

# Maui's New Kahului Airport Rental Facility Saves Travelers Time & Hassle

Peggy Seymour – May 20th



This image shows the new Kahului Airport Consolidated Rent-A-Car facility. (Photo: Courtesy of the Hawaii Department of Transportation)

Travel just got easier for most of the 6 million visitors expected on Maui in 2019 thanks to the new \$340 million Kahului Airport Consolidated Rent-A-Car facility which opened last Wednesday.

The new 1.3-million-square-foot multilevel CONRAC houses all major rental car companies in one place. An electric tram connects passengers to the main terminal.

Gone are the days when arriving passengers walked over 100 yards from baggage claim to a bleak, crowded rental car check-in. Once there, visitors stood in line for a shuttle bus ride to cramped rental facilities. Then they stood in line again to sign contracts and pick up rental cars.



The former rental car check-in replaced by the new CONRAC at Kahului Airport. (Photo: Courtesy of the Hawaii Department of Transportation)

That was a problem for tourism.

Maui's main airport is the second busiest in Hawaii by passenger volume, but its rental car industry generates the most revenue according to the Hawaii Department of Transportation. Those figures reflect the more affluent demographics of Maui visitors. And travelers with money to spend expect more.

## More Convenience

"The public will no longer be directed to scattered facilities around the airport," said Robert Hunsinger, Director of Airport Relations and Properties at Enterprise Holdings.

The new CONRAC facility includes rental car offices, customer service counters, ready and return rental car space, and quick-turn-around areas to service rental car fleets, according to the [Hawaii Department of Transportation](#).

Companies with offices now in the Kahului CONRAC include Advantage, Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Enterprise, EZ, Firefly, Hertz, National, Payless, Thrifty and Zipcar.

Kahului Airport's new electric tram will relieve congestion by eliminating 25 shuttle buses that transported customers between the airport terminal and rental car counters. The old shuttles made an average of 85 trips per hour.

Maui Airport's District Manager Marvin Moniz [told the Maui News](#), "The visitors as well as the locals can benefit from having a reduction of traffic at this terminal. This is a blessing for us."



Kahului Airport's new electric tram for the short ride to the Departures and Arrivals Stations. (Photo: Courtesy of the Hawaii Department of Transportation)

Parking at the airport will also be easier as much needed space is freed up in the short-term lot, now that 693 parking spaces at the facility are available for airport employees.

## A Model Project

Hailed as the largest-ever public works project on Maui the facility was completed on time and on budget, winning awards for its sustainable design. These days that is rare in Hawaii. The Honolulu Rail Transit Project designed to ease terrible traffic congestion in Hawaii's biggest city is mired in delays and cost overruns.

At the request of the Federal Department of Transportation the F.B.I. announced an investigation into the causes of the overruns.

Estimates of the total costs for the Honolulu project have ballooned from \$5.26 billion in the 2012 to \$12 billion by project end — which is nowhere in sight.

Commenting on the Maui project at the opening event, Hawaii Gov. David Ige said, "The best part is this is funded with no taxpayer dollars involved". The \$340 million dollars comes from car rental customers from around the world who visit Maui County."

CONRAC funding comes from a state Customer Facility Charge, a daily \$4.50 applied to customers who rent a car.

## Maui Rental Industry Outlook

Overall, the outlook is strong for Maui's rental car industry, the Maui News reports. Kahului Airport rental car companies made double what Oahu did last year, Moniz said.

The Valley Isle accounts for 35 percent of car rental revenues statewide, according to Sen. Gil Keith-Agaran (Wailuku, Waihee, Kahului).

*"We always outpace them,"* said Hunsinger, adding that more than 2,000 cars are rented on a good day.

Overall in 2018, Maui led the state in average spend per visitor at \$1,739 per trip according to a [Hawaii Tourism Authority news release](#) in January, 2019. The island of Oahu came in second, with an average spend per visitor of \$1,375.

A similar facility is scheduled for 2021 completion at Honolulu's Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, Ige said. That is, if it doesn't face major delays and massive budget overruns.