



Councilmember Todd K. Apo

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City & County of Honolulu • City Council District 1
Ewa • Kapolei • Waianae Coast

AUGUST NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2008

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Letting the People Vote on Mass Transit

As you have heard about in the news, the Council is poised to put a charter amendment question on the ballot asking the public to vote on whether or not the City should proceed with the mass transit project that started back in 2005. From talking with people and from various polls, I recognize that a large majority of West Oahu residents want and need this transportation solution. Furthermore, such a system will bring many benefits to the entire island. The charter question will put an end to the public debate and will give the City marching orders on whether or not to proceed with the project. It will be a decision that cannot be changed unilaterally by either the Mayor or the Council.

We live in representative democracy – meaning that the officials we elect to represent us are given the duty to understand the sentiments of the community and to undertake the efforts to fully understand all of the pros and cons and direct and indirect impacts and any proposed project. It is with this system that decisions are left to those officials to guide government. When an issue does go to the ballot, whether for State Constitutional issues or City Charter issues, I hope all voters will take the time to wade through the information being offered by both sides. Understand what information may be misleading or incomplete . . . or completely wrong. Both sides will work hard to prove their point, but it must be done with facts, not opinions.

Representing West Oahu, I have continued to support the transit project. Recognizing the cost of the project, I have pushed to insure that the project is done right, putting us in a position to have a good product that gets done on time and within budget. It is why I hope that if we move forward with the project, we also create a transit authority to manage and implement the project. Successful projects across the nation have used this model and I believe that it is preferable to the other option of leaving the project within the existing Department of Transportation Services, which is already overburdened and subject to greater political pressure.

Finally, I would like to address two key issues, cost and traffic relief. A \$3.7 billion project is major. People worry about cost overruns. However, something that has gone unreported that you must understand is that the budget factors in about a 20% contingency for any additional costs. Additionally, it will not cost each person some \$4,000. Those calculations put out by anti-rail groups fail to deal with the realities of the funding. It ignores that nearly a billion dollars will be received from the Federal Government, and that nearly a third of the general excise taxes collected come from tourist and other non-residents.

With regards to traffic, the fact is that traffic is going to continue to increase unless we do something significant. Anti-rail groups push toll roads. Unfortunately, they have not addressed the problems with their proposal, including the question of what will happen when cars on any new toll road reaches downtown and hits the rest of traffic in our congested urban core. The answer is that traffic on those toll roads will back up just like we see on H-1 and Nimitz today. More importantly, toll road proposals will make only West Oahu residents pay for the road's development. They call it a "user fee." The reality is that this traffic solution should be paid for by the entire island. Directing

COUNCIL CALENDAR

WEDS - August 6
10 am
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

WEDS - August 20
9 am
FULL COUNCIL MEETING

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SAT - August 9
SUN - August 10

Waianae Sunset on the Beach
Maili Beach Park
Free Admission! Food, entertainment, booths, movies and more.
For more information visit www.valleyofrainbows.org

FRIDAY - August 8
5 pm
25th Annual National Night Out
Ewa Beach Boys and Girls Club
91-884 Ft. Weaver Road
Call 689-4182 for more information

SAT - August 16
8:30 am – 11 am
Adopt A Block
1 DAY, 2 LOCATIONS!
Ewa: Campbell HS North Road Parking Lot
Maili: Maili Elementary School Parking Lot
Call 768-3300 for more information.

growth to West Oahu has allowed other areas avoid development – keeping the country, country. With that, the entire island must play its part in providing the necessary infrastructure for the developing areas like West Oahu. The cost cannot be isolated to our region.

I look forward to the November election results. The City has put a lot of effort into the project to date. The Locally Preferred Alternative (“LPA”) - an elevated fixed guideway going from the west end of Kapolei, through Pearl Harbor and Airport, to Waikiki, and to UH Manoa was selected in 2006. The initial Minimal Operating System – running from East Kapolei to Ala Moana was selected in 2007, allowing for expansion on both ends of the system to complete the LPA. And after much debate, the technology was selected in 2008. Now, the City hopes to receive the voters decision to continue to move forward with this transportation solution for the entire island.

As always, you can email me at tapo@honolulu.gov. I regularly send out electronic newsletter updates, so please visit the District 1 website at www.toddapo.org and join our mailing list. If you have any other questions, please call me at 768-5001.

Aloha,



TODD K. APO
Councilmember, District 1

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Last month the Honolulu City Council had a busy Committee month. Key legislative items and meeting discussions are summarized here. Most of this legislation is expected to be further considered by the Council some time in August. To review the full text for any of these meetings, agendas, minutes or legislative items or to sign up for future meetings notices please visit:

<http://www4.honolulu.gov/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-78916/07-31-08%20agenda.htm>

TRANSPORTATION

Resolution 08-148, CD1, introduced by Councilmember Apo, requests that the Department of Transportation Services establish specific Traffic Engineering policies and plans for implementing appropriate measures for the purpose of public safety. This resolution reports that the installation of appropriate traffic engineering measures such as traffic circles and speed humps have proven to be effective in reducing both motor vehicle speeds and pedestrian and vehicular accidents. In 1998, the City established the Traffic Calming Program based on research of the appropriate traffic calming principles. However, this program was halted due to fiscal constraints. Resolution 08-148, CD1 requests the program be updated to include written policies and procedures for traffic engineering that enable the department to once again address traffic calming requests.

PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY

Resolution 08-93, titled “Relating To The Development Of A Major Film Production Studio In Kapolei” and introduced by Councilmember Apo, requests that the Department of Planning and Permitting process necessary Land Use Ordinance and Development Plan amendments to allow film studio enterprises in Kapolei. The resolution reports that currently, a proposed film studio development plan includes a commissary with kitchen; studio offices; screening room; studio store; convenience retail uses and attractions; film studio student annex; and a hotel with 100 to 150 guest rooms and a pool. No additional resort amenities are included and the hotel is primarily intended to accommodate film studio activities. The proposed LUO and plan amendments will clarify both the allowable conditions and restrictions for the establishment of a film studios in Kapolei.

Resolution 08-168 relates to the City’s Policy on Historic Preservation Reviews. This resolution requests that the administration report on the implementation of the Comprehensive Historic Preservation Review Policy, which was established by the Council in 1989. This policy requires, at minimum, that historic and archaeological properties are inventoried. This resolution requests that the report provide a number of details about the preservation policy including a list of significant historic and archaeological properties affected by development projects and the identification of officials who are responsible for monitoring the City’s historic and archaeological program.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Resolution 08-176 relates to the Board of Water Supply Issuance of Revenue Bonds. This resolution affirms that the Board of Water Supply is authorized to issue revenue bonds without prior approval of the City Council. Introduced by Councilmember Apo the resolution confirms its bond issuance authority as detailed in the Hawaii State Statutes. The Board of Water Supply Manager reported that this resolution was requested by the Board's Bond Council. The Committee was also assured that the Board would continue the practice of reporting on bond activities to the Council prior to issuance. The Board of Water Supply expects to issuance its next revenue bond in early 2009.

Resolution 08-156, titled "Payment Of Real Property Tax Assessments", requests that the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services establish procedures to permit the use of credit and debit cards for the payment of real property tax bills. Currently, property owners are not able to pay tax bills on line nor utilize a credit card for payment. During discussion, it was revealed that issues of costs and software capability will need to be addressed in establishing the credit card payment option.

Resolution 07-283 requests that the Department of Planning and Permitting Implement Expedited Building Permit Processes. The resolution explains that the City has improved some planning and permitting processes by allowing third-party review and setting of time limits for departmental action. An expedited permit process, which could include a premium processing fee, may help to increase departmental efficiency further. 60 days after the adoption of this resolution, the Department of Planning and Permitting, is to report back to the Council about its implementation analysis and/or progress of an expedited permit process.

Resolution 08-147, CD 1, approves the use of the competitive sealed proposals method for the leasing of commercial space at the Chinatown Gateway Plaza for an arts incubator. The Mayor's Office of Economic Development reported that Resolution 08-147, CD1 is an extension of the Mayor's Chinatown Summit and the Arts at Marks incubator project in Chinatown. The city owns a 4,431 square foot real property located at 1041 Nuuanu Avenue. This resolution authorizes this parcel to be leased as part of the arts incubator project.

ZONING COMMITTEE

Bill 46 (2008) requests rezoning for 344.5 acres from the Agricultural District to the General Preservation District, Intensive Industrial and Industrial-Commercial Mixed Use classifications. The proposed zone change will enable the applicant to develop the Kapolei Harborside project. According to the development plan, this project will be located next to the Kalaeloa Harbor and focus on providing space for industrial, warehouse, and related business uses. This endeavor is expected to be developed as a sustainable and smart growth project by incorporating a number of concepts including mixed uses, open space, green building standards, a Sustainable Energy Park And Natural Preserve. The applicant considers the Kapolei Harborside Project the final industrial component in their vision for the City of Kapolei.

Bill 47 (2008) rezones lands to the mixed-use residential districts for approximately 1,781 acres. Makaiwa Hills has plans for 4100 homes and will include half to one acre lots on the hillside west of Makakilo. According to the application, the project includes a variety of housing types serving low- and medium density residential, apartment and mixed-use markets with affordable housing developed on-site. Supportive uses include approximately 30 acres of a business mixed-use area, a community commercial center and retail in a Town Center. The project will include land for public elementary and middle schools.

Bill 48 (2008) requests rezoning for 516 acres from a the Agricultural Districts to mixed uses including Preservation, Low-Density Apartment, Medium-Density Apartment and Community Business. According to the application, the Kapolei West project, is planned as a transit-oriented golf course community with 2400 multi-family homes. A full range of services including employment, commercial services, educational, recreational, public facilities, and housing are incorporated into this project.

All three projects are consistent with the Ewa Development Plan and collectively are expected to create 7500 permanent jobs, 1500 construction jobs, and about 1950 affordable housing units. Part of the zoning changes includes a community benefits package that will preserve Kunia Plantation Village's 115 plantation homes as affordable housing. Additional land will be used for government purposes, mass transit alignment, three schools, day care facilities, and a fire station.

Reso 08-33 This Resolution would initiate an amendment to the Revised Charter for the City and County of Honolulu 1973, and require Council to have a two-thirds majority vote for ordinance concerning the designation of Oahu's urban growth boundaries. Discussion centered on the necessity of a two-thirds

majority. Currently, urban growth boundaries are determined through the General Plan and implemented through the community development plans. Status: Deferred.

BILL 10 (2008), CD1 This bill would create Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zones around transit stations and TOD development rights based on the TOD zone. A transit authority would be in charge of TOD zoning as opposed to the Department of Permitting and Planning. Status: Deferred for further review and results of general election.

The following pieces of legislation were granted time extensions for Council action: Reso 08-161 - 201H Affordable Housing Exemption for Seawinds Project, Waianae; Bill 6 (2008) Bed and Breakfast Homes; Bill 8 (2008) Regulation of Certain Visitor Accommodations.

PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

Resolution 08-155 “approves for the appropriation of limited monies from a grant-in-aid provided by the state of Hawaii for the Weed and Seed Program.” This legislation cites the Y.M.C.A. in the agreement as the entity who may reimburse the Honolulu Police Department with a maximum amount of up to \$32,000. The adoption of Resolution 08-155 will lock in money from an agreement to reimburse the city for expenses incurred by law enforcement operations to accomplish the objectives of the program; thus, ensuring another year of success for the program.

Bill 43 (2008) - Relating to Public Parks - aims to maintain the beauty of our parks by returning lost and/or abandoned property to its owners. More specifically, the bill would grant the Department of Parks and Recreation the duty to inform island merchants of the location of abandoned shopping carts that are left unattended in parks across the island. Specific discussion determined that shopping carts must be both unattended and empty, before attempting retrieval.

Bill 42 (2008) - Relating to Public Parks - revisited the exact definition of several terms including “camp,” “camping,” and “sleeping place.” Committee dialogue focused on amendments that created specific terms to determine prohibited park activities, while maintaining the interests of the City to maintain parks and beaches for all to enjoy.

KALAELOA GEIGER GATE BEAUTIFICATION

On July 24, about 50 volunteers participated in the landscaping of the Kalaeloa Geiger Gate entrance. The beautification project was sponsored by the Kalaeloa Community Network. After clean-up of the area, volunteers helped in the installation of rock beds and plants on the shoulders and median strip. New signage and re-painting of the curbs and guard shack were also part of the project. A big mahalo goes out to Suzette Smith of Kalaeloa Communities and Pearlyn Fukuba of Hawaii Community Development Authority for organizing the event.

PO’OKELA FELLOWS PROGRAM

The City & County of Honolulu Department of Human Resources is seeking applicants for the Po’okela Fellows Program. This program pairs college students with City “mentors” to gain valuable work experience in hopes of attracting students for future City employment. Applicants must have a minimum 2.0 scholastic average on a 4.0 scale and complete at least 48 credits by the start of the fellowship. Students may be employed part-time up to 19 hours per week and will be paid \$10 per hour. Applications are accepted through mid-November for the spring semester. For more information, please e-mail pookela@honolulu.gov or contact Kara Iwasaki at 768-8548 or Tracyn Wong at 768-8547.

ADOPT A PARK PROGRAM

Would you or your group/organization like to adopt a park? Over 282 organizations have adopted our city parks, and the City has started Hoa Paka, a park partnership recognition program, acknowledging volunteer efforts, contributions and sponsorships. For an application or more information on how you can adopt a park, please call Clint Jamile with the Department of Parks and Recreation at 768-3034.