



CITY COUNCIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 18, 2008

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RAIL EIS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD EXTENDED; COUNCILMEMBER DJOU INVITES PUBLIC TO COMMENT ON RAIL CONSTRUCTION STARTING IN-TOWN

Councilmember Charles K. Djou (Waikiki, East Honolulu) welcomed the decision to extend the public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and hopes the public will forward more comments to the FTA to change the construction phasing of rail to start in-town.

"If we do rail, we need to do it right. In part, that means the first phase of the rail system should run from Downtown to Aiea instead of from East Kapolei to Waipahu. I encourage the public to continue to comment on the construction phasing of rail contained in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Starting construction in-town will provide more immediate traffic relief, service more people, and makes more sense. That's why virtually every other U.S. city that has done rail starts in-town rather than on the outskirts of town," stated Councilmember Djou. "Furthermore, during the decade or two it takes to build rail, if a hurricane hits Oahu or if the current recession lasts longer than we expect, and the City can only afford to build 10 or 12 miles of the rail system, it simply makes much more sense to have that 10 or 12 miles in-town between Aiea and Downtown than connecting Waipahu and empty dirt fields in East Kapolei."

Earlier this month, Councilmember Djou submitted testimony to the FTA to shift initial construction and the first operating phase of the rail system from East Kapolei/Waipahu to Downtown/Aiea. Today, the City announced it would extend the deadline for public comments on the Draft EIS from January 7, 2009 to February 6, 2009. Councilmember Djou hopes the FTA will ask the City to change the initial proposed phasing of the rail system in-town in the Final EIS.

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