

[This two-page summary is available on www.honolulutraffic.com/HandoutCC.htm and there you can click on these underlined phrases for third party confirmation — mostly city or federal.]

The case against rail — and more taxes

Congestion: The [City forecasts](#) that while we are already 15 percent over capacity on H-1 during the rush hour, we will be 81 percent over capacity in 2030 — with rail. Think of it another way: The City does not plan to widen the H-1 freeway but has plans [to build 60,000 new homes in the Ewa Plain](#). What else could there be but massive increases in traffic congestion?

This may astonish most people since their assumption has been that rail was all about reducing traffic congestion. However, the bald fact is that city planners and elected officials have had no intention of reducing traffic congestion — and never did. They have been conducting [a war against the automobile](#), which is why traffic congestion is so bad now. Follow the money — [campaign contributions](#).

Cost: The City forecasts ([AA, table 5-1](#)) that to build their preferred 28-mile full alignment from Kapolei to UH, it will cost \$4.6 billion. [We have calculated that it will actually cost \\$6.4 billion](#) — and possibly more. In addition the operating losses will be another \$90 million a year. This will be far greater per capita of population than any other metro area in the U.S. as [the data clearly shows](#).

More Taxes: [The Mayor originally forecast that it would cost \\$2.6 billion to build rail and said he needed a one per cent hike in the General Excise tax](#) to build it, but the Legislature only authorized a half percent. Now his forecast has nearly doubled to [\\$4.6 billion \(our is even higher\)](#). We calculate it will take a [40 percent hike in property taxes](#) to build and operate the full alignment.



This is the City's rendering from under the Varsity Theater rail station looking makai down University

Environment /Blight: Imagine [this elevated rail line snaking through town](#). It will go along Dillingham cross over to Nimitz, along Nimitz to Halekauwila, up Ward Avenue, along Kona Street, onto Kapiolani Boulevard to University, up University and over H-1 to UH. All the while at 75-77 decibels. [Nor will there be any energy savings; rail is an energy hog.](#)

Turn over
for more



The case for HOT lanes — the tax-free alternative

Congestion: We propose a two-lane reversible, elevated highway operated as a High-Occupancy/Toll facility (HOT lanes). Buses/Rapid Transit (BRT) and Vanpools would go free and have priority; all other would [pay a toll variable by time of day](#). Surprisingly, the idea of paying tolls on new HOT lanes is [quite popular with local residents](#).

The function of the variable toll is to keep the HOT lanes traffic full, but congestion free. When operated this way the throughput of vehicle traffic on one of the HOT lanes [will be twice as much per hour as a nearby regular H-1 lane](#).

This means that the two HOT lanes will carry as much as four lanes of the regular H-1 freeway, which will result in significant traffic congestion relief. It means that those who never pay to use the HOT lanes will be the greatest beneficiaries; if they drive on the regular H-1 lanes they will get significant congestion relief, if they commute by bus they will get congestion-free travel, and, in any case, they will pay no extra taxes.

Cost: The city forecasts a cost for the HOT lanes of \$2.7 billion ([AA, table 5-1](#)). However, the almost identical facility in Tampa was built for \$420 million. No engineer we work with has come up with a number greater than \$1 billion — and some much less. [We are using \\$900 million as our estimate](#).

No more taxes: [The federal government will fund half of the cost, or \\$450 million. The other half will be funded by revenue bonds to be paid off by toll revenues.](#)

Environment /Blight: The elevated toll lanes will run along Kam Hwy, then along H-1 by the airport, then along Nimitz to finish by Hilo Hattie's. [Several entrance/exits](#) will provide access along the way. Unlike the rail alternative, the elevated tollway will not go through town or any residential neighborhoods and be a visual and noise blight.