



COUNCILMEMBER IKAIKA ANDERSON DISTRICT 3 UPDATE FEBRUARY 2017

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CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Feb. 7

Public Safety	9 am
Parks	10 ³⁰ am
Executive Matters	1 pm

Wednesday, Feb. 8

Budget	9 am
Public Works	1 pm

Thursday, Feb. 9

Zoning and Housing	9 am
BEDT	1 pm
Trans & Planning	2 ³⁰ pm

District 3 Staff

- Paulyne Anakalea**
Executive Secretary
- Gail Myers**
Senior Advisor
- Andrew Malahoff**
Senior Legislative Aide
- Francisco Figueiredo**
Communications
- Alan Teixeira**
Community Liaison

Aloha,

ON RAIL, TAXES AND FEES

Over the last two weeks, I have received numerous inquiries regarding the recent discussions on increasing certain motor vehicle fees and taxes to help pay for the rail project. There is no question that the increasing cost of constructing the rail project continues to pose a serious challenge for us all. But it is important to keep in mind that the project is about much more than just a mode of transportation. It is part of an overall approach to changing how current and future generations will live and commute.

Without question the two greatest problems facing Oahu are housing and transportation. We cannot control our population and as our population continues to grow the demand for housing is under unrelenting pressure. The fact that we are on an island with a finite amount of land only compounds this problem. Rail will allow for higher-density development which, in turn, will help to provide exponentially more housing and hopefully stem the rate at which housing costs are increasing.

I can assure you that the people of Oahu matter to me and my colleagues. As elected officials we do not have any special exemption from taxes or fees; we pay the same as anyone else. For myself, as a father of four young children, I face the same day-to-day struggle of making ends meet as many of our other residents face. But this daily struggle also reminds me that I have an obligation not just to the people of the present but to our future generations.

It would certainly be easy and politically preferable to turn a blind eye to challenges the future generations will face - without adequate planning and investment in our infrastructure - and instead champion minimal fees and taxes, but that would be irresponsible.

The simple fact is that many of the challenges we are facing both at the local and national level are a direct result of delayed and deferred investment in our infrastructure. At the local level and with respect to rail: what if we had constructed the system nearly three decades ago when it was first proposed? Perhaps we would have been able to construct the system at a significantly lower cost while being able to preserve more open space. The urban sprawl that has taken over Oahu, particularly over the last three decades, has been a direct result of a transportation network entirely dependent on the personal automobile. From a planning perspective: I firmly believe that rail transit is a critical component to meeting the housing and transportation needs for our future.

(continued)

Specific to the costs of the project- the Council and HART are continuing to find the best ways to contain costs for construction but, at the end of the day, we are also subject to the same market forces as any construction project. A limited workforce coupled with high demand for materials and labor has had an adverse impact on the costs. Over the next few months we will work with HART as the agency works to provide more accurate cost figures as are reasonably possible. Unfortunately, I cannot see any other reasonable and cost-effective approach to addressing the aforementioned long-range issues other than completing the project.

Regarding the operating and maintenance (O&M) costs for the rail project, we do have estimates for the system costs and while they may seem high but, when compared to the costs associated with expanding the bus system to support the same level of ridership, they are lower. Another, long-range, benefit to rail is that O&M costs are relatively fixed whereas O&M for the bus system is highly-susceptible to outside and uncontrollable costs like fuel, lubricants, tires and so forth. To put things in perspective, the current year cost for operating TheBus is ~\$200M. Of this, nearly \$50M is attributable to fuel and maintenance items - during a time when petroleum prices are 50% below peak prices.

All in all, we are where we are. We need more housing, we need more efficient and reliable transportation options and—most importantly—we need to be focused on investing in the collective future of our people.

Malama Pono,

Ikaika

Update On Bill 8 (2015); Commercial Activities

Bill 8 (2015), CD1, FD1 was recently passed by the Council and became law without the Mayor's signature. While this bill primarily deals with commercial activities at beach parks throughout Waimanalo, one significant change—which also impacts the existing ban at Kailua and Kalama Beach Parks along with all the right-of-ways—is that the penalty for violations of this prohibition will now be a strict civil fine; pending Mayoral approval.

This change was necessary to help aide in enforcement. As the existing penalty involves the possibility of criminal charges the evidentiary burden was much higher. By limiting the penalty to civil fines (up to \$500 per infraction) we believe that enforcement efforts will be met with greater success.