

HONOLULUTRAFFIC.COM

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

May 5, 2011.

Dear Friends:

Once again, I need your tax-deductible financial help in funding a lawsuit to stop the politicians from inflicting this \$5.5 billion elevated heavy rail transit line across our beautiful city. It will degrade the grace of the city, block views, destroy the Honolulu waterfront, and be an economic and environmental disaster.



Many believe it will provide traffic relief but the City admits in the Final EIS that, "traffic congestion will be worse in the future with rail than what it is today without rail."

And it's the Train from Nowhere. It starts on the Ewa plain in farmland rated the finest in Hawai'i. It does not

connect to the City of Kapolei, Campbell Industrial Park, Ewa Beach, let alone the Waianae Coast.

At the Diamond Head end, after walling off the city from the waterfront and tearing up native Hawaiian burial grounds along the way, it will terminate at Ala Moana Center. This is far short of UH Manoa, regarded as the epicenter of Oahu's traffic problems.

The City also says that using energy-saving rail transit means fewer cars on the road and a reduction in energy use. This is also a myth. The U.S. Department of Energy shows that, in most cases, the energy use per passenger mile for rail is higher than that for automobiles.

The Mayor says it will supply jobs, jobs, and more jobs; 17,000 of them he says.

However, the Advertiser investigators said, "only about 350 future construction jobs can be directly connected to the project. That's the peak number of people that Kiewit Pacific has said it would employ during rail's construction from East Kapolei to Leeward Community College." That's a third of the rail transit line's total length.

That means the same 350 workers can then build the second 6.5 miles and, in turn, the third.

The rail project is really about building over O'ahu's best farmland and generating campaign contributions from those who will make money off rail, such as developers, landowners, construction companies, construction unions, and engineering companies; it is not about solving our traffic problems.

CB Richard Ellis, a global consulting firm, has projected a \$460 million shortfall in the ½ percent GE tax collections from what the City projected in their August 2009 financial plan. The FTA's own consultants found a similar shortfall.

In addition, ALL the operating subsidies will come from the City's General Fund. This comes on top of the City's recent sewer system settlement with EPA, which will cost \$7.2 billion all by itself.



The above images are the before and after of the Waipahu rail transit station

Can you personally afford the property tax increases that will result from tax revenue shortfalls and construction cost overruns?

And here's an important question: This is a noisy elevated \$5.5 billion rail line, 35 feet high and 30 feet wide blanketing most of the streets it runs on. Trains run every 1½ minutes for eight of the 20 hours it operates. It will cross the most valuable part of Honolulu's waterfront area and through our historic districts. It is opposed by every one of Hawaii's environmental organizations, but the FTA approves it as the "environmentally preferable alternative"? How can this be right? Or even legal? Well, it is not right, and it is not legal.

If the City had just followed the law, we would not find ourselves facing this monstrosity and its horrendous costs. Here's why it's not legal:

Federal environmental laws required the City in 2006 to perform a full historic properties survey of the entire corridor from Kapolei to UH, including locating native Hawaiian burial sites. They didn't do it.

Second, they should have "rigorously" studied the various transportation alternatives equally well to see which could provide adequate transit service with the least impact on the historic buildings and burial sites in the corridor. They didn't do it. Instead, they picked elevated rail, the alternative with the greatest negative impact.

For example, in 2000 Mayor Harris proposed a Bus/Rapid Transit, or BRT program, which Parsons Brinckerhoff predicted would have greater ridership than what it now predicts for the current rail project. It would have had no effect on historic sites and be a third of the cost.

In 2003 Governor Lingle proposed a \$2.6 billion 22-mile rail line from Kapolei to a new transit center at Iwilei, where riders would transfer to buses. It also would have had little impact on our city.

There are many other transit alternatives not properly studied by the City that would provide good transit service, reduce congestion, without destroying our city.

You may find some of the information listed above surprising; check all our sources of information online at: www.honolulutraffic.com/TRUE.pdf

How are we going to stop the rail?

We have retained arguably the finest environmental attorney in the country, Mr. Nicholas Yost of the San

Francisco office of global law firm, SNRDenton. He was formerly General Counsel of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. He was the lead draftsman of the Federal Government's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations, which bind the FTA. He was also last year's winner of the American Bar Association's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Environmental Law and Policy.

He tells us, "We are delighted to have been retained to undertake this worthy battle -- and expect to succeed."

We have raised \$100,000 locally so far but we need more



NOW and I need your help. To beat the City and the Feds we need you to help me raise \$100,000 by contributing today. With your help, we will win this lawsuit and the court will stop this costly

and damaging rail project. None of your money will go to salaries; we are ALL volunteers.

You have helped in the past in opposing the rail transit monstrosity and you can now help us finish the job by making a tax-deductible contribution.

Please think hard about how much stopping rail is going to be worth to you.

If rail construction only runs \$1 billion over budget, that together with its yearly operating losses will cost

the average household a \$400 increase in property taxes every year forever. The increase in property tax on businesses means the prices you pay at the store will increase also.

While funding this lawsuit is a one-time event, property taxes go on forever.

It is urgent that you send us a tax-deductible contribution today to the "SBH Educational Foundation Rail Fund", 6600 Kalaniana'ole Hwy, Suite 212, Honolulu HI 96825.

Your contribution will help protect your retirement against the economic havoc that a rail transit line will bring. Every contribution helps.

Please contribute generously TODAY so we can fight to keep this heavy, noisy, elevated rail line out of our City.

Best regards,



Cliff Slater, Chair

PS. We are filing our lawsuit within days and then will argue its merits in court. This costs money. You can contribute now, or you can pay forever in increased property taxes and other fees. Moreover, there will be no money left over for real traffic solutions.

While you are thinking about your contribution, consider also how construction will affect you during the eight years they are building rail – a nightmare.

To avoid that please mail your contribution TODAY.