



RT Strategies

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November 8, 2007

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Poll of Voters Shows

Concerns about Global Warming Drove a Key Group of Supportive Voters Away: Among “Pro-Transit Defectors” Who Would Have Supported a Transit-Only Proposition but Voted No on Proposition 1, Global Warming Cited as Top Concern

Proposition 1 failed by 12 percentage points because a key group Pro-Transit Defectors objected to the project’s potential negative impact on the environment and global warming, according to a recorded-voice telephone poll with a representative sample of 5,000 voters in the Transit District conducted by RT Strategies.

- Slightly more than half of the voters in the poll (52%) say they would have voted for the Transit part of the ballot proposition if it had been presented alone (the Pro-Transit Voters).
- Among those Pro-Transit voters, more than one-in-four (29%) report that they voted “No” on Proposition 1 (the Pro-Transit Defectors).
- The single most important reason given for voting No on Proposition 1 among those Pro-Transit Defectors was “because of its environmental impacts like global warming.”
- Among Pro-Transit Defectors, 39% voted No because of its environmental impacts like global warming, 28% because of higher taxes, 18% because a specific project under Proposition 1 that they oppose, and 15% for other reasons.
- *Pro-Transit Defectors who voted No on Proposition 1 specifically because of concerns about the environment and global warming represent 6% of all voters. If they had voted Yes on Proposition 1, as they say they would have voted Yes on the Transit-only elements of the proposition, Proposition 1 might have passed.*



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Among all No voters, regardless of whether they would have voted Yes on a Transit-only bill (the Pro-Transit Defectors) or not, 45% objected to higher taxes, 20% objected to the impact of Proposition 1 on the environment and global warming, and only 19% objected to specific projects.

- Among all the No voters who say they voted No because of their objection to higher taxes, a plurality of 35% object to the 50-year duration of some of the taxes, 21% the sales tax increase, 19% the car tab tax increase, 14% to the fact the taxes overall hurt the poor more than the wealthy, and 11% other tax concerns.
- The project attracting the most opposition was the proposed Tacoma light rail extension. Among No voters who say they voted No because of their objection to a specific project, 47% cite the Tacoma light rail extension, 12% the widening of 520 through the arboretum, 9% the incomplete funding for 520 bridge replacement, 4% the cross-base highway in Pierce County, and 4% other concerns.

Looking ahead, voters indicate a strong preference that roads and transit propositions be funded through tolls paid by users. A majority (54%) say major transportation projects should be funded through user fees like tolls, with only 25% preferring general tax increases.

- Among those voting No on Proposition 1, 65% say user fees like tolls should fund major transportation projects.
- Specifically, electronic tolls on the Lake Washington floating bridges to fund 520 replacement, I-90 maintenance and more transit service between the eastside and Seattle wins support from 70% of all voters in the poll (including 67% of those who voted No on Proposition 1, 74% of those who voted Yes on Proposition 1, and 78% of those who say they would have voted Yes on a transit-only version of the ballot proposition.)

All of the interviews were conducted November 4-6, 2007 with a representative cross-section of voters in the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) district. The margin of error in the poll is $\pm 1.4\%$. The poll, conducted by RT Strategies, was sponsored by the Sierra Club.