

Regional Transit Task Force

Presentation

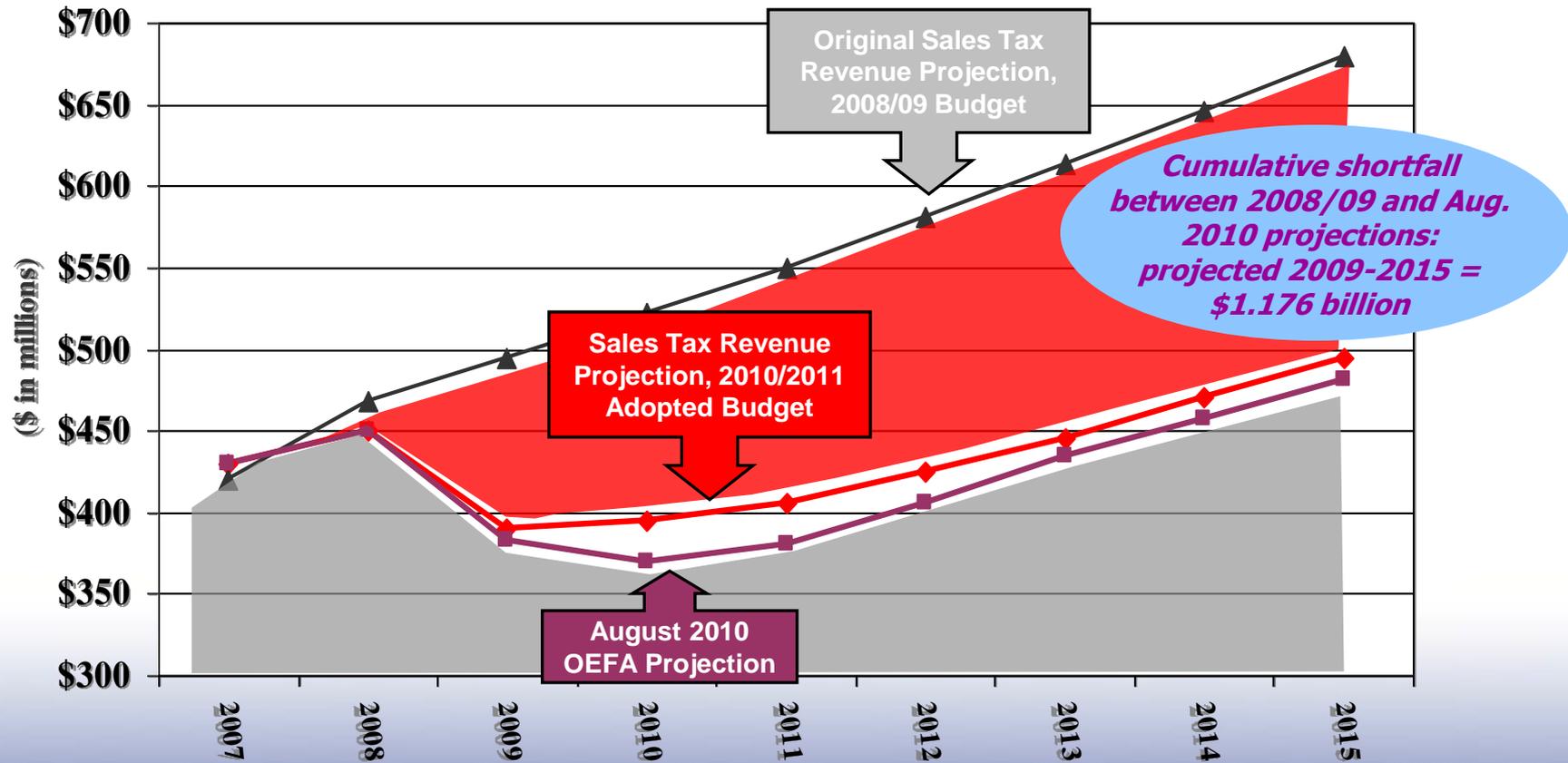
Seattle City Council

January 24, 2011

King County Council and Executive Creation of the Task Force

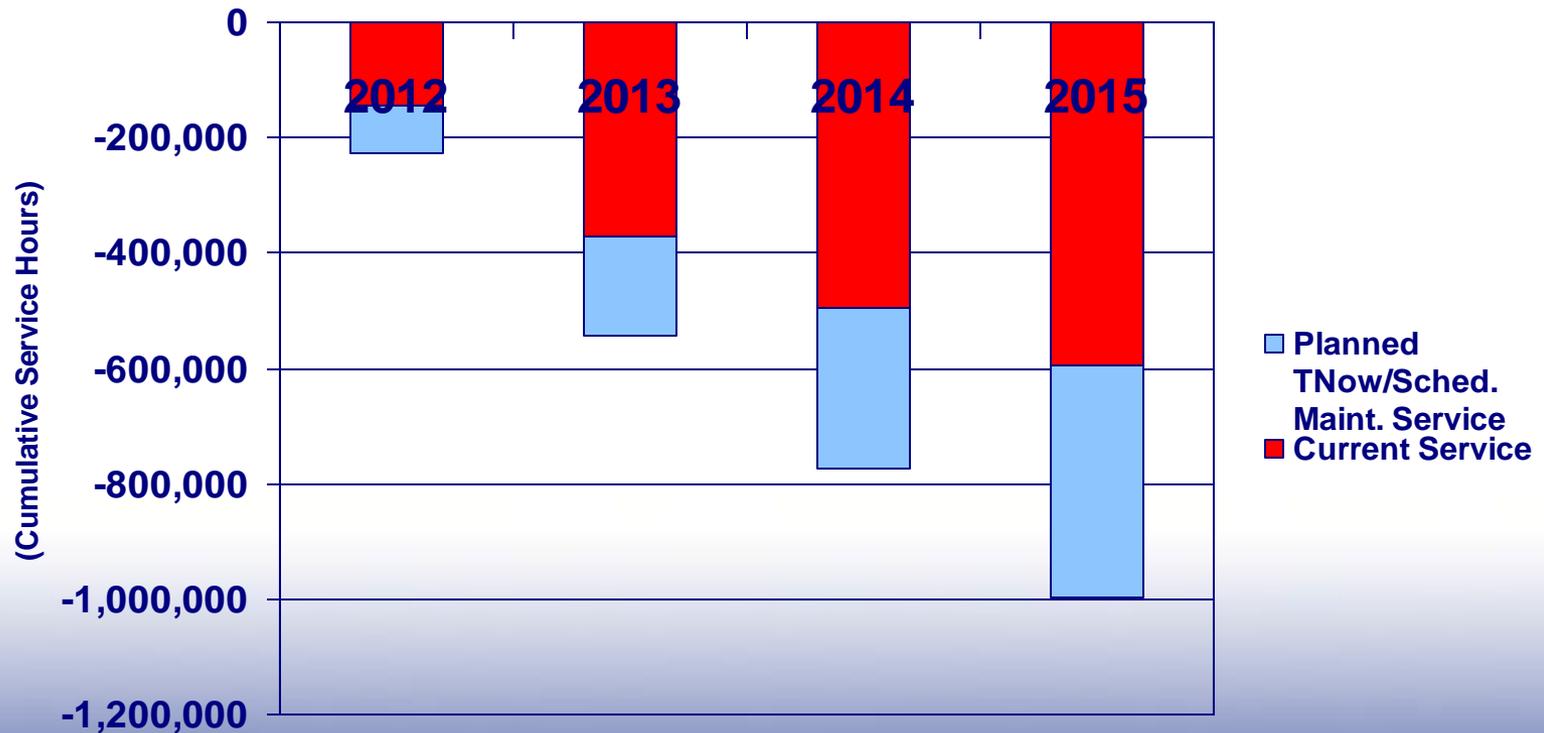
- 2010-11 Budget required establishment of regional task force and executive transmittal of Comprehensive and Strategic Plans utilizing task force recommendations.
- Precipitating factor: the significant drop in projected sales tax revenues 2008 – 2010
- Despite actions taken by the County to avoid major service reductions in 2010-11 biennium, anticipated large reductions 2012 - 2015.

Sales Tax Shortfall



Additional Shortfall by Year between 2010/11 budget projection and Aug. 2010 projection (millions \$)

The program is now balanced, but a series of service reductions and deferrals will be required over the next 4 years



Reduction also in fleet and other infrastructure requirements

Charge: Develop Recommendations

- Should include:
 - Criteria for systematically growing the transit system;
 - Criteria for systematically reducing the transit system should revenues not be available to sustain it
 - Strategies for increasing the efficiency of King County Metro; and
 - State and federal legislative agenda issues to support recommendations.

Charge: Key Factors

- Determine how and to what extent these factors should shape decisions about transit services:
 - Land use;
 - Social equity and environmental justice;
 - Financial sustainability;
 - Geographic equity;
 - Economic development;
 - Productivity and efficiency; and
 - *Environmental sustainability.*

Task Force Membership

- 28 Members and 3* Non-Voting Members
 - Elected officials (6)
 - Business and economic development interests (3)
 - Organized labor (2)
 - Countywide rider interests – educational (2), social service (2), large employers (2), persons with disabilities (1)
 - Good government (1)
 - Environmental concerns (2)
 - Transportation experts (2)
 - Riders or citizen representatives (3)
 - Transit advisory committee representative (1)
 - Puget Sound Regional Council representative (1)

The Task Force Process

- 13 full group meetings over 7 months
- 7 Sub-group meetings
 - ✓ Performance measures sub-group
 - ✓ Cost control and efficiency sub-group
- Strong participation from task force members from beginning to end
- Build a common base of knowledge
- All meetings open to the public
- Reached unanimous agreement on recommendations

Work of the Task Force

The Task force studied and considered:

- Overview of Metro budget and operations
- Current policy for service allocation
- Performance of all Metro services
- Findings of 2009 performance audit
- Regional growth projections for population and employment
- Metro performance against other transit agencies
- Developed scenarios to test policy guidance

Importance of the Transit System

- Transit essential to support regional growth.
 - PSRC: by 2040 population increase by 42%, jobs by 57%. Transit service must increase by 90%. Most growth expected in 12 largest cities.
- Metro Service Crucial for Economic Recovery/Vitality - Large number of riders use bus service to commute to/from work
- Transit ridership eases congestion and enhances environmental sustainability

Themes that Emerged from Task Force Discussions

- **Regional Perspective** - strike a balance between regional, rider and local communities interests
- **Transparency** - Decision making based on clear, consistent criteria and objectives
- **Efficiency** - Transit operations and administration of system
- **Balanced Approach** - Expense reductions, efficiencies and new revenues
- **Performance Based** - Evaluate performance

Task Force Recommendations

- Adopt new performance measures
 - By service type. Use measures to evaluate individual routes, system as a whole, and peer comparisons.
- Control all agency operating costs.
 - Specific strategies include follow up on 2009 audit, explore alternative service delivery models, and potential reduction in overhead and internal service charges

Recommendations, Cont.

- Service reduction and growth decisions should be based on following policy priorities, not a formula.
 - Emphasize productivity
 - Ensure social equity
 - Provide geographic value
- Create clear and transparent guidelines for making service allocation decisions
- Create long-term, sustainable funding base
 - Create broad coalition to pursue additional revenue sources
 - Must implement other recommendations

Defining Productivity

- Create system that results in high ridership and efficient service
- Strong correlation with several key factors
 - Economic Development
 - Land Use
 - Financial Sustainability
 - Environmental Sustainability

Defining Geographic Value

- Must be multi-faceted approach, must be perceived as “fair”
- Balance Access with Productivity – Investments in transit should be appropriate to land use, employment and housing densities, and transit demand.
- Tax Equity – Some relationship (but not an exact formula) between tax revenues created in sub areas and distribution of service.
- Economic Vitality – Get most number of workers to and from job centers

Defining Social Equity

- Provide transit service to those who have no, or limited transportation options.
- Use transit service to address gaps in mobility and to avoid or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse social, economic, or human health impacts
- Consider both origins and destinations for people with limited transportation options

Next Steps

- Executive transmits revised Comprehensive and Strategic Plans, February 2011
 - To include service allocation guidelines and performance measures
- Regional Transit Committee (RTC) review and recommendation, June 2011
- County Council Adoption ,June/July 2011
- Incorporation in 2012/13 budget, Nov 2011

Questions and Discussion