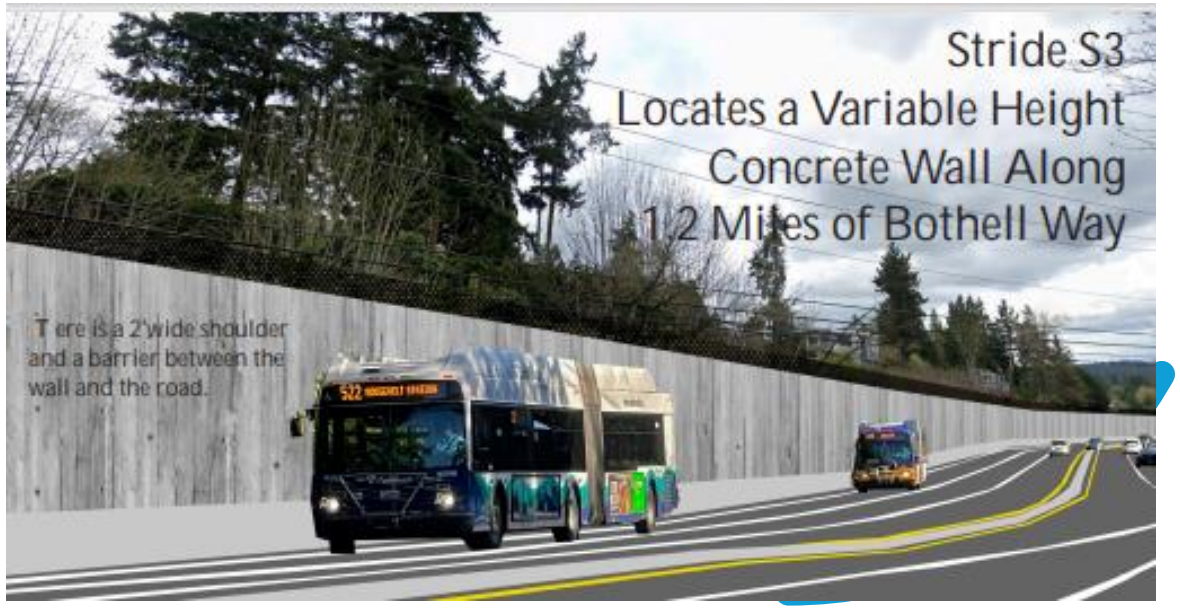
Presentation to the Lake Forest Park City Council, June 24, 2024

By: CORE (Citizens Organized to Rethink Expansion of HWY 522 through Lake Forest Park)

What will our legacy be?

This?

Or This?



Why is this message so difficult to deliver to Sound Transit Board Members and the Press?

There is a simple way for Sound Transit to:

- ✓ Save hundreds of millions of dollars to invest in other projects
- ✓ Take far less time to build Stride-3
- ✓ Deliver speedy bus transit through LFP
- ✓ Virtually eliminate drastic environmental and aesthetic impacts to our community.

It is a simple, effective alternative

- ✓ **Don’t construct a dedicated northbound BAT lane between 153rd and 165th**

Not going to read this entirely.

What we all know: This plan devastates our community

ST's current plan inflicts significant, inequitable impacts on our entire Community.

- ✓ 5 acres of trees, as many as 400 including 80 landmark trees along with
- ✓ 110 impacted property owners on Bothell Way (56% of all Stride-3 impacted property owners).
- ✓ 95,000 tons of dirt and debris hauled, 65% of the total for Stride-3
- ✓ $253mm of all Stride 3 capital costs for construction and construction management, more than 50% of total Stride-3 costs in 2021 dollars
- ✓ Increased stormwater runoff into our streams and Lake Washington.
- ✓ No plans yet approved for crossing Blsche'tla Creek, a fish-bearing stream, on a landslide and steep slope-sensitive area
- ✓ Unmeasured cut-through traffic impacts, short- and long-term, through the heart of our community's narrow streets and by our elementary schools.
- ✓ Loss of parking and customers of small businesses along Bothell Way, short and long-term.
- ✓ Driveways of hundreds of private homes, condos, apartments, and businesses entering and exiting as buses pass at maximum speed.
- ✓ A near mile-long retaining wall as high as 16 feet creating higher levels of traffic noise, heat islands, all attracting graffiti.

All these increased costs and damage are due to Sound Transit's "West Shift" in June, 2020.

ST reasons for shifting the road west are weak at best, but the lasting impacts are real.

- *"Minimizes the need for 10 full property acquisitions"*
- *"We talked to property owners leading us to modify the design accordingly."*
- The facts:
  - It's the most expensive and environmentally damaging design option.
  - ***9 out of ten homes that would have been lost were between 155th and 165th.***
  - The West Shift was announced just 10 months before ST issued a DNS approving their 2,700 page "SEPA" submission for Stride-3
  - The "30% plans" dated October 2020, included in the SEPA, dated appear to show the west shift.
  - No one knows the actual story of how, who, why, or when the decision was made.

Sound Transit's spurious arguments for building a BAT lane in LFP

Argument One: Philosophical rationale for BAT Lanes: ***CEO Timm to LFP Citizens at Brookside Elementary***

- *"BAT lanes are necessary for fast, frequent, reliable bus service, Shoreline to Bothell."* (1)
- *"BRT, to be functional, requires a significant number of BAT lanes. Reducing it turns it into Rapid Ride Buses, that's not the mandate of voters."(2)* **False:**
  - LFP increases total Stride-3 BAT lane coverage by just 7%, to a total of 53%
  - 2016 voters guide and 16-page mailer has no mention BAT lanes in LFP.

Argument Two: It saves bus rider's time: ***Project Manager Bernard Van De Kamp, to Sound Transit Board, December 3. 2022:***

- *"A northbound Bat Lane reduces bus transit time through LFP during PM weekday rush hour by 2.3 minutes; up to 10 minutes when most congested" (3)*

False:

- *ST calculates "time savings" in LFP from at 145th and 30th to Town Center or beginning at 153rd and Bothell Way to Bothell Way and 61st in Kenmore.*
- *Adjust these correctly and it is not 2.3 minutes, more like 1.4 minutes*
- *No explanation how the 10-minute "most congested";' how it was determined; how often it happens, the probability of it occurring.*
- *Never mentions only 6 buses impacted during the 2-hour, weekday afternoons commute.*
- *Regardless, 62% of the entire Stride-3 weekday rush hours is saved in the 13 blocks between the Shoreline Light Rail Station and 145th and 15th*

October 3rd, 2023. ST shifts argument to solving for "maximum traffic delays"

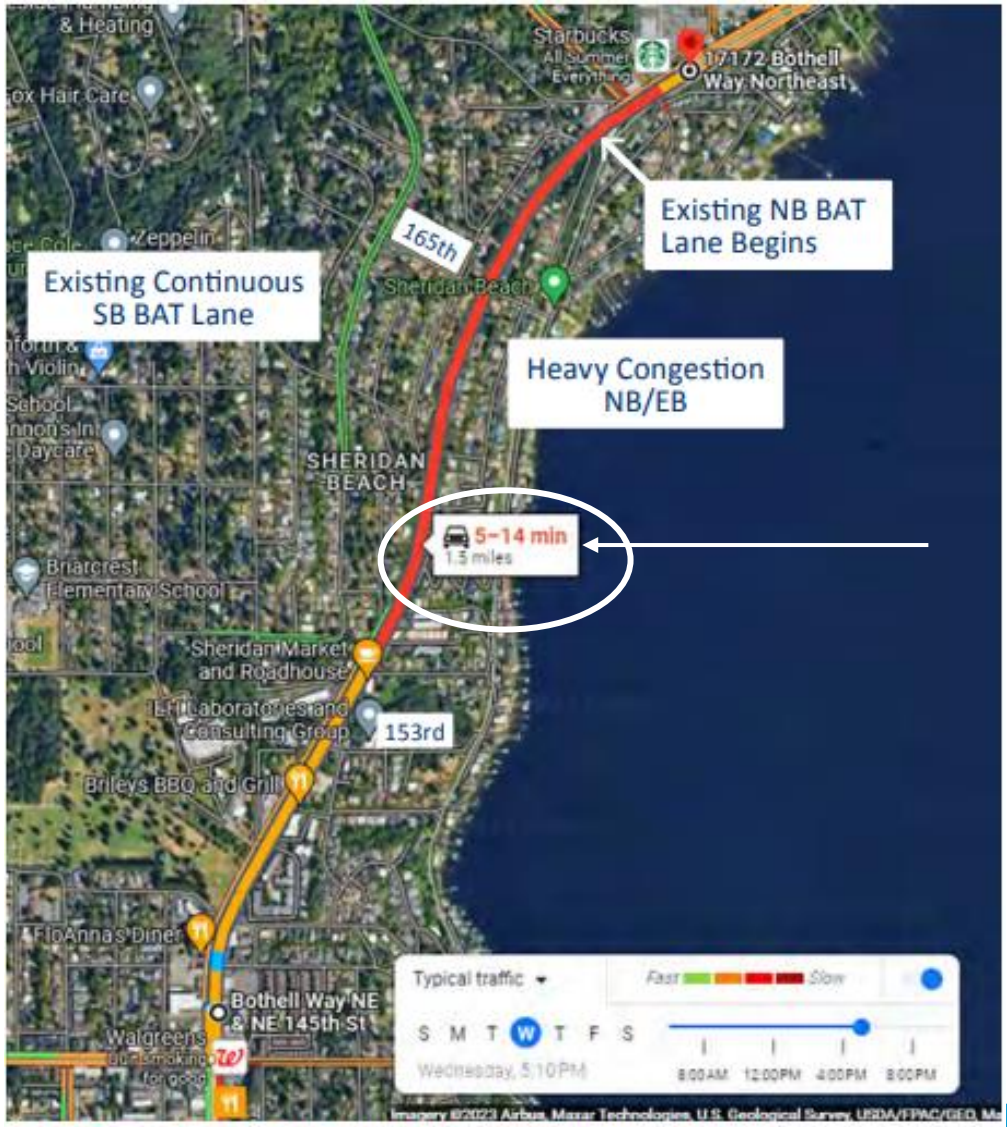
Argument Number 3: The argument shifts from "average time saved" to fixing the "maximum delay"

- Members of the Council, Stewardship Foundation, and CORE met with the Stride-3 Staff and Julie Timm, October 3, 2023
- ST shifted the argument from "average time saved" to "maximum delay".
- Proof to justify the design was a single screenshot from Google Maps showing 5-14 minutes delay buses would face in LFP.
- With the BAT lane, the bus "would go 2–9 minutes faster than without it."
- "Travel times provided by Google Maps are independent and reproducible."
- No other research or studies were offered as rationale for building the road here.

Sound Transit arguments for building a 1.3 mile northbound BAT lane in LFP

Sound Transit's Google Traffic Map; the basis of the argument.

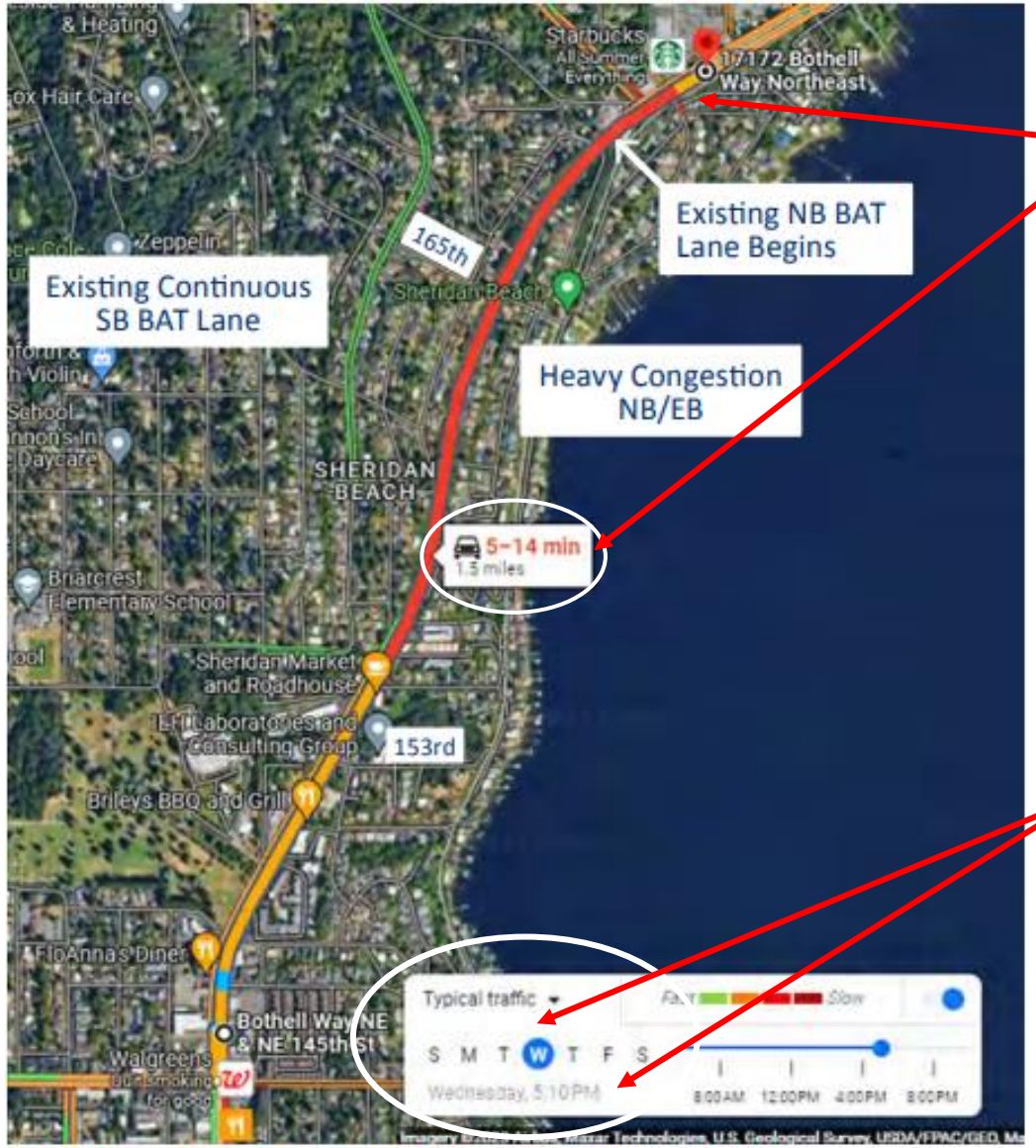
- A single Google Traffic Map showing the "typical traffic" during afternoon peak hours ranges from 5 to as much as 14 minutes.



MAP 2 – *Existing PM peak traffic conditions, SR 522*

Lets take a closer look at this map

Sound Transit's Google Map: Take a closer look

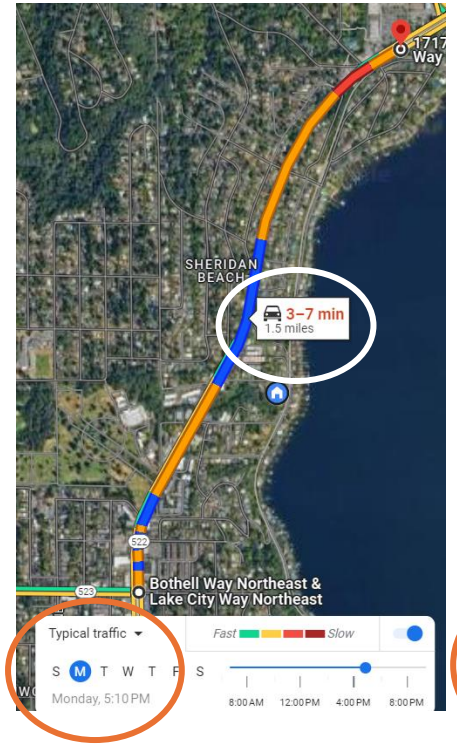


MAP 2 – *Existing PM peak traffic conditions, SR 522*

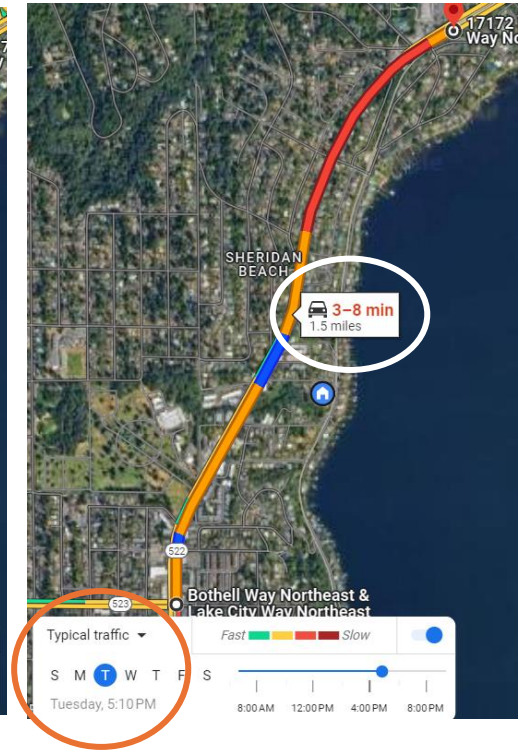
Map shows 1.5 miles, which includes the existing BAT Lane near Town Center.

Note that the map is for typical traffic Wednesdays at 5:10pm

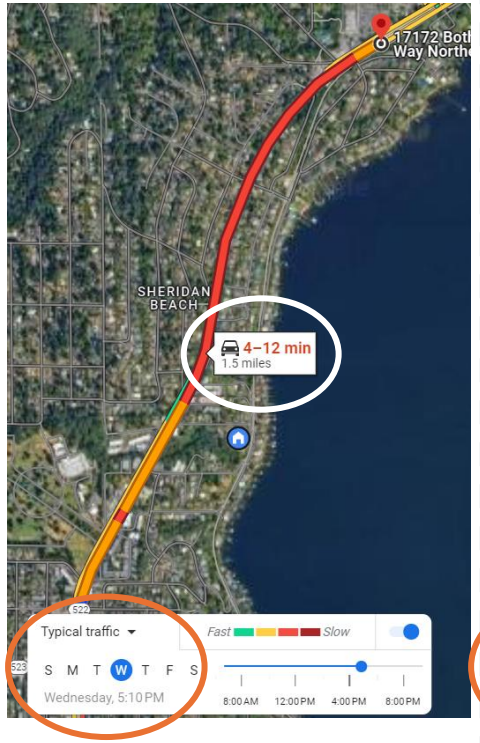
ST appears to have “cherry picked” the one day and time that historically has the greatest traffic backups: Wednesdays at 5:10pm



Monday, 5:10pm
3-7 minutes



Tuesday, 5:10pm
3-8 minutes



Wednesday, 5:10pm
4-12 minutes

Thursday, 5:10pm
3-10 minutes

Friday, 5:10pm
3-7 minutes

These maps alone show there is considerable variance in traffic patterns by discrete times and sections of the roadway during the weekday PM peak hour commute. This was never investigated

Investigating discrete traffic patterns: Core's Google Data Extract Analysis*

From a handful of screen shots there is variance in traffic, by sections of the roadway.

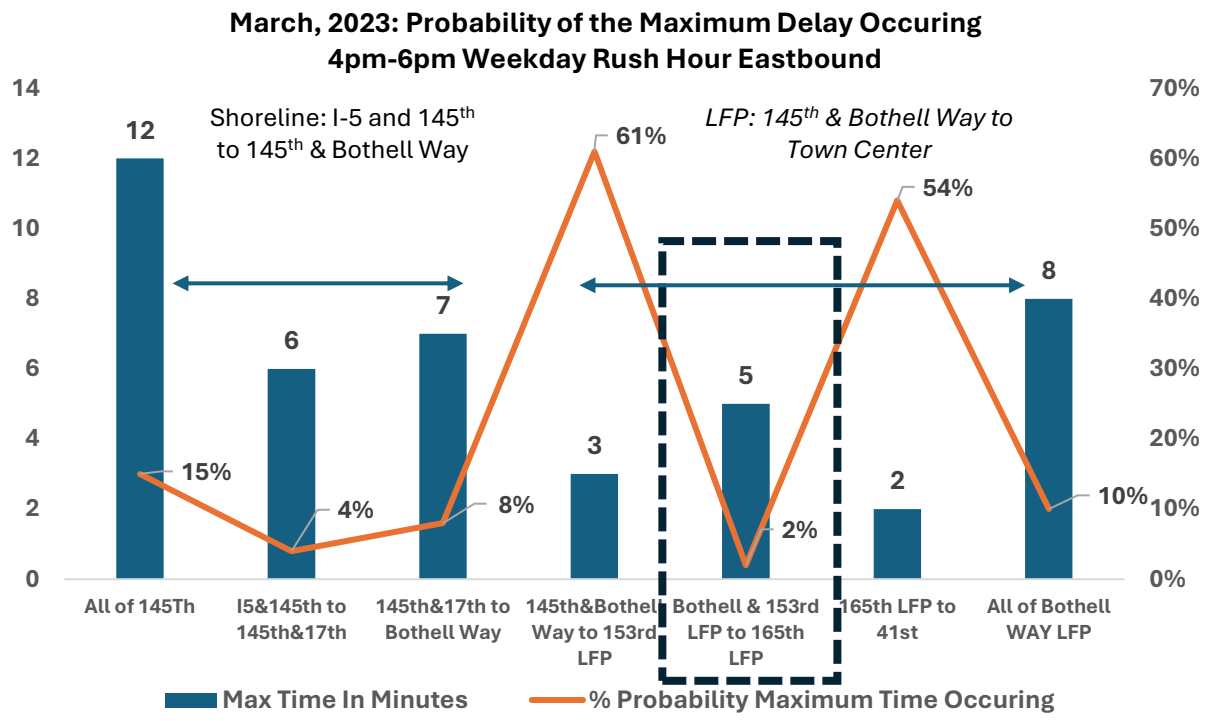
- CORE obtained a detailed extract of Google Maps Traffic data.*
- The data supports an alternative approach to the engineering plan in Lake Forest Park
- The advantages are significant and material
  - Cost hundreds of millions of dollars less
  - Take far less tune to built
  - Marginally impact bus transit time through LFP during peak, afternoon, weekday hours
  - Virtually eliminate the ascetic and environmental impacts to our Community

*Analysis was done by Dr. Nitin Gautam, a 20-year Microsoft veteran who managed multiple PhD's and Data Sciences Teams during his career.

The extract pulled data in 10-minute increments for every day for the entire month of March 2023 and March 2019. The data was pulled for 145th to Bothell Way (Shoreline) and Bothell Way to 41st and Bothell Way, (LFP); each 10-minute increment included the maximum, minimum, and average travel duration. In addition, data was pulled by individual segments of the roadway for both 145th (Shoreline) and Bothell Way (LFP)

Don't build a dedicated BAT lane between 153rd and 165th.

There is considerable variance in traffic backups during the 4pm-6pm weekday rush hour through LFP



- It's not the maximum travel time delay in and of itself. What matters is the probability of it happening during the time in question.
- The data shows the section of Bothell Way between 153rd and 165th has a maximum travel time of 5 minutes, but only a 2% chance of it occurring between 4 pm to 6 pm.
- This means that ***not building a BAT lane in this section of the roadway*** would have a marginal impact on the bus transit time for the 12 buses passing through LFP at this time.

How do we break through to Sound Transit Board Members with this message:

LFP can help Sound Transit save hundreds of millions of dollars and build Stride 3 faster.

- ✓ Just don't build a BAT lane over the 10 blocks from 155th to 165th
- ✓ This would marginally impact most buses' transit time passing through LFP during the afternoon, weekday rush hour.
- ✓ It impacts far fewer property owners and require only 1full property take.
- ✓ It is faster to build Stride-3, cost hundreds of millions of dollars less, money that can be invested in higher return Sound Transit projects.
- ✓ It virtually eliminates the drastic environment and aesthetic impacts on our Community.
- ✓ Plain and simple, it's the right thing to do for mass transit riders, taxpayers, and residents of Lake Forest Park.

Read CORE's whitepaper: https://bit.ly/3V5LdXM

What will the Council's legacy be?

- Core is behind you
- LFP Stewardship Foundation is behind you
- Nearly every LFP resident is behind you

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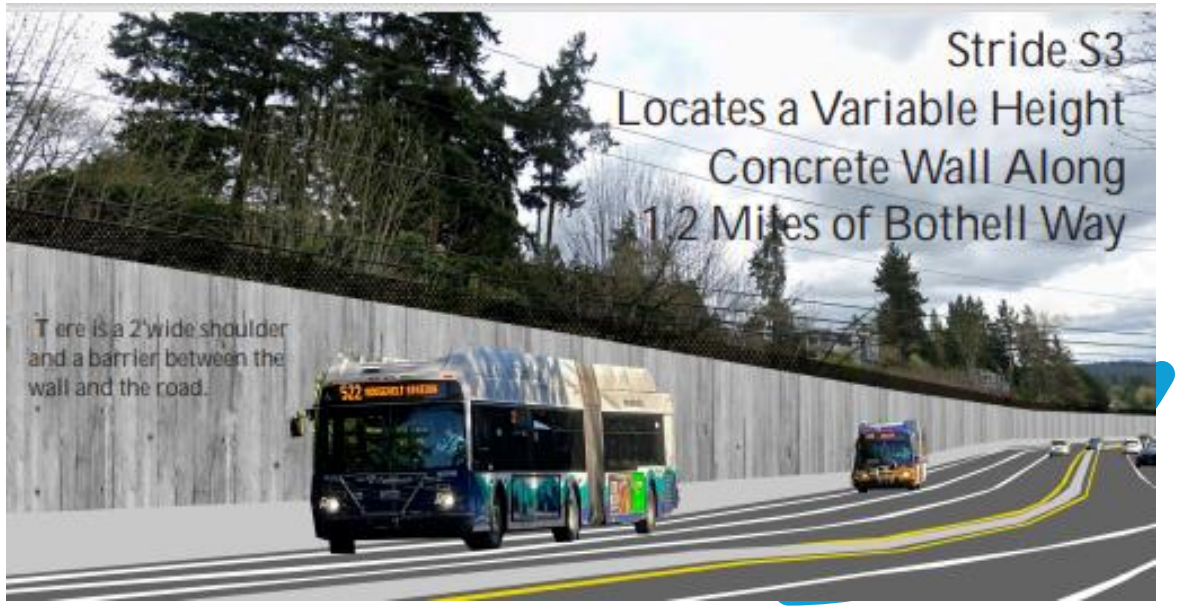
Or This?