



2008 Ballot Initiatives Report

Voters across the United States approved more than \$71 billion in additional transportation funding during the November 4 elections. Twenty-seven of 37 total measures, or 72 percent, were approved. When taking into account only the measures asking voters to approve, extend or increase taxes and bond measures, 24 of the 32 measures, or 75 percent, passed with an average vote of 63 percent.

Of the 37 measures related to transportation funding—eight were bond issues, 24 were new taxes or tax extensions, renewals or increases, two questions proposed changes to existing funding allocations, and three were advisory questions.

All eight bond measures, totaling \$10.9 billion, passed with an average approval of 65 percent. In addition to the states of Alaska, California and Rhode Island, bond issues were approved in Colorado, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas and Virginia. The largest bond measure was in California—voters approved \$9.95 billion in general obligation bonds to pursue high speed rail service between San Francisco and Southern California.

Washington state voters rejected a proposal that would have diverted funds from existing transportation user fees into a special “Reduce Traffic Congestion Account.” The plan called for taking money from vehicle sales taxes, certain tolls, red-light cameras and other state transportation projects. Approximately half of the anticipated \$662 million in revenue would have been available for other relief activities, including expanding road capacity.

In Colorado, voters did not approve a change in the allocation of the existing severance tax to increase transportation funding. Amendment 52 would have taken part of the severance tax paid by oil and gas companies and used it for transportation improvements.

The number of transportation ballot initiatives tracked by ARTBA was comparable to 2006. The value of the transportation measures was up significantly in 2008 compared to the 2004 presidential election.

There were 30 state and local ballot initiatives in 2006. Of the 27 initiatives asking voters to increase revenue for transportation infrastructure, 77 percent, valued at over \$40 billion, were approved, including five statewide measures related to transportation funding. In 2004, voters supported \$28 billion in ballot initiatives and voted on 55 transportation funding-related measures. Thirty-six initiatives—representing 78 percent of the bond and tax measures—were approved.

The election results in 2008 continue to demonstrate strong public support for state and local transportation ballot investment initiatives.

ARTBA 2008 Election Report

State and Local Transportation Measures November 4, 2008							
State	Location	Type of Change	Mode	How It Relates to Transportation	Result	% Yes	% No
Alaska	Statewide	Bond	Transportation	This measure authorizes the state government to issue bonds in the amount of \$315,050,000 for transportation projects.	Yes	62	38
California	Los Angeles County	Sales tax increase	Transportation	The measure would increase the county's sales tax to 8.75 percent from 8.25 percent. It seeks to raise up to \$40 billion over 30 years and help fund highway road improvements, subway line extensions and other projects.	Yes	67	32
California	Santa Barbara	Sales tax extension	Transportation	Measure A2008 would extend the existing 2 cent sales tax authorization for 30 years beginning April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2040. The Measure A2008 ordinance includes a transportation expenditure plan (Investment Plan) identifying various transportation projects and programs to be funded by the sales tax revenues. The plan would generate over \$1 billion over a 30-year period.	Yes	78	21
California	Santa Clara County	Advisory Question	Transit	The Valley Transportation Plan 2035 would allow Santa Clara county to continue to plan, design, construct and provide transit services as described in the draft Valley Transportation Plan 2035 (VTP 2035) to be adopted by December 2008. No tax increase.	Yes	70	31
California	Sonoma and Marin Counties	New sales tax	Transit	Measure Q proposes a quarter-cent sales tax to pay for a train system running from Cloverdale to Larkspur that would cost \$450 million to build and \$19.3 million a year to operate.	No	63	37
California	Stanislaus County	Sales tax increase	Transportation	Measure S would institute a half-cent sales tax to raise an estimated \$700 million over 20 years to be dedicated to neighborhood road repair.	Yes	66	34
California	Statewide	Bond	Rail	Prop. 1A (Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act) asks voters to approve the issuance of \$9.95 billion of general obligation bonds. This would partially fund a \$40 billion, 800-mile high speed train under the supervision of the California High-Speed Rail Authority. The train would run between San Francisco and Los Angeles.	Yes	52	48
Colorado	Pitkin County	Property tax increase	Transportation	Referendum 1B would increase property taxes in Pitkin County at a rate equal to \$16 per year for every \$100,000 in residential property value. It would generate approximately \$5.4 million per year that would be dedicated to improving county roads, which does not include Highway 82.	No	35	64
Colorado	Statewide	Change in allocation of severance tax revenues	Transportation	Colorado Initiative 120 (Amendment 52) would create the Colorado Transportation Trust Fund, to be funded by that portion of the severance tax that exceeds the amount deposited to the state severance tax fund in the previous year, adjusted for inflation via the Consumer Price Index. This constitutional amendment would provide an estimated \$89.2 million for the Trust Fund in FY 2008-09, \$35.1 million in FY 2009-10 and \$48.8 million in FY 2010-11	No	36	64
Colorado	Weld County, City of Hudson	Bond	Roads	Voters are asked to approve a bond issue for street related improvements in the amount of \$5 million.	Yes	64	36
Georgia	Gwinnett County	Sales tax renewal	Transportation	A 1 percent sales tax will be used for roads, bridges, libraries, public safety and other improvements on a pay-as-you-go basis. The Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (or SPLOST) would generate an estimated \$850 million. Roughly half, about \$381 million, would go to roads, streets and bridges.	Yes	55	45
Hawaii	Oahu	Advisory Question	Rail	A ballot question asks voters, "Shall the powers, duties, and functions of the city, through its director of transportation services, include establishment of a steel wheel on steel rail transit system?" The City Charter would be amended to allow a \$4 billion "steel wheel on steel rail" rail transit system.	Yes	51	46
Kansas	Lawrence	New sales tax	Roads	Question #1 is a 0.3 percent for streets and infrastructure: A dedicated revenue source for streets, sidewalks, trails, equipment, and storm sewers. The sales tax revenue will help Lawrence catch up on the maintenance of residential streets and make improvements to high traffic streets.	Yes	73	27
Kansas	Lawrence	Sales tax increase	Public transportation	Question #2 proposes a 0.2 percent sales tax increase for public transportation. With a dedicated funding source, the City will have the resources to merge the transit system with the University of Kansas transit system. Some funding would be used for capital improvements.	Yes	70	30

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Michigan	Almena Township	Property tax renewal	Roads	Township Proposal 2008-1 – Road Millage Renewal: Shall the expiring previously voted increase in the tax limitation imposed under Article IX, Sec. 6 of the Michigan Constitution on general ad valorem taxes within Almena Township be renewed at .9418 mill (\$.9418 per \$1,000 of taxable value) and levied for four (4) years, 2009 through 2012 inclusive, for maintenance, repair, and construction of township roads, raising an estimated \$157,400 in the first year of levy? Millage revenue will be distributed to other governmental units that contractually provide such services to the township, including the Van Buren County Road Commission or to other or fewer units as determined by the Almena Township Board.	Yes	62	38	
Michigan	Bangor Township	Property tax renewal	Roads	Road Millage Renewal Proposal Shall the previous voted increase in the tax limitation and levy, imposed under Article IX, Sec. 6 of the Michigan Constitution, as reduced by the required millage roll back which last resulted in a levy of 3.5043 mills (\$3.5043 per \$1,000 of taxable value) upon taxable real and tangible personal property within Bangor Township, be renewed for levy in the years 2009 through 2012 inclusive for maintenance and construction of roads within the unincorporated portions of the township; and shall Bangor Township levy such renewal in millage thereby raising in the first year of levy an estimated \$190,000.00?	No	49.7	50.3	
Michigan	Lincoln Township	Property tax renewal	Transportation	Lincoln Township is asking voters to renew the road tax and add an additional amount to bring the levy to 1 mill for 2009 through 2012. The tax would generate \$75,140 in the first calendar year. The money would finance construction, emergency services and equipment purchases for the township.	Yes	54	46	
Michigan	Midland County	Property tax renewal	Transportation	The countywide question asks voters to renew a 1-mill tax for 2009-12 for construction and improvements to county highways, roads, streets and bridges. The levy would cost owners of \$100,000 homes less than \$50 a year and would raise nearly \$3.3 million in the first year.	Yes	61	39	
Missouri	Kansas City	Sales tax increase	Rail	A ballot question proposes a 3/8 cent increase of the city sales tax for 25 years, which would be used for the establishment of the "North Kansas City, Missouri Light Rail Transportation Development District" for the purpose of developing a light rail transportation project.	No	44	54	
Missouri	Saint Louis	Sales tax increase	Transit	Proposition M asks voters to approve a half-cent increase in the transit sales tax to support mass transit. The initiative is expected to raise \$80 million annually over a ten year period. The first half would be used to match federal grants for the expansion fo the MetroLink system. The second half would cover the cost of operating the existing transit system and improving the existing bus system.	No	48	52	
Nevada	Washoe County	Advisory Question	Transportation	RTC 5, an advisory question, asks, "Shall the Washoe County Board of Commissioners seek state legislation for the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) to obtain necessary additional funding for transportation projects that will reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and repair and maintain roads in the Truckee Meadows?"	Yes	55	45	
New Mexico	Bernalillo, Sandoval and Valencia Counties	Sales tax increase	Transit / Transportation	Voters will be asked to decide whether to raise the gross receipts tax by one-eighth cent per dollar. Half of the tax revenue will be dedicated to the New Mexico Rail Runner Express commuter train. The other half will go to surface transportation projects within the counties. The measure is expected to generate \$19 million annually, increasing to \$27 million by 2015.	Yes	53	46	
North Carolina	Greensboro	Bond	Transportation	Residents of Greensboro will be asked to vote on a \$134 million transportation and street improvement bond. This bond will support more than 70 transportation projects throughout the city of Greensboro, including new sidewalks, bridge repairs, bike lanes, road widening, installation of new traffic lights and signals, and more.	Yes	59	41	
Ohio	Berlin Twp	Property tax renewal	Transportation	1 mills (renewal) for 3 years, commencing in 2008, first due in calendar year 2009, for general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing & repair of streets, roads & bridges.	Yes	73	27	
Ohio	Clarksfield Twp	Property tax renewal	Transportation	0.9 mills (renewal) for 5 years, commencing in 2009, first due in calendar year 2010, for general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing & repair of streets, roads & bridges.	Yes	56	44	
Ohio	Grafton Twp	Property tax renewal	Transportation	1 mills (replacement) for 5 years, commencing in 2009, first due in calendar year 2010, for general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing of roads & repair of bridges.	Yes	56	44	
Ohio	Greenwich Twp	Property tax renewal	Transportation	3 mills (renewal) for 3 years, commencing in 2008, first due in calendar year 2009, to maintain & repair roads & bridges.	Yes	59	41	

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Ohio	Margaretta Twp	Property tax renewal	Transportation	1 mill /s (additional) for 5 years, commencing in 2008, first due in calendar year 2009, for general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing & repair of streets, roads & bridges.	No	41	59	
Ohio	Pittsfield Twp	Property tax renewal	Transportation	2 mills (renewal) for 5 years , commencing in 2009, first due in calendar year 2010, for general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing & repair of township roads.	Yes	64	36	
Ohio	Vermilion City	Income tax increase	Roads	Ordinance No. 2008-43B, providing for an increase of 1/2% in the rate of Municipal Income Tax for the improvement & repairs of streets.	No	32	68	
Ohio	Willard City	Income tax increase	Transportation	Asks, "Shall the Ordinance providing for an additional 1/4% levy on income from 4/1/2009, thru 3/31/2015, for roadway capital improvements within the City, be passed?"	No	31	69	
Oregon	Salem	Bond	Roads	M24-248 is a 15-year, \$99.8 million bond that would pay for road work and safety improvements for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.	Yes	55	45	
Rhode Island	Statewide	Bond	Transportation	Approval and issuance of transportation bonds will provide funds to the DOT to match available federal funds and to provide direct funding for improvements to the state's highways, roads and bridges; to match available federal funds and to provide direct funding for commuter rail; and to purchase new buses and/or rehabilitate existing buses in the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority's bus fleet.	Yes	77	23	
Texas	Denton County	Bond	Transportation	A \$495 million bond package is divided into two propositions: One part is \$310 million for road work and the other is \$185 million for government buildings and technology.	Yes	68	32	
Virginia	Arlington	Bond	Public transit	The country would issue a general obligation bond in the amount of \$10 million to finance capital projects for Metro.	Yes	77	23	
Washington	Puget Sound	Sales tax increase	Rail/bus	A \$17.9 billion plan to extend light-rail lines by 2023 and beef up regional bus service and Sounder commuter trains between Lakewood, Tacoma and Seattle. It would involve a sales tax increase of 5 cents per \$10 purchase.	Yes	59	41	
Washington	Statewide	Create special account dedicated to traffic congestion relief	Transportation	I-985 would send portions of the money flowing from vehicle sales taxes, certain tolls, red-light cameras and other state transportation projects into a "Reduce Traffic Congestion Account."	No	41	59	