



Breakthrough Change Initiatives Frequently Asked Questions:

Did the teams get handed a set of solutions when they were formed?

No, the teams were handed a list of potential areas to explore for cost savings. The lists they received were a compilation of employee comments, not a directive.

Will the teams balance the budget?

No, the teams are not intended to balance the budget for 2005-2006 or into the future. The cost savings they identify may be part of the solution, but it won't be the whole solution since we're looking at a \$15.9 million hole in 2007-2008 and the teams are only asked to identify \$3-\$5 million in savings for 2006.

Why are we doing this if we didn't have to make substantial cuts in the last budget?

If I were to grade my own performance in the last budget development cycle, I would have to give myself a B-. We attempted to do a better job of identifying services to cut instead of just trimming and expecting everyone who's left to pick up the slack—but we didn't get there in the last cycle. What's not true is that we didn't have a budget problem or take cuts. All of you in the departments know that you had to make sacrifices, some more than others.

Why aren't the teams looking at enterprise funds, like utilities?

They are—at least on the General Government side. Although the cost savings targets for the teams are for General Fund dollars only, it makes no sense for us to trim one fund and not the rest. In fact, the program areas, as you can tell, cross over into all departments. So I have asked the team leaders to also look for cost savings in enterprise funds. We are not looking at Tacoma Public Utilities specifically, however the City Council has asked that we include them in a second phase of study following our General Government teams' conclusion.

Whom should I talk to if I have a question about a particular team or a suggestion?

See the [list of team members](#). You should feel free to contact any of the team members or tell your department director. Directors receive regular updates and opportunity for input on each of the teams' work.

Are you serious about these teams or will we just get studies that go nowhere?

We're serious about these teams. Many of the issues have been talked about in this organization for years—like the need to get a handle on spiraling employee medical benefit costs or questions concerning fleet service costs. The time to answer those questions or address those concerns is now, while the heat is on and another huge budget shortfall is staring us in the face.