

# Sample Ballot Initiative Questions

The purpose of this page is to provide some examples of some specific languages used in previous and upcoming public transportation ballot initiatives and referendums. We have organized each section based on what type of question they have proposed to voters. We hope this will be of some use to you when you decide to start crafting language for your particular public transportation initiative.

## Authority Creation

### **Denton County, Texas, November 2002, Passed 73% to 27%**

Shall the creation of the Denton County Transportation Authority be confirmed?

### **Kitsap County, Washington, November 2003, Failed 64% to 35%**

Kitsap Transit Proposition No. 1 concerns passenger-only ferry service and revenue to implement the service. This proposition would approve Kitsap Transit's Passenger-Only Ferry Investment Plan for local and cross-sound passenger-only ferry service initially from Kingston, Bremerton and Southworth to Seattle and authorize Kitsap Transit to levy local sales and use taxes on taxable transactions of 3/10 of one percent and a motor vehicle excise tax on license renewals in the amount at 3/10 of one percent of the value of motor vehicles, to be used solely for passenger-only ferry service.

Should this proposition be approved?

### **Summit County, Utah, November 2003, Passed 70% to 30%**

Shall the Snyderville Basin Public Transit District impose a sales and use tax of .25% within the District's boundaries, the proceeds for which shall be utilized for the operations and improvements to public residential and commercial transit services within the District, to include funding for the Kimball Area Transportation Special Services District?

### **Miami-Dade County, November 2002, Passed 66% to 34%**

Shall the county implement the People's Transportation Plan

including: Plans to build rapid transit lines to West Daade, Kendall, Florida City, Miami Beach and North Dade; expanding bus service; adding 635 buses; improving traffic signalization to reduce traffic backups; improving major and neighborhood roads and highways, including drainage; and funding to municipalities for road and transportation projects by levying a 1/2 percent sales surtax whose proceeds will be overseen by the Citizen's Independent Transportation Trust?

**Arlington, Texas, May 2002, Failed 58% to 42%**

Shall the creation of the Arlington Transit Authority be confirmed and shall the levy of the proposed tax, not to exceed one-quarter of the percent, be authorized?

**Lexington, Kentucky, November 2004**

Are you in favor of the establishment of a mass transportation program, to be financed by the levy of an additional 6 cents per \$100 on all taxable property?

**Tucson, Arizon, November 2003, Failed 64% to 36%**

**Proposition 200**

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE TUCSON CITY CHARTER BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TAX REFERRED BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL, RELATING TO INCREASING THE 2% LIMIT ON THE TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX AND DEDICATING THE PORTION OVER 2% TO SPECIFIED TRANSPORTATION PURPOSES

A "YES" vote shall have the effect of raising the 2% limit on the transaction privilege tax to 2.3%, except for construction contracting which is raised to 6%; placing the portion of the tax over 2% into a transportation fund; each dollar apportioned between public transit (66 cents), neighborhood street maintenance (20 cents), bicycle and pedestrian improvements (10 cents), and traffci enforcement (2 cents).

A "NO" vote shall have the effect of maintaining the Tucson Charter's 2% limit on the City's transaction privilege tax rate.

**Proposition 201**

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TUCSON CODE BY PUBLIC INITIATIVE, RELATING TO ADOPTING A

**COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND  
INCREASING THE TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX RATE TO  
2.3% EXCEPT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTING  
TAX RATE WHICH IS INCREASED TO 6%**

A "YES" vote shall have the effect of providing for a comprehensive transportation system and increasing the transaction privilege tax rate to 2.3% except for the construction contracting tax rate which is increased to 6%, the increase to fund the system

A "NO" vote shall have the effect of maintaining the current provisions of the Tucson Code Chapters 19 and 30.

## **Funding Extensions and Increases**

### **East Bay, California, November 2004**

All registered voters in Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, El Cerrito, Emeryville, Hayward, Oakland, Piedmont, Richmond, San Leandro, San Pablo, and certain unincorporated areas of Alameda and Contra Costa counties are eligible to vote on Measure BB.

Measure BB: To preserve affordable local public transportation services that allow seniors and people with disabilities to remain independent, take students to and from school, help East Bay residents commute to work and reduce traffic and air pollution by reducing the number of cars on the road, shall the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) increase its existing parcel tax by \$2 per parcel per month for ten years with an independent fiscal oversight committee and all money staying local?

### **Fairfax County, Virginia, November 2004**

Shall the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia, contract a debt, borrow money, and issue bonds of Fairfax County, Virginia, in addition to transportation improvement bonds previously authorized, in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$165,000,000 for the purpose of providing funds for the cost of providing additional transportation improvements and facilities, to finance the cost of constructing, reconstructing, improving and acquiring transportation improvements, including highways in the primary and secondary systems of State highways, off-street parking, pedestrian improvements, and ancillary related improvements and facilities, and including capital costs of necessary land, transit facilities and equipment in the

Washington metropolitan area allocable to Fairfax County pursuant to the provisions of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact?

YES/NO

**Arlington County, Virginia, November 2004**

Shall Arlington County contract a debt and issue its general obligation bonds in the maximum amount of \$18,536,000 to finance, together with other available funds, the cost of construction, acquisition, and rehabilitation of Metro facilities by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority?

**Grand Rapids, Michigan, November 2003, Passed 67% to 33%**

Shall THE RAPID (Interurban Transit Partnership) levy a tax for public transportation of up to 0.95 mills? This millage is a renewal of the 0.75 mill approved by the voters in 2000 and an addition of 0.20 mills. This millage covers a period of five (5) years, beginning in the year 2004 and continuing through 2008, on the taxable value of all taxable property in THE RAPID's district (the six cities of East Grand Rapids, Grandville, Grand Rapids, Kentwood, Walker and Wyoming). This millage is estimated to raise \$9,014,232 in its first year.

**Lansing, Michigan, August 2004, Passed 60% to 40%**

CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CATA)  
MILLAGE PROPOSITION  
CITY of LANSING, CITY of EAST LANSING, MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP,  
LANSING TOWNSHIP and DELHI TOWNSHIP

Shall the public transportation authority, the Capital Area Transportation Authority(CATA), for continued service, as provided for by Public Act 55 of 1963, as amended, replace an existing tax levy of 1.4 mills (approved by the voters in 1999) and a second levy of .82 mill (approved by the voters in 2002) with (i) a renewal of 2.1878 mills (as rolled back pursuant to the Headlee Act Amendment), and (ii) an increase of 0.0322 mill for a total millage levy of 2.22 mills (that being \$2.22 per thousand dollars of taxable value) on real and personal property located within CATA's

service area, for five years, 2006-2010, inclusive? If approved and levied, this millage would generate approximately \$12,102,000.00 in 2006.

**Kansas City, Missouri, November 2003, Failed 37% to 62% (Clay Chastain sponsored)**

Shall the City of Kansas City, Missouri, impose a city sales tax at the rate of 1/2% for a period of 12 years with the proceeds dedicated to creating a progressive public transportation system that will increase mobility, reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and foster the development of a more economically viable, safer, and livable community via the following improvements (including operation and maintenance), all of which will be under the auspices of the City of Kansas City, Missouri and the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA):

1. Increase the level of bus service across the City by adding 50 (total) new electric and hybrid-electric buses to the existing bus fleet; and
2. Construct a Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT) from a Park & Ride lot at Barry Road to Downtown operating on or in the vicinity of the North Oak Trafficway and the Burlington Avenue Corridor; and
3. Construct a Central Corridor Electric Streetcar line from a Park & Ride lot at 75th Street to Downtown operating on or in the vicinity of Main Street and the Country Club Right of Way; and
4. Construct a Light Rail line from a Park & Ride lot at the Truman Sports Complex to the Central Corridor operating on or in the vicinity of Linwood Boulevard and the Rock Island Right of Way; and
5. Construct a Multi-Modal Regional Transit Hub at, or in the Vicinity of, Union Station; and acquire property for Transit Stations, Rail Right of Ways and Park & Ride lots only; and to establish bicycle lanes, retire bond indebtedness; and secure state and federal matching funds?

**Kansas City, Missouri, November 2003, Passed 69% to 30% (KCATA sponsored)**

Shall the City of Kansas City enact a city sales tax for the purposes of operating, maintaining, equipping and improving the transit system, also known as the Metro, by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority for Kansas City, Missouri, as authorized by Section 94.605 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri at a rate of 3/8% for a period of 5 years?

**Indianfields Township, Michigan, August 2004, Passed 62% to 38%**

Shall the previously voted increase in the tax limitation imposed under Article IX, Section 6 of the Michigan Constitution on general ad valorem taxes within Indianfields Township be renewed at 1 mill (\$1.00 per \$1,000 of taxable value) for the period of (4) years, 2005 through 2008, inclusive, for the sole and exclusive purpose of the continuation of public bus transportation services within Indianfields Township; and shall the Township levy such renewal in millage for said purposes, thereby, raising in the first year and estimated \$117,065?

**Columbus, Ohio, November 1999, Passed**

Shall the continuation of an existing sales and use tax be levied for all transit purposes of the Central Ohio Transit Authority at a rate not exceeding one-fourth of one percent (1/4%) for a continuing period of time?

**Regional Transportation District (FasTracks), Denver, Colorado, November 2004**

Shall regional transportation district taxes be increased (first full fiscal year dollar increase) annually and by whatever additional amounts are raised annually thereafter by increasing the rate of sales tax levied by the district by four-tenths of one percent, from the current six-tenths of one percent to one percent commencing January 1 (first calendar year that commences after the election at which the ballot question is submitted), and, in connection therewith, shall regional transportation district debt be increased (principal amount), with a repayment cost of (maximum total district cost) with all proceeds of debt and taxes to be used and spent for the construction and operation of a fixed guide way mass transit system, the construction of additional park-n-ride lots, the expansion and improvement of existing park-n-ride lots, and increased bus service, including the use of smaller buses and vans and alternative fuel vehicles as appropriate, as specified in the transit expansion plan adopted by the board of directors of the district on or before (specified date) and shall debt

be evidenced by bonds, notes, or other multiple-fiscal year obligations including refunding bonds that may be issued as a lower or higher rate of interest and including debt that may have a redemption prior to maturity with or without payment of a premium, payable from all revenues generated by said tax increase, federal funds, investment income, public and private contributions, and other revenues as the board may determine, and with such revenues raised by the sales tax rate increase and the proceeds of debt obligations and any investment income on such revenues and proceeds being exempt from the revenue and spending restrictions contained in section 20 of article X of the Colorado constitution until such time as all debt is repaid when the rate of tax will be decreased to that amount necessary for the continued operation of the system but not less than six-tenths of one percent?

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Richland Hills, Texas, February 2004, Passed 67% to 33%**

Shall the Fort Worth Transportation Authority be continued in the City of Richland Hills?

### **San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, November 2004**

To protect public safety and keep Bay Area traffic moving in the aftermath of an earthquake or other disaster, shall BART, the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, be authorized to issue bonds not to exceed \$980 million dollars to make earthquake safety improvements to BART facilities in Contra Costa, San Francisco and Alameda Counties, including strengthening tunnels, bridges, overhead tracks and the underwater Transbay Tube, and establish an independent citizens' oversight committee to verify bond revenues are spent as promised?

**Source: *Center for Transportation Excellence (CFTE.org)***