

Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the City and County of Honolulu Department of Transportation Services (DTS) Rapid Transit Division (RTD) are considering a project that will provide high-capacity transit service on the Island of O‘ahu.

The study corridor extends from Kapolei in the west (the Wai‘anae or ‘Ewa direction) to the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UH Mānoa) and Waikikī in the east (the Koko Head direction). It is confined by the Wai‘anae and Ko‘olau Mountain Ranges in the mauka direction (toward the mountains, generally to the north within the study corridor) and the Pacific Ocean in the makai direction (toward the sea, generally to the south within the study corridor) (Figure S-1). This corridor includes the majority of housing and employment on O‘ahu. Its east-west length is approximately 20 miles, and between Pearl City and ‘Aiea its width is less than one mile between Pearl Harbor and the base of the Ko‘olau Mountain Range.

Purpose of and Need for Transportation Improvements

The purpose of the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project is to provide high-capacity rapid transit in the highly congested east-west transportation corridor between Kapolei and UH Mānoa, as specified in the *O‘ahu Regional Transportation Plan 2030* (ORTP) (O‘ahuMPO 2007). The Project is intended to provide faster, more reliable public transportation service than can be achieved with buses operating in congested mixed traffic. It will provide reliable mobility in areas of the corridor where people of limited income and an aging population live and will serve rapidly developing areas at the ‘Ewa end of the corridor. The Project will also provide additional transit capacity and an alternative to private automobile travel, as well as improve transit links within the corridor. In conjunction with other improvements included in the ORTP, the Project will help moderate anticipated traffic congestion in the corridor. It also supports the goals of the *City and County of Honolulu General Plan* (DPP 2002a) and the ORTP by serving areas designated for urban growth.

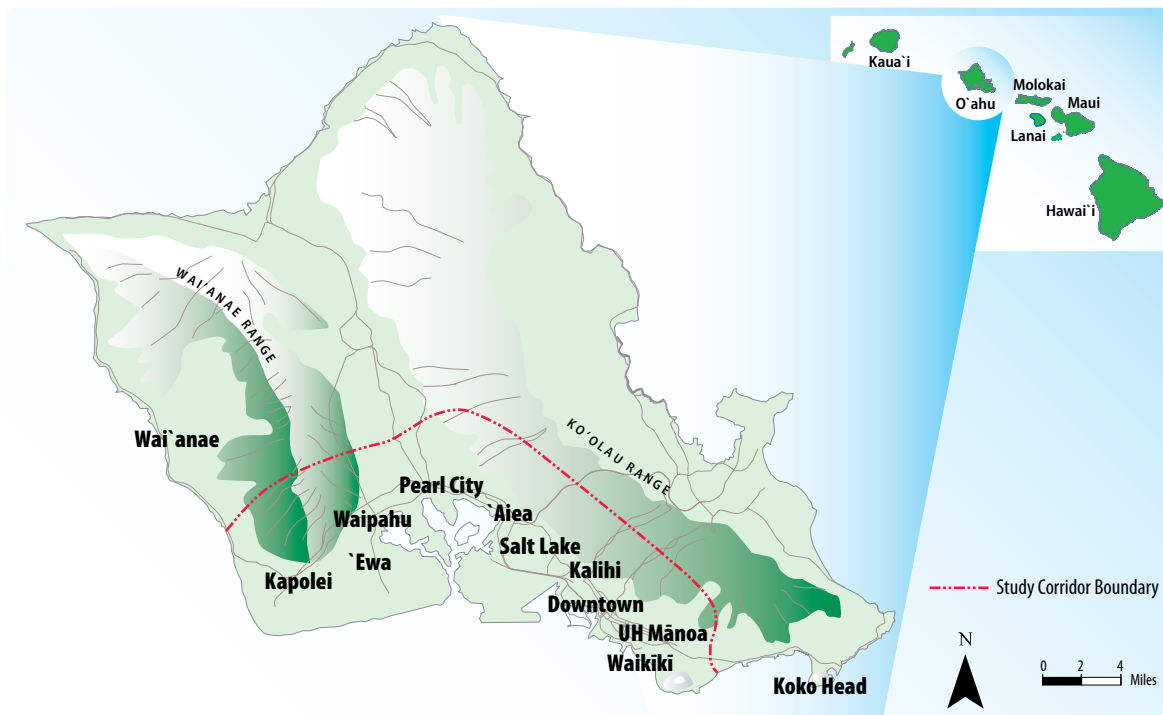


Figure S-1 Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project Vicinity

The Project will improve mobility for travelers who face increasingly severe traffic congestion, improve transportation system reliability, provide accessibility to new development in the ‘Ewa-Kapolei-Makakilo area in support of the City and County of Honolulu (City) policy to develop that area as a “second city,” and improve transportation equity for all travelers.

Alternatives Considered

Prior to completing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), alternatives were evaluated at three stages. First, a broad range of alternatives was considered and screened down to four alternatives for evaluation in the *Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project Alternatives Analysis Report* (Alternatives Analysis) (DTS 2006b). Second, the Alternative Analysis recommended (and the City Council selected) the Fixed Guideway Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative. Third, scoping for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process confirmed that no

alternatives that had not been previously studied and eliminated for good cause would satisfy the Purpose and Need at less cost, with greater effectiveness, or with less environmental or community impact.

Prior to selecting an elevated fixed guideway system, the City and FTA evaluated a variety of high-capacity transit options. Options evaluated and rejected included an exclusively at-grade fixed guideway system using light rail or bus rapid transit (BRT) vehicles, as well as a mix of options consisting of both at-grade and grade-separated segments.

Scoping is an open process involving the public and other Federal, State, and Local agencies to identify the important issues for consideration in the EIS process.

During the fall of 2005 and winter of 2006, the City conducted an alternatives screening. This

is documented in the *Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project Alternatives Screening Memorandum* (DTS 2006a).

The alternatives were screened through a series of steps, including gathering data, creating a comprehensive list of potential alternatives, developing screening criteria, and presenting viable alternatives to the public and interested public agencies and officials for comment during the Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 343 (the State of Hawai'i's environmental impact statement law) preparation notice comment period and the Alternatives Analysis scoping process. Lastly, input from the scoping process was analyzed, and the alternatives were refined based on this input.

Once this evaluation was complete, the modal, technology, and alignment options were combined to create the following alternatives, which were evaluated and documented in the Alternatives Analysis Report:

- **No Build Alternative**
- **Transportation System Management Alternative**
- **Managed Lane Alternative**
 - Two-direction Option
 - Reversible Option
- **Fixed Guideway Alternative**
 - Kalaeloa-Salt Lake-North King-Hotel Option
 - Kamokila-Airport-Dillingham Option
 - Kalaeloa-Airport-Dillingham-Halekauwila Option

Chapter 2 of the Alternatives Analysis Report described these alternatives in detail, and Chapter 6 of that report compared them. After review of the Alternatives Analysis Report and consideration of public comments, the City Council selected a Locally Preferred Alternative that was signed into law by the Mayor, becoming Revised Ordinance of Honolulu (ROH) 07-001. This ordinance authorized the City to proceed with planning

and engineering of a fixed guideway project from Kapolei to UH Mānoa with an extension to Waikiki. The City Council also passed Resolution 07-039, which directed the first construction project to be fiscally constrained to anticipated funding sources and to extend from East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center via Salt Lake Boulevard.

During the NEPA scoping process, several scoping comments were received requesting reconsideration of the Managed Lane Alternative. This was considered and rejected during the Alternatives Analysis process. Because no new information was provided that would have substantially changed the findings of the Alternatives Analysis process regarding the Managed Lane Alternative, this alternative was not included in the Draft EIS.

In addition to suggestions to reconsider previously eliminated alternatives, three separate proposals were received and documented in the *Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project National Environmental Policy Act Scoping Report* (DTS 2007). One proposal was to provide additional bus service with either school buses or private vehicles. The second was for a High-Speed Bus Alternative to include aspects of the Fixed Guideway Alternative and the Managed Lane Alternative (which was eliminated during the Alternatives Analysis process). These proposals were similar to alternatives that had already been considered and eliminated during the Alternatives Analysis process. Therefore, they were not considered in the Draft EIS. The third proposal was for an additional fixed guideway alternative serving the Honolulu International Airport. This alternative was included in the Draft EIS.

During the scoping process, comments were requested on five transit technologies. The comments received did not substantially differentiate any of the following five considered technologies as being universally preferable to the other technologies:

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- Light-rail transit
 - Rapid-rail transit (steel wheel on steel rail)
 - Rubber-tired guided vehicles
 - Magnetic levitation system
 - Monorail system

Subsequent to the scoping process, a technical review process that included opportunities for public comment was used to select a transit technology. This process included a broad request for information publicized to the transit industry. Transit vehicle manufacturers submitted 12 responses detailing the features of these different vehicle technologies. The responses were reviewed in February 2008 by a selection panel that ranked the performance, cost, and reliability of the proposed technologies and accepted public comment on the technology selection. The panel's findings are summarized in its report to the City Council dated February 22, 2008. The panel's report resulted in the City establishing steel wheel operating on steel rail as the technology for the Project and eliminated the other technologies from further consideration.

The alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS are the result of this process of developing alternatives and reflect comments received during the scoping process. This information is summarized in the *Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project National Environmental Policy Act Scoping Report* (DTS 2007).

The following four alternatives were evaluated in the Draft EIS. They were developed to comply with the Locally Preferred Alternative adopted by the City Council and to address the public and agency comments received during the comment period for the HRS 343 preparation notice for this Project and the NEPA scoping process:

- No Build Alternative
- Fixed Guideway Transit Alternative via Salt Lake Boulevard (Salt Lake Alternative)

- Fixed Guideway Transit Alternative via the Airport (Airport Alternative)
- Fixed Guideway Transit Alternative via the Airport and Salt Lake (Airport & Salt Lake Alternative)

As documented in the Draft EIS, adverse impacts to environmental resources would be slightly greater with the Salt Lake Alternative than with the Airport Alternative with respect to acquisition and displacements, hazardous materials, and noise. The guideway and stations would be dominant elements in views near the Project, while viewpoints farther away from either alternative would be less affected. Visual effects would be greater with the Salt Lake Alternative because it runs makai of several residential neighborhoods where many viewers would have an increased sensitivity to view changes and blocked views.

The Airport Alternative would carry the most passengers and provide the greatest transit-user benefits. The Airport Alternative also would result in the fewest vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours of delay. It would provide access to employment centers at Pearl Harbor Naval Base and Honolulu International Airport and would have substantially greater ridership to those areas than the Salt Lake Alternative. It would serve the Salt Lake neighborhood with connecting bus service. The Airport Alternative would have slightly lower potential for encountering archaeological resources but would affect more historic resources than the Salt Lake Alternative. It has been determined that the Airport Alternative would result in the least overall harm to resources that are protected by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act and would encroach the least into waters of the U.S. during both construction and operation.

Because the Airport & Salt Lake Alternative is almost identical to the Salt Lake Alternative, the same adverse effects for the Salt Lake Alternative would apply. In addition, the Airport & Salt Lake

Alternative would have the greatest impact, of the three Build Alternatives, on waters of the U.S.

Based on technical performance of the alternatives, public comment, and City Council Resolution 08-261, RTD selected the Airport Alternative as the preferred alternative, and it is described in this Final EIS as the “Project.” The selection of the preferred alternative was made to comply with FTA NEPA regulations that state the Final EIS identify on the preferred alternative (23 CFR 771.125(a) (1)). FTA has not made a decision on the selected alternative and will document its selection in the Record of Decision (ROD).

The No Build Alternative is included in this Final EIS to provide a comparison of what future conditions would be if the Project were not implemented. This alternative includes completion of the committed transportation projects identified in the O’ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (O’ahuMPO) ORTP.

The Project will provide a fixed guideway transit system from East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center via the Airport. Planned extensions are anticipated to West Kapolei following Salt Lake Boulevard, UH Mānoa, and Waikīkī. The Locally Preferred Alternative selected by the City Council includes the Project and the planned extensions. Detailed plans of the Project are included in Appendix B, Preliminary Alignment Plans and Profiles. The system will use steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology and could be either automated or employ drivers. All parts of the system will either be elevated or in exclusive right-of-way.

In addition to the guideway, the Project will require construction of transit stations and supporting facilities. Supporting facilities will include a vehicle maintenance and storage facility, transit centers, park-and-ride lots with a total of 4,100 spaces, an access ramp from Interstate Route H-2 (H-2 Freeway) to the Pearl Highlands Station, and traction

power substations. The maintenance and storage facility will be located either in Ho’opili near Farrington Highway between North-South Road and Fort Weaver Road or near Leeward Community College.

Some bus service will be reconfigured to bring riders on local buses to nearby fixed guideway transit stations. To support this system, the bus fleet will be increased. Analysis of the Project assumes completion of the committed transportation projects identified in the ORTP, including improvements to the H-1 Freeway and a Nimitz Viaduct.

Geographic areas of effect are typically discussed in four categories:

- **Project Region**—the entire Island of O’ahu
- **Study Corridor**—the southern coast of O’ahu where the Project will be located
- **Project Station Area**—all areas within one-half mile of a proposed project station
- **Project Alignment**—the fixed guideway’s proposed route and properties adjacent to the alignment

Transportation

Existing and future (planning horizon year 2030) transportation system conditions, service characteristics, performance, and transportation effects for each of the alternatives (including the No Build Alternative) are evaluated in this Final EIS. The evaluation is organized into three sections:

- Existing (2007) conditions and performance
- Future (2030) conditions and performance, with comparisons between the Project and 2030 No Build conditions
- Construction-related effects

The existing transportation network (streets, highways, parking, bicycle and pedestrian network, and public transportation) was evaluated. Current transit service in the corridor is heavily used, resulting in bus service productivity that is among the highest in the U.S. Congestion-related delays

occur on roadways within the study corridor. This includes peak a.m. and p.m. congestion, especially in the peak direction (i.e., toward Downtown in the morning) and on existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.

These congestion-related delays increase travel times for the entire network; and increasing congestion and constrained operating conditions for public transit services have led to transportation conditions that are becoming less reliable. Although the bus system's productivity exceeds several systems that operate in larger metropolitan areas, gradually slower speeds, increased costs, and reduced service reliability have resulted from buses operating in mixed traffic. Even with the \$3 billion in planned roadway improvements outlined in the ORTP, congestion will increase, making it more difficult for bus transit to effectively serve the population.

Under the No Build Alternative, transit service would experience somewhat slower operating speeds and reduced reliability through the 2030 horizon year.

With the Project, overall transit speeds will increase, which will reduce travel times and improve operating efficiency as a result of the fixed guideway system. End-to-end travel time on the system will be 42 minutes. The Project will reduce travel time to major activity centers, such as Downtown and Ala Moana Center. For example, transit travel times from Kapolei to Downtown Honolulu in the a.m. peak would be 90 minutes in 2030 with the No Build Alternative and 55 minutes with the Project. Trips to and from Central O'ahu and Waikiki, while not directly served by the Project, also will benefit from reduced transit travel times. Total congestion will be reduced by 18 percent with the Project.

Transit service will be improved through local bus routes and pedestrian and bicycle access to guideway stations, resulting in an increased transit

share of total trips (particularly for work-related trips). A fixed guideway system will also improve transit equity by reducing travel times for transit-dependent populations to major employment areas.

With the Project, the fixed guideway will affect existing streets, parking capacity, and pedestrian and bicycles facilities. Effects of the Project will include reduced travel lane widths, parking, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks. Careful design and placement of guideway columns will minimize these potential effects. The Project will negatively affect traffic conditions at six intersections near the East Kapolei, UH West O'ahu, Pearl Highlands, and Ala Moana Center Stations. The Project will result in a loss of 105 on-street and approximately 785 off-street parking spaces. Traffic and parking effects will be mitigated. Construction of the Project will have temporary effects on the transportation system, and mitigation will include a Maintenance of Traffic Plan and Transit Mitigation Program.

Environmental Analysis, Consequences, and Mitigation

The existing conditions, environmental effects of the No Build Alternative and the Project, and mitigation are evaluated in this Final EIS. All aspects of the natural and social environment were evaluated per NEPA and HRS 343 regulations. All probable adverse environmental effects and proposed mitigation measures are further summarized in Table 4-1 of this Final EIS. Efforts were made to avoid and minimize impacts to the natural and built environment. In many cases, impacts were avoided or minimized. Following is a summary of those resources where an impact is anticipated and mitigation commitments have been made by the City (Appendix I, Mitigation Comments).

Displacements and Relocations

Property acquisition of 191 parcels will be required. The Project will require 33 full acquisitions. Partial acquisitions will include 158 parcels.

Acquisition of land used for residential and commercial purposes will result in displacements and relocations. Displaced residents will need to purchase or rent new dwellings. Displaced businesses will need to purchase or lease new commercial/ industrial space, and the location where employees work will change.

Twenty residences, 1 church, and 61 businesses will be relocated by the Project. Acquisition of property for the Project will be conducted in accordance with Federal and State regulations. Where relocations will occur, affected property owners, businesses, or residents will receive compensation in compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws. Compensation will be in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (CFR 1989a).

Visual and Aesthetics

Visually sensitive resources in the study corridor include landmarks, significant views and vistas, historic and cultural sites, and Exceptional Trees. These resources are important because of their scenic quality, scale, and prominence within the visual environment.

The Project's visual effects will include removing trees, altering 'Ewa-Koko Head and mauka-makai views, affecting light and shadow effects, and introducing project components that are out of scale or character with their setting. Even with mitigation measures, some obstruction and changes to views will result in a high level of visual impact, or a significant impact, and changes to some views will be probable unavoidable adverse effects. These effects will be most noticeable where the guideway and stations are nearby or in the foreground of views.

Mitigation measures will focus on preserving visual resources, enhancing the Project with architectural and landscape design features—retaining existing trees where practical, providing new

vegetation, shielding exterior lighting—and engaging the community in the design as appropriate.

Even with mitigation, the Project will block views in several areas and, therefore, will have a probable unavoidable adverse effect.

Noise and Vibration

Noise impacts from the Project were evaluated using criteria established by the FTA, which are based on community reaction to environmental noise exposure (FTA 2006b).

Noise levels were measured at locations along the project alignments and near proposed station locations to establish the most sensitive existing environment (i.e., existing baseline noise levels). Noise measurements were taken at ground-level and elevated noise-sensitive locations along the study corridor. Potential noise effects from transit park-and-ride lots and maintenance and storage facility operations were also evaluated.

A solid parapet wall will be included in the project design to reduce noise levels. In areas with high-rise apartments and hotels that have lanais above the elevation of and facing the rail, this wall will have some benefit by reducing noise generated by the Project by 3 dBA or more at five of the eight locations where moderate impacts are predicted. Sound-absorptive materials will be placed within the guideway structure in the vicinity of the three buildings where impacts are anticipated. With this mitigation, no noise impacts will occur.

The Project will not create vibration effects, so no mitigation is proposed.

Hazardous Materials

A number of sites within the study corridor were identified as potential sites of concern for hazardous materials. In some locations, large or specialized hazardous waste or hazardous materials sites may be affected by right-of-way acquisition. These

include underground and aboveground storage tanks (UST and AST), fuel islands, and engineered storage facilities. In a few cases, the Project may displace hazardous materials operations. This includes relocating gas station fuel islands and USTs and ASTs. Environmental site assessments will be conducted for potentially contaminated sites, and remediation will be completed where needed.

Water Resources

Twenty streams or conveyance channels are to be crossed by the guideway or other project structures. In 18 cases, where the Project crosses them, these stream channels have been modified within the study corridor. More importantly, the guideway traverses urban areas where streams have been realigned and otherwise modified for flood control purposes. The Project will, once constructed, permanently encroach upon 0.08 acre of waters of the U.S. These impacts are from placing piers in Waiawa Springs, Moanalua Stream, Kapālama Canal Stream, and Nuʻuanu Stream and improving a culvert in Waiawa Springs.

The guideway will cross several floodplains in Waipahu and Pearl Highlands. However, the Project will not cause significant floodplain encroachment as defined by USDOT Order 5650.2. Any changes caused by the Project will be mitigated through design to comply with current flood zone regulations.

Where the guideway will cross floodplains, the columns supporting the guideway and stations will be designed to withstand flooding. Facilities in floodplains at ground level (e.g., stairs and elevators) will be designed to function and remain safe during flooding. Traction power substations will be placed outside of floodplains. Hydraulic studies completed for specific locations where the Project will cross floodplains indicate that, with mitigation, the Project will not raise base flood elevations. In particular, the Pearl Highlands parking structure will be designed to allow floodwaters to pass

unimpeded and fill placed previously on the ʻEwa side of Waiawa Stream will be removed.

Pollution prevention best management practices (BMP), such as regular inspection and cleaning of the drainage system, will need to be a part of the stormwater management plan that will be developed during Final Design. Permanent BMPs will be needed for the maintenance and storage facility and the park-and-ride facilities. Permanent BMPs will also be installed for stormwater that drains from the guideway at all crossings of water bodies. Permanent BMPs will be installed as part of the Project to address stormwater quality before the water is discharged to streams or existing storm drain systems. The BMPs will promote a natural, low-maintenance, sustainable approach to managing and increasing stormwater quality. As part of the permitting process, project plans will be prepared to establish BMPs that will help prevent stormwater pollution.

Street Trees

Coordination regarding street trees has been initiated with the City Department of Parks and Recreation Division of Urban Forestry and community groups, such as the Outdoor Circle and Sierra Club. This has resulted in identifying Exceptional Trees along the project alignment. Coordination will be ongoing as the Project progresses.

The Project will require tree pruning and removal. Tree removal will be minimized to the greatest extent possible, but if a street tree is close to the guideway, it will likely require periodic pruning, if not removal.

Effects on street trees will be mitigated by transplanting existing trees or planting new ones. Most of the affected trees along Farrington Highway could be transplanted.

Archaeological, Cultural, and Historic Resources

Under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (USC 1966a), Section 106 requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties. This includes archaeological and traditional cultural properties, which are the beliefs, customs, and practices of a living community of people that have been passed down through the generations. Hawai‘i’s historic preservation review legislation (HAR 2002) includes similar requirements.

Archaeological resources already documented within the study corridor include remnants of fishponds, human burials, subsurface layers related to traditional Native Hawaiian occupation, historic building and structure foundations, and historic trash pits and privies. Because of the level of existing development along the study corridor, many of these resources have been destroyed or altered beyond repair. The Project will not directly affect any known archaeological resources.

The analysis of cultural resources was based on compliance requirements for NEPA, NHPA Section 106, and Act 50 (HHB 2000), as it amends the State of Hawai‘i EIS law (HRS 343) to include “effects on the cultural practices of the community and State.”

Where cultural resources remain or may be discovered, all effort will be made to avoid destruction. A plan for restoration and care will be made for each existing cultural site.

Known and potential historic resources were identified and evaluated, and the Project’s effects on them were determined. Properties within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) were identified as those with construction dates before 1969. The APE contains 81 historic resources (individual or districts). Through consultation, the Project was determined to have an adverse effect on 33 resources. Adverse effect determinations recommended by SHPD were

accepted by the FTA. All comments from consulting parties were considered in the development of the Programmatic Agreement (PA) (Appendix H, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act Programmatic Agreement).

Construction Effects

Construction is planned to begin in late 2009 and be completed by 2018. Construction effects will be temporary and limited in areas as construction proceeds along the project alignment. These effects will vary depending on the land use in each sub-area. Construction-related effects will primarily result during construction of the main structural components: the foundations and columns, superstructure (the elevated guideway structure), and stations. Construction of other system components, such as traction power substations, will also have associated effects, but to a lesser degree. Construction activities at the maintenance and storage facility, park-and-ride lots, transit centers, and staging and support facilities will result in effects that are localized to the vicinity of those facilities.

During construction, access to businesses near construction activities could be affected.

The construction contractors will implement a project-specific Safety and Security Management Plan to mitigate effects on community services, such as fire prevention and emergency preparedness and response. This plan will also protect the general public, private property, and workers from construction risks.

During construction, visual quality may be altered for all viewer groups. Construction-related signage and heavy equipment will be visible at and near construction sites. Mature vegetation, including trees, may be removed from some areas or pruned to accommodate construction of the guideway, stations, and park-and-ride lots. This will degrade or partially obstruct views or vistas.

Noise during construction will be bothersome and annoying to nearby residents, visitors, and businesses. The Project will generate noise that will occur intermittently in different locations throughout the nine-year construction period.

Common sources of vibration during construction activities include jackhammers, pavement breakers, hoe rams, bulldozers, and backhoes. Pavement breaking and soil compaction will likely produce the highest levels of vibration. Depending on soil conditions in a given sub-area, activities such as pile driving can generate enough vibration to result in substantial short-term noise impacts. Various mitigation methods will be used to minimize noise and vibration impacts during construction.

Archaeological resources or native Hawaiian burials could be encountered during construction. The potential to encounter these resources will be reduced through pre-construction site investigations completed in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Division and the O'ahu Island Burial Council.

Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (USC 1966b) protects public parklands, recreational lands, wildlife refuges, and historic sites of National, State, or Local significance from acquisition and conversion to transportation use. Because avoiding Section 4(f) resources was an important consideration, most public parks, recreational resources, and historic properties identified within the study corridor were avoided in designing the Project. However, the Project will result in the direct use of 11 Section 4(f) historic resources and 1 recreational resource; direct use *de minimis* of 2 Section 4(f) historic resources and 1 recreational resource; and temporary occupancy at 1 property. Considering the analysis of the Project's use of Section 4(f) resources, there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of these resources.

Cost and Financial Analysis

The capital cost of the Project, in fiscal year 2009 dollars, will be \$4.3 billion.

The local funding source for the Project is a dedicated 0.5-percent surcharge on the State of Hawai'i's General Excise and Use Tax (GET). This GET surcharge revenue is to be used exclusively for the Project's capital and/or operating expenditures and is expected to generate \$3.5 billion (year-of-expenditure dollars) through 2022. The FTA has agreed to consider \$1.6 billion (year-of-expenditure dollars) for the Federal contribution to the Project from the New Starts program.

The City receives Federal assistance through various funding programs from the FTA for ongoing capital investments to maintain and overhaul its transportation system. The financial analysis performed assumes the City will continue to receive these funds, some of which will increase noticeably after implementation of the Project.

Comments and Coordination

Agencies, non-governmental groups, and the public have been engaged throughout the project planning process, as required by Federal and State law. Public involvement efforts, including agency coordination and consultation, have been continuous throughout the Project, beginning with the Alternatives Analysis phase in December 2005 through the public comment period on the Draft EIS and during preparation of this Final EIS. In accordance with Executive Order 12898, particular attention has been paid to reaching low-income and minority populations, which are traditionally underserved and underrepresented in the public involvement process.

As part of the NEPA and HRS 343 process, the Draft EIS was circulated for a 75-day review and comment period starting in November 2008. Formal public hearings were held during

this period. Attendance at the hearings was not required to submit comments.

In total, 592 comment submissions were received. The majority of the comments received were related to the following topics: alternatives considered, planned extensions, ridership and travel forecasting, parking, traffic analysis, visual, noise, cost and financing, construction phasing, construction effects, and acquisition and relocation.

Public involvement activities will continue throughout the construction period. This program will continue to involve the community while advancing project activities, education, and construction assistance. Project staff will work with businesses and residents prior to and during construction to provide information and address concerns about the construction process. The Project will also continue use of the Speakers Bureau, the project website (www.honolulutransit.org), and the hotline.

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