Transit Sustainability Project

CHANGE IN MOTION

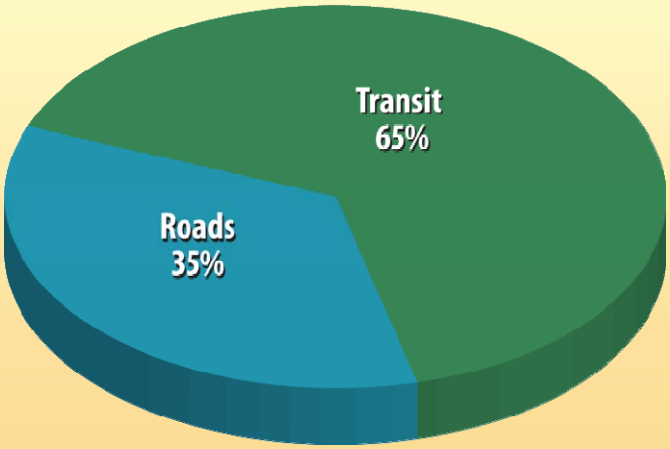
Project Kick-off Meeting
May 14, 2010

Why are we here?

Why is it important for the region?

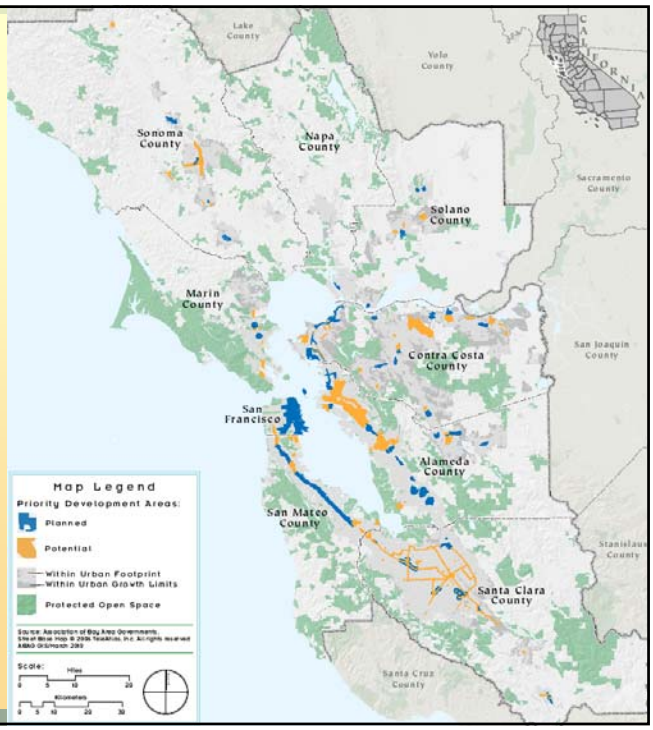
Transportation 2035 Plan

Expenditures by Mode (Total revenues: $218 Billion)



Focused Growth

- Critical to the region's ability to manage growth
- 55% of projected population growth through 2035 can be accommodated in PDA's covering only 3% of the region's land area



Transit Sustainability Project

- Goal: to identify the major challenges facing transit, confront them directly, and identify a path toward a flexible, affordable, well-funded transit system that more people will use for more trips
- Project Principles
  - Objective, fact-based analysis
  - Build on work already completed and underway
  - All issues are on the table

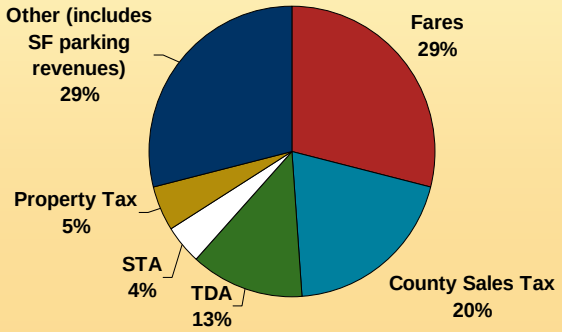
What is a sustainable transit system?

Working Definition

- Customer: A system that functions as an accessible, user-friendly and coordinated network for current and future transit riders, regardless of mode, location or jurisdiction.
- Financial: A system that can cover its operating and capital costs with a growing share of passenger fare revenues from increased ridership as well as reliable streams of public funding.
- Environmental: A system that can attract and accommodate new riders in an era of emission reduction goals and is supported through companion land use and pricing policies.

Where are we?

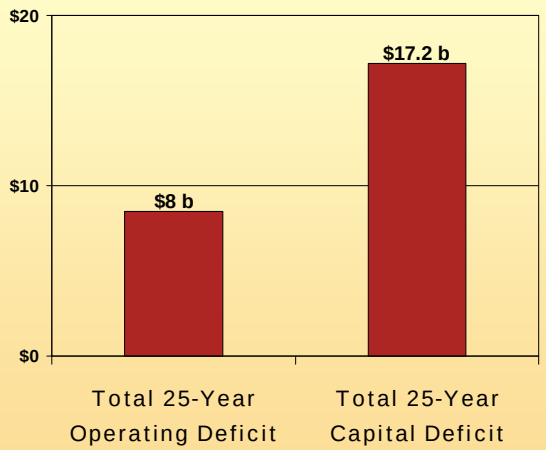
- Current transit use and infrastructure is robust
  - 500 million annual passengers
  - Average of 1.7 million passengers per weekday
  - 200 million revenue vehicle miles; 19 million revenue vehicle hours
  - 4,551 total vehicles, 994 miles of track and 54 maintenance facilities
  - 14,059 FTEs
- Operating funds: over $2 billion a year



Where are we?

- Bay Area residents historically support transit
  - 78% of voters said "increasing the use of public transit" is an "extremely important" or "very important" priority for the transportation future of the Bay Area (Spring 2008)
  - 63% of voters said "investing in public transit to encourage less driving" should be the region's most important transportation investment priority when asked to choose among other priorities (Spring 2008)
- But that support may not be endless:
  - When asked in March 2010 which of fourteen areas of state government spending they would favor cutting, 48% of Californians said public transportation – up from only 30% in 2008

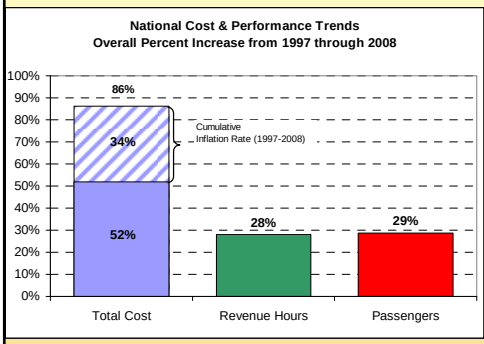
Financial:
Short and Long Term Problem

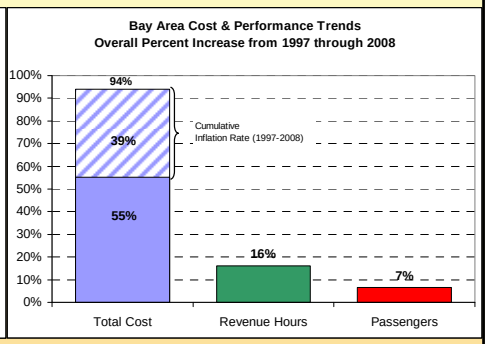


Projected Deficits Transportation 2035

Comparison of Performance Trends

Overall Percent Increases

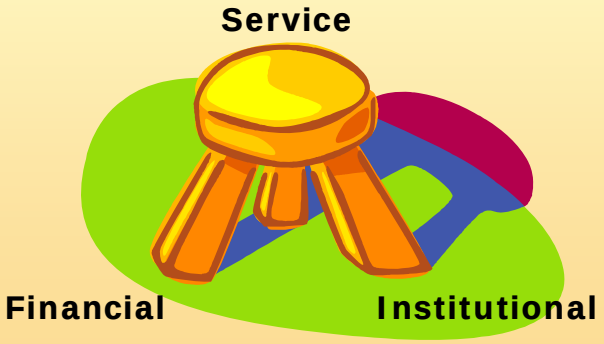




Notes:
1) Operating costs only.
2) Data from the NTD database.
3) All modes except Demand Response are included.
4) For all rail service, passenger car revenue hours was used.

What are the possible causes of the problem?

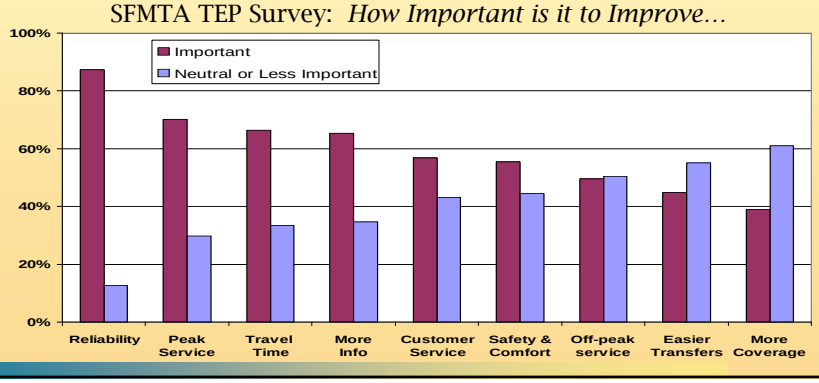
- Individual interviews with members of the Select and Project Steering Committees to identify key issues
- Interviews centered on three areas for focus:



Initial Perspectives: Service

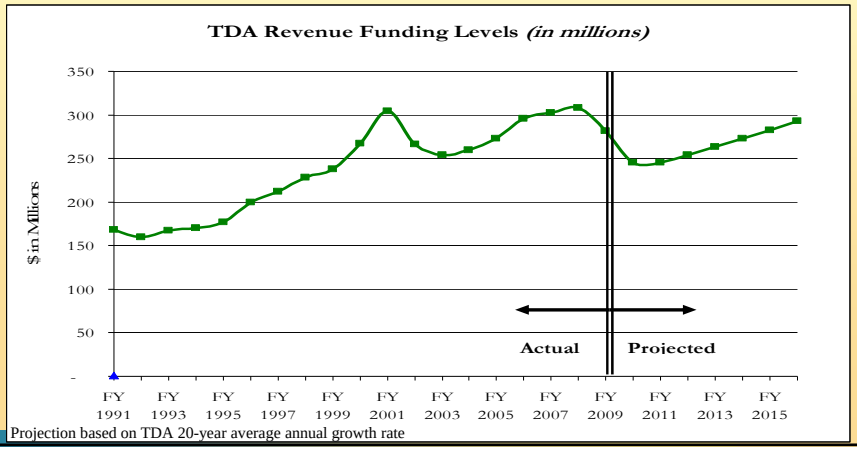
1. Transit is not reliable, safe or convenient
2. Transit system is confusing; connections are difficult, time consuming
3. Transit service is not price or time competitive with the auto alternative
4. There is too much service; too little service; service is in the wrong place
5. Duplicative services compete for the same riders
6. Lack of uniform fare policies disadvantages riders

SFMTA TEP Survey: *How Important is it to Improve…*



Initial Perspectives: Financial

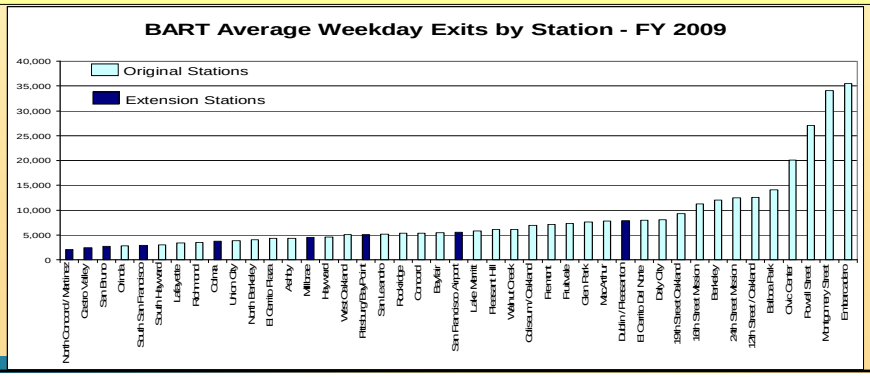
7. Salaries and benefits are costly
8. High cost of service is a result of large administrative structure
9. Inefficient work rules inflate cost of delivering service
10. Unpredictable revenues result in unstable service and fares



Projection based on TDA 20-year average annual growth rate

Initial Perspectives: Institutional

11. Expansion policies resulted in increased operating costs but few riders
12. Political pressure and "return to source" policies keep unproductive routes in service
13. Land uses and other external factors confound transit's effectiveness
14. Multiple operators results in a fractured decision-making process and works against a cohesive regional transit network
15. Decision-making does not match markets - regional/commute, local/lifeline



Your Initial Perspectives: What are the possible causes?

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Perspectives on Service Opportunities

- Develop a regional vision for an appropriately scaled transit system with performance measures
- Distinguish between service types to inform investments
- Identify best practices to inform service design
- Expand vision of what transit service includes – e.g. dynamic ride sharing

Example: VTA Service Design Guidelines

Community Bus

Standard:
20 Boardings/Rev. Hour

Local

Standard:
30 Boardings/Rev. Hour

Express

Standard:
60% Seat Utilization

Bus Rapid Transit

Standard:
300 Boardings/Station

Perspectives on Financial Opportunities

- Cost containment strategies – reinvest cost savings in the transit system to better serve the customer and save and create jobs
- Consider how pricing and tolls can support transit
- Demonstrate that we are maximizing the productivity of the current system to build support for new revenue

Perspectives on Institutional Opportunities

- Establish a regional fare structure
- Better utilize existing transit expertise in the region to get a better product to the customer
- Identify institutional structure that aligns with service objectives

Transit Operator	Senior/ Disabled	Youth	Child
AC Transit	50%	50% (5-17 yrs.)	4 and under free (limit 2)
BART	63%	63% (5-12 yrs.)	4 and under free
Caltrain	50%	50% (5-17 yrs.)	4 and under free (limit 1)
County Connection	66%	Same as adult	Under 6 free
Golden Gate Transit	50%	50% (6-18 yrs.)	5 and under free (limit 2)
SamTrans	58%	43% (5-17 yrs.)	4 and under free (limit 1)
San Francisco Muni	66%	66% (5-17 yrs.)	Under 5 free
Santa Clara VTA	58%	15% (5-17 yrs.)	Under 5 free
WestCAT	58%	Same as adult	Under 6 free (limit 2)

Project Approach

1. Baseline (now – 6 months)
   - Finalize initial work plan to guide analysis
   - Get to a common understanding of current situation: translate perceived causes of the problem into facts
   - Establish a shared vision: agree to definition of a "sustainable transit system"
2. Moving Forward (6 – 18 months)
   - Conduct analysis in areas of finance, service delivery, and institutional/decision-making to develop implementation options to achieve the vision
   - Preliminary recommendations
3. Adopt Implementation Plan (18 – 24 months)
4. Ongoing outreach (now – 24 months)

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