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A COMMUNITY WIDE EFFORT TO KEEP ELEVATED RAIL OUT OF OUR CITY

The case against rail

When the authorities first promoted rail's "benefits" it led the public to believe that:

- Rail would reduce traffic congestion below today's levels.[i]
- Rail would reduce the time for public transportation riders to get to town.
- Rail would be "green" and more energy efficient than cars or buses.
- Rail would provide thousands of local construction jobs.

However, since then the public has become more aware that these so-called "benefits" are illusory.

First, and most important, the City has now admitted in the Final EIS that, "traffic congestion will be worse in the future with rail than what it is today without rail"[ii] and the FTA agrees. While HART says there would be a 40,000 reduction in daily car trips, according to the Final EIS it is a trivial amount relative to the additional trips that will occur because of population growth. A better way to look at it is that there would be 21 percent more auto trips is we build rail versus 23 percent if we do not.[iii] Some benefit.

Second, the public is now learning that the promised reduction in travel time for transit commuters from Kapolei Transit Center to Downtown will not happen. In fact, their travel times will likely worsen. For example, the Country Express C Bus currently takes 38 to 52 minutes for this trip depending on when one travels.[iv] On the other hand, the travel time for rail will be about 53 minutes.[v] Even during the worst of the rush hour, TheTrain will take longer than TheBus. Moreover, what makes it even worse; the City says they intend to discontinue the C bus and all other express buses as soon as the rail line is up and running.[vi] Given that most rail passengers will have to stand and they will also be less likely to have a no transfer trip, rail will be an inconvenience for many.

Third, TheTrain would use twice as much energy as TheBus per passenger mile. It would even use about 15 percent more than the average automobile per passenger mile. Where the City has misled us about rail's supposedly low energy use is that the City has used a "weighted" average for national rail energy use, which includes New York City data. New York accounts for 60 percent of all the nation's rail transit passengers and is extremely energy efficient. No one pretends that we would have the density of ridership that New York enjoys with people travelling back and forth all day. Ours would be a suburban commuter oriented line, full one

way during rush hours and virtually empty the rest of the time. We would have a rail line with energy usage similar to other suburban oriented lines, and that is more than twice that of New York as the U.S. Transportation Energy Data Book clearly shows.[vii]

Fourth, as the Star Advertiser showed recently, of the 508 jobs provided by rail, only 152, or 30 percent, are local construction jobs. The rest are either Mainland jobs or planning and administrative jobs. Kiewit has said in the past that they would hire 350 construction workers at the peak and it looks like 40 percent, or 140 of them, will be specialized workers from the Mainland, leaving 210 as local workers. Whatever the eventual outcome, the projected "thousands" of local jobs appear unlikely; if there were, HART would be shouting out the details from the rooftops -- and they are not.

Initially, the public intuitively believed these proposed "benefits" to be true. They have subsequently had to really think these benefits through and have arrived at opposite conclusions from what HART is selling. These are now settled facts that are not going to be dislodged.

Endnotes:

[i] http://www.honolulutraffic.com/DEIS_Comments8_VII.pdf

[ii] You can find that statement in the Final EIS at: http://www.honolulutraffic.com/FinalEIS/AppendixA.pdf page 1252.

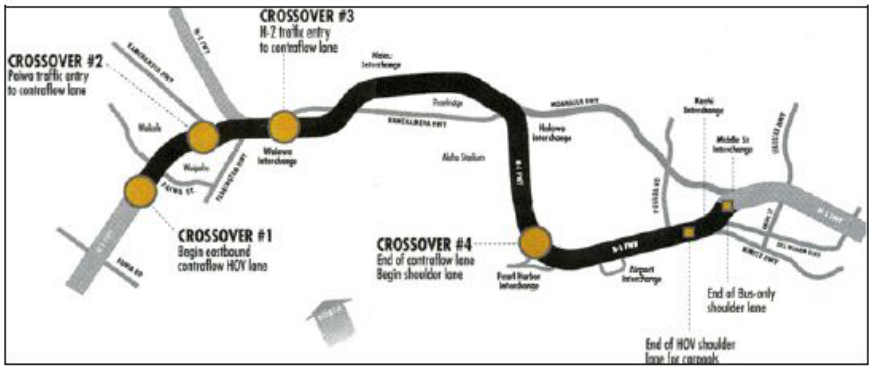
[iii] It is actually 20.8 percent versus 22.8 percent before rounding.
This table is from the Final EIS:

Table 3-12 Islandwide Daily Trips by Mode—Existing Conditions, No Build Alternative, and Project

Trips by Mode	2007 Existing Conditions		2030 No Build Alternative		2030 Project	
	Daily Trips by Mode	Percentage of Total Daily Trips	Daily Trips by Mode	Percentage of Total Daily Trips	Daily Trips by Mode	Percentage of Total Daily Trips
Residents						
Automobile–private	2,291,800	82.1%	2,815,800	81.5%	2,767,600	80.1%
Transit	166,400	6.0%	205,400	5.9%	255,500	7.4%
Bicycle and walk	333,000	11.9%	432,800	12.5%	431,700	12.5%
Total Daily Trips by Residents	**2,791,200**	**100%**	**3,454,000**	**100%**	**3,454,800**	**100%**

[iv] A major reason for the fast trip times is that the C bus and other express buses can use the Zipper Lane. One of the deterrents for commuters to use the C bus is that the Zipper Lane runs one way only into the Downtown at the moment, which means the return trip takes much longer. However, the Hawai'i DOT plans to install a Zipper lane in the reverse direction in the near future.

Exhibit 6: H-1 Freeway Zipper Lane Location



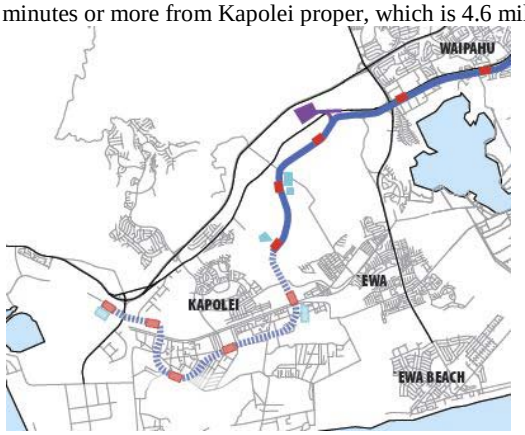
http://www.thebus.org/Route/Timetables/RtC.pdf Allow that the C bus to Downtown takes two minutes less than the time shown for the Kapi‘olani/South stop since no times are shown for Downtown stops.

Table 3-16 Fixed Guideway Station-to-Station Travel Times—2030

From Station	To Station	Travel Time Between Stations (in minutes, including dwell time)
East Kapolei	UH West O`ahu	2
UH West O`ahu	Ho`opili	4
Ho`opili	West Loch	2
West Loch	Waipahu TC	3
Waipahu TC	Leeward CC	2
Leeward CC	Pearl Highlands	1
Pearl Highlands	Pearlridge	4
Pearlridge	Aloha Stadium	3
Aloha Stadium	Pearl Harbor NB	2
Pearl Harbor NB	Airport	3
Airport	Lagoon Drive	2
Lagoon Drive	Middle Street TC	2
Middle Street TC	Kalihi	2
Kalihi	Kapālama	2
Kapālama	Iwilei	2
Iwilei	Chinatown	1
Chinatown	Downtown	1
Downtown	Civic Center	1
Civic Center	Kaka`ako	1
Kaka`ako	Ala Moana	2
Total Travel Time		42

CC = Community College TC = Transit Center NB = Naval Base

v The city projects that rail would take 38 minutes from East Kapolei to Downtown — see table 3-16 above. Kapolei commuters would have to drive to the East Kapolei rail station park-and-ride lot on North-South Road, which would take 9 minutes or more from Kapolei proper, which is 4.6 miles away. (see map below).



That would mean a total of 47 minutes, plus the average ¼-mile to walk from the park-and-ride lot to the rail station, which would take 6 minutes at 2.5 mph, for a total of 53 minutes (map of the park and ride area and the station is shown below).

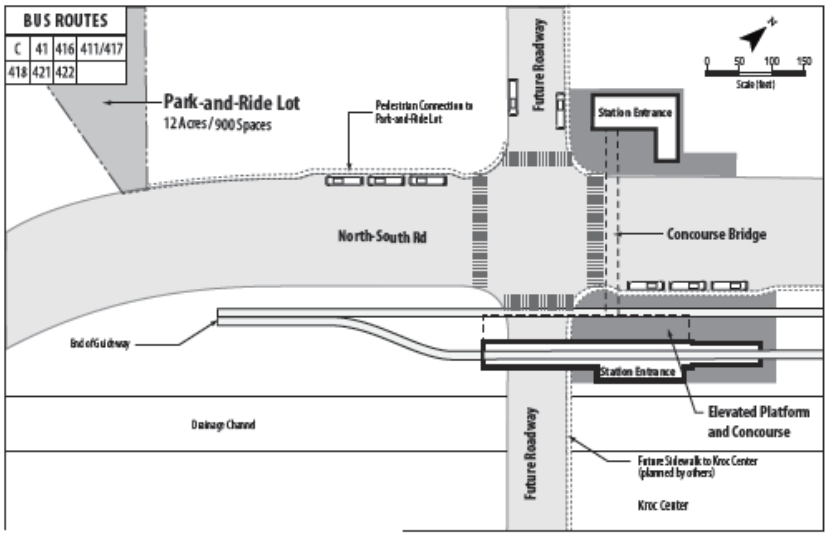


Figure 2-17 East Kapolei Station

If the planned extension to Kapolei Transit Center were built it would reduce the time to 38 minutes plus the travel time from East Kapolei to Kapolei Transit Center of 6.2 miles at 28 mph, or 13 minutes, for a total of 51 minutes. While the Transit Center is not 6.2 miles as the crow flies, the rail line meanders about in getting there and almost doubles the direct distance (the meandering is illustrated in the city map above).

[vi] "Some existing bus routes, including peak period express buses, will be altered or eliminated to reduce duplication of services provided by the fixed guideway system." Final EIS, p. 2-43.

[vii] For more detail from the U.S. Department of Energy's Transportation Energy Data Book go to http://www.honolulutraffic.com/HNL_rail_energy_use.pdf