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phase of a major transit project is obvious. Construction jobs are created, business volumes and employment are stimulated in the local businesses that provide materials and equipment. Transit operations, too, generate a significant economic impact and one that is more lasting than that of construction. The most important economic benefits, however, of a good transportation system are those that result from the long-term effects of transportation on communities and their overall economies. A comprehensive transportation system is essential to an effective economic development program. Making employment opportunities, goods and services more accessible makes good economic sense. We also know that property values are enhanced by proximity to rail transit stations. Further, there appears to be a negative relationship between housing values and closeness to freeways. Passenger rail, specifically commuter rail, attracts and focuses new development, increases capacity in congested corridors, enhances property values, rents and occupancy rates, and provides access to labor markets for both central city and suburban employers. Finally, I want to close with something we haven't talked much about yet, and that are the environmental benefits. We need to mitigate and reverse the declining quality of our air, water and physical surroundings. Nebraskans certainly have indicated very much a concern with their environment. There's a growing awareness and concern about how much pollution we put in the air with passenger cars. We know that nitrogen, oxides, ozone and carbon monoxide present and account for approximately half of those pollutants. Rail, especially the commuter rail operations, can reduce this congestion and the resultant air pollution by reducing the number of vehicles on the state's highways, especially during the critical morning and afternoon drive times. Easily the most significant contribution that public transportation can make to the improvement of air quality lies simply in the much greater efficiency of fuel use by transit vehicles compared to that of private automobile. Travel in single-occupancy automobiles typically produces as much as four to eight times the amount of noxious emissions per person as travel by public transit. So, I hopefully have covered, for my colleagues, what I see as the numerous benefits that might be associated with rail transit, particularly commuter rail. There are mobility benefits, efficiency benefits, safety benefits, user cost savings, and a tremendous amount of economic development benefits...