

Kapolei Property Development, the landowner and major developer for the region, has run into financial hardships during the poor economy and

told the city its construction of the parkway would be delayed.

Handing over the responsibility for construction of the road means it can be finished by 2014. The city also agreed to repave Kamokila Boulevard, another key Kapolei thoroughfare.

City officials believe the city will come away with a net benefit of about \$24.6 million as a result of the deal.

Hannemann said transit-oriented development is high on the list of possible uses for the area. He said it's too early to tell if it will make more sense for the city to sell the land outright or develop the area itself and lease out property.

"But the city now has all these options at its disposal," the mayor said.

The city won't sell or develop the properties right away, and can afford to wait for the economy and the real estate market to improve. "There's not going to be any fire sale," Hannemann said.

Of the 34 acres, 21 had already been designated for transfer to the city but were originally required to be used only for government purposes. That restriction has been lifted. The remaining 13 acres come to the city without restrictions except that any proceeds derived from those lands must go to the city's transit fund.

The City Council on March 17 passed Resolution 10-49 authorizing Hannemann to sign the

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memorandum of agreement with Kapolei Property Development.

Kapolei Property Development President Brad Myers called the deal a "win-win" for the city, the company and the community.

Reach Gordon Y.K. Pang at [gpang@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:gpang@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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Posted on: Thursday, March 25, 2010

## Honolulu rail project will have to pick up tab for airport route fix

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

The city, not the state, will have to pay to resolve the issue of a planned commuter rail line running too close to the Honolulu International Airport, according to a Nov. 3 letter from the state Department of Transportation.

City, state and federal officials met last week to discuss the problem of Honolulu's new elevated rail line encroaching on runway airspace. The problem could be fixed by moving the two closest runways or moving the proposed rail line.

The issue remained unresolved following last week's meeting, said state transportation Director Brennon Morioka.

The city wants to move the runways, according to the letter from Morioka to the Federal Transit Administration. Whether the decision is made to move the runways or some other alternative is selected, the city will be responsible for covering the costs, Morioka said in the letter, which was released by the city this week.

"The city will fund the runway relocations or alternative proposed by the city," the letter stated.

City Councilman Romy Cachola said yesterday that the council has not been briefed by city officials on how much it will cost to move the runways or come up with an alternative solution.

"The issue about the airport and all that, we were not updated on that," Cachola said. "It's only now that we're learning about this. They've known about these things all along and it's only now that we're hearing about it."

City Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka was unavailable for comment yesterday. In a letter to The Advertiser earlier this week, Yoshioka said the city has been talking with federal and state officials for several years about the rail route and airport. Yoshioka said city and federal officials "are working on a timely resolution to this issue that all parties can agree on soon."

The city hopes to move runway 22R/4L about 750 feet makai and the adjacent 22L/4R runway 300 feet makai, according to the Nov. 3 letter from Morioka.

Under current plans, the elevated train track and a station planned for the intersection near Aolele Street and Lagoon Drive would be at least four stories tall and less than 1,000 feet from airport runways. That encroaches on a runway airspace buffer designed to keep buildings and other obstructions from affecting airplane

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operations.

## moving quickly

Construction of the \$5.3 billion rail system was to have begun in December but the project cannot proceed until the airport issue is resolved and Gov. Linda Lingle has signed off on an environmental impact study.

Morioka said state, city and federal officials are moving quickly to resolve the airport issue.

"We had a very productive meeting last week (and) we made a lot of progress in talking through some of the issues, but there are a couple of issues that still need further evaluation by the technical folks by both the (Federal Aviation Administration) and the city's consultants," Morioka said. "Everybody is in agreement that yes we should work quickly in trying to resolve this, but we also want to make sure we're not rushing things because we need to make sure we're doing things right."

The City Council voted in January 2009 to divert the path of the train from Salt Lake to the airport. That change adds about \$220 million to the cost of the 20-mile East Kapolei-to-Ala Moana project, but is expected to generate higher ridership and greater community acceptance.

That \$220 million in added costs does not include the price of making changes at the airport to accommodate rail, Cachola said. A city agreement to pay for airport changes should have been disclosed by city officials much sooner, said Cachola, who had pushed for the Salt Lake alternative.

City officials have said the complications are a result of newly adopted federal aviation regulations — a charge the FAA has denied.

Based on the Nov. 3 letter and information provided by the state Department of Transportation, it appears the city based its

initial analysis of the impacts of rail on an outdated airport layout plan.

## outdated plan used

In a his letter to The Advertiser, Yoshioka said the city conducted an airspace analysis of the route that was given to the state Department of Transportation in May 2008 and the FAA in mid-2009.

"Neither the FAA nor HDOT at the time commented about conflicts with the runway protection zone in our airspace study," Yoshioka wrote. "The issue was actually brought up by a Federal Transit Administration consultant. When we were made aware of this in mid-2009, we moved promptly to work with the agencies to address it."

The airport layout plan used by the city for its analysis was drafted in the mid-1990s and had not been updated to reflect subsequent changes in runway protection zones, Morioka said.

"The city was using the older version that is currently in existence," Morioka said. "It did reflect an RPZ — runway protection zone — of a thousand feet, but my understanding is ... the FAA had made the change to the RPZ requirements for the larger aircraft to 1,700 feet

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back in 1994 or 1997."

In the Nov. 3 letter to the FTA, Morioka said that the city's plan to move the runways was reasonable, but would require an environmental review.

That position has not changed, he said.

"We would support the concept if that is the route that is in the best interest of the rail facility and the airport," he said this week. "But, depending on how you do things, there are going to be certain impacts and these impacts need to be mitigated and so those are some of the issues that are currently being evaluated and discussed by all the parties — the city, DOT, FAA and FTA.

"At some point in the very near future we are going to have to get together to talk about the findings and then figure out where we go from there."

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## Letters to the Editor

### **Clear path must be available for takeoff**

There has been some media discussion about the Lagoon Drive rail station and interference with one of the runways at the Honolulu International Airport.

No problem, within reason, for pilots when all engines are up and running. But, and it's a very big but, when an engine on a multi-engine airplane fails at V1 (engine failure recognition speed) the pilot can and may continue, and take off with the absolute guarantee he can take off and climb out clearing all obstacles.

Safe takeoffs are predicated on having a clear unobstructed takeoff flight path; that's what clearways are all about. If you build anything that projects into that clearway you invite disaster. Why would anyone want to do that? Just don't do it, period.

*Jim Bugbee  
Honolulu*

## Letters to the Editor

### **Mayor should stay, solve rail problems**

As a supporter of the city's mass transit project, I am dismayed and disturbed by the mayor's recent actions. While he must be commended for his leadership in getting the project off the ground and securing local funding, it is perplexing how he could now undermine it for personal political gain.

The recent disclosure that the city — and, I assume, the mayor — was notified of the FAA's concerns to the close proximity of the rail line to the airport runway as early as January 2009 raises doubts about the mayor's headlong attempt to start construction before the end of 2009, and his promises to start construction in 2010, knowing that the route could not be approved. Did he believe that the matter would go unnoticed before the election?

His actions remind us of the recklessness of the Lingle administration in pushing the Superferry project, again for political gain, without complying with necessary EIS requirements.

The mayor should stay where he is, serve out his full term, and repair the damage he has done to the most important public works project this state has ever undertaken. He must put the interests of the public above his own ambitions.

*Francis Nakamoto*  
*Honolulu*

## Letters to the Editor

### **Options to solve runway zone issue**

The Advertiser's report, "Honolulu's rail route too close to runways, may have to shift," (March 17), neglected to describe less drastic solutions, including explaining the ease with which the runway could be extended on the makai side.

In general, the runway protection zone extends 1,900 feet from the end of a runway. The rail line would be about 1,400 feet from runway 22R. At the Honolulu airport, many existing buildings are within the RPZ, which exists to protect aircraft running off the end of runways.

Fortunately, there are no buildings or water courses within 1,000 feet of the makai end of runway 22R-4L, and all the land is airport property. This is probably the easiest solution.

One alternative is to lower the track into a cut lined with retaining walls and pass the trains under Lagoon Drive, which is about 7 feet above sea level at that point. This cut can be kept dry with proper drainage and a pump.

Finally, the article did not report that the RPZ rules are relatively new, and unlike other FAA rules on airport areas, they are applied differently at different airports. If they were applied strictly at Honolulu airport, a dozen or more businesses opposite runways 22R and 22L would have to close.

*Hannah Miyamoto  
Honolulu*

## Letters to the Editor

### **rail**

#### **Transit tax causing unknown job losses**

"That (\$460 million rail) tax is costing the state jobs," according to UH economics professor Sumner LaCroix ("Number of rail jobs is anybody's guess," March 15).

Finally, someone had the courage to say it and publish it. It is amazing that next to nothing has been said about this .

It is revealing that so much hype is being made about how many jobs the rail will create, but no one is saying how many jobs the rail tax has already killed in this recession and how many more it will kill in the future.

While rail will create jobs, it will also kill jobs, so it makes no sense to keep hyping the job creation angle without subtracting out the related job loss. If your job is not rail-related, it is at risk.

As far as the supposed economic stimulus along the rail route, common sense dictates that that is also offset by business loss and economic stagnation for businesses that are away from the rail route.

The best traffic solution is to have the jobs where the people are. If we continue with the outdated concept of moving the people to the jobs, then the problem and expenses forever grow as the population does.

*Leighton Loo  
Mililani*

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Posted on: Thursday, March 25, 2010

## Rail could reshape Honolulu's identity

*Strong infrastructure needed for city to be 'Capital of the Pacific'*

By James H. Spencer

As an urban planner, I believe urban infrastructure is the backbone of a strong and modern democracy. Whether you live in the most rarefied enclave or the most hardscrabble housing project, you depend on your city to provide you with the most basic services like water and sanitation, electricity, and transportation. It is these shared resources, investments and interdependencies that keep us all engaged in productive discussions and negotiations. And it is because of these interdependencies that I worry about the future of Honolulu.

I encourage us all to set aside the cost-benefit analyses and technical debates surrounding the Honolulu rail project for a moment. Fiscal naysayers and technical critics certainly have valid points, but mega-projects such as our proposed rail are always about much more than the dollars and cents.

The Sydney Opera House, New York's Empire

State Building and Kuala Lumpur's Petronas Towers are all defining characteristics of their respective cities, and all were major fiscal burdens. As visionary projects, they were never meant primarily as sound financial investments to make a profit or to cover costs. They were investments to create and develop each city's identity on a global stage by coalitions of municipal and private interests. It is this identity that is the subtext of the ongoing debate on Honolulu rail.

Whether he is aware of it or not, Mayor Mufi Hannemann has been leading the charge to reshape Honolulu's urban identity and turn it into a city worthy of being called the Capital of the Pacific. His strategy, including embracing Kapolei as the second city and emphasizing its walkable streets, has been impressive over the past six years, and the rail line is only the tip of a larger iceberg.

There are at least two major reasons why voters should continue to push for rail and the promotion of Honolulu as the Capital of the Pacific. First, it is the only viable way to "keep the country country." The North Shore is one of the wonders of the world; Kailua and Kāne'ohe are peaceful gems within a short drive of downtown. However, O'ahu's housing shortage is severe and will not easily disappear through our island version of suburbanization. Without taking advantage of and "densifying" the Honolulu core, the paving of O'ahu's rural hamlets is inevitable.

Secondly, Honolulu must become a global "destination" if we are to hang on to our best

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and brightest youth. Many of our successful students leave after high school because they feel they cannot get a challenging university education in Hawai'i. Young professionals — from Hawai'i or elsewhere — like the excitement and culture of big-city life like New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Honolulu can be an attractive alternative to these places if the city invests in growing the right way.

Which brings me back to the rail. The rail itself will not bring back Hawai'i's off-island young people, nor will it be the only thing to "keep the country country." What it can do is provide the physical backbone for a world-class city in Hawai'i.

I believe that this has been Hannemann's goal all along, and he has made some progress during his time in office. His impending departure from Honolulu Hale, however, threatens to place the vision of a vibrant Honolulu on the chopping block.

If Hannemann leaves office, then rail will die yet again, and with it the hopes for a new and improved urban Honolulu. City politics is an "in-the-trenches" kind of job.

As governor, Mufi Hannemann would never have the time, nor political leverage to provide the kind of leadership Honolulu needs to become its own destination rather than an appendage of Waikīkī and the tourist industry.

*James H. Spencer is an associate professor of urban planning/political science at the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa and is an adjunct fellow in the environment program at the East-West Center. He wrote this commentary for The Advertiser.*

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Updated at 3:07 p.m., Thursday, March 25, 2010

## State calls for greater transparency in city rail project

Advertiser Staff

The state Department of Transportation called today for "a higher level of transparency for the proposed rail transit project" and said it would post all correspondence from the DOT to the city regarding the proposed rail transit project online at: [hawaii.gov/dot/railtransit](http://hawaii.gov/dot/railtransit).

The state took the step following reports in The Honolulu Advertiser stating the city's proposed rail route runs too close to the state-run Honolulu International Airport and either the route must be changed or two runways must be moved. The airport issue could potentially delay start of construction on the project, which had been scheduled to commence in December.

"As early as 2006 we pointed out to the city that there are potential runway impacts near the Lagoon Drive side of the alignment," said Brennon Morioka, state DOT director, in a news release.

"As the correspondence reveals, the city has been made aware of this issue since the inception of the rail transit project and has had ample time to address it in order for EIS process

to come to a conclusion," Morioka said.

City Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka wasn't immediately available for comment.

The DOT said in its news release: "Following the most recent March 17 meeting between city, state and federal officials, each party involved mutually agreed that further engineering analysis would be necessary on specific technical issues before the route can be approved both federally and by the state. No timeline on resolution of these matters was decided upon but all parties agreed to work as expeditiously as possible."

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</pacific/stories/2010/03/22/daily31.html>

# PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Thursday, March 25, 2010, 2:31pm HAST

## Hawaii gas prices remain flat

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Gas prices throughout Hawaii were flat over the past week, as oil prices hovered around \$80 per barrel, according to AAA Hawaii.

The average statewide gas price increased by just a penny from a week ago to \$3.48 a gallon.

Gas prices for Hawaii metro areas were as follows:

- In Honolulu, regular unleaded sold for \$3.37 a gallon, the same as a week ago and \$1.02 higher than a year ago.
- In Hilo on the Big Island, regular unleaded sold for \$3.47 a gallon, unchanged from last week, but \$1 more than last year.
- In Wailuku, Maui, gas was \$3.85, up one cent from a week ago and \$1.24 more than last year.

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Posted on: Friday, March 26, 2010

## Honolulu rail planners knew of airport issues in 2006, state says

*DOT releases letters showing city has known of airport route encroachment issue since 2006*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

The city's proposed rail-transit project needs to be conducted with "a higher level of transparency," the state Department of Transportation said yesterday as it made public all its correspondence on the issue.

"There is a lot of misinformation out there about the Honolulu rail-transit project and the public deserves to know all the facts," said Brennon Morioka, state DOT director.

The state's release of five letters to the city and two other documents was partially driven by statements from city officials that the rail line's encroachment on airspace at the Honolulu International Airport was not brought to the attention of the city until mid-2009, Morioka said.

The airport encroachment issue must be resolved before the start of construction on the \$5.3 billion, 20-mile elevated rail line from East K apolei to Ala Moana. The issue with the airport could have been addressed by the city sooner, Morioka said.

"In 2006, our first letter indicated that they should be aware of runway issues in the Lagoon Drive area, so we have continually offered our assistance and willingness to meet with the city on numerous occasions," he said. "There has been more than ample time for these issues to be addressed in the timeframe that the city had hoped to go out to bid and start construction.

"To date, the (project's environmental impact statement) ... has not addressed those concerns."

Under current plans, the elevated train track and a station near the intersection of Aolele Street and Lagoon Drive would be at least four stories tall and about 1,300 feet from airport runways, Morioka said. That encroaches on a runway airspace buffer designed to keep buildings and other obstructions from affecting airplane operations.

City director of transportation services Wayne Yoshioka said yesterday, "The city appreciates the posting of seven letters regarding the Honolulu rail-transit project by the state DOT. As director Morioka correctly points out, the letters show the collaboration and cooperation that has existed for several years now between the city and the state regarding this all-important,

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voter-approved project. The city has worked to address the state's concerns."

Yoshioka said in a written statement that at a meeting last week the state, federal officials and city discussed "technical issues" that need to be resolved regarding the airport.

"Since that meeting, several discussions have taken place between the city and the (Federal Transit Administration) ... about the plan that should help resolve the runway protection zone issue expeditiously," he said.

### 'Please be aware'

City Council members have criticized city transportation officials for not disclosing the extent of the airport problem sooner, and for not allowing council representatives to attend last week's meeting.

The city recently said the airspace concerns arose last summer and were the result of changes in federal aviation rules. The FAA has said there were no rule changes affecting the project.

The documents released by the state yesterday show that the airport runway concerns were first raised in an Aug. 9, 2006, letter, when then-DOT director Rodney Haraga told the city that the agency supported plans to build a station near Aolele Street and Lagoon Drive.

"In addition, please be aware of height restrictions, especially at the area near Lagoon Drive which is the runway approach area for runway 4R and 4L," Haraga wrote in a letter to the city Department of Transportation Services.

Another letter to the city dated July 20 of last year warned that the city's draft of its final environmental impact statement for the train did not resolve the airport concerns.

"There are several operational and engineering

issues that still have not been addressed," Morioka wrote in a letter to Yoshioka.

### Cost unclear

In a letter to The Advertiser this week, Yoshioka said the city conducted an airspace analysis of the route, which was given to the state Department of Transportation in May 2008 and the Federal Aviation Administration in mid-2009.

However, Morioka said the state has not been provided with such a study. According to the state DOT, the city based its initial analysis of the impacts of rail on an outdated airport layout plan. That plan was drafted in the mid-1990s and had not been updated to reflect a 1994 change in runway protection zones.

The airport issue could be resolved by moving the train route farther from the airport or moving two runways. The city has said it prefers that the runways be moved. The city would be responsible for paying the costs of relocating the runways. Just how much that could cost has not been disclosed.

Reach Sean Hao at [shao@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:shao@honoluluadvertiser.com)

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Posted on: Friday, March 26, 2010

## Political rivals split on rail

*Djou says he wouldn't ask for federal funding; Case, Hanabusa would*

By **Derrick DePledge**  
Advertiser Government Writer

Honolulu City Councilman Charles Djou said yesterday that he would not pursue federal money for a Honolulu rail project if elected to Congress, while former congressman Ed Case and state Senate President Colleen Hanabusa said they would despite their concerns about how the city has approached the project.

Honolulu is depending on federal money to help pay the \$5.3 billion elevated commuter rail line, and the state's congressional delegation has been united behind the project.

Djou, one of the main opponents of rail on the City Council, said he would not ask for federal money but would accept the funds if granted by the Federal Transit Administration.

"If money grew on trees. If we had an unlimited supply of financial resources, of course we should do rail," the Republican said at a forum sponsored by the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of

Commerce, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Hawai'i Association of Realtors at the Japanese Cultural Center.

"But the problem is, the people of Hawai'i are not made of money."

Case, a Democrat, said he would push for federal money for rail if elected. He said lawmakers have a responsibility to plan for the future and asked what Honolulu would look like in 50 years without mass transit.

But he also said he is concerned about the city's financial projections for the project and has no problem with Gov. Linda Lingle's plan for an independent financial analysis.

"We do not want to embark on something like this if we don't have it right," Case said.

Hanabusa, also a Demo-crat, has had concerns about the city's design for rail and with the environmental review process. But she said O'ahu voters determined in 2008 that they wanted the steel wheel/steel rail design.

She said she would do her part if elected to make sure the project goes forward.

"That's the democratic process, irrespective of how any individual may disagree or agree to it," she said.

**campaign themes**

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The three leading candidates in the May 22 special election to fill out the remainder of former congressman Neil Abercrombie's term in urban Honolulu's 1st Congressional District spoke at the forum and answered questions from the audience.

The format did not allow for rebuttal. But the candidates did have a chance to spell out their campaign themes.

Case described himself as an experienced moderate who will reduce the national debt and try to change the partisan tone in Congress.

Hanabusa portrayed herself as a proven legislator who can effectively collaborate and work within the establishment.

Djou cast himself as an independent who will fight to lower taxes and reduce the size of government.

## drawing lines

Hanabusa, who has been endorsed by many elected Democrats and labor unions, sought to draw clearer distinctions with Case and Djou, who have campaigned more as outsiders.

"You will hear the word 'independent' throughout this campaign, but what is independence?" she asked. "Experience has taught me that a legislator — and that's what a congressperson is — that no single person can solve a problem by working alone."

In an apparent reference to Djou, she said: "It is not hard to vote 'no,'" and added, in an apparent reference to Case, "or to think that you know better than everyone else."

Hanabusa described the real work of a legislator as listening and crafting workable solutions.

Case said his philosophy was in the middle, between those who believe government can be

"all things to all people" and those who think government has little or no role and is the enemy.

"What it really does come down to is, 'Who has the best overall mix of experience, beliefs, principles, commitment and abilities to represent Hawai'i in Congress, but also to be part of the representation of a great country in a world that needs leadership?' " he said.

Djou said he is concerned that Congress is taking the country in the wrong direction.

"We are concerned that our government seems to continually get bigger and bigger, but our lives are not getting better," he said. "We are concerned that our government does very little efficiently or very cost-effectively, but despite that, continues to try to do more and more."

Reach Derrick DePledge at [ddepledge@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:ddepledge@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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# Letters to the Editor

For Saturday, March 27, 2010

## Rail losses will mean more school cuts later

I know schools are state and rail is county -- but taxpayers are just one. So when rail experts say rail is designed to run at a loss, and lawmakers say revenues are too few to provide a full week of school for Hawaii's children, I ask: Will rail's guaranteed losses require more school cuts later?

Other spending already trumps schools in the budget contest. The employee retirement system has a "full faith and credit" pledge that trumps everything. As push comes to shove, you know school, not rail operations, will be cut to four days. So, please, set rail aside for now. As nonvoters, children are already Hawaii's biggest losers. They won't stand a chance against rail's guaranteed losses.

George L. Berish  
Piikoi

# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Monday, March 29, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### Transit Route

#### Use of old railway line will be costly

These comments address the use of the old, existing Oahu Railway and Land Co. railroad right-of-way from Kapolei to the stadium, as proposed by Keoni Dudley ("As planned, rail will kill Waipahu," March 4).

The right-of-way from Nanakuli to about 100 yards east of Fort Weaver Road is on the National Register of Historic Places, which precludes its use for a rail system without first removing it from the register, a lengthy and potentially costly process.

The portion of the old right of way between Fort Weaver Road and Pearl City is criss-crossed with buried pipelines from Campbell Industrial Park, all the way to Pearl Harbor and on into Honolulu Harbor.

Between Pearl City and the stadium, much of the old right-of-way has been converted to a bicycle path and its 40-foot width has been reduced to between eight and 10 feet by encroachment of surrounding properties.

Once reaching the stadium/CINPACFLT boathouse, the right-of-way is obstructed by highway overpasses and other development, not to mention that the original path of the railroad was through the submarine base, not around it.

Use of the old OR&L right-of-way, which last saw a train in December 1947, may appear an easy solution to a number of problems. However, the development which has occurred over the last 63 years precludes its use.

*Robert Yatchmenoff*  
*Honolulu*

Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - March 29, 2010  
</pacific/stories/2010/03/29/daily2.html>

# PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Monday, March 29, 2010, 9:50am HAST

## Hawaii gas prices stable, at least for now

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

A 0.1-cent increase in Honolulu's average gas prices was not enough to have any effect on the average price per gallon, which stood at \$3.37 on Monday, the same price as a week ago.

However, the city's average retail gasoline price is \$1.02 per gallon higher than on the same day last year and 5.5 cents per gallon higher than a month ago, according to HonoluluGasPrices.com, part of GasBuddy.com, which operates more than 200 live gasoline price-tracking Web sites.

The national average also was flat, moving just 0.5 cents per gallon in the last week to \$2.81, the same price as a week ago. The national average increased 11.5 cents per gallon during the last month and is 77.8 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

"Oil prices have been reluctant to move higher than the low \$80/barrel range as adequate supply and lower global demand continue to weigh on investors", Patrick DeHaan, the company's senior petroleum analyst, said in a prepared statement Monday.

However, DeHaan doesn't expect gasoline prices to remain stable for long. He anticipates a boost in prices in April before prices peak around Memorial Day.

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Posted on: Wednesday, March 31, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### Rail Transit

#### **No more delays; it's time to start project**

Gov. Linda Lingle conducting a financial analysis of the Honolulu rail project is a waste of time, and more importantly, a complete waste of taxpayer money.

The FTA already hired independent experts to review the financial aspect of the project. The FTA's study, called the Jacobs- Oversight Report, gave the project high marks, stated its cost estimates accurate and reasonable, and concluded that the project is ready to move forward.

The year before that, Booz Allen & Hamilton, an audit and accounting firm, similarly provided the project favorable results.

The Hawaii Business Roundtable, made up of our state's top business leaders, conducted its own study, and concluded that the rail's financial plan was sound. Last month, Don Horner, First Hawaiian Bank board chairman and a member of the Roundtable, stated that the rail financial plan is even stronger now, with a greater federal financial contribution, conservative revenue projections and a solid contingency fund.

No more studies. No more delays. What are we waiting for? As Horner stated, the time to build rail is now.

*M. B. Espiritu*  
*Honolulu*

Updated at 4:01 p.m., Wednesday, March 31, 2010

## Watchdog groups criticize Hawaii spending in annual 'pork report'

Associated Press

HONOLULU — Two watchdog groups are criticizing what they consider "pork-barrel" spending by state and city governments in Hawaii.

The nonprofit groups, The Grassroot Institute and Citizens Against Government Waste, released their second annual "Hawaii Pork Report" on Wednesday.

The study targets several instances of state and local spending on schools, transportation, parks and other government programs.

It takes particular aim at marketing and public relations expenses for Honolulu's proposed rail transit project.

The report also cites a \$99,500 settlement with a Big Island woman who was injured in a 2006 traffic accident involving then-Mayor Harry Kim, and a \$112,200 loss the state suffered from an ill-fated Chinese technology park.

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# Honolulu Weekly

## Rail uncovered

Inside the long-awaited Final Environmental Impact Statement  
Adrienne LaFrance

March 31, 2010

Amid political name-calling, sensational headlines and evasive officials offering little beyond canned quotations, Honolulu residents have been left wondering exactly what is going on with the City's multibillion-dollar rail proposal, which officials are telling the truth and how much longer we have to wait to see the document that the City assures will seal our transit fate and solve our traffic problems.

While Honolulu transit officials turned down *Honolulu Weekly's* requests for the most recently submitted draft of the Final Environmental Impact Survey (and State transportation officials never formally responded), the Federal government finally obliged. The *Weekly* examined thousands of pages of documents obtained in a federal Freedom of Information Act request. The result: a first look at the latest draft of the FEIS in a side-by-side comparison to the previous version, which was made public in November 2008.

Among the more notable aspects of the document, which still requires approval from the Federal Transit Administration, are the historic properties newly acknowledged to be adversely affected by the rail plan, the 890 parking spaces the project would eliminate and the fact that the document—submitted by the City in October 2009—indeed addressed both the possible encroachment of the rail route onto Runway Protection Zones at Honolulu International Airport and the related permitting requirements (see “Airport Alternative” box), consistent with what City officials have said. That's just the beginning. But with a project of this scope and complexity, you have to start somewhere.

## Unresolved Issues

### 2009 Final EIS:

Several permits are still required for the construction of the project.

Transfer of ownership of a site near Leeward Community College is not yet complete.

Federal funds from the New Starts program will not be committed by FTA until the completion of the Full-funding Grant Agreement.

## **Airport Alternative**

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

The Airport Alternative will carry the most passengers, with 249,200 daily transit trips by 2030.

No mention of runway positioning as it pertains to proposed rail route.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

The Airport Alternative will provide 273,000 daily transit trips by 2030.

Runway 22R/4L at Honolulu International Airport will be relocated approximately 750 feet makai of its current position and Runway 22L/4R will be relocated approximately 300 feet makai of its current position to make the Runway Protection Zone compatible with the project and existing buildings near Lagoon Drive.

The guideway alignment has been located to avoid the new Mauka Terminal and airplane tarmac planned for the location of the existing commuter terminal parking lot.

Approximately 2 acres of land will be needed to accommodate the placement of elevated guideway support columns and two passenger stations on airport property.

The City lists the required permit for construction in Runway Protection Zones among necessary paperwork to be filed “by contractor within two years of intended construction of airport portion of the Project.”

## **Operating Parameters**

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

Transit times from Kapolei to Ala Moana Center in the a.m. peak would be between 57 and 59 minutes via rail.

Potential effects of the project could include reduced travel lane widths, parking, bike lanes and sidewalks.

Each train will be capable of carrying 325 passengers, for a peak capacity of 6,000 passengers per hour per direction.

It's envisioned bicycles would be allowed on trains.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

Transit times from Kapolei to Downtown Honolulu in the a.m. peak would be 55 minutes (no estimate on transportation time between Kapolei and Ala Moana Center provided).

The project will result in the loss of 105 on-street and approximately 785 off-street parking spaces. No bicycle facilities or sidewalks will be removed as a result of the project.

Each train will be capable of carrying up to 500 passengers, for a peak capacity of 8,650 passengers per hour per direction.

Bicycles, luggage and surfboards will be allowed on trains and regulated by policy.

## **Noise and Vibration**

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

Moderate noise impacts are anticipated at between 18 and 23 residential buildings.

A solid parapet wall and vehicle wheel skirts will provide 2- to 5 dBA (decibel adjusted) noise reduction at floors above the level of the guideway.

Additional noise mitigation measures will be explored.

The project will not create vibration effects, so no mitigation is proposed.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

Moderate impacts are anticipated at eight locations.

A solid parapet wall will reduce noise by 3dBA or more at five of the eight locations where moderate impacts are anticipated.

Sound-absorption materials will be placed within the guideway structure in the vicinity of the remaining three locations, meaning no noise impacts will occur.

The project will not create vibration effects, so no mitigation is proposed.

## **Displacements and relocation**

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

Property acquisition ranging from 179–205 parcels would be required.

The project would require 34 or 35 full acquisitions.

20 residences, one church and between 62 and 67 businesses would be relocated by the project.

There are 58 schools, six libraries and 93 religious institutions within one half-mile of the project alignment.

The project will have no adverse effects on Hawaii Employers Council; Ossipoff's Aloha Chapel; Potential Makalapa Housing Historic District; Lava Rock Curbs, six quonset huts; wood tenement buildings; OR&L office, terminal building and document storage building; Nuuanu Stream Bridge; Chinatown Historic District; Merchant Street Historic District including Honolulu Police Station; Walker Park; Mother Waldron Playground; Honouliuli Stream Bridge, Waiawa Stream 1932 Bridge (westbound lanes), Waimalu Stream Bridge, Kalauao Springs Bridge or Waikele Stream Bridge.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

Property acquisition of 191 parcels will be required.

The Project will require 33 full acquisitions.

20 residences, one church and 61 businesses will be relocated by the project.

There are 46 schools, five libraries and 82 religious institutions within one half-mile of the project alignment.

The project *will* have adverse effects—including some effects to integrity of setting and feeling—on Hawaii Employers Council; Ossipoff's Aloha Chapel; Potential Makalapa Housing Historic District; Lava Rock Curbs, six quonset huts; wood tenement buildings; OR&L office, terminal building and document storage building; Nuuanu Stream Bridge; Chinatown Historic District; Merchant Street Historic District including Honolulu Police Station; Walker Park; Mother Waldron Playground; Honouliuli Stream Bridge, Waiawa Stream 1932 Bridge (westbound lanes), Waimalu Stream Bridge, Kalauao Springs Bridge and Waikele Stream Bridge.

Some land within the study corridor has been designated ceded land. For land designated as ceded lands within the project's right-of-way, ownership of these lands will not change. The Rapid Transit Division will obtain the appropriate permissions from the State for any ceded lands needed for the Project.

## **Archaeological, cultural, and historic resources**

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

The Area of Potential Effect, identified as containing properties with construction dates before 1969, contains 84 historic resources. Up to 61 of those resources could be affected by the Project.

Mitigation measures for historic resources are being developed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Division.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

The Area of Potential Effect contains 81 historic resources. Through consultation, the Project was determined to have an adverse effect on 33 of those resources.

Adverse affect recommendations by the State Historic Preservation Division were accepted by the FTA.

The Project will not affect any known archaeological resources.

## **Cost and Funding**

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

In fiscal year 2008 dollars, the capital cost of the project would be \$4.8 billion.

The local funding source for the project is a 0.5 percent surcharge on the State General Excise and Use Tax.

The local funding source is expected to generate \$4.1 billion through 2022.

The FTA has agreed to consider \$1.2 billion for the Federal contribution to the project from the New Starts Program.

The weighted average interest rate on long-term debt is assumed to be 3.71 percent, consistent with the City's AA financial rating as of July 2008. Finances charges are expected up to \$727 million.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

In fiscal year 2009 dollars, the capital cost of the project would be \$4.3 billion.

The local funding source for the project is a 0.5 percent surcharge on the State General Excise and Use Tax

The local funding source is expected to generate \$3.5 billion through 2022.

The FTA has agreed to consider \$1.6 billion for the Federal contribution to the project from the New Starts Program.

The weighted average interest rate on long-term debt is assumed to be 3.27 percent, consistent with the City's AA financial rating as of April 2009. Finances charges are expected up to \$393 million.

## **Water resources**

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

Although floodplains and surface marine waters are found at various sections of the route, mitigation using best management practices would promote a natural, low-maintenance, sustainable approach where possible.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

Twenty streams or conveyance channels and several floodplains are to be crossed by the guideway or other project structures.

The project will permanently encroach upon .08 acres of U.S. waters from placing piers in Waiawa Springs, Moanalua Stream, Kapalama Canal Stream and Nuuanu Stream.

Since Draft EIS was published, several meetings have been held. In December 2008, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Hawaii Department of Health, Hawaii's Coastal Zone Management Program, Hawaii Commission on Water Resource Management and Environmental Protection Agency met with project staff to clarify water resource requirements for the project.

## **Section 4(f)**

Section 4(f) of the 1966 U.S. Department of Transportation Act protects public parklands, recreational lands, wildlife refuges and historic sites of national, state or local significance.

### **2008 Draft EIS:**

The project would result in direct use of between seven and eight Section 4(f) resources.

The project would result in de minimus (of minimum importance) impacts on between six and seven Section 4(f) resources.

No temporary or constructive use would occur.

### **2009 Final EIS:**

The project will result in direct use of 12 Section 4(f) resources.

The project will result in de minimus impacts on three Section 4(f) resources.

The project will require temporary occupancy of one Section 4(f) resource.

There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of these resources.

### **Comments**

#### **2008 Draft EIS:**

Public involvement in the form of opportunities for comment will continue through the remainder of the project.

The Draft EIS is being circulated for a 45-day review and comment period. A formal public hearing will also be held during this period. The hearing's purpose is to give interested parties an opportunity to formally submit comments on the Project and the analysis contained in the Draft EIS. Attendance at the hearings is not required to submit comments.

#### **2009 Final EIS:**

Public involvement activities will continue throughout the construction period.

The Draft EIS was circulated for a 75-day review and comment period starting in November 2008.

In total, 592 comment submissions were received. The majority of those comments were related to the following topics: Alternatives considered, planned extensions, ridership and travel forecasting, parking, traffic analysis, visual, noise, cost and financing, construction phasing, construction effects, acquisition and relocation.

### **Timeline: 120 years of Honolulu Transit**

## **The 1800s**

1888: The Oahu Railway and Land Company is founded with a government railroad charter approved by King David Kalakaua.

1895: The development of the OR&L's route across 'Ewa establishes the first urban development at Pearl City.

1899: The first two automobiles in Honolulu take to the streets.

## **Early 1900s**

1901: Honolulu Rapid Transit and Land Company launches an electric streetcar system.

1925: Motor bus operations begin in Honolulu.

## **The '40s & '50s**

1942: Streetcars are replaced completely by buses.

1947: OR&L makes its last trip on New Year's Eve before the company's dissolution.

1953: Construction of the H-1 highway is complete.

## **The '60s**

1960s: Public opposition to expanding highways mounts on Oahu.

1966: Honolulu Mayor Neal Blaisdell suggests rail as an alternative to automobiles.

1967: Oahu Transportation Study concludes rail between Pearl City and Hawaii Kai would be a cost-effective transportation solution.

1968: Preliminary engineering and evaluation completed for Honolulu Area Rail Rapid Transit, popularly known as HART.

## **The '70s & '80s**

1971: Bus operations expand on Oahu under a new name: TheBus.

1980: HART advocate and Honolulu Mayor Frank Fasi loses reelection to Eileen Anderson.

1981: Honolulu Mayor Eileen Anderson scraps HART after President Ronald Regan eliminates federal funding for new mass transit.

1984: Frank Fasi reelected as mayor.

1986: City officials revive rapid transit project, based on planning from HART but incorporating new automated technologies, and call it Honolulu Rapid Transit or HRT.

## **The '90s**

1992: Final Environmental Impact Statement is issued for HRT.

1992: City Council rejects local funding solution, halts HRT.

1998: City develops the Oahu Trans 2K Islandwide Mobility Concept Plan, an integrated transportation approach with planned roadway and public bus system improvements.

## **The aughts**

2000: Major Investment Study and Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a system based on bus rapid transit completed.

2005: State Legislature approves Act 247, allowing City Council to levy tax to fund transit improvements.

2005: State and Federal paperwork filed to explore transit solutions for Oahu congestion.

2006: *Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project Alternatives Analysis Report* completed. Report evaluates four transit solutions: Do nothing, transportation system management, express buses operating in managed lanes, fixed-guideway transit system.

2007: City Council considers 3,000 public comments, selects a fixed-guideway from East Kapolei to Ala Moana by way of Salt Lake Boulevard as the locally-preferred alternative.

November 2008: Oahu voters pass a charter amendment in support of a steel-wheel on steel-rail transit system.

November 2008: City releases Draft Environmental Impact Statement, requests comments from public.

November 2008: City Council Chairman Todd Apo and City Councilman Charles Djou propose altering rail route to go past airport.

January 2009: City Council passes resolution to approve airport route.

October 2009: City submits Final Environmental Impact Statement to Federal government, Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann announces delay to planned December 2009 groundbreaking.

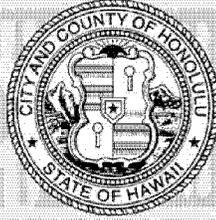
## **Into the future**

March 2010: Federal, State and City officials meet to discuss airport zoning and other technical issues.

2018: Planned completion of Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project, based on December 2009 groundbreaking.

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# NEWS RELEASE



Office of the Mayor  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Release No. M-6-10

March 2, 2010

## **HANNEMANN UNVEILS LEAN AND BALANCED SPENDING PLAN FOR 2011**

(Tues., March 2, 2010)—Mayor Mufi Hannemann today unveiled a lean and balanced spending plan for the fiscal year that begins on July 1, including a \$1.827 billion City operating budget that is just 1.2 percent larger than the current year's budget.

The increase is driven largely by predetermined costs such as previously arbitrated pay raises for police and firefighters, negotiated pay raises for bus drivers, and other work force costs.

“This is a carefully crafted spending plan that will protect public health and safety, make prudent improvements to our infrastructure, and invest in our future,” Hannemann said.

The plan also includes \$14 million for specialized public safety requirements of hosting the 2011 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation conference. The City hopes to receive federal reimbursement for all or a portion of these costs.

Absent the costs related to labor agreements and the APEC conference, the operating budget would decrease 1.8 percent, Hannemann said.

The spending plan sets the real property tax rate for the newly created Non-Homeowner classification at \$3.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value. This rate is lower than the old Improved Residential classification rate, which was \$3.75 in 2006.

The change for an owner of a typical single-family home in the Non-Homeowner classification is expected to be 49 cents more per month. A change of 25 cents more per month is expected for the owner of a typical condominium in this classification.

The Homeowner rate would remain \$3.42 per \$1,000 of assessed value, no other classification rates would change, and no additional taxes or fees were proposed.

“Given these difficult economic times, it is incumbent upon government to not add to the burdens of our residents who may be threatened with financial difficulties,” Hannemann said.

The budget assumes 21 to 24 day furloughs of certain City employees, and continued five percent pay cuts for Cabinet members. Certain other employees not covered by collective bargaining agreements will also receive five percent pay cuts.

The plan also assumes that Honolulu will continue to receive a fair portion of the Transient Accommodations Tax (hotel room tax) collected from visitors by the State. Honolulu receives approximately \$41 million annually from this tax, which helps offset the visitor impact on public services such as police and fire protection, garbage collection, park maintenance and wastewater operations.

The separate \$2.108 billion Capital Improvement Project budget included in the spending plan designates \$493 million for sanitation upgrades, \$124 million for street repairs and \$1.316 billion for the City's rail transit project.

Hannemann cautioned that some commentators habitually lump the Operating and Capital Improvement budgets together and compare them with combined budgets from previous years—which did not include major investments in the island's sewer system and the rail project—to deliberately create distorted and misleading impressions of City spending.

“The fact of the matter is that the Operating Budget, which pays for all the day-to-day services our residents and visitors depend on, would only increase by 1.2 percent,” Hannemann emphasized. “The separate Capital Improvement budget will obviously be larger than in previous years because we are investing in a major rail transit project this island badly needs, and making up for years of neglect to our sewer system and other infrastructure.”

#### Highlights of the Capital Improvement budget.

##### Transit:

- Honolulu High Capacity Transit Project (\$1.3 billion);
- Bus and Handi-Van Acquisition (\$17.7 million);
- Alapai Transit Center and Alapai Transportation Management Center (\$17.1 million).

##### Sanitation:

- Solid Waste Facility Expansion (\$142.8 million);
- Ala Moana Wastewater Pump Station Force Mains No. 3 and 4 (\$139.5 million);
- Kaneohe/Kailua Force Main No. 2 (\$90.7 million);
- Kailua Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements (\$23.6 million);

##### Highways and Streets:

- Rehabilitation of Streets (\$77 million)
- West Oahu Traffic Improvements at Various Locations (\$185.5 million);

##### Public Safety:

- Police and Fire Equipment and Acquisitions (\$9.9 million);
- Replacement of the Waianae Police Station (\$5 million);
- East Kapolei Fire Station (\$4.5 million).

New initiatives included in the spending plan include:

- a Nanakuli Regional Park;

- Waikiki park and landscaping improvements;
- a senior community center at the former Wailupe Valley School;
- reconstruction of the Kualoa Regional Park wastewater system;
- a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system for wastewater facilities; and
- aerial imaging for real property assessments.

-30-

Media contact: Bill Brennan, Mayor's Office, 768-6928

# Facts about rail transit near the Honolulu Airport.



You may have read a recent article that implied the City did not adequately prepare for the airport portion of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project. This is untrue.

## Here are the facts:

**Fact:** The City completed the required airspace study for the rail route near the airport and the Lagoon Drive rail station.

**Fact:** The City gave the airspace study to the Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) in 2008 and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in mid-2009. It was based on the airport's official plans which did not have the new, larger FAA runway protection zone.

**Fact:** At the time, neither HDOT nor the FAA found conflicts with the rail route or the Lagoon Drive station. When we discovered a conflict we informed HDOT and proposed a mitigation plan.

**Fact:** HDOT Director Brennon Morioka sent a letter agreeing to the City's mitigation plan in November 2009.

**Fact:** The form 7460 that is mentioned in the article has nothing to do with the EIS, or the

runway protection zone. It's a standard form filed a minimum of 30 days before construction, and construction of this segment is several years away.

**Fact:** The City informed the FTA that we have reached a solution to the FAA and HDOT concern over the airport issue, including the runway protection zone, and we are waiting for the FTA's concurrence. This federal EIS is a FTA document so their concurrence is needed before the solution is finalized.

**Fact:** The airport is a vitally important destination for the rail system, which is why the City is working diligently to ensure that the airport station is planned well.

**Fact:** We have collected over 99.4% of the forecasted amount in GET revenue from 2007 to date.

Some continue to give an inaccurately bleak picture on GET revenue and say we are short on money. Instead of reacting to the month to

month revenue fluctuations, we rely on the economic experts' assessment through the project time period. The experts adjusted the financial plan for the economic downturn and our financial plan was even deemed "conservative" by the independent Hawaii Business Roundtable.

We anticipate the recovery from the recession and so does the Governor's Council on Revenues. Their latest forecast shows the economy is recovering sooner than expected with the growth rate of 6.2%. The City also moved up some key construction contracts to take advantage of the current slow market so that the contracts are coming in with substantial savings. Additionally, the Federal Transit Administration has expressed strong support for funding this project with over \$1.5 billion in federal funds.

**The project has a solid financial base and is moving forward. Mahalo for your continued support for rail.**

***"Honolulu's rail system is the best transit project in the country."***

**Congressman James Oberstar**  
Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

# Building Community Wealth around Transit

## **WHAT is Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)?**

Transit station neighborhoods become home to new shops and restaurants, services, community facilities, jobs, housing choices, and great public spaces that take advantage of the convenience of transit.

## **WHY should I attend this event?**

Hear local and national experts discuss the benefits of TOD and how it can create economic opportunities in your community.

## **WHO should attend?**

Anyone interested in the exciting potential of TOD.

**RSVP by April 1 requested • Register today!**

Becker Communications • phone: 533-4165

email: [teambecker@beckercommunications.com](mailto:teambecker@beckercommunications.com)

For more information, please visit: [www.honoluluodpp.org/planning](http://www.honoluluodpp.org/planning)



TOWN HALL MEETING

**Tuesday, April 6, 2010**

6:00 p.m. Registration

W. R. Farrington High School Auditorium

1564 North King Street

# Honolulu Rail Transit Project



H O N O L U L U   R A I L   T R A N S I T   P R O J E C T

566-2299 | [www.honolulutrainsit.org](http://www.honolulutrainsit.org)

# HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT



# Operating Details

- **When will trains run?**

- From 4 a.m. to midnight
- Every 3 minutes at morning and afternoon rush hour
- 6 minutes at mid-day
- 10 minutes at night

- **How fast will trains travel?**

- Over 55 mph top speed;  
30 mph average with stops



# Operating Details

- **How much will a ride cost?**
  - Same as TheBus; one-way transfers valid on both
- **How do I get to a rail station?**
  - Every station will have bus stops, bike paths and walking paths
  - Four park-and-rides totaling 4,100 parking spaces



# Hawaii's Economy

- **Worst economy since Great Depression**
- **Absence of major shovel-ready projects**

## LOCAL NEWS

**1 in 6 in Hawaii lacking full-time work**

**Isles' jobless rate stays near 30-year high**

**Hawaii hotel industry had dismal year in '09**

*New report cites revenue losses last year at \$741M, lowest rate of occupancy since at least 1987*

# Rail Transit

- **State's best economic stimulus**
- **Rail construction will create 4,000 jobs & invest \$300 million in Hawaii's economy this year**
- **Congressman Oberstar: "Honolulu's rail program is the #1 transportation project in America."**

# FTA leader Peter Rogoff

- **“there is some considerable financial strength to this project”**
- **“our expectation is that the final contribution will be \$1.55 billion”**
- **“we would not have included funding in the President’s budget for this project if we thought it was falling off the rails”**

# Finances On Track

- **Reviewed by consultants hired by FTA**
  - Booz Allen Hamilton
  - Jacobs Engineering
  - Porter & Associates
- **Independently reviewed by local business leaders**
  - Hawaii Business Roundtable
- **GET surcharge revenue 99.5% of projections**
- **Saved \$90 million on construction so far**

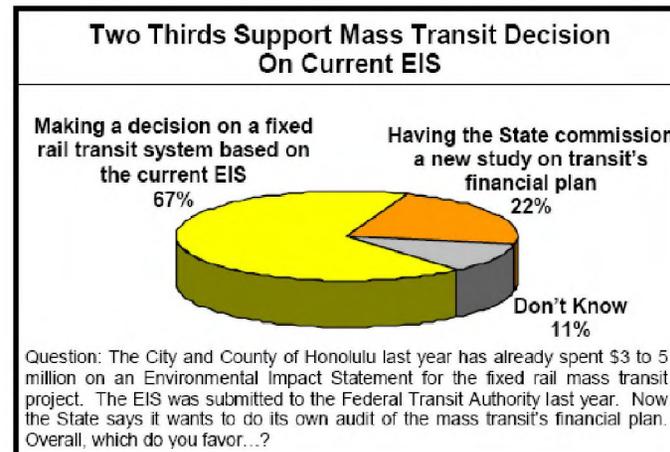
# Final EIS Status

- **Final EIS is complete**
- **13 State agencies have been consulted**
- **FTA working quickly and aggressively to resolve FAA issues**
- **Admin draft of Final EIS transmitted to Governor via OEQC in December**

# 67% back results of Isle rail study

## Advertiser Staff

More than two-thirds of people surveyed support making a decision on whether to build rail based on an existing environmental study, according to a poll released yesterday.



# At-Grade is Not An Option

- **Won't provide service Honolulu needs**
- **Revising EIS for at-grade will take far longer than 6 months**
- **FTA: it would put us back at square one**
- **Cost of delay is large:**
  - **1 year: about \$200 million**
  - **2 years: \$ 400 million**

# At-Grade Takes Traffic Lanes



Houston

At-grade trains can take up to 3 traffic lanes from cars and trucks

# At-Grade Affects Underground Utilities



**At-grade rail requires relocating all underground utilities**

# At-Grade More Likely to Impact `Iwi



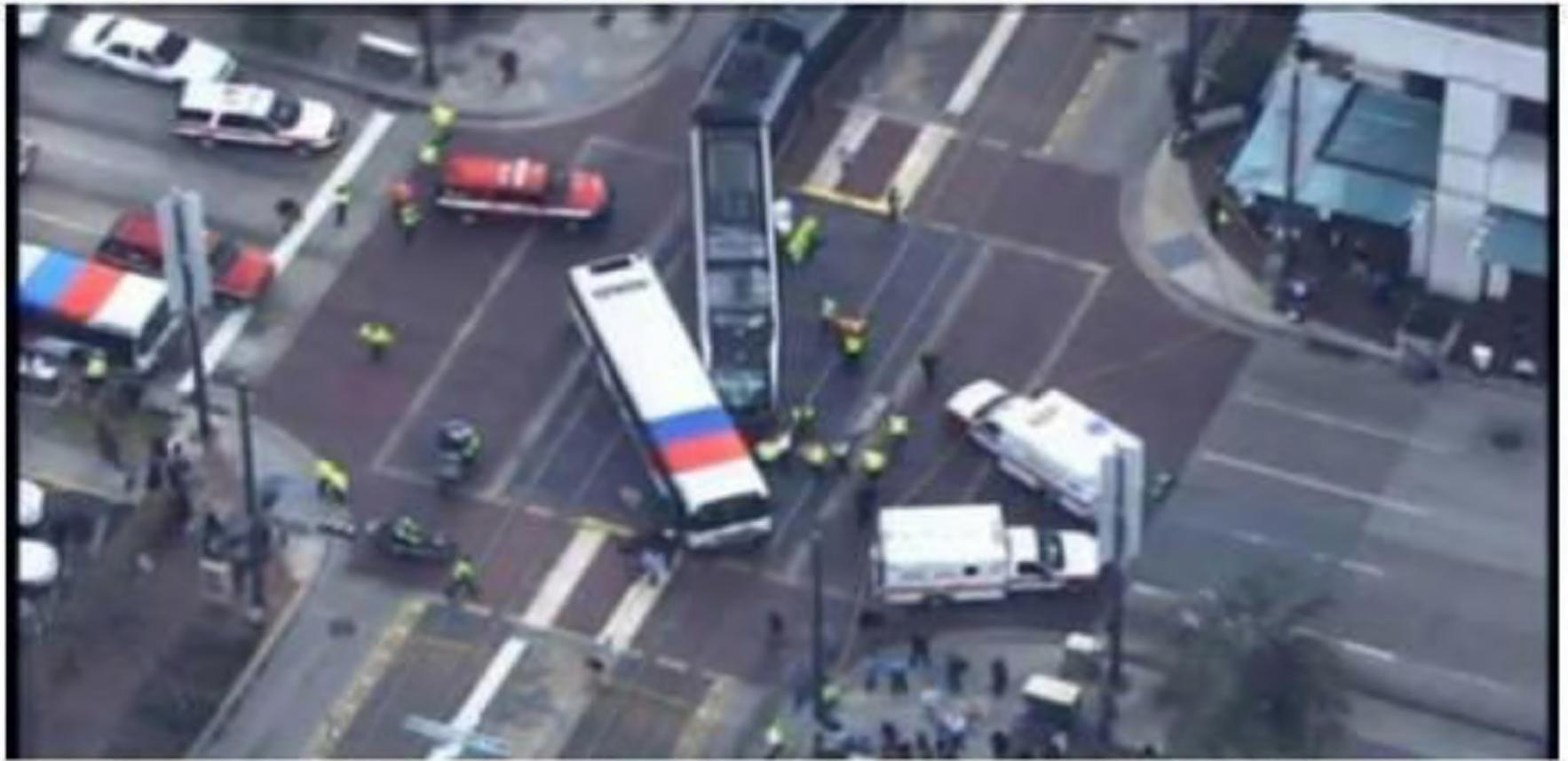
**At-grade rail requires excavating a trench for trains**

# Phoenix: 52 car-train collisions in 2009



# Houston: Feb. 8, 2010

Officials: 9 injured after Metro bus collides with light rail train



# **Elevated Rail in Vancouver, BC Home of the 2010 Winter Olympics**



**SkyTrain seen from the street**



**SkyTrain is in scale with its surroundings**

# What Could Elevated Rail Look Like in Honolulu?

# Kamehameha Highway at Ka'ahumanu Street



# Kamehameha Highway near Radford Drive



# Crossing Nuʻuanu Stream



SIMULATION

# Halekauwila Street at Mother Waldron Park



SIMULATION

# Honolulu Rail Transit Station Designs

# MAKAI | *Entry View — East Kapolei Station*



MAUKA | *Entry View — UH West O'ahu Station*



# Waipahu Transit Center Station



# West Loch Station



# LCC Station



# Pearlridge Station



# Canopy Design for Stations



# Canopy Design for Stations



# Rail Transit Resources

- **Monthly Newsletter**
- **[www.honolulustransit.org](http://www.honolulustransit.org)**
- **Twitter.com/HNL\_RT D (@HNL\_RT D)**
- **Youtube.com/honoluluonthemove**
- **Facebook – Search Honolulu Rail Transit**

# **Pearl Highlands Rail Station Community Workshop**

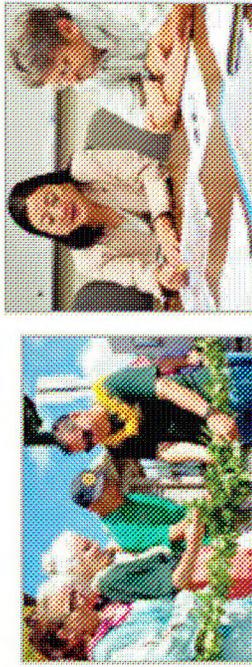
**March 30, 2010**

**Highlands Intermediate School**



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Transit-Oriented Development Forum



## TOWN HALL MEETING

**Tuesday, April 6, 2010**  
6:00 p.m. Registration  
W. R. Farrington High School Auditorium  
1564 North King Street

Hosted by Mayor Mufi Hannemann  
and the Department of Planning & Permitting

**get on BOARD!**  
Transit Oriented Development



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Agenda

- Project Update
- Pearl Highlands Station: Regional multi-modal transit center
- Pearl Highlands Station: Preliminary design
- Breakout Sessions
- Summary of Breakout Sessions







Pearl Highlands Station

RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



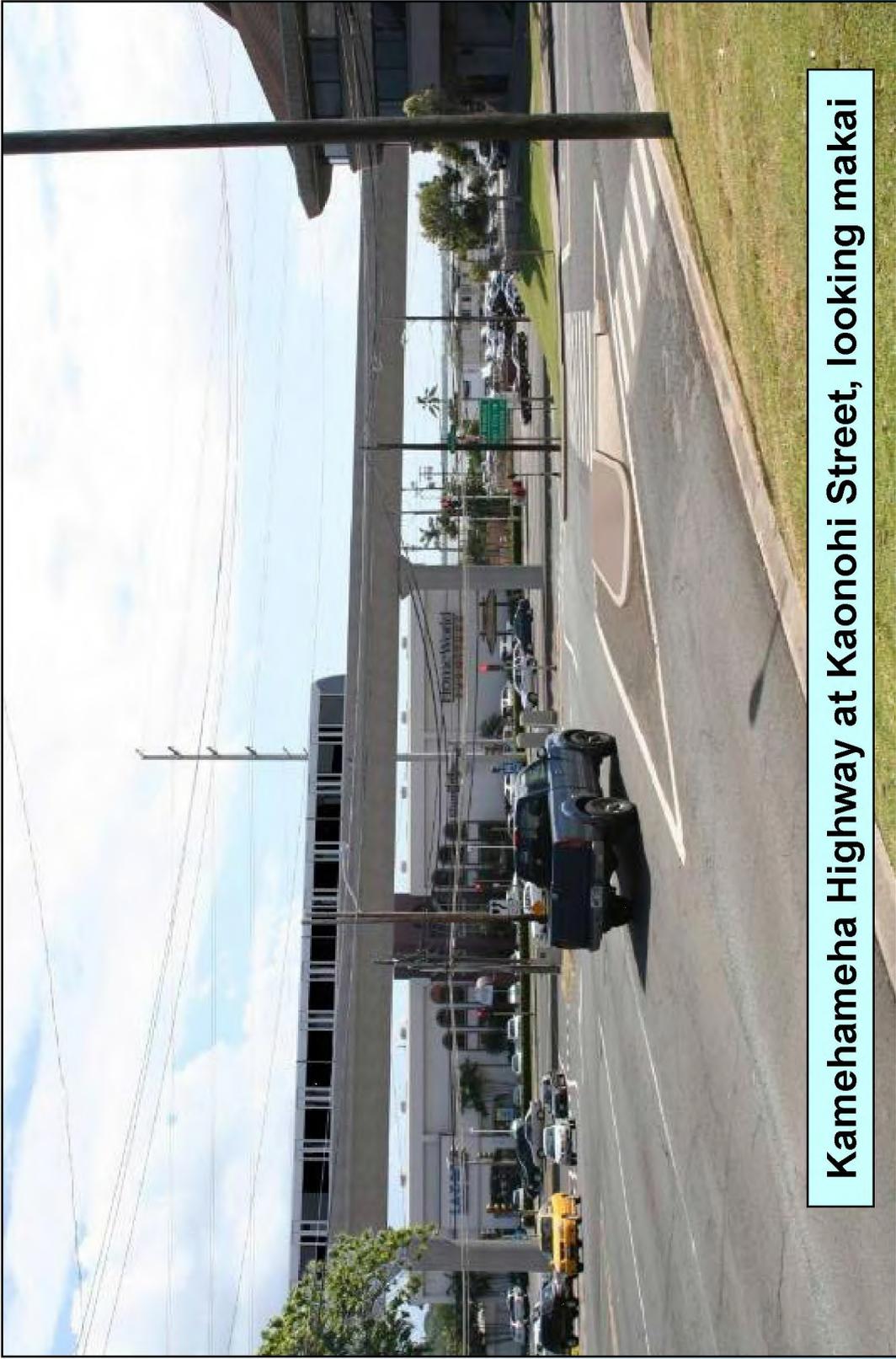
# Rail Travel Times from Pearl Highlands

Destination	Travel Time
East Kapolei	14 minutes
Leeward Community College	1 minute
Airport	12 minutes
Downtown	24 minutes
Ala Moana Center	28 minutes



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

# Elevated Guideway Simulation



Kamehameha Highway at Kaonohi Street, looking makai



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Elevated Guideway Simulation



Kamehameha Highway at Ka'ahumanu Street, looking makai



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Pearl Highlands Rail Station

Regional multi-modal transit center



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Regional Transit Center

- Hub for Pearl City and central O'ahu commuters
- Access from major traffic arteries
- All transportation modes
- Will reduce traffic congestion



# Transit Center Features

- Parking garage: 1,600 spaces
- New H-1 and H-2 off-ramps
- Rail ridership: 22,000 a day
- Bus transit: 15 bus connecting routes
- Bicycles and pedestrians
- Kiss and ride

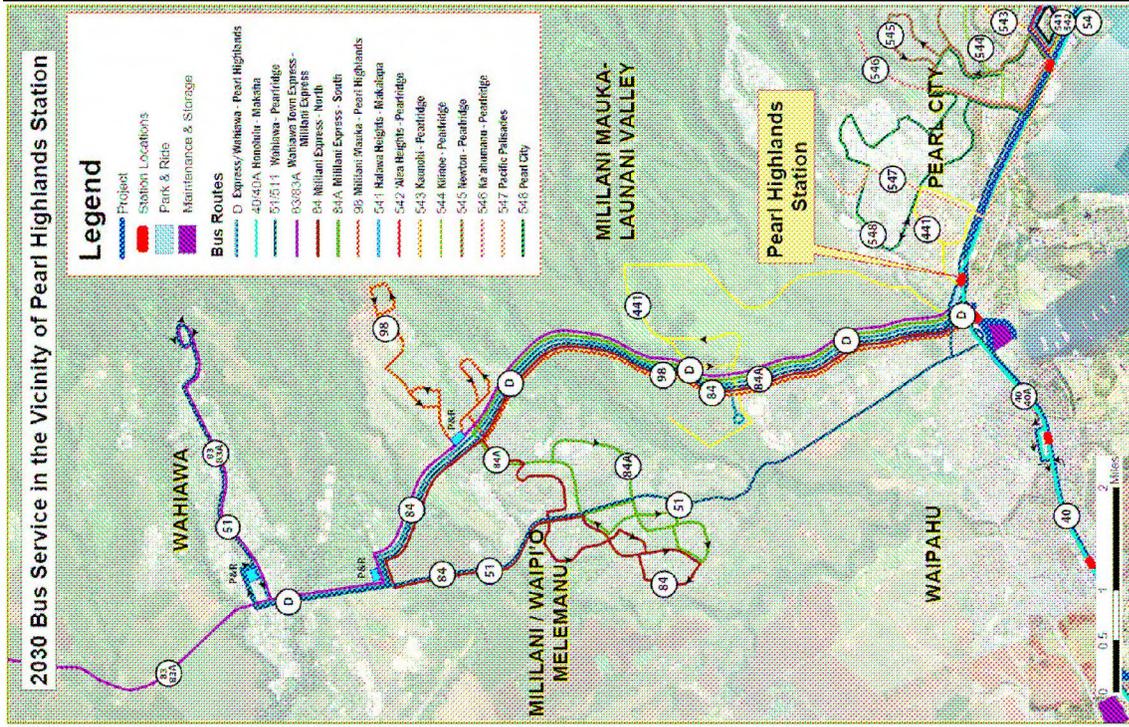


# Regional Access

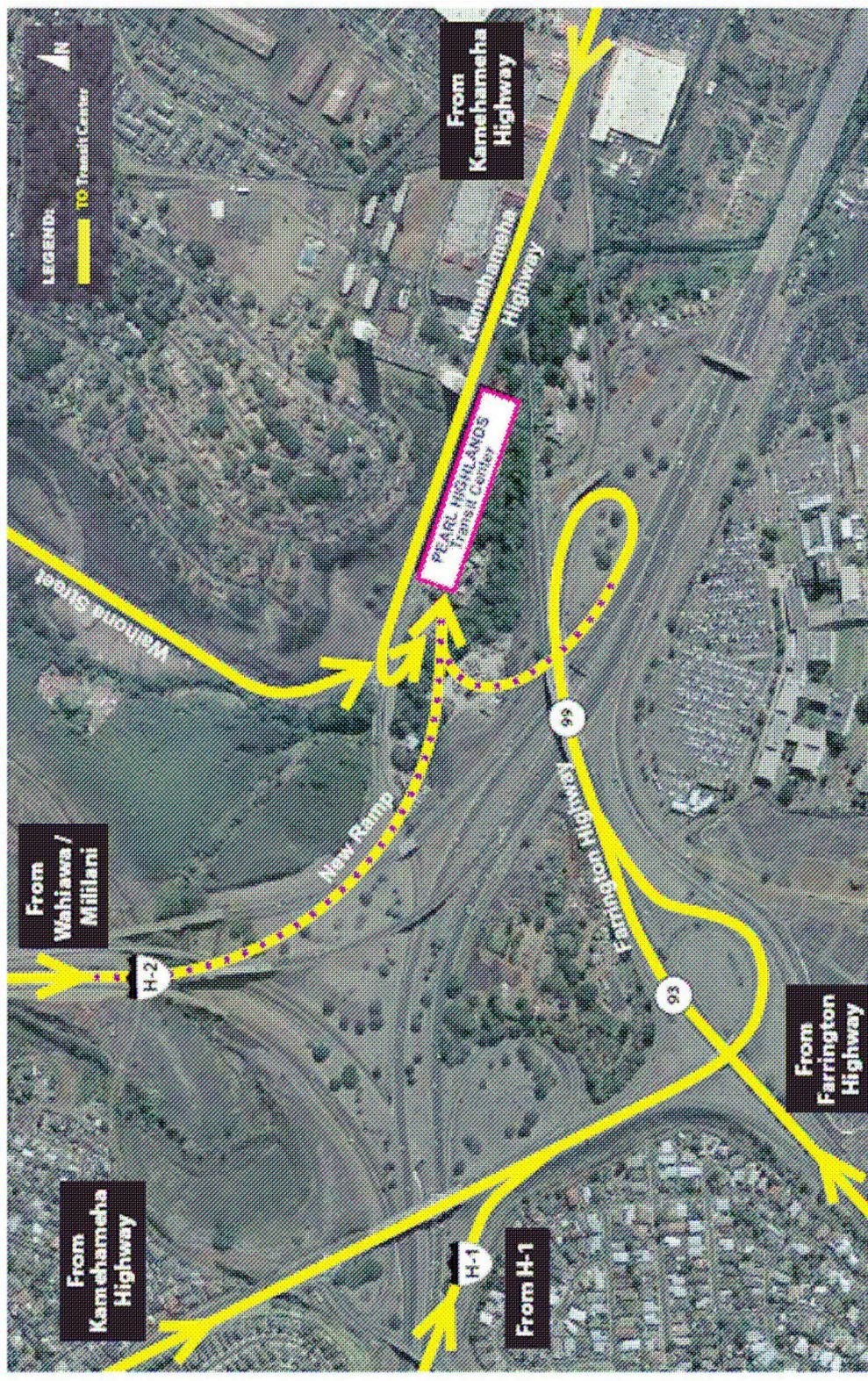


RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

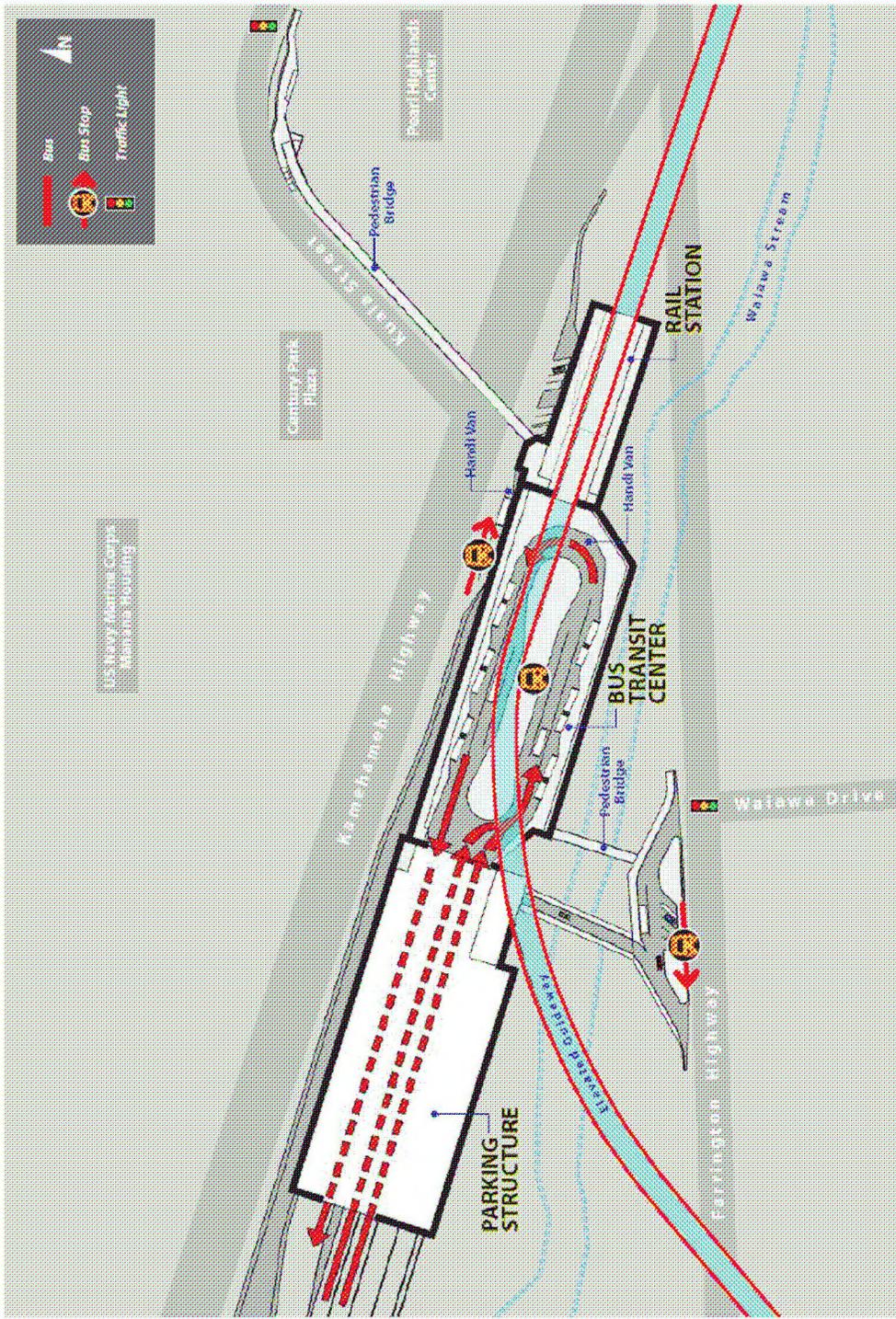
# Connecting Bus Routes



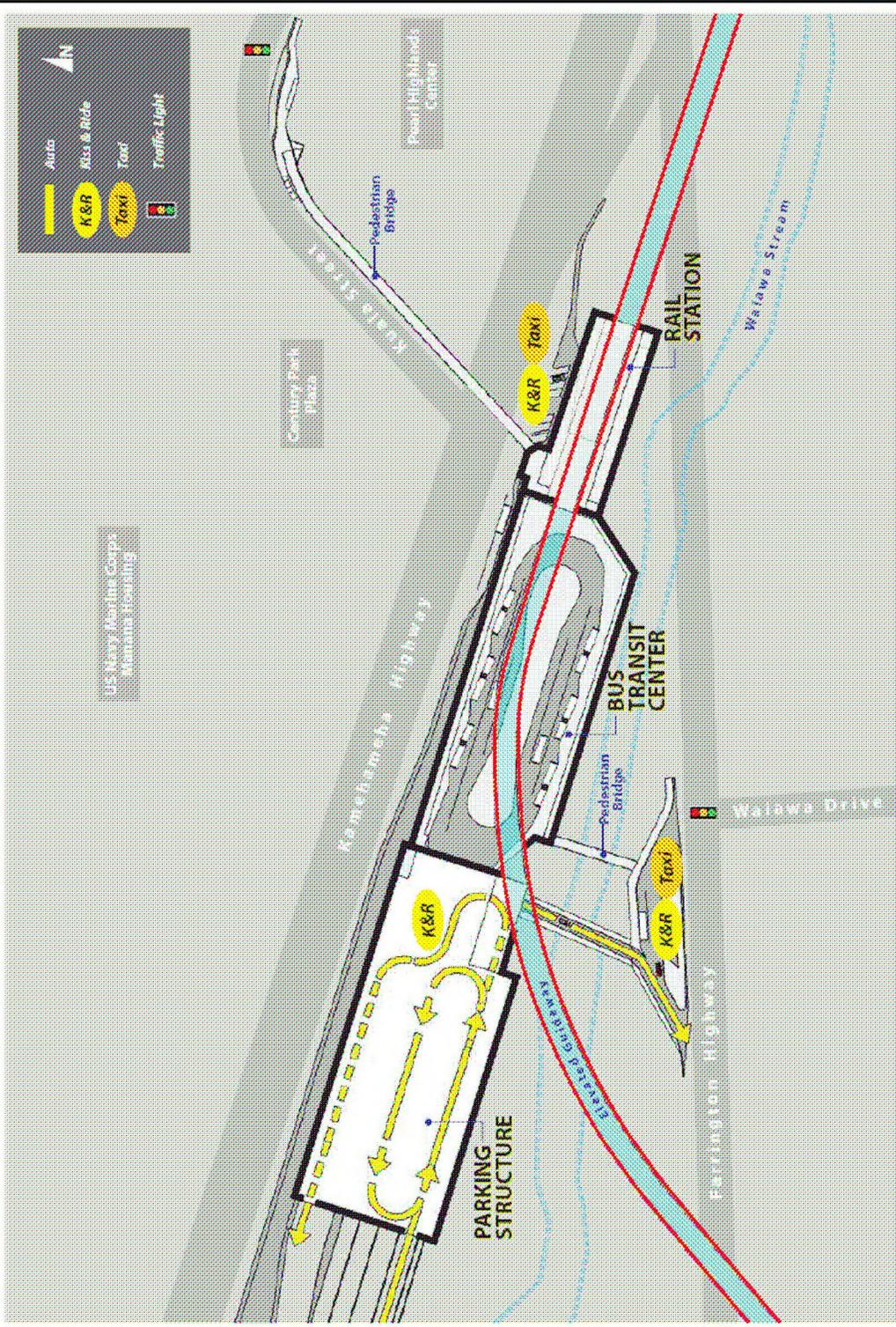
# Ramp & Roadway Access



# Bus Stop Locations

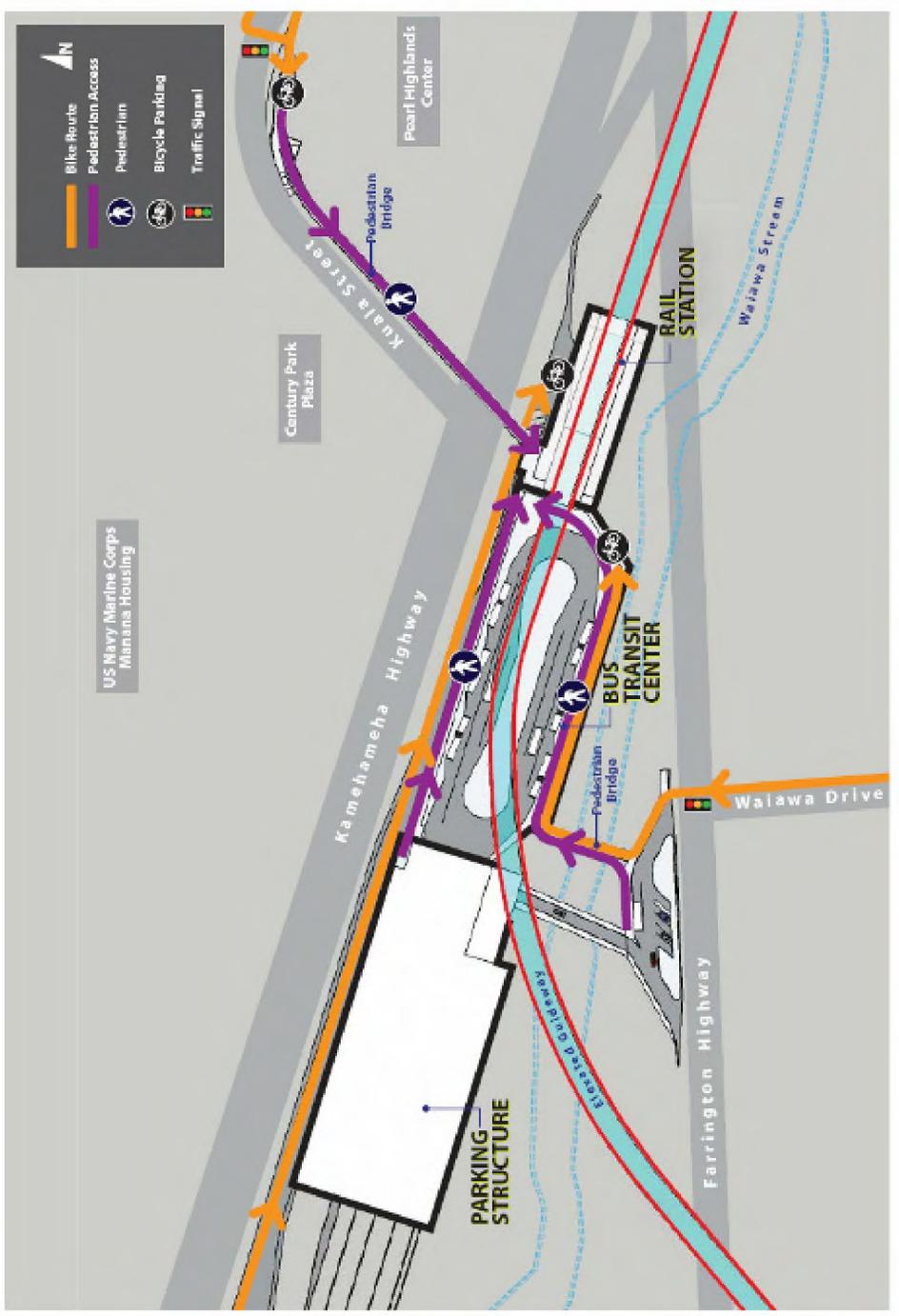


# Parking, Kiss & Rides, Taxi



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# Bike & Pedestrian Paths



# Pearl Highlands Rail Station

## Preliminary Design



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Examples of Community Comments

Need xeriscaping and native Hawaiian plants. |

Canopy material needs to be low-maintenance

**Is there a covered walkway from the parking area to the platform?**

Audience Like station canopy

How will graffiti be controlled?

Are the stations earthquake proof? |

**Station needs to be eco-friendly.**

How many cars do the platforms hold? |

**Make station, parking, and the area graffiti-resistant and cleanable.**



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

# Summary of Community Comments

- Canopies over walkway
- Wind screens
- Rest rooms
- Native plant themes
- Sustainability
- Art, cultural and history

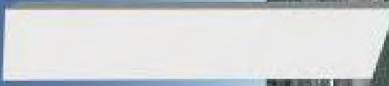




RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



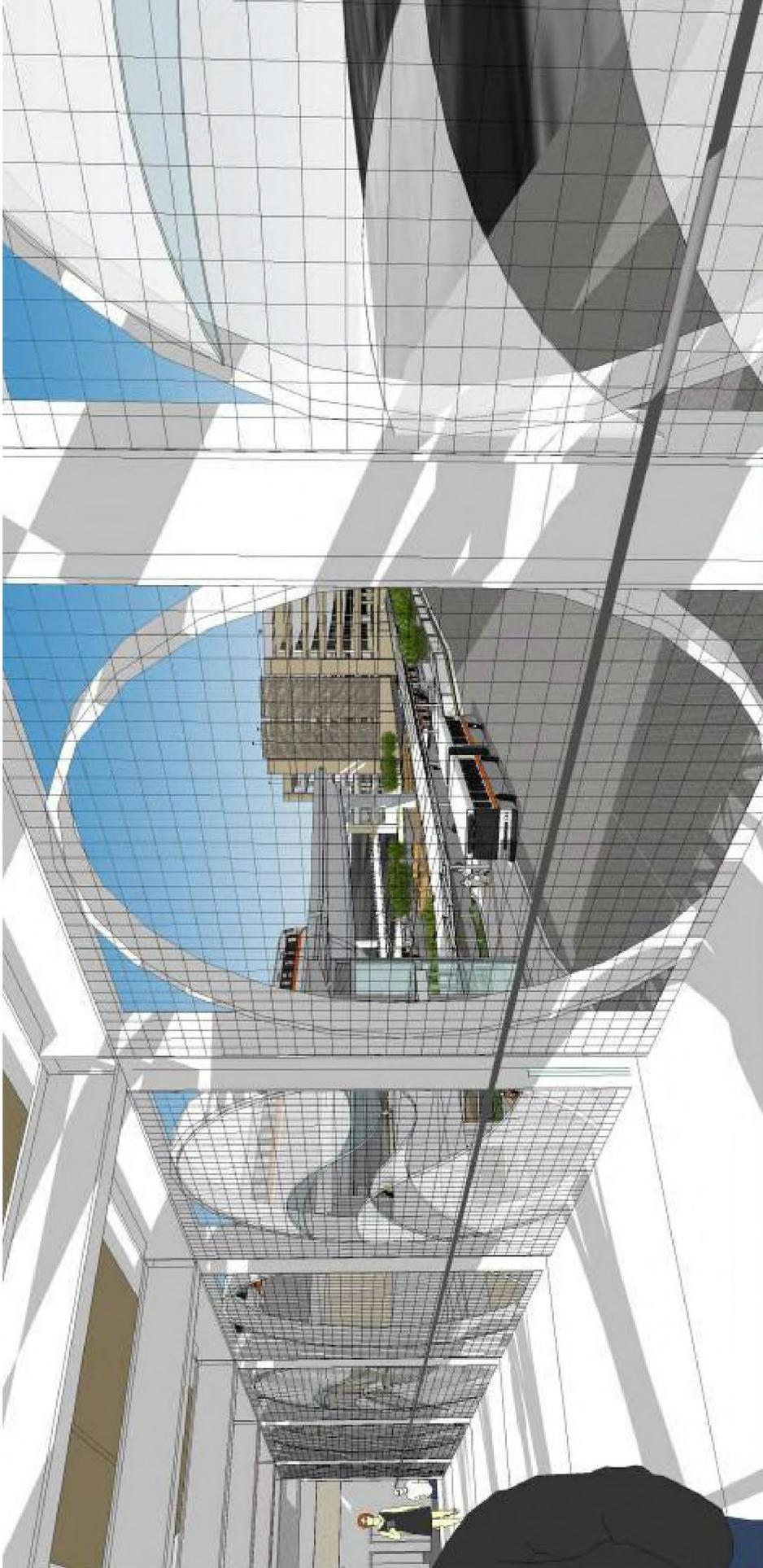
RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



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RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Animation to Be Inserted Here



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

# Breakout Sessions



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Contact Us

566-2299

[www.honolulutransit.org](http://www.honolulutransit.org)

[info@honolulutransit.org](mailto:info@honolulutransit.org)



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# Breakout Summaries



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

# ***Mahalo!***



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S