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Pacific Resource Partnership

At the peak of Hawai'i construction in 2007, 40,000 were employed before the number declined to 27,550. Rail is expected to bring an additional, much-needed 10,000 to the construction industry in a time when nearly 40,000 are in need of work.

July 11 at 6:55 PM · Comment
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Pacific Resource Partnership

Good things happening in Kapolei! PRP member contractor Pankow is building this project.

FBI holds groundbreaking for new field office - News Now - KGMB and KHNL Home

The Federal Bureau of Investigation broke ground for the construction of a new Honolulu field office on July 11. According to the FBI, the 10-acre site is the largest of its kind in the state.

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Wall Photos
Pacific Resource Partnership (Albums) - Updated about a month ago





Aloha Executive Director's Message

The biggest project currently moving forward on Oahu is the voter-approved Honolulu Rail Transit project; preliminary construction began last year. Yet rail continues to face numerous attacks.

The Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) strongly believes a future without rail isn't one we can afford. Nor can future generations.

These aren't easy economic times. Few cities or states are as fiscally comfortable as they'd like to be. Most are far worse off than Honolulu, which has a unique and major opportunity to build a solid economic future with rail.

Rail's budget stands at \$5.3 billion, a significant sum. More significant are the opportunities that construction spending will create. Rail planners learned from the overruns encountered in building the H-3 Freeway. For starters, the rail budget includes \$1 billion of contingencies designed

to address potential cost increases.

More importantly, building rail will create 10,000 new jobs a year. That is equivalent to 1.6 percent of Hawaii's workforce, and will go a long way towards drastically reducing unemployment in the state. Related development work will contribute to even more jobs. Simply put, rail means getting Honolulu where it needs to be and putting Hawaii back to work.

Our traffic has reached a point of no return. Honolulu commuters already face some of the most punishing congestion in the nation. Planning for our interstate highways began in 1960, when the island's population was barely half a million. Our roads aren't equipped to serve the island in 2011, and the situation will be even more dire in 2030.

That is why we've been dedicating our efforts towards getting this historic and vital

project on the right track, and will continue to do so.

Beginning with this issue, you will find a rail column in every Ho'oku, which will provide construction updates and highlight recent milestones, such as the Honolulu City Council's decision to issue \$104 million in general obligation bonds to fund rail and their approval of HART's operating and construction budgets. We will also be posting the latest updates on our recently launched Facebook and twitter pages; I hope you will connect with us via our social media outlets.

It is too late in the game to be creating unjustifiable delays to stop rail. For the last 30 years, we have studied and discussed transportation options. The process hasn't been perfect, but little in life is. What is clear is that efforts to further delay the implementation process will penalize us all.

John White
Executive Director

PRP Welcomes U.S. Transportation Secretary

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood expressed his continued support of Honolulu's rail project at a reception hosted by The Pacific Resource Partnership at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa on March 22.

"We sincerely appreciate Mr. LaHood's commitment and support of this much-needed rail system on Oahu," said John White, executive director of PRP. "We are grateful that he recognizes the significance of this project and its benefits to the entire state."

PRP's reception also allowed LaHood to connect with Hawaii's business and government leaders, including U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye, U.S. Senator Daniel Akaka, U.S. Congresswoman Mazie Hirono and Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle.



PRP Executive Director John White, U.S. Sen. Daniel Akaka, FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, U.S. Congresswoman Mazie Hirono, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, Hawaii Carpenters Union Financial Secretary and Business Representative Ron Taketa, and U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye

PACIFIC RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP TAKES ADVOCACY ONLINE

Recognizing the significance of social media and its impact worldwide, The Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) recently launched a rail advocacy campaign on twitter and Facebook.

PRP kicked off the campaign in May with a tweet up event for local social media influencers with updates on the project and the benefits of transit-oriented development (TOD) from key rail advocates. PRP Executive Director John White, Lance Wilhelm (Kiewit Building Group), Terrance Ware (City & County of Honolulu) and Jun Yang (Faith Action for Community Equity) spoke about the importance of garnering rail support for a project that will have economic and social benefits for years to come. The tweet up at Bonsai Restaurant vamped up supporters and made its way to twitter's trending topics under the hashtag #prprail.



Local social media influencers tweeting during PRP's rail tweet up.



You can follow PRP on twitter at @PRPHawaii and "like" our Facebook fan page by searching for 'Pacific Resource Partnership' on Facebook. Or, visit our website www.prp-hawaii.com and click on the links to our Facebook and twitter accounts.

Contractor Workshops Aim to Keep Members Competitive

In an effort to help member contractors stay competitive, The Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) recently held two educational workshops.

[Act 17]

In March, PRP hosted a workshop about Act 17, a law that allows for a 5% bid preference on State or County public works bids or proposals with an estimated value of \$250,000 or more for contractors who participate with apprenticeship programs registered with the State of Hawaii for each trade it will employ on the project.

More than 75 people from nearly 50 general contractors statewide learned from State Comptroller Bruce Coppa about the rules governing Act 17. Also in attendance to discuss upcoming projects and Act 17's impact on their agencies: Lori Kahikina, deputy director of the City & County of Honolulu's Department of Design and Construction; Brian Minaai, vice president of capital improvements for the University of Hawaii; and Randolph "Randy" Moore, assistant superintendent for the Board of Education.

[BIM 101]

In June, PRP featured a half-day workshop presented by U.S. CAD on Building Information Management, or BIM. Contractors

in attendance learned that BIM is a tool for project management, and were treated to an incredible demonstration of U.S. CAD's BIM software, Revit, where the instructor managed to create a 3D drawing of a structure with a roof, door, windows and several interior rooms in a matter of minutes.

BIM is already being required on some large University of Hawaii and City & County of Honolulu projects, and is revolutionizing the design and construction industry.



Brian Minaai, vice president of capital improvements at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, speaks to member contractors at PRP's Act 17 workshop.

Unemployed HCU Members Remain Optimistic

Like many who are out of work, Dellas Alexander is scraping by on unemployment checks and a part-time job. But she refuses to let the economy dampen her spirits. "I don't like to be fearful," she said.

The 41-year-old carpenter has been on the bench since March. Her husband Eric, who also works in the industry, is unemployed as well. "We have our moments. I think we handle unemployment differently. My husband has to be working, but when I'm not, I make the best of it," she noted.

The mother of five has worked on many military projects for various contractors, including Hawaiian Dredging. She has seen a vast difference in the industry since she began in drywall more than a decade ago. "When I first started, I didn't have trouble getting work. But this year has been difficult, everything is slow," she added.

Dellas is one of the thousands of Hawaii Carpenters Union members who are unemployed and are trying to weather this economic storm. On the Neighbor Islands, the jobless rates are worse, especially on the Big Island, where 96

percent of unionized carpenters in Kona and 70 percent in Hilo are unemployed.

Mike Bustin, Sr., who has been out of work since January, stays afloat by having a backup plan. "If all you have is unemployment, you're not going to make it. You got to figure out something you can do when there's no construction work," he said.

For Mike, it's driving a tour bus. "I consider myself fortunate to have work, because a lot of members of the union haven't been as fortunate. I know people who have been on the bench for nearly three years," the 56-year-old said.

People like Mike and Dellas are exactly who The Pacific Resource Partnership hopes to help. Formed in 1987, PRP's mission is to secure jobs for its member contractors and unionized carpenters. With its focus on protecting existing work, reacquiring lost work and obtaining new work for unionized contractors, PRP has increased market share over the last 24 years for unionized construction by supporting and developing initiatives that strengthen Hawaii's building sector and contribute to the health of the state's economy.

PRP identifies and provides guidance to valuable projects to meet the economic, environmental and social needs of the state. One such project is the proposed Honolulu Rail Transit project. Since PRP believes it will improve the quality of life for all residents, it has launched a significant advocacy campaign which has included creating ads, organizing social media events and reaching out to lawmakers and the public.

Rail will provide Oahu with an affordable, reliable mode of transportation that will save riders money, ease traffic congestion and promote hassle-free commutes. Studies show that people who live in rail-accessible neighborhoods need fewer cars, drive less, walk more and are less likely to experience or contribute to traffic congestion. Rail will be accompanied by transit-oriented development (TOD), allowing communities and businesses to flourish along the route.

PRP's advocacy efforts also helped Kyo-ya obtain approvals at the Honolulu City Council, which was a significant step in moving the \$700 million Waikiki hotels project forward. PRP's "Better Waikiki" ad campaign stressed the importance of

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Unemployed HCU Members Remain Optimistic

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hotels renovating to remain competitive with other resort/beach destinations.

PRP has also been a long-time supporter of the Thirty Meter Telescope on the Big Island. PRP has helped to educate residents about the numerous benefits of bringing the world's largest optical telescope to Hawaii.

As the voice of the construction sector, PRP plays a key role on issues that are decided at government levels, advocating for legislation and public policy that benefit the local building industry. Such efforts include successfully lobbying for funding for state projects, including the University of Hawaii - West Oahu campus. PRP also helped secure a project laborer agreement with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, which is currently the largest residential homebuilder in the state.

PRP uses its influence and resources to increase job opportunities for members like Mike and Dellas, who remain optimistic during this difficult period.

Mike, who most recently worked on Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa in Ko Olina, said the economic downturn forced him to be on the bench for a year and a half. But he's learned, from his many years in the industry, how to endure uncertain times. "I know how to go about it. It's about investing," he said. "I also learned the value of saving a long time ago. I've been frugal."

"I see developments getting started, so I'm hopeful. I know there will be jobs," Dellas said. "We can manage in a tight economy. We just have to be careful."

Mike and Dellas both believe the construction industry is extremely rewarding, which is what keeps them moving forward. "There's just something about a person who can build things. As an apprentice, I'm not as masterful as some of the journeymen and master craftsmen, but it's a learning process. I have met very skilled journeymen in the HCU," Mike said.

"I enjoy working outdoors with my hands," Dellas said. "I finally found something I enjoy and I don't want to give it up."

TRACKING RAIL

The newly formed Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation's (HART) board of directors recently approved several measures to keep rail on time and on budget, adding to a growing list of key milestones for the \$5.3 billion project.

RAIL PROJECT KEY MILESTONES

- The establishment of HART marks a major milestone for the project, with the current Rapid Transit Division and its staff shifting gears and becoming the semi-autonomous public transit authority. Voters overwhelmingly approved the change last November, with 63 percent voting in favor of amending the charter to create the new authority to oversee the planning, design, construction, and potential expansion of the rail project.

HART's significant actions:

- Passed both the \$354.7 million capital budget and the \$20.5 million operating budget for the current fiscal year;
- Adopted transparency, financial and procurement policies;
- Appointed the project's current general manager, Toru Hamayasu, as interim executive director; and
- Initiated a national search for a permanent director.

- The Federal Transit Administration's announcement in June that Honolulu's rail project received the full \$55 million requested in the current federal budget, keeping the project on solid footing with the federal agency. That decision also moves the project closer to receiving the full \$1.55 billion anticipated.

- The Honolulu City Council's approval of a measure to allow the project to seek a bond measure for construction in the future.

- Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle hosting U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff, Hawaii's Congressional delegation and the governor for a project briefing. Secretary LaHood gave the project high marks, noting that things have been done "by the book."

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Contractor Kiewit Pacific Co. continues to work along Farrington Highway in Waipahu in preparation for building the guideway in September. Work includes relocation of trees and utilities, in addition to shaft and soil testing.

For more information on HART and the rail project, go to www.HonoluluTransit.org



Mike Bustin, Sr. drives a tour bus on Oahu to stay afloat in between construction jobs. He, like many of his colleagues, remains hopeful the economy and industry will improve.



Q&A Terrance Ware

*Transit-Oriented
Development Administrator,
City & County of Honolulu*

Q: What is Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)?

A: Transit-Oriented development (TOD) refers to creating compact, mixed-use communities around a transit station. By design, they invite residents, workers, and shoppers to drive less and ride transit more. Transit is a tool to help achieve a community vision – a way of helping to create the kind of place in which residents want to live, work, play, and raise families. Shaping a vision means imagining development that recognizes both the community's potential and its economic, political, and environmental limitations.

Q: What things make TOD successful?

A: For TOD to be successful and produce the desired public benefits, it needs to have the density, diversity of uses, and design that will draw significant numbers of people out of their cars and onto trains, buses, and other forms of travel.

These factors are vital to the long-term success of TOD:

- Enhanced mobility and environment. The primary transportation benefit of locating housing, jobs, shops, and other activities around transit stations is that transit ridership increases. TOD areas should be safe and secure communities which are inviting places to walk.
- Alternative living and working environments. TOD also serves as a safety valve for development pressure by providing housing that minimizes impacts on local roads, does not contribute to sprawl, and enables existing neighborhoods to remain intact.
- Public celebration. The transit station should function as a window to the rest of the region and be physically tied to the community's major gathering place.

Q: How will TOD be implemented and what will be unique to Honolulu?

A: Numerous studies point to the financial benefits of being near transit. The challenge is to create partnerships that allow those benefits to translate into profitability for developers and improved livability and opportunity for residents, rather than simply for landowners.

The Ho'opili, West Loch, Pearlridge, Kapalama, Iwilei, and Ala Moana stations offer the greatest potential TOD value capture. Reasons include their proximity to employment centers and community amenities, existing traffic congestion, lack of major encumbrances to development, presence of large multi-acre development sites, and precedence for high density development.

The challenges to TOD implementation in Honolulu are clear:

- The need to address expectations and communication between residents, government, and the development community, and to build consensus on urban issues. The scarcity of land increases the importance of discussion regarding the appropriate use and pattern of development.
 - The role of government regarding the entitlement process. Concerns that the process will be slow and politically unpredictable and result in costly delays and revisions need to be addressed.
 - The timing and planning of the transit system construction and influence expectations. The benefits of transit will accrue over a long period, not immediately.
 - Financing, specifically for infrastructure needs and housing. Housing in Hawaii is constrained by a lack of resources and by legislation.
 - Acknowledgement of market opportunities and constraints. Transit alone does not create market demand or an immediate shift in the pattern of development.
- For the City to successfully leverage the transit investment:
- There must be political consensus and support of the vision, goals, and objectives.
 - The City must have the skill and resources to participate effectively as a development partner. Because it has limited financial resources, this will be a major challenge. The City should investigate opportunities for a public-private catalyst project. This project could be a model to demonstrate the City's willingness to act as a development partner – providing financial resources (where possible) and reviewing or modifying applicable policies (where appropriate) to promote the type of development it desires.

- The community must have the capacity to act on its own behalf. Honolulu has relatively few community-based economic development organizations. Providing the resources to enhance the capacity of the existing organizations or creating other sustainable entities presents a significant challenge.

CONTRACTOR SPOTLIGHT: Pro-Bilt Construction Company, Inc.

When Aldon Mochida needs a break from the hustle and bustle of his job on the Valley Isle, he hits the mat. "It relieves stress," he said.

The president of Pro-Bilt Construction Company, Inc. serves as the judo coach for Maui High School, where he just wrapped up his first season. Aldon coached the majority of competitors who represented Maui County at the Hawaii High School Athletic Association State Judo Championships in May. "It's a good physical sport and it also helps them academically," he noted. "A lot of our black belts are successful."

Aldon is also a sensei for the Wailuku Hongwanji Judo Club. He has also coached for Baldwin High School and St. Anthony Junior-Senior High School.

But there is an underlying reason for all the time he devotes to this martial art. "It improves my golf game," he said. "It's like going to the gym every day, without lifting weights." His interest in judo began during intermediate school and continued during his college years when he competed at Colorado State.

But there is one more interest Aldon has had, just as long as judo. "I wanted to build buildings since I was 12 years old," he recalled. "The first time I went on an airplane, I saw downtown Honolulu. I saw these high-rise buildings and my first impression was, some man built this... how did he do this?" Aldon turned his boyhood curiosity into a career spanning more than 35 years. He has seen many changes over the past several decades, particularly with the advancement of technology and equipment.

Aldon retired from Hawaiian Dredging as a project manager in 2005, before joining Pro-Bilt Construction, the company involved with Maui Community College's student housing project and Honua Kai Condo.



Aldon Mochida, president of Pro-Bilt Construction Company, Inc., relieves stress by coaching judo at Maui High School. He is also a sensei for the Wailuku Hongwanji Judo club on the Valley Isle.



But like many companies, Pro-Bilt Construction was struck by the nation's economic downturn. "It's been the worst two-and-a-half years of my life. I've struggled to keep this company alive. But I didn't sit around, I looked around for work," Aldon said. His company searched for other forms of business, including opportunities in the alternative energy industry. Pro-Bilt has managed to survive, and a lot has to do with Aldon's passion for the construction industry. "I love my job," he stated.

Aldon also finds balance, by leading a very active life outside of work.

He's heavily involved with golf (every Sunday) and Eagle Scouts, in addition to teaching private swimming lessons. Aldon also co-chairs the Maui County Fair's famous chow fun booth for his church, which sells more than five tons of noodles in four days. He attributes his busy schedule and zest for life to his mom, who ran two restaurants, took correspondence classes and served as a den mother. "I give my mom credit, she was my mentor," Aldon said. "Busy people find more time. People who are not busy, tend to not get involved in life. I think by the time I die, I will have put in twice the actual time of my life."