



6 February 2003

INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Sand Island Tunnel, Oahu, Hawaii

1. Purpose: To provide information on the subject project.
2. Points of Major Interest and Facts.

a. This reconnaissance study is underway as an Interagency and International Services effort pursuant to the Chief's Economy Act authority. The purpose of the reconnaissance study is to determine the feasibility of replacing the fixed bridges to Sand Island with a tunnel. Sand Island protects Honolulu Harbor from the open waters of Mamala Bay and creates two channels into Honolulu Harbor, Honolulu and Kalihi channels. The completion of the study is held in abeyance until the State determines a source of funding for additional requested work.

b. Hawaii imports approximately 80 percent of its food and merchandise with over 90 percent of them shipped into Honolulu Harbor. Honolulu Harbor presently has only one navigable channel. Fixed bridges block navigation by large vessels through the second channel. The harbors master plan (Oahu Commercial Harbors 2020 Master Plan) envisions an overall increase in shipping into Honolulu Harbor and proposes to improve navigation efficiency by constructing a tunnel and opening the second channel to navigation. The study is funded by the State of Hawaii, Department of Transportation, Harbors Division and includes Federal funding from the Federal Highway Administration.

c. The study analyzed tunnel alignments, types of tunnel, and construction methods. The final report study will present the recommended tunnel construction, its associated construction cost estimate, and a benefit-cost analysis. The pre-final report indicated an estimated construction cost of approximately \$290M and was determined to be economically justifiable. The final report will update the cost estimate and is expected to increase. Harbors Division requested the final report present additional information that was not required in the original scope of the study. An estimate of the additional effort was provided and is being evaluated by Harbors Division.

d. Upon completion of the study, the State of Hawaii will need to determine whether it should go forward with the project for implementation. Due to the magnitude of the cost the project, the State of Hawaii will likely solicit Federal cost sharing support for construction of the tunnel. Federal Highway Administration would be most probable source of Federal funding.

3. Congressional Interest. The State of Hawaii has notified the Congressional delegation of the importance of this project. The office of Senator Inouye is interested in the study results.