

“Getting There” Our Transportation Crisis

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Hearst CT Media
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What Does a Columnist Do?

CONNECTICUT POST | GREENWICH TIME | STAMFORD ADVOCATE | THE NEWS-TIMES | *The Norwalk Hour*

Darien News | Fairfield Citizen | New Canaan News | The Spectrum | Westport News | Wilton Villager

- Every Monday (front page): *“Getting There”*
- Different than being just a reporter
- Thomas Friedman / NY Times
- *“I am either in the heating business or the lighting business.”*

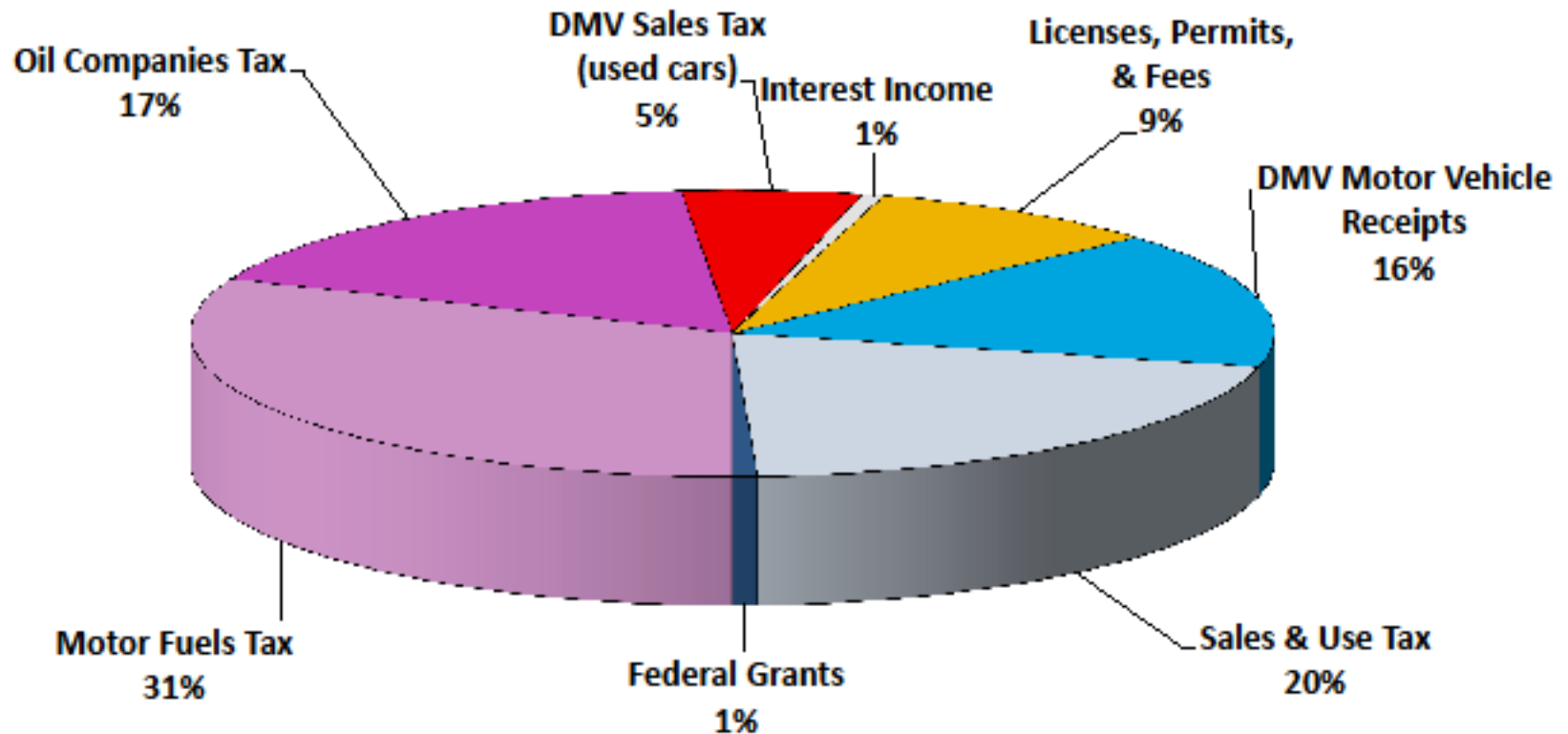
Commuter Advocate

- Metro-North Commuter Council – 19 years

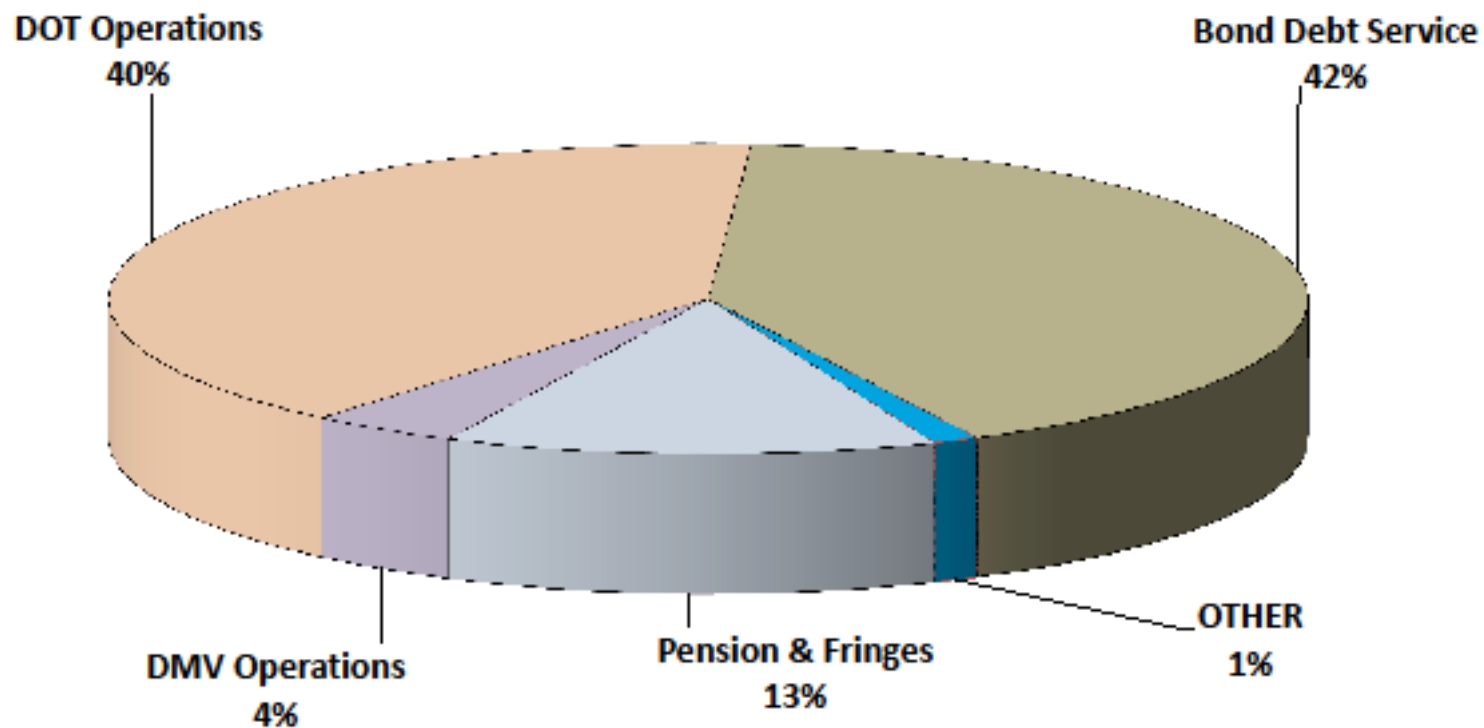




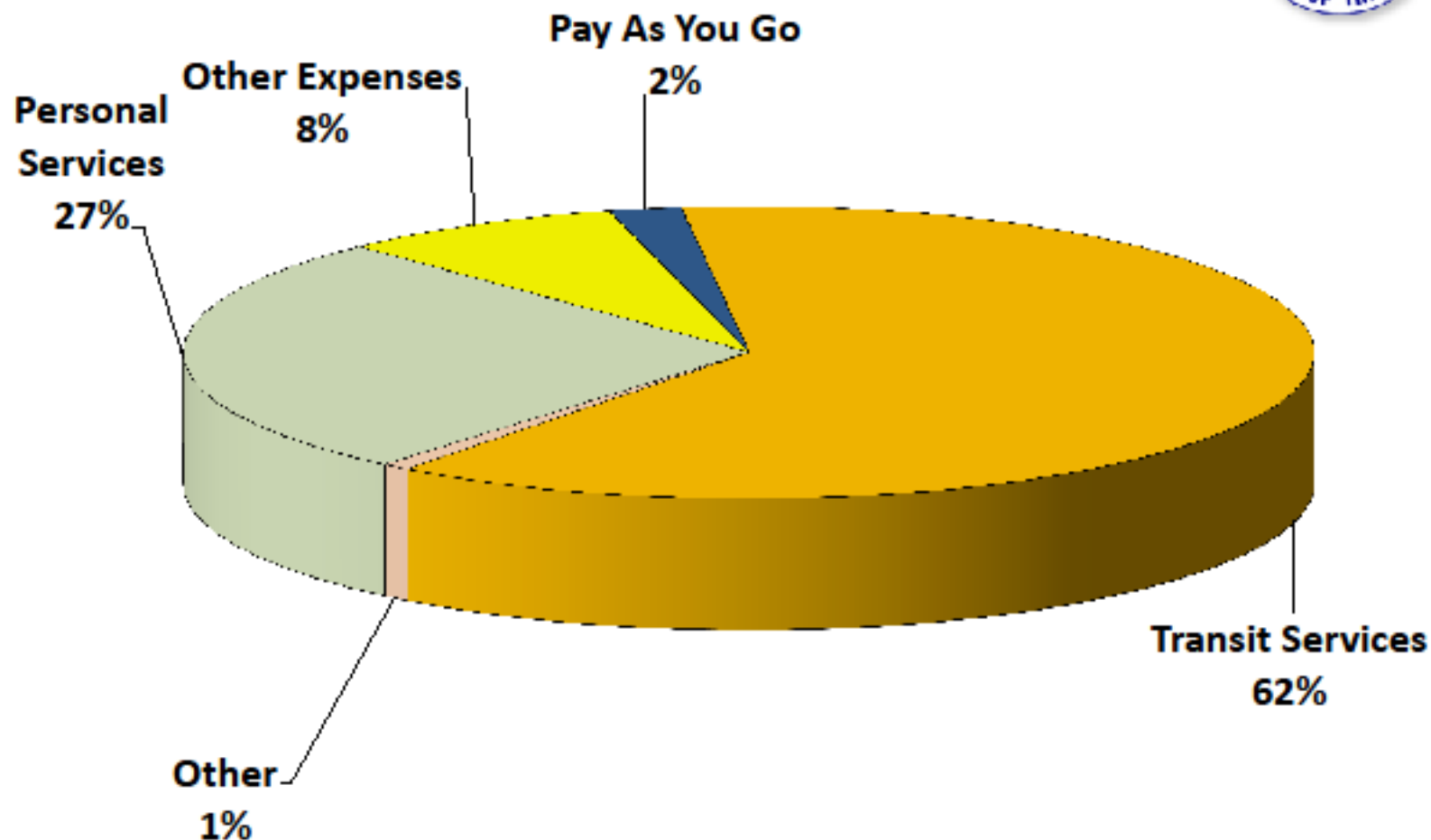
Special Transportation Fund Sources of Income



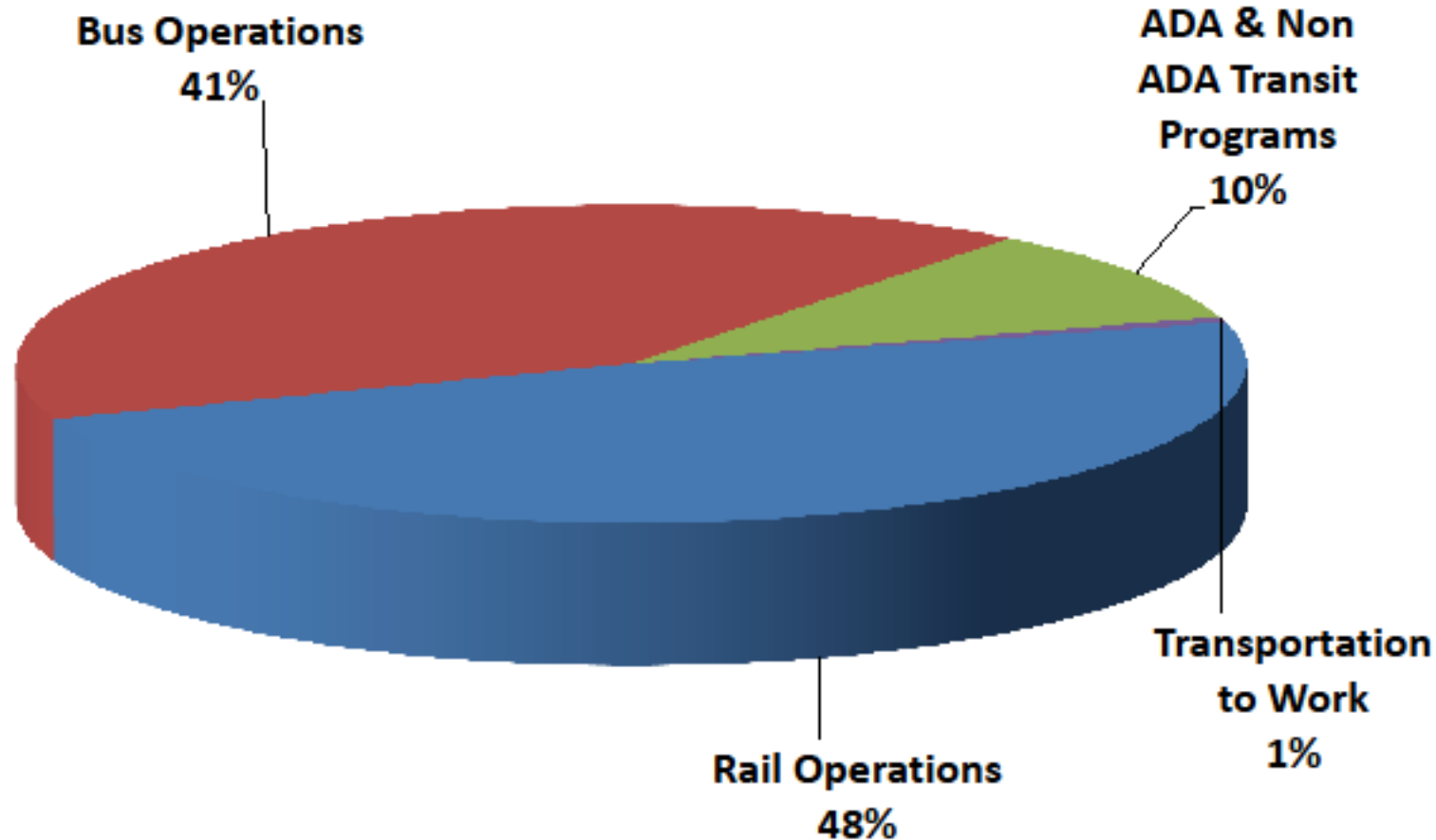
Special Transportation Fund Appropriations



Special Transportation Fund DOT Operations



Special Transportation Fund Transit Services

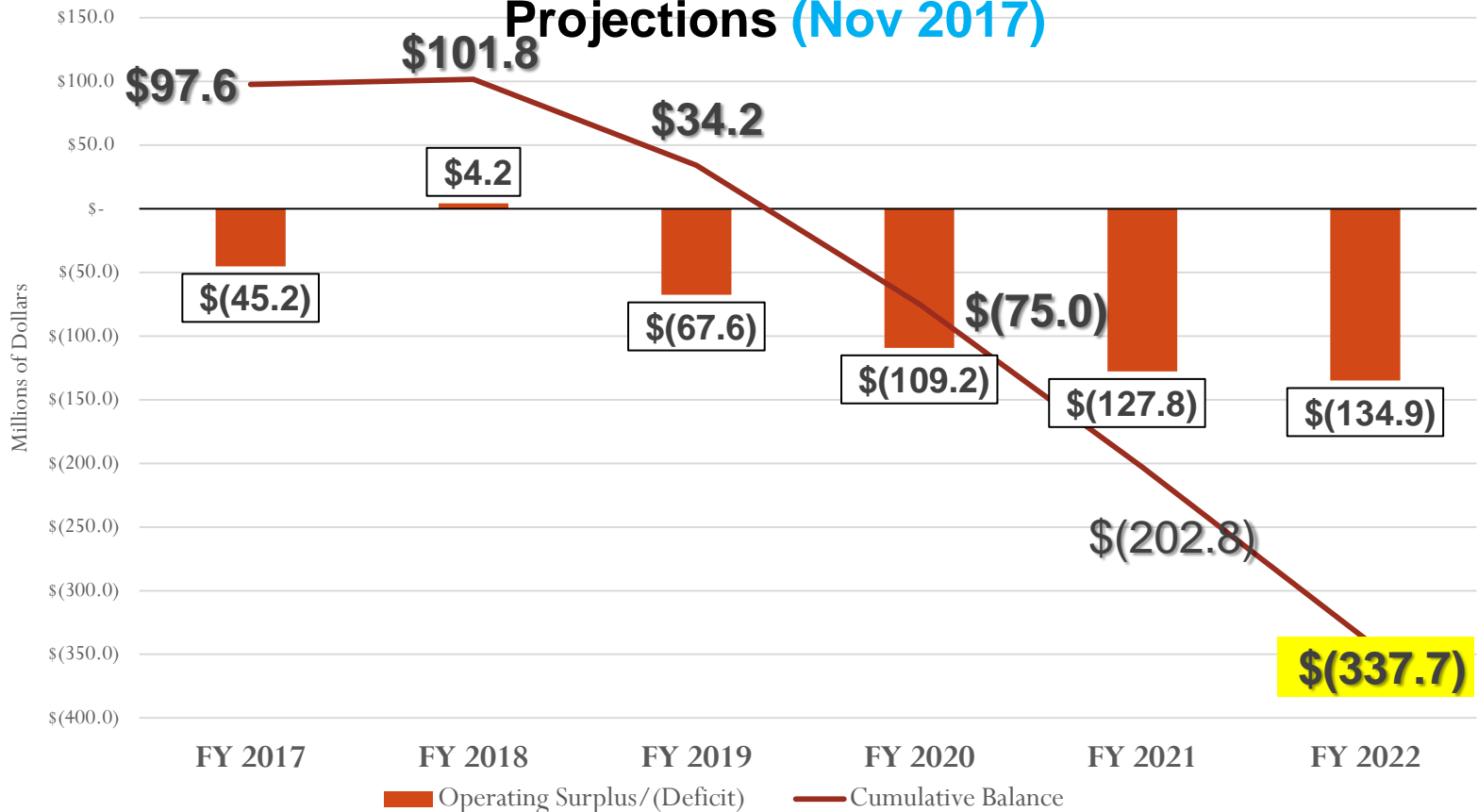


STF Forecast – November 2017

DOT Expenses forecast through June 2017



Special Transportation Fund Projections PA 17-2 with OPM Rev and DOT Operating Projections (Nov 2017)



What's the problem with STF?

- Gasoline tax revenues are down
 - Better gas mileage, more electric cars
- The Gasoline tax was LOWERED in 1997 by 14 cents a gallon = \$3.4 Billion in cumulative loss
- The gasoline tax is not pegged to inflation
- Gasoline in the US is too cheap
 - - In CT \$3.00 a gallon
 - - In Canada 25% more
 - - In Netherland \$6.48 US per gallon
- In other words... we cannot rely on the current gasoline tax to fund our roads & rails

The STF as Piggybank

- The STF has been regularly “raided” to balance the state’s budget
- In the last 10 years, \$400 million has been taken
- Compared to \$3.4 B lost since ‘97s cuts
- Why not install a “Lock Box” on STF?
- Referendum in November 2018
- But what do we do in the meantime?
- The deadline is JULY 1st 2018

If The STF is in the red...

- The state can't go to Wall Street for new bonding, transportation or otherwise
- Our bond rating is already down from AA- to A+
- Lower bond rating = higher interest rates
- The STF must be fixed:
- CDOT can only...
 - Find new revenues (fares)
 - Cut expenses (everything else)
- The Legislature can...
 - Identify new revenue sources (tolls, taxes)

Operating Budget Actions



DOT Administrative Impacts

- Reduction in DOT Staffing – currently 423 vacancies (14%)

Highway and Bridge Impacts

- Reduction in PAYGO road and bridge paving and maintenance work
- Completely close Rest Areas
- Reduced maintenance staff will impact service levels for snow events and routine maintenance

Bus Impacts

- Eliminate Non-ADA local bus service subsidies
- 15% Bus Fare Increase FY 2019
- Transit District 15% Subsidy Cut FY 2019
- Transit District 50% Subsidy cut FY 2021
- Additional CMAQ subsidy for CTfastrak
- 5% Bus service reduction in FY 2021



Operating Budget Actions



Rail Impacts

- 10% Rail Fare Increase FY 2019
- 5% Rail Fare Increase FY 2021
- 5% Rail Fare Increase FY 2022
- Metro-North Non-Service Expense Redux FY 2019
- No Weekend and Some Off-Peak Service Redux
 - Danbury, Waterbury and New Canaan Rail Lines FY 2019 (starting July 2018)
- 50% Reduction in Shoreline East Service FY 2019

Capital Program Impacts



- **\$4.3B of Engineering, Construction and Public Transportation projects will be postponed over the next 5 years**
- Funding for municipal projects will be eliminated
 - Local transportation
 - Local bridge
 - Town aid road
- Postponement of projects has already cancelled over \$60M of construction projects for this construction season

Capital Projects Under Review for Suspension or Deferral

Highway and Bridge

- **State Bridges currently rated in fair condition, excluded @ \$77m**
- **Hartford Interchange 29 @ Charter Oak Bridge (unless Federal \$\$)**
- **Woodbridge CT 15 West Rock (Heroes) Tunnel**
- **Norwalk 7/15 Interchange**
- **Hartford I-84 Viaduct**
- **Middletown Route 9 Signals/Bridges**
- **Waterbury 8/84 Interchange (Mixmaster)**
- **West Hartford, I-84 Construct Operational Lanes EB & WB**
- **I-95 Widening between Stamford to Bridgeport**
- **I-95 Widening from the Baldwin Bridge to the Gold Star Bridge**
- **Danbury, Reconstruct I-84 between Exits 3 & 8**
- **Gold Star Bridge NB (Phase 2)**
- **Maintenance Facility Rehabs and Replacements**
- **Renovate District 1 HQ Building in Rocky Hill**
- **Salt Shed Roof replacements and wetland remediation**



Capital Projects Under Review for Suspension or Deferral

Public Transportation

- **Hartford Line–PE and Con–Phase 3b–Double tracking (Hartford - Springfield), including additional stations (North Haven, Newington, West Hartford, Windsor, and Enfield)**
- **Café Car Conversion (10 cars)**
- **Clinton, Orange & Merritt 7 Railroad Stations (PE and Con)**
- **New Haven Railroad Station Parking Garage(PE and Con)**
- **Stamford Railroad Station Parking Garage (PE and Con)**
- **Stamford Railroad Station Pedestrian Bridge (PE and Con)**
- **Madison Railroad Station – Pedestrian Bridge and Parking Garage**
- **Bridgeport Barnum Railroad Station**
- **Cos Cob Bridge Repairs**



Capital Projects Under Review for Suspension or Deferral

Public Transportation

- **New Canaan Branch Improvements**
- **New Haven Line Customer Service Initiative**
- **New Haven Line – Rail Maintenance Facility Improvements**
- **Replacement of Rail Cars on Shore Line East, Waterbury and Danbury Lines**
- **Off System Bridge Repairs, Middletown Swing Bridge Repairs**
- **Greater New Haven Transit District (GNHTD) New Maintenance Facility**
- **Norwalk TD Facility Improvements**
- **Greater Hartford Transit District (GHTD)- Union Station Improvements**
- **Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA) – Facility Improvements**
- **Bus Service Expansion Fleet**

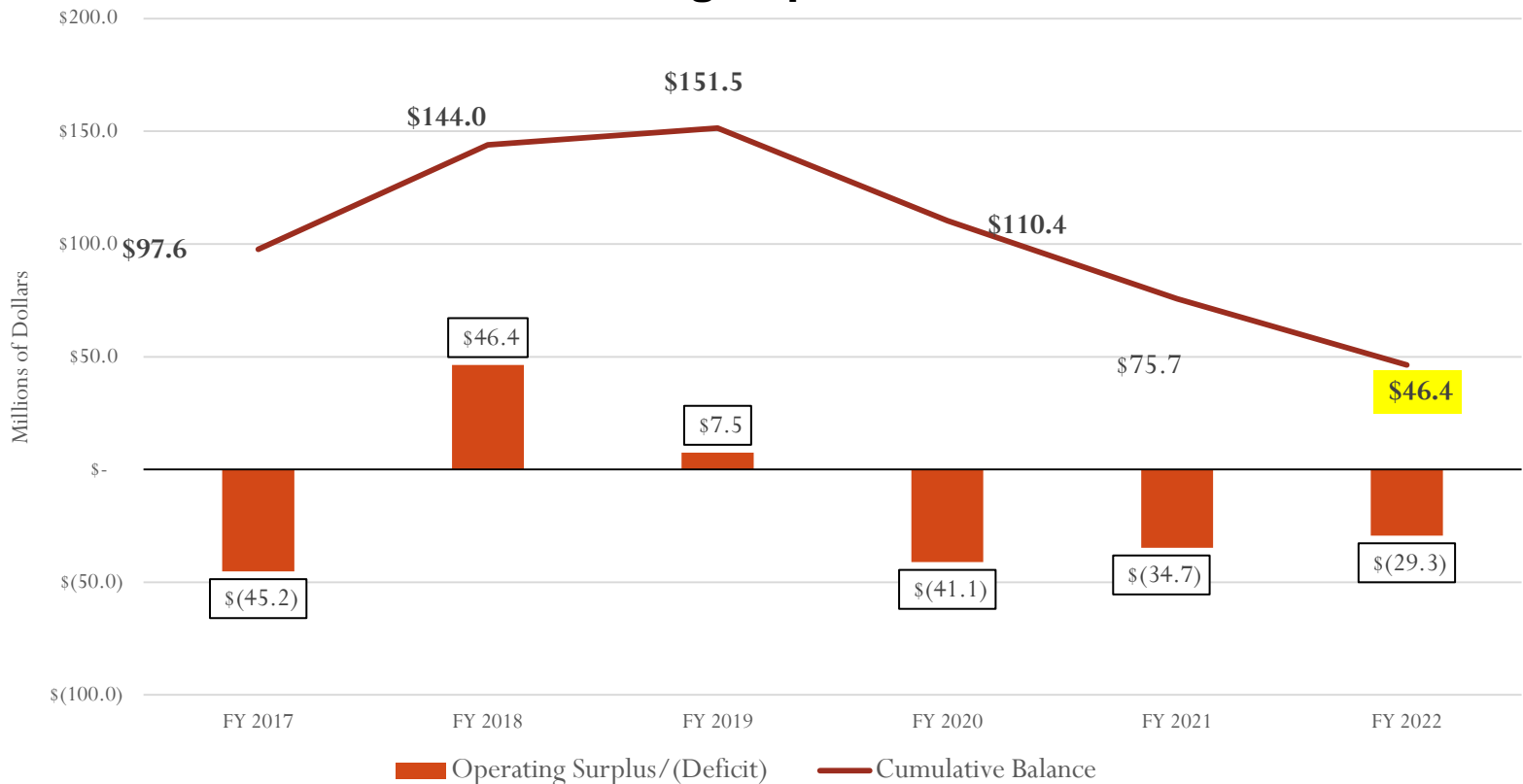


After these cuts...

STF Forecast – December 2017



**Special Transportation Fund Projections
Based on Table 8 including Expenditure**



What's It All Mean?

- More traffic on I-95 & The Merritt
- Less mobility for the “carless”
 - Shop workers, house-cleaners, restaurant staff
- Less transit = less desirable for development
- Real estate prices go down
- Taxes go up
- Once cut, can service be resumed?

Mass Transit Keeps Getting Hiked

Rail Fares

- 2003 15%
- 2005 5.5%
- 2012 5.25%
- 2013 5%
- 2014 5%
- 2015-18 1%
- 2016 6%
- 2018 10%

52.75%

Bus Fares

- 2004 10%
- 2005 14%
- 2012 4%
- 2014 15.4%
- 2016 16.7%
- 2018 13.8%

2000 - 2018

73.9%

Regional Gasoline Taxes / Tolls

- CT unchanged since 1997 (when it was lowered by 14 cents) to 25 cents per gallon

<u>State</u>	<u>Motor Fuel Tax</u>	<u>Tolls ?</u>
• Connecticut:	25 cents	NO
• Massachusetts:	24 cents	YES
• New Jersey:	37.1 cents	YES
• Rhode Island:	34 cents	YES
• New York:	24.2 cents	YES
• Pennsylvania	58.2 cents	YES

Trump's Infrastructure Plan

- Only \$200 B in federal money
 - From where? Tax cut = \$1 Trillion deficit
- The other \$ must come from states, P3's
 - Privatize what? At what cost? For whose profit?
- Raise Federal gasoline tax 25 cents per gallon
 - On top of CT's proposed tax hike
- Infrastructure is more than roads & rails
 - Water supply. Airports, Electric grid, Internet

What's the Answer?

- Gov's Transportation Finance Panel suggested:
- “Lock Box” on Special Transportation Fund
 - Referendum November 2018
- Increase gas tax 2 cents / yr for 7 years
 - Eventually back to old levels of 1997
- Increase gross receipts tax 1%
- Vehicle miles tax
 - DOA last summer, bi-partisan opposition
- Tolls (potential \$750 million per yr in revenue)
 - 2-4 years to implement

Tolling Myths

- The Feds won't let us
- We should only toll out-of-state vehicles
- Let's just do "border tolls"
- Tolls slow traffic / cause accidents
- Tolls will clog local roads
- Toll revenue will be mis-spent
- Our highways should be freeways
- Tolls are a "tax"

Aren't We Already Paying Tolls?



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