



Transit Sustainability Project Final Recommendations

Alameda CTC Senior and Disabled Mobility Workshop
July 16, 2012



TRANSIT
SUSTAINABILITY
PROJECT

Overview

- 1. Project Context**
- 2. Performance Measures and Targets**
- 3. Transit Performance Initiative**
- 4. Service, Institutional Recommendations**
- 5. Paratransit Process and Recommendations**

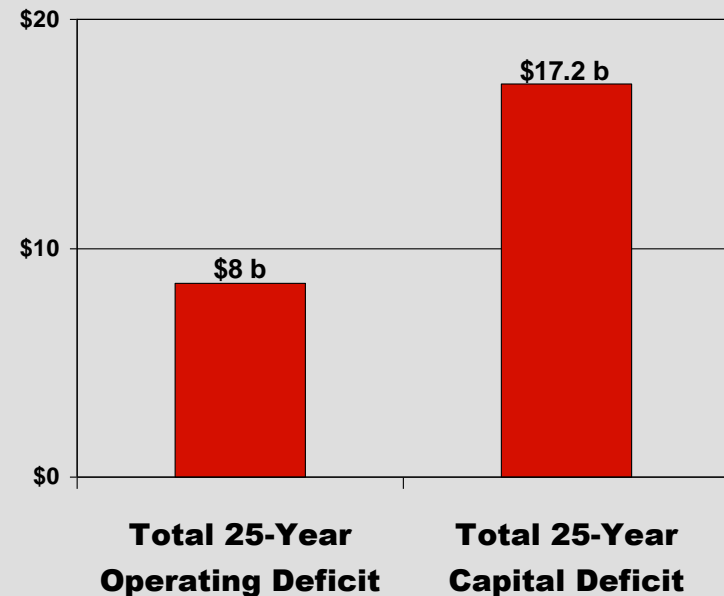


Project Context

Challenge for Bay Area Transit System

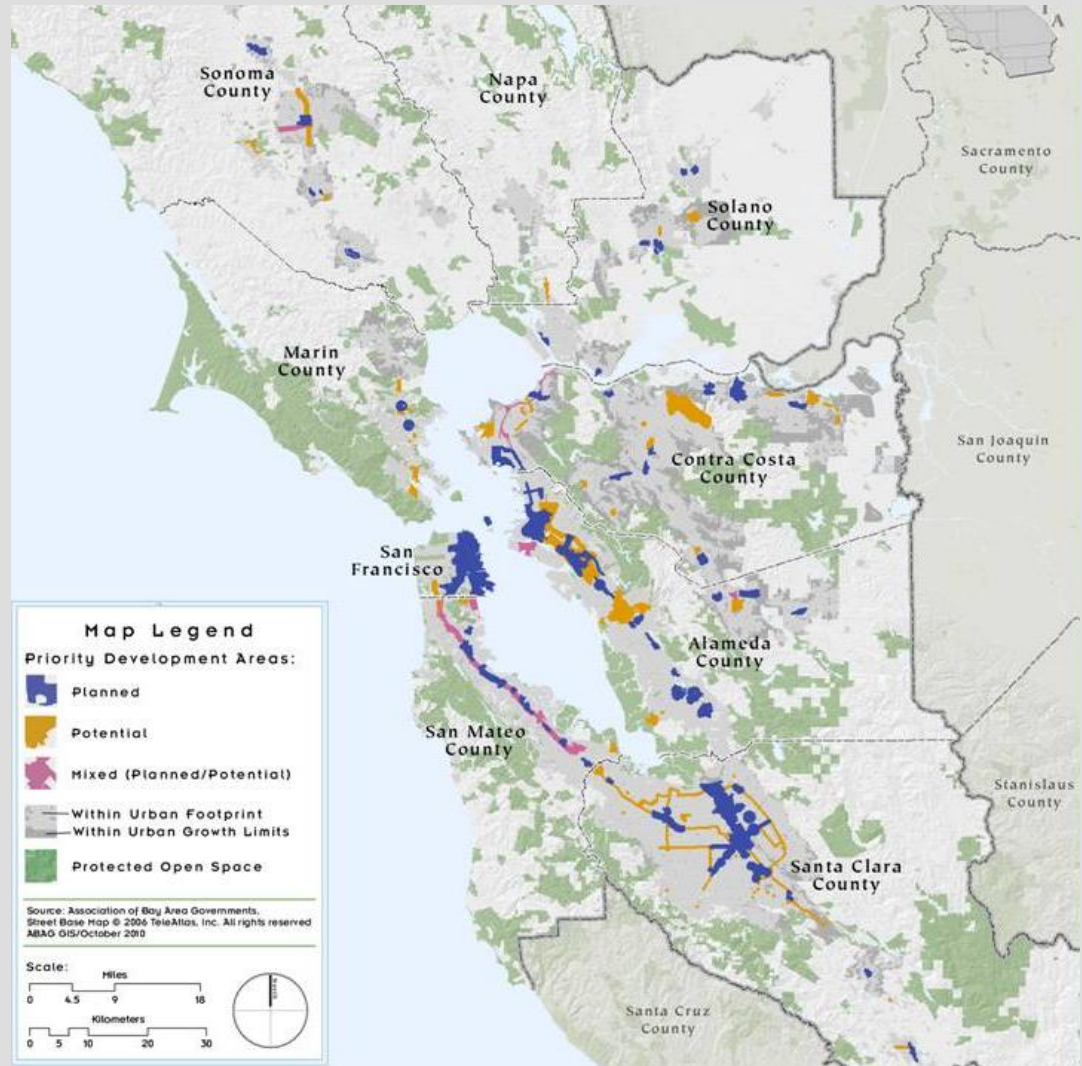


Projected Deficits Transportation 2035



Opportunity for Bay Area Transit System

- Bay Area seeks to focus growth around transit
- Plan Bay Area forecast growth in Priority Development Areas:
 - 74% new housing
 - 67% new jobs
- More intense development near high quality transit

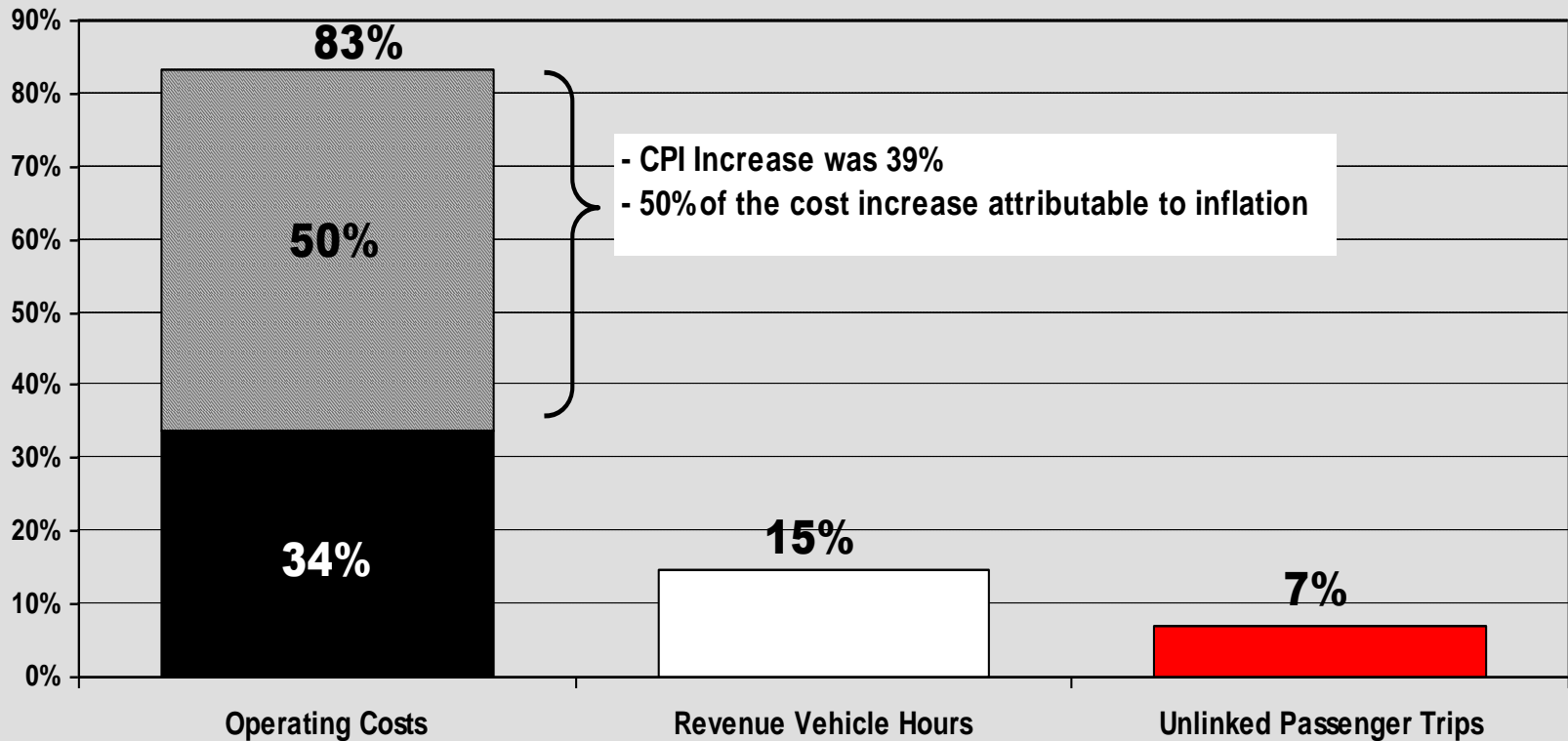


What is Important for Transit's Success?

- **Improve financial position:** Contain costs, cover a greater percentage of operating and capital costs with a growing share of passenger fare revenues; secure reliable streams of public funding.
- **Improve service for the customer:** Strengthen the system so that it functions as an accessible, user-friendly and coordinated network for transit riders, regardless of mode, location or jurisdiction.
- **Attract new riders to the system:** Strengthen the system so that it can attract and accommodate new riders in an era of emission-reduction goals, and is supported through companion land use and pricing policies.

Performance Measures and Targets

Bay Area Large Operators: Percent Change in Cost and Performance Indicators (1997 – 2008)



Source: National Transit Database, "Big 7" only.
Excludes ferry, cable car and paratransit.

Performance Measures and Targets - Big 7 Operators

Reduce “real” operating cost per service hour, cost per passenger, or cost per passenger mile by 5% within 5 years

- Financial targets would be set compared to the highest cost per hour experienced by each agency between 2008 and 2011 to include savings from labor agreements since 2008
- Based on evaluation and possible savings in areas including:
 - Fringe Benefits
 - Work Rules and Business Model
 - Administrative Costs
- Cost per passenger or cost per passenger mile target could also be achieved by a combination of attracting more passengers and operating efficiencies

Recommendations: Transit Performance Initiative

Transit Performance Initiative

Investment and incentive approach to achieve improved service performance

Investment

1. Regional investment in supportive infrastructure to achieve performance improvements in major transit corridors

Incentive

2. Reward agencies that achieve improvements in ridership and service productivity



TRANSIT
SUSTAINABILITY
PROJECT

Recommendations: Service and Institutional Policies

Recommendations

- Additional TSP policy recommendations related to:
 - Service
 - Institutional
 - Paratransit
- Based on best practices at other agencies or represent promising initiatives already underway.
- Implementation of these recommendations will take focus and follow-up actions by MTC and the transit agencies



Process and Recommendations: Paratransit

Paratransit Overview

- ADA Paratransit is required as a civil right – no funding is provided
- Must be “comparable” to fixed-route services:
 - No capacity constraints
 - Same hours and area as fixed-route
 - No trip purpose rules
 - Fare no more than twice basic adult fare
 - Reservations up to the day before service
- Over 5% of total public transit operating cost in the Bay Area*
- About 1% of public transit trips in the Bay Area*
- All service is operated by contract providers – roughly 90% of all Paratransit costs are for purchased transportation

*MTC 2009-10 Statistical Summary

Paratransit TSP Process

Paratransit Studied Separately from Fixed Route Service

- Unique mode dependent on fixed route structure
- Vulnerable population served: frail elderly and disabled
- Costs are driven by different factors than fixed route
- Affected by cutbacks in social services transportation

Paratransit TSP Process

- Technical Advisory Committee of 8 transit operators
- Ad Hoc Committee of contract providers
- Briefings of MTC Policy Advisory Council, Equity and Access Subcommittee
- ADA paratransit rider focus groups conducted

Paratransit Process: Analysis Steps

- Reviewed existing services and trends
- Identified strategies to manage cost and increase mobility
 - Review of national experience and literature
 - Survey of Bay Area operators
 - Review prior MTC and local plans
- Evaluated potential financial and service impacts of strategies
- Identified Regional Priority Strategies

Paratransit Recommendations

- Consider fixed-route travel training and promotion to seniors
 - Expanding fixed route travel training – through mobility orientation sessions and one-on-one individualized training – would increase mobility for the users and help reduce growth of ADA paratransit demand.
 - Ideally, training and outreach should be conducted before individuals apply for paratransit service or, at a minimum, should be made available during the process of determining eligibility for these services.

Paratransit Recommendations

- Consider charging premium fares for service beyond ADA requirements

Where transit agencies provide paratransit service that goes beyond what the ADA requires, they may charge extra for those "premium" services

- Transit agencies that serve an entire jurisdiction can define a "two-tiered" service area, with the first tier being the ADA required service area within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the fixed route service and the second tier extending to the jurisdictional limits
- Higher fares can be charged for trips in that second tier
- The transit agency can also adopt differing policies for that premium second tier, such as more limited service hours, denials of service once capacity is reached, and so forth

Paratransit Recommendations

- Consider enhanced ADA Paratransit certification process
 - A robust certification process that includes in-person interviews as well as evaluations of applicants' functional mobility by trained professionals provides more accurate determinations of applicants' travel skills and may result in more applicants being referred to fixed route service based on their individual abilities
 - This may result in some reduction in ADA paratransit costs and also result in improving the mobility of riders due to the increased spontaneity afforded by fixed-route transit
 - Depending on the transit agency, available cost savings range from none to substantial
 - One centralized regional process is not needed, but many transit agencies can enhance their processes. Some smaller agencies could combine this function for efficiency and to support staff with specialized skills

Paratransit Recommendations

- Consider implementing conditional eligibility
 - Conditional eligibility finds that some applicants can use fixed-route service for at least some of their trips and specifies the particular conditions under which paratransit service is required
 - While this requires a more sophisticated eligibility certification process, conditional eligibility avoids ADA paratransit costs for those trips that ADA-eligible riders take on fixed-route service
 - Opportunities exist at several transit operators in combination with an enhanced eligibility process

Paratransit Recommendations

- Creation of sub-regional Mobility Managers (e.g. CTSA) in one or more sub-regional areas to better coordinate resources and service to customers
 - National and local coordinated models exist and should be evaluated to deliver high quality and efficient paratransit services across transit agency boundaries and shared costs with social services
 - Several MTC programs, including Lifeline and New Freedom, have funded mobility management efforts to identify best practices and develop mobility management models for regional replication
 - The Commission will use the information from these efforts to recommend specific areas and agency leads for implementation of sub-regional mobility managers in the Bay Area

Paratransit Recommendations

- Improve fixed-route transit (per Plan Bay Area)
 - Continuous improvements to the fixed route system will shift some demand from paratransit to the fixed route system
- Walkable communities, complete streets, and land use planning (per Plan Bay Area)
 - Planning efforts should ensure that senior housing and other senior-related facilities are sited in locations that are close to fixed-route services and proximate to activity centers featuring shopping, medical and other services
 - Long-term strategy in which transit agencies will only play a supportive role. It requires an active role from cities and counties.

Paratransit Recommendations

- Walkable communities, complete streets, and land use planning (per Plan Bay Area) (*continued*)
 - An integrated land-use/transportation plan is the primary goal of Plan Bay Area, under development and scheduled for adoption in 2013
 - The proposed OneBayArea grant program seeks to reward local jurisdictions for building housing near transit and conditions funding on adherence to complete streets policies

Additional Information

Information on MTC Transit Sustainability Project available at:

<http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/tsp/>