



Rail at a Crossroads

The issue: How to finish the system that was promised

For Kapolei and West O’ahu residents, it’s not a question of whether the Honolulu Rail Transit (Rail) should be built. The question is how the full system will end up being built if additional funding is not secured. At the time of this posting, the situation is fluid with more than a dozen bills related to Rail funding making their way through the House and Senate.

Where things stand

■ Nearly 11 miles of the rail guideway and the operations and maintenance facility are now largely complete, with rail car testing on the alignment set to begin in the coming months. Construction of nine west side stations is well underway.

■ Currently, there is funding only to award Rail construction contracts to Middle Street. If the project stops there, HART and the City and County will breach its full funding grant agreement with the Federal Transit Administration. This will expose the City to repayment of funds received, forfeiture of the \$1.55 billion in federal funds approved for the project, and the loss of other future federal funding.

■ There is no viable Plan B, other than to identify the source and raise the remaining funds to complete Rail to Ala Moana. Stopping the project at Aloha Tower and eliminating stations



along the way, or other major changes, will result in further costly delays and lawsuits, as new environmental reviews will be required. This realignment will also negatively impact Central O’ahu commuters. Not to mention that it will not be the rail system that the public voted for in 2008, and which a strong majority still supports.

■ Because there is no other major funding source for the project to proceed, legislative action on a GET extension this session is a “do or die” situation for Rail. Raising enough through higher property taxes and fees is not viable, and will shift costs to O’ahu residents alone rather than the GET, which affects residents, visitors and other non-residents. The last two groups (visitors and other non-residents) now pay nearly 30 percent of the GET.

Permanent GET extension is the best answer

A permanent GET extension is the only way the full rail system can be completed. For Kapolei and West O’ahu residents, the full

locally preferred alternative selected in 2006 takes rail to West Kapolei and UH Mānoa. Ending Rail at East Kapolei makes no sense as government and job centers for the Kapolei region are in the City of Kapolei.

The benefits of Rail

It’s a quality of life issue that affects the entire island of O’ahu. We have the unenviable distinction of having some of the worse congestion in the country. Surveys over the past few years show Honolulu in the top five to 10 most traffic congested cities in the U.S. The island’s population will continue to grow, especially in West O’ahu, which is experiencing the fastest growth in the state. Residents feel the effects every day on the clogged roadways and freeways in the Kapolei region.

It’s also important to keep in mind that neither the City nor the State has other transformative transportation projects planned in the foreseeable future. Absent an alternative plan, Rail is the only viable solution.

What you can do: Let your voices be heard.

If you are concerned about the future of Rail and support the full build out of the rail system as originally planned, please contact key legislators. Ask them to provide enough funding to complete the rail project as planned.

Who to contact:

Senator Lorraine Inouye
Chair, Senate Committee on Transportation and Energy Committee
808-586-7335
seninouye@capitol.hawaii.gov

Representative Henry Acquino
Chair, House Committee on Transportation
808-586-6520
repacquino@capitol.hawaii.gov

Kapolei Area Elected Officials

Senator Will Espero
808-586-6360
senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov

Senator Mike Gabbard
808-586-6830
sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov

Senator Maile Shimabukuro
808-586-7793
senshimabukuro@capitol.hawaii.gov

Representative Sharon Har
808-586-8500
rephar@capitol.hawaii.gov

Representative Ty Cullen
808-586-8490
repcullen@capitol.hawaii.gov

Representative Matt LoPresti
808-586-6080
replopresti@capitol.hawaii.gov

Representative Cedric Gates
808-586-8460
repgates@capitol.hawaii.gov

Representative Andria Tupola
808-586-8465
reptupola@capitol.hawaii.gov



Mele & Hula

About 500 concertgoers gathered on the ocean-side lawn at Lanikuhonua to soak up the sights and sounds of the Mele & Hula summer concert on the evening of August 13, 2016. The annual Hawaiian music and dance festival features some of Hawaii’s finest performing artists. This time, it was Pomaika’i Keawe Lyman, Kimo Keaulana, and Pa’ahana, along with Halau Hula Olana, Halau Keali’ika’a Punihonua Ke’ena A’o Hula, and Halau Ke Kai O Kahiki. The concert is sponsored by the James & Abigail Campbell Family Foundation and the Lanikuhonua Cultural Institute.



KAPOLEI PROPERTIES DIVISION

Kapolei Properties Division is a division of the James Campbell Company LLC focusing on the development of the City of Kapolei, and on economic development and job creation in the Kapolei region.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON KAPOLEI, PLEASE VISIT: www.kapolei.com or contact Steve Kelly at stevek@kapolei.com

TO SUBSCRIBE to this newsletter, go to www.kapolei.com and join our email list.