

US' First Fully Autonomous Urban Railway System, Built by Hitachi Rail, Opens in Honolulu



Honolulu, June 30, 2023 – Hitachi Rail announced today the completion and start of passenger service for the first phase of Honolulu’s ‘Skyline’ – the city’s new metro system and the first fully autonomous metro system in the United States¹.

The state-of-the-art system will eliminate an estimated 40,000 car trips per day from the city’s congested streets and highways – equivalent to adding up to eight new freeway lanes – once fully complete.

The new line has been delivered on behalf of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) and the City’s Department of Transportation Services (DTS); it marks the first new major metro system to launch in the US since 1993.

The first phase of the Hawai’i’s largest infrastructure project is open to passengers from today, with the elevated rail line covering nearly 11 miles between the nine stations from East Kapolei to Aloha Stadium. Passenger services to additional stations further along the rail line, such as the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport will commence in two additional phases over the coming years.

To commemorate the important milestone, a grand opening ceremony was held today at Aloha Stadium station. A crowd of 250 celebrated the achievement, with speeches from U.S. Senator Brian Schatz, the Governor of Hawaii Josh Green, Mayor of Honolulu Rick Blangiardi, DTS Director Roger Morton, and Alistair Dormer, Executive Vice President of Green Energy and Mobility, Hitachi Ltd. The group then took the inaugural train ride through the nine stations opened, which opened to the public today.

The system is all electrically powered and will move people on to sustainable transport and away from pollution via private cars, reducing emissions and congestion for residents and tourists. The densely packed O‘ahu east-west transportation corridor currently suffers from notoriously bad congestion and significant traffic delays. The new high capacity transit system is also set to unlock important economic benefits for the Hawaiian economy.

Hitachi Rail’s role in the joint venture include:

- Manufacturing passenger vehicles (train cars) for the system
- Design and construction of the subsystems (fire detection, alarm system, passenger screen gate system, etc.)
- Testing and commissioning the entire system to be safety certified for passenger service
- Operating and maintaining the system during passenger revenue service

Now completed, the overall fleet is comprised of 20 four-car trains, each equipped with capacity to hold up to 800 passengers. Total train length is 260ft, with generous open gangways between cars to allow passengers to move freely using all available space. Trains are also air conditioned, featuring Wi-Fi for all passengers, as well as ample space for bicycles, surf boards, baby strollers, luggage, and more. Trains are also fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with dedicated spaces for wheelchairs allowing free autonomous movement for disabled passengers embarking on and off the trains.

Alistair Dormer, Executive Vice President of Green Energy and Mobility, Hitachi Ltd said: “We’re delighted to have delivered Honolulu’s largest ever infrastructure project, which will have a major impact reducing congestion and emissions on the island. Reducing car journeys by up to 40,000 a day, once the full system is complete, this will make a huge difference to travel in Hawai‘i.”

Giuseppe Marino, Group CEO, Hitachi Rail said: “Delivering the US’ first ever fully autonomous rail system is an extremely proud moment for Hitachi Rail. It cements our position as an international leader in autonomous metros, which have such an important place in offering reliable, high capacity, sustainable transportation for cities around the world.”

Rick Blangiardi, Mayor of Honolulu said: “This system represents a long-overdue opportunity and I cannot thank enough the hands that went into completing this first phase of the project. It is because of each and every one of you, our future generations of residents and visitors alike will be able to experience a modernized transit network on O‘ahu. Skyline presents an unprecedented opportunity to connect passengers to our central and leeward cities and the distinct beauty and character they each possess... My warmest ‘Mahalo’ to the hundreds of hard-working professionals at Hitachi Rail who have served as valuable partners in this project thus far...”

Lori Kahikina, HART CEO said: “The initial opening of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project is a momentous achievement and Hitachi Rail has been an instrumental partner in reaching this goal of delivering the first fully automated driverless commuter rail system in the country to the community. The HART Team is extremely grateful to have earned the trust and support from our stakeholders to work collaboratively in the interest of the tax payer to deliver the first installment of the State’s largest capital improvement project and infrastructure investment in its history.”

Hitachi boasts a proven track record as a world leader in implementing pioneering autonomous metro systems worldwide – including delivering systems in Copenhagen, Milan, Rome, Riyadh and Taipei. The Automatic Train Control (ATC) system employs cutting-edge technology to guarantee the safety of passengers, vehicles, and the entire system. All train movements and track switches are managed from a single control room that is staffed 24/7, meaning the systems will offer passengers safe and efficiency travel all year round.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- To see images of Skyline please click here ([LINK](#))
- ¹ The Skyline is the US' first autonomous urban rail system. While there are already rubber-wheeled and light autonomous people movers, mostly at airports, this is the first true mass transit GoA4 (Grade of Automation) system in operation in the United States.
- The next phase of the project encompasses 5.2 miles of track and four additional stations running to Middle Street-Kalihi Transit Center. Completion is anticipated in summer 2025.
- The second phase, which is expected to be operational in about 2 years, adds an additional 5.2 miles of track and four stations from Aloha Stadium to Middle Street-Kalihi Transit Center. A third phase will add 3 miles of track and six stations to a temporary terminus at the Civic Center Station in Kakaako. An additional 1 mile of track and two stations that will end at Ala Moana Transit Center will be completed in a later phase.
- VIPs in attendance included:
 - U.S. Senator Brian Schatz, serves on the U.S. Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee
 - U.S. Senator Mazie K. Hirono, serves on the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
 - Governor of Hawaii Josh Green
 - Mayor of Honolulu Rick Blangiardi
 - DTS Director, Roger Morton
 - HART CEO, Lori Kahikina

About Hitachi Rail

Hitachi Rail is connecting the future of mobility - helping every passenger, customer and community enjoy the benefits of more seamless, sustainable journeys. The company's pioneering technology enables more than 18bn passenger journeys every year and helps to safely transport millions of tons of freight.

As a trusted partner to operators around the world, Hitachi Rail delivers every part of the railway, from manufacturing and maintaining high-speed bullet trains to digital signalling infrastructure and more.

Hitachi Rail is delivering value for its customers through Digital Transformation. The company's new Smart Mobility and Digital Asset Management solutions are cutting costs, carbon and congestion, while offering more choice and convenience to passengers than ever before.

Hitachi Rail is becoming a climate change innovator by innovating greener products with its

customers - such as battery trains, and through its commitment to reduce its own CO₂ emissions to net zero by 2030.

Hitachi Rail's reach is global, but its business is local - with success built on investing in the people and communities that it serves. With over 14,000 employees in 38 countries, the company is growing and looking to recruit diverse talent now.

Find out about more by visiting [hitachirail.com](https://www.hitachirail.com) or [hitachirail.com/careers/](https://www.hitachirail.com/careers/)

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