



## **2012 Ballot Initiatives Report**

Voters on November 6 showed once again the importance of transportation by approving 68 percent of the measures to increase or extend funding for highways, bridges and transit. This is in line with years past – in 2010 voters approved 61 percent of similar measures, they approved 78 percent in 2008, 77 percent in 2006 and 76 percent in 2004. The total value approved was \$2.4 billion.

ARTBA tracked 31 measures overall – five were statewide initiatives and 26 were local. All of the seven bond initiatives were approved by voters. Eighteen measures were for increasing, extending or renewing a sales tax for transportation purposes, two were property tax extensions and one was for a local gas tax.

Three of the four statewide measures to raise additional transportation funds passed with an average approval rate of 63 percent. Arkansas voters approved a one-half cent increase in the state sales tax to cover a \$1.3 billion bond issue for roads and bridges. The temporary sales and use tax will help fund improvements for state highways and bridges, county roads, city streets and other surface transportation. Alaska voters approved a bond issue of \$453.5 million for transportation. Question 4 in Maine was approved by 72 percent, providing \$51.5 million in bonding for highway and bridge repairs and local road improvements. Voters in Arizona rejected an extension of a temporary sales tax increase that would have raised \$900 million in revenue for education and \$100 million for the state infrastructure fund.

Although a strong majority of voters (65 percent) in Los Angeles, California, supported Measure J, which would have extended the 30-year one-half sales tax passed in 2008 for an additional 30 years, the ballot initiative needed a 66 percent super majority for approval. The current sales tax measure is set to expire in 2039. Had the measure passed, it would have extended the current sales tax to 2069 and given the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority the ability to accelerate several transit projects by borrowing against future tax revenues.

There was a proposal to increase the gas tax in Memphis, Tennessee. Although most local governments do not have the ability to levy gas taxes, there are some states that have exceptions. Voters rejected a proposal to increase the local gas tax by one-cent per gallon to fund bus operations for the Memphis Area Transit Authority. Voters also rejected an increase in the Memphis sales tax to cover a local budget deficit and fund education.

Three ballot initiatives did not specifically ask voters to increase funding for roads, bridges or transit, but they did address transportation issues. Voters in Michigan have

opened a path to one of the largest bridge projects in the nation by rejecting an initiative that would have required a statewide referendum before building an international crossing to Canada. The referendum was initiated by the owner of the Ambassador Bridge to prevent a new crossing over the Detroit River. The Canadian government announced an agreement with the Governor of Michigan earlier this year to build and pay for a new publicly owned bridge between Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, just two miles south of the Ambassador Bridge. The Canadian Transport Minister said the bridge will now be built “as soon as possible.” The cost of the project is estimated to be \$1 billion.

Voters in Cornelius, Oregon rejected a measure to repeal the local fuel tax, which is used to improve roads. Residents of Virginia Beach, Virginia, approved a nonbinding referendum in support of having the local City Council explore extending a local light rail system into the city.

The results, consistent with the past four elections, continue to demonstrate strong public support for state and local transportation ballot investment initiatives.

State and Local Transportation Funding Measures for November 2012 Ballots										
State	Location	Type of Change	Mode	Description	Amount at stake	Result	% Yes	% No	Notes	
Alaska	Statewide	GO Bonds	All	The measure would allow for a general obligation bond to be issued for the purpose of transportation projects in the state. The bond would not exceed \$453,499,200.	\$453.5 million	Passed	59.4%	40.6%		
Arizona	Statewide	Sales tax extension	Highways	In 2010 voters approved a temporary once-cent increase in the state sales tax set to expire in mid-2013. The ballot initiative asks voters to make the increase permanent. The bulk of the \$1 billion in revenue would be used for education. The measure would provide \$100 million a year for the state infrastructure fund, to be used for highways, roads, public transportation and other infrastructure projects.	\$100 million	Failed	35.1%	64.9%		
Arkansas	Statewide	Sales tax increase	Surface Transportation	Issue 1 on the ballot asks voters to approve a half-cent sales tax increase to cover a \$1.3 billion bond issue for roads and bridges.	\$1.3 billion	Passed	58.0%	42.0%		
California	Alameda County	Sales tax increase	Transit, Highway & Bridge	If voters approve this third iteration of the existing Measure B sales tax, Alameda would get \$242 million for transportation projects. This includes replacing three bridges, funding high speed bus service from Alameda Point to the Fruitvale BART station in Oakland and improvements at the I-880/Broadway/Jackson interchange in Oakland, improving access to and from Alameda's West End.	\$7.8 billion over 30 years	Failed	65.5%	34.5%	Needs 2/3 majority	
California	Capitola	Sales tax increase	Roads	If Measure O is approved, the sales tax will increase by a quarter-cent in order to pay for disaster recovery and to maintain general services, including public safety and street improvements.	\$900,000 annually	Passed	50.8%	49.2%		
California	Los Angeles County	Sales tax extension	Rail, Subway, Airport	In 2008, voters approved Measure R, a one-half cent sales tax increase on goods and services across Los Angeles County for a 30-year period to fund \$40 billion in transportation projects. Measure J asks voters to extend the tax for an additional 30 years.	\$40 billion	Failed	64.7%	35.3%	Needs 2/3 majority	
California	Napa County	Sales tax extension	Roads	If approved, Measure T will extend a current half-cent sales tax to generate money to fix pot holes as well as for a variety of street and road repairs. The tax would generate \$282 million over its life, but would not go into effect until 2018. A 2/3 supermajority vote is required for approval.	\$282 million	Passed	74.0%	26.0%	Needs 2/3 majority	
California	Paso Robles	Sales tax increase	Roads	Voters in the city of Paso Robles will decide whether to increase the local sales tax rate from one percent to 1.5 percent. An estimated \$36 million would be raised for roads if Measure E is approved.	\$36 million over 12 years	Passed	58.9%	41.1%		
California	Salinas	Sales tax extension	Roads	Ballots in the city of Salinas will include a question about whether to permanently extend a half-cent sales tax increase in place since 2006. Set to expire in 2016, voter approval of Measure E would keep the city's current sales tax rate of 7.75 percent unchanged.	\$10 million annually	Passed	75.3%	24.7%		
California	Yucca Valley	Sales tax increase	Roads	Measure U on the town of Yucca Valley's ballot will ask voters whether to raise the local sales tax by 1 cent for the next 30 years. Roads would get a portion of the increased funding.		Failed	48.2%	51.8%		
Colorado	Aurora	Property tax extension	Roads	Voter approval of Question 2B will allow the City of Aurora to extend a mill levy assessment – or property tax – to finance the construction of 21 separate roadway improvement projects throughout the City. The projects include road widening, median improvements, new turn lanes, and miles of new and improved sidewalks and bike paths.	\$74 million	Failed	43.4%	56.5%		
Colorado	Pikes Peak	Sales tax extension	All	The November ballot issue asks voters to extend capital funding (via a penny sales tax) for an additional 10 years for 150 transportation projects. Fifty-five percent of the one-cent sales tax would go to a voter-improved list of capital projects, 35 percent to road and bridge maintenance and ten percent to metro transit improvements.	\$60 million	Passed	80.0%	20.0%		
Maine	Statewide	Bond issue	All	Question 4 on the ballot would provide about \$36 million for highway and bridge repairs throughout the state. Another \$5 million would be allocated for local road improvements.	\$51.5 million	Passed	71.7%	28.3%		

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Michigan	Kalamazoo	Property tax extension	Transit	Voters are asked to approve a renewal of a 0.6 mill levy to support Metro Transit operations from 2013 to 2015. It is expected to generate about \$1,024,425 annually. The levy was first approved in 1986 and has been successfully renewed each time it has gone back on the ballot.	\$1 million	Passed	63.0%	37.0%		
North Carolina	Orange County	Sales tax	High Speed Rail, Transit	If approved on Nov. 6, revenue from the proposed 0.5 cent sales tax will go toward new buses, improved bus service, an Amtrak station in Hillsborough and a proposed light rail connection from UNC to downtown Durham.		Passed	58.8%	41.2%		
Ohio	Mahoning County	Sales tax renewal	Transit	Voters are asked to approve a five-year renewal of the 0.25-percent sales tax for the Western Reserve Transit Authority. It was last approved in 2008. The sales tax brought in \$7.5 million in 2011.	\$30 million	Passed	60.0%	40.0%		
Ohio	Perrysburg	Sales tax	Transit	This question asks voters to approve a five-year, 1.45 mill levy to support new public transit service. Perrysburg voted in March to end their participation in TARTA in favor of the option to establish a separate system.		Failed	49.0%	51.0%		
Oregon	Eugene	Bond renewal	Roads, Bike, Pedestrian	If approved, the city could issue up to \$43 million in bonds. About 93 percent of funds would be used for road maintenance while the rest would go to bicycle and pedestrian projects. The bonds would be paid during the next five years through property taxes at an estimated rate of 65 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.	\$43 million	Passed	58.8%	31.7%		
Oregon	Lake Oswego	Bond issue		Voters will decide whether to authorize up to \$5 million in bonds to help pay for improvements to Boones Ferry Road. Plans call for widening the road to four lanes, landscaping medians, making turn lane improvements, and adding bike lanes. The work is estimated to cost \$25 million. To pay for the improvements, property taxes would be increased at a rate of 6 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.	\$5 million	Passed	52.0%	48.0%		
Oregon	Rogue River	Bond issue	Roads	Ballots will ask voters about issuing up to \$1.6 million in bonds to pay for road work.	\$1.6 million	Passed	57.5%	42.5%		
South Carolina	Richland County	Sales tax increase	All	Voters are asked to approve a one-cent sales tax increase to support road improvements, bus service, greenways and bike lanes. Approximately 25% of funding would be reserved for bus service by the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority.		Passed	53.6%	46.4%		
Tennessee	Memphis	Gas tax increase	Transit	The proceeds from the Gas Tax, if approved, will go to the Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA). MATA plans to provide increased frequency on major bus routes, improvements to bus shelters and additional drivers.	\$3 - \$6 million/year	Failed	38.0%	62.0%		
Texas	Austin	Bond issue	All	Proposition 12 calls for highway improvements which would involve traffic-signal synchronization, street reconfigurations, new sidewalks, bridge repairs, urban trails, and bikeways to address multimodal issues. There would also be funding for a proposed 30-mile regional trail system. It is part of a larger \$385 million bond package.	\$143.3 million	Passed	55%	45%		
Texas	Houston	Sales tax diversion	All	This measure asks voters if they support extending the current diversion of 25% of Metro's one-cent sales tax for construction and maintenance of streets, bridges, pedestrian and bike infrastructure, traffic signals, and streetlamps. Known as the General Mobility Program (GMP), the diversion was first approved by voters in 2003 and is set to expire in 2014. If the referendum is approved, the diversion will continue through 2025.		Passed	79%	21%		
Virginia	Arlington County	Bond issue	Transit, Pedestrian, Bike, Traffic calming projects	A bond referendum seeks \$31.9 million for Metro and other transportation needs. Almost half of the total would support the regional transit authority's capital-improvement fund, and \$17.3 million would go to repaving and to pedestrian, bicycling and traffic-calming projects.	\$31.9 million	Passed	80.1%	19.9%		
Washington	Clark County	Sales tax increase	Light rail, Transit	Voters are asked to approve a 0.1 cent sales tax increase to generate \$4.5 to \$5.5 million for light rail operations and Bus Rapid Transit in Vancouver's Fourth Plain corridor.	\$5 million	Failed	43.7%	56.3%		

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Washington	Lynden	Sales tax	Roads, Trails, Bridges	If approved, this proposition authorizes Lynden Transportation Benefit District to impose a sales and use tax of 0.02% for ten years to fund transportation improvements.	\$3 million	Passed	54.0%	46.0%		
Washington	Pierce County	Sales tax	Transit	This measure would impose a 0.3 percent sale tax increase (3 cents on a \$10 purchase) in Pierce County in order to avoid further cuts to Pierce Transit and restore some services that have been cut due to the recession.	\$159.7 million by the end of 2017	Failed	49.3%	50.7%		

State and Local Transportation Measures for November 2012 Ballots - Non Funding Measures										
State	Location	Type of Change	Mode	Description	Amount at stake	Result	% Yes	% No	Notes	
Michigan	Statewide	Statewide referendum	Bridges	Proposal 6 would have required a statewide referendum before building an international crossing to Canada.		Failed	40.0%	60.0%		
Oregon	Cornelius	Repeal local fuel tax	Roads	Since 2010, the city west of Portland has imposed a 2-cent-per-gallon tax to pay for roads. It has generated about \$160,000 since it took effect. Voters are being asked to repeal this local fuel tax.		Failed	47.0%	53.0%		
Virginia	Virginia Beach	Nonbinding referendum	Light rail	Virginia Beach residents will vote on a nonbinding referendum Nov. 6 to gauge support for extending Norfolk's The Tide light rail into their city. The ballot asked if the Virginia Beach City Council should "adopt an ordinance approving the use of all reasonable efforts to support the financing and development of The Tide light rail into Virginia Beach?"		Passed	62.0%	38.0%		