



Highlights:

- Over 73% of all Transit Ballot Measures were approved in the November 2008 election. This represents the highest passage rate in the history of transit ballot measures.
- Public transportation's ridership growth has increased markedly in the last year. Voter's perceptions of public transit are increasingly favorable.
- Generating support for public transit measures and initiatives can be accomplished by following a few key pointers that help to build value and engage the voter.

NEWS:

F. Scott Dwyer recently joined the Majic team as a Project Manager / Legislative & Planning Analyst. His experience includes analyzing legislation on Capitol Hill for Congressional Committees and supporting the Committees' Chairmen.

What Makes a Transit Ballot Measure Successful?

The November election was about "change" in more ways than one: A change in voters' perceptions of public transportation resulted in the approval of 73% of transit ballot measures during this past election.

Transportation's record-breaking election year is all the more impressive since these propositions and measures were passed in an economic downturn, when voters are historically more likely to vote against property tax and sales tax increases. Additionally in California, many measures required a supermajority (2/3) to succeed and got it, including the largest transportation initiative of 2008, Measure R in Los Angeles County.

Even the recent fall in gas prices did not deter support for these transportation initiatives. Voters across the country made it clear they are willing to pay for initiatives that establish the infrastructure for providing an alternative to driving while reducing congestion.



A record number of voters turned out in the 2008 election.

Moreover, the record turnout in support of the transit initiatives coincides

with the new highs in public transportation ridership. This year's voter was more concerned with foreign and economic issues than in any year past, and many voters weighed national security and oil dependency issues as they entered the voting booths, breathing new life into the mantra, "Think globally, act locally."

Successful initiatives were those that offered a direct value to voters, even those who would not be using the proposed infrastructure. They succeeded in highlighting public need as well as personal gain.

Furthermore, the benefits of timing cannot be overlooked.

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Public transportation has experienced huge increases in ridership.



Are you planning to implement new initiatives to support public transportation? Call Majic Consulting Group to help put together a winning campaign.



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(Successful Transit Ballot Measures)

This election shed light on the need for alternative energies and more efficient use of current fuels; many measures and ballots succeeded because they reiterated this need, highlighting the efficiency of public transportation.

Although this election was particularly good for transit, transportation-related initiatives usually have a higher rate of success than other ballot measures. Here are a few points that successful initiatives have in common.

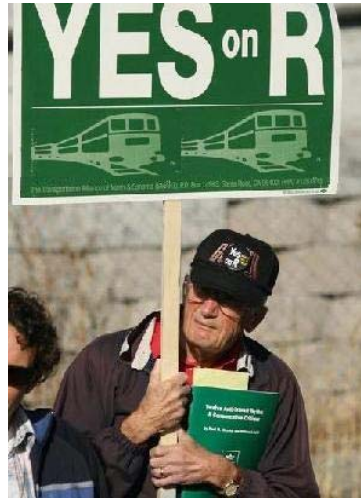
1. Keep it simple

Less is more when it comes to ballots and initiatives. Focus on a few main objectives. Do not tack on extraneous items or other agenda measures.

2. Trust in the voters

Voters can and do read past the titles of ballots and measures. Voters

are increasingly informed and are able to appreciate the long-term impact of many initiatives. Clearly present the long-term goal as well as the proposed main steps to achieve it.



Measure R in Los Angeles County received widespread public support.

3. Touch the “hot button”

By their very nature, transit initiatives are almost always good for the environment. Benefits include decreased oil consumption, reduced traffic congestion, etc.

Successful initiatives don't forget to state the obvious.

4. Show direct value to each voter

Many voters often do not frequently or directly use the initiatives they support. These voters support such measures because they will benefit from the reduced congestion, increase in jobs, improved efficiency, etc. Make voters aware of the benefits to them.

5. Add the personal touch

As with touching on a “hot button” and showing direct value, referencing something that resonates personally with the voter, while difficult, strongly increases the likelihood of passing an initiative. Fortunately, public transportation is an area in which the vast majority of voters have at least some personal experience.

The more you understand about your voter and their needs, the more successful your transit ballot measures will be.

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