

I-083-001

MR. BRONER: So thank you for hearing us. I appreciate you public officials listening to citizens on this important issue. But I would like to say that, given how much this bridge will make global warming worse -- well, it's fortunate that it's a floating bridge.

So a few things. First of all, what we should be doing is planning this bridge for the next 50 years, not for the last 13. Those 13 years, we're never getting back. Let's move on.

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What we should ultimately be doing is replacing the pontoons. We know that they're damaged, that they need to be replaced. What we should not be doing is using this as an excuse to push through a design that doesn't meet our needs.

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What we should be doing is treating bus rapid transit as the minimum of what we should be doing. Bus rapid transit would be the Montlake stop. We know that bus rapid transit is a very effective way of getting high-capacity transit with the minimum of capital investment.

What we also should be doing is -- since we're treating this as the minimum we should be doing, we should think about what is the most we should be doing, which is taking the 6.1 miles between east link and north link and realizing that it's penny-wise and pound-foolish to tear them up and reconfigure them now without putting in light rail.

If you assume that we're not going to do light rail for the next 50 years, well, yes, let's just do that now. But I think that's a false assumption, given all the challenges that previous speakers have outlined. But maybe Washington engineers have a plan they can pull

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Comment noted.

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Your comment about replacing the pontoons is noted, and as presented for all the alternatives considered in the DEIS, the SDEIS, and with the Preferred Alternative, the pontoons are being replaced. The Preferred Alternative recommended by WSDOT and FHWA is a design resulting from years of community input and consideration, and has been determined to meet the long established project purpose and need by moving people and goods safely and more effectively through the SR 520 corridor.

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Section 2.4 in the Final EIS explains why initial implementation of light rail transit on SR 520 is not planned. The decision to locate Sound Transit's initial east-west light rail transit corridor on I-90 rather than SR 520 has been made through extensive regional deliberation (see Table 2-2 of the Final EIS).

The SR 520 High-Capacity Transit Plan, which was endorsed in 2008 by the state, King County Metro Transit, and Sound Transit, found that until at least 2030, demand for transit in the 520 corridor could be satisfied by bus rapid transit that runs in HOV/transit lanes—complementing Sound Transit's East Link on I-90. At the same time, the plan acknowledges that after 2030 significant increases in cross-lake travel may warrant dedicated HCT facilities in both I-90 and SR 520. Therefore, the new SR 520 bridge and associated interchanges will be built in a way that allows the structure to accommodate a two-way light rail line or busway at a future date.

While WSDOT believed that the design of the SR 520, I-5 to Medina project already accommodated potential future light rail, the agency

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off when the pontoons -- when they become the only thing that's still  
afloat.

(End of comment.)

worked with the City of Seattle and Sound Transit to identify changes that would enhance the corridor's rail compatibility. The Preferred Alternative reflects these design changes and allows for two potential future rail options (see Chapter 2 of the Final EIS). Under the SR 520 High Capacity Transit Plan, Sound Transit would study the demand and necessity of light rail later in this decade. For more information, please see the SR 520 High Capacity Transit Plan at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/Library/technical.htm>.