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Significant Highway

Judging TH-3 is always going to be like deciding whether the chicken or egg came first. Whether it is a necessary response to development, or a spur to unnecessary development seems likely to be permanently debatable . . . ad nauseum.

Happily, there is no such debate about another new Island highway that may prove in the long run to be far more socially significant than TH-3.

Completion of the Queen Kaahumanu Highway on the Big Island provides a 33-mile coastal road along the Kona Coast of the Big Island through areas previously inaccessible and thus undeveloped.

It provides a high speed link from Kailua-Kona north to Kawaihae. The State already has developed the Ke-ahole Airport and Honokahau Boat Harbor along its path. Resorts are expected to spring up as well, with some already emerging. The area has some of the world's finest climate. Its moon-like lava terrain can be smoothed by bulldozers and grassed over just as has been done at Keaunohou, south of Kailua.

The Queen's Highway area affords a near-perfect test of our intentions and our capabilities so far as "quality growth" is concerned.

It was built to spur growth, and the start is from scratch. Both Gov. George Ariyoshi and Hawaii County officials now promise the growth will be controlled. They feel confident they have the tools to make this assurance come true.

The Queen's Highway has been a relative bargain, only \$15 million, one-twentieth the cost of TH-3, yet its impact as a spur to development should be even greater than TH-3's.

Public officials must never be released from their commitment that this time the growth that will be spurred will be quality growth.

Here is one case where we will be able to look back in the future and see with utter clarity how well our hopes and the professions of our government leaders were fulfilled.

S.B.

Case for TH-3

Opponents of TH-3 are now emphasizing the argument that the highway would open up development of still-pristine areas of Windward Oahu. But that need not be.

Far more growth lies ahead in the already-developed areas of Windward Oahu — especially Kailua, Kaneohe and Kahaluu. TH-3 would be needed to accommodate this growth even if not a single additional square foot of Windward Oahu were rezoned for development.

The State Land Use Commission has rejected development plans for Waiahole-Waikane. Additional brakes may be placed on development in Windward Oahu. There is a growing appreciation of the importance of preserving agricultural lands.

This doesn't impair the case for TH-3. Single-unit development is just the beginning. The transformation of Makiki into a community of high rises may well be repeated — although we hope in a more attractive way — in Kailua. More intensive development will mean more cars, and a greater need for mass transit. That means TH-3.