

## Public Involvement Overview

May 2010

	Month
Hotline Calls*	26
Comment Sense Submissions/Inquiries**	17
Speakers Bureau	
Presentations/ Coffee Hours/ Community Displays & Events	37
Neighborhood Boards	22
Community Updates/Mayor's Town Meetings/ RTD Workshops	0
TV/Radio Appearances	2

\*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.

## May 2010 website and hotline comments

Submission Method	Submission Date	Submission Content/Notes
Email	05/01/2010	I'm not sure I understand why this project is going forward? Can you help me out? -So we can't afford to properly maintain all the roads we already have? -We're starting a rail project we don't have the money for? -We will be less able to maintain either after the rail system is built. -Our state budget is in the crapper Yet you guys think it is a good idea to spend money on this project that will benefit a fraction of Oahu's population? Am I missing something?? Shouldn't our priorities be to balance the budget and take care of what we already have before we take on more expenses? Please help me to understand? Thank you! Brian
Website	05/01/2010	The rail lanes that will be construct on Oahu will have to be strong enough to withstand in case of a huge tsunami or a hurricane. Let's have a rail lanes to withstand a Category 5 hurricane.
Website	05/04/2010	When will the rail transit system will start construction? The more you delay the construction deadline the more money we wil have to pay. Also it looks like the rail finished date will be delay till 2019 or 2020. Also be sure that Honolulu's Rail Transit System gets approved by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) first before starting construction.
Website	05/04/2010	Why are we spending so much money on a project that may, I repeat, may reduce traffic into town by single digit percentages only. It seems that even the City and Couty The Boat did not work, so who is to say the very very very expensive rail is going to work. Drop it.Now and bring back the Superferry , a concept that proved itself already beneficial to all and not specific interests.Now people like myself on disability will have to go through a whole bunch of time and procedures just to get passes , if the rail has passes for disabled. This rail is a feather for Mufi, the Superferry is a feather for all. Good Luck and God Speed, but I don't think the rail will meet up to its goals to cover its costs.
Website	05/05/2010	What is the current status of your rail system? Is it waiting for approvals, in intial construction phase, or what exactly. I am looking forward to making an application for employment in railcar maintenance when things get realy going.
Email	05/07/2010	1. how much does it cost the city for each passenger that boards the bus? 2. how much will we save by building a train? John (response to e-blast- see attached e-mail)

<b>Submission Method</b>	<b>Submission Date</b>	<b>Submission Content/Notes</b>
Hotline	05/07/2010	Are we making half of it already. Please record my message. Bye. (phone message saved)
Email	05/10/2010	Response to e-blast sent via hawaiireporter@gmail.com: A friend thought you would like to read this report in Hawaii Reporter: Hannemann/Caldwell Administration Mismanage the City & County of Honolulu Panos D. Prevedouros, PhD <a href="http://www.hawaiireporter.com/story.aspx?81b3fd77-70fb-4c01-a4ad-75a3beb17d50">http://www.hawaiireporter.com/story.aspx?81b3fd77-70fb-4c01-a4ad-75a3beb17d50</a> Please read this carefully for this is the truth about your illconceived, outdated and overpriced project which will bankrupt Oahu . It must be stopped. Geoffrey Paterson
Website	05/12/2010	Even if your cute Draft EIS has ended. PLEASE STOP MUFIS FOLLY WE WONT RIDE IT AND WE CAN'T AFFORD IT AND YOU CANNOT/WILL NOT MAINTAIN IT. PLEASE STOP IT BEFORE ITS TO LATE. TOM 292-1800
Hotline	05/19/2010	Could not get a good quality map to download. Wanted better copy. Also wanted to know if that map was the most current.
Hotline	05/20/2010	Wanted to see Ualena adjustment on map - could not tell from maps provided on website.
Hotline	05/24/2010	Wanted info on how alignment would go down Farrington Highway and also information on how businesses would be notified on impacts during construction.
Website	05/27/2010	What will the upper height of the train be as it passes Topa Financial Center and where will the rail be in relation to this building?
Website	05/29/2010	For the last 2 nights there have been extremely loud noise outside of my house. I was forewarned that the rail project is drilling and starting building. However, this is ridiculous! I would like any of you, whom are working on this rail project to come and sleep in my house with all this noise. I am very disappointed! Instead of getting earplugs as a complimentary gift from the C&C I was given...Lipgloss. I am currently staying at a different residence because it is literally impossible to sleep.

\* 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.

Pertinent hotline calls are now included on this list.



# FAA will approve shift in rail route

By [Star-Bulletin staff](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, May 01, 2010

0 [tweet](#) [Share](#) City officials have learned that the Federal Aviation Administration will approve realignment of the planned rail transit system to a route several hundred feet farther from Honolulu Airport.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann said the city received the word yesterday from the Federal Transit Administration of the FAA approval, removing the "final obstacle" in preparation of an environmental impact statement on the 20-mile rail project from Kapolei to Ala Moana Center.

The FAA had raised concerns that a planned four-story station less than 1,000 feet from active runways would encroach on the airspace buffer zone.

Earlier this month the city released plans to move a portion of the railway from Aolele Street to Ualena Street and put the station at Ualena and Lagoon Drive.

Hannemann met with FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, and city officials consulted with the FTA and FAA about mitigation measures to resolve the concern.

No information has been released on what the realignment will add to the estimated \$5.3 billion cost of the project.

The mayor announced the FAA approval during an afternoon news conference.

"The change that we asked for has been accepted, both the FAA and FTA, and it will be reflected in the final EIS and the document that we are working very hard to get to the governor's desk. So that is a good milestone and another significant movement forward," Hannemann said.



**Mufi Hannemann:**  
*The mayor calls the approval a "significant movement forward"*

## Find this article at:

[http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100501\\_faa\\_will\\_approve\\_shift\\_in\\_rail\\_route.html](http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100501_faa_will_approve_shift_in_rail_route.html)

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### Honolulu Rail Transit

Although it is one of the most popular places in Hawaii to live, and that's not even mentioning the millions of tourists who come through each year, people living on Honolulu Hawaii real estate have never enjoyed a rapid transit service. Partly, this is just a product of island living. People would rather worry about their new yacht keel design or the best surfing waves than they would over whether or not people can get to work faster. But the fact is that Honolulu is a major city in the United States, and the only one without some kind of transit system.

That is why the city government, along with approval from the state, decided it was time to approve a high capacity, rapid transit system back in 2008. Attempts have been made to build a public rail transit system from Honolulu to West O'ahu in the past, but all have met with significant opposition. That is why the governments did not immediately contact an electronic contract manufacturing business or even announce what type of transit system would be put in place. However, amid shouts from opposition, it appears that it is indeed a rail line which will be used to move people along this route in the future.

In fact, parts of the project have already begun to be built. The total project is slated to be completed in five different stages, with each stage completed a year from 2010-2017. The transit system will be a steel wheel to steel rail train system, run by electricity. The funding for the land has been approved through a commercial mortgage broker.

There is still controversy surrounding this rail system. People need to keep in mind that this is Hawaii, although it is a busier part of Hawaii than on the other islands. That means there is a significant amount of territorial-ism that people seem to inherit immediately after purchasing their own property here. They don't want to see anything new happen which could disrupt what they see as their paradise, be it blow through valves or a mass transit system. Of course, because this is still America, people also tend to forget that they are only enjoying their current lives because of changes which have come before.

For that reason, there has been significant opposition to the rail process. However, there are also numerous benefits to the new rail transit system that people opposed to it tend to overlook. There is the fact that people will be able to cross the busiest places of the island in a much faster manner, getting to an adult hockey tournament or other activity on time. The transit system will create more jobs on its own, not to mention make other jobs more attainable for hundreds of people on the island.

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Honolulu HI Real Estate

Sunday, May 02, 2010

# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Monday, May 3, 2010

## Bad roads cost Hawaii drivers an average \$503 a year, report says

*Report shows Hawaii's poor pavement leads to high vehicle-repair costs*

By **Greg Wiles**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Poorly maintained roads cost Hawai'i drivers an average of \$503 a year as they shell out extra money for tire repairs and damaged shock absorbers.

That's one of the findings of a new report from U.S. Public Interest Research Group, which found that Hawai'i only trails New Jersey and California in terms of the highest costs paid annually by drivers as a result of rough roads and bridges.

"As the amount of road decay, potholes, bumps, clogged drainage systems and damaged bridges increases, so too do the number of accidents, the amount of money spent on car maintenance and the number of hours consumed by driving," said the report, "Road Work Ahead."

The report said there also is a cost in terms of the unsafe driving conditions that can lead to accidents, injuries and deaths. Poor road conditions were a contributing factor in about one-third of the nation's 34,000 highway fatalities last year, the report authors wrote.

"Without regular maintenance, roads turn into crumbled asphalt, erosion narrows shoulders and lanes, damaged drainage systems create hazardous floods, and broken retaining walls can allow boulders and other obstacles to obstruct a safe path," the report noted.

It also found Hawai'i had the seventh-highest percentage of roads in poor-to-mediocre condition, with more than one-quarter of streets and highways falling into this category.

The study also found costs are higher in metropolitan areas and that Hono- lulu ranked No. 5 among cities with populations of more than half a million. Costs due to rough roads was \$688 annually.

The report said drivers in urban areas are likely to pay more because of the especially poor road conditions found in cities. Poor road conditions also contribute to traffic and delays as drivers slow to avoid potholes or lose control over rough patches.

U.S. PIRG said the nation needs a stronger commitment to repairs and should ignore special interests that push for new and bigger projects instead of maintenance.

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"Federal and state policies ... often fail to achieve the proper balance between building new infrastructure and taking care of what we already have built," the report said.

"To counteract the tendencies to neglect repair and maintenance, we must adopt strong 'fix it first' rules that give priority to maintenance of our existing roads and bridges, set national goals for the condition of our transportation system and hold state governments accountable for achieving results."

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

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## ROUGHEST ROADS

State	Percent of roads in poor condition
Alaska	35 percent

...

## ROUGH ROAD COSTS

Highest average additional annual costs due to rough roads

State	Cost
New Jersey	\$596
California	\$590
Hawai'i	\$503
Rhode Island	\$473
Oklahoma	\$457
Maryland	\$425
Missouri	\$410

## CITY

Highest additional annual costs due to rough roads

Area

Los Angeles

San Francisco

San Jose

-Oahu

Tulsa

Honolulu

San Diego

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Updated at 1:56 p.m., Monday, May 3, 2010

## Mayor says FAA agrees with city on Honolulu rail transit's airport plan

Advertiser Staff

Mayor Mufi Hannemann said today that the city is making significant progress toward breaking ground and beginning rail construction after the Federal Aviation Administration has concurred with the Runway Protection Zone avoidance measure for the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Hannemann has an FAA letter stating the "rail project alignment is consistent with our standards for airport development."

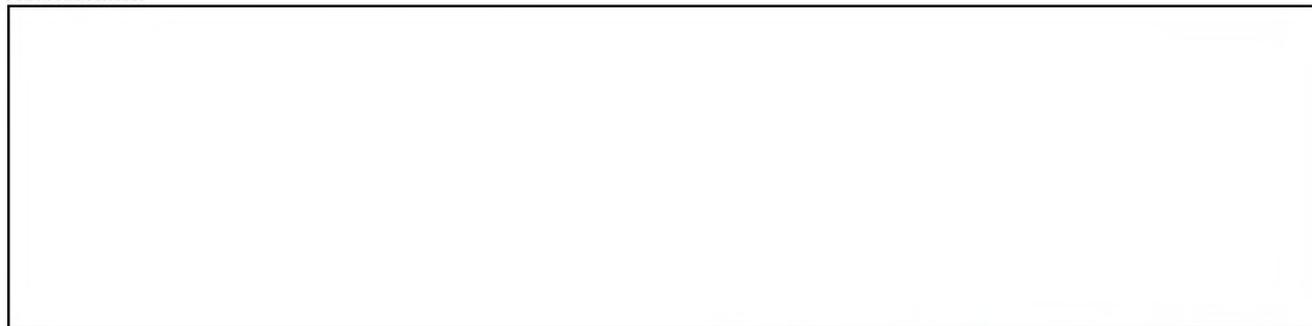
"This milestone means there are no outstanding issues associated with the rail system serving the Honolulu International Airport or completing the rail transit Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS)," he said in a statement. "I thank the FAA, the FTA and the State Department of Transportation for their valuable technical advice and cooperation in reaching this solution."

The city said the RPZ avoidance will relocate a portion of the project's guideway several hundred feet, from Aolele Street to Ualena

Street, beginning approximately 2,000 feet west of Lagoon Drive, and will relocate the Lagoon Drive rail station to the corner of Ualena Street and Lagoon Drive. The alignment through the airport area will still be primarily along Aolele Street.

The city plans to begin construction of that segment of the project in 2014.

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - May 3, 2010  
</pacific/stories/2010/05/03/daily2.html>

# PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Monday, May 3, 2010, 9:51am HAST

## Honolulu gas prices inch upward

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Honolulu's average gas prices inched up 0.7 cents per gallon in the past week, pushing Monday's average price to \$3.45 a gallon.

Nationwide, the average price rose 4.1 cents in the past week to \$2.90 per gallon, according to HonoluluGasPrices.com, part of GasBuddy.com, which operates more than 200 gasoline price-tracking Web sites.

Honolulu's prices are \$1.06 per gallon higher than a year ago and 4.9 cents per gallon more than a month ago.

The national average is 84.3 cents per gallon higher than a year ago and 7.9 cents per gallon higher than a month ago.

Costco in Iwilei reported the lowest Oahu price for regular gas at \$3.28 a gallon, while the price of gas at Chevron in Mililani was the highest at \$3.55 a gallon.

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Posted on: Tuesday, May 4, 2010

## FAA approves of Hawaii rail transit route change to protect airspace

*Plan will protect airspace around Honolulu airport*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

A plan to shift the route of Honolulu's proposed elevated commuter rail project to avoid Honolulu International Airport airspace has found favor with the Federal Aviation Administration, the city said yesterday.

The city had planned to run the 20-mile, East Kapolei-to-Ala Moana train past the airport along Aolele Street, with a station near Lagoon Drive. However, the five-story station encroached on a runway protection zone that's supposed to be free of construction.

Last month, the city announced plans to shift the train's route from Aolele Street mauka about 300 feet starting about 2,000 feet 'ewa of Lagoon Drive. The alternative of moving a nearby runway was too expensive, the city said.

The FAA notified the city via a letter that it concurred with city plans to move the train's route, Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann said yesterday.

"This milestone means there are no outstanding issues associated with the rail system serving the Honolulu International Airport or completing the rail transit Final Environmental Impact Statement," Hannemann said in a news release.

The city did not specify when the project's final environmental impact study will be released or when construction will begin.

"We are making significant progress toward breaking ground and beginning rail construction," Hannemann said.

FAA spokesman Ian Gregor yesterday confirmed that the agency accepted the city's request to include the new rail alignment in the master plan for the Honolulu airport. However, the potential impact of rail on that plan and on airport airspace won't be known until the agency completes ongoing studies, he said. Those reviews are being expedited, Gregor said.

Construction of the airport segment of the \$5.3 billion project is expected to begin in 2014. The train is to be built in phases, starting with a section from East Kapolei to Waipahu.

Groundbreaking for the train project was supposed to start last December, but was delayed by a prolonged review of environmental impacts and the airport airspace issue.

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The city also is awaiting federal approval of an agreement that establishes the framework for lessening the project's impact on cultural and historic resources.

The Federal Transit Administration is the agency that is ultimately expected to release the project's final environmental impact statement, which then would need approval by Gov. Linda Lingle before the project could proceed. Lingle plans to hold public hearings and conduct an independent analysis of the project's finances before deciding whether to approve the project.

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

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Posted on: Wednesday, May 5, 2010

## Final Pearl Highlands Rail Station Workshop Set For May 13

Reader Submitted

The City and County of Honolulu as part of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project will share final drawings of the Pearl Highlands rail station with the Pearl City community on Thursday, May 13.

The free workshop will run from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Highlands Intermediate School, 1460 Hoolaulea Street in Pearl City. This is the last of three community design workshops for the planned Pearl Highlands station.

The Pearl Highlands station, which will be located along Kamehameha Highway across from the Pearl City Sam's Club, will be a regional station designed to serve residents in Central Oahu and the North Shore. The station will feature a 1,600-stall park-and-ride, along with an H-2 Freeway off-ramp to access the station. Many city bus routes in the region will also connect with the station.

Rail project officials at the meeting will showcase final renderings for the area station based on residents' feedback from the previous workshops held in February and March. Similar community-based workshops have been held for rail transit stations planned for Pearlridge, Leeward Community College, Waipahu and Kapolei.

"We want to thank the residents from the Pearl City area and the surrounding communities for their feedback on this particular rail station that will serve Central Oahu and the North Shore," said Mayor Mufi Hannemann. "We want to ensure

that each station design best reflects the personality and history of its respective community or area."

For more information on the community workshop, contact our project office at 566-2299 or at [info@honolulutransit.org](mailto:info@honolulutransit.org).



Many regional bus routes will connect with the planned Pearl Highlands rail station along Kamehameha Highway across from the Pearl City Sam's Club.

Photo credit: City & County of Honolulu

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Posted on: Wednesday, May 5, 2010

## Honolulu rail project facing pressure to protect native burials

*It fears pressure to move iwi if project has already begun*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Before starting to build its \$5.3 billion commuter rail project, the city must survey the train's route through Kaka'ako to make sure it won't interfere with burials or other cultural resources, a panel charged with protecting Native Hawaiian burials said.

The city plans to build the 20-mile elevated train in phases and intends to conduct archaeological surveys before starting work on each segment. The Kaka'ako segment would be the last to be built, and the area has not yet been surveyed.

The O'ahu Island Burial Council says the city must conduct an archaeological survey of the entire route before starting construction. The group opposes plans to run the elevated train down Halekauwila Street in Kaka'ako, saying it is concerned that the buried remains of Native Hawaiians might be there.

The burial council and others have expressed concerns that if the transit project encounters burials after construction starts, there will be pressure to move the human remains rather than alter the train's route.

Last month the burial council voted unanimously to request that Department of Land and Natural Resources Director Laura Thielen, who is also the State Historic Preservation Officer, not sign a pending agreement with the city that would

allow studies of archeological impacts to occur in phases rather than all at once.

The city needs the Federal Transit Administration, Hawaii State Historic Preservation Division, National Park Service and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to sign that "programmatic agreement" before the rail project's final environmental impact statement can be released and construction of the 20-mile East Kapolei to Ala Moana train can start.

However, several groups — including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Oahu Island Burial Council, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Historic Hawaii Foundation and the American Institute of Architects — are pushing for changes to the language of the agreement, which establishes the framework for mitigating the impact of the rail project on Honolulu historical resources.

### state law invoked

The burial council is appointed by the governor and works to protect Hawaiian burial sites. The resolution was drafted with help from the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation.

Both groups contend that state law requires that

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all archaeological studies be completed before the state can allow the city to proceed with the rail project.

"The city has to complete the historic review process before the project can start and the historic review process requires that all the archaeological reports be done now," said David Frankel, an attorney for the NHLC. "The state can't sign off until the entire review process is completed."

Thielen was unavailable for comment.

"She is still reviewing the OIBC resolution and surrounding issues," said Deborah Ward, a DLNR spokeswoman.

According to a 2006 study by the city, there is a high probability of finding Native Hawaiian burials and other archaeological artifacts once construction starts in urban Honolulu. However, the city does not plan an archaeological survey of the Middle Street-to-Ala Moana Center segment of the rail project until next year. The city is planning to begin construction on the first phase of the rail line in East Kapolei later this year and complete the entire 20-mile line by 2019.

The train's route down Halekauwila Street was chosen by the Honolulu City Council in early 2007, based on a 2006 study of various transit alternatives.

The city has said it would consider moving train guideway footings and altering utility relocation plans to avoid iwi — human remains. However, it's unlikely that discovering human remains in Kaka'ako will cause the city to alter the route, city officials have said.

## Project delays

The city doesn't think plans to conduct archaeological studies in phases violate state law, said city Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka.

"We're just going to have to see," he said. "We don't think it's a problem."

The programmatic agreement is under final review by required signatories, Yoshioka said. The city expected that agreement to be completed late last year, followed by groundbreaking in December.

However, construction has been delayed by the programmatic agreement and issues concerning the train's impact on airspace safety zones at Honolulu International Airport.

Yoshioka declined to predict when construction would begin.

"Rather than make assumptions about how things are going to go, what we want to do is let the process play out," he said.

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

## THE RESOLUTION

Whereas, the current PA for the City's rail project includes a phased approach for archaeological inventory survey, and

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Whereas, HRS Chapter 6E-8 and 6E-42 preclude a phased archaeological inventory survey approach, and

Whereas, the State Historic Preservation Officer has the ability to safeguard the full authority of State historic preservation laws and the integrity of historic properties and burial sites, and

Whereas, the OIBC Rail Task Force has been guaranteed in numerous PA meetings that State laws would not be circumvented by the PA,

Therefore, the OIBC strongly recommends that the State Historic Preservation Officer object to any version of a PA that allows for a phased archaeological inventory survey approach, and that the OIBC communicate the same to the PA signatories in our capacity as consulting parties to the PA.

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Posted on: Thursday, May 6, 2010

## Honolulu may have violated law in awarding of design contracts

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

The state is looking into allegations that the city may have violated procurement law when it awarded dozens of professional design services contracts, including three related to rail.

The complaint of suspected city procurement violations was filed about two weeks ago with the state attorney general's office and the U.S. attorney's office by a local attorney, John McLaren, on behalf of former Gov. Ben Cayetano and other, unidentified, people.

The complaint has been forwarded to the state Procurement Office. It alleges that the city failed to negotiate with the first ranked respondent to numerous bid solicitations. The city also inappropriately waived requirements that awards be made from a list containing three competitors, according to the complaint.

Among the issues alleged in the complaint is whether the city mistakenly relied on an invalid rule when it waived a three bidder requirement in awarding contracts, including rail contracts with InfraConsult LLC, to provide project management oversight and with Parsons Brinckerhoff, to conduct engineering and environmental studies.

If waiving the three bidder requirement is determined to be invalid, then other city and state agencies also may have erroneously awarded contracts for more than 10 years. However, the complaint focuses only on potential procurement violations by the City and County of

Honolulu.

Cayetano, who has criticized Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann's handling of the rail project, said he's concerned about city procurement procedures in general and rail contract awards in particular. Cayetano declined to name the others who joined him in filing the complaint.

"We've been looking at the rail contracts and the way the city does business," said Cayetano. "The process is being abused. There's a reason the law says there should be a minimum of three (bidders). That procurement law as amended (is) to provide for greater transparency, greater objectivity."

State Procurement Office Administrator Aaron Fujioka confirmed his office was looking into the issues raised by the complaint, but declined to comment on the details of the complaint.

"An issue was recently brought to the State Procurement Office's attention and is currently under review," he wrote in an e-mail to The Advertiser.

City Budget Director and Chief Procurement Officer Rix Maurer III wasn't available for comment on Tuesday and yesterday.

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## copy to kobayashi

According to a copy of the complaint sent by McLaren to City Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi on April 26, the city failed to negotiate a contract with the top-ranked bidder in 72 cases over several years.

The complaint also alleges the city inappropriately awarded 13 contracts in cases where there were fewer than three competitors for each deal.

Three of those contracts involved the city's planned \$5.3 billion East Kapolei-to-Ala Moana rail project.

McLaren said he spent several weeks examining legislative, legal and procurement records to identify suspect cases.

However, he said, the number of suspect cases cited in the complaints is based on contract information available on the Internet.

Materials in contract folders on each deal could yield different results, he said.

One allegation in McLaren's complaints claims that Honolulu city officials waived the minimum three bidder requirement by relying on an administrative rule that has no basis in law.

The rule was adopted in December 1995, which was about six months after the Legislature eliminated a procurement law provision allowing for procurement processes to proceed even if fewer than three submissions are received, McLaren said.

In 1997 the Legislature established a minimum requirement of three bids within the state procurement code, which also applies to counties, McLaren said.

"The law appears to be not administered in the way that was intended by the Legislature," he said. "I don't think anyone was deliberately not

paying attention to this; it's just one of those things that sort of crept up. It goes way back."

## 3 contracts cited

The complaint McLaren sent to Kobayashi cites three rail contracts that were awarded, even though there were fewer than three competing bidders. Those deals include a \$10 million 2005 contract with New York-transportation engineering firm Parsons Brinckerhoff. That was followed by an \$86 million 2007 deal with the same company. There were only two competing bids for each contract.

Similarly, InfraConsult LLC — a company formed by three former Parsons Brinckerhoff employees — received a \$36.7 million 2009 contract from the city. InfraConsult, which provided similar services under a \$11.5 million 2006 contract, was the only firm that bid on the 2009 contract.

All three rail contracts were investigated in 2009 by then city auditor Les Tanaka. His audit found that the contracts complied with procurement law.

However, the audit also highlighted concerns about why there weren't more competing bids for transit contracts.

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The audit said that two unidentified contractors were reluctant to bid on projects because of the city's relationship with Parsons Brinckerhoff.

"Perceptions of contractor favoritism persist among the public and for some within the engineering industry, due to the award of two contracts to PB Americas, a firm that has been awarded city projects for several decades," the audit said. "This perception was further reinforced by the project management support consultant award to former PB Americas employees who comprise InfraConsult."

In response to the audit, city officials said that the city complied with all applicable laws when soliciting bidders for the three contracts.

Even if the rule under which waivers were provided proves invalid, it's unlikely those rail contracts would be cancelled or put out to bid again, Cayetano said.

"I don't know if the contracts could be invalidated because it's already been let out and work has been done on it," he said.

Kobayashi said she plans to introduce a resolution calling for a probe of the allegations in the letter by the state attorney general and possibly the U.S. district attorney.

"That's a lot of possible violations," she said. "I just feel as a City Council we have to do something about this.

"It's not a rail thing; it's a procurement thing."

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



Ben Cayetano

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Posted on: Thursday, May 6, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### **Rail Tax**

#### **Why not use funds to help state budget?**

Thank you for printing Rep. Gene Ward's commentary, "Tax raise not needed to balance budget" (April 23).

I especially appreciate his closing statement, "No one should tell the people of Hawaii that we don't have any other choice but to raise taxes." He provides some good choices, such as "borrowing from — not raiding — the Hurricane Relief Fund and the rainy day fund."

There is another choice no one is considering — borrowing from the fixed rail fund. Millions of dollars are sitting in a fund which could be used to help the city and state in this time of financial hardship. It seems to me like someone saving up for a Hummer while going without the basic necessities of life.

*Gloria Kaneshiro  
Honolulu*

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Updated at 2:08 p.m., Thursday, May 6, 2010

## Resolution seeks updated financial plan for Honolulu rail-transit project

Advertiser Staff

The Honolulu City Council transportation committee unanimously passed a resolution today requesting that city officials provide the council an updated financial plan for Honolulu's \$5.3 billion rail project as well as an accounting of transit fund proceeds and expenses.

Under the resolution, which now goes for a vote before the full council, the council also is seeking a list of all city and contract employees working on the project along with their qualifications, and an updated list of rapid transit contractors and subcontractors.

City Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka said he would provide the council with the requested information. However, he could not say when the information would be available.

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Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - May 6, 2010  
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# PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Thursday, May 6, 2010, 9:34am HAST | Modified: Thursday, May 6, 2010, 9:35am

## Hawaii gas prices flat from last week

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

Hawaii's average gas prices Thursday were unchanged from a week ago, averaging \$3.57 a gallon, according to the [AAA Hawaii Weekend Gas Watch](#).

- In Honolulu, regular unleaded is \$3.46 a gallon on average, flat for the second week in a row, but \$1.06 higher than a year ago.
- In Hilo on the Big Island, regular unleaded is \$3.57 a gallon, four cents more than last week and \$1 more than last year.
- In Wailuku, Maui, the average gas price is \$3.93 a gallon, two cents more than last week and \$1.15 more than last year.

“The price of oil has been linked closely to the value of the U.S. dollar, which increased significantly today against European currencies,” said Chris Olvera, AAA Hawaii's acting branch manager.

The price of oil dropped Thursday to below \$80 per barrel, he said.

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## UPDATE: Rail Consultants — Who Are They Now?



**Katherine Nichols**  
Money reporter-host

By Katherine Nichols

05/06/2010

Transportation director Wayne Yoshioka drew fire from the City Council's transportation committee for what the council perceived as a lack of transparency related to rail expenditures. The committee passed a resolution Thursday requesting that city officials provide updated information about rapid transit contractors and subcontractors, along with their qualifications and job descriptions.

Council member Ann Kobayashi questioned why millions of dollars have been spent on a small number of individuals or groups for "public outreach" or "public involvement."

"We are completely transparent on this issue," countered Yoshioka. "We're under scrutiny from the Federal Transit Administration." Yoshioka defended the city's multiyear contracts, and said they included the consultants' expenses. He also indicated he would provide an updated list for the council.

From April 2007 to Nov. 2009, the individuals or organizations receiving city funds for public outreach or involvement included:

- Lychee Productions, Inc: \$1.4 million (also listed as a subconsultant and paid an extra \$201,000 for public involvement)
- Elisa Yadao: \$285,000 (also listed as a subconsultant and paid an extra \$80,000 for public involvement)
- Community Planning & Engineering: \$374,000
- Pat Lee & Associates: \$217,000
- Douglas Carlson: \$210,000
- R & R Partners, Inc. \$137,500
- Gary Omori: \$181,000
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Posted on: Friday, May 7, 2010

## City says contracts proper

*Spokesman calls complaint a political ploy by Cayetano*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

A complaint that some city contracts — including three rail deals — may have violated procurement law are unfounded and politically motivated, city spokesman Bill Brennan said yesterday.

Former governor Ben Cayetano had forwarded a complaint about city procurement activities to the state attorney general's office and the U.S. attorney's office. The state Procurement Office is looking into the complaint, which alleges that the city relied on an invalid rule in awarding contracts in situations when there were fewer than three competitors.

It also alleges that the city awarded contracts to competitors that did not rank highest among those vying for a contract.

City officials yesterday denied that any contracts were inappropriately awarded. Brennan said the charges were an attempt by Cayetano to help former congressman Neil Abercrombie 's bid for governor. Mayor Mufi Hannemann is a potential competitor for that office.

"What we have here is an ex-governor, backing a retired congressman, hiring an attorney during an election year to file a complaint about contracts that were awarded years ago and that have since been found by both the state courts and the city auditor to be in compliance with federal, state and local procurement requirements," Brennan said. "The Honolulu rail

transit project is too important for this city and for this state to become politicized by the ex-governor and those he backs."

The complaint of suspected city procurement violations was filed about two weeks ago by local attorney John McLaren on behalf of Cayetano. State Procurement Office administrator Aaron Fujioka, who has acknowledged looking into the complaint, said yesterday that there was no update concerning that issue.

Cayetano, who has criticized Hannemann's handling of the rail project, said the complaint was driven by an apparent pattern of violations of procurement law and the manner in which contracts were awarded.

"It's no secret that I support Abercrombie," Cayetano said. "One reason I got involved ... I see all this stuff and the problem with this town (is when) people think they're getting screwed, nobody says anything. That's why we we're doing what we did."

Abercrombie campaign spokeswoman Laurie Au said the city was attempting to point the blame for the alleged violations elsewhere.

"When questions of corruption arise, it's standard

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to point fingers at other people," she said in an e-mail. "The only issue is, 'Is it true?' "

Cayetano said Hannemann politicized rail by allowing a conflict of interest to exist among project contractors. One of the project's largest contractors is Parsons Brinckerhoff, which has an \$86 million deal with the city. The other major contractor is InfraConsult LLC, which has a \$36.7 million deal to manage the rail project for the city. InfraConsult was founded in part by former Parsons Brinckerhoff employees.

And the train project is run by the city transportation department, which is led by director Wayne Yoshi-oka, a former Parsons Brinckerhoff engineer.

## corporate links

"There's no question in my mind that the whole project is politicized — the whole way they set up the structure with InfraConsult getting this huge contract to oversee Parsons (Brinckerhoff) and with Yoshioka, a Parsons employee going to the city to be head of DTS," Cayetano said. "You've got to be blind not to see the conflict in that thing."

Contracts with Parsons Brinckerhoff and InfraConsult were investigated in 2009 by then city auditor Les Tanaka. His audit found that the contracts complied with procurement law.

The complaint became public this week after McLaren sent a version to City Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi. Kobayashi forwarded the complaint to other council members — an action that made the document publicly available.

The letter alleges the city failed to negotiate a contract with the top-ranked bidder in 72 cases over several years. However, that analysis was based on online procurement records. At least some of those records list contract bidders alphabetically, rather than by the highest-ranked bidder, which could have caused confusion about which bidder was the top-

ranked.

## Bidder rankings

According to the complaint, the city awarded a contract to Parsons Brinckerhoff even though another bidder ranked higher. The city yesterday said that Parsons Brinckerhoff was the top-ranked bidder for that deal.

"Allegations that we failed to negotiate with the first-ranked respondents was based on false assumptions," the city said in a news release.

In another case, the complaint alleges that a bidder won without being on a formal list of bidders competing for the contract. The city yesterday said it has not had the opportunity to look into all of the cases highlighted in the complaint. However, all contracts were awarded to the top-ranked bidders, Brennan said.

Brennan said the city is willing to provide access to all contract files in question to clear up the matter.

Another main complaint is that the city allegedly inappropriately awarded 13 contracts in cases where there were fewer than three competitors for each deal. Three of those contracts involved the city's planned \$5.3 billion East Kapolei-to-

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Ala Moana rail project. The complaint claims the city waived the minimum three-bidder requirement by relying on an administrative rule adopted in 1995. That rule has no basis in law because of legislative changes made in 1995 and 1997, said Cayetano, who's an attorney.

"The law was changed and the underlying law and rule are in conflict," he said. "As any lawmaker knows, it's the law that is supreme."

City spokesman Brennan said the rule in question was adopted while Cayetano was in office.

"It is the rule and we're required to follow the rules," Brennan said. "If (Cayetano) ... suddenly has a problem with a rule that was promulgated under his watch, he has no one but himself to blame."

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

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## Reality Rail

Blog of Honolulu Rail for Growth

- [About Reality Rail](#)

Posted by: **loomisisc** | May 7, 2010

### Honolulu Transit Passengers Save \$10,892 Annually

While many drivers lament the regular maintenance and fuel costs to keep their automobile running smoothly, Honolulu public transportation passengers enjoy an annual savings of \$10,892, according to a recent report by the [American Automotive Association](#) (AAA).

Public transportation passengers in Honolulu save more than the national average of \$9,453 and the city is ranked seventh highest in the nation for transit savings. All six of the cities with an annual savings greater than Honolulu have rail transportation services. The savings is based on the purchase of a monthly public transit pass and factoring in local gas prices for May 3, 2010 and the local monthly unreserved parking rate.

City	Monthly Savings	Annual Savings
1 New York	\$ 1,166	\$ 13,994
2 Boston	\$ 1,048	\$ 12,584
3 San Francisco	\$ 1,027	\$ 12,319
4 Chicago	\$ 968	\$ 11,611
5 Seattle	\$ 951	\$ 11,417
6 Philadelphia	\$ 944	\$ 11,229
7 Honolulu	\$ 908	\$ 10,892
8 Los Angeles	\$ 851	\$ 10,208
9 Minneapolis	\$ 840	\$ 10,085
10 San Diego	\$ 838	\$ 10,060
11 Portland	\$ 817	\$ 9,805
12 Cleveland	\$ 816	\$ 9,796
13 Denver	\$ 816	\$ 9,790
14 Baltimore	\$ 799	\$ 9,585
15 Washington, D.C.	\$ 771	\$ 9,254
16 Miami	\$ 767	\$ 9,207
17 Dallas	\$ 750	\$ 9,004
18 Atlanta	\$ 739	\$ 8,868
19 Las Vegas	\$ 731	\$ 8,791
20 Pittsburgh	\$ 695	\$ 8,340

\*Based on gasoline prices as reported by AAA on 5/3/10

Top Twenty Cities- Transit Savings Report -  
APTA

According to the 2010 edition of the AAA annual report '[Your Driving Costs](#)' the cost of owning and operating a vehicle has increased 4.8 percent since last year. The leading factor was the rise in higher fuel prices. The 4.8 percent increase, along with higher gas prices compared with this time last year, means that transit riders can now save approximately \$762 more in commuting costs annually.

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) releases a monthly "[The Transit Savings Report](#)" and calculates the average annual and monthly savings for public transit users. The report examines how an individual in a two-person household can save money by taking public transportation and living with one less car. To calculate your individual savings with or without car ownership, go to [www.publictransportation.org](http://www.publictransportation.org).

"Taking public transportation provides a safe and affordable way for individuals and families to cut costs," according to a recent APTA release. "In addition, local public transit offers a travel option that has an immediate positive impact in reducing an individual's overall carbon footprint while helping reduce America's dependence on foreign oil."



The 2010 APTA Rail Conference is scheduled for June 6-9 and invites all rail system personnel, board members, policy makers, suppliers, consultants, and any other personnel involved with rail and fixed guideway design, construction, operations and maintenance.

The conference provides attendees with the most comprehensive learning and networking experience possible. The conference includes a complete slate of technical sessions relevant to the operation, management and maintenance of rail and fixed guideway systems. To learn more about the conference go to [www.apta.com](http://www.apta.com).

Friday, May 7, 2010 [27 Comments](#)

## Should Transit Systems Charge More During Peak Hours?

by Sarah Goodyear on May 7, 2010

<http://streetsblog.net/2010/05/07/should-transit-systems-charge-more-during-peak-hours/>

This morning on the Streetsblog Network, there's a lively and intelligent discussion going on at Jarrett Walker's [Human Transit](#) over the question "Should fares be higher during peak hours?"

The Human Transit post was sparked by an earlier discussion at Yonah Freemark's blog, [The Transport Politic](#), about the possibility of peak surcharges on Washington, D.C.'s Metro system (it already costs more to ride Metro at peak times; the proposal in question is for an additional 50-cent charge in the most congested part of the system).

Walker thinks such charges could be a good thing:

There's also an argument for peak surcharging that connects with urbanist goals for transit. People who have the option of traveling off-peak should be encouraged to do so, because off-peak capacity is usually abundant, while peak capacity is naturally scarce and costly for the transit agency. This strategy helps build off-peak patronage, which supports more all-day service, which leads directly to transit that is more relevant to the entire life of the city rather than just the commute. All-day frequent service is the only type of service that can support transit-oriented development and thus change the shape of the city in more sustainable ways. From an urbanist perspective, then, a gentle but persistent effort to shift demand away from the peak makes sense.

I have trouble even seeing a social justice argument against peak surcharges, as the average peak-period traveler usually has a higher income than an average midday traveler (because lower-paying jobs, mostly in service industries, are less likely to start and end on the usual peak). So insisting on flat fares all day could actually be seen as regressive.

Be sure to check out both original posts for a well-reasoned debate on the topic.

More from around the network: [Totcycle](#) proposes a "Bike to School Across America" competition. [Seattle Transit Blog](#) previews Mayor Mike McGinn's forthcoming "Walk Bike Ride" initiative. And [Broken Sidewalk](#) has a little snippet about a college basketball player who wouldn't get into a car during March Madness — because he recognized how dangerous it can be.

Posted on: Friday, May 7, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### 'Leaders' should listen to suggestions

David Shapiro's Volcanic Ash column, together with these letters, which I read almost every day, are the main reasons I subscribe to The Honolulu Advertiser.

Our state and city "leaders" should pay attention to the free advice that is often presented, for example:

- Run the new Honolulu rail system at grade rather than elevated.
- Get teachers and others to take a pay cut rather than furloughs.
- Ban fireworks statewide.
- Take camping gear away from the bums in our parks, on our sidewalks, etc., instead of passing a lot of ineffective laws.

*James R. Arcate*  
*Honolulu*



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### Pearl Highlands Rail Transit Station Workshop



Rendering shows entrance to the Pearl Highlands Rail Transit Transfer Station.

The Pearl Highlands Rail Transit Transfer Station is planned to be built across from Sam's Club on Kamehameha Highway in Pearl City and will change the landscape of lower Pearl City dramatically.

The rail station complex facility will serve as the hub for daily commuters traveling through the Central Oahu corridor.



Photo courtesy of the City and County of Honolulu

Aerial Mauka view depicting the scope and magnitude of the rail station project.

For more information call: 566-2299 or [info@honolulutransit.org](mailto:info@honolulutransit.org).  
Highlands Intermediate School is located at 1460 Hoolaulea Street in Pearl City.

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Posted on: Monday, May 10, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### Rail project

#### Cayetano's claims politically motivated Rail project

Ex-governor Ben Cayetano has reinvented himself as a proponent of clean government since leaving office. He's employed that theme in opposing the rail transit project and he's dusted it off in his latest, and we might add, unsubstantiated broadside, with an assist from Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi.

His claims regarding the process we used to hire firms working on rail are spurious. The City and County of Honolulu has been prudently, if not meticulously, complying with all federal, state, and county procurement laws and regulations for the rail project. That's been confirmed by federal reviews of the financial plan, an analysis by the Hawai'i Business Roundtable, and an audit by the city auditor.

And here's the kicker: The procurement law the city has been following was proposed and approved by the very person now complaining that we didn't follow the law — Ben Cayetano. Hawai'i Administrative Rules, Section 3-122-66, states that "if the names of less than three qualified persons are submitted the head of the purchasing agency may determine that negotiations may be conducted provided that the prices submitted are fair and reasonable, and other prospective offerors had reasonable opportunity to respond."

As a longtime friend and supporter of gubernatorial candidate Neil Abercrombie and a backer of Kobayashi's 2008 mayoral ambitions, the ex-governor's claims should be labeled for what they are: baseless, politically motivated rubbish and a waste of the taxpayers' time and money.

*Rix Maurer Iii*

*Chief procurement officer, Department of Budget and Fiscal Services, City and County of Honolulu*

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Monday, May 10, 2010

## [del Castillo on Honolulu rail](#)

Rafael del Castillo, a candidate for the 1st Congressional District, was asked about his position on Honolulu's planned rail system. With his permission, here is his reply:

Although as your Congressman my opinion would not have direct impact on rail, I do have strong opinions on the issues the rail project has raised. First, I would love to see Hawaii have a modern, highspeed system that

moves people and eliminates cars on the road. Rail is not a silver bullet and while mass transit is an essential component of the solution to congestion, it is just that, a component.

I disbelieve that the proposed rail system will do anything to alleviate congestion based upon the facts that have been offered, and for the reasons below. Properly employed using a less-expensive phase in, rail could help change dependence on the highway, and therefore pay for itself.

Rail can no longer be seen as the key to reducing dependence on oil, as I discuss, and therefore to the extent to which other municipalities obtained economic benefits from rail in the last two decades, can no longer be listed in rail's benefits column.

Second, I am more than a little disappointed in the way the rail project has been marketed by the Mayor and its proponents. For job creation and long term economic benefit to Hawaii, rail is not the answer. \$5 billion invested in our aging infrastructure would be a far better investment and economic stimulus, and I firmly believe we need those more than we need whatever rail eventually can do to improve our transportation system.

The actual effects of rail on commute times are too far off to be counted on as more than speculative. But getting back to job creation for the moment, rail will result in at \$1.5 billion of the \$5 billion going to stimulate either the Canadian or Japanese economy because that is the approximate cost of the trains.

Even \$1.5 billion spent on our infrastructure would create long term employment in Hawaii, and if scheduled properly, would ensure that those jobs go to Hawaii residents instead of having to import workers to meet the scheduling demands of rolling out the rail project.

I wish that our unions would take a harder look at the alternatives and invest their political influence in the best alternative for creating jobs and careers in Hawaii. Importing workers to meet deadlines is a really bad idea for Hawaii because it has the potential to create more unemployed when the temporary jobs run out. I wish we could assess the politicians responsible for creating that potential the amount we have to pay out for unemployment to the extent that imported workers stay and collect it.

The impact of rail on commuting is speculative at best. It depends too heavily on developing ridership. It does not address how those riders will get around when they reach

their destinations. UH Manoa is one thing, because it is a pedestrian campus, but downtown is quite another.

What will we do to support the ridership of people who need a car once they get to work? We know that people will continue to drive their cars, so it makes more sense to me to invest in moving cars instead of people. I have seen a proposal for a tiered toll-based car-moving highway that appears to make a great deal of sense. It has been done in other centers in the U.S.

Of course I want to see cars off the road, but as peoples' lives and commitments, and desires, become more complex due to more offerings in terms of opportunities in work and play, transportation design has to be more carefully thought out to anticipate how to serve those needs.

A rail line that moves along a defined corridor and is principally designed to get people into the center of town does not address that predictable evolution. That is not to say that the plan as it has been amended to address the development along the route cannot or will not address that to some extent, but those developments are a spin off and that does not satisfy the planning challenge I am suggesting.

I have never favored steel-on-steel. If we are going to build a 21st century transportation system, we must invest in 21st century technology. I am not an expert, but the proposed metro system appears to be the most expensive to maintain, the most expensive to modify or add to, and the most resistant to technological improvement, factors that do not appear to have been weighed against alternatives.

I do not believe that steel-on-steel is a legitimate choice, and am interested in investigating why it was chosen over LRT, or even an ultra modern maglev further. (I was a member of the legal team that represented the State successfully on the Aloha Stadium case against US Steel. It is apparent that the lessons learned from that case were not considered fully in the rail proposal.

The Stadium was built with steel that was designed to develop a patina of rust as a substitute for routine maintenance - I studied steel when I was in engineering school and produced a paper theorizing why nickel-miraging steels, on the atomic level, are so resistant to corrosion in high-saline environments, and thus was familiar with the product (which is not nickel-based) and had first seen it in Denver when I was working on the paper - a product that has been used successfully in many

environments. It failed miserably in Hawaii because engineers failed to test the conditions adequately at the Stadium site.

As it turned out the trades deposit high concentrations of salt on steel surfaces, much higher than had been seen in any other location where US Steel had used the product, and that is why the structure has essentially rotted.

That surely means something when you are building an elevated steel-on-steel system that is subjected to the same deposition of salt all along the line.) I am very concerned that we will not be able to afford to maintain the heavy rail system, and if we don't, it will tarnish the image of paradise in the eyes of visitors, and will impact adversely on one of our economic mainstays. If that happens, I don't need to tell you it will feed off itself, as diminishing visitor counts further depress the resources available to maintain the heavy rail.

Because you have asked the question, you probably know that the proposed system will cost more per ridership mile than any rail system in the history of the U.S. I am a strong proponent of revising automotive transportation because, for the foreseeable future in Hawaii, we will be dependent on the automobile.

I was very pleased that Nissan has decided to market the Leaf in Hawaii or at least Honolulu, so we have at least one electric car manufacturer planning to offer us a choice. In all of the country, Hawaii needs electric cars more than anything, and I have been very disappointed that our politicians have been wholly ineffective in persuading manufacturers to sell them here.

Nissan's decision was a smart marketing decision, and regrettably had little or nothing to do with any of our Congressional or state political leaders. I found the news of the Korean manufacturer looking at building electric cars in Hawaii somewhat encouraging, although I do not believe that, without strong political leadership (which I can bring), the plan will actually come to fruition.

I have been lobbying my brother to bring the Smart car here. Friends of mine have one and there are a few that have been imported. The Smart car takes up half a lane and half a parking spot. My wife and I drove one in France about 7 years ago and they provide fine transportation and it is fun to slip into a half a parking space and pass in a space little wider than the space a motorcycle requires.

Most people drive themselves to-and-from work, or, at

most have 2 in the car, so the small size of the Smart car is not an issue for commuting. Devoting two lanes to the Smart car and the copycats of the Smart car platform, would bring great relief immediately and cost little in infrastructure revision. It would also go a long way towards alleviating the parking problem downtown.

I believe the political leadership is not working on this type of solution because they have too much invested in rail, which makes me suspicious about the nature of their investment.

To put things in perspective, \$5 billion would buy 200,000 Smart cars. If we made a commitment to converting cars to the Smart car platform in substantial numbers, we could perhaps persuade one or more manufacturers of that class of vehicle to open a Hawaii plant (for real). Fortunately I have some substantive direct access to the manufacturers, so I could begin exploring this type of alternative right away.

Naturally we would have to persuade enough people to switch, but wouldn't you consider swapping a big car for a Smart car if you were offered access to two or four exclusive highway lanes and to parking at 1/2 price if you worked downtown? Add to that a tax credit for making the swap, and you would have to be seriously in love with that big car to elect not to swap it for a Smart car platform.

BTW, an all-electric version of the Smart car will be produced by the 1st quarter of 2011 last I heard, and several manufacturers are copying the Smart car platform, so there will be choices and competition.

I favor addressing the congestion problem with more immediate measures as I suggest, and I believe that I can influence things in that direction. I further favor a longer-term plan to establish a 21st century people-mover that offers an attractive way to get around alternative to the automobile, one that is intended to convert people from cars for all or nearly all of their transportation needs.

If steel-on-steel is built, and what I am predicting comes to pass, I fervently hope that people will not forget which politicians pushed the rail project, and remember them at the polls.

As I said, I hope you will pass this along. The question has not come up in prior debates, at least the ones to which I have been invited, but I am sure people want to know. Creating a massive tangible monument to my name is meaningless to me, as is being remembered for

anything. I am solely interested in using our resources wisely and creating real solutions to problems that also foster opportunities for the people of Hawaii and make all of our lives better in the long run. I believe what I am suggesting will direct more \$ into the pockets of working people, and improve the quality of life in Hawaii.

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[Permalink](#) posted by [Larry](#) @ 5/10/2010 09:31:00 AM



### Comments:

#### Elect this man!

# posted by Anonymous : 9:46 AM HST

**del Castillo is all wrong. Just to name one point, he never mentions the overwhelming bus ridership in the City, and the fact that transit is at least 10 years along on a steady slide into immobility. Maybe rail WON'T move many existing drivers out of their cars, but it WILL encourage existing transit riders to not buy MORE CARS--cars that will probably BREAKDOWN more often, incidentally-and make the road commute from 'Ewa MUCH SLOWER.**

# posted by Shulie : 11:46 AM HST

**Post a Comment**



## EDITORIAL

# All-electric cars driving Hawaii into the future

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

6 [retweet](#) [Share](#) All-electric cars are poised to enter Hawaii in ways that should contribute to the state's economic recovery while weaning it away from a dependence on gasoline. Their entry to the islands should play an important role in the Lingle administration's goal of having clean sources account for 70 percent of the state's energy by 2030.

In the past two weeks, Nissan Motor Co. declared Hawaii to be one of the early markets to launch its LEAF model and South Korea's CT&T revealed its plan to build Hawaii's first car assembly plant.

Both activities involved the state's cooperation and more will be required.

Those efforts include finding ways to provide facilities for charging batteries for what the state estimates to reach 10,000 electric cars in five years. The CT&T vehicles' lead-acid batteries need recharging every 30 miles while a fully charged lithium polymer battery can go 62 miles.

Nissan's full-size sedan is expected to go on sale early next year for \$32,780, with a tax rebate of up to \$7,500. CT&T plans to sell cars assembled overseas at a new dealership in Honolulu in six months and start its Oahu assembly line of its smaller cars within two years.

The CT&T project involves building a facility costing up to \$50 million at a location yet to be determined. The factory will be capable of assembling 10,000 cars a year, creating about 400 jobs and generating as many as a thousand peripheral jobs. The total investment is expected to reach \$200 million.

Honolulu's speed limit of 25 to 35 mph on city streets "fits perfectly into our type of vehicle," said Joe White, the CT&T American chief operating officer. "The other thing is working with a state that adheres to the philosophies of our company."

Gov. Linda Lingle, who has been a champion of green energy, signed a memorandum of understanding with CT&T Chief Executive Officer Lee Young-gi to enter into a working relationship with the company.

Most of CT&T's vehicles can go up to 40 mph. That is 5 mph faster than electric vehicles made by American Custom Golf Cars that took to Oahu's roads last month to the consternation of motorists accustomed to driving streets faster than the posted limit.

Gas guzzlers will take time getting used to sharing the roadways with limited-speed vehicles.

"The transition to electric vehicles needs a major jump-start, and this is happening now," said David Rolf, executive director of the Hawaii Automobile Dealers Association.

Hawaii is an ideal location for electric cars to make a significant debut; many mainland motorists may hesitate to purchase a car unable to carry the electrical equivalent of a full gas tank. The Lingle administration has steered the state in the right direction.

**Find this article at:**

[http://www.starbulletin.com/editorials/20100510\\_all\\_electric\\_cars\\_driving\\_hawaii\\_into\\_the\\_future.html](http://www.starbulletin.com/editorials/20100510_all_electric_cars_driving_hawaii_into_the_future.html)

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Updated at 6:44 p.m., Wednesday, May 12, 2010

## City Council seeks rail project financial details

Advertiser Staff

The Honolulu City Council on Wednesday passed resolution 10-86, which requests city officials to provide the council an updated financial plan for Honolulu's \$5.3 billion rail project as well as an accounting of transit fund proceeds and expenses.

Under the resolution, the council also is seeking a list of all city and contract employees working on the project along with their qualifications, and an updated list of rapid transit contractors and subcontractors.

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Posted on: Wednesday, May 12, 2010

## Fake passes plague TheBus

*More counterfeits than ever, officials say, as public is warned of scam*

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

The widespread use of counterfeit city bus passes has prompted city officials to warn bus passengers to buy their passes only from official sales locations.

TheBus drivers have confiscated 198 fake bus passes in the past two weeks, Mayor Mufi Hannemann said yesterday.

"Far too many people are using this," Hannemann said at a news conference. "The problem is that people are being duped into buying these passes."

The counterfeit passes are believed to be selling for \$20 to \$25, about half that of a \$50 monthly adult bus pass, the mayor said.

"That should be the first signal to you that you're getting a bad deal," Hannemann said. "Please don't do this. It's wrong, it's not right, it's illegal."

Wayne Yoshioka, city transportation services director, said anyone caught using a fake bus pass will be asked to turn over the card and to leave TheBus.

Two of the people who tried to use the passes in recent days were arrested, said police Maj. Carlton Nishimura, commander of the department's Criminal Investigations Division.

The violations are misdemeanors, and those

found guilty face up to a year in jail and a fine of up to \$2,000, Nishimura said.

Detectives are looking into where the counterfeits are being sold, he said. Nishimura did not rule out the possibility that they are being sold in stores.

"That's part of our investigation," he said.

People who come into possession of the fake passes should turn them over TheBus drivers or officials, Nishimura said.

There are ways to determine if a bus pass is counterfeit. Fake ones have a raised silver strip along the card's lower section. The strip in the real ones are incorporated into the plastic card.

Also, counterfeit cards generally have edges that are cut less uniformly.

Oahu Transit Services operates TheBus. J. Roger Morton, the company's president and general manager, praised bus operators for being "eagle-eyed" in looking out for counterfeit passes since warnings were issued two weeks ago.

"We told them that this was, in essence, stealing from the city when someone uses a fake bus

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pass," Morton said. "Clearly in these times, it's not something that can be tolerated at all."

While attempts at counterfeit bus passes is nothing new, "I've never seen anything as rampant as it is right now," he said.

A majority of the passes were confiscated from passengers in the Kalihi and downtown areas, where TheBus ridership is highest, Morton said. But they've also been spotted at the Waipahu and Wai'anae transit centers, as well in Kahalu'u, Waikiki and Kapolei, he said.

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

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ABC Stores (not all)

University of Hawaii-Manoa Campus Center

Hawaii Pacific University bookstore

Hawaiian Tel Federal Credit Union

Chit Chat Store (Bishop Square)

Source: City Department of Transportation Services



Mayor Mufi Hannemann holds up fake, right, and genuine, left, bus passes. In the past two weeks TheBus drivers have confiscated 198 fake bus passes, which sell for about half the cost of a real bus pass.

NORMAN SHAPIRO | The Honolulu Advertiser

## WHERE TO BUY THEBUS PASSES

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TheBus offices, 811 Middle St.

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# Honolulu CIVIL BEAT

Wednesday, May 12th, 2010

Honolulu Hawaii Education Land Money

## Rail, Highway Projects Won't Be Covered By "Local Jobs Bill"



Treena Shapiro  
Honolulu reporter-host

By Treena Shapiro

05/12/2010

A new law aimed at getting Hawaii construction tradesmen back to work should generate more local jobs on some upcoming projects.



RJ Brown/Civil Beat

But public works projects that receive federal dollars will be exempt, including two of the largest — rail and highways. The federal government has earmarked \$200 million for state highway and bridge improvements and the city's \$5.3 billion rail proposal hinges on a \$1.55 billion federal contribution.

Supporters of the bill acknowledge that federal law supersedes the new state regulations. However, they note the state Legislature budgeted \$4.5 billion for more than 2,300 public works projects in 2008 and 2009 and not all are bound by federal procurement law.

Whether the bill will achieve its intended effect on locally-funded jobs is up for debate. State Comptroller Russ Saito suspects the quota might discourage competitive bidding and open contracts up to legal challenges. A number of industry groups shared Saito's concerns.

"The cost of jobs will go up and they'll be delayed," Saito said. "It's not likely to increase jobs."

Dubbed the "Local Jobs for Local People" law, Act 68 requires that Hawaii residents must comprise 80 percent of the workforce for government contracts. Since 2007, construction jobs have fallen by 20 percent, according to a report commissioned by the Painters Local Union 1791, a primary supporter of the initiative. Forecasts by the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization predict that construction spending this year will be down 17 percent from 2009, but will start rising again next year, in part because of government projects.

Until the economy recovers, the local jobs law is intended to ensure that the majority of local construction jobs go to people who live and spend their wages in the state, said state Sen. Robert Bunda, who introduced the bill. (The law doesn't have a sunset.)

"It's to keep the money here in Hawaii. You have 80 percent of the residents on projects from in state," he said after the state Legislature overrode a veto of the Senate Bill 2840 by Gov. Linda Lingle.

Testimony from labor unions during the past legislative session reflected their frustration that Hawaii tradesmen have faced rising unemployment numbers while government contractors have hired workers from out of state.

"If there are jobs outside the scope of duties for existing government employees, such as for these large public construction projects, the tax dollars that are used to pay for the work should be thoughtfully directed to heal our economy," wrote Nora Nomura, deputy executive director of the Hawaii Government Employees Association.

But industry groups expressed concern that the legislation could lead to litigation and payment delays. The General Contractors Association of Hawaii, representing 570 firms, concluded in written testimony that "these provisions will lead to increased project costs, bid protests and delays in executing contracts. All of these will not be in the best interest of the public or the residents who would like to work on these projects that will be delayed by bid protests or cancelled due to lack of

### Discussions

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lapse of funds."

While there's little debate over whether it's important to get tradesmen back to work, some of the biggest projects in the pipeline are exempted from the state quota because federal law prohibits discrimination or preferential hiring on any grounds, including geography. Since the proposed Honolulu rail plan will use federal funding, the hiring restrictions won't apply to the thousands of jobs the project would create — as many as 10,000 by city estimates. Others estimate a lower total, but still acknowledge that it will create jobs.

In November 2009, Mayor Mufi Hannemann and 12 private sector labor unions signed the Rapid Transit Stabilization Agreement that ensures contractors will offer comparable pay and standardized work conditions to all its employees, whether they are union or not. The intent is to stave off potential labor disputes and take away incentive for contractors to bring in out-of-state workers who might work for lower wages.

No such agreement is required for many other government jobs that rely entirely on local funding. Supporters of the law expect it will keep millions of dollars in wages and taxes in Hawaii. "In an economy like this, every job counts and a mandate like this does more than tries (to create jobs). It guarantees a certain level of local people will be put to work on these projects," said Nathaniel Kinney, a labor attorney and organizer for the International Painters Union and Allied Trades, District Council 50.

Kinney provided a report by two mainland university economists who analyzed the economic impact of hiring local construction workers over bringing them from out of state. In one section, they looked at an alternative rail route that had been considered in 2008. According to the report, that route — longer than the one ultimately chosen — would have created 12,000 construction jobs. If 67 percent of workers were imported, the state would lose out on \$299 million in economic activity and \$22 million in tax revenue. By contrast, if 80 percent of workers were Hawaii residents, it would add \$210 million to the local economy and only \$7 million in local taxes would go out of state, the economists estimated. In addition, 1,670 local jobs would be saved, they said.

Nevertheless, the city can only encourage rail contractors to hire locally without running afoul of federal law. The same applies to the state transportation highway, harbor and airport projects that received \$199 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (stimulus funds).

"Whenever we use federal funds, we cannot have prohibitions on contractors," said state Department of Transportation Director Brennon Morioka.

But Morioka pointed out that being exempt from the law doesn't mean that local workers won't be hired. In fact, he said it's generally more cost-effective to work with local contractors who have equipment and laborers here than to bring equipment and people over from the mainland, he said. "Almost all of our contracts are with local contractors," he said.

Craig Nishimura, director of the city's Department of Design and Construction, has concerns projects could be delayed due to potential legal challenges, but said "for normal types of projects, it's not all that much of a concern."

Like Morioka, Nishimura said even without the law, local workers should be hired. "We do have mainland contractors, but they've been here a while, so they hire locals who supplement the mainland hires," Nishimura said. He expects that there are enough Honolulu workers for the city to meet the quotas in the new law.

Nishimura raised concerns about problems that could arise if necessary skill sets can't be found in the local worker pool, but the law makes an exception for shortage situations.

Kinney, the labor lawyer, said the push for the local jobs initiative was a result of contractors hiring out-of-state workers for projects such as a \$10.5 million renovation project at Aloha Stadium that employed 50 workers — most from out of state, according to legislative testimony.

Even if federal projects are left out of the equation, having a law on the books should stimulate the industry, Kinney said. "In an economy like this, every job counts and a mandate like this more than tries (to create local jobs). It guarantees a certain level of local people will be put back to work," he said.

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**DISCUSSION:** *Has all the attention focused on guaranteeing the percentage of Hawaii residents on government contracts been worth it? Join the discussion.*



## 'Bargain' bus passes are fakes

Drivers have seized 198 of the widely distributed phony cards in the past two weeks

By [Mary Adamski](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, May 12, 2010

**1** [retweet](#) [Share](#) Hundreds of Oahu bus riders are being lured into buying "bargain" bus passes but are finding that using the fake cards will get them ejected from TheBus, city officials said yesterday.

Bus drivers have seized 198 phony bus passes in the past two weeks in a campaign described yesterday by Mayor Mufi Hannemann and city transportation officials.

Copies of multicolored counterfeit passes were displayed at a news conference, which was called after 70 fakes were collected by drivers on Monday.

The fakes can be detected by handling them, officials said. A metallic strip is part of a real pass; on the fakes it can be felt as a strip taped onto the card.

"We've had bouts of counterfeits before, mostly on a small scale and very crude," said Roger Morton, chief executive officer of Oahu Transit Services. "I've never seen it as rampant as it is now. These are of a better quality and obviously widely distributed."

The mayor said, "People are being duped on the streets. If a bus pass is going for \$20 or \$25, that should be the first signal you are getting a bad deal."

Legitimate monthly passes, which cost \$50, are sold in numerous locations, including satellite city halls, supermarkets, 7-Eleven stores and the UH Campus Center, he said.

Two people have been arrested for using counterfeit passes, a misdemeanor that could lead to a year in jail and a \$2,000 fine, said police Maj. Carlton Nishimura, of the Criminal Investigation Division.

"Frame of mind is part of the decision to charge," he said. "They have to know it is fake."

He said police and prosecutors are conferring about possible felony forgery charges against the counterfeiters if they are found.

The first fakes were spotted in April, and by early May the people peddling the fakes "ramped it up," said Wayne Yoshioka, director of the city Department of Transportation Services. "What riders need to know is that the bus operator will confiscate the pass. It's not worth it to spend the money and have it taken away and not even get a ride out of it."

Morton said that when the campaign to find the fakes went into high gear last Wednesday, bus drivers would stop the bus while a road supervisor or police officer was called.

 Fake city bus passes on rise



Honolulu police continue to confiscate fake city bus passes.

[ [Watch](#) ]



"We changed the policy when the numbers grew," he said. "It became a major inconvenience for bus riders. We now confiscate the pass but don't stall the bus and interrupt the schedule." Each rider found with a fake is put off the bus.

Morton said there is no pattern of phony passes in use in a particular area. Most of them have been found on routes through downtown Honolulu and Kalihi because "that's where the heaviest bus traffic is. The operators have been eagle-eye finding them.

"Essentially it's stealing from the city when someone uses a fake. In these times it can't be tolerated to take the city's money," Morton said.

Hannemann said that anyone with information on the source of the cards is asked to call the Honolulu Police Department.

**Find this article at:**

[http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100512\\_Bargain\\_bus\\_passes\\_are\\_fakes.html](http://www.starbulletin.com/news/20100512_Bargain_bus_passes_are_fakes.html)

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## Letters to the Editor

For Wednesday, May 12, 2010

### **Electric cars help wean state off oil**

I applaud the recent news that a Korean company will soon be building electric cars in Hawaii. Not only will it help diversify our local economy, but it will wean us off our islands' dependency on oil.

While I understand these cars are not designed to go fast enough to drive along the freeway, electric vehicles are a step in the right direction away from gas-powered ones. This effort, along with the city's high-speed, electric-powered train, will hopefully lead us toward reliance on renewable energies — rather than one that comes from a barrel.

Jonn Serikawa  
Honolulu

Posted on: Friday, May 14, 2010

## **Letters to the Editor**

### **Rail Construction**

#### **Can city be trusted to get rail started?**

Both the mayor and the City Council have failed to handle a simple \$10 million contract for shipping garbage to the Mainland. This has been an ongoing fiasco since last October.

Therefore, how can the taxpayers of O'ahu expect them to handle the construction of a multifaceted rail system with a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars?

Personally, I have no faith that the rail construction can be managed properly when our local leaders can't even handle garbage.

Let's stop rail now before it puts the taxpayers in the poor house.

*Don Jackson  
Honolulu*

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# Honolulu CIVIL BEAT

Friday, May 14th, 2010

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## Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project

The City and County of Honolulu Government plans to build a \$5.3 billion elevated rapid transit line that will cover 20 miles from east Kapolei to Ala Moana Center. The proposed route, pending approval from the Federal Transit Administration, passes through Ewa, Waipahu, Pearl City, Aiea, Kalihi, downtown Honolulu and Kakaako. Since release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in November 2008, the city has made a route adjustment to bring a stop near the Honolulu International Airport into federal compliance. The proposed route is scheduled for completion by 2019. Future plans call for eventually extending the line to the University of Hawaii-Manoa and Waikiki.

The city considered four options before settling on a steel wheel on steel rail system, which has received city, state and federal support. During the 2008 general election, 50.6 percent of Honolulu voters said yes to the charter amendment question: "Shall the powers, duties, and functions of the city, through its director of transportation services, include establishment of a steel wheel on steel rail transit system?"

The rail issue was so divisive during the election that more people voted down the steel-on-steel technology (140,818) than voted for anti-rail mayoral candidate, now-Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi. Kobayashi received 128,798 votes.

The project continues to have vocal detractors, however, who have called for alternatives, such as high occupancy toll lanes with prioritized bus rapid transit or even nothing at all. However, as of April 2010, the city is well on its way to finishing a Final Environmental Impact Statement to submit to the Federal Transit Administration for approval.

The proposed route would include 21 ADA-compliant rail stations that will have escalators, elevators, stairs and platforms level with the trains' floors. Not every station will have parking, but the rail system is intended to work in concert with TheBus, allowing for easy transfer between the two.

### Route

The initial Honolulu rail line is proposed to run 20 miles from east Kapolei, near the University of Hawaii-West Oahu campus, to Ala Moana Center. Along the way, it would pass Waipahu, Leeward Community College, Pearl City, Pearlridge, Aloha Stadium, Salt Lake, Kalihi, Honolulu Community College, downtown Honolulu and Kakaako. Extensions are also planned. One extension would go from Ala Moana Center to the University of Hawaii-Manoa campus, as well as Waikiki. Other proposed extensions would lead west through Kapolei and to Kalaeloa.

Depending on the final route, the project could require the acquisition of 183 to 267 acres, which would affect a minimum of 40 residential parcels (some vacant), 131 businesses and one church. In all routes considered for the draft environmental impact statement, 13 residential properties would potentially be fully acquired and another 12 partially acquired, with a net loss of 58 residential units. In addition, as many as 137 businesses could be displaced.

The route will also have visual impacts, that include tree removal and altered mountain and ocean views. The American Institutes of Architects Honolulu Chapter has posted simulations of what the an elevated rail line would look like in downtown Honolulu.

### History

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- [Impact on Historic Sites](#)
- [Key Players](#)

#### Authors



Treena Shapiro



Katherine Nichols

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The current rail proposal isn't Oahu's first. The idea has been considered for 40 years. In 1967, the Oahu Transportation Study recommended a fixed guideway from Pearl City to Hawaii Kai, which then-Mayor Neal Blaisdell pursued. In the 1970s, then-Mayor Frank Fasi inherited the project and received federal money for the Honolulu Area Rapid Transit (HART) project, a fixed guideway that would connect Aloha Stadium and Kahala Mall. However, Fasi's defeat to Eileen Anderson in the 1980 election put his rail plans on hold. Fasi would regain the mayoral seat and, with support from the Gov. John Waihee administration, receive Congressional approval for \$618 million in federal funding for HART. The plan called for a 0.5 percent general excise tax increase to cover the remainder of the project costs, but in 1992 the city council voted down the tax increase in a 5-4 vote, killing the plan.

In 2003, rail came up again, this time as a light rail proposal from then-state Sen. President Robert Bunda, (D-21, Mililani Mauka, Wahiawa, Haleiwa, Mokuleia, North Shore). Gov. Linda Lingle, a Republican, that year also proposed light rail in West Oahu and an elevated Nimitz "flyover" highway. She ended up dropping both plans due to her party's opposition to the projects, which would have required tax increases for funding.

Two years later, however, both the city and state agreed to work together on a rail proposal. In 2005, the state legislature passed a GET surcharge, which Lingle allowed to pass into law without her signature. This time the city council approved the tax increase.

In 2008, the city, state, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and voters approved the start of a steel-wheel-on-steel-rail system. The project's groundbreaking was scheduled for December 2009, but has been delayed because the FTA has yet to approve a Final Environmental Impact Statement. In April, the city announced it had adjusted a portion of the route near the airport so it would no longer encroach on the airport runway protected zone. The city said it is almost ready to send another draft of the environmental impact statement to the FTA for approval, but it is possible the route adjustment may require a supplemental EIS.

Even if the FTA approves the final draft quickly, other factors could hold up the project. Lingle has said she wants to do a thorough analysis of the updated financial plan, which could take up to three months.

Lingle's analysis is not included in the city's current timetable, which calls for FTA approval and groundbreaking in 2010 and the first segment from East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands to be completed and opened in 2012. The other segments are scheduled for completion by 2017, in three phases:

- Pearl Highlands to Aloha Stadium
- Aloha Stadium to Middle Street
- Middle Street to Ala Moana Center

The entire project is scheduled for completion in 2019.

## Financing

Honolulu's \$5.3 billion rail project will be funded by a combination of city, state and federal funds. The city has already set aside \$250 million in tax revenue for the project and anticipates receiving a total of \$1.55 billion in federal funding. So far, Congress has appropriated \$65 million for the project over three years and another \$55 million was included in this year's budget. Mayor Mufi Hannemann said the remainder of the federal funding for the project is slated by the end of fiscal year 2011, but that is subject to approval of the environmental impact statement and financial plan.

The one-half percent general excise tax surcharge dedicated in 2007 to fund the bulk of the rail system has produced lower than anticipated revenues. City officials have pointed out that while revenues have dropped during the economic downturn, including a \$27.1 million shortfall last year, the projections are based on the surcharge being spread out over 16 years. Hannemann has said plans to deal with a funding shortage will be included along with the yet-to-be-released Final Environmental Impact Statement. The new financial plan could also adjust for another potential shortfall this year. After the city dropped rail tax revenue projections from \$198 to \$164 million in fiscal year 2010, the state Council on Revenues reported in March that GET collection had been even lower than expected. As a result, with only four months until the fiscal year ends June 30, the city had only collected \$104 million.

A breakdown of the estimated \$5.3 billion costs are as follows, according to an October 2009 Federal Transit Administration memo:

- Guideway and Trackwork: \$1.7 billion
- Stations, stops, terminals: \$389 million
- Support facilities: \$138 million
- Site work/Special conditions: \$895 million
- Systems: \$311 million
- ROW, land, improvements: \$129 million
- Vehicles: \$399 million
- Professional services: \$934 million
- Contingency: \$184 million
- Finance charges: \$290 million

Gov. Linda Lingle, who will have to sign off on the project, has called for an analysis of the updated financial projections to determine the economic viability of the project.

## Technology

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The Honolulu Rail system will use steel-wheel technology. In February 2008, an independent panel of transportation experts appointed by the administration and city council recommended steel-on-steel as the best long-term and most cost-effective solution. The panel cited benefits that include higher passenger capacity, better ride quality, better energy efficiency and lower noise and air-quality impacts.

The independent technology selection panel had five members:

- Chairman Ron Tober, former manager of several transit authorities
- Steve Barsony, a systems engineering expert
- Kenneth G. Knight, a construction expert
- Henry Kolesar, an operations expert
- Panos Prevedouros, a professor of Traffic and Transportation Engineering at the University of Hawaii-Manoa.

Prevedouros, who jumped into the 2008 mayoral race and campaigned against rail, was the only dissenting vote. Prevedouros supported rubber tire technology, citing the advantage of it being a lighter weight system with a lower price tag.

The panel had compared the steel-wheel on steel-track system to rubber tire on concrete, monorail and magnetic levitation technology.

The decision to move to rail came just a couple years after the city abandoned plans for a bus rapid transit system in urban Honolulu, due in part to concerns that dedicated bus lanes would create more congestion rather than help it. The city considered other alternatives, such as elevated high-occupancy toll roads, as well.

Honolulu follows several cities in selecting a fixed rail system — Charlotte, Houston, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Sacramento and San Jose have all built light rail systems since 2003. However, the American Institute of Architects Honolulu Chapter pointed out that most of those routes operate at ground level, rather than the elevated line proposed for Honolulu.

The architects' group supports light rail, but in a flexible system combining elevated and at-grade tracks, with the route at ground level through the urban core.

## Impacts

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The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Honolulu rail project looked at the traffic corridor from Kapolei to Manoa and drew conclusions based on more residents and job sites moving toward West Oahu through 2030.

Currently, 63 percent of Oahu's population and 81 percent of employment is located in the designated transit corridor. The planning documents looked at a narrow 23-mile strip bounded by the Waianae and Koolau mountain ranges and the Pacific Ocean. The corridor includes most of West Oahu, including many new and upcoming suburban developments and the "second city" of Kapolei, as well as the business district and Waikiki. By 2030, the population living in the area is expected to increase to 69 percent, along with 84 percent of jobs. If those projections are correct, along with the expectation that 95,000 commuters will ride a train on a daily basis, the city predicts future traffic congestion will be reduced by 20 percent instead of steadily increasing as more people and businesses move toward West Oahu.

## Ridership

In 2007, about 73 percent of more than 2 million daily trips on Oahu originated between Kapolei and Waikiki, including about 350,000 trips during peak morning travel times. Under the proposed system, trains will hold more than 300 passengers, which planners say is the equivalent of more than 200 cars, with trains coming every three minutes during rush hour. If the train ridership is as robust as the city hopes, it could mean 30,000 fewer cars on the road each day. According to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), this could improve traffic congestion and parking shortages for others commuting to work in downtown Honolulu, Kakaako or the Ala Moana area, even those coming from areas not served by the rail system.

While there is skepticism among opponents about whether the ridership projections will be realized, the city hopes to have similar results to smaller communities, as well as less densely populated cities with successful steel-wheel transit systems, including Portland, Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Although 2010 data shows declining ridership in public transportation nationwide, the American Public Transportation Association reported before the economic downturn that public transportation use had been on the rise in several cities, with increased ridership of 5 percent to 43 percent within a one year time frame.

Honolulu's ridership numbers will likely depend on how easy the rail system will be to use and how much it reduces commute times. The city so far has offered little data to make comparisons between the length of a rail commute and driving in rush hour. The Draft EIS offered only two comparisons between 2007 rush hour drive times and projected 2030 transit travel times:

- Waianae to UH-Manoa: 128 minutes by car vs. 91-93 minutes by train
- Kapolei to Ala Moana Center: 101 minutes by car vs. 57-59 minutes by train

In his State of Rail Address on Oct. 29, 2009, Mayor Mufi Hannemann offered one more comparison — travel from East Kapolei to downtown Honolulu would take 38 minutes by train, compared to the 89 minute average drive in 2007.

None of those estimates take into account how long it would take a commuter to get to the nearest transit station, however.

## Economic Impacts

According to Hannemann, the Honolulu rail project would create 10,000 jobs and add \$330 million to the economy this year.

However, a University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization study in March 2009 offered a different outlook, combining the construction impacts of both the State Highway Modernization Program and Oahu Rail Mass Transit: “These programs have little near-term stimulative effect, but may provide a substantial boost to the industry in the medium term, adding more than \$2 billion in annual real contracting receipts and nearly 6,000 additional jobs by 2013.”

Over the course of the project, UH economists' projections cut the city's job estimate by a third, taking into account the current economic climate. They also predict significant job creation won't take place immediately — in contrast to Hannemann's statement that 4,000 jobs would be created in 2010 alone. However, while the job numbers and timeline are different, the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization reports on the construction industry predict that large government-funded projects, including rail, will give the struggling construction industry a boost when construction begins.

Opponents of the project, including mayoral candidate and outspoken rail critic Panos Prevedourous say it will create only 1,000 local jobs and 2,000 jobs total in the public sector. However, his projections could not be substantiated in the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization report he cited or by local economists reached by Civil Beat.

## Impact on Historic Sites

Although the city has said seven historic sites will face negative impacts, the Historic Hawaii Foundation believes at least 33 historic properties, including three historic districts, will be adversely affected by the planned rail route. Adverse effects, according to the foundation's definition, include “demolition, physical occupation of a portion of the site or having an impact on the site's setting, context, feeling or association.” Another 50 are in the area of potential effect.

The project will also impact between 152 and 177 parcels, including 35 that will be acquired. The adjusted portion of the route near the airport could change the number of affected properties.

## Key Players

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann has been rail's most visible advocate since 2005, a position that made for a contentious campaign when Hannemann ran for reelection in 2008. See more on the Honolulu Rail Key Players page.

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Honolulu

# CIVIL BEAT

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Friday, May 14th, 2010

[Honolulu](#) | [Hawaii](#) | [Education](#) | [Land](#) | [Money](#)

## Honolulu Rail Key Players

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Several of the state's most prominent politicians, including Honolulu Mayor [Mufi Hannemann](#), have voiced their support for the city's proposed rail project.

Honolulu Mayor [Mufi Hannemann](#) has been rail's most visible advocate since 2005, a position that made for a contentious campaign when Hannemann ran for reelection in 2008.

Speculation that Hannemann will resign to run for governor later this year raises questions about the fate of the Honolulu Rail project, but others also have an interest in keeping the project alive. If Hannemann does step down, his current managing director Kirk Caldwell, would step in as acting mayor until a special election can be held. Caldwell has already started raising funds for a mayoral campaign. Other potential mayoral candidates include City Prosecutor Peter Carlisle, City Councilman Donovan Dela Cruz and censured City Councilman Rod Tam.

If he runs for governor, Hannemann would face former U.S. Congressman Neil Abercrombie in the Democratic primary. Abercrombie, along with the rest of Hawaii's congressional delegation, has been a rail supporter. Lt. Gov. James "Duke" Aiona is the most prominent Republican running for governor and has not taken a strong position on the subject.

U.S. Sen. [Daniel K. Inouye](#), the state's most powerful politician, has been the most outspoken of Hawaii's Congressional delegation in support of the rail issue. In 2009, Inouye discouraged the state legislature from using the state's rail transit tax to ease the state's budget deficit. Daniel Akaka and U.S. Congresswoman Mazie Hirono also back the project.

### Table of Contents

- [Honolulu Rail Key Players](#)
- [Government](#)
- [Contractors](#)
- [Opponents](#)

### Authors



Treena Shapiro

### Share



## Government

- City Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka
- State Transportation Director Brennon Morioka
- Federal Transit Administration Administrator Peter Rogoff
- Rail project manager Toru Hayamasu

## Contractors

- InfraConsult LLC, of Scottsdale Ariz., received a five-year \$36.7 million contract to oversee the rail project after no other bidders emerged. InfraConsult has been managing the project since March 2007, when only one other firm bid for the \$11.5 million contract. InfraConsult will oversee the other contractors.
- Kapolei-based Kiewit Pacific Co., received a **\$483 million contract** in Oct. 2009 to build the first 6.5 mile leg of the route from Kapolei to Pearl Highlands.
- Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. received an \$86 million contract in August 2007. The New York-based engineering firm played a major role in designing the H-3 freeway and is the city's general engineering consultant for the rail project.
- Engineering and consulting firm PB Americas Inc., a unit of Parsons Brinckerhoff with offices in Honolulu, was awarded a \$90 million two-and-a-half year contract in Aug. 2007 to prepare the environmental impact statement for the proposed transit route.

## Opponents

- **Sensible Traffic Alternatives and Resources, Inc.**
- Grassroots Institute
- Cliff Slater
- Panos Prevedouros
- State Sen. Sam Slom
- State Sen. Fred Hemmings

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# Welcome to the neighborhood | Pearl City

Goal is clean, safe neighborhood

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, May 16, 2010

1 retweet [Share](#) **OUR TOP ISSUES**

## Illegal dumping and racing on the freeway are ongoing concerns of area residents

1. Illegal dumping/bulky-item dumping is an ongoing problem in our residential areas.

Although measures are being implemented on the City Council level, we're still seeing bulky items placed on the sidewalks in various residential areas well before the pick-up date every month.

2. Racing on the freeway by Pearl City in the late hours of the evening is a continuing disruption for residents in the surrounding residential areas.

Usually in the midnight hours on the weekends, vehicles engage in racing activities on the freeway, which generates a lot of noise and safety hazards.

3. The rail project as it relates to transit-oriented development is also a subject of involvement in Pearl City.

Transit-oriented development is expected to affect the Pearl City area on Kamehameha Highway due to the construction of the rail project, once that takes effect in Pearl City.

4. We continue to advocate repairs and improvements to our parks and the Pearl City Library for the community to utilize.

We have asked the city administration and the state Legislature to include renovations to the Manana Community Park and the Pearl City Library, respectively, to add more parking spaces and ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

5. We urge improvements and welcome new businesses in the Pearl City Gateway.



**James Pickard Sr.**

When the city and county's warehouses along the

**BOARD NO. 21**

Pearl City Gateway were taken down, several new businesses opened in that area, and more are expected to arrive in the coming months.

## SO SPECIAL

### Ready to 'Talk story'

The Pearl City community is special because of its friendly and caring multi-generational population. Anytime you go around Pearl City, the people are never hesitant to "talk story" with you. This degree of friendliness is one of the most defining qualities of Pearl City and the people here.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

» In the 2000 Census, Pearl City, located along Pearl Harbor's north shore, had a population of 30,976, with 8,921 households and 7,288 families. The estimated population in July 2007 was 31,877.

» The racial makeup, according to the 2000 Census: 53.4 percent Asian, 17.24 percent Caucasian, 7.3 percent Hispanic or Latino, 6.15 percent Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 2.7 percent African-American, 0.27 percent Native American, 1.4 percent from other races, and 18.8 percent from two or more races.

» The estimated median household income in 2008 was \$84,785, according to [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com); it was \$62,036 in 2000. The estimated median house or condo value in 2008 was \$568,873 (it was \$272,100 in 2000).

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## Say Yes to the Honolulu Rail System

Honolulu's soon-to-be-built rail transit system makes sense for Oahu residents no matter where you live. It will improve mobility for islanders who must commute along the Kapolei-Downtown corridor, and it'll cut traffic congestion from projected levels by about 20%. If you're put off that I'm a paid communications consultant to the City and started this blog specifically to advance the project, you probably don't want to read any further.

Monday, May 17, 2010

### Civil Beat: 'Transit Plan Out of City Hands'

[The new subscription online news service](#) makes an excellent point in its lead story on transit today – and does it so succinctly that we stole its headline for our own. Editor John Temple's Twitter posts today included a link to the story, so we feel comfortable quoting from it and [linking to it here as well](#).

Reporter Treena Shapiro starts off by noting: *"When construction begins on Honolulu's rail line is now up to the governor and federal government."*

It's like raising a child. You spend years preparing, planning, informing and selecting, and in the end, the City has to stand back and see what happens with this major project. Shapiro continues:

*"The City this month submitted its final Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed \$5.3 billion rail project to the Federal Transit Administration. For construction to begin, the FTA and Gov. Linda Lingle need to sign off on the plans."*

The requirement to obtain those two final sign-offs has been known for years, so that's not "news" news. But Shapiro's observation serves to sharpen the focus of everyone concerned with rail. First the FTA, then the Governor must give rail a thumbs up.

### FTA's Endorsement

The former doesn't seem in doubt. [FTA officials in February gave the project a ringing endorsement](#) and as good as pledged \$1.55 billion in federal funds to Honolulu rail. So the real question is whether the Governor will formally accept the FEIS and allow rail to be built.

We've noted here that [the Governor has shown a partiality to at-grade trains](#), even though at-grade transit requires more ground-level disruption and trenching, more neighborhood impacts, more incursion into existing traffic lanes, is [accident-prone and therefore less reliable](#), is slower, can carry fewer passengers, and so on.

Shapiro's piece is informative reading and we encourage Yes2Rail's visitors to do so, but we'll also add some of Mayor Mufi Hannemann's thoughts as expressed [in a February 2 press](#)

### What riding the train will avoid



After 2/9/10 accident on the H-1.



### Blog Archive

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[Civil Beat: 'Transit Plan Out of City Hands'](#)

[Time to Revisit Issue of At-Grade Rail Safety](#)

[Public Urged To Attend Tonight's Rail Workshop](#)

[1st District Survey Shows Majority Favor Rail; Sup...](#)

[Purchase Allegations Called 'Baseless Rubbish'](#)

[City Responds, Says Politics Drives Complaint](#)

['It's not a rail thing; it's a](#)

[conference](#). He reflected on the FTA's supportive comments and the necessity for Governor Lingle to sign off on rail for it to become a reality after all these decades of planning and anticipation. Mayor Hannemann:

*"We would really hope that she would start sending some positive messages and signals," Hannemann said. "Whatever it is that's holding her back, cast it aside for the good of the people. This is a train that will bring economic benefits for people for years and decades and generations to come.*

*"I'm very pleased that Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff with Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has proclaimed this morning great confidence in Honolulu city rail transit initiative... Today's show of financial support validates the financial analysis, the evaluations that have been put forward for many years, and certainly it could not come at a better time, especially when the chief executive of this state is expressing strong concerns and reservations about going forward.*

*"For the federal government to also say today that we are committing to one point five billion dollars towards that full funding agreement that we will sign by 2011 is the ultimate. It's wonderful news. This is going to be one of the highest amounts or awards ever given to a city in America...."*

*"The other news that I want to put out today again is that in the new criteria going forward for transportation projects under new starts funding, there's going to be an emphasis on livable communities. There's going to be a collaborative effort between (the Department of Housing and Urban Development) and (the Environmental Protection Administration) to identify those projects that will bring about green communities, livable communities and sustainability. And Honolulu will rank again very high, mark my words. Why? Waipahu, Pearl City, Aiea, Kalihi, Chinatown, eventually McCully, Moiliili will all be the recipients and beneficiaries of a transit-oriented development concept.*

*"They know this is an excellent project. If they didn't believe that was so or if they believed that it was shaky, they would not have approved what they have approved and have announced today. So, good news for Honolulu, even better news for the state of Hawaii, because this is going to benefit all of us in the state...."*

When asked how soon he would like the Governor to approve the FEIS, Hannemann answered: *"It's not on her desk yet, and we knew that, but the fact of the matter is, and Peter Rogoff reiterated it this morning, that 13 state agencies have already opined, have already given their comments and suggestions. We're working very closely with them. We've been collaborating very closely with the Office of Environmental Quality Control, so the fact of the matter is there has been a lot of consultation going on. We believe it's 99 percent done. We really would hope that she would start sending some positive messages and signals.*

*"You know how many states would love to hear what we heard today? This is unbelievable, that we got the good news even before the EIS was released from Washington, so that validates the fact that they know that we're doing a good job and we brought it to this point that they're willing to go out and say one point five billion. So I really believe the Governor, whatever it is that's holding her back, cast it aside for the good of the people. This is*

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## About Me

### DOUG CARLSON

Reported and edited for newspapers and broadcast stations (including all-news radio) in Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles and Honolulu. Covered Honolulu city government for the Honolulu Advertiser and KGMB-TV. Managed corporate communications and served as spokesman for Hawaiian Electric Company for nearly a decade. Doug has been a communications consultant since 1993 (<http://commaaina.com>) and has special interests in renewable energy and rapid transit development. He launched, produced and hosted Hawaii Public Radio's "Energy Futures" call-in program in 2009-10 (Mondays 5-6 pm KIPO). Doug authored books on The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific ("Punchbowl") and on the decline of standard grammar

*not Mufi's train. This is the train that will bring about economic benefits for the people for years and decades and generations to come...."*

in society and business ("Me and Him Are Killing English!").

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Posted by Doug Carlson at [5/17/2010 04:32:00 PM](#)

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Honolulu

# CIVIL BEAT

Monday, May 17th, 2010

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## Transit Plan Out of City Hands

By Treena Shapiro

05/17/2010



Treena Shapiro

Honolulu reporter-host

When construction begins on Honolulu's rail line is now up to the governor and federal government.

But it's unlikely that the mayor who's been the force behind the project will be in his office for the groundbreaking.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann has propelled the project forward for most of his term-and-a-half tenure, but is expected to announce this month that he will resign his city post to run for governor. Even if he remains in office until the July 20 candidate filing deadline, its unlikely the project will receive all the approvals it needs to begin construction by then.

The city this month submitted its final Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed \$5.3 billion rail project to the Federal Transit Administration. For construction to begin, the FTA and Gov. Linda Lingle need to sign off on the plans.

Uncertainty over the timing is a big change from last year. In October, Hannemann showed so much confidence in the project that he approved a \$483 million construction contract for the first leg of the rail route, which would be funded entirely by a dedicated surcharge on the state's general excise tax. At the time he announced the Kiewit Pacific contract, he predicted the project's groundbreaking would come by the end of 2009.

Now the city will wait for a commitment of federal funding to begin building. The Environmental Impact Statement is required before the city can compete for funding through the FTA's New Starts program. But the city also must submit a separate financial plan that will be evaluated to determine whether the city's proposal qualifies for \$1.55 billion in federal funding. The federal contribution could dictate whether the city can afford to build the 20-mile elevated line.

City Department of Transportation Services Director Wayne Yoshioka said the financial plan is an evolving document and will be updated to reflect new developments, such as new contracts, before it is submitted to the FTA. Completion of the financial plan awaits approval of the final EIS, because that will solidify the route. Yoshioka pointed out that the rail budget has already changed, citing the Kiewit Pacific contract that came in \$90 million below the estimate.

"We have several other RFPs (requests for proposals) stacked up and ready to be awarded. When those get awarded a similar thing may occur. You constantly have to adjust for these things," he said.

Once the city brings the EIS up to federal muster, the public will be given 30 days to comment on the official document before the FTA and governor decide whether to formally accept the document. Approval from the governor or a designated representative is required because the environmental review process falls under the state Office of Environmental Quality Control's jurisdiction.

In addition to approval of the EIS and financial plans, procedural challenges may also delay the project. The city has conducted an archeological inventory for only the first of four phases of construction — with plans to complete the remaining surveys before beginning each subsequent portion of the rail line. The Oahu Island Burial Council has appealed to the U.S. Department of Transportation and the state Department of Land and Natural Resources to compel the city to survey the entire route for Native Hawaiian burial remains and cultural resources before any construction is



Honolulu City Government

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allowed to begin. It fears that once construction is underway it will be impossible to make any adjustments for historical or cultural sites.

Another obstacle could be a legal challenge. Rail opponents have said they plan to file a lawsuit if the FTA issues a record of decision, signaling the end of the environmental review process. *Sensible Traffic Alternatives and Resources Inc*, a vocal anti-rail group, has raised questions about the city's ability to finance the project, as well as whether all alternatives were adequately addressed before the city moved forward in its planning.

The proposal is currently in its preliminary engineering stage, which includes hammering down the design and critical project elements. The city cleared one hurdle recently when it adjusted the route near the airport and received the blessings of the Federal Aviation Administration, which had raised concerns about the proximity of the line to the runway.

But Yoshioka said the state Historic Preservation Division still needs to determine whether the more than 60-year-old buildings that line the new route are historic, or, as he believes, just aging warehouses.

When the route and design are fixed, the city will have the detail it needs to justify whether it can afford not only to build the rail line, but operate and maintain it after the GET surcharge sunsets at the end of 2022. This information is a required part of the financial plan the federal government will review to determine whether to give a financial green light to the project.

At the state level, the governor says she's going to scrutinize the city's financial plan before she signs off on the project. The governor has already solicited bids from companies interested in analyzing the plan, but her spokesman Russell Pang pointed out that at this point there is nothing to review. "We have not yet received anything from the city," he said.

As for how long it might take the governor to make a decision, Pang said, "The governor has said before that we will do a careful and thorough analysis of the EIS and the financial portion and we're not going to be dictated by any artificial deadline, i.e., a registration deadline to file for a particular office."

However, the state has been working with the city to move the project forward. State Department of Transportation Director Brennon Morioka said the state helped the city bring the route near the airport into compliance with Federal Aviation Administration guidelines. "We've always been trying to be a partner in trying to make sure the rail route serves the best interest for all parties," he said.

On his side, Morioka said the two levels of government are trying to coordinate on how the route will cross state properties, including highways and airport area. "We're trying to complete the agreement which outlines the terms and conditions of having the route go through the state's right-of-ways," he said.

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**DISCUSSION:** *Join the discussion of issues raised by this article and other questions related to Honolulu's proposed rail project.*

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Monday, May 17, 2010 [11 Comments](#)

### [The Potential for Private Investment in Transit](#)

by [Sarah Goodyear](#) on May 17, 2010



Richmond, Virginia, around the turn of the last century. (Photo via [North Richmond News](#))

Could private developers be the key to developing the nation's transit infrastructure?

That's the question that has engaged many members of the Streetsblog Network over the weekend.

The catalyst for what has become a very lively discussion was [an article](#) by Christopher Leinberger on the Atlantic's website, part of their month-long "[The Future of the City](#)" special report.

Leinberger suggests that we might look to an earlier model of financing for mass transit — one in which real estate developers pay to build not only housing, but also rail lines to serve those new

neighborhoods.

It worked in pre-World War II America, Leinberger notes, creating the "streetcar suburbs" that later were rolled over by federally funded highways and the sprawl they enabled.

But [Human Transit](#)'s Jarrett Walker warns against looking to the past for solutions. He argues that current labor and environmental regulations, concerns about sufficient competition, and integration into existing transit systems are potential pitfalls of privatization. He does think that there are funding mechanisms involving private enterprise that could be effective:

I am not arguing against [value capture](#) or [tax-increment financing](#), which Leinberger also endorses. These are methods of financing a rail line partly through debt that will be repaid based on higher land values — and thus higher land taxes — that the line will generate. There is no reason we can't continue to expand on these principles as a revenue source. I'm criticizing only the more simplified nostalgia on which Leinberger builds his argument.

Also weighing in with posts on the topic are [City Block](#) and [Discovering Urbanism](#). Both are rich with links and resources, so jump on in. And check out [Washington, D.C.'s plans](#) to have commercial landowners pony up for its new streetcar line.

## 11 Comments

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1.

**Glenn**

I was actually thinking about all the private transportation systems set-up all over NYC the other day. Universities have shuttle buses to link their dorms to their main campuses. Large buildings far from the transit system set up shuttle buses. Tourists are shuttled around the city in private double decker buses. All of these use public space for pick-up and drop-off and even have signage on the street in some cases. And often these private systems operate way below capacity, but the public at large is shut out of these transport links. I'm not sure what the solution is and lord knows that the MTA has no money to distribute, but there's definitely inefficiencies at work. Perhaps these private lines need more regulation and part of their agreements to operate are that they allow some unlimited MetroCard holder use their services.

Another idea is for some sort of transit BID-like structure to develop for transit lines/zones. The MTA could put out a baseline service plan and interested parties along that line could buy-up for supplemental service at cost from the transit service. Or if we think about it from a public subsidy standpoint, surveys could be done to assess which businesses are contributing to mass transit service demand and they can be charged based on customer/employee usage. Maybe that would encourage walking/biking to work policies/investments.

May 17, 2010 at 11:34 am [Link # 1](#)



2.

**Doug**

The problem with business models based on conservation is that the premise is that the payer base decreases with the success of the model.

This the case with novel healthcare initiatives; revenue declines when simple, non-treatment solutions are found. Similarly, encouraging biking causes utilization of roads and transit to decline. This is OK in small amounts, but you have a crisis when everyone starts catching on – a victim of your own success.

Not saying there isn't a solution, you just have to be aware of creating incentives that cause an unstable equilibrium (i.e. the “goal” necessarily kills itself)

May 17, 2010 at 12:46 pm [Link # 2](#)



3.

**J**

Here in california, developers are responsible for all street enhancements, meaning widening the road (always), landscaping and lighting.

It qwould make sense to demand money be put in a public transit fund. It doesnt make sense for the developer of 10 homes to launch a bus line, but it does make sense for them to pay to have an existing bus line be extedned to their development

May 17, 2010 at 2:16 pm [Link # 3](#)



4.

**Sean T Hedgpeth**

I think the Park Merced expansion will be a good case study for this type of thing. If you look at TDM requirements, shuttles or transit subsidies are often required as part of an MOU. The problem is, there is no real enforcement wing of the planning dept. Also, I think that parking requirements deserve a front and center part of this discussion. Less parking, more density, more profit, and more revenue for transit.

May 17, 2010 at 2:49 pm [Link # 4](#)



5.

**J:Lai**

Glenn, I don't think the problem is lack of physical buses. The problem is that the existing buses travel too slowly.

I don't think the private development model works for transit in very many cases. The highest demand routes can be profitable enough that they would attract private capital as stand-alone investments, but then government is left with the task of running all the money-losing routes with lower demand, but without the revenue from high demand routes to subsidize them. Either that, or you end up only providing service in the few places with very high demand.

May 17, 2010 at 2:52 pm [Link # 5](#)



6.

**[SteveS](#)**

@J:Lai Maybe some better-run systems have lines that are profitable even under city operation, but with San Francisco's Muni, the city loses money operating every single bus route, even the ones that are crammed to capacity during rush hour which could easily be privately operated for large profits!

If these lines were privatized, the city would at least not be losing money operating them, a net gain to the system even if they levied no taxes on the private operators. And if private operators can run more efficiently, they might also be a better option for less-traveled lines: it could cost the city much less to contract them to maintain a certain level of service and provide a per-rider subsidy than it does to operate the lines themselves. This has traditionally been cumbersome, but with electronic fare systems it becomes much easier to handle inter-agency (and potentially inter-company) payments on a per-trip basis, much like Muni and BART have long been doing within San Francisco.

May 17, 2010 at 5:21 pm [Link # 6](#)



7.

**Ryan Holman**

I think that public-private partnerships are great for transportation, they fill a gap in the market that benefits them and the people who use them and the general public, who don't have to subsidize or plan it. I love how another commenter suggested that the proliferation of private transit operations (university and corporate shuttles) should be MORE regulated.

Why on earth would we discourage efficient transportation infrastructure being built without spending any of our resources?

May 17, 2010 at 5:56 pm [Link # 7](#)



8.

**JK**

Um, no. There are no developed world, urban transit systems operating at a profit. If this was such an attractive market space, you would see private vendors beating down the door to offer services. You don't. As many readers know, the original NYC subway and bus systems were private. They went bankrupt and were taken over by the city. More recently, the NYC DOT subsidized the Queens Bus and Green Line and other private "franchise" bus fleets. They were notorious for terrible service, and were finally absorbed by the MTA. Private transit can, and does, operate on high demand corridors — Flatbush and its dollar vans are an example — but a hodgepodge of peak hour service does not a transit system make. I am incredibly skeptical that a developer could keep a shuttle service operating for long. A university or hospital, yes. They have much bigger budgets than developers. But that's not public transit.

May 17, 2010 at 7:05 pm [Link # 8](#)



9.

**[Cap'n Transit](#)**

And if they hadn't had to charge the nickel fare?

May 17, 2010 at 7:12 pm [Link # 9](#)



10.

**mrek**

The olde developers built the streetcar line as cheaply as possible, ran it until they sold the last of the houses or it broke down, then either trashed it or dumped the barely usable remains on some transit organization (anybody, as long as they had no further involvement with it). Those lines never made money – they were subsidized as a come-on for land sales.

A modern equivalent might be one condo development in San Mateo Co. that I looked at (ended up going elsewhere after looking at the mini-studios in a firetrap building offered for \$500K). The complex had an old hippie bus that they ran to/from BART. Paid for by homeowners assn fees. That's the kind of "developer-funded" transit that we would get in the modern era.

**\*\*rant warning\*\***

I agree with Jarrett.

A serious problem with transit and "profitability" is that "retail" transit can't make money. Unless you can make dial-a-ride work (think taxi?), it has to be there whenever somebody wants to ride,

which means it runs nearly empty most of the time. Ummm...so do your roads? Mainline transit like rail and trunk-line buses can come closer to breaking even (at best) on an operating basis, and some commute specials (managed to stay full) might even make it. However, modern principles of accessibility, safety, and clean air mandate equipment that costs a fortune to buy and maintain (typical bus is \$250-500K; that cute streetcar costs \$3+ million; that light rail car is \$5+ million – each; CNG pumps for buses run \$2-3 million each if gas is available at the property line; streetcar and light rail lines start at \$25-30 million/mile to build and \$100+ million/mile isn't unheard of), and the drivers etc have to be paid a living wage (the old private transit companies were not known for paying more than bare subsistence – equivalent of poverty level today). No private operator would have a chance of making a profit or even breaking even in the transit game, since they would have to cover ALL those costs not just the wages and energy to run around. Look at the Las Vegas monorail fiasco for an example, even with casinos kicking in some bucks.

When you look at the history of the private rail transit systems, what really killed them was a combination of never being able to make enough to retire debt (i.e. capital cost), plus the unsupportable cost of rebuilding the remaining systems after WW2 wore them out. GM et al helped some of them into the grave, but they were ready to fall anyway. It made abundant sense at the time, with cheap fuel, buses running on somebody else's right of way instead of one you had to maintain and pay taxes on, and collapsing ridership as people bought cars, to dump the rail lines.

Face it: moving people is expensive. People are not boxes and lumps of coal – they expect to be treated as people. But they won't (and in most cases can't) pay enough to cover the cost of all that coddling let and make much profit. That's why most urban transit will remain a “public” utility – the societal benefit should justify payment by more than just the riders, just as for the roads most transit lines run on.

May 17, 2010 at 9:38 pm [Link # 10](#)



11.

**Boris**

“There are no developed world, urban transit systems operating at a profit.”

Do you have any proof of this statement? And, if you mean operating profit, even some MTA routes make money. This is easily visible from the data the MTA released a few months ago to show it is cutting only money losing, low ridership services.

May 18, 2010 at 12:39 pm [Link # 11](#)

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Posted on: Tuesday, May 18, 2010

## Expect night road closures during soil sampling for rail

Advertiser Staff

City rail transit contractor Kiewit Pacific will conduct nighttime soil sampling from East Kapolei to Waipahu beginning May 25.

The work is being done as part of the preliminary design for the first portion of the rail route, to run 6.5 miles between East Kapolei and Pearl City.

Soil sampling work in residential areas will be done at night primarily along the Farrington Highway median between Waipahu High School and Fort Weaver Road. Night work along Farrington Highway will run from May 27 until early September.

Work will require some nighttime lane and intersection closures Sundays through Fridays between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. westbound and 6 p.m. through 5 a.m. eastbound. One lane of traffic in each direction along Farrington Highway will remain open during the night work.

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## **KITV.com**

### **Soil To Be Tested On Rail Route**

#### ***Testing To Be Done Between East Kapolei, Waipahu***

POSTED: 6:21 am HST May 18, 2010

UPDATED: 6:37 am HST May 18, 2010

**HONOLULU** -- An important next step is being taken in the city's plan to build rail transit.

Crews will start soil sampling at night around the first leg of the proposed route between East Kapolei and Waipahu.

The testing is designed to make sure the soil is stable enough to handle the construction of the \$5.4 billion project, especially the heavy concrete pillars that will support the elevated guideway.

Crews will work in residential areas at night, primarily along Farrington Highway between Waipahu High School and Fort Weaver Road.

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**HAWAII NEWS**

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2010-05-18 Posted: 04:45:32

**Soil sampling work to begin for rail project**

By Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Nighttime soil sampling work is to begin next week for Honolulu's planned \$5.4 billion rail transit project.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann's office says the work from East Kapolei to Waipahu is part of preliminary design work for the first portion of the route.

City Transportation Services Director Wayne Yoshioka says the testing of soil stability will help refine the design and location of concrete pillars that will support the elevated guideway.

The testing will be performed by Kiewit Pacific. The company was selected to design and construct the first segment of the rail transit route.

City officials say work in residential areas will be done at night, primarily along Farrington Highway between Waipahu High School and Fort Weaver Road.

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Updated at 4:32 p.m., Wednesday, May 19, 2010

## City says rail tax collections on pace with revised targets

Advertiser Staff

Transit tax revenues are totaling 99.6 percent of the city's revised financial goals, the city announced today.

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann said in a news release the tax collection figures are encouraging.

"This is excellent news that bodes well for the future of the rail project," he said in a news release. General excise tax "revenues are on track despite the state of the economy, and we have saved \$90 million in construction costs for the first rail contract. We could realize additional savings on three major rail contracts that will be awarded later this year."

As of April, the city received \$499.3 million from the rail tax, the city said. The rail tax is a 0.5 percentage point surcharge added to the general excise tax on Oahu. Revenue from the tax will be use to build a planned 20-mile, \$5.5 billion commuter train.

The revenue taken in as of April is close to the \$501.5 million revenue target contained in the city's August 2009 financial plan.

However, when compared to a financial plan contained in the city's November 2008 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the tax revenue is coming in about 5 percent below expectations. Under the 2008 plan, the city anticipated raising \$527 million by April.

The city's revenue projection was adjusted in 2009 to reflect the slowing economy. Under the

August 2009 updated financial plan, the city expects transit tax revenues to total \$3.69 billion over the 15-year life of the tax. That's about \$360 million less than the \$4.05 billion in transit tax revenues forecast by the city in a draft environmental impact statement.

The city now expects to rely on increased federal funds — including diverting federal money intended for TheBus — to help make up for the lower-than-anticipated tax revenue, according to the most recent financial plan.

The excise tax surcharge for rail started in 2007 and ends in 2022. Overall the city needs to collect an inflation-adjusted \$3.9 billion from 2007 through 2022 to pay its share of the train's costs under current revenue and cost projections.

During April the transit tax raised \$9.8 million for the city, which was down from \$12 million raised during April 2009.

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Posted on: Wednesday, May 19, 2010

## EIS, cost concerns could derail construction plans

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann's desire to break ground soon on a \$5.3 billion commuter rail line and Gov. Linda Lingle's concerns about the project's finances are on a collision course this summer.

For months Hannemann has urged residents and lawmakers to pressure Lingle to quickly sign off on the train's final environmental impact statement, once it is issued by the city. That approval would remove a major hurdle to the start of construction on the 20-mile East Kapolei to Ala Moana elevated train.

But Lingle says she wants to hold public hearings on the rail's environmental impact and conduct an analysis of the cost and revenue estimates. That could take months and won't begin until the city releases an updated financial plan for the project.

City transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka could not predict when the updated financial plan would be available. However, he objected to Lingle's notion that she needs the plan before signing off on the rail project.

"That's absurd," said Yoshioka, following a recent City Council committee hearing. "She's wrong."

The city originally wanted to break ground last December. It now appears likely that construction won't begin until fall at the earliest.

Under prior timetables the final environmental impact statement — which will assess, among

other things, noise and visual impacts, residential displacements and financial costs — was supposed to be released in spring 2009. When that deadline could not be met, the release date was pushed back to last fall.

The project has been delayed in part because the route interfered with a runway airspace safety buffer near the Honolulu International Airport. The city also failed to finalize an agreement between state, city and federal agencies that establishes the framework for lessening the project's impact on cultural and historic resources.

### pending hurdles

Federal Transportation Administration spokesman Paul Griffo would not discuss when the final environmental impact statement might be released. However, the two outstanding issues may be close to being resolved.

The airport airspace issue appears to be taken care of following a city decision to move the train's route near Lagoon Drive farther mauka, said state transportation Director Brennon Morioka.

It's unlikely that change will require further environmental studies.

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"Now that the runway issues have gone away, I think the potential for any additional studies from what we can tell is minimal," Morioka said. "We're not going to be the ones asking that any additional, supplemental studies be done."

The city also must execute a "programmatic agreement" with the Federal Transit Administration, Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Division, National Park Service, the Navy and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation before the final environmental impact study can be released.

That agreement also was supposed to have been completed last year, but was delayed amid a prolonged review of measures needed to mitigate the impact of rail on historic sites. The agreement now is in its final draft and is being circulated for signatures, said the city's Yoshioka.

The State Historic Preservation Division and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation have yet to sign the agreement, he said.

The O'ahu Island Burial Council, which is charged with protecting Native Hawaiian burials, opposes plans to run the train down Halekauwila Street in Kaka'ako, out of concern that the area's sandy soil is likely to contain high concentrations of unmarked Native Hawaiian graves.

Deborah Ward, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Land and Natural Resources, said that the state Historic Preservation Division is still consulting with various parties regarding whether the state should sign the current agreement.

## public input

Even if Lingle approves the project before she leaves office on Dec. 6, the environmental review process calls for a 30-day period for the public to provide comments on the project's impacts. The city then will need to respond to those

comments before the federal government can provide a so-called "Record of Decision," which marks the end of the environmental review process.

The city plans to begin construction once that milestone is reached. However, opponents have made it clear that they will seek an injunction to halt the project before construction can begin. They're expected to argue that the city didn't adequately explore alternatives that were less likely to impact historical resources or that would cost less and alleviate more roadway traffic, among other things.

"We'll step in the moment the (Record of Decision) looks imminent," said Cliff Slater, a vocal opponent who advocates for a managed, elevated highway lane alternative. "It doesn't look imminent at the moment. I think it's a long way away."

The city already has set aside \$250,000 to defend an anticipated lawsuit challenging whether project officials complied with environmental laws.

Just how much project delays could cost is unknown. Earlier this year the city said a delay could cost \$100 million a year. However, Yoshioka would not provide an estimate on how

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much delays could cost.

"We're just going to have to see," Yoshioka said.

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

## KEY EVENTS

Steps needed before breaking ground on O'ahu rail line:

- Final environmental impact statement completed (expected this summer)
- Gov. Linda Lingle begins review of EIS (could take three months or more)
- Lingle approves EIS
- Public can comment on EIS and city will respond (could take two months)
- Record of Decision issued by federal government
- Groundbreaking

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Posted on: Wednesday, May 19, 2010

## Honolulu rail tax revenue falling short of predicted growth

*Looks like city may face another year without increase in collections*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Tax collections needed to pay the city's share of a planned elevated commuter rail line are running flat year-over-year with two months to go in fiscal 2010. If they continue at their current pace, transit tax collections are headed for a third straight year of little to no growth.

The city had originally counted on tax collections climbing every year for 16 years.

However, the current flat trajectory of transit tax collections reflects a slowing state economy that continues to grapple with reduced construction and visitor arrival activity. That reduced economic activity has cut into tax collections needed to build the \$5.5 billion project and forced the city to adopt several coping strategies. These include:

- Diverting \$300 million in federal funds for TheBus to build rail.
- Relying on increased federal contributions, which now are projected at an inflation-adjusted \$1.6 billion.
- Possibly absorbing reduced tax revenues within a \$1 billion buffer set aside to handle contingencies.

Through April the half-percentage-point rail

surcharge on the general excise tax raised \$130.7 million, versus \$131.8 million raised during the same months a year earlier, based on figures provided by the state Department of Taxation. That's down from the \$138.8 million raised during the first 10 months of fiscal 2008, which ended June 30, 2008.

If collections continue at the current monthly average of \$13.1 million for the remaining two months of fiscal 2010, collections could reach about \$157 million by June 30. That's down slightly from the \$164 million the city expected to collect, according to the city's August financial plan for the rail project.

Total transit tax surcharge revenues were \$161 million in fiscal 2008 and \$164 million in fiscal 2009. So far the tax has raised about \$515 million. Those figures exclude a 10 percent administrative fee retained by the state, which collects the tax surcharge for the city.

Overall the city needs to collect an inflation-adjusted \$3.9 billion from 2007 through 2022 to pay its share of the train's costs under current revenue and cost projections.

The city's current revenue projections anticipate transit tax collections will rebound strongly next fiscal year and continue to climb through 2015,

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with growth then moderating until the tax sunsets on Dec. 31, 2022.

City Transportation Department Director Wayne Yoshioka did not return two phone messages left with his assistant yesterday, seeking his comment on the tax collection situation.

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

## OVER 3 YEARS

No growth in rail tax collections:

2008\* \$161 million

2009 \$164 million

2010\*\* \$157 million

\*all years are city fiscal years

\*\*projected collections

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# Honolulu CIVIL BEAT

Wednesday, May 19th, 2010

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## Honolulu Rail Project Highlights Burial Concerns



Michael Levine  
Land Reporter-Host.

By Michael Levine

05/19/2010

In Hawaii, bones are everywhere, and they're nowhere.

In a centuries-old tradition that departs sharply from common mainland practices, Polynesians buried their dead in unmarked graves from the time they arrived in Hawaii, seeking to protect their loved ones' spiritual power (mana) from theft.



Flickr: randystoreyphotography

The City and County of Honolulu's \$5.3 billion plan to construct a 20-mile elevated train line from West Oahu to downtown Honolulu, which would become the largest infrastructure project in Hawaii history, is almost certain to contact iwi kupuna at one point or another.

How those burials are treated — especially in the culturally sensitive area of Kakaako — tells us a great deal about the relationship between Native Hawaiians and their government, not just in Honolulu but across the state. A public official who has direct control over what happens next seems resigned to the prospect of relocating bones.

That attitude concerns the Oahu Island Burial Council, which listed its many concerns in an October 2009 letter to the Federal Transit Administration. In April 2010, the council discouraged the state from allowing the city to conduct archaeological surveys in stages rather than all at once, and move forward with the rail plan in the interim. The council says this approach limits options for how to deal with burials.

"The OIBC cannot agree to a project plan that has placed our kupuna as a secondary after thought in the planning process," the letter concluded.

State Historic Preservation Division Administrator Pua Aiu says the phased approach "makes more sense given that this is a project that is going to be built in phases, so it's best to do the archaeology in phases." She said similar approaches were employed in other linear projects like H-3, the Alii Highway on Hawaii Island and the multi-use coastal path on Kauai.

Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation Litigation Director Alan Murakami said the rail project's failure to adequately consider burials is part of a worsening pattern that government agencies have followed in the decades since Hawaiian remains became a hot-button issue.

"These are major offenses against the legislative design that was put in place in 1990 and threatens the integrity of the program," Murakami said, referring to the state's Historic Preservation Program. "It would be a complete distortion of how the law is supposed to operate."

A contentious fight over the construction of the Ritz Carlton at Honokahua in West Maui, where hundreds of burials were unearthed, led the state to amend Chapter 6E of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. A program was established to preserve historic and cultural assets in the face of a changing society.

The law promotes burial preservation by requiring that the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources have an opportunity to review and comment on the effect of any proposed project on historic or prehistoric burial sites.

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For previously identified burials, each island's burial council determines whether the iwi should be preserved in place or relocated. But when burials are inadvertently discovered during development, the preservation division has more latitude in making that decision on its own.

Archaeological surveys often don't uncover all the burials on a site, Murakami said. But at least they make it possible to identify some, if not all, of the bones before any construction begins. If the surveys are phased, the council's power is usurped as burials that should be identified prior to construction become inadvertent discoveries.

"The idea is that Hawaiians should have a decisive say whether burials should be protected or not. (But) in the last two decades SHPD has accelerated its interpretation of the law to in essence undercut that authority," Murakami said. "If you're sloppy about your archaeology, that's where you start seeing this shift in power from the burial council to the SHPD staff."

Murakami said conducting surveys in stages on the eve of construction puts extraordinary political pressure on SHPD to move the project forward.

Aiu agreed with Murakami that surveys don't always find all the iwi, pointing to the proposed Ward Whole Foods Market that was slated to open near Kakaako before inadvertent discoveries stopped the project in its tracks.

Aiu said the burial council is focused specifically on iwi, while the division needs to look at the "bigger picture." The Historic Hawaii Foundation has already published a list of 33 historic properties that will be impacted by the rail project, and Aiu said moving the route mauka to Queen Street or King Street bring it to the edge or even into the heart of a historic district with buildings like the Hawaii Capitol and Iolani Palace. And because Kakaako is so packed with burials, there is no alignment that is guaranteed to avoid them, she said.

"Given the concentrations that we've found in Kakaako before, and given that on a project like this you have not only the post, you have trenching for utilities," Aiu said. "I think that we're going to be put into situations where we're not going to be able to preserve in place."

While the city has some flexibility in where it puts the footings for the elevated rail, it is constrained in many ways. Asked if she was concerned about her hands being tied by the project's scale and the area's limitations, Aiu said, "I think we know what's coming down the road."

"I'm hopeful that we don't find huge numbers," she said, "but we will have to deal with what we do find."

---

**DISCUSSION:** *Join the conversation about how authorities should deal with burials and Native Hawaiian cultural concerns when planning construction projects. Should the state allow the city to use a phased approach to archaeological surveys?*

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Posted on: Thursday, May 20, 2010

## City says rail tax revenue just shy of revised target

*\$499.3M collected as of April; 2009; goal was \$501.5M*

Advertiser Staff

Transit tax revenues are totaling 99.6 percent of the city's lowered goals, the city said yesterday.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann said tax collection figures are encouraging.

"This is excellent news that bodes well for the future of the rail project," he said in a news release. General excise tax "revenues are on track despite the state of the economy, and we have saved \$90 million in construction costs for the first rail contract. We could realize additional savings on three major rail contracts that will be awarded later this year."

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The revenue taken in is close to the \$501.5 million revenue target contained in the city's August 2009 financial plan.

However, when compared with a financial plan contained in the city's November 2008 draft environmental impact statement, the tax revenue is coming in about 5 percent below expectations. Under the 2008 plan, the city anticipated raising \$527 million by April.

The projection was adjusted in 2009 to reflect the state's slowing economy. Under the August 2009 updated financial plan, the city expects transit tax revenues to total \$3.69 billion over the 15-year life of the tax. That's about \$360 million less than the \$4.05 billion in transit tax revenues forecast by the city in a draft environmental impact statement.

The city now expects to rely on increased federal funds — including diverting federal money intended for TheBus — to help make up for the lower-than-anticipated tax revenue and higher costs, according to the most recent financial plan.

The excise tax surcharge for rail started in 2007 and ends in 2022. Overall, the city needs to collect an inflation-adjusted \$3.9 billion from 2007 through 2022 to pay its share of the train's costs under current revenue and cost projections.

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Posted on: Thursday, May 20, 2010

## Reviewing rail, jamming up the mayor

Back in October, Mayor Mufi Hanneman held his "State of Rail Transit" event, part speech, part pep rally. One of the spectacles was a video, featuring the mayor riding the train of the future. "This is not a virtual dream, folks," he said. "This is our reality." He added that the city was "poised to break ground on the project"

Now, seven months later, that's starting to look like Hannemann's "Mission Accomplished" moment.

But even if Hannemann got ahead of himself, the closer we move to election time the more it seems like Hannemann's political opponents are doing everything they can to jam up the rail approval process so they can jam up his gubernatorial aspirations.

Gov. Linda Lingle is sticking to her plan to hire an expert to conduct an independent analysis of the rail system's finances, a redundant and time-consuming process that won't even start until the city completes its own financial plan and gives it to Lingle.

She also wants to hold a series of public hearings, as part of fulfilling her pledge to give the final environmental impact statement and financial plan a thorough going-over. (The city says she doesn't need an updated financial plan to sign off on the statement, yet another area of frustrating disagreement for those of us looking in from the outside).

Even someone who gives her credit for doing her due diligence before signing off on the project has got to wonder about this move. Contrary to complaints by some, there have been many

opportunities for public comment already. And even before the federal government issues its final verdict on the EIS — a "record of decision" — the public will have another 30-day period to weigh in and the city will be required to answer every inquiry.

So there's really no purpose for Lingle's planned set of public hearings, is there?

Oh, wait. There's the political incentive and, given the dynamics of the election season, it's a powerful one. More hearings would provide a forum for critics of rail to hammer the project, as well as its champion, just as Hannemann is campaigning.

Maybe they're hoping the din will become so loud, the project so imperiled, that Hannemann will have to stay in the mayor's office instead of quitting this summer.

The \$5.3 billion rail project is an enormous investment and critics, as well as public officials, are right to ask questions and make sure they're satisfied with the answers. City officials' handling of snags like the airspace issue along the airport route is certainly open to criticism.

But if people are simply looking to wound Hannemann by messing up the rail project,

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they're taking a huge risk. From the results of the 2008 election, and from every credible poll we've seen, the community still supports rail.

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# Honolulu CIVIL BEAT

Thursday, May 20th, 2010

Honolulu Hawaii Education Land Money  
**"This is not Mufi's train."**



John Temple  
Editor.

By John Temple

05/20/2010

Come with me, up the grand staircase at Honolulu Hale, to a small conference room on the 3rd floor. On one side of a long table sit five easels, each with a beautiful rendering of one of the stations planned for the city's proposed \$5.5 billion rail line.



HonoluluTransit.org

It's stuffy, but the vision is beautiful. A fast-moving train sliding above the traffic. A sense of neighborhood reflected in the design of each station. An alternative to sitting stuck in traffic.

This is a room full of true believers, people who've dedicated a serious part of their professional lives to making this project happen. It's personal to them.

They are Kirk Caldwell, the city's managing director and a candidate for mayor if, or more likely when, Mufi Hannemann formally throws his hat into the ring for the governor's race; Wayne Yoshioka, director of the Department of Transportation Services; Kenneth Toru Hamayasu, general manager of the Honolulu Rapid Transit Project; Bill Brennan, Hannemann's press secretary; Johnny Brannon, informational affairs officer in the mayor's office; Scott Ishikawa, public information officer, Rapid Transit Division; and Nalani E. Dahl, public involvement team, Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

It is good for Honolulu Civil Beat reporter-host Treena Shapiro and me to hear what they have to say. Listen in, as I share some of what we heard.

## The Status Quo Is Not Acceptable

Caldwell begins by talking about rail as the mayor's "No. 1 passion." He acknowledges that the project is "highly controversial," but goes on to make the case for why it's essential, so essential that he left his law practice to work for the mayor to help get it done. After describing the three or four previous unsuccessful attempts to build a rapid transit project for Honolulu — all of which have been ably described by Treena on our special page devoted to rail, he warns, "if this project dies, it'll be another 20 years" before it's tried again.

Caldwell is passionate. "The status quo is not acceptable anymore on this island," he says. He describes the creation of a second city of Kapolei, on the Ewa Plain and the broken promises and broken lives that would result if they don't provide a better way to get residents who moved there back and forth to their jobs.

He also describes the need to build a city that doesn't eat into agricultural lands, one where communities are created around transit hubs. He warns that if the "asphalt huggers" get their way, the city will lose \$1.5 billion in federal transit funding and that the city's climb out of the recession will be much slower than it needs to be.

"We're building a good system," Caldwell promises.

Yoshioka says that in planning transportation for Oahu there's always been the understanding that a high capacity transit system would be needed. He describes looking at different options and alignments in 2005 and 2006. The map, he says, "looked like spaghetti."

### Discussions

- Discussion: Honolulu Rail

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## Going Over Old Debates

Some of the current debates — elevated or at-grade, for example — were decided by the City Council in 2006 and 2007. The impression the group gives: Those questions are behind us. The job of the staff is to carry out what has been approved by the council, and that includes the 20-mile line under discussion today.

In 2008, the council decided the kind of technology to use — one they say is more off-the-shelf than it is custom — and voters gave authority to the city to build a steel-on-steel system. In the latter part of that year, the draft Environmental Impact Statement was released. Some 3,000 comments have been received and every one has to be acknowledged. That's what the city is doing, to make sure that when — not if — the project is challenged in court, no injunction to stop the project will be issued. Because the law will have been followed.

Talk turns to the criticism from city council over the lack of financial information and information about contracts.

Brennan says seven councilors are quite satisfied, and that with the other two it's "political." One, Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi, is a former opponent of Hannemann. The other, Councilman Romy Cachola, saw the route moved out of his Salt Lake district to serve the airport. This project, we're told, was selected by the council in 2006.

The bill is just as much a law that they have to follow as if the council had banned text messaging while driving. In either case, they'd have to carry out the law. The council, with only one different member than today's council (Councilman Ikaika Anderson), gave marching orders in 2006 after 19 hours of hearings.

We ask about roads. Why doesn't anybody talk about the need to fix the roads, too? Yoshioka says there \$3+ billion in road improvements in the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan. They also point out that the city doesn't have authority over all the road. It's the state that's responsible for the freeways. "We need both," he says.

## The Dispute With The Governor

Then comes the dispute with the governor. She's clearly an obstacle to the rail project, and from this table it's obvious that they're resigned to the fact, if not happy about it, that it could be the next governor who gives the project the green light.

"She is the accepting authority," Caldwell says of Gov. Linda Lingle. "There's no requirement that she accept or that she must accept." But he then goes on to question why she thinks she needs her own financial analysis, when the state isn't on the hook for the project and financial analysis is not part of the EIS process.

Caldwell points out that there have been three separate financial studies. The Federal Transit Administration paid for them because it will be putting up \$1.5 billion.

"All three came back and said we were in the ballpark," he says. What Lingle should be doing is determining whether the city followed the law and looked at the impacts of the project and addressed them, Caldwell says. Impacts are the issue, not the financial plan. Finances, he says, are not a valid reason for her to reject the project.

The result of the delay? "People are not getting back to work as fast as they could," Caldwell says. More people are doomed — yes, that's the word he used — to be stuck in traffic longer. He acknowledges that the mayor, his boss, could be the mayor to start the rail project and the governor to finish it. Sub text, of course, is that Caldwell could be the mayor to make it happen.

In the meantime, says Hamayasu, the projects general manager, they're "ready to start construction."

But what about the lawsuit that's expected from opponents, and a possible injunction to keep the workers idle? "If we follow the process properly," Caldwell says, "we survive the motion for an injunction. We can defend the process. We won't ram it through."

And what about other concerns? Talk turns to the iwi kupuna, or Native Hawaiian remains, and acquiring property, among other challenges. They say the phased approach to archeology will mean they'll know exactly where the line is going and that the elevated train is much less disruptive.

They speak with respect for the Native Hawaiians and for the process of working with them. Almost

reverence, really. An at-grade system would need a trench 30-50 feet wide, as much as 10-20 feet deep, they say. That would be worse. The elevated line will use posts that can be moved to avoid disturbing sites. They also point to the history of construction along the route and the destruction that may have already occurred.

In the end, Caldwell admits, "I drank the Kool-Aid," speaking of the benefits of rail. It happened when he was a student in Boston and used the train there. But it's clear he's drunk deeper this decade, both when he was in the Legislature and now that he's in city hall.

Finally, they make clear, in Caldwell's words: "This is not Mufi's train."

From this discussion, that's obvious. The people in the room have dedicated countless hours to studying the rail project, to explaining it, to pitching it and to listening to concerns about it. It's theirs. They own it.

At the end of our conversation, I can't say that their plan is the perfect solution. But there's no doubt as I head out into the now quiet Honolulu Hale that they're ready to take more slings and arrows, if only they can get construction underway and prove their critics wrong. That, they seem sure, will be certain.

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**DISCUSSION:** *Come talk about these issues on the [Honolulu Rail discussion page](#).*

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# Say Yes to the Honolulu Rail System

Honolulu's soon-to-be-built rail transit system makes sense for Oahu residents no matter where you live. It will improve mobility for islanders who must commute along the Kapolei-Downtown corridor, and it'll cut traffic congestion from projected levels by about 20%. If you're put off that I'm a paid communications consultant to the City and started this blog specifically to advance the project, you probably don't want to read any further.

Sunday, May 23, 2010

## Been There, Done That: Rail Alternatives Still Being Debated Despite Years-Ago Decision

It's late May 2010, yet to read some of the discussions at Civil Beat and other websites, you'd think it's 2006 all over again.

[Civil Beat's subscription news service](#) is attracting attention by offering members the opportunity to engage in dialogue with each other, the site's reporters and editors on Hawaii's major issues – civil unions, energy independence, Honolulu's rail project and many others.

Our interest is mostly the rail project, of course, and we continue to post a pro-rail point of view that's clearly identified on our member bio page. Most of the commentary from other members has indeed been civil, with the occasional ad hominem attack the exception.

### Catching Up with the Times

Some members continue to support options to rail to address Honolulu's increasing traffic congestion issues. Just this weekend buses on managed (hot) lanes were suggested by one contributor, prompting our recommendation of a thorough reading of [the Alternatives Analysis discussion](#) in the project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Indeed, it's safe to say all alternatives suggested by community residents over the years were fully explored in the Alternatives Analysis process – including waterborne ferry service. (A frequent visitor to a newspaper comment section was fixated for a few weeks on the idea of using barges to float buses across Pearl Harbor.)

The DEIS addresses all the major alternatives, including the busses-on-managed-lanes suggestion, and since it keeps coming up, it's worth quoting why the analysis dismissed it. From Chapter 2, Section 2.1.2:

*"While this alternative would have slightly reduced congestion on parallel highways, systemwide traffic congestion would have been similar to the No Build Alternative as a result of increased traffic on arterials trying to access the facility. Total islandwide (Vehicle Hours of Delay) would have increased with the Managed Lane*

### What riding the train will avoid



After 2/9/10 accident on the H-1.



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*Reversible Option as compared to the No Build Alternative, indicating an increase in systemwide congestion (Table 2-1). Transit reliability would not have been improved except for express bus service operating in the managed lanes. The Managed Lane Alternative would not have supported planned concentrated future population and employment growth because it would not provide concentrations of transit service that would serve as a nucleus for transit-oriented development. The Managed Lane Alternative would have provided very little transit benefit at a high cost. The cost-per-hour of transit-user benefits for the Managed Lane Alternative would have been two to three times higher than that for the Fixed Guideway Alternative (Table 2-1). Similar to the (Traffic System Management) Alternative, the Managed Lane Alternative would not have substantially improved service or access to transit for transit-dependent communities."*

The Final EIS that soon will be issued will reiterate all the alternatives that were deemed worthy of serious and detailed analysis. At this late date, it seems appropriate for residents to shift from continuing their own alternatives analysis to instead focus on what's immediately ahead.

The FEIS will address mitigation of Honolulu rail's impacts on the community. An elevated rail system is what's on the table – not an ongoing rehash of the issues that reasonably should have been put to rest four years ago

Posted by Doug Carlson at [5/23/2010 09:31:00 AM](#)

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**About Me**

**DOUG CARLSON**

Reported and edited for newspapers and broadcast stations (including all-news radio) in Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles and Honolulu. Covered Honolulu city government for the Honolulu Advertiser and KGMB-TV. Managed corporate communications and served as spokesman for Hawaiian Electric Company for nearly a decade. Doug has been a communications consultant since 1993 (<http://commaaina.com>) and has special interests in

renewable energy and rapid transit development. He launched, produced and hosted Hawaii Public Radio's "Energy Futures" call-in program in 2009-10 (Mondays 5-6 pm KIPO). Doug authored books on The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific ("Punchbowl") and on the decline of standard grammar in society and business ("Me and Him Are Killing English!").

[View my complete profile](#)

# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Tuesday, May 25, 2010

## Cameras coming soon to Honolulu city buses

*Stated goal is to improve security, but unions worry drivers will be monitored*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Smile. You could be on TheBus camera.

Starting as soon as this week, the city may begin using surveillance cameras on city buses.

The city will test different systems and award a contract on June 15 for the installation of cameras and microphones on 49 buses, or 9 percent of the fleet, according to a request for bids issued May 3. The city has not said if it plans to expand the program to all 531 buses.

The addition of cameras to TheBus is supposed to:

- Provide a sense of security for drivers and passengers,
- Reduce criminal activity, including theft and vandalism, and
- Reduce liability complaints.

However, plans to install surveillance equipment on buses are drawing opposition from employees of O'ahu Transit Services Inc., operator of TheBus. Teamsters Local 996, which covers about 1,300 drivers, mechanics, maintenance workers and clerical staff of OTS, has filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, seeking to prevent the city from installing the

surveillance equipment.

Bus employees are concerned that video and audio information gathered could be used against them, said Ron Kozuma, president of Local 996.

"The cameras really should be to monitor the perimeter of facilities and the people going onto the bus, not to monitor the operator or employees," he said. "It's like anybody else — how would they feel if they were watched by their boss for eight hours a day or 10 hours a day.

"I think that's unreasonable working conditions to be under. The company has an obligation to negotiate those types of things with the union, which they have not."

Roger Morton, president and general manager for OTS, referred questions about the bus surveillance system to James Burke, chief of the city's Public Transit Division. The Advertiser called Burke yesterday morning and was told he was in a meeting. Later in the day, Burke's office referred questions about bus cameras to city transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka. At about 3.30 p.m., Yoshioka's office said he was at a City Council budget meeting. As of 5 p.m. yesterday, Yoshioka had not contacted The

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Advertiser to comment on the bus cameras.

Honolulu would join a growing list of cities with bus surveillance equipment that includes San Francisco, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Chicago.

The installation of video and audio recording equipment in buses also has raised concerns about privacy invasion. Last year The Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority added cameras to some rail cars. The cameras are equipped with microphones. However, they're kept off because of privacy concerns, according to a September story in The Washington Post.

Officials with the Hawaii Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union were unavailable for comment on this story yesterday.

Privately gathered video already has been used to discipline a Honolulu bus driver. In 2008, a bus passenger caught a driver on video playing a hand-held electronic game. That driver was suspended.

The city started soliciting bids for the bus surveillance system on May 3 and set a May 10 deadline for bidders to schedule a test of their equipment. That dead- line was later extended to May 14 after a complaint by at least one vendor. The city has said the contract must be in place before the end of June. However, the budget for the project has not been disclosed.

Once the contract is awarded, the winning bidder will have one year to install the equipment on 40, 40-foot buses and nine, 60-foot buses.

According to the city's request for bids, the cameras will be mounted in six positions:

- Facing out the front window;
- Facing the front door and fare box;
- Mounted at the front, but facing the rear of the bus;

- Mounted at the center, but facing the rear of the bus;
- Mounted outside the bus facing curbside;
- And mounted outside the bus facing roadside;

Articulated 60-foot buses will have two additional cameras. Each of the 49 buses also will be equipped with a microphone , which will record audio in the proximity of the bus driver and fare box. Video and audio would be stored in a recorder on the bus and be available remotely.

The upcoming surveillance system test follows a small-scale test of similar technology on TheBus in 2007.

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

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The city will award a contract on June 15 for surveillance cameras and microphones to be installed on 49 buses.

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Posted on: Tuesday, May 25, 2010

## Letters to the Editor

### Rail Transit

#### Scrap train in favor of driverless cars

Randall O'Toole of the Cato Institute, a well-respected public policy research foundation, believes that rail will be outdated and unpopular in eight years. He says that driverless vehicles will lead the way in a new transportation revolution. By using laser guided "adaptive cruise control cars," traffic will flow three times quicker than normal.

Collisions are caused by slow reflexes; computers won't have that. Moving at consistent speeds, traffic jams will be a headache of the past. Fewer cars idling equals less pollution.

Impossible? Engineers from Stanford have developed the most up-to-date models. Watch the news this fall when their driverless Audi TT negotiates the hairpin turns up Pikes Peak at racing speeds.

This vehicle never veers more than a half inch off course. O'Toole says the greatest obstacle is the government, which would rather push taxpayer subsidized trains. Turning vehicles into driverless cars is basically a software update.

Scrap the rail, pay our teachers to go back to school, and enjoy your beautiful (hands-free) drive to work. Why put us into perpetual debt to buy and maintain an obsolete white elephant?

*Frank Rogers  
Green Energy Outlet*

## Letters to the Editor

For Tuesday, May 25, 2010

### Let's hope Djou changes on rail

Since Congressman Charles Djou opposes rail transit, along with most other government services, I think he should promise us that he will never ride the Metro in D.C. He is going to Washington to cancel Congresswoman Mazie Hirono's vote, so he's already contributing to the gridlock in our nation's capital.

If he gets a six-month lease on a nice apartment in Arlington or Bethesda, he'll get at least two hours a day behind the wheel to help him understand why people in West Oahu are so frustrated sitting in traffic. When his six months are up, maybe he will come back to Hawaii with a more realistic view of how government programs like rail transit can improve the quality of life for the taxpayers he represents.

David Fry  
President, Young Democrats of Hawaii

## City Begins Soil Sampling for Elevated Rail System



Reported by: [Brianne Randle](#)

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

Last Update: 5/27 10:14 pm

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[Soil Sampling Dates & Locations \(1.6MB\)](#)

Near Waipahu High School crews began closing off a portion of Farrington Highway to begin the task of testing where Honolulu's rail route might go.

"Going to be doing soil testing, in some places dilling down to 100ft, doing this to make sure that where we put our columns for this elevated rail system, they'll be about 150ft apart, are going in places that is suitable and we now what the soil is like," said Kirk Caldwell, Clty Managing Director.

They will be using infrared radar machines to locate utility lines such as sewer, water and electrical. With a display screen they can accurately see what is up directly below them.



"They are going to shoot radar equipment down into the soil to also tell them what's there. Should the subsurface be OK and the radar come back clean, we'll be then doing these moorings about every 150ft.," said Caldwell.

The machines will also test the soil's stability. Helping the City refine where to install concrete pillars along this center median to support the elevated guideway.

"In ANY project that's a \$5.5 Billion all properly done so when they say go we can go ahead and start creating those jobs," said Caldwell.

The work will require nighttime lane closures between 7pm and 6am eastbound and 6pm thru 5am eastbound.

"We're actually closing a lane of traffic on Farrington Highway, we're doing it in the evening to not impact traffic to take care of the people who live here and not cause gridlock ourselves," said Caldwell.

The project will stretch down thru Ft. Weaver Road and take thru mid September to complete.

"Will go on for the next couple months it will not be completed immediately," said Caldwell.

The City says it expects to hand Governor Lingle the Final EIS on the rail project for her signature within a month or two.

## **KITV.com**

### **Overnight Road Work On Rail Route Begins**

## ***Waipahu Motorists Should Expect Road And Intersection Closures***

POSTED: 10:09 pm HST May 27, 2010

UPDATED: 10:49 pm HST May 27, 2010

**HONOLULU** -- Preliminary engineering work along Oahu's proposed rail project is starting to get underway,

City managing director Kirk Caldwell said it's necessary the work gets going.

"So when we put in the pillars there are no surprises and so we are going to be doing this every 100 feet in the median along Farrington Highway," Caldwell said.

The work involves testing the soil stability so engineers can design the concrete foundation for the elevated guide ways.

"They are going to be using radar to go down in the soil to see if there are any utilities below there because if there are we don't want to drill into a power line or sewer system or water main," said Caldwell.

The city expects to begin actual soil sampling sometime next week. There may be some noise, but Caldwell says it may be no louder than a bus.

The crews will be working over a six and a half mile stretch from Waipahu to East Kapolei. Motorists should expect delays along the route to last through the summer. The work will close off lanes and intersections during non peak traffic hours. At least one lane of traffic in each direction along Farrington Highway will remain open.

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# honoluluadvertiser.com

Posted on: Friday, May 28, 2010

## Honolulu rail project losing Hannemann as its driving force

*Hannemann's backing has been crucial to \$5.5 billion project*

By **Sean Hao**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Mayor Mufi Hannemann's political aspirations and management of the city's \$5.5 billion rail project are parting ways.

Hannemann's decision announced yesterday to run for governor and his pending resignation from his city office will put the future of the rail project into a successor's hands.

Just how the state's largest-ever public works project survives the separation from Hannemann — the project's biggest champion — is unclear and is likely to be heavily debated as the race for governor heats up.

Hannemann did not address the rail issue during his short announcement in Kalihi yesterday. However, accusations that Hannemann's bid for governor could jeopardize the rail project arose immediately after the announcement .

Hannemann's Democratic opponent Neil Abercrombie and others contend the mayor should have shepherded the project through the end of the mayoral term in 2012.

"Mufi has been totally hands-on with the rail and he's totally hands off now," said Lance Miyake, the business agent for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1260. The IBEW has endorsed Abercrombie. "He wanted

to make it seem like it's his project and now it seems he's abandoning the project."

Honolulu's proposed 20-mile East Kapolei to Ala Moana rail project has made significant progress during the past decade. But one of the biggest steps — breaking ground — has eluded Hannemann.

The project has been bogged down in an environmental review process that was supposed to be completed last year. Groundbreaking, which also was supposed to occur in East Kapolei last year, has been delayed indefinitely.

Two recent sticking points — proximity to Honolulu International Airport and impact on cultural and historic resources — are nearly resolved. Wrapping those up will clear the way for the release of a final environmental impact statement for the project soon, said Jennifer Sabas, U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye's chief of staff in Honolulu. That means the rail project is in a position to move forward without Hannemann.

"There are a few outstanding issues," Sabas said. But, "I definitely think it's far enough along and the process will take care of itself."

City Council Chairman Todd Apo agreed.

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"I don't think this will affect the project," he said. "I think everyone in charge of making this project understands how important this project is to our island. Obviously the mayor was a big leader in this project. That doesn't mean he's the only person that can do that."

"I'm confident that the interim, acting mayor as well as whoever may take that position ... will continue those efforts."

## Caldwell steps up

Hannemann's duties will be assumed by city Managing Director Kirk Caldwell until a special election for mayor this fall. Caldwell, Honolulu Prosecutor Peter Carlisle, City Councilmen Donovan Dela Cruz and Rod Tam and University of Hawai'i-Mānoa engineering professor Panos Prevedouros have expressed interest in running for mayor.

The first major rail-related task ahead will be to push for the federal release of the project's final environmental impact statement. Gov. Linda Lingle then will need to sign off on the document before construction can begin. However, Lingle says she wants to hold public hearings on the rail's environmental impact and conduct an analysis of the cost and revenue estimates. That could take months and won't begin until the city releases an updated financial plan for the project.

Even if Lingle ultimately approves the project, a lawsuit seeking to stop the construction is likely.

"This (rail project) is not inevitable," said rail opponent Cliff Slater, who advocates for a managed highway lane alternative to rail.

However, Slater doubted that Hannemann's exit would have much impact.

"At this point I think the mayor's primary function was to generate community approval, but when it comes to the environmental side of things, it's out of his hands and that's where it's stuck right

now."

City Councilman Romy Cachola criticized Hannemann's decision to leave office before construction has begun.

"I don't know what will happen to the rail project," Cachola said. "I'm really concerned (about) its success without him leading the charge."

## higher office

However, George Paris, director of the Iron Workers' Stabilization Fund, said Hannemann could do more to support the project from a higher office. The Iron Workers Local 625 has endorsed Hannemann's bid for governor.

"The mayor was on top of this all the way," Paris said. "There were so many people out there trying to block the project."

"Him being governor, it might benefit rail. We want to see it move forward," Paris said. "If it doesn't happen this time, it won't happen at all."

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

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# Mayor to leave Honolulu Hale in bid for Washington Place

By [B.J. Reyes](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, May 28, 2010

0 [tweet](#) [Share](#) The race is officially on.

Again.

Mufi Hannemann made the long-expected announcement yesterday that he will skip his final two years as Honolulu mayor to run for governor.

"My intention is to serve a full four-year term," Hannemann said. "I want to be governor—that's the only thing on my radar screen, and my desire to serve the public is to be the governor of Hawaii."

He wasted no time in trying to separate himself from his main opponent in the Democratic primary, former U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie, in a rematch of a special election campaign for Congress in 1986.

"Neil has legislative experience. He does not have executive experience," Hannemann said. "Neil has been a citizen of the Beltway for 20 years. He's more familiar with Washington, D.C., than what happens at Washington Place (the governor's residence), so in many ways he is out of touch, out of step and out of place."

 [Mufi Hannemann Announces Run For Governor](#)



Mayor Mufi Hannemann officially announced he is running for governor.

[ [Watch](#) ]



**VIDEO** Hannemann Announcement Creates Domino Effect



Mufi Hannemann's announcement to run for governor is creating a domino effect.

[ [Watch](#) ]



Abercrombie responded by seizing on Hannemann's declaration that if elected this would not be his last job, but one to advance his political career.

"I see the office as a cornerstone. The mayor sees it as a steppingstone," Abercrombie said. "The mayor sees politics entirely through the prism of his political career."

"He said today while he was running he's been listening to people and they want him. And all I can tell you is I've been listening to people and they want change."

Hannemann will have to resign as mayor before filing for the governor's race, but he has until a July 20 deadline to do so. He said he plans to remain on the job until then.

Matters he hopes to resolve before resigning are working with federal authorities to complete the final environmental impact statement on the city's rail project, finalizing the city's \$1.8 billion operating budget and completing the two-day-a-month furlough schedule for city employees.

Abercrombie called it politics as usual from Hannemann, saying he believes the mayor should resign now rather than exploit a loophole that lets him hold one office while campaigning for another.

**SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL VACANCY**

Once Mufi Hannemann resigns as mayor, the City Council will have 10 days to call for a special election to fill the final two years of his term, said City Clerk Bernice Mau.

Because the vacancy occurs within 180 days of a regular election—the September primary—it can be held in tandem with that election.

Five notable candidates have declared their intent to seek the office: Kirk Caldwell, city managing director, who also would be named acting mayor once Hannemann resigns; Peter Carlisle, Honolulu prosecutor; Donovan Dela Cruz, City Council member from District 2 (Mililani Mauka-Temple Valley); Panos Prevedouros, a University of Hawaii engineering professor and anti-rail advocate; and Rod Tam, City Council member from District 6 (Downtown-Kalihi).

"Will all the decisions he's going to be making now—between now and July—have to do with being mayor, or is he going to have his eye on the governor's race?" Abercrombie said. "You mean to tell me he can say, 'I'm running for governor as of today—except not really—and all the decisions I make right now, don't worry, it won't have anything to do with how they might affect me in the governor's race'?"

"You're asking people for an awful lot of suspension of disbelief to have that happen."

Hannemann countered that Abercrombie was putting personal ambition ahead of the people's business by resigning from Congress, giving up valuable seniority and prompting a special election that cost taxpayers about \$1 million.

"When I resign, the timing will be such that a primary and a special election can be held on the same day and that the transition is such that there will be no vacancy—no void of leadership—where decisions can't be made, as what happened in the 1st Congressional (District)," he said.

Hannemann added that he can advance the rail project more as governor by working collaboratively with the county mayors as he has done in recent years.

Both candidates say they will run positive campaigns. The 1986 race became known for its bitterness, Abercrombie winning in the special election but losing the primary to Hannemann, who then lost to Republican Pat Saiki in the general election.

Hannemann heads into this primary with a significant advantage in money: \$2 million in cash on hand, compared with \$770,000 for Abercrombie.

On the Republican side, Lt. Gov. James "Duke" Aiona and former state Sen. John Carroll have said they will run for governor.

Aiona issued a statement saying Hawaii "can't afford" Hannemann.

"I look forward to putting my support for Hawaii's working families and small businesses against his record of raising taxes and increasing the cost of living for our residents on Oahu," Aiona said.

Hannemann said the state cannot afford four more years of the status quo from the Republicans.

"Duke has been a silent partner," he said. "You can't come across as a breath of fresh air when this is the team that brought us Furlough Fridays. This is the team that derailed the Superferry. ... You can't have it both ways."

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Posted on: Monday, May 31, 2010

## Cameras a solution in search of a problem

We're not sure why it is that Honolulu needs surveillance cameras and microphones on TheBus.

So far, it feels like an expensive solution in search of a problem.

Have city buses recently become carriers of crime, harassment and general mayhem? Sure, annoyances abound, but from our occasional travels there doesn't appear to be an increase in bad behavior. We aren't aware of any recent incidents in which passengers or drivers have been threatened. In fact, the worst news to come out of TheBus lately is that the use of counterfeit passes is rampant.

So we're not sure why it is that Honolulu needs surveillance cameras and microphones on TheBus.

The fact that the drivers' union hates the idea makes us warm to it a bit. The union's president is fine with the cameras as long as they're not pointed at the drivers; he calls it "unreasonable working conditions."

Well, that's a bit of a stretch, since darn near every job is under some kind of surveillance these days, whether it's in the form of monitored phone calls, keystrokes on the computer, GPS tracking and yes, microphones and cameras. Like they tell everyone who works on a computer, assume someone is reading all of your e-mail, so is it unreasonable to expect that bus drivers should always assume someone is watching? After all, it's a bus.

But again, has there been an issue with bad drivers? Here and there we hear about a disciplinary case; a privately gathered video was

used to suspend a driver in 2008 when he was caught playing a hand-held electronic game. But is this an epidemic?

So we're not sure why it is that Honolulu needs surveillance cameras and microphones on TheBus.

We live in a paranoid age with heavy-handed security and surveillance measures that would make George Orwell wince. Most of us have gotten used to being observed and, as in the recent case of the bombing attempt in Times Square, see the benefit to surveillance of public places.

Administrators of TheBus have been mum on the camera project but we hear some of the money to pay for it may be available from the Department of Homeland Security. It's a stretch to imagine a terrorist picking Honolulu as a target, and then taking the No. 43 bus from Waipahu, but we'd be happier about the whole camera thing if someone else was paying for it. If it's city money, we'd rather see it spent on some added buses during rush hour.

But even if this is some federal pork, we'd still have to say we're not sure why it is that Honolulu needs surveillance cameras and microphones on TheBus.

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## Letters to the Editor

For Monday, May 31, 2010

### **Rail project supposed to be under way now**

Are the citizens of Honolulu being taken for a ride on the mass transit?

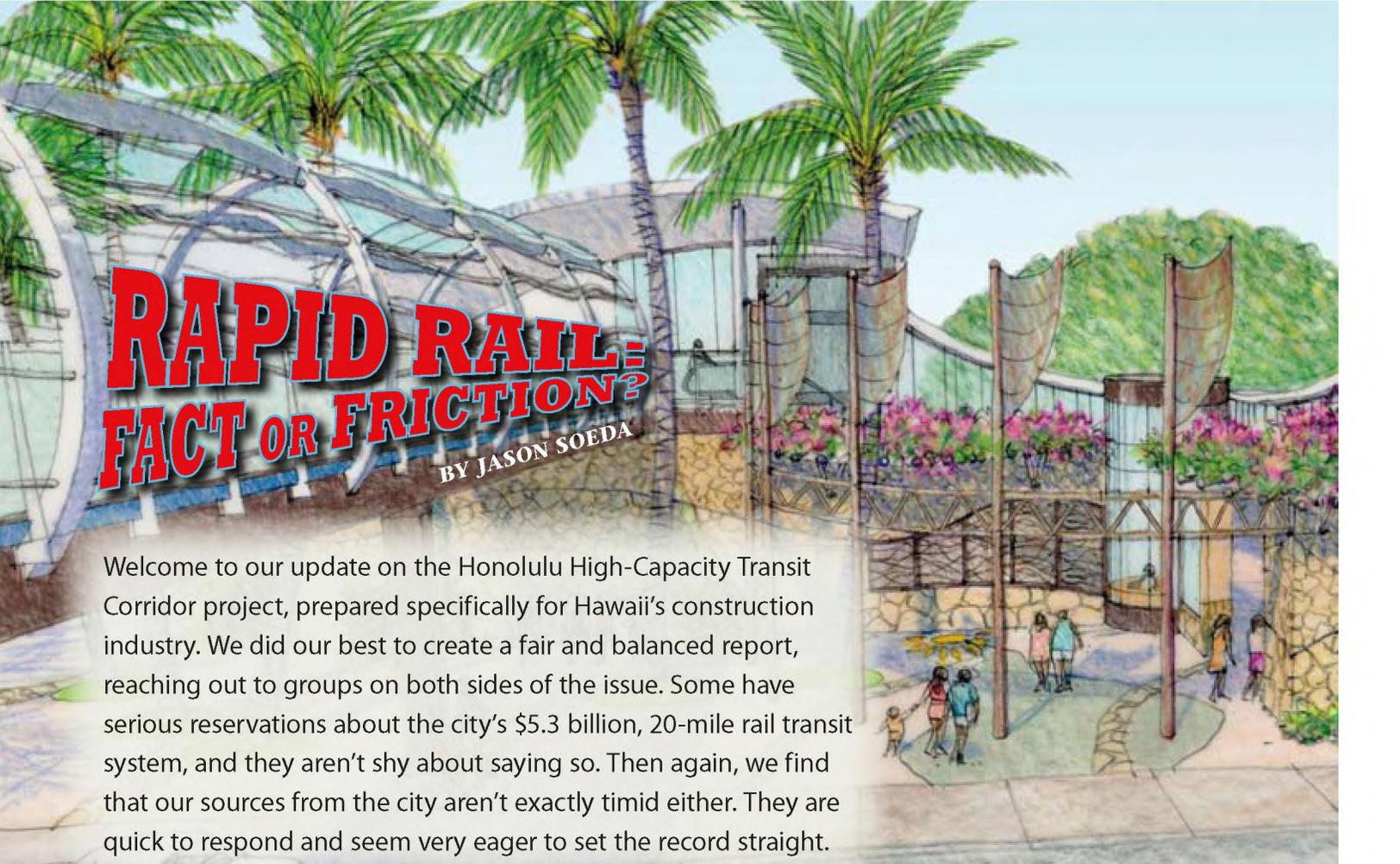
Construction was to have started in November 2009 and we are now being informed that soil exploration and utility location is starting on Farrington Highway.

How did this project get awarded nearly a year ago when the city is still gathering data for design?

Four thousand union workers are waiting for jobs. How many homes have been foreclosed on during this period of delay?

A signed environmental impact statement by the governor would start the project, but construction would be delayed by this information-gathering. Is this research being done now for the other phases?

Mark Inoshita  
Honolulu



# RAPID RAIL: FACT OR FRICTION?

BY JASON SOEDA

Welcome to our update on the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor project, prepared specifically for Hawaii's construction industry. We did our best to create a fair and balanced report, reaching out to groups on both sides of the issue. Some have serious reservations about the city's \$5.3 billion, 20-mile rail transit system, and they aren't shy about saying so. Then again, we find that our sources from the city aren't exactly timid either. They are quick to respond and seem very eager to set the record straight.

## Know the Score

Based on the City & County of Honolulu's environmental impact statement, the Honolulu rail project will create an average of 4,000 construction jobs and 10,000 jobs overall during each year of the project. It's great news for local builders. However, in the last few months, the project has garnered some less than desirable attention. In January, for instance, Gov. Linda Lingle hosted a public forum for Hawaii residents to hear a presentation from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) - Honolulu chapter on its concerns about the city's proposed elevated rail plan, as well as potential alternatives for the project. The association insisted that portions of the rail would be more suitable at ground level. Then in March, newspaper headlines blared out that the route runs too close to a Runway Protection Zone near the Honolulu International Airport. The state Department of Transportation

admonished the city for what it perceived as a "lack of transparency" around the city project, adding that the city would be responsible for covering the cost of the airport route fix.

In light of the recent setbacks, we asked Mayor Mufi Hannemann to give us an update and perhaps some assurance that the project is still on deck:

*Q: Will the rail project actually happen?*

A: We still plan to break ground this year in East Kapolei and begin building the first 6.5 miles of the guideway with contractor Kiewit Pacific Company. The governor's reservations notwithstanding, it's not a question of "if" rail will happen, it's a question of "when" it will occur.

Please note that this project is on solid financial footing. We have collected \$460 million from the GET surcharge as of January this year. That is more than 99 percent of our anticipated local revenue. The head of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Peter Rogoff, has said, "because of the excise tax revenues, the

Honolulu project has more money already committed to it than a great many other projects would dream of having at this stage."

The FTA believes so strongly in this project that even before the release of the final EIS (environmental impact statement), the agency publicly stated it intends to fund \$1.55 billion of rail construction, which is the current amount that we are requesting.

*Q: What things must happen before the groundbreaking?*

A: The FTA must approve and the governor must accept the final EIS, which completes the project's state environmental review. Next, the FTA must issue a Record of Decision (ROD), which completes the project's federal environmental review. At that point, we will have proceeded with the steps needed to break ground for the project.

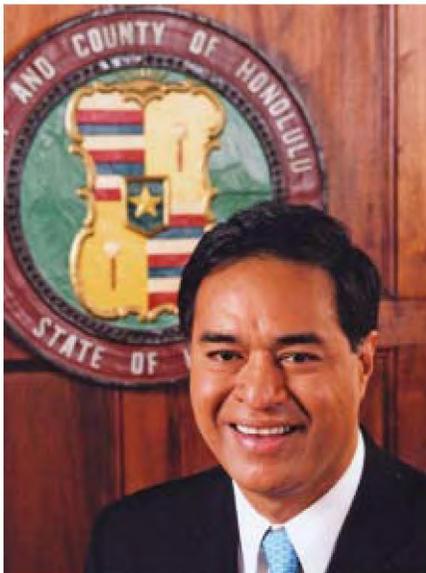
*Q: What if it does not break ground in 2010?*

A: We've always said, 'The longer we delay, the more we will pay.' The best example is the city's previous try at rail 17 years ago, in which the cost of



East Kapolei station

the project back then was \$1.7 billion. We have every reason to believe we will break ground this year. We hope that once the final EIS is released, the governor will accept the document in a timely manner because the state does not have any similar project on the horizon that can stimulate the economy the way rail can.



Mayor Mufi Hannemann

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**Q: What happens if the rail transit project falls through completely?**

A: As Sen. Daniel Inouye has said before: "It's now or never." This is our best and last chance for rail transit on Oahu. We already have two strikes against us because of past failures with rail, most notably in 1992 when the City Council turned its back on rail and more than \$600 million in federal funding. If this project dies, we will likely not see a rail system on Oahu in our lifetime, and we will lose our best tool to manage traffic congestion on the island.

**Q: Please tell us about the contracts awarded so far.**

A: The first construction phase is a design-build contract awarded to Kiewit Pacific for 6.5 miles of guideway from East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands. The award was \$90 million lower than initially anticipated because of the economic slowdown.

Other contracts are scheduled to be awarded this year for the train maintenance and storage facility in Waipahu; for the core systems, which includes the electronic operating system and the train vehicles; and for the Kamehameha Highway guideway. If current market trends continue, it is likely those contract awards also will be lower than expected.

Train stations along the route are to be constructed in separate future contracts.

## Friend or Foe?

The following are remarks from a number of organizations that have disagreed with certain aspects of the city's project. We



begin with AIA Honolulu.

"We are concerned about transit as it impacts our entire built environment, our communities and our people. Our involvement is an integral part of our mission," says Peter Vincent, Honolulu architect and AIA transit task force member.

Vincent describes his first encounters with rail officials: "We've been expressing our interest to be involved in the project since early 2006. At that point we were told, 'It's too early for architects to get involved — there will be an opportunity later.' Unfortunately 'later' never came and in 2007 we were told it was 'too late' and that has been the message from the city ever since. Regardless, AIA Honolulu has continued to endeavor to work with the city administration and the city council, has met with a variety of community groups and has provided extensive written and verbal communication on our position, in the interest of educating the public and for the best outcome for our island community."

AIA Honolulu supports a flexible

light rail system with portions of the route built at street level.

Vincent responds to critics who say it will not provide the most reliable, most convenient and cost effective transportation through Honolulu:

"As a system, Light Rail Transit (LRT) is no less reliable or convenient than the Automated Light Metro (heavy rail) system the city is planning for Honolulu. LRT is as fast, can deliver more than the required capacity per direction at substantially less capital investment and is much more widely used across the U.S. and abroad. LRT has all the advantages, yet offers more flexibility than the Automated Light Metro. It can be elevated where need be, it can come to grade where appropriate, has shorter turning radii and is quieter. The flexibility of LRT provides alignment opportunities that simply cannot be achieved with Automated Light Metro technology. A further advantage is that, while several companies manufacture Automated Light Metro, they each have their own proprietary technology that locks them in to future expansions. In contrast, with LRT, the initial supplier could be manufacturer X, then when the system is expanded, or more cars are needed, that could be competitively bid and awarded to manufacturer Y. This is a huge advantage to the taxpayers of Honolulu that is currently being missed.

"The more contentious issue," adds Vincent, "seems to be whether the system is elevated or at grade, rather than the technology. AIA



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Honolulu's position is that we agree that significant portions of the route should be elevated, due to traffic congestion and other factors, however based on studies and the experience of numerous other cities, portions would be more suitable at-grade. These portions include the segment from East Kapolei to Waipahu, and downtown Honolulu, particularly through the Chinatown historic district and along Honolulu's waterfront. The future segments of East Kapolei to Kapolei and Ala Moana Center to Waikiki and UH Manoa are also well suited to being at-grade. For every mile that the system is at grade instead of elevated we save approximately \$200 million.

"Based on a study of Honolulu's transit system by an independent transit expert, approximately 50 percent of the system could effectively work at-grade, saving \$1.8 billion," continues Vincent. "And if you include the full length of the proposed system - to Waikiki and UH Manoa - the savings would be about \$3.3 billion."

Vincent clarifies AIA Honolulu's position on Honolulu mass transit:

"AIA Honolulu is 100 percent supportive of a fixed-guideway, steel-on-steel transit system for Honolulu, which has been our position since the inception of the project. Keep in mind that LRT is also 'fixed-guideway, steel-on-steel' and thereby meets the definition that Oahu's

voters approved. It's important to note that voters did not vote for an all-elevated system."

The Historic Hawaii Foundation (HHF) has its own concerns about the rail project.

"Our approach is to help project planners accurately identify the impact to historic resources and to avoid, minimize and mitigate any adverse effects," says Kiersten Faulkner, executive director of the foundation. "As a major infrastructure project that will affect historic sites and set the framework for community development along its route, the rail issue met HHF's criteria for involvement."

HHF is currently working with the city to create a programmatic agreement (PA) designed to identify and protect historic properties from adverse effects by the construction of the rapid transit system along its proposed route.

Says Faulkner: "The agreement is a legally binding document between the FTA, the state Historic Preservation Division and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. An executed agreement is a federal requirement under the National Historic Preservation Act in order for any federal agency to provide funding, permits, licenses or other approval of any undertaking. Other federal agencies, such as the Navy, will also need to complete agreements prior to issuing their

own approvals for the project. The other federal agencies have not yet initiated their own, separate, consultation processes.

"The bulk of the draft PA was developed in 2009. It includes a list of historic sites likely to be adversely affected by the project and whether that effect is direct, indirect, cumulative or reasonably foreseeable. The PA also includes measures for continued identification and analysis of historic resources that may be unknown at this time. The stipulations in the agreement include ways to protect historic buildings and sites during construction; restore characteristics of some historic properties; a grant program to rehabilitate historic properties within the corridor; and measures to provide education and outreach about the history and preservation of significant places along the route.

"The draft PA was last circulated to the consulting parties in early November 2009," Faulkner explains. "At that time, HHF had a list of technical corrections that needed to be addressed. The final PA has not yet been accepted by the signatories and HHF has not yet seen the final version. It is unknown when the agreement will be executed."

Has the foundation's involvement in the project made any difference in the city's plans?

Faulkner responds: "The city's initial proposals for the PA did not adequately identify the full scale of the project's impact to historic sites, districts, buildings and landscapes along the route. Through the efforts of HHF and the state Historic Preservation Division, the analysis was revised and the list of adverse effects is now more complete and accurate. About 90 percent of HHF's proposals were integrated into the draft PA in some form."

Kamehameha Schools conducted its own study, which analyzed the economical and environmental viability of the Honolulu rail project. The institution owns land where four of the proposed train stations would be located. According to



Leeward Community College station

the report's findings, a partially ground level train would trim millions off the project. When asked to comment, Ann Botticelli, vice president of community relations and communications, says, "As part of the DEIS comment process we commissioned Phil Craig to conduct an analysis of how a flexible system might work and his report was the result of that. We did not intend to publicly present it as an alternative to the city's plan, and it is a mistake to characterize it that way."

Botticelli adds that Kamehameha Schools and the city happen to see eye to eye on quite a few points: "The truth is, we agree with the city more than we disagree. The city administration and Kamehameha Schools agree that a well-planned fixed guideway system can provide a powerful catalyst for economic development and efficient transportation from the second city in Kapolei to downtown Honolulu. We share the city's interest in



Rendering of the Waipahu station

identifying the most cost-effective, efficient and safest mass transit system for the entire community."

To round out this section, we asked Brennon Morioka, state transportation director, to comment on Honolulu rail's issues about

Honolulu International Airport. He says, "We understand the sense of urgency expressed by the city and we are all working as quickly as we can. But we also want to make sure we are following the process correctly."



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## Precision Planning

Lance Wilhelm of Kiewit explains the firm's role in the project:

"We continue to work with the city to complete the myriad plans, systems and programs we will need to effectively and efficiently execute our operations once we receive the go-ahead for construction," says Wilhelm. "Projects of this magnitude require a tremendous amount of pre-planning, scheduling and preparation. While we are anxious to begin full-fledged construction operations, we are also using this time to meticulously plan and schedule our work."

Wilhelm says that part of Kiewit's planning process includes taking a very detailed look at the current traffic patterns along the guideway alignment.

"We want to create a construction work plan that will minimize and mitigate impacts to the traveling public," Wilhelm says. "Traffic mitigation is much more than planning where and when to set up traffic cones, signs and flaggers. Our entire construction work plan; the specific foundation construction, concrete placement, and pre-cast erection method is being developed to create the most efficient operation possible, and all with an eye toward minimizing the impact to the public."

One of the strongest reasons for supporting rail is the new construction jobs it will create, says Wilhelm. "During a recession in which the construction industry has been hungry for work, this rail project will be a boon for the industry," he says.

Wilhelm concludes, "Reliable, fixed-guideway transit systems provide the key transportation and connectivity link that make developments, particularly the kind of walkable, human-scale, mixed-use



Lance Wilhelm

developments envisioned in transit oriented development (TOD), both practical and financially feasible."

## All the Right Moves

*We asked prominent leaders of the construction industry for their take on the project. Our first question: "Do you feel the City and County of Honolulu has made the right moves?"*

Glenn Nohara, president of Koga Engineering & Construction, answers, "There will always be a debate on what 'the right moves' are. If you ask a hundred people, you will probably get a hundred different opinions on what is right."

Nohara praises the city for keeping citizens informed about the project. "Throughout this whole process, the city has held many public hearings and informational meetings with industry groups, distributed literature about rail transit and maintained a web site on the status of the project."

Bill Wilson, president of Hawaiian Dredging Construction Co., says, "Whenever a major project is being developed there are many, many considerations which must be addressed. It is complex and time consuming. It is hard to do. The city is addressing these many issues as reasonably and rationally as possible. There can also be new information that becomes available which can change previous decisions."

*How do you feel about the controversy surrounding the project?*

"For most, any major change is difficult," says Nohara. "It is easier to stay in our comfort zone and stay with what we are accustomed to. Past examples of projects that met resistance include the Honolulu International Airport's Reef Runway project and the H-3 Freeway. Both of which are of great benefit to our people today."

Kyle Chock, executive director of The Pacific Resource Partnership, agrees with Nohara. "Most major projects and initiatives come with some controversy," says Chock. "Take for example the H-3 Freeway – when

it was first proposed, many people were opposed to its construction. The project became tangled up in the court system and as a result, it took 20 additional years and millions of dollars more than it should have to construct. Now that it's complete and in use, public sentiment about H-3 is very positive – it has greatly improved commuting for Windward residents."



Kyle Chock

Adds Chock: "A high-profile issue such as rail will always have its opponents – but at the end of the day, we can all agree that residents have suffered through traffic congestion for far too long. Rail is a viable solution that will help to ease traffic congestion for thousands of families living in Leeward and Central Oahu."

*How will Hawaii benefit from this project?*

Nohara says: "I think rail transit is the single biggest step we can take to reduce the negative impacts to our environment that our current forms of surface transportation create. This ranges from the amount of land we take to build roads, highways, parking structures and maintenance facilities to the amount of carbon dioxide we emit into the atmosphere each year. The rail transit system has the capability of moving far greater numbers of people while requiring far less land area than what our cars and buses require. When we fully develop our renewable energy sources, the rail system can offer the quickest and single largest transition to its use. All our state's people, not just in construction, need work now and this project is the largest one that can start in the very near future with a substantial amount of federal funding. The trickle-down effect would help other sectors of our economy."

Chock concurs, saying, "In addition to providing Oahu residents with a clean, convenient and efficient mode of transportation, rail transit will provide thousands of jobs for

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that will infuse more than \$1 billion in federal funding into our local economy, create thousands of jobs, and improve the quality of life for the people of Hawaii.

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Hawaii's construction workers. During these tough economic times when many local construction workers are sitting on the bench, with no means to support their families, the rail project is looked at as a beneficial solution to ease traffic woes, create jobs and stimulate the economy. In addition, TOD resulting from the rail project will also create thousands of additional construction jobs that can sustain our industry long after the rail project is completed."

## Grassroots Response

Since June 2008, a representative from Honolulu Rail Transit has attended Kapolei Neighborhood Board meetings to provide updates and answer rail questions. Chair Maeda Timson says the project's Public Involvement Team has kept Kapolei residents well informed on the issues. She also says transit representatives took all of their ideas and concerns into account.

"It was truly amazing how we were able to share information," Timson says. "Everyone's manao was seen in the final recommendation."

Timson says the city's plan is the most viable option to dealing with the transportation needs of rapidly developing West Oahu. "Many of us feel it is an investment for today and tomorrow. We must get traffic relief now and prepare for what the west side will continue to bring to the area and the entire state," says Timson.

Alicia Maluafiti, an Ewa Beach resident and spokeswoman for the pro-rail group Go Rail Go, agrees. She says, "No matter how many roads we build, rail is the only long-term transportation solution to addressing traffic congestion while accommodating the growth on the island. We are ready to ride."

Maluafiti says Go Rail Go began as a necessary grassroots response to rail opponents who were pushing for a charter amendment that would stop rail transit on the island of Oahu forever. "It was clear that we needed to mobilize to ensure that our voices were heard because we are

the ones spending two to three hours each day sitting in traffic. Most of the anti-railers are east Honolulu and windward Oahu residents that just don't want to pay for rail because they won't be riding it."

Maluafiti empathizes with the challenges the city is facing.

"Like the city, we're frustrated. We waited more than 10 years for the widening of Fort Weaver Road and 20 years for the North-South Road. It's clear the city and the major stakeholders are really trying to work with the federal government, but unfortunately, politics continues to interfere with their collective ability to do the public good. Most people just wish the stars would align so we can break ground. We can see it. We can even taste it. We're so close. We just have to continue to believe that it's gonna happen. Because the alternative for those living in West Oahu is really worse than giving up hope now."

## Sky High

To conclude this report, we offer Mayor Hannemann a chance to respond to criticism of the project. First, he responds to claims that street level rail is the most reliable, convenient and cost effective choice.

"An elevated, steel-wheel rail system is the fastest, most reliable and safest transit option," says Hannemann. "It is completely separate from traffic and has no chance of colliding with cars on the road or becoming stuck in traffic congestion like an at-grade train system would."

Hannemann continues: "American Public Transportation Association president Bill Millar recently said an elevated rail system is the 'gold standard' for rail systems because it is a sealed right-of-way. A sealed right-of-way is the safest and most efficient avenue of transportation since you have the least interference from other traffic.

"The Phoenix light rail system runs at-grade or on the surface level along with other traffic. In its first



Pearlridge station

year of service last year, the system recorded 52 collisions between trains and cars. That's an average of one accident a week.

"The accidents have not only become a major safety issue, but it has shut down the train service for hours. The elevated Vancouver SkyTrain, which is the system that Honolulu wants to emulate, has not had one collision with cars. In fact, the Vancouver SkyTrain had record ridership during this past Winter Olympic Games without a single collision."

And here is our final question for the mayor: Is there any way you can reassure the construction industry that rail transit is moving forward? And what else would you like them to know?

"The city is proceeding with this project diligently within the framework of the federal and state environmental requirements in an open and transparent manner," says Hannemann. "The city is also working in partnership with the federal agencies to maintain the funding eligibility. That means we are not alone in the process. Federal agencies, assisted by their consultants, are overseeing everything we do. We could not have reached where we are with the project without having everything done properly. That is the reason why we were assured future federal funding by the FTA. Congressman Jim Oberstar, chair of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, has repeatedly called Honolulu's rail program "the No. 1 transportation project in America."

**BI**

# If Elevated Rail Fails, So Will Its Jobs

BY MICHAEL A. LILLY

Oahu needs an affordable, aesthetic and effective rapid-transit that will create jobs. Those who are pro-rail because it will create jobs should advocate less expensive alternatives that will ensure those jobs will actually happen.

As a fifth generation keiki o ka aina, I am pro-rapid transit. As a child, my mother rode the trolley. We had railroads from Honolulu to Haleiwa and elsewhere. Rapid transit is good for Oahu.

But will elevated rail, at a current price tag of \$5.3 billion, ever get off the ground?

I recently stood where the city plans a Chinatown transit station, which will obliterate our majestic vistas. The Honolulu chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) described such 70-foot-high stations as "Football Fields in the Sky." Even San Francisco tore down its Embarcadero to open views much as we did for Aloha Tower.

Two compelling reports of the Federal Transit Agency warned that elevated rail is based on overly-optimistic financial projections while ignoring downside risks. Some of its findings were: "GET surcharge revenue has consistently been less than forecasted;" "any shortfall in revenues would have material consequences on the city's ability to finance" rail; based on Council of Revenues figures, the city's forecast of the GET surcharge growth will have a deficit of \$322 million through 2023; financing costs are "understated by about \$24.7 million;" and the city has not explained rail's cost risk [deficit] of up to 1/2 billion dollars. And no one knows what costs or delays will result from the recent disclosure that rail, as planned, invades airport airspace.

If rail costs more than expected – who ever heard of a government project coming in at budget? – or the excise tax surcharge doesn't generate enough revenues, from a business perspective, rail is insolvent.

Meanwhile, Mayor Mufi Hannemann said any delay will increase annual costs by \$200 million. Hence, delays will have draconian financial impacts.

As a former Hawaii Attorney General who has litigated environmental claims for more than 35 years, I guarantee lawsuits will be filed against rail. The city expects it and has hired defense attorneys. Expect court injunctions halting rail until that is sorted out. H-3 Freeway litigation stalled construction for 10 years!

Using the mayor's figures, if litigation lasts five years, rail's cost would increase by \$1 billion.

Not only is elevated rail the largest and most expensive construction project in state history – it's nearly four times more expensive than the next most expensive rail system in the nation located in Virginia.

And the city's optimistic cost projection is only for Phase I from West Oahu to Ala Moana Center. It projects

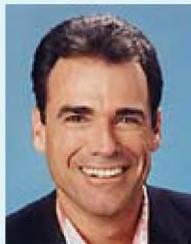
another \$2.4 billion for the important Phase II to Manoa and Waikiki. If we can't afford Phase I, how will we pay for Phase II?

All for an inflexible fixed system which will forever burden Oahu residents with the result.

The AIA proposed a partially at-grade light-rail system at a savings of \$3.3 billion that: includes Phases I and II, can be built in less time, reduces the possibility of litigation and preserves our magnificent views and will create jobs. Other less expensive alternatives have also been proposed.

As for elevated rail, if it fails, so will its jobs. Should we spend taxpayers' money on a system we do not want with billions we do not have?

**BI**



*Michael A. Lilly is a former Hawaii attorney general, retired Naval Reserve Captain, decorated Vietnam War veteran, and a partner in the Honolulu law firm of Ning Lilly & Jones.*



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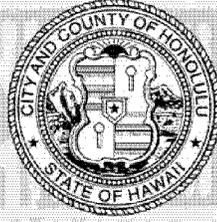
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# NEWS RELEASE



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2009

### **HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT'S RUNWAY PROTECTION ZONE AVOIDANCE MEASURE APPROVED**

Mayor Mufi Hannemann announced today that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has concurred with the City's Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) avoidance measure for the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Mayor Hannemann is in receipt of an FAA letter stating the "rail project alignment is consistent with our standards for airport development."

"This milestone means there are no outstanding issues associated with the rail system serving the Honolulu International Airport or completing the rail transit Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS)," said Mayor Mufi Hannemann. "I thank the FAA, the FTA and the State Department of Transportation for their valuable technical advice and cooperation in reaching this solution."

"We are making significant progress toward breaking ground and beginning rail construction. Building the rail system is the state's largest economic stimulus and will employ an average of 10,000 workers a year."

The RPZ avoidance will relocate a portion of the project's guideway several hundred feet, from Aolele Street to Ualena Street, beginning approximately 2,000 feet west of Lagoon Drive, and will relocate the Lagoon Drive rail station to the corner of Ualena Street and Lagoon Drive. The alignment through the airport area will still be primarily along Aolele Street.

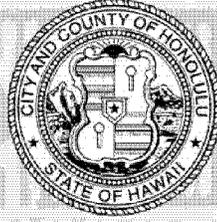
Construction of this segment of the project is expected to begin in 2014.

-30-

**Contact: Wayne Yoshioka 768-8305**

AR00079324

# NEWS RELEASE



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 19, 2010

## **LOCAL REVENUE FOR HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT HOLDING FIRM**

(Wednesday, May 19, 2010)—Mayor Mufi Hannemann announced today the Honolulu Rail Transit Project has received 99.6 percent of its expected revenue from the General Excise and Use Tax (GET) surcharge for rail transit.

As of April, the City had received \$499.3 million in surcharge revenue. The Project's August 2009 financial plan anticipates \$501.5 million in revenue during the same period.

"This is excellent news that bodes well for the future of the rail project," said Mayor Hannemann. "GET revenues are on track despite the state of the economy, and we have saved \$90 million in construction costs for the first rail contract. We could realize additional savings on three major rail contracts that will be awarded later this year."

Hannemann noted that net GET surcharge to the City in March totaled \$16.3 million. "That is an encouraging sign for the rail project and is an early indication that Honolulu's economy is getting stronger."

The rail project's GET projections and financial plan have been scrutinized and validated by the Federal Transit Administration, the agency's independent oversight contractors as well as leaders with the Hawaii Business Roundtable. The Roundtable called the rail project's financial plan conservatively prepared.

Authorized by the Hawaii Legislature and the Honolulu City Council, the one-half percent GET surcharge began in 2007 and ends in 2022. It is expected to generate about \$3.5 billion for the rail project. The surcharge can only be used for rail construction and operations.

-30-

Contact: Bill Brennan 768-6928

AR00079325



# Honolulu On The Move

THE HONOLULU HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT NEWSLETTER

## Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): From The Experts



*"With transit you get out, you walk, you feel a bit better...we could all use more exercise and that's a good thing..."*

William Fleissing

-William Fleissing, President of Communitas Development Company

*"(TOD makes it) exciting to be on the street because there are all of these things going on and people watching and it's easy to walk from place to place because things are close together and convenient..."*



Mary Murtagh

- Mary Murtagh, President of EAH Housing, a non-Profit development and management company that builds

### Contact Us

You can reach us by calling project information at 566-2299 or by submitting your comments to [www.honolulutransit.org](http://www.honolulutransit.org).

Call or email us if you would like to receive an electronic version of this newsletter or would like be removed from our mailing list.

## Transit-Oriented Development 101



Photo Rendering: Envisioning green spaces from TOD in a Waipahu neighborhood.

**Aloha!** This edition of our newsletter is devoted to Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). TOD is a major step forward in Honolulu's evolution as a world-class city. It is new, mixed use development that occurs in neighborhoods within half a mile of a rail station. This development typically encourages people to walk, bike or catch a bus to their destination rather than relying on an automobile.

TOD can reduce the number of vehicles on the road, create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and even promote healthier lifestyle as people walk instead of drive.

Properly planned and implemented, TOD can bring new investment into an area from homes, retail and commercial plazas and parks and public spaces. New investment creates tax revenue for essential government services, jobs and economic opportunity. Portland has seen \$3 billion in investment because of its MAX rail line; Washington, DC has experienced \$15 billion in investment around its Metro system; and more than \$7 billion in public and private

resources have poured into Phoenix around its Valley Metro line.



Photo Rendering: TOD in East Kapolei.

The first step in TOD planning is asking communities what kind of development they prefer around their rail station. The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) convened workshops and community engagement activities for the first communities along the rail route – Kapolei, Waipahu and Pearl City. Residents told officials they want to see new housing, retail plazas and office buildings along with recreational opportunities.

- continued on back



## Sustainable Features of Honolulu's Rail Transit System



**Photo Rendering:** The Maintenance and Storage Facility is seeking LEED® Silver Certification. Planned features include vegetated roof, natural lighting, solar panels, xeriscaping and recycled content in building material and furnishings.

- The Maintenance and Storage Facility, which will house the rail vehicles, will be seeking "silver-certified" under the Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design Program, also known as "LEED". The LEED® green building certification program is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of green buildings.
- Stations will have natural ventilation and day-lighting to reduce energy costs.
- Water-permeable pavement and bio-filtration will reduce excessive rainwater runoff.
- Recycled materials will be used whenever possible during construction.
- The train runs on electricity that can be generated by wind, solar or other renewable energy sources.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Rail Display at Kahala Mall June 19-20, 2010

"Ride Tomorrow's Train Today"

Experience a virtual train simulation and take a free souvenir e-photo! Complimentary transit tote bag for first 1000 people with completed survey.

Hours: Saturday, June 19, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Sunday, June 20, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

— continued from front

Their ideas and suggestions have been incorporated into draft TOD plans for Kapolei and Waipahu that can be reviewed available at the DPP website:

<http://www.honoluludpp.org/planning/>.

DPP will hold workshops for every community along the route and use the input to create unique TOD plans for those areas.



**Photo:** TOD in Oakland, California.

# Honolulu Rail Transit Project



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# 20-MILE ROUTE

## Kapolei to Ala Moana Center



# 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



# CONNECTIONS TO THE UH SYSTEM

- Rail stations will be located near:
  - UH West Oahu
  - Leeward Community College
  - Honolulu Community College



Leeward Community  
College Station

- More frequent bus service will operate between Ala Moana Center and UH Manoa

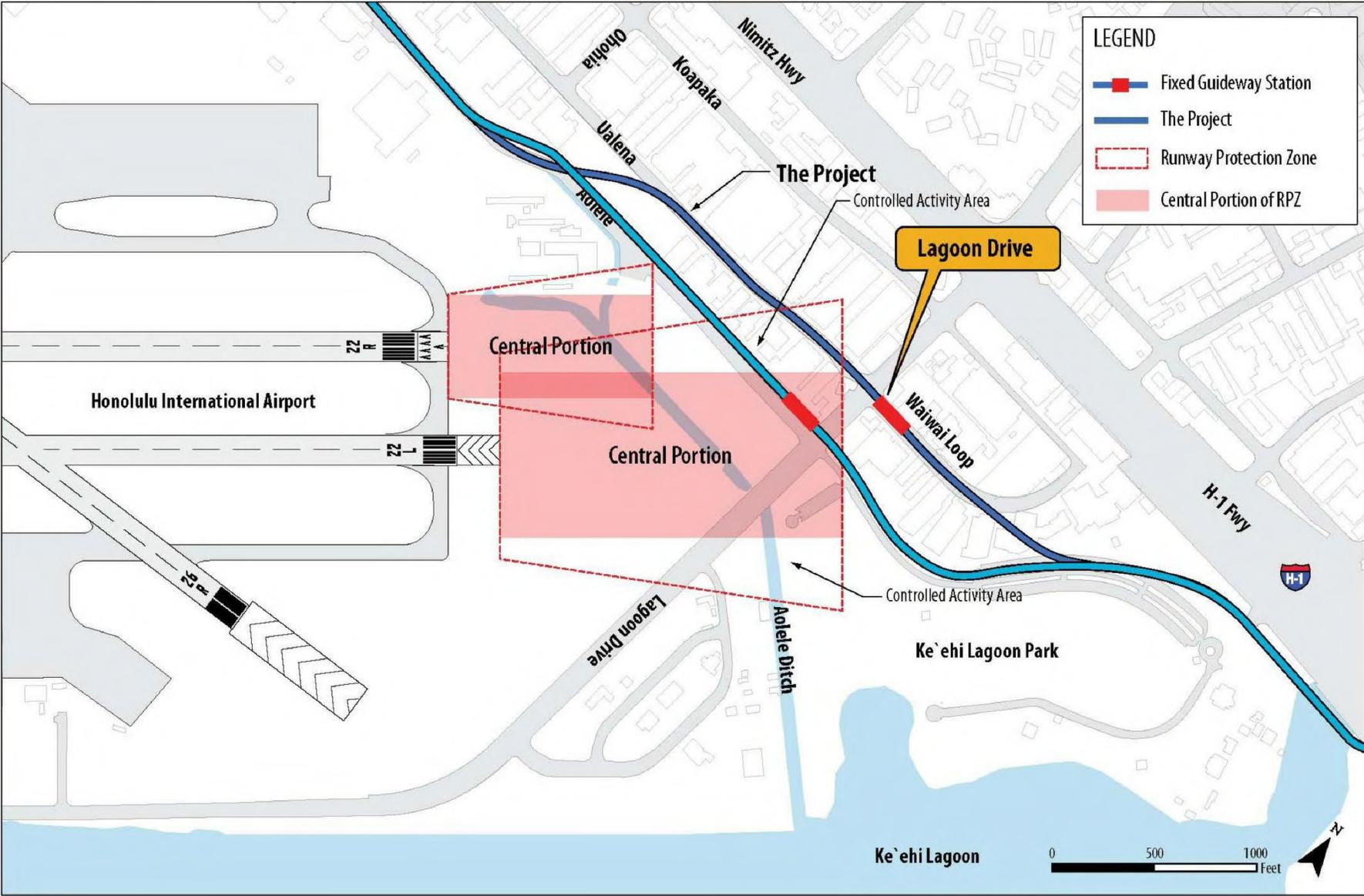
# PROJECT CHECKLIST COMPLETED MILESTONES

- Transit Surcharge Passed – 2005
- Alternatives Analysis – 2006
- Locally Preferred Alternative – 2007
- Selection of Technology – 2008
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement – 2008
- Voters approve “steel rail” system -2008
- Selection of Airport Alignment – 2009
- Preliminary Engineering – 2009

# FINAL EIS STATUS

- 13 State agencies have collaborated
- Admin draft of Final EIS transmitted to Governor via OEQC in December
- Runway Protection Zone Resolved

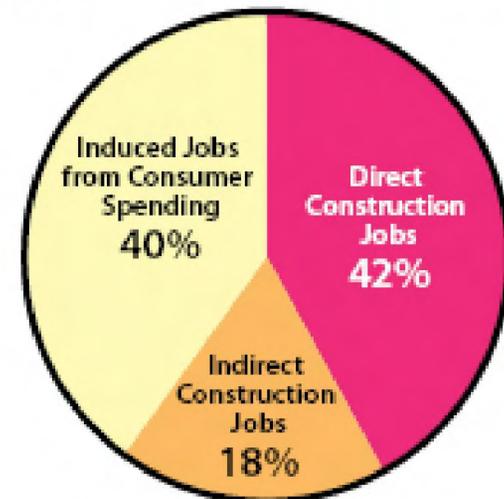
# RUNWAY PROTECTION ZONE



# ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Building rail will help fight the recession
- Creating 10,000 jobs a year; 4,000-plus construction jobs
- Rail will be the state's largest job creating project

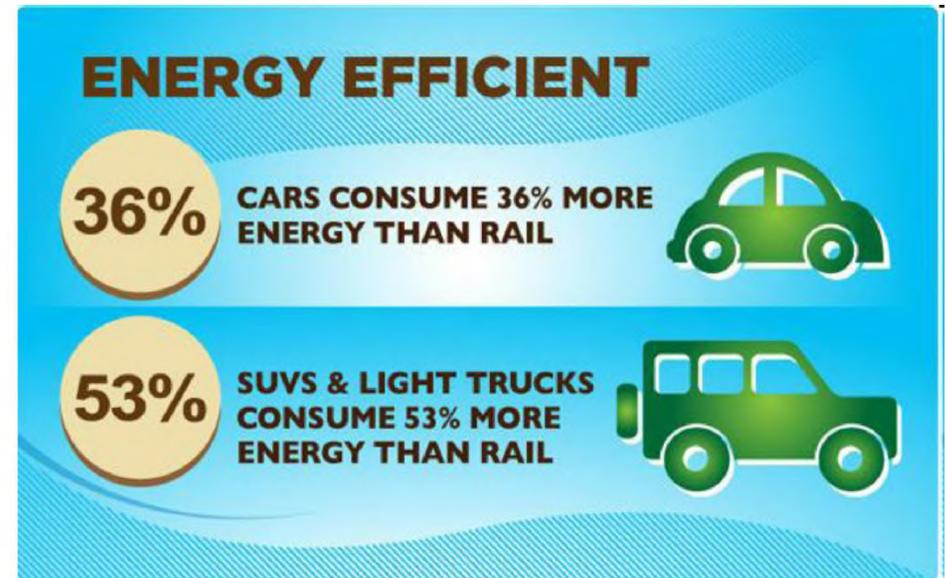
Employment Created by Rail Construction\*



\*Person years of employment.

# ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Electrically-powered rail uses less energy than cars and trucks, per passenger mile
- Rail will take 30,000 vehicles off our roads, reducing Honolulu's carbon footprint
- Rail is endorsed by the national Sierra Club



# TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

- Maximize use of resources and infrastructure
- Communities can take advantage of transit access
- Publicly enabled, privately invested



# PRIVATE INVESTMENT NEAR RAIL

- Washington Metro – \$15 Billion since 1976
- Dallas DART – \$4.3 Billion since 1996
- Portland MAX – \$3 Billion since late 1970s
- St. Louis MetroLink – \$1 Billion since 1993

# FEDERAL SUPPORT

- FTA Leader Peter Rogoff: “there is some considerable financial strength to this project”
- FTA Leader Peter Rogoff: “we would not have included funding in the President’s budget for this project if we thought it was falling off the rails”
- Congressman Oberstar: “Honolulu’s rail program is the #1 transportation project in America.”

# UPCOMING MILESTONES

- Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS)
- Final EIS to be accepted by the State
- Record of Decision
- Groundbreaking

# TRANSIT AUTHORITY

- City Council approved placing this question on ballot:

*“Shall the revised City Charter be amended to create a semi-autonomous public transit authority responsible for the planning, construction, operation maintenance, and expansion of the City’s fixed guideway mass transit system?”*

# AT-GRADE IS NOT AN OPTION

- Won't provide service for Honolulu needs
- Revising EIS for at-grade will take far longer than 6 months
- FTA: it would put us back at square one

# AT-GRADE TAKES TRAFFIC LANES



Houston

At-grade trains can take up to 3 traffic lanes from cars and trucks

# AT-GRADE MORE LIKELY TO IMPACT IWI



**At-grade rail requires excavating a trench for trains**

# PHOENIX: 52 CAR-TRAIN COLLISIONS IN 2009



# **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 NEAR RADFORD DRIVE



# DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD NEAR HONOLULU COMMUNITY COLLEGE



# CROSSING NU‘UANU 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



# 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
- ‘Ōlelo – Sundays at 4:30pm

# **PEARL HIGHLANDS STATION WORKSHOP**

**Thursday, May 13, 2010 from  
6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

**Highlands Intermediate School**

- This is the third and final workshop for the Pearl Highlands area.
- Please RSVP by calling the project hotline at 566-2299 or emailing [info@honolulustransit.org](mailto:info@honolulustransit.org)

*Mahalo!*

