

# COUNTY OF HAWAI'I TRANSIT AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN



## County of Hawai'i, Mass Transit Agency & SSFM International, Inc.

The County of Hawai'i Transit and Multi-Modal Master Plan (Master Plan) presents a set of programs to provide a wider range of transportation options, reduce dependence on the automobile, and reduce the negative effects of transportation on the environment and climate change.

The Hele On transit system had faced years of decline and was at a critical juncture of either falling apart, or being renewed. Service conditions were poor and had to change. By not sugar coating this reality, the planning process gained credibility and support. The planning process tackled the problems of a failing public transit system while envisioning the role transit could play in the community. It addressed demographic changes such as aging population, poverty, distribution of residents living far from their jobs, and long travel distances.

The renewal program presented has accompanying graphics as well as key implementation steps, staffing and financial needs. In this way, it is a road map for implementation and has already started to reap rewards. The document helped dialogue and support efforts to enact a GET surcharge. The 1/2 percent GET surcharge will fully fund the projects in the Master Plan. It will also support other programs: multi-modal, climate change, alternate energy efforts of the County Departments of Public Works, Research & Development, and Planning.

Active community engagement was critical. This included on-board survey of riders, two rounds of island-wide community workshops, televised County Council presentations, and a project website. Late in the planning process the volcanic eruptions in lower Puna covered many roads used by the bus routes. The planning process re-opened dialogue in order to reconfigure routing and to assist the county with disaster recovery.

Now in the first year of implementation, the Master Plan has supported applications for federal grants to purchase buses, state and local efforts for alternative energy for transportation and a wide variety of other efforts. When new buses arrive in early 2020, they will be deployed first on the cross-island route and the Puna hub and spoke, which were top priorities in the Master Plan. Customer service and performance measure work is also in progress.



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