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Delegation information
Committee: Executive Policy Committee
Committee - council: N/A
Committee - other: N/A
Agenda item (number and title): Property 2

Service inquiry: Register as a Delegation, Submit Comments in writing
Participation preference: Via Zoom
Comments in writing: Completely missing from this item is the RFP that should have been issued years ago, for the study of ways to mitigate the leakage problem. Until this report has been published and objectively considered, no one should run off with fanciful solutions. Was there such an RFP? Is there such a report? Shouldn't you start there?
Before voting in favor of this item, I implore you to watch the Youtube of the SPC meeting on the 7th, at about the 60 minute mark. There are so many reasons to vote to revisit this, after the big questions have been properly answered.

The RFP for study of the Concourse in 2020 was top secret. Why? It demands that any company wanting to do this work for the city must remain silent on what they see and learn. Why? Your RFP says nothing about exploring a list of means of mitigation. Why not?

Too often city hall is presented with a solution in search of a problem. The civil service or a third party develops an idea. The city hires a big company to push the idea with a media campaign and hires an engineering company to say that the problem is huge and that the "idea" is the only solution. Megaprojects around here all tend to follow this model. They get rammed through, and often the "idea" is wrong. Luckily taxpayers and motorists have infinitely deep pockets, or so we are told.

It is very curious that the Mayor would announce "the solution" before his council and his electorate have had a chance to review the alternatives. Was he tricked and misled by staff and the RFP that kept the work on this TOP SECRET? Some folks are not happy with the process so far. TV told us that fixing the leaks would cost $73m. Only later do we hear that filling in the underground will cost $50m or so and that slicing off the barriers will cost $10m. Are those numbers correct? Will the 2 options actually cost the same?

With the huge supply of unused retail space nearby, and no sign that foot traffic, commuting, and retail needs will grow much, the Concourse could be reduced in size, to accommodate leak mitigation or it

could be closed. That is clearly a lower cost option. Until the budget has a lot of extra money, and until there is shortage of retail space in the area, this is the only option to consider. If it is closed, pedestrians can do what I have done for decades, use the next traffic light, at Fort etc. Most folks know that this is quicker than using the Concourse.

For nearly a century, issuing a report that misled the public could get an engineer in trouble. To deal with what they said was a cresting wave of misleading reports, the Engineers completely removed the rule that forbade writing or saying anything that would mislead. With no such rule in place, it is prudent to take any engineering report with a grain of salt. Keep in mind that an engineering company that supports a bad idea knows it will be richly rewarded with millions of taxpayer dollars in follow-up contracts.

Far away from our city hall, governments are presented with objective evaluations of problems, and a full range of mitigation options. It is sad that, so often, you are not given that opportunity. Each of you have an obligation to fully consider matters at hand. Blindly following a report from a staffer is never a good option, no matter what you are told.
File:
Public engagement preference: Yes