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Lessons Learned: A Conference on Transit Referenda and Why They Succeed or Fail

Mineta Transportation Institute
San José State University
San Jose, CA 95192-0219

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Lessons Learned: A Conference on Transit Referenda and Why They Succeed or Fail

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16. Abstract

This year, the Mineta Transportation Institute joined the American Public Transportation Association, as well as authorities in transportation to join in a conference on July 29 through July 31, 2001, entitled *Lessons Learned: A Conference on Transit Referenda and Why They Succeed or Fail*. The purpose of the conference was to discuss the history of successful and unsuccessful transportation measures that have existed in various cities across the United States. Participants represented members from transportation agencies nationwide. Each table was presented with issues to discuss and present to the conference. Short presentations were made by various authorities in the transportation and political arenas. The conference included several question and answer sessions. The moderators were Pete Cipolla and Rod Diridon. This publication, a transcript and summary of the July conference is a next step in the information transfer effort.

This conference brought together a nationwide representation of transportation authorities as follows:

•Dr. Peter Haas, Professor, Political Science and Transportation Management, San José State University
•Dr. Richard Werbel, Professor, Polictical Science and Transportation Management, San José State University
•Bill Lind, Director of the Center of Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation, Washington D.C.
•Pete Cipolla, General Manager, Valley Transportation Authority
•Gary Richards, Columnist, "Mr. Roadshow," *San Jose Mercury News*
•Max Besler, Campaign consultant, Townsend Raimundo, Besler and Usher
•Carl Guardino, President and CEO, Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group
•Jude Barry, CEO, Catapult Strategies and former Chief of Staff for San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales

There were over 100 conference participants from various transportation agencies across the country.

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Event co-sponsors included:

•The American Public Transportation Association

•The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

•The Center for Transportation Excellence

•The Mineta Transportation Institute

Thanks to the following individuals:

•Art Guzzetti, Director of Policy Development and Member Mobilization, the American Public Transportation Association;

•The Santa Clara County Chapter of the League of Women Voters and Virginia Holtz;

•Presenters Peter Haas, Ph.D., Bill Lind, Robert Puentes, Richard Werbel, Ph.D., Alan Wulkan, and panelists Jude Barry, Max Besler, Carl Guardino and Gary Richards; and

•Peter Cipolla, General Manager, Valley Transportation Authority; and Jeff Hanan, Halik Associates, both of whom acted as moderators for the event.

Additional thanks to the following:

•San Jose Hyatt Saint Claire Hotel

•San Jose Convention Center

•Valley Transit Authority

•Mirassou Vineyards

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5

WELCOMING REMARKS 7

AN OVERVIEW OF TRANSIT REFERENDUM CAMPAIGNS AND THE COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE CONDUCTED THEM 13

PASSING LOCAL TRANSPORTATION TAX MEASURES: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY 35

TWELVE ANTI-TRANSIT MYTHS:A CONSERVATIVE CRITIQUE 53

BROOKINGS INSTITUTE UPDATE ON ELECTION DAY 2000 BALLOT MEASURES 63

DOING IT RIGHT: SANTA CLARA'S NOV. 2000 ELECTION 83

GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION 129

ORGANIZING THE CAMPAIGN 133

IMPORTANCE OF THE MEDIA 143

HANDLING THE CRITICS 159

THE ESSENCE OF WHAT WINS AN ELECTION 183

CLOSING DISCUSSIONS 195

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS 205

APPENDIX A-1

FOREWORD

At the beginning of the 21st century, providing funding for transportation improvements remains a challenge. With numerous programs competing for local, state and federal funding, transportation planners must often seek special funding for necessary projects. Taxpayer referenda provide an important means of securing dedicated funding for transportation projects.

Transportation proponents in Santa Clara County, California, have been among the most well-informed and proactive when it comes to passing transportation tax measures. The most recent success occurred in November 2000, when a one-half percent sales tax was extended for an additional 30 years to provide funds for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, and for the BART extension to the Silicon Valley.

It made perfect sense for the Mineta Transportation Institute to become involved in the American Public Transportation Association's "Lessons Learned: A Conference on Transit Referenda and Why They Succeed or Fail," which was held on July 29 and 30, 2001. This was another in a series of symposia presented by the Institute on issues of national importance to the transportation community. MTI research focuses on transportation management and policy concerns, and we are the proud publisher of two important studies, MTI Report 00-01, *Why Campaigns for Local Transportation Initiatives Succeed or Fail: An Analysis of Four Communities and National Data,* and MTI Report 01-17 *Factors Influencing Voting Results of Local Transportation Funding Initiatives with a Substantial Transit Component: Case Studies of Ballot Measures in Eleven Communities.*

The conference provided an opportunity for over 100 attendees to examine and discuss the latest information about transportation tax measures. Presentations included "A Overview of Transit Referendum Campaigns and the Communities That Have Conducted Them," by Alan Wulkan; "Twelve Anti-Transit Myths: A Conservative Critique" by Bill Lind; "Brookings Institute Update on Election Day 2000 Ballot Measures" by Robert Puentes; and "Passing Local Transportation Tax Measures-A Follow-Up Study" by Dr. Peter Haas and Dr. Richard Werbel. Panelists for the expert panel "Doing It Right: Santa Clara's November 2000 Election" included Jude Berry, Max Besler, Carl Guardino and Gary Richards.

I would like to take the opportunity to personally thank all the organizations and individuals who gave their time and talent to make this important symposium a success.

- The Santa Clara County Chapter of the League of Women Voters, and especially Virginia Holtz, were instrumental in organizing the activities of the two-day conference.
- Thank you to the conference presenters as well as our moderators Peter Cipolla, General Manager of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, and Jeff Hanan of Halik Associates. Their skillful management of the meeting added much to the productivity of the event.
- We especially appreciate the work of Art Guzzetti, Director of Policy Development and Member Mobilization of APTA. Having the APTA conference at San José State University and highlighting our recent research was his concept, and he was instrumental in accomplishing every facet of the event. He and the APTA staff were accomplished partners in the logistics of the event, and key to its success.
- I also would like to thank MTI research and publications staff, including Research Director Trixie Johnson, Research and Publications Assistant Sonya Cardenas, transcriber Noelle Major and editors Cathy Frazier and Jimmie Young for their work on this publication. Thanks also to Dr. Peter Haas, MTI's Education Director, and Dr. Richard Werbel, our research team, for participating as presenters at the conference.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank the various transit agencies who sent their best and brightest people to share their thoughts and experiences with presenters and participants alike.

Because it is the mission of MTI to provide the best in transportation policy research, it is my hope that this publication together with our prior research will be of assistance to referenda authors and supporters in working toward successful passage of well-written, truly beneficial transportation referenda in their own communities.

Rod Diridon

Executive Director, The Mineta Transportation Institute

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the summer of 2001, the Mineta Transportation Institute co-sponsored, with the American Public Transportation Association, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, and the Center for Transportation Excellence, a two-day symposium on July 29 through July 31, entitled "Lessons Learned: A Conference on Transit Referenda and Why They Succeed or Fail." The purpose of the conference was to discuss the history of successful and unsuccessful transportation measures that have existed in various cities across the United States. Participants represented members from transportation agencies nationwide. Each table was presented with issues to discuss and present to the conference. Short presentations were made by various authorities in the transportation and political arenas. The conference included several question and answer sessions. The moderators were Pete Cipolla and Jeff Hanan This publication, a transcript and summary of conference is a next step in the information transfer effort.

This conference brought together a nationwide representation of election consultants and transportation reserachers who presented the most up-to-date reserach on transportation referenda. Presenters included the following individuals:

- Peter Haas, Ph.D., Professor, Political Science and Transportation Management, San José State University
- Richard Werbel, Ph.D., Professor, Polictical Science and Transportation Management, San José State University
- Bill Lind, Director of the Center of Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation, Washington D.C.
- Pete Cipolla, General Manager, Valley Transportation Authority
- Gary Richards, Columnist, "Mr. Roadshow," *San Jose Mercury News*
- Max Besler, Campaign consultant, Townsend Raimundo, Besler and Usher
- Carl Guardino, President and CEO, Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group
- Jude Barry, CEO, Catapult Strategies and former Chief of Staff for San Jose Mayor, Ron Gonzales

Over 100 attendees invloved in the transportation industry took part in the conference. Their backgrounds were as varied as board members, development officers, legal counsel, city managers and public/media relations professionals.

Conference participants were treated to several presentations which shared the most recent research on passing transportation referenda. The subjects included "An Overview of Transit Referrendum Campaigns and the Communities That Have Conducted Them;" "Passing Local Transportation Tax Measures: A Follow-Up Study;" "Twelve Transit Myths: A Conservative Critique;" "Brookings Institute Update on Election Day 2000 Ballot Measures;" and a group panel discussion of "Doing It Right: Santa Clara's November 2000 Election."

Additionally, participants participated in table discussions with topics including "Organizing the Campaign;" "Importance of the Media;" "Handling the Critics;" "It's All in the Details;" and "What Wins An Election?" After brainstroming sessions, participants presented their findings, ideas and concerns to the expert panel, who provided immediate feedback.

Conference participants were invited to stay in San Jose for an additional day for a Federal Transit Administration "New Starts" workshop, which was held on campus at San José State University. No transcripts of this event were taken.

This publication is organized chronologically, by presentation title, and the question and answer session which followed each presentation is in the same chapter.

WELCOMING REMARKS

PETER CIPOLLA:

Our community rallied behind a sales tax measure and we were successful in a transit-only vote of 72 percent in favor of transit half-cent sales tax. A 30-year sales tax, beginning in the year 2006 will generate, in 2000 dollars, around $6 billion. So everybody thinks we have a whole lot of money to spend but we've got a whole list of projects to spend them on too. So, I'm beating away the dogs and stuff, saying, "Yeah, [Inaudible], give us some money, we have some other projects to do." But, we're managing to hold them off and such. This community has really had a history of self-help, or dealing with its own transportation measures. We're going to hear a lot more about that tomorrow.

We've got several members of the team on a panel tomorrow morning first thing, including—Gary Richards, who's from the media. He's from the *Mercury News*, who I will, I'm gonna say it again tomorrow, but he is probably one of the most knowledgeable people when it comes to transportation and transportation issues that you're ever gonna run up against. I know that Rod back here will help me verify this.

We have an extraordinary gathering of people here at this conference, meeting, workshop, round table discussion, whatever you want to call it. I think there are about 100 or so participants which is quite impressive as far as I'm concerned. I will be the first one to say that when I first heard about it happening, half the staff was shaking their heads back there saying, "Are you sure that everybody's going to come here for this in July?" I'm really pleased to see you all here. But we have everybody from political champions, community activists, business leaders, transit officials, transportation officials, people who've been involved in the positive outcomes, and the negative outcomes of referendums. We hope that, through this process, that we undertake this afternoon and tomorrow, that we're going to be able to generate a body of knowledge that can be packaged in such a way that it will be useful, not only to those of you in the audience that need to go back and try again, but the many other communities in our United States that need to do it for the first time. To make sure that we capture all of these ideas, large portions of this meeting are going to be recorded, so be careful what you say. I'm just kidding. But, actually, I'm not kidding. Be careful what you say. Make sure what you want to say. You want to be heard. Tomorrow, I don't think the sessions are going to be recorded during the workshop things. So if you have something

that you really want to get off your chest but you don't want it recorded, save it for tomorrow.

Tomorrow is designed—actually, the whole conference is designed, to have some pretty frank and candid discussions about the topic of referenda and such; thus "Lessons Learned, a Conference on Transit Referendums and Why They Succeed and Why They Fail."

There are a few people, a few organizations that deserve a lot of credit in putting this thing together. First, I'd like to thank APTA's business members. They made a significant financial contribution, as they always do, in helping put this meeting together. Also the Mineta Transportation Institute, headed by Rod Diridon and Trixie Johnson here; and others of the Institute are here and have worked real hard to help make this event a real positive outcome and helped coordinate a lot of the logistics and made arrangements for tonight's dinner and such. In addition, we'll be reporting on a couple of reports that they have led the way in putting together.

The other group is the Center for Transportation Excellence. Since that group formed in 1999, it's been a very proactive source of information on the benefits of transit, inspired by the concept of what we're talking about today. I also want to give credit to the first individual that actually raised this issue, Alan Wulkan. You'll actually be hearing from Alan today also. Alan raised the issue—"Wouldn't it be great if we put all the people who've been dealing with referendums in one room and you know, get a real brain drain on them and be able to package that information?" I think the Center kind of picked up the ball and ran with it. APTA's picked up the ball and run with it. Mineta Institute has picked up the ball and run with it. Now here we all are today. I think one of the other things that you're going to see this generating—and I have to put in a pitch for this too—is that the Center for Transportation Excellence is gonna be an additional voice in our PT Squared Program—the Transportation Partnership for Tomorrow. That's going to be real critical in the weeks and months to come as we move forward with reauthorization. While the discussion tomorrow is going to be highly interactive, the focus of today's program is to learn about the many topics of research that have been going on.

We're going to hear from the Mineta Transportation Institute, who have two reports; the Brookings Institution Center for Urban and Metropolitan Policy; Bill Lind to unveil the latest report of the Free Congress Foundation, which I have had the opportunity to read and I'm very excited about that coming out and its timing is superb. There will be opportunities to Q&A after each of the speakers. We'll have microphones out in the audience. So I would encourage

you, as the speaker is talking, write yourself a little note or if you have a question in mind, be sure to jot it down so that we can follow up on it.

We're also very pleased that the Federal Transit Administration has chosen San Jose to unveil, or at least to have a special half-day workshop here on Tuesday morning, on the New Starts Program. This is very important to probably most everybody in this audience. So, I would encourage you to be able to attend that on Tuesday morning at the Business College of San José State University.

Then, just as a final thought, I'll remind everybody that tonight we're going to have a real nice evening out at the Mirassou Winery, nice dinner and such. We're going to try to get you out of here at 5:00 so you can run, dash back to the hotel and be out in front of the hotel. VTA buses will be out there at 5:30 to take you down to the winery.

With that, I'm going to jump into the meat and potatoes of the program, so to speak, and it's my pleasure to introduce my colleague and good friend, Rod Diridon, who is the Executive Director of the Mineta Transportation Institute. Many of you in the audience know Rod served five terms on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, and during that term he was also Chair of the Transit Agency, which was a part of the County. Rod had also served as Chair of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Chair of APTA, and was also the United States Representative to UITP. He has really made Light Rail, and was the founder so to speak, at least we give him the paternal credit of saying he was the founder of light rail in San Jose, which he was. We wouldn't be doing what we're doing here today without Rod, so…Rod Diridon.

[APPLAUSE]

ROD DIRIDON:

Actually, many people, when we were first building that system, declared that it had no father, and used the pejorative term for things that have no father, to describe it. I'm at least glad that that term has gone away.

Pete, thanks for the nice introduction. I'll move quickly through my comments so that we can save some time for questions. I'd like to first of all thank a lot of people. Looking around, I see some good friends in the audience. It's kind of like "Old Home Week." Whenever we get together with transit people now, maybe the silver hair is making it, indicating that I've been around long enough to have gotten to know most of you. But, it's nice to have you in San

Jose. I'm glad you were able to avoid the beautiful sunshine and somewhat cool weather today to be in here, in these dour surroundings, learning about how to be successful transportation politicians. Passing that tax is the whole key. If you've got the money, you can do anything in the world. Today, you'll learn how to do it.

Before I get into that, let me first say some thank-yous. The League of Women Voters need to be thanked, double thanked and triple thanked. All five of the local chapters in Santa Clara County offered volunteers to help. Virginia Holtz was our liaison person with them and the person who organized the activities. So, go home and hug a League member. While you're here, you can hug one too. The reason why they were so successful, and Virginia is here by the way—thank you very much Virginia for all of the organizing help that you provided—the reason why the League is so involved is because of the Research Director for the Mineta Transportation Institute. By the way, you know that we've shortened that name. It used to be the Norman Y. Mineta International Institute for Service Transportation Policy Studies. I have job security because I'm the only one who can say it that fast.

So, the Mineta Transportation Institute Research Director is Trixie Johnson. Trixie is a past president of the local and regional Leagues, then she became a Planning Commissioner and a City Council member for two terms and was Vice-Mayor of the City of San Jose before we were very pleased to have her become the Research Director for the Mineta Transportation Institute. She brings with her all of her good friends, and we can do wonderful things as a result of it. So we thank you, Trixie, and you, Virginia and the Leagues.

Let me also thank the Mineta Transportation Institute staff and I'll use that as a lead into doing the commercial part of the program. I have to give you a little bit of background on MTI. We are really busy right now. We have 31 research projects going, many of them in foreign countries. We have over 50 Ph.D.-level researchers under contract with as many research assistants supporting them under contract. Trixie is really busy, you can imagine. By the way we do only policy research; we don't do technical research. So this is our business. Helping you figure out ways of running your business better is our business, and we're happy to do that. Trixie will have out for you to review tomorrow the list of the various projects that we have in process, and those that we've already published so that if you need copies, either electronically or hard-copy, we can provide those to you. You can use that information then to help provide better transportation programs for your local communities. We in addition have a Master of Science in Transportation Management, and that's something that I

hope you take very seriously and take it back to your bright, young potential managers and maybe yourselves. We can provide that Masters Degree anywhere in the state, in the United States, through video streaming. It's an accredited California State University Master of Science. It's very innovative in that it teaches transportation systems, not how to do individual elements of transportation, but it teaches how to run a mass transportation system or how to run a public works department or a state transit agency or whatever. So, it's quite good. The classes are often times taught by top experts in the field of transportation. In the state of California, they're taught through the videoconference bridge of the California Department of Transportation. So all you'll have to do is go over to your local Caltrans Regional Headquarters, and you can take the class. They're 5:30 until 9:30 in the evening, so they're designed for working people. We'd love to be able—we have liberal scholarship programs for the students that are in the program, so that the cost bite is not at all serious—and we'd love to be able to provide that service to you. We know that because the gas taxes are very high in the rest of the world. We can't outspend the rest of the world when it comes to building transit agencies, so we have to outsmart them. That Master of Science in Transportation Management, is going to help us outsmart them.

Let me go on now and talk for just a little bit about what you're going to be treated to over the next couple of days. First off, this afternoon, you're going to be presented with 11 case studies on ballot measures that have been successful or unsuccessful and the professors who have been our research directors on this project, which isn't even published yet. It's in pre-peer review form. It's not quite published. So it's really hot off the griddle. The professors are Dr. Richard Werbel and Dr. Peter Haas. This is their second study that they've combined to bring to you. I think it's going to be very insightful. What we bring to that is the background in this county of success. We've had… in March 1976, the first half-cent sales tax in the State of California was passed. A half-cent sales tax forever, for transit. That's what's running Pete's program now. In 1984, we had a half-cent sales tax for highways for 10 years. Highways got even with us for the 1976 tax. Then in 1994, 10 years later, we had a half-cent tax adopted for highways and transit. That was overturned by the courts and we went right back in 1996 and passed a half-cent sales tax again. Each one of those at about 54, 55, 56 percent, and the half-cent sales tax in 1996 was for 9 years, and it was passed by 54 percent of the vote. It was part transit and part highways.

Then the great success that surprised us all, which was a very pleasant surprise. Last November, we had a half-cent tax for 30 years, passed by over 70 percent

of the vote. It was a classically good campaign. It was for a good reason because we'd had a reputation in the valley for delivering projects ahead of schedule and under budget. Also, we have a very bright electorate. Silicon Valley tends to attract people with good educations and they could understand why we needed transportation and transit. This last tax was all transit—30-year half-cent sales tax for only transit. So it gives you an idea that maybe this is the place for you to look at when you want to model your tax programs.

You're going to learn about that from Dr. Werbel and Dr. Haas. Then tomorrow, we've put together a panel for you that really involves the people that were involved in passing those taxes. The professional consultant, the manager, the community organizer, and the head of the manufacturing association. As Peter mentioned, the newspaper columnist, who is very, very bright and effective in terms of transportation, has always been supportive of our transportation programs. We call him Mr. Roadshow on his column in his media, which he kind of chafes at, because he's very pro-transit. So, you'll enjoy Gary Richards tomorrow, as Pete said you would.

So please, make sure you're here and not out on the golf course. We're gonna be checking. Well, maybe the day after you can be out on the golf course. And enjoy yourself. Santa Clara County is a wonderful area. The dinner tonight is at Mirassou Winery, which is a world-renowned winery. I know you'll enjoy that. Make sure you're not late for the 5:30 bus departures. Thank you very much for coming from all over the nation, as you have, to learn about how to create funding for transportation in your community.

Welcome.

[Applause]

AN OVERVIEW OF TRANSIT REFERENDUM CAMPAIGNS AND THE COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE CONDUCTED THEM

PETE CIPOLLA:

Earlier I thanked APTA's business members for their financial support for this conference. I'm especially pleased to call upon Alan Wulkan, who's the chair of APTA's business member Board of Governors, and serves with me on the APTA Executive Committee. Alan's a senior as many of you know. He is a Senior VP with Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas. He's had extensive experience and involvement with transit elections, some successful, some not so successful. Notably, the last election last year in Phoenix, Arizona, his home community. Alan's role today is to give us a general overview of transit referendum campaigns and the communities that have conducted them. Now this is his birthday weekend, and we dragged him back from Las Vegas. We probably saved his house, his ranch and everything else, but we dragged him back from Las Vegas to be here with us today, so please welcome Alan Wulkan.

[Applause]

ALAN WULKAN:

Hello. Good afternoon everybody and welcome.

Usually a lot of times at APTA meetings we go around and everybody introduces everyone. But it looks like we have almost 100 people. So we shouldn't do that maybe today. How many of you, however, have been involved with elections for transit that have lost, raise your hands. How many of you have been involved in transit elections that have won, raise your hands. How many are here for the first time because you want to win an election coming up soon? Great, thanks. You know, for all of you who raised your hands you know in the transit business you can become very pessimistic very quickly when you start thinking about the daunting task of passing a tax in your community for transit.

I have a little story I want to tell you. I want you to remember this as you go through the most difficult times of your campaigns, especially if you're about to become pessimistic to the point where you're not sure it's worth it. I want

you to remember the guy who cuts my hair, Roger. Roger is the most pessimistic person I have ever met in my whole life. One summer I wanted to go to Italy on vacation. I went in to get my monthly haircut. Roger said, "Where are you going on vacation?" I said, "I'm going to Italy." Roger said, "Why would you go to Italy? They hate Americans over there." I said, "Roger I've been there before and I want to go again." He said, "When are you going?" I said, "I'm flying on Saturday." He said, "Saturday, the worst day of the week to travel. Everyone travels on Saturday. There's going to be long lines." And then he said, "Okay, what airline are you flying?" I said, "Al Italia." He said, "Al Italia? They're never on time. They lose your luggage. It's going to be a terrible trip. Where are you staying?" I said, "Well, last time I was there, I stayed at the Plaza de Navona." He said, "Plaza de Navona? My God, all the street people hang out there. You'll not get any sleep. They'll accost you every day. All right, what are you going to do when you're there?" I said, "Roger, last time I was there I didn't get a chance to go see the Pope or the Vatican. I really want to do that." And of course he says, "A million people a day try to go see the Pope. You have no chance at all."

Well, despite all that pessimism, I went anyway. I came back the next month to get my haircut. And I said, "Roger, you're not going to believe it. I went to Italy and the people were fantastic. They treated us like gold. We flew on Saturday, and it must have been a holiday weekend because there was nobody in the airport. And Al Italia was right on time. The baggage got there right when we arrived. Plaza de Navona, maybe because it was a holiday weekend, was empty. We had the whole place to ourselves. We went to the Vatican. And all of you have probably seen pictures of the Vatican, and there's double doors and there is this beautiful courtyard where lots of stairs that come down." And I said, "Roger, you're not going to believe what happened, but while we were milling"—and again, I guess a lot of people living in Italy and Europe are on vacation in August, so there's not a lot of people at the Vatican—"The doors open and the Pope starts walking out onto the courtyard in the Vatican. The tradition there is you line up so the Pope can welcome you to the Vatican, and we all line up. And he's coming straight down the line and he stops." I said, "Roger you're not going to believe it but he stops right by me." And Roger says, "You're kidding." I said, "No." And the Pope leans over and whispers in my ear, "That's the worst haircut I've ever seen in my life."

All right, so when you start thinking you're getting pessimistic, and times are tough, remember my friend Roger.

Over the last 28 or 29 years, I've been involved with over 25 transit elections throughout the country. When I was asked about the idea of having this seminar/conference, I thought it would be a great idea. They asked me would I share some observations about what's happened around the country, especially most recently. Then I added to that because any of you who know me, I like to talk about the things that I feel passionate about, and this I do. Those are some of the lessons learned and some of the principals that I've picked up over the last 28 or 29 years on the keys to being successful in transit elections.

You're going to hear, I hope, a lot of overlap over the next two days, because that means we probably are beginning to get it right in understanding some of the lessons together. I'm going to do a few things. I've got three case examples. For those of you in the audience who I know, if I offend anybody, I'm sorry. But they are my observations in elections that you have had. So, Danny, don't get upset with me from Dade County. Or others I know who are here from Phoenix. But I'm going to run fairly quickly through this overhead presentation. You have copies. We did not make those copies up to try to take them off of the PowerPoint, which frankly, with this projector, doesn't project very well. I brought a backup in the overhead. So I'm going to do those instead of the PowerPoint. I can get you the color copies or whatever after the seminar.

Obviously, in the last couple of years during a lot of elections, you have seen similar headlines. We took these from some of the headlines around the country on elections that have been held in many of your communities and others. Nationally, over the last three years, data that was available, it's kind of interesting. In 1998, when you look at how many elections failed versus passed, transit elections, as you can see, about 70 percent of the transit elections that were held in 1988 failed. In 1999, it became about 50/50. We lost a few more than we won. Then in the year 2000, you can see we won almost as many as we lost in 1998, almost 70 percent of the elections that were held. All of those people who are pessimistic say these things never pass, and that's not true. They're passing, and the more we do them, obviously the more we learn. In 1998, as you can see, we had about, just under 15 transit elections that we lost, 71 percent of them. In 1999, a few more, and as I said, we split. Then the year 2000, there were over 30 initiatives throughout the country. Of those, as you can see, we won almost 70 percent of them.

Now I wanted to take three case examples, and I hope you'll bear with me. There were so many that I just wanted to pick the ones that I thought contrasted well. Two of them are going to be from the same community, the first being Dade County. I'm from Dade County, it's my home. That's where I started my

career. I'm very proud of what's happening in Dade County and what continues to happen. We've had a history in Dade County of elections and they have not been overly successful in the recent times. They were successful earlier. The last election in July of 1999, was a special election.

For those of you who don't know Dade County, they pay for almost the entire budget of a rail, bus, people mover, para-transit program out of the general fund in transit. It puts a lot of pressure on the voters, on the policy makers of the community every budget year. There's been a move for many, many years to try to get a dedicated revenue source. So the concept in Dade County was to go for 1 percent sales tax. This was somewhere where they wanted to make it palatable to an electorate that had been negative on new taxes before, and tolls used in Dade County to finance the maintenance and operation, and in some cases, the construction, but mostly the maintenance and operation, of many of the roadways. The mayor came up with a concept of trading tolls for the sales tax. There was an awful lot of discussion about replacing general funds support with the sales tax, eliminating tolls, expanding transit. And all their polling and surveys said tolls were a terrible burden on the community and they hated them. They decided this would be a concept that would work.

Unfortunately, the way it came out was—a very strong mayor, a very popular mayor, one who I believe that at the time the decisions were made most people would say could pass just about anything this mayor thought was a high priority—the mayor decided that he was going to closely control the campaign. Although there were a lot of people involved behind the scenes in raising money and doing strategy, the overall approach to this campaign was in the hands, and I hope that Danny would agree, of the mayor's office. The mayor's office was closely controlling the campaign; he had the strategy. The business community would raise the money, and they did. They raised almost $2 million. They would appeal to special interest. They don't want a real big turn out. They want those people who really care. They would play traffic and tolls against the transit issue. And a lot of the polling and surveying said that was a good idea. They had polling results that, to be very blunt, early on, showed that they might be ahead. But they weren't ever really far ahead. They always showed a relatively close election. I'm going to come back to that issue later on some of the lessons learned.

What were the results? Strong champion, the mayor. Special election, the strategy was—let's get a low turnout. Highly targeted, you'll hear this, the high propensity voter. By the way, in your communities, I know there will be some campaign people that will disagree with me. When you hear high propensity

voter campaign in a transit election, watch out. Because what usually happens is you don't get only the high propensity turnout in transit elections. You get high turnouts. Dade County lost 2 to 1. The turnout was over 30 percent. What happened was they came out with not an anti-transit vote. Dade County has had its challenges in the past. It came out as an anti-government vote in many cases. Hispanic and Anglo vote where the mayor, particularly in an Hispanic community, was the single most popular elected official in the county, went big time against transit. There was an anti-tax mood as things had been changing in Dade County. It's much more conservative today. And frankly, the strategy of a low turnout, high propensity voter, highly controlled election, simply did not work. The election did not come up from the grass roots. It came up from the top down.

A second campaign that I wanted to highlight very quickly is a smaller community, one where I happened to have my office. At the time of the election I was Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce. What happened here was in Arizona for the last ten years, there have been four unsuccessful regional votes in Maricopa County to get a transit tax. So we decided we were going to try to do something a little different. If I was to ask you what state has the highest number of dedicated taxes for transit in the United States, what would you guess? What state?

PARTICIPANT:

New York

ALAN WULKAN:

Anybody else?

PARTICIPANT:

California.

ALAN WULKAN:

California. Anybody else? Arizona? No. Believe it or not, it's Texas. It's not because Texas is some great champion of public transportation overall over the last 20 years. It's because they have a piece of legislation that allows local governments, city by city, to vote as they feel it's needed on transit. If the big

city approves it, it doesn't make any difference what everybody does. The tax is approved and it's initiated. Then, all the other communities join in. What we decided is we would do the same thing in Arizona. We can't win regional transit taxes. We can't win regional taxes for education and health in an elderly community; it's a very conservative community. So we decided we'd go city by city. We went to the citizens of our local community and worked on a transit plan. We got very strong business support. In fact, it was the Chamber of Commerce that went to the city council and asked for the election. The council didn't want to do the election. In Arizona, elected officials, God bless them, they're wonderful people, but if you want to win a major tax election, a lot of times, they're not your closest friends. Because everybody thinks, again, this anti-tax mood, anti-government mood, "Why are they going to ask us for more money?" So we asked our elected officials to take a very low profile.

Tempe is a community of only about 140,000 people. So that's why I wanted to talk about it because you don't just have to be a big city to pass a transit tax. We went for a half-cent sales tax forever. No term limits on it. Expand a bus, dial a ride, rail planning, etc., and we won the very first transit tax in Arizona by 54 percent of the vote. And I'll go into some of the lessons on that later. But everyone thought, well, if we can pass it in Tempe, then Phoenix, the biggest community in the state, certainly with the most needs, we'd clearly be able to pass a transit tax going locally. In 1997 they tried right after the 1996 Tempe election, a high-targeted campaign. We're going to get those people who always vote. Once we win that part of the election, we're going to win. Strong vote by mail.

By the way, in my judgement, that is the future of elections, not just in transit. Vote by mail, at least for transit, is a great system. This is not absentee balloting. It's the next step. Anybody who wants to vote by mail has a right to get a ballot. These parties distribute these ballots. Now, people who are involved with issues distribute the ballots. The vote by mail ballot, coming in early, if you can think about it, usually is more targeted to the issue. Because it's later in the campaign that the anti-government and all the things that have nothing to do with your campaign, begin to rise to the top of the debate. So, in almost every election in Phoenix, especially this one, we won in 1997 over 60 percent of the vote by mail that came in a week before the election.

However, we had a governor who opposed it. Our governor Simington—I'll talk a little bit about that in a minute—as you remember, he was being impeached around this time, and finally was impeached. I'll tell you why that's an issue. Nobody wanted to talk about the rail vote in 1997. We had lost a vote

in 1989 and everybody thought, “My God, if we talk about rail, we’re going to lose again,” even though rail was in the plan. Anti-government voter, we appealed to people that this was not coming from the city council. We had strong business community support. We were going for a half-cent sales tax. We had a committee of 600 that the mayor appointed to bless the plan. So we had strong business community support, and the mayor of Phoenix became the champion. We kind of converted them.

But what happened? All the polls showed we were way ahead. The mayor is Republican. The governor is Republican. About four weeks before the election, the mayor, while the governor was under investigation, asked the governor to resign. The governor didn’t want to resign. Internal squabbling. One thing led to another. Three days before the election, the governor asked the head of the Department of Environment Equality, and the Department of Transportation, to hold a press conference, and announced that public transportation does nothing for air quality and congestion, simply to get back at the mayor of Phoenix. On his way to the press conference, the governor in his limousine got a phone call the jury was in on his case. To show you how these political feelings go, he picked up the phone, called his department directors, said, “I can’t be there, do it anyway while I’m in court.” Headlines the next day were, “Absolutely transit does nothing for air quality and congestion.” Two days later, we lost the vote by 122 votes. Ironically—this is a true story—the very next day, we had an air quality alert. The headline in the paper was, “DOT says use public transit, air quality alert.” One day too late.

So we lost our election. Out of 185,000 votes, we lost by 122 votes. If that press conference wasn’t held, would we have probably won? Probably. But our polling said that we were way ahead, and it really shouldn’t have swung that closely. So the mayor decided let’s go back. And in 2000 we held a second election in Phoenix. Ladies and gentlemen, you are going to lose the first time. Hopefully you’re wrong. When we won in Austin, when I was Executive Director there, we were lucky. We were one of three or four that won the first time. But the chances are you’re going to lose the first time. That’s not embarrassing, there’s nothing wrong with that. It’s part of the education process in your local communities. That’s what we decided in Phoenix—“Let’s go back again. Let’s build on the things that we did well.”

We knew that we were going to get a good mail campaign. We won 60 percent of the vote last time. So this time we targeted 70 percent of the vote to get that in before the election day. We had a very specific, defined plan. Instead of a committee of 600, we went with a committee of 2,000. We actually put, as I’ll

show you in a little bit, we put the maps of the ballot measure on the ballot. When someone walked in, they could see a map right in front of them and what they were getting for their vote. Most places don't allow you to do that legally. We can do that in Arizona. We addressed the opposition. We took them head on. This was not like we did in 1997, a stealth campaign. We decided when the opposition said something, we were going to counter it. If they were going to have 50 people at a rally, we were going to have 150 people at a rally if we can. We took the opposition on every single turn of the campaign. We polled our conservative voters. Our conservative voters love rail. I am sorry for my friends who are only doing bus initiatives. They are much more difficult to win than an initiative that has rail in it. Conservative voters are not going to use a bus. They don't think they are going to use a bus, and it doesn't make any difference what you think they are going to use. They want to use quality transit only, and in their view, quality transit, which Bill and I have talked about, and so has Paul, is defined in many cities as rail transit. So we elevated the rail issue, and we weren't worried about the anti-government voter because we realized we were going to lose them anyway.

Okay, what happened? We changed the ballot a little bit. The mayor decided he would not go back for the same exact campaign. So instead of a half-cent, we went for four-tenths of a cent—65 percent for bus, 35 percent for rail, a citizens based campaign. The chamber took a leadership role. The mayor of Phoenix, almost to the flip side of what he did in the first campaign, became a zealot. This was something that he was going to basically predicate his history of a mayor on and really became one of the best champions I've ever worked with in the last 20 or so years. I do want to say, because the first one gives it away how we did, the night of the election, we all went around the room. We had a little dinner for the people who were involved. A little dinner—it was about 60 people and the key people in the campaign. We were all asked to give our projections as to how we are going to do. I've been to many of these so I didn't want to tell the mayor I thought we were going to lose, because I didn't think we were going to lose. But I know these are always close and I said 52 to 48. I mean it scaled all the way, I think from everyone in the room, the highest someone got bold and said we might win 55 percent of the vote. The mayor said, "Nonsense. I think we are going to win close to 70 percent of the vote." We thought he was crazy. But I got to tell you, he put his machine to this thing. We won 2 to 1, almost 70 percent percent of the vote. This is one of the reasons why is we put together a citizen's commission which helped create this part of the referendum. Again, the ballot included exactly what was in it for me. That's a theme you're going to see in a little bit. If you can't answer the question—

"What is in it for me?"—in your city, you are not going to get that person to vote for your initiative.

Okay. Those are three real quick case studies and you're going to hear a lot more. I didn't want to spend my whole time on that. This is what I think is more important to this presentation, and for what I think you're going to be doing in the future. I think first of all there are some principals that you've got to follow. Ladies and gentlemen, you can disagree, debate, or you can say your community is different. You all live in different communities. But you are not different. Every issue you are going to face in your communities has been faced before. Every reason that you are going to win or lose has been faced before. You can do things differently. Every city has its own little campaign group that has got to be different. But take my word for it. If you don't pay attention to the basics, you're going to lose.

First, focus on winning. The story I love to tell in Tempe is—I come from a transit background. I grew up in the transit industry. I know that bus pullouts from a transit operator standpoint is a nightmare. They hate them. We in transit think they are the worst thing in the world. We did a poll when we were putting our plan together for the election. We asked people, "Rank the things that you like or don't like about public transit." The number one thing in our community people hate about public transit was that damn bus sitting in traffic and they were sitting behind it. They thought that was a terrible thing. When we polled, what they hate about public transit, and what they would vote for, bus pullouts are the number one things the voters in Tempe said they vote for. Our transit manager went bonkers—"You can't give me bus pullouts. It's going to ruin the operation of the transportation system." I said, "Mary, listen to what I'm telling you. Do you want a bigger transit system and more money and win an election? Or do you want the best operated small transit system in America?" It's very simple. We had more bus pullouts in that plan that you've ever seen in your life. And we won. Focus on what the voters want you to give them; not what you think is the best thing for them.

Follow the keys to success, which I'm going to talk about in just a minute. Survey early and often. As I said, most of these elections are not going to turn on whether people like public transit. Ladies and gentlemen, you can ask these questions all day long, up to the day you lose, and your voters are going to say, "We think public transportation is great." All in favor of public transportation raise your hand. The issues in most of these elections have nothing to do with public transit. Recognize that there are going to be a whole range of other issues you are going to be dealing with.

Early fund raising. You can't win these things without money. Certainly the size of the community makes a big deal. We only raised $250,000 in Tempe. In Phoenix, we raised $2.3 million. So, wide range, but you have to have money.

Keep it simple. I know that sounds like it's so easy to think about. I can't tell you how much ballot language has played in losing elections. Despite the fact that you live and die with these issues, a vast majority of people that are going to vote on your referendum's future won't focus on it until the day before they go into the ballot booth. No matter what you think how many headlines you have, how many TV, how many radio shows. They're not going to focus until the day before they go into the ballot booth. If they walk into the ballot booth and they don't understand what you're asking them to give them, they're going to vote "no." A confused voter is a no-vote. An uninformed voter is a no-vote. Make it simple so they understand it.

Transit elections are unique. It's a principal I keep preaching everywhere I go. The vast majority of the people that are going to vote on your future will never use what you are asking them to vote on. I don't care if you've got the greatest transit system in the world. The best split you're going to get is going to be 15 to 20 percent of the people in your community. So, again, why would the other 80 percent that are never going to step on your transit system vote for you? You've got to answer that question when you put together your initiative. They're unique elections. Spend a lot of time thinking about what's in it for me.

I think I'm doing okay with time. Keys to success. I won't go through all these in great detail. Timing. Simple things. We had an election once in Phoenix. We did it, I think, the week after income tax time. Everybody said April would be a great time to do it. A lot of people would be around. You have to be around because you have to file your taxes. Not the best time to hold an election.

If you're community is in a depression, laying off people, other issues, it may not be the best time. It's up to you and your campaign consultants to think about that. The other side of it is, I will tell you, in every election I've ever been involved with, there's never a good time to hold a tax election. Show it to me. What's the best time to go ask people to give you more taxes? It's never a great time. But in each individual election, I think this is where cities are different, you got to get a sense. I always lean toward going earlier, not later. But you still have to have enough time to do a campaign. Have a specific plan. Be able to answer what's in it for me. Economical development may be in it for the business community, and they'll never use transit. There may be a whole

range of other issues. We polled in 2000 even though in 1997 the opposition really killed us in Phoenix on air quality. Transit is not going to do anything for air quality. Transit is not going to solve any community's air quality problem. We know that. It's one piece of a pie. One piece of a puzzle that you have to put together. We polled our voters in 2000 in Phoenix. They thought transit is going to help air quality. All of our ads showed the dark cloud and the air quality problems. Even though, technically, most people would say it's not going to solve it. It doesn't make any difference. Make sure you have enough in it for everyone to vote on.

Keep it simple, I talked about that. Champions, make sure you show the benefits. Public involvement. There are, to me, a four-legged stool, a three-legged stool, I added the fourth one for funding. You have got to have a grass roots campaign. You can't just go out and decide what the plan is going to be based on all your wealth of experience and think the voters are going to embrace it. You have got to have public involvement, grass roots plan. You got to have champions. We talked about that and it's up there. You got to have professional help. If you don't have those three things and then combine funding to tie them all together, you are going to lose. Some people think they can have two of those three, or one of those three because they are so strong. Take my word for it, you are going to lose.

Listen to your community. If they tell you they want something, stay ethical, don't do anything you can't do. Give it to them. Make sure you have a regional balance. That's something I don't want to talk about too much. Governance and accountability. A lot of people if you're creating a new agency, that's another issue. We can talk about that at another time. Be a little creative. Some communities really want to see the high tech solution, some people don't. Understand what your community is really attracted to. As I said, have adequate funding when you're doing the campaign. And don't think you can get by. So many campaigns I've talked to people, "Oh well, that's a problem but we can get around it." They lost.

Champions, you can not win a transit election without a champion. If you go in it and say, "Well, we've got a lot of people who like us, they are supporters, but they're not people that really are champions that will lead a campaign," you're not going to be successful. They should be a recognized household name. They should not have any inherent political interest. I was surprised that the mayor of Phoenix turned out to be a much better champion than I thought he was going to be. He knew his constituents and did a great job. Most of the time if it's the mayor, if it's someone that looks like they have a political interest,

they're not the best champion. They've got to have the time to work on it. It's one of the reasons why elected officials are not the best champions. They have other jobs. They don't have time to work on the campaign. But we had a former mayor in Austin that helped us win. She was by far in 1984 the most recognized household name in our community. She was a three-term mayor, the only woman mayor in the history of Austin at the time. And really helped us tremendously. Chamber leaders, former city council people. We had a radio station in Dade County that helped us win our first election. Needless to say, we got great coverage on his radio show. Professional help. You're going to go through this debate every single time.

Local versus national. In my judgement, you need to stick as best as you can to local political consultants. The people that win elections in your communities are who you want to win election in your community. That's not to say that they're aren't some very good national consultants that can give you advice. But there are too many, in my judgment, that have a cookie-cutter approach to winning transit elections. Winning transit elections in San Jose or Los Angeles is not the same as winning in Salt Lake where we won the second time around. Basically with local election people, we had the best numbers eight years ago or whatever it was in Salt Lake, maybe more now. We had the best survey numbers I've ever seen six months before an election. National campaign came in. This is how we win, I'll leave him unnamed, this is how we win them in California. It's a stealth campaign. We don't take on the opposition. It's high-propensity voter, we've won nine out of 10 elections in California this way, we're gonna win. We got killed. Okay, it doesn't always work because it works in California.

The other thing I'll tell you about polling. If you are not $2^1/_2$ to 3 times ahead in your polls when you start thinking about the election, I don't care if that's six months ahead or a year ahead—don't go. Don't think because your're 55-45, it looks good. You need to be in rule of thumb, $2^1/_2$ to 3 times ahead, six months or longer outside of the election, or you're going to lose. Those numbers get tighter and tighter and tighter, and you need to have that kind of margin. Listen to your consultant. What would you expect from a consultant to tell you, okay? Listen to him. That's why you hired him. You know, you might be a great transit manager. You might be a good public relations person. You might be a great operations manager. You don't do transit elections. Listen to the consultants that you hire. If you don't like the advice, change the consultant maybe, but listen to the consultant, okay?

Issue campaigns, frankly, they're different. They're different than election campaigns for individual office. That's one of the reasons why a good local campaign manager or consultant, paired with some of these people you're going to hear about today, including myself, who could give them a little bit of a perspective on what happens nationally on the transit issues, make a very good time. Have a realistic budget. All of your money, 75 percent of your money, is going to come in late. It's going to come in the last 30 days of the campaign. So make sure you're realistic. When you're thinking about buying TV and radio and newspaper, make sure you understand it's in the cash flow, and that's where your consultants are going to be very helpful to you. Of course, the campaign strategy is critical, and that's why good professional consultants are going to give you great advice. Grass roots, the business community today is key in many, many communities. Make sure you have them on board. Neighborhood groups, community organizations, the Speakers Bureau, there's a whole lot of things we can do and talk about during the conference, but it's critical that you have that grass roots.

Before I run out of time, make sure you've got enough money. Community Chair is important. I always love picking or getting the banker, the leading bankers involved as my finance committee. They know how to raise money. No one says "No" to the banker because they don't know when they're going to need that bank to help them the next month in financing. Set realistic budgets, and I won't go through all of that.

Okay, some lessons learned, and then I'll shush. Election issues—you're gonna deal with these, we'll talk about them, I know others are going to deal with 'em. What's in it for me? I've already talked about that. The One Percent Myth. Only one percent of the people in the community are ever going to use public transit. And, if you believe that, then it doesn't do anything for congestion, it doesn't do anything for air quality, it doesn't…the problem is, when you get into debates on these issues—listen to the question. One percent means nothing. The major freeway in your community carries less than three or four percent of the total trips in your community. Understand the question. If it means nothing, get rid of it. Talk about what's strength for you. Most people try to debate our opposition on their turf. Their questions. Most of them are getting very good. They're better than we are in most communities in understanding what plays with the general public. So, stop thinking like a transit person. Start thinking like someone who's focused on winning an election. Then you have a better chance of winning.

"All rail systems are over budget with little ridership." We know that's not true, but you're going to be dealing with that issue if it's rail in your plan. "Transit should pay for itself." We've heard about that, cheaper options are always an election issue that you've got to deal with. Why do transit? We have schools, we have other issues that we have to deal with and you're going to have to be prepared for that. There are other priorities, just like I just said, other issues. Government mistrust; you may have that, you have got to deal with that government mistrust in part of your planning. Empty buses—everyone is seeing empty buses, so why would anyone think they're going to use it if you give them more money? You're going to deal with that issue. "Transit does little for air quality." I touched on that. There are a lot of people that go around this community. If you think you've heard all of the debate on transit in your communities, wait. If you're doing a major election, you're going to be visited by a number of people that do this for a living—going around and trying to make sure that transit initiatives are not passed. We know these folks, we know where they're coming from and of course, the industry would be happy to help. Lessons learned, and I got five minutes so I can do it real quick.

Usually you're going to go, as I said, more than once. Hopefully, you're going to win, but most of the time you're going to do it more than once. The outcome is influenced by other issues. Understand that, deal with that the best you can within your community to try to clean the deck on whatever issues your community is faced with during this time. All local elections identified, most of them were all or nothing propositions. You can't pick and choose whether you vote for bus versus rail. That's a good thing. You want to put your plan together so there's a little bit of something for everyone. By the way, one thing you're going to go through, everyone does this, you're going to go through a debate—do we go for a quarter cent, a half cent, three quarters of a cent? I will tell you, most of the survey research I have done, of these elections, the people who are going to oppose you at a quarter cent are going to oppose you at a half a cent, they're going to oppose you at three quarters of a cent. If your plan is not big enough to answer the question of "What's In It For Me?", you're going to lose. I don't mean be grandiose, don't be bigger than you need to be. You want to be conservative in the way you approach the financing, but make sure you have enough money to do the job, because if the voters don't perceive you have enough money, they're going to not support you. You can succeed as a standalone or in combination with highways. We've seen that happen in both. So, it's not one or the other. The most successful campaigns, as I've said, have had grass roots and professional management, they're well-financed…Pete, how am I doing? I'm almost done on time? Couple more minutes? Okay.

A successful transit election is more likely to be linked with the funding request. Make sure there's a trust factor there. People want to know what they're paying for and what they're getting and the proposition should be focused on short-term and immediate time frames. In Miami, we used to say, "We don't go try to sell the people in Northeast Dade County on something that requires them to buy more than green bananas." These people don't buy green bananas. They don't, people are short-term focused. They want to see what I'm going to get today. You try to tell them it's going to ripen in the future, and 10 years from now you're going to get a great rail system, they think they're going to be dead by then, okay? They're not, it was funny, the opening of MetroRail after we won our election, I had some of the same people that said, "Why would I support you? I'm going to be dead by the time we open." Then sure enough, I reminded them that they're still here. That's fun, if you have a chance to do that, but they don't trust you up front. So be careful with that. Don't try to sell the long-term vision, unless again, in some communities, long-term vision is paired with the short-term benefits. That really does work well.

Most elections are close. They're, you know, thank God for San Jose's and the second election in Phoenix. I mean, you can surprise people. You can win by the, huge majorities. But I'm going to tell you. You're campaign is going to be, probably within three or four percentage points one way or the other, especially if you win. You lose more by wider margins and we win more by narrow margins. Um, interesting—every community that I've studied and been aware of—eventually, after they went the first time, they passed their tax. Now some communities have just gone for the first time. San Antonio and a few others for rail. Eventually, we win. That's what you saw on that first chart. We're beginning to win more often. We're beginning to educate voters better and frankly, you don't have to be pessimistic. You don't have to always think about my friend Roger. If you're here, and you listen to the wealth of knowledge that we have on the panel, and others coming up, you have a lot of reasons to be optimistic. This is a great time to be in public transit. This is a great time to be offering options and choices for people in this country. If you just pay attention to some of the basics, you're going to be successful too. Thank you for inviting me today. It was really a lot of fun.

PETE CIPOLLA:

Alan, thank you.

We're just gonna take, let's do a couple little housekeeping-type things. One, after each of the speakers, we'll allow a couple of minutes for some quick Q&A. Then, toward the end of the session today, we'll open it up to actually asking questions of anybody on the panels and on their other presentations.

The other thing is, we're gonna go straight through folks, so we're not gonna take a break this afternoon. So, if you need to stretch, there's some goodies out in the back there, so feel free. Speakers, don't be offended if people stand up or have to go to the restrooms or whatever, or if you have to stand up, you can stand up and stretch too. But, I think it's important that we do try to just kind of push forward and push through this, so that's going to be the routine today.

Does anybody have…yes, go ahead. Well, you're going to have to move faster than that, Art. Alan…I can repeat the question.

PARTICIPANT:

Could you talk a little more about selling the short and long-term vision?

ALAN WULKAN:

I think the biggest issue you have with most people is, the day after the election, and I swear this is true, the day after our election in Phoenix, our Transit Office got phone calls asking "How come I don't have service, since we just passed this thing?" I mean, the day after. I'm not kidding. So, people focus on the short term. Now, as good planners, as good policymakers in our communities, you need obviously a long-term vision. You need to know where you're trying to get to. If you hired good consultants, they'll help you get to that. But, if you're trying to win an election, don't try to sell the long-term vision as the cornerstone of the election. Certainly in San Jose, they had a 10 year plus, and you'll hear more about that, vision of where transit was going. I will also tell you it helps you a lot, if you're trying to sell the long-term vision, it helps a lot if you've got a real homerun on your hands locally. If you've got a great system, like here, and others like in San Diego, which first put their major system in place first, before they went for the long-term vision, then people begin to trust you a lot more, and you have a chance to sell that vision. But a lot of people want "What's In It For Me?" answered in their lifetime and, as they perceive it…

PETE CIPOLLA:

Alan, are we going to celebrate your next birthday? Well, one more, a couple more questions. I'd like to follow up just a little bit. You're going to hear a lot of different thoughts and a lot of different opinions and you're going to hear me saying this often, over the next day and a half, take it all with a grain of salt. Because you all have to, you have to take what you get here and package it for your own system and package it for your own situation. It's a lot different for us; it's a lot different going forward with the first sales tax or the first measure than like us, going forward with our fourth one. And, you know, we already have a lot of things going, so we could move forward with a measure that doesn't even start collecting tax until 2006. So, it's a different situation for everybody. So, take what you learn and kind of go through it and shake it up a little bit and sees what falls and..oh, we have somebody with a mike there. Go ahead…

PARTICIPANT:

Alan, you said, you said that, in general, the bus initiatives don't do well. Rail does. What about BRT—Bus Rapid Transit?

ALAN WULKAN:

First of all, I don't want to over-generalize there. Bus initiatives, in some communities where rail has absolutely no role, is a little bit more difficult to pass with conservative voters. That doesn't mean that bus initiatives alone won't pass, 'cause they do. In Austin, when we passed ours in 1984, we were bus-only, with just rail planning involved. There wasn't, rail was not a major issue. But they are more difficult, particularly today, when people are looking as what we, and you'll see the Weyrich reports that are back there, and I think Paul and Bill have done a great job, of defining quality transit. BRT plays into that very well. If you can convince your conservative suburban voters, or people that don't see themselves, whether we like it or not, they're not on there today because of a reason. They don't see themselves sitting in a bus, stopping often, and what they perceive is not a quality ride, today. But, we have seen rails, commuter rail and Bus Rapid Transit, be successful in attracting people that won't normally use transit. So if you're looking at a BRT as the future express bus component of your plan, test it in your community. If it makes sense, use it. But if it doesn't, then you might have to look…… sales tax or first measure than like us, going forth with our fourth one. We already have a lot of things going. So we could move forward with a measure that doesn't even start collecting tax until 2006.

So, it's a different situation for everybody. So take what you learn and kind of go through it and shake it up a little bit. And see what falls.

Oh, we have somebody with a mike there. Go ahead.

PARTICIPANT:

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PETER CIPOLLA:

Sharon?

PARTICIPANT:

Alan, I was wondering if you could just comment on sunset versus imperpituity? And that ties in very much with the issue of short term/long term.

ALAN WULKAN:

Yeah, we have dealt a lot with this and in Phoenix, and it was a real problem with us. There are those who really believe—and you'll go through this debate—you'll get more voters who will support you if you have a 20-year term, or a 30-year term on your tax, as opposed to imperpituity.

The research that I've been involved in the past does not support that. It might be intuitive—people might think that's the case. But the research says the priorities of why people support or oppose something is the length of the tax. Yet, our mayor in Phoenix would not let us put the initiative back on the ballot if it didn't have a 20 year sunset. So now we're faced with financing a multi-billion dollar program, and we can't bond long term against it, we have other problems with it. Yet, again as Pete said, every community has got its unique circumstances. If the mayor won't let you get on the ballot unless you've got sun setting in there, it's probably got to be something that has a sunset provision.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, we're going to take two more questions here, then the gentleman over there, and then we're going to move on. You'll have opportunities to ask more questions later on.

QUESTION:

Is there a significant difference in how you would approach a campaign in a small urbanized area with mixed rural setting than in a major metropolitan area?

ALAN WULKAN:

Well, I think the first thing in either one is understand your voters. Understand what their priorities are. I mean, clearly a campaign in Tempe is different in Phoenix. In a rural community it is going to be different than in other places. So, again, it's the survey research part. It's understand the voters. It's understand how they vote. There are clear voting trends in rural communities that are different than in the major metropolitan areas. Bringing in the professional people that have won in your rural communities on major initiatives if there are any, I think are key. And listen to them. Have them tell

you what's going to get that rural farmer to support you. Or that rural resident to support you. That might not be the same issue in a major metropolitan area.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, sir?

QUESTION:

[Inaudible]

ALAN WULKAN:

A lot of our opposition on the industry will say to you—of the total trips made in your community, less than 1 percent ever use public transportation. Even if you were to win—and I have heard this over and over again… let's say you go from no dedicated revenue service to one penny, and it gives you this tremendous amount of money, the best you'll ever do of all trips is go from maybe .5 percent to 1 percent.

Well, first of all, they are talking about all trips. Every time you walk, every time you bicycle. Most of the trips in your community that don't even have transit in your neighborhood, they count all the trips in that area. So if you listen real closely, they're giving you something that is probably true. Less than 1 percent of the total trips in any community will ever use public transit. Just like less than 3 percent of the total trips ever use any given freeway link. Because there are so many trips. We're not trying to get all trips. We're looking at work trips. We're looking at medical trips. We're looking at those trips that we can compete for. In the areas where we provide quality transit, we compete very well for those trips. But don't fall into the trap. The trap is—1 percent of all trips, therefore why make the investment. You wouldn't invest in freeways.

Again, when they come into a community, as they did in Austin, they'll talk about the whole community, where there is no transit. There's only transit in a very small part of the service area, where Capitol Metro provides service. So when they come in there and they say, "Well, look at these numbers, they're terrible." Well, they're terrible because there is no transit in those parts of the community. We never are going to compete well if we can't provide transit. So there are traps. And as you get closer to the election we can…

PETER CIPOLLA:

I think you are going to see a lot of this in the discussion as we follow through to that. Okay?

Alan, thank you, but we really do need to move along.

[Applause]

During dinner tonight or the bus ride to or from, corner these folks and do the brain drain on them too.

PASSING LOCAL TRANSPORTATION TAX MEASURES: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY

PETER CIPOLLA:

I am now pleased to introduce two fine gentlemen from the Mineta Transportation Institute—Dr. Peter Hass and Dr. Richard Werbel. They have co-authored two studies on transit referendum, which they are going to discuss with us.

Peter Haas is professor of the department of Political Science at San José State University. He has numerous scholarly and professional articles on the subject matter, which also includes the 1998 report entitled, "Capital Versus Operating Variance For Transit. Economic Impacts For California."

Richard Werbel is the professor of marketing at San José State University and is an expert on research methodology. He has published numerous reports on that.

Please welcome Dr. Hass and Dr. Werbel.

RICHARD WERBEL:

Hi, I am Richard Werbel. Peter is my colleague. We have a little bit of a power play presentation, so we'll be alternating here.

We're allotted 45 minutes. We are going to each try to go about 10 minutes and then leave a lot of time for questions. We have a lot of research here. We can only touch upon that. We do recommend that you do read our reports. The first one you can get currently; it was published last year. The second one, as Rod said, is in a pre-review stage. But that should be ready in hopefully a few weeks.

The title of the study which was on the last slide, is "Passing Local Transportation Tax Measures: A Follow-up Study." I like to use the word ballot measures rather than referendum or referenda, even though I took four years of Latin in high school and I know plural with Latin, it's easy to get screwed up with that. With ballot measures, it's much easier.

To go into more detail, let's start with the last factor. We are focusing on what we refer to as actionable factors. Those refer to primarily the nature of a

transportation package and the process used to determine it. For example, we have looked at the expiration date of an x-ray machine. Peter will have more to say about that. Peter is going to go over the findings. We're going to refer to them as findings rather than recommendations because this is a research study. I'm going to go over some of the methodology. Anyway, the actionable factors deal with the nature of the transportation package, the process used to determine it, proponents campaigns, opponents' campaigns, nature of coalition. We also have looked at background factors, because they certainly come into play. Just as an interesting background factor that is fairly unusual. In Salt Lake, which is an unusual case by the way we generally found as Ellen found that if you aren't starting with a two to one margin, you're in trouble. In Salt Lake, a month before the election, they did polling and they were, I think, about 10 percent points behind, which was very ominous. In addition, their campaign raised only $200,000. So, those were a couple of factors, combined, that were rather ominous. They won, by about 53 percent I think. The transit agency actually did a lot of communications and there was a lawsuit involved, which was eventually decided in their favor, after the election of course.

But the interesting thing, and a typical thing about that, is roads. They were doing construction on a major interstate and people were really angry at roads. Actually some of the funding was required to go to roads, and some people almost opposed it because it was going to roads. Clearly the sentiment against roads did help here. So there are some unusual features. [Inaudible] actionable features. We found that the best way to study this is through a case approach. That involves interviewing and written documentation that I will describe in a little bit more detail.

In the second phase of the study, we've looked at about 10 ballot measures in communities. Actually in some of those communities, and you'll see a slide of that shortly, not yet, we'll list the communities studied. Phoenix is one of the communities we studied. Each of the ballot measures we're looking at and this is a fairly narrow focus—does have a substantial rail component. That, of course, means that it tends to be done in larger communities. These are the communities that we focused on in this most recent one. In a few of these communities—and I am going to refer to this again later—they actually had two measures. In Alameda County, they had a measure that failed in 1998, two years before the measure that succeeded. As Alan said, Phoenix had a failed attempt by 123 votes in 1997 and won by about a two thirds to one-third margin in 2000. Denver failed in 1997, came back in 1999, and won again by about a two thirds percentage. Sonoma County had another measure in 1998 that failed. The 2000 measure also failed. Although in California, there's a

higher threshold for failure. They actually got 60 percent and failed because the super majority requirement is needed.

In our first study, we included Denver in 1997; Sonoma County; Santa Clara measure in 1996; and Seattle had two measures in 1995 and 1996. So in both studies, I think they've looked at 17 different measures in 12 different communities.

What is different about our case approach, and we need to thank the Mineta Transportation Institute for that, is we've been able to do an intensive study, which usually you can only do a few cases, with 17 different cases again. Again, we needed substantial funding for that and we got it through the Mineta Transportation Institute.

So, let me tell you a little bit about the information that we collected. Because again, we are focusing on these actionable features. We mostly did onsite interviews. For four communities, we did telephone interviewing. And is there anybody here from Salt Lake? I'm not sure if I talked with any of you on the phone, but hopefully I have talked with a few of you.

Since we were interested in the package and the campaigns, we always talked with somebody from the transit agency. We typically talked with somebody from elected officials and/or the representatives aides. We talked to political consultants. We always talked to an opposition. We generally talked to people from the business community. Sometimes we talked to people from the environmental community. In some instances, particularly in California, if you have the environmental community opposed to you, that can be a problem. It was a problem in Alameda in 1998, and a problem in Sonoma County in 1998 and 2000.

We also found it helpful generally to talk to people in the press, particularly newspapers. We would usually try to talk to them at the end, and have them from an objective perspective, maybe clarify some conflicting information we might have received.

We also looked at a lot of written information. We tried to get a lot of the written information before we did the interviews, so that those would frame some issues for us. We looked at some major investment studies. We looked at a lot of survey results. I certainly agree with Alan and found that a lot of research, not just during the campaign, but in putting the package together, makes a lot of sense. People were open with us about the research that was

done. We saw [Inaudible], budgets… We did a lot of content analysis of newspapers. So we have a lot of information on these ballot measures.

One of the interesting things that I mentioned before, we were able to do two measures in a very short time in some communities. If we include our first study, we have Seattle in 1995 and 1996; Sonoma in 1998 and 2000; Phoenix in 1997 and 2000; Denver in 1997 and 1999; and Santa Clara, actually, in 1996 and 2000.

One of the interesting things that we found then supports what Alan said. That is there could be substantial changes within a community in a relatively short time. I think the biggest increase was in Alameda where they went from 58 percent to 81 percent in a two-year period. Some of the others were generally changes in the voting percentage in the 15 percent to 23 percent range. Seattle had the smallest increase, but that was about 9 percentage points. In all those instances, there was an increase, which again suggested optimism. But it also suggests that this is—as Alan said—these transit initiatives may be unusual in a sense that it isn't a philosophical issue. Voters may have some ambivalence. There are things they like. Will the money be worth it? Although sensitivity has been on the upward side, I don't know if that's necessarily grounds for optimism.

What we found in looking at some of these studies is that there could be significant changes in voting primarily on the campaign. In Phoenix, the measure in 2000 was fairly similar to the measure in 1997. Rail did play a more prominent and explicit role in 2000. The tax was reduced. There was a sunset date. The tax was reduced, our understanding is, primarily at the insistence of the mayor so that he could say it wasn't a tax increase. I guess there was a [Inaudible] sales tax for some other purpose that was being phased out. As a Republican, he felt much more comfortable saying that it technically was not a tax increase. So we found big campaign differences. Phoenix is an interesting campaign. I may talk about it a little bit later, particularly in terms of how they dealt with the opposition. Alan talked about that a little bit.

Seattle on the other hand—and Alameda County—there really wasn't that much difference in the campaign. There was more difference in the two different transportation packages. So we certainly found that the nature of the package and the nature of the campaign both can have a substantial effect on results. Peter is going to go into some more details on what our findings were, dealing with the package and the campaign.

PETER HAAS:

Hi. Welcome to sunny San Jose. I'm really glad to see you all here. I rode my bike over here. Yet another trip that won't be one of that 1 percent, but a luxury for me I guess.

The social scientist in me wants to warn you a little bit about the validity for the findings. That is given that we have such a small… even though, as Richard pointed out, we had the luxury of lots of case studies—still, they don't really comprise a scientific type of sample. So the findings that we make are not definitive in a scientific way. Yet we find them to be pretty compelling in many ways.

I would also add that our findings, to the extent that I was able to pick up on what Alan was saying, are pretty much congruent with what Alan had to say. So, I think we are going to find a lot of dovetailing here, and that's a good thing. You'll find that we use slightly different terminology sometimes, and our findings are nuanced in different ways. But I think you're going to find a fair amount of congruence.

What we did was essentially try to isolate factors that we thought would be critical to the outcome of elections. The problem is of course that these factors tend to, using social science lingo, co-vary. They tend to correlate. So you'll find that a community, for example, that has a lot of support from the business community, will also have a lot of funding from that business community. Those that have a business community participated in the planning of the process. All those things tend to roll together. So it's very hard to say from this list of factors which is particularly the most important. But let me just roll right into the findings.

One of the most important things we found, or one of the things that would kind of be most important I should say, is unfortunately something that is probably the least actionable of all the things that we found. That is the perception of a transportation crisis. The communities that were successful in passing these measures tended to have a measurable, palpable sense of transportation, congestion, pollution—all those things bundled together—crisis. The way you can measure that is through survey results, through interviews, and things like that. So communities that did not have this kind of sense of crisis really struggled to convince voters that they needed to pass this particular package.

The second factor that seemed to be a positive in terms of promoting success was, as I mentioned, sponsorship from the business community. Again in the communities that passed, the measures—and that was in this case six out of ten—virtually every one of them had substantial sponsorship from the business community. Locally, for example, the business community here, the high tech community, was clearly instrumental in helping to pass the Measure A/BART measure here.

However, it's not all the business community as the third factor suggests. It's really important, and I think this goes largely with what Alan said, to have a visible… In our case, in these larger communities, they were all elected officials. But somebody with a lot of credibility and a lot of name recognition had to take the lead and be associated with the head of the campaign. Virtually each of the six measures that passed in our recent study, have this key recognizable elected official up front. I won't take the wind out of the sails of the local community, but in Charlotte for example, the Republican mayor of Charlotte was very active and out front and lead their measure successfully. Whereas in the communities that failed, they simply lacked that one recognizable person who could be the symbolic leader of the campaign.

Fundraising is the next factor. Now bear in mind that all of our communities are big communities, so I don't want to take the wind out of the smaller communities. But in these large communities, there is almost an acid test. If you had a $1 million or more, you passed. If you didn't have $1 million, you failed. There was one case in Austin which did have more than $1 million and they managed to fail. But every other case in our study, that rule was consistent.

Again, these are findings…not recommendations. And so it may be possible to do it in other communities with less money. But I think if you are in a big community, you ought to think about at least getting close to that $1 million figure.

Finally, what we found was that multi-modal projects, and by that we are being very narrow in our description in what we mean by multi-modal. Essentially, we mean a mixture of us and reality. Because remember, all of our studies involve a rail component. But the ones that also threw in some money for bus service tended to be more successful than the ones that were rail only. Now there was at least rail only measure that did pass. But, most of the failed measures were rail only. Again, it doesn't mean you can't pass a rail only

measure. It just seems from our results that having a mix modal approach may appeal to more voters. I think you can see why.

Let's move on to the second list. These are a few more factors that are positively associated with successful campaigns. Now, consultants, and I think Alan will concur with this, will disagree about exactly which medium is best for passing a local transportation measure of this kind. But what we found is that in each of the successful communities, a pretty strong combination approach of both television, some radio, but usually a lot of television mixed with a very targeted, extensive direct mail campaign was successful. Whereas, communities who tried to do it, basically only with television were a little less successful. But, for the most part, if you had that mixture, we found success.

Again, you will find consultants who are sold on one or the other. All I can say is the cities that we looked, the cities that were successful did use a mixture. Some of the cities that were not successful did not use a mixture. That's the basis for that finding.

We, of course, dovetailed with Alan on the importance of an experienced consultant. By that, we mean pretty much the same thing he meant. We mean a consultant who is experienced with local measures, particularly local transportation measures if that's possible. The cities that were less successful tended to use either inexperienced consultants—academics who were working in their spare time; and/or, consultants who were out of their element working on a transit election.

Another thing we found is voters in these cities tended to be much more supportive of rail systems when they were an extension of an existing rail service. That, of course, dovetailed again with Alan. When you have a system in place—and this is my interpretation—it gives voters something to have experience with, they know that it is good, and they feel comfortable expanding it. But trying to present a brand, new comprehensive system, particularly, is going to be a lot of trouble. In Seattle for example, back in 1995, they came out with a proposal for this very grandiose rail system. Ultimately, they were successful the second time around with a scaled back initial rail system.

We also found a few things that were particularly associated with failure, or lack of success. First of all, there were some agencies that seemed to be tainted, for whatever reason. We weren't there to judge the transit systems by any means. But, certainly, there were communities that had a problem image with their transit system. If you believe that you are in that boat, you need to

probably think about doing things to try to remedy that. Because none of the systems that had this kind of image were ultimately successful. Whereas the successful elections were all associated with pretty good, well regarded transit systems. This could be things like public arguments about routing; public partisan bickering about where a route is going to go. In St. Louis for example, there was big to do. The funding was already there for these routes. But that disagreement, that public pain spilled over into the election and helped them defeat that particular ballot.

Organized opposition. Believe it or not, none of the successful measures really faced what we would call "an organized, well-funded opposition." Whereas a couple of measures that lost did face such an opposition. So if you have reason to believe that you are going to face an organized funded opposition, you need to take particular care and be prepared to deal with that opposition in some ways that we may have time to get into later, or we may have to wait to other parts of the conference to get into.

Special elections. This is a fairly subtle one. But what I can say about special elections is… and by special election I mean—do you put the ballot on during a Presidential or Congressional election, or do you have an off year, special dedicated election?

What we found in our study is that every failed vote, that is the four that failed, occurred during a special election. Now that doesn't mean that special elections doom you. Because three of our winning campaigns also occurred in special elections. So it's just something to bear in mind. I'm not as confident in this particular finding as in the others. Nevertheless, it does bear repeating that all the failed elections occurred on a special elections date.

Then, finally, and again this is something that dovetails with Alan, we found that in the losing campaigns, there was a distinct lack of what we call public or stakeholder input. That these were essentially top down. They tended to be initiated more by the transit agency acting more or less alone and sort of as an expert. They failed to get other members of the community involved in the planning and the creation of the transportation package and this seemed to be associated with failure.

Okay, we found a couple of things that really could not be described as factors, per se, but we found them to be important enough that they bear discussion. These were the issues of, "How do you manage the message of your

campaign?" And, "How do you lessen the potential for opposition arguments?" Richard was just going to chime in with a couple of quick comments on that.

RICHARD WERBEL:

These two things are related and let's deal with the opposition issue.

This is a tough issue. I don't think this is an area where we can generalize. We found successful ones going from ones that pretty much ignore the opposition and just stay on their message and focus primarily, if not strictly, on advertising. Because the opposition rarely has much by way of funding. But on the other hand, Phoenix was very aggressive in engaging the opposition. That was important.

Let me just tell you some of the things that Phoenix did that were, I think, quite aggressive.

Firstly, they came up with a very interesting acronym that was also used in Salt Lake for the opposition. The acronym was "CAVE." Anybody want to guess what that stood for? Yeah, "Citizens Against Virtually Everything." In other words, trying to put the onus on them for a solution. Maybe that's one of the things you can try to do to really get the focus and attacking on them to some extent. Although. I think the opposition may adjust. I'm going to talk a little bit more about opposition research. I think, particularly after the 2000 elections, which generally went positive, I would not be surprised if the opposition makes some adjustments. I'm not sure what those adjustments are going to be, but I think that is something that should be anticipated. I mean, it just makes sense once you start losing more, that you're going to make some adjustments.

They also attacked the credibility of some of the lead opponents, which in this case, were fairly easy to attack. I mean, one of the lead opponents actually worked for the state Department of Transportation, but seemed to be in favor of private enterprise solutions. He was being paid by taxpayers money. So there was a little bit of a conflict there. One of the other lead opponents was also fairly easy to criticize. They actually criticized both in ballot arguments, ballot arguments in states that have voter information pamphlets. My understanding is that Texas doesn't, for example, and maybe other states don't even have these pamphlets. But, it's a place where you can make a lot of good arguments.

They also did an interesting thing. Normally, I would probably argue that getting into debates with opposition is something to avoid doing. I mean, it puts them on sort of the same platform of credibility as you. It gives them a chance to get their message out because debates tend to be publicized. They have a lot of statistics that at a minimum, can confuse the voters. But, in fact, a couple of the places that lost, they got involved in debates and I think the proponents tended to lose control over the message then.

In Phoenix, they did something very interesting. In 1997, they thought one of the things that contributed to the failure—although the Governor's last second opposition was probably the deciding factor given the small margin of the vote—was the talk radio stations really killed them. So, they decided to go to the top radio stations, saying they would be willing to debate the opponents if the talk radio stations stayed neutral, in other words a quid pro quo. That worked. They were able to air a series of debates and the radio stations did honor their word. I'm not recommending that this be used in all communities. This is again where I think you need some consultants with understanding of the local community. A lot depends on the nature of opposition, maybe what some additional polling shows, whether you're ahead, how far you're ahead, in terms of how you engage the opposition. I think some of the opposition is where you need some contingency planning. Surprises can happen and if you have plans ahead of time, that's good. If you're going to do contingency planning, it's very important to do research on what the opposition arguments are likely to be.

PETER CIPOLLA:

We only have a few more minutes so we do want to move on to our final conclusion.

Obviously this issue of managing the message and dealing with opponents is very subtle, and it's different in different communities. That's why we didn't place it with the other conclusion. It's a lot more nuanced and we don't really have time to get into every nuance there.

So moving on to our final conclusions, first of all bear in mind that combining the two studies together, only 8 of the 17 passed. We had 6 of 10 in the last study, but overall, 8 of 17 have passed. So, there's nothing certainly guaranteed about passing these measures.

Secondly, we found that essentially, it's hard to quantify, it's hard to even qualify. But we found that the passing measures featured well researched proposals and well planned campaigns. If you don't have those elements in place, the odds are probably going to be against you.

Then, finally and this is a message that I hope we're getting between the three of us by now, if you don't succeed, definitely try again. Because we have plenty of examples in instances where communities have gone back, they've learned from their mistakes, they've learned their marketplace, they've come back, and they've done very well.

We'd like to take a few questions now. Thanks a lot.

QUESTION:

You said multi-modal, and then you said by that you meant rail and bus. I'm wondering if you looked at any measures that also included road improvements? And whether you could comment on whether that was helpful or not because it might be an indicator of a more broadly based supported campaign versus actual support from a margin?

The second one is clarifying on special election. Do you mean a special election that was called at a time, like a municipal election where it might nor normally occur? Do you just mean even year versus odd year elections?

PETER HAAS:

First of all, we did look into the issue of highway funding. Because we thought originally that would be something good, that would help measures pass. But in fact, in this particular study, we did not find very good support for that idea. What we found was that the highway-bus combination worked fine, but adding in highways in this particular go around was not particularly helpful. You have to almost read the report to get the nuances there. But, we're giving you a shortened version here.

PETER CIPOLLA:

You meant rail-bus version, Peter?

PETER HAAS:

Oh did I say highway? I'm sorry. Rail and bus we found seemed to be the most successful combination, whereas the results on throwing in highway were at best inconclusive. Again, that doesn't mean that you can't win with a highway component. Because back in 1996, Santa Clara had both. These are trends, not definitive conclusions in most cases.

Second of all, with respect to the elections, we are basically talking about any odd year election. But most of these special elections were just dedicated to that particular issue. Actually, you could come up with maybe four of five classes of elections, but with only ten cases then you don't really have any. So what we basically did was divide it between Congressional and Presidential elections versus everything else. Everything else clearly fared worse than a more general either Presidential or Congressional election.

That would be the conventional wisdom but our data doesn't really support studying that.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Let me add a few things about the highway issue. It's a complex issue and I think it's hard to generalize. I think in Austin the fact that there was no highway component and that there had been very little highway work done, yeah, I think that was an important indicator on the debate. The opponents acronym was "ROAD"—"Return Our Allocated Dollars." I think that was an important argument there. Austin was also a case where the prior transit agency actually had gotten into some problems. I think they were an issue also.

I think in Alameda County, they got over 80 percent. I think they needed a road component. I don't think they would have gotten the support of the business community there, without that support.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Richard, Alan wants to throw his two cents in.

ALAN WULKAN:

When I grew up in the East Coast, I thought big turnouts were great for issue elections. Then I moved to Arizona. Big turnouts for conservative voters on tax issues usually don't work too well. So, be very careful drawing conclusions on whether big turnouts on general elections are in your best interest.

PETER CIPOLLA:

I think it goes to the question or the statement—"Poll early and often," and give your voters what they want, whether it's roads, transit, bus transit, transit only, or whatever.

PARTICIPANT:

I would add that the election issue is a finding but it's one of our less strongly supported findings. So you need to be very careful. I agree with Alan about that one.

PETER CIPOLLA:

You had a question?

TOM SHROUD:

Tom Shroud from St. Louis. I would just comment on our 1997 election which was a special which we lost on the suburbs. The opposition didn't need any money, because it dominated the news. So, the opposition didn't have to raise money, They got on all the talk shows, etcetera. We went into the election showing 55 percent, 60 percent in favor. The week after the election that we lost, we showed 55 percent or 60 percent in favor. So, I think…

ALAN WULKAN:

Sorry, but yours is one of the cases that I am basing that observation on to be honest. So, yes, it is something worth looking at and it's not just turnout. It also has to do with this issue of managing the message.

PARTICIPANT:

Speaking of the news, we did find that there tended to be rather substantial local news coverage, certainly in special election years because what else is there? But that's true even in election years. In Austin, where you have got in a sense a local son running for president, it got a lot of coverage. But of course, that was the first measure. But what we did find and maybe this is one of the reasons why later measures combined are more likely to pass that tends to be an old issue for the press and they may give it less coverage—the opponents in Phoenix were upset that it didn't get more coverage in 2000. And the newspaper reporter said, "Why repeat the same arguments we made in 1997?" So the press is an issue. You have got to deal with that.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Let's get two more questions. Go ahead.

KAREN RAY:

Karen Ray from Austin.

My question is—there has been a lot of debate around the country about the amount of money you spend educating the public with public sector dollars from the authority versus the money invested by the campaign which is purely the political. Salt Lake took a very aggressive stance. We didn't have as good luck with some of the things we dealt with in Texas.

I'm just curious what that meant, because I felt that we made a conscious choice and I'm not going to second guess that. But did you look at that at all? About the dollars invested by the agency, public sector dollars which are constrained? Versus the information on a campaign and how that affected the outcome?

PARTICIPANT:

That's a very tough issue because there can be legal problems and as you say, Salt Lake took a very aggressive approach. I mean, they did what I call "television advertising" during the campaign. They started behind and they didn't have much of a budget to work with. They were sued and there position was supported.

In San Antonio, I think the agency was much less aggressive and they were sued and the lawsuit, I believe, was against the agency.

So, I'm not a lawyer, but…

PARTICIPANT:

I think it's highly doubtful hat you're going to win with a public agency's money. I think you're going to need private funding out there to do it.

PETER CIPOLLA:

One more question.

PARTICIPANT:

Actually, that was my question.

Regarding using public education…

PARTICIPANT:

I'd like to chime in and say that we did look at that, not systematically in terms of amount of dollars spent, but I would say in a good percentage—I don't have the number on the top of my head—a good percentage of the successful campaigns did include an extensive public education effort by the transit agency. I'm thinking Charlotte, Phoenix, Seattle and their second go around. So that's' certainly something that can help you, but there are legal and other considerations.

PARTICIPANT:

One final question, if I may. I did have one part B to this. Just any chance on defining public education? Just in terms of Salt Lake's case. I mean, what did they say in terms of how they defined that? Because we're struggling with that and I can see that question coming up.

PETER CIPOLLA:

I think tomorrow's session is going to be more suited to get into that type of debate.

We've got one more question back here and that's it, because we really need to move on. Sorry to be the monarch up here but that's my role today folks.

RICHARD BRANNAMAN:

Richard Brannaman from Portland. I think everything we do in Portland defies convention. Because we won our first couple and then we lost a couple. We had a million dollars but we lost. We were doing an extension but we lost. We learned a lot, and we know pretty much why we lost. But, one of the things that happened in our last campaign was the media was relentless. They took every argument that the opposition made, which were a handful of people, and repeat them in the paper as if the were truth. It was day after day that it was going to be "$4 million a trip on this light rail line," the "1 percent," and all that kind of stuff.

So I am wondering if you dealt with campaigns where the media itself was biased in their news stories. Because the editorials were all with us, the editorial board was totally positive, yet the stories on the front page day after day were very negative.

PARTICIPANT:

I don't know about extreme bias, but we found examples like yours. What we found is that in successful communities, they were prepared for that opposition. Maybe not the city where you were. But a hallmark of a successful campaign was one that was already prepared to deal with those kinds of contingencies and had experts ready to come in and testify in some cases. Or essentially, they were prepared for all those.

Now there are other nuances to this in terms of whether you want to go to a so-called "stealth campaign" and try to avoid any confrontation or not. I think we are going to get into that in specific sessions.

PARTICIPANT:

You can also use the editorial to some extent to maybe counter that. If they're going to support you in Phoenix for example, there was one whole editorial written on the 1 percent solution. It totally debunked that. So I think if you have got them on your side, that's one thing you can possibly do. Again, there is a lot of coverage. At best, it going to be balanced.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, Richard and Peter, thank you very much.

[Applause]

We're going to move on now. Their reports are in the back of the room. They're going to be with us tomorrow, so you're going to have ample opportunity to keep them fit.

Again, there's no magic potion. Just a lot of good ideas.

TWELVE ANTI-TRANSIT MYTHS: A CONSERVATIVE CRITIQUE

PETER CIPOLLA:

Our next speaker is Bill Lind. Bill Lind, as most of you know, is with Free Congress Foundation. He has just issued a brand new report—and I think everyone is grabbing copies of this. It is an excellent report on twelve anti-transit myths, a conservative critique. Bill, as you know has teamed with Paul Weyrich on a number of other reports, including the 1966 report, "Conservative and Mass Transit—Is It Time For A New Look?"; in 1999, "Does Transit Work—A Conservative Reappraisal." Currently, he is working on a fourth study—"Bring Back the Streetcars—A Conservative Vision of Tomorrow's Transportation." So please welcome, Bill Lind.

BILL LIND:

As was just noted, we are just releasing our new report, the third in a series on conservatives and mass transit here today. So we hope that is one of the events of the conference.

What lead us to do this study is the fact that we noted what we call the "anti-transit troubadours" and their travels around the country. As has already been mentioned, if your town is going to have a referendum in transit, you will get a visit from these people, probably with Wendell Cox in the lead. We noticed something else. Wherever the troubadours go, they always sing the same songs. It doesn't matter what type of rail transit you are proposing. It doesn't matter what it's cost is, where it is going to go, who it is going to serve, what it's ridership productions are, or anything else. They always say the same things. In that, we saw an opportunity.

So what we have done here—and I am not going to stand up here and read to you what is in it, with a couple of exceptions where I want to make a couple of specific points about it—but what we have done in this our longest study to date, is identify twelve of their major arguments and a bunch of the minor ones, and give you some perspective answers that can at least get you started.

It is critically important in the view of Paul Weyrich as well as myself—and Paul is one of the most knowledgeable people in the country on how to organize for and win elections, including referendum—it is absolutely

critically important that you answer these people, that you answer the charges. We have seen one referendum after another go down in defeat because the charges were not answered. The transit authority had its polls and it had its money and it had its consultants and it thought, "Well, we're all set. We don't need to pay attention to these people." Then they lost, because in fact, these guys do a pretty good job.

The reason they can do a good job is that a referendum is not like an election between one of them. Except for me, I voted for Pat Buchanan.

In a referendum, that's not true. In a referendum, all you have to do is create doubt. The voter who has doubt, the voter who has questions, the voter who is uncertain, has a perfectly simple answer. He votes no.

So, you're in a situation where all the opponents have to do, and they do it pretty well, is come in with some of these statements like, "Transit only carries 1 percent," raise some doubt in the mind of the voter, who again is not paying a lot of attention for the most part, and he goes and votes "no."

So you have got to answer. What we have tried to do here is again at least get you started by identifying what the traveling anti-transit troubadours are most likely to say in your town.

Now our study, of course, addresses their arguments from a conservative perspective. We are conservatives. But beyond that, most of the people are likely to vote against you in a referendum are also conservatives. For the most part, the liberals think transit is just a good thing. So they're going to vote for it regardless of whether it makes any sense or not.

Conservatives look at transit with a cold and fishy eye. First of all because we don't like government. Secondly, because we really don't like taxes. Most conservatives figure that transit is not something they are ever going to use and therefore it's just another damn transfer payment. This gets to the bus and rail issue also. Our study, like most of our studies, focuses on rail. Very few conservatives see themselves riding a bus. Almost all conservatives are riders from choice. They have a car. They have a car available, usually a pretty nice car. We're not poor most of us. If we want to drive, we can. We're not going to leave the BMW in the garage and take the smoke-belching bus, burping its way down some local street, stopping at every other corner and taking forever to get into town. There can be exceptions—express buses, if we look at the

demographics, probably a lot of those people have pretty good incomes and view themselves as conservatives and probably vote accordingly.

But for the most part, conservatives want rail. Some of this is rational. Some of it isn't. But, it is an absolute and overwhelming fact that most people—I suspect even a lot of people who aren't conservatives—see rail as the definition of high quality transit. Most conservatives want quality. Again, they are middle class or upper middle class people who can afford quality in other aspects of their lives. They want it in transit too. So therefore, if they're interested in transit, it is going to be rail transit. Now many of them also don't even know what rail transit means.

Remember most rail transit disappeared in this country a very long time ago. My colleague Paul Weyrich was in Denver at one point with a conservative senator who was very much opposed to transit, including light rail. And Paul said, "Will you ride it with me?" And the senator said, "Okay." After about ten minutes on it, the senator turned to him and said, "This is nice." Very few conservatives, very few Americans, have any idea of what rail transit is really like unless they are in one of the few towns that already has it. This gets to the issue of expanding from a small segment and so forth which we have said in the past is very important. Simply because, even conservatives don't know what it means. But, once they do figure out a lot of conservatives do ride rail transit, then it is something they will in many cases vote for.

The study answers the critics on two levels. This is not explicit in it, so let me draw out what I mean. We identify, as I said, 12 major arguments and a bunch of others, and we provide some specific answers. My favorite, which I will talk about a little here, because it is one of the ones the press loves, is the arguments that it would be cheaper to buy or lease a new car for every rider than to build a new light rail system. In each of the myths, we quote from the transit critics so they can't deny that they said that. I will quote here from our old friend, Wendell Cox, "Finally, light rail is very expensive. With respect to virtually all new systems, it would have been less expensive to lease each new commuter in perpetuity, in some cases a luxury car such as a Jaguar XJ8, or a BMW 740I." This was in a publication from our good friends at the Heritage Foundation.

As we note in our answer, this one is a real howler. To put it into perspective, a new BMW 740I goes for about $62,900. APTA estimates that approximately 13 million people use transit on a typical weekday. 13 million times $62,900 would be $817.7 billion, almost half of the annual Federal budget.

We get a little more specific as we go along. We look specifically at St. Louis, which is one of our favorite examples. St. Louis' 18-mile MetroLink Light Rail Line cost $450 million to construct the initial line. It carries about 42,500 riders on an average weekday. Onboard rider surveys indicate that about 80 percent of the riders are new to transit. They are Mr. Cox's new commuters. To buy each one of them a new BMW 740I would cost $1.1 billion, about 2.5 times as much as it would cost to build MetroLink. That's only the beginning. Light rail equipment is often in service for decades, as those of us who like PCC cars can note. In around 5 years, all of those BMW's are going to need replacing. So you have to spend the $1.1 billion about four or five times before you have to rebuild MetroLink. Plus of course, the cost of MetroLink includes the cost of the road, or in this case, the track. Very few BMW's come with their own roads attached. To the cost of the car must be added the cost of the roads to carry them, the parking spaces to hold them, the police to ticket them when they are driven as BMW's are meant to be driven, and the fire and rescue crews to pry them open when they run into each other.

In short, it's poppycock. But you have got to be able to make a point that it is poppycock. This comes to sort of the metal level, as a philosopher would say.

What you can use our study to do is inoculate your local community, and particularly the press, about what's going to happen. Right at the beginning, you can say, "By the way, our town is going to get a visit from the anti-transit troubadours. Here's what they are going to say. We know that because they say the same thing everywhere they go. And, here's the act." You reveal it as what it is. It is a traveling road show. It is an act. "Here's the act they are on. Here's why they do it. Here's what they are going to say. Here's why it is nonsense." So, you have inoculated, you have vaccinated, your local community against them before they even come on the scene. Does this totally nullify all arguments against transit? No.

Let me touch on another one, just briefly, that we mention here. Another one that has to be answered, not just rhetorically but in the design of a system. That is—that transit brings crime into a community. I think that this argument is going to become more and more common. But it's different, because local people are, in many cases, the ones who are advancing this. They are doing so because they are scared. This is not a phony argument about giving everyone a BMW. We know from the experience with the Baltimore Light Rail Line that indeed rail transit can bring crime into a community. It did, particularly car theft. Now, it's not real easy for the thief to come out from the light rail line and steal a television and then carry it back on the light rail line under his arm.

But, it is easy to go out into a suburban area where crime is low and a lot of people still leave the car in the driveway with the keys in the ignition—and spending my summers as I do back in the west side of Cleveland, yes there are parts of America where we still live that way. And it's kind of nice. They don't have to take the light rail line back into town because they have just acquired alternate transportation. Here where the argument is real and where the concern is genuine on the part of locals.

What's happened all too often were these guys came to town, took everybody by surprise, got all kinds of headlines, and the charges they make are never responded to effectively. The voter goes into the voting booth with questions in his mind. So when that happens, you lose. On that, I'll be happy to take some questions.

[Applause]

PARTICIPANT:

I've read from some communities that there has been an effort to discredit these troubadours by suggesting that they are self-interested or paid message-bearers. How has that played? Has that been successful and is that an approach to take?

BILL LIND:

I'd be a little cautious there, because we haven't seen solid proof of that. Plus, they can always play the same game in reverse and say, "Well, look how many people advocating this worked for the transit system." Guess what, you think they're not self-interested? What we've actually done here that we think may be somewhat more promising, and is certainly a great deal more fun, is that we have dug around and found some of their own prescriptions for how to solve transportation problems. Mr. Cox had a wonderful one for Atlanta that would have literally paved the entire city with eight-lane highways a mile apart in a grid every direction, double-deck highways, underground highways. I mean, it literally became self-satire. It was all you had to do to discredit him was to quote him. That is very effective, in our view. Indeed, we include in our study here the quotations from Mr. Cox on that. We strongly encourage you, if he comes to your town, to let your newspapers know before he gets there what his solution is. That, I think, may work better.

PARTICIPANT:

Have you ever seen a situation where, as you said, people can by raising doubt, cause them to simply vote no? Where you basically put an A or a B on the ballot? You basically say, "Here's our plan, as we understand their plan is this, select one of the two plans."

BILL LIND:

I have not. I don't know of any case where that's happened. I don't know whether anyone else on the panel… no. I don't know legally how possible that is. I'm not sure the way the law is written on these matters, whether you could do that, without at least giving the option of "Do nothing." Then of course, you'd be worse off, because now you'd have to get a majority in a 3-way contest.

VICKIE SHAFFER:

I'm Vickie Shaffer, Huntington, West Virginia, a much smaller community than…it's not working…now it is. I'm Vickie Shaffer, from Huntington, West Virginia, a much smaller community than many that we've talked about.

What are the dangers, in the case of living in a more liberal community, of taking your enemy's arguments to the press when your enemy probably won't show up?

BILL LIND:

Um, that could be a factor. You may want to calculate that in, if the other side looks at it and says, "Hey, this is hopeless." Then you may want to soft-pedal this whole thing. I'm talking generally about larger communities here, where they see a pretty good chance of coming in and derailing something.

Yes…in the back?

PARTICIPANT:

I think that the discussion that you have done here is to address issues where the opposition and the proponents see no meeting of the minds. I would hope that this would not mean that those who are proponents of transit measures would not try to incorporate into their proposals, and their programs, the kinds

of issues that some of these, the opposition leaders, really do have at heart when there are serious issues and not just political issues. For example, I think the issue of bus versus rail is a serious issue. The issue of operating costs versus capital costs is an important issue. Equity and environmental justice really mean that our packages for the proposals that go on the ballot have to be tailored to address all of the community needs and not just building a rail system.

BILLL LIND:

What we're addressing here falls under the category of what I was talking about in crime. These are genuine local concerns. Yes, of course, you try to address those by satisfying the different constituencies, building a consensus and so on. What we're addressing in this study is specifically what I might call national arguments of the traveling anti-transit troubadours. Again, we do that because these guys have been pretty successful. They have done a lot of damage in a lot of places. But, there's absolutely a distinction between what you're talking about, which are genuine local concerns that tend to be quite specific, and their arguments, which again don't change town to town, project to project. They're always the same. The 1 percent was mentioned earlier. It's a classic. I would just note our whole second study—this transit study addresses that—by saying, "Hey folks, the measurement itself is wrong, and here's why and here's a different measurement, which is transit competitive trips."

PARTICIPANT:

Just a quick question. Paul has, you know, made it really a habit of his to go and do the debates very effectively. In your opinion or in his opinion, do you believe that they have been effective? I mean, I think one of the panelists said that debates are risky. How do you feel about that issue?

BILL LIND:

I think that in general you must address the opponents. Absolutely. Now, Paul is particularly effective, because of course he's a widely known conservative. Where are most of these debates taking place and who's participating in them? The audience is the local conservative community who are skeptical about this to start with. The venue is often a conservative radio talk show host's program and the opponent is someone who's at least calling himself conservative. In fact, he's usually libertarian, which is in fact a very different thing altogether. But the two tend to get confused in the public mind. So, when you have

somebody on the right coming in advocating the transit program, then that changes the political dynamics. I think that is effective. But, more broadly, I would say that except in special cases such as where your community has got a unique nature politically, I would say it is extremely dangerous not to answer the critics and not to do so quickly and well. Okay, two more questions. One here.

PARTICIPANT:

To follow on that point just made, it might be instructive to look at what happened in Columbus, Ohio, where we had a debate in which a local fellow who lived in one of the nearby inner-city neighborhoods that was beginning to turn around was able basically to organize and spend $250 and derail our last issue. What happened was that Wendell Cox sought him out and then parachuted his data and his material and his stuff into that guy's hands as well as into the newspaper and the alternative newspaper took up the fellow's cause? The big mistake that you don't want to make in terms of a debate is having had this fellow who was a local organizer debating the Director of the Transit Authority. This fact, right away, just elevated this guy and gave him all the ink that you could possibly want it to do. So, you do want to debate, but you want to frame it within your local context. You know Wendell's gonna come. Wendell tried to crash something I did, and I'll tell you this story over drinks, but the point is—Don't have your agency as part of the debate.

BILL LIND:

I think that's true, the self-interest question works against you, because the easy thing for the opponent to say is "Well, your salary is paid by this money. We're just increasing your empire, aren't we?" You're very vulnerable on that. Keep in mind the opposition can succeed with a very small budget, because the newspaper wants to write a balanced account. So, it is going to seek the critics out in many cases, even if they have very little money, and give them a fair amount of ink. Otherwise, it's not a story from their standpoint. It's certainly not a balanced story. So they can get a lot of free publicity. Then, keep in mind once again, that all this guy had to do was raise doubt. He didn't have to prove a point. He just had to raise doubt and raise questions in people's mind. And that's…yes?

CARL PALMER:

It appears to me that in the Cincinnati region, Wendell and his troubadours have essentially preempted the debate. The Cincinnati plan is really not very far up the growth curve yet, but Wendell's already copped some significant politicians, the editorial pages of the major newspapers and many talk shows, before the debate even started. First of all, everybody should be aware of that, I think it's an evolving strategy on their part. Secondly, how do you overcome that once he gets the first jump?

BILLL LIND:

Well, I think even then, you can start to sit down and explain to people. Here is the act that's going on. This is a national act. They do this on a national basis. The very fact of pointing out that the arguments are always the same I think, is powerful, because that, from a local standpoint, gets people start to say "Oh, well maybe he really doesn't know our local situation." It does, however, underline the importance of preempting. This is true in almost any type of conflict, that the guy who gets his blows in first has a tremendous advantage. These people are not incompetent at what they do. They have generally done what they do pretty well.

I would also note, however, that in Cincinnati, he's got fertile ground, because there is a lot of disagreement on what the route ought to be. The politicians are at each other's throats over this. It isn't where it's a case of the political establishment agreeing, then having to deal with its critics. That, of course, makes the job of people like Wendell Cox all the easier. All right, I guess that's it?

[Applause]

PETER CIPOLLA:

I'll pull the mike down. Thank you, Bill.

Looks like we're going to have about 15 minutes for Q&A after our next speaker. I think what we'll do is devote a few questions directly to our next speaker and then open it up for about 15 minutes or so. Don't forget we got all day tomorrow too.

BROOKINGS INSTITUTE UPDATE ON ELETION DAY 2000 BALLOT MEASURES

PETER CIPOLLA:

Our next speaker is Robert Puentes. Rob is a Senior Research Manager at Brookings Institution. He's going to also focus his discussion, where are you, in back of me, or down there…oh, there you are, down there. Regarding the 2000 ballot measures, Rob has recently authored papers on Flexible Funding for Transit; Growth-Related Ballot Measures and a Policy Agenda for Older Suburbs.

Rob—all yours**.**

ROBERT PUENTES:

Well, thanks a lot for having me here tonight. My head is spinning …[Inaudible] I wish I had the ability to edit some of the things I was going to say, because I've definitely learned a lot just sitting up here today. There's going to be a lot of redundancies, not redundancies, dovetailing, as we call it, with what everybody else has said before. But I think it's definitely consistent with what this audience is looking for and what we've talked about here today.

There are copies of the report that's on that back table. Please take them with you. I don't want to haul them back to D.C. I've been asked to talk about a paper that we prepared in connection with last November's election.

The paper came out in February, where we looked not only at transit measures, but at every single measure that went on throughout the country, that we thought had the ability or the potential in some way to shape the pace, the quality, the speed of growth in metro areas and communities, regions throughout the country. The growth issue is very hot, obviously, keeping us very, very busy. There's a lot of discussion around the country about this, not just from the transit perspective, but a whole host of issues. I think there's a lot of commonalties between the stuff you're trying to do and the stuff that we looked at here in the report. Just a quick commercial about us.

The Brookings Urban Center—our mission is to understand all the key trends that are going on across the country. That's why this report is very important. We knew that these ballot measures, not the referenda—I don't speak Latin—

but the ballot measures definitely had some kind of key role in shaping growth around the country last November. So this report fills that part right there. We identified the most promising strategies for dealing with growth, for promoting healthy cities and strong regions. We developed a metropolitan and an urban agenda that's based on this empirical evidence, based on the trends. It includes the best practices. We do some of it in Washington. We do some of it with academics and other people from all over the country. So, I think again, a lot of this is very complementary. The nexus of the report was how growth-related issues were dealt with at the ballot box last November. In summary, there were 553 measures we found that came before voters that dealt with some aspect of the growth debate. There are lots and lots of different measures. They were in many different categories; we got them down to five specific categories, which I'll talk about in a minute.

One of those categories was Open Space; Open Space measures that were designed to build and maintain parks and recreational facilities. This is the one element of the report that's consistent over the last three years. We did reports in 1996 and in 1998 that just focused on Open Space. These measures continue to be highly, highly popular. About 80 percent of these passed last year and that's about the same percentages that we saw in 1996 and in 1998. Less than 10 percent of the overall measures were initiated by citizens. A lot of the measures that got a lot of attention—national press too—were citizen initiatives that dealt with growth-related issues. They were contentious, they were very controversial, but for the most part these only made up about 10 percent of all the measures that went before voters last November related to growth. Again, these citizen initiatives were related to growth management and were very contentious. The regulatory restrictions on growth were controversial and contentious, as I said. The transportation measures really received a mixed reception. We didn't just look at transit. We looked at everything. We looked at the roads, multi-modal, pedestrian, whatever you're talking about, but they did receive a mixed reception. I'll talk about those.

Measures that just focused on transit, however, really did perform very, very well, probably one of the best. But the main summary is that the growth debate in this country is very, very diverse, very complex and that echoes a lot what the panel's already talked about. Just a couple of quick cautions, the ballot measures by definition are only actions that required public approval. We didn't look at all the other things that are going on. A lot of states are doing a lot of things related to "Smart Growth" if you will, but they don't appear in this report. It reflects voter sentiment, which in some cases was highly influenced by spending, by the media; this has already been covered by everybody here

and it doesn't capture the diversity in local and state governments. There are lots of different statutory, legal requirements. Again, we kind of already touched on these. It was just too much for us to get into at the time. The measures again are a snapshot in time. These are just the measures that took place last November. If there are inconsistencies with the other thing the panel's already talked about, I hope that those are because they weren't in last November's elections. But again, just a snapshot in time.

Lots and lots of things have changed since then. But probably most important is that a "yes" vote or a passage of a particular measure in this report doesn't necessarily indicate a vote for "'smart growth" or for "good things" that are going to beneficially shape the way that our regions grow. I have a hard time even saying that, because we had a very hard time internally trying to qualify whether a measure was "good" or "bad". There are lots of these that are slam-dunks—they're obviously good measures. But a lot of the other ones were so strange and screwed up, that we didn't even know how to talk about them internally. We didn't know how to talk about them in the report. There are a couple of those case studies that I will touch on here, though.

But again, this is why you have to be careful with the percentages, where measures have passed 80 percent, 90 percent. You have to be just a little cautious. So, here are the five categories. Again, there were 553 total, almost half of these were related to open space, to the preservation of open space, usually on the suburban fringe. About 80 percent of these passed. The Governance category was related, basically, to the way governments do business. There was government's flexibility, mergers, decision making by local governments. There were a few of these. There were Economic Development measures, Growth Management measures; again, very contentious. Only about 54 percent of these passed, as opposed to the others you could see, very high numbers. Infrastructure is where the transportation and transit stuff lives. You break these down—most of the Infrastructure measures were transportation-related. A good portion were related to schools. Not programs within the schools, but the actual construction of, you know, a school on the suburban fringe definitely has effects on the way regions grow. Affordable housing—very important issue I'll talk about and a little bit about Water quality.

We broke these down by states and we found that the top five states, as far as the ballot measure went, made up a little more than half, of all the measures in the country. It's for a lot of reasons, and not necessarily because these places are experiencing tremendous growth crisis. Most of them are; most of the

country is. But there's a whole host of reasons. We already talked about a little bit of them: Government fragmentation, judicial precedence, legal requirements, whatever the case is, definitely had an effect on how many measures appeared in different states. California—there's fragmentation, there's tremendous growth pressures. In Colorado, there are legal requirements that require things to come before voters. If the local government wants to spend a budget surplus, for example, they have to send it before voters. In New Jersey, there is enabling legislation that allows local governments to put before a vote referenda that are designed to raise sales taxes to preserve open space. So all those things have an effect on how things get onto the ballot in different states. We broke them down by region; this isn't too interesting; it's pretty much evenly spread out. You can see in the northeast that about 91 percent of the measures passed in that region. Most of these again were related to open space as opposed to places in the west, where only 62 percent passed; it's a relatively very low number. Again, a lot of these were related to growth management, to regulating how growth occurs in a community, and these didn't do so well. We'll look at how the measures actually got on the ballot.

In a lot of cases, as you know, there's lots of different ways, but really, broken down, they can fit neatly into two categories.

The citizen initiatives, you know, the standard signature campaigns, made up only about 10 percent of the measures, with most of them in growth management. But there were in a couple of other categories, transportation included. The vast majority of the measures were referred to the voters by legislatures. It's important to note though that a lot of legislative referrals started out as citizen initiatives, where citizens were generating a lot of interest, they had a really good idea, and the legislature would kind of co-op the measure. I don't mean that in the pejorative. Sometimes it's a good thing. It kind of helps it to move along. Maybe that's a reflection of why the citizen initiatives didn't do so well. They were hot-button issues, they're ones that legislatures probably didn't want to touch.

It's also important to point out though that these citizen initiatives are not necessarily just the guy standing with a clipboard outside of a grocery store. These are well-financed, in some cases, they're very well-financed, sophisticated campaigns, financed by wealthy individuals. There were a couple of cases in Florida and Washington where this was true, or by very well-heeled special interests. The measures in Arizona related to growth management were an example of this as well. We wanted to see what the measures were designed to do. Again, we knew that they were, they have, they dealt with different

aspects of the growth debate, but they didn't have the same intentions. Most of them were related to funding. They were designed to provide funding for a specific project or plan. The overwhelming majority of these were in the open space category, designed to purchase open space and protect it from development. There was a pretty good number, actually, that were advisory measures. They were just designed to kind of get a sense of the electorate. They were pretty much in all the categories, but they didn't have any real binding authority, but they did very, very well; almost all of them passed. The other category was Regulatory. This was to develop growth management plans, affordable housing ordinances, whatever the case is, they made up a pretty good portion of them as well.

We also wanted to break them down spatially to find out where these things were taking place. We knew that the economic development measures seemed to be coming up a lot more in the central cities. So we had a research assistant actually spend a lot of time breaking them down, and plotting them on a map. It's all included in the report, and we found that the absolutely overwhelming majority of these measures were located in the suburbs. Again, most of these related to open space, and most of them related to growth management. These are places that are experiencing tremendous growth pressures for the most part; these things are appearing on the ballot. In fact, suburban led in all the categories except for economic development and I'll talk about that in a second. Actually, I'm going to talk about each of the categories very quickly. I want to spend a lot of time on the transit part of it, but, the reason I want to talk about all these categories is because they're all in some ways related. They are all kind of, hate to use the phrase, inexorably linked. I mean, they're all related to how communities are growing, and it's important if you're putting, I think, if you're putting transit measures on the ballot, that you understand what else is going on around the country.

In a lot of cases, you'll find allies in the people who are working to influence the growth debate. There are a lot of these measures and I'll talk about the ones that are 'linked' with other categories. They're not intentionally linked. They don't know about our report. But they had different elements to them and they weren't just necessarily transit, but they dealt with a lot of aspects of the growth debate, and we can talk about how it's consistent later. For economic development, of the 40 measures again, 18 were in the center city. In fact three of the top five cities that are ranked by population lost in the 1990s had ballot measures related to economic development, namely Philly, Baltimore and Detroit. I think all of these passed except for one that was in Baltimore, and rural voters approved six out of nine of the economic development measures.

These charts on the left shows, it's hard to read, suburban, rural and central city. The black is the total number of measures and the light blue is how many of them passed. Statewide is not reflected on that. Just two quick examples; in Philadelphia, there was a $162 million bond for capital investments. It had a transit element, it had an economic development element and it had an open space and parks element. In Alabama, there was a $350 million bond and in Detroit, $55 million.

The Governance Inflexibility category was a very hard one for us to qualify, because we don't know the intricate workings of all of these local governments. But for the most part, they were designed to affect local and state authority; mergers, regional government's decision-making. All of the local measures in this category were located in the suburbs and almost all of them passed—13 of 15 were approved. But of the statewide measures, there were 10 of them; only three of them passed. This is probably the worst performing subcategory that we had. Again, all 15 were located in the suburbs.

These measures probably aren't that relevant to the stuff we're talking about. None of these were linked with anything else. These were all very, very specific, but still, I think it's important. In the Louisville area, voters approved a referendum to merge the city and the county. It elevated the city from the 64th largest to the 23rd. It had a lot of support from local officials, which is surprising, because a lot of these people will lose their jobs because of this merger. But it was very well supported by the civic community, by a lot of the officials, and it passed pretty good. Voters in Massachusetts, again, had the benefit of having local governments support a measure to create a regional council governance in Cape Cod. They did not have that same benefit in the Berkshire area and that measure was killed. The Open Space category: again, these are measures designed to protect open space from development, the green infrastructure as it's commonly referred to. These are really, really picking up steam as we've seen over the last couple of years. Most of these are right in the suburbs. A couple are in rural areas, central cities, but for the most part, these are suburban phenomena. Local governments in New Jersey, have just 46 measures. They passed 45 of them, directly related to the Governor's, well, the former Governor's billion dollar Open Space Initiative which let local governments put the stuff on the ballot to preserve open space. A lot of these measures were linked with other things—with economic development, with transportation, and I'll talk about those. But two very interesting ones: voters in the St. Louis region—there was a bi-state referenda that went before voters in six counties in Missouri and Illinois. It had a .1 sales tax to create a Regional Park District; there's an inter-governmental agreement in the two states to

coordinate planning and development—very well thought out plan. It was very sophisticated and it was a little bit of a—from St. Louis you may know—it was a little bit of contentious issue I think going forward. But it finally did pass in four of the six counties, and then it was approved.

Another very interesting one was in Ohio, where voters authorized—it should be $400 million, really it was one measure. It was $400 million where $200 million of it went to preserve open space on the fringe, another $200 million went to remediate brown fields and promote economic development in the center cities. The two main issues that they're dealing with in Ohio related to growth were loss of open space on the fringe, from people leaving the center city, and enough economic development in the center city. This addressed both those issues, wildly supported by the voters and also by the governor, wowed local officials—it soared to victory. The growth management issues, again, didn't have such and easy task. These are traditional or innovative methods to regulate development, either through zoning, moratoria on building, urban growth boundaries, whatever the case is. Most of these, again, obviously, were in the suburbs. This was very hard for us to qualify, because some of these would actually have a negative effect on the way these regions are growing.

The measure in Oregon, the Takings Measure, would actually undermine a lot of the Smart Growth measures that are there in the first place. That one actually passed and I think it's now in litigation, but it did pass.

So, it's very hard for us to say, again, which was good or bad. But most of these measures, again, were located in California, where only 21 of 44 passed. They did not do very well. Also, the growth management measures weren't linked with anything else. All of these were strictly growth management measures and may show some lessons why they failed, but they weren't linked with anything else. But there are relationships to the stuff we're talking about here today.

The two main ones that got probably the most media attention in the nation were in Arizona and Colorado. These were statewide measures to establish, essentially, urban growth boundaries around a lot of communities in the state. In Arizona, I think it was all of them. In Colorado, it was just the major ones. In both cases, they were defeated overwhelmingly by about 70 percent of the vote. Interestingly, in both cases, at least I know in Arizona, about this time last year, both, the Arizona measure was, it had a 70 percent approval rating. It looked like it was going to be approved, and like the issues we're talking about before, as soon as opponents heard, there was a $4 million campaign targeted

against it. As soon as that campaign started, the numbers plummeted and the measure was destroyed. Business interests in Colorado raised $6 million and defeated that one by about the same amount.

The last category in Transportation is infrastructure. These are mainly capital spending programs with the greatest potential to help communities grow. We chop it up into four categories, which are Affordable Housing, Transportation, Water Quality, and Schools. These are very important issues going on in the debate across the country. 95 percent of these infrastructure measures were local. Only a very small percentage of them were statewide and many of these infrastructure measures were linked with other categories. Again, they weren't intentionally linked. They don't know about the categories. I'm not saying it was like a happy by-product where development of a bus line, for example, would have economic development benefits. But where there was money for augmenting a light rail in Denver, for example, and money for affordable housing or plans to promote affordable housing, where it was specifically targeted to do more than one thing. In fact, all of the linked affordable housing measures passed. I think there are about 15 of these affordable housing.

There's an affordable housing crisis in this country. A lot of local officials recognized that and they had very systemic solutions for addressing affordable housing in their area and all of these passed. The largest number of the infrastructure programs were related to Transportation. It was 70. Four of the six statewide measures were located in the northeast, but almost 90 percent of the local ones were located in the south and the west. Again, they were places which were experiencing tremendous growth pressures. The local ones, in the south and the west, did pretty well: 76 percent of them passed. But of the statewide ones in the northeast, 50 percent passed. They did not do very well. This is a map just breaking down the statewide ones. You can see the four in New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island and we can talk about the other two, if we have time.

For transportation, 35 measures were on the ballots in the suburbs, an even amount in the rural areas and in the center cities. As with the affordable housing ones, the transportation measures that were linked with other categories that had elements related to the preservation of open space, and that somehow dealt with other aspects of the growth debate, did very, very well. Linked transit measures passed in Denver—it had an affordable housing element. Also in Philadelphia where it dealt with economic development and open space. Again, not in a haphazard by-product kind of way, but it very specifically dealt with all these other issues.

Breaking down the transportation category, the road construction measures made up most of the category. They're about 51 percent of these. They did pretty well. About 72 percent of them passed. The transit measures made up about 31 percent of the category—did extremely well—almost 87 percent of these passed. 19 out of 22 passed. By our calculations, this may or not be consistent, but there were light rail referenda that failed in Austin and Kansas City, I think where Wendell Cox made an appearance. There was a tax increase proposal to offer a regional transit pass in Boulder, that I think was narrowly defeated. Other than that, I think all of the transit ones passed. We talked about multi-modal before. In this sense, multi-modal refers to transit/road/pedestrian, whatever the case, the broad way we think about multi-modal. These did not do so well. I mean, there were only 7 of them, 4 of them passed, so the percentage was pretty low—57 percent. The reason, and we talk about it in the report, we speculate why these didn't do so well, and there was a question before about this, is that in these cases, the transit, I mean this is one measure, was designed to have support, broad support for the measure. But even within that support, there was fragmentation.

For example, the people who favor road construction as a way to alleviate congestion didn't really care about the transit element. There was in-fighting, even within the supporters, and that's probably why a couple of these failed. We know in a couple cases that's true anyway. Some examples of the transit ones: light rail measures failed in Austin and Kansas City, but there were four Utah counties that created a Regional Transit Authority. That one passed. Existing transit systems in San Jose, and of course, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore did receive funding. All of those did pass. For road measures, voters in the Galveston area approved a $1.2 billion bond for constructing and maintaining roads. A lot of road measures in Texas did well. There was a Washington state measure that was designed to require 90 percent of transportation funds to be spent only on roads, and it would have made road building the primary way to address transportation issues in that state. This one also was leading by about 60 percent about this time last year. A very organized campaign was developed to defeat it; thankfully, it wound up being crushed. It was a ridiculous one. For multi-modal, there was a $6.2 million measure to maintain Rhode Island roadways, and also to provide transit funding and to relocate I-95, I-195. That one passed. But there were more balanced transportation measures in New York State and Charleston County that failed. The one in New York state was a huge bill. It was a $3.2 billion bond that had a lot of problems, not the least of which was that it had limited support from statewide officials. The measure in Charleston County failed by a very small margin, and it had a lot of support from local people, from local

officials. Actually, they were kind of encouraged that it only failed by a little bit, for the reasons I guess we talked about before, that the next time they knew they're going to have it sail through.

So for transportation, we broke down the revenue source. Most of these were funding issues, to find out if we could figure out which ones passed and why. All the ones where the revenue source was to be appropriations, passed. It's not hard to understand, but there were four of these, and all of them passed. If there was the issuance of a bond to pay for these, they did pretty well; 86.7 percent. If it was for raising taxes to pay for this, not so good; 63 percent. All of the ones that had a property tax element failed; sales tax did a little bit better, but you can see the breakdown there. It's also in the report.

So again, although this is not exactly the debate we're talking about here today, there are definitely lessons that can be learned from what we did, and lessons that are learned from the growth debate that's going on across the country. It's a lot of the same people having the same discussion. Not necessarily from a transit advocacy standpoint, but from people who are sick and tired of growth. They have no idea how to deal with it. They know or, they should know, in a lot of cases we're seeing that they are knowing, that some very sophisticated discussion is going on across the country. You would really be surprised. Citizens are definitely concerned with the way that their regions are growing. They're concerned with the shape, the pace and the quality of growth, they're realizing that road building is not necessarily the way to address the problems in all cases. So I think you're definitely going to have allies in the people that are working on the growth debate and the folks that you're talking to.

The Open Space Preservation measures remain highly popular. We saw this in 1996, 1998 and we saw it last year. If there's a way that you can link up with them somehow, to have a measure that provides trade of funding, for example, and then preserves open space or parks or whatever it is, I think that you would be very successful. Growth management, on the other hand, is likely to remain very contentious. Even since the election, they haven't even been able to get together to work out what they did wrong last time. That discussion is just barely starting and we are not optimistic that it's going to be solved easily. Probably some of the issues you may want to stay away from. Infrastructure measures, I kind of see mixed. That may be a little strong. You know they did okay. But when you broke it down we saw in a lot of cases where it wasn't great. But the long-term acceptance of transit is apparent. Again, a lot of these measures did very well.

The relationship between affordable housing and smart growth is rising as a public concern. We're seeing this all across the country. A lot of local officials get this and they don't understand some more complex issues, but this they understand and they're willing to do a lot of different things to address it. They don't know how to address it and they're looking for ideas. Finally, measures that align urban, suburban and rural constituencies also seem promising. We saw this at the statewide level, particularly in Ohio, where they were able to talk to the central city constituents and the rural constituents. They got together on one issue; it had the "What's in it for me?" at both ends. It also had a suburban element to it. The thing soared to victory. If we can replicate that, then I think we'll be in good shape. Copies of these are in the back. They're also available up on the web site. You can e-mail me if you have any questions or if you need other copies of the report.

Thanks.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, Rob, Thank you. If we have a couple of questions specifically for Rob…the moderator's bringing the mike for you.

THOMAS SHROUT:

A couple of comments.

One, the St. Louis Parks Tax, a tenth of a cent, it was on a general election. I tell you, no one knew it was on the ballot until they went into the ballot box and voted for Parks. I think the earlier lesson about when you should be on the ballot is instructive in that case, at least in Missouri.

The second comment, I'll represent my friends in Kansas City who are not here. They would take issue with that being a light rail defeat last year. That was an initiative petition that was like a 10-year tax, assuming 99 percent federal funding on a measure and the Transit Authority opposed it as did any responsible citizen, so…just a caveat.

ROBERT PUENTES:

Yeah, and we talked about some of those in the report, you're right. To get the nuances, as was [Inaudible] before, please read the report.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Other questions? Okay, for Rob specifically? Go ahead.

QUESTION:

Just a quick one. Under what situation you would recommend transit ballot initiative to re-link to Affordable Housing or to Open Space? Do you see any, relation to what, where or, when you would link the two, or when you would link to Open Space, or when to Affordable Housing?

PETER CIPOLLA:

Again, it depends. One thing we didn't talk about here, are the wild differences across the country; we mentioned it before, so I didn't get into it. It definitely depends on the region, it depends on the locality, it depends on a lot of different things. In Denver, they could do it. They were talking about augmenting the transit system, they were talking about affordable housing; it was a natural fit. You know, I think affordable housing is definitely an issue in most places across the country, but, it's not a one-size-fits-all. In Ohio, the issue was definitely the declining core and the exploding ex-urban area and the loss of open space. That was a natural fit. I don't think it was too hard for them to figure it out, even for the local officials, but they were able to link those two things together. It got a lot of support. If it had affordable housing instead of open space, would it have done so well? I doubt it, but it really depends on the community.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, and then we'll come over there.

QUESTION:

Relating to a similar presentation that's been given earlier, there is a transit, Anti-Transit Roadshow. Is there, in your studies or in your analysis of these campaigns, an organized Smart Growth Roadshow or an Anti-Smart Growth Managed Growth Roadshow that's emerging?

ROBERT PUENTES:

Yes. Again, not in most cases. I mean, people don't necessarily associate the provision of affordable housing near a transit line as a smart growth issue that they want to attack. These aren't necessarily that contentious. There's definitely a NIMBY factor, but for the most part, that's not the kind of issue that's attacked from the anti-smart growth people, if you will, if I can over generalize. But, the growth management measures, absolutely, positively. The Arizona and the Colorado growth management measures suffered terribly from the fact that these people did fly in—not the same people, or maybe it was—but they definitely had national people came in to tell people why this was bad. This was going to affect their quality of life. It was going to take time away from your kids cause you're going to have to spend time in planning meetings. Just a lot of different things and you're right, people didn't really respond to them. These measures were crushed.

PETER CIPOLLA:

You know, "Rail-Volution" is going to be in San Francisco next month. That's another opportunity where the tie-in of transit and transit projects and smart growth all works together in a very positive vein. There are a lot of people involved in that presentation, in those series of presentations that would be more than happy to come into your communities and help out.

There's another question over here, sir?

QUESTION:

Yeah, could you say a couple more words about the difference between open space preservation and growth management? I'm thinking in particular about the urban growth boundaries as a way of preserving open space and how this gets painted and where you draw the line?

ROBERT PUENTES:

I think we probably suffer from being too close to the issue, so it's easy for us to make sharp points on them. But the open space measures were designed solely, in most cases, just for the purchase of open space, usually by a local government, for the purposes of not building on it. Okay? We don't think that these alone are the smartest way to regulate growth in a community because

there's leap-frog development, there's all kinds of things. In a lot of cases it may make traffic congestion and these kinds of issues a little bit worse cause it only pushes it further and further out. That's probably too much of my own opinion in there, but…the growth management measures are designed to be much more systemic and they're designed to regulate growth. It's urban growth boundaries as you mentioned, which as you know, in California they use quite a bit. It's drawing a circle around a community, a county, a region, whatever—no growth on the outside of that. These are very contentious. It always raises issues, but other growth management issues, I mean, it could be something as simple as zoning or it could be something as very contentious as a moratoria on building. We find that those strike out every time.

I just think we need to be very careful. If anything is unique to the area that you're…. You're looking at these referendums and it's these kinds of issues. In some areas a linkage with growth or no growth could be very damaging. Some of the same people in Phoenix who were supporting us for transit were viewing that as a way to continue to manage growth, to continue growth, to do it in a more logical way. But the anti-growth folks that were out there. Frankly we had to walk a very thin line, because all the people that were contributing that $2 Million to our campaign were also some of the same people contributing the $4 Billion to the anti-growth Campaign. So making these linkages, you have to be real, real careful. Not that, I think that "Rail-Volution" takes a very positive way. I think Pete was right. If we could find a way where we could attain mutual ground, where achieving mutual objectives by investing in transit makes affordable housing more interesting, makes additional opportunities for development, then I think those linkages are very positive. But I think, we meant doing that through many, many, many years. If you looked at the same bars of win and loss elections in those that were Highway versus Transit, of the 1970s and 1990s, we would not be where we are today if we continued the dialogue of trying to choose one over the other. We came a long way in the last 10 years of trying to work together on managing how we develop. I think that's the key to most of these elections.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, I want to open it up to all the speakers. We'll take about 10 minutes of questions. Don't forget Rod is here who's lived through what, five transportation sales tax measures in one way or the other and lived to tell about it. So, we'll start around here and I'll come back around and circle back.

Go ahead, sir.

QUESTION:

Thank you.

The earlier presentation by Mr. Wulkan made an admonition that we needed to have, I think you said, two to three times a lead, public opinion lead, at least six months before we go to the polls. What about those of us who need that just to survive the polls? Those of us who need a two-thirds majority just to pass? How do you adjust that number up?

ALAN WULKAN:

You know, I think honestly that's where people in California and I know in the state of Washington have had that problem for a long time. I think that's where you've got to bring in people that have won elections under those circumstances. My guess is, it's not going to be that difficult to factor it up. If you're not way ahead, but your erosion, depending upon… I don't know what happened in San Jose. We'll hear a lot more in this area. You'll hear more about how that happened. But I have to tell you, obviously, this is so simple. You guys got a tough road ahead of you**.**

If you've got super majorities, as you've had here, I mean, it took a lot of years for the things that Rod did and Pete did to build up that kind of confidence in the voters that you couldn't get 70 plus percent of the voters. So, it's a tough one with super majorities.

Rod?

ROD DIRIDON:

Can I comment?

PETER CIPOLLA:

Yeah, Rod, please.

ROD DIRIDON:

I think if Santa Clara County were starting now, we may never pass a tax election. But by having started back in 1976 and squeaking that first one

through on a rifle-shot special election where we had 18 percent vote turnout and we concentrated only on bus riders and environmentalists and a very few others and didn't put out one press release and just a very, very rifle-shot campaign, with low voter turnout, and yet we still won by only 54 percent. That was the nexus. Once that was on the books and we had a chance to build some system with that money, and prove that the program would work, then the public confidence began to build and we were able to get into the higher numbers. But you, to try to get a super majority on a first ballot—very, very tough. I'd recommend, by the way, that you not combine with other measures. You can only lose. Your support base for a transit program brings in construction labor, and is usually funded by the industrial and building community, I mean the business and building community If you try to put a growth measure on top of that, you're going to lose some of that basic support, even though I'm very pro-controlled growth.

MODERATOR:

Another question. Yes, sir?

PARTICIPANT:

A lot of the election results that you've been talking about occurred during a period of relatively strong or exceptionally strong economic conditions. Any of you that have looked at that data care to speak on how significant that was? You know, what percentage points do you get because unemployment's at 2 percent and folks have money in their pockets?

ALAN WULKAN:

I'll answer it. I'll guarantee, I mean I'm probably, the panel tomorrow might kill me, but I don't think we would pass it today. We would not have passed our election today under today's circumstances. All the stars, all the moons, everything—earth was right in a perfect alignment. We had just come off a really good transit project where we finished up a project a year ahead of schedule, congestion was at its worst, all sorts of things, factors were in there. But I will guarantee you, maybe Rod will disagree with me, under current economic conditions, I don't think this county would have passed it.

ROD DIRIDON:

I concur, in that particular instance that macroeconomic conditions probably did contribute to that. On the other hand, we've done a more rigorous statistical analysis that preceded this study, was associated with our former study. But at any rate, we didn't find any systematic linkage between those kinds of macroeconomic statistics and the outcomes of elections. So there's some hope. I think you'd have to look at the local specific conditions, and not base too much just on a generalization like that.

ALAN WULKAN:

Could I add kind of a funny response to that? Probably the major impact would have been that we would not have had $1.8 million from industry to run the campaign on, because they've cut their donations to nothing. You know, the Crippled Children's Society isn't getting any money from the industry in Santa Clara County now. So, what you'd probably have to do, if you're in a down economy, is run a very carefully chosen special election with a very careful rifle-shot campaign, where you didn't tell anybody at all, except those people that you know are going to vote for you, that there's even an election occurring. You can do that with a minimum amount of money, and you focus on a low turnout. That's risky, because if you get a strong opposition, you're dead.

ROD DIRIDON:

I've just got to say. I've been involved with winning elections in the 1970s, the 1980s, the 1990s and the beginning of 2000. I've lost elections in the 1970s, the 1980s, the 1990s and the beginning of 2000. [Laughter] I think there are these macro issues, but really, it really comes down to how are things in your community at that time, and timing was the number one issue I put up on the Lessons Learned.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Other questions?

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Yes?

PARTICIPANT:

Thank you.

First, I'd like to thank the whole panel. I think these have been great presentations and very informative for me.

[Applause]

I did have a question for Bill Lind in particular, although I'd be interested if anyone else is preparing anything. If I understand the theme of most of the presentations, it seems to be that you have to build coalitions to win, and those coalitions have got to include local elected officials, the business community and grass-roots organizations. I couldn't agree more. I've been through two Denver elections—a losing one and a winning one—and I think that's certainly true. I think Mr. Lind and Mr. Wyreck are doing some of the best work I've seen to help debunk the myths and arm folks with the facts—the real facts—about transit and the difference it's making in our communities. I think your reports have been great.

I'm wondering, hopefully, what more you might have planned to help arm these coalitions with the campaign kind of training and materials that they need to go out and win? In particular, I might put in a plea if you are planning anything, to focus at least some effort on the West. Because I think the West has some particular opportunities and some particular challenges. And could use exactly your kind of help and resources.

ROD DIRIDON:

Well, let me just reference two things. Let me mention again the offer Paul has made to APTA. Of course his work has been nationwide, including the West, to essentially take all the expertise that he and that Free Congress as an institution have developed in 25 years of electoral process work, at the grass-roots level. Essentially how to win elections and how to train people to win elections and put it at the disposal of APTA, for the purpose of trying to win these transit referenda. As I said, if you're interested in seeing that happen, let APTA know.

Second, the study I'm now beginning, which will be next, our fourth in the series, "Bring Back Streetcars," is an attempt to do two things: First, to open the door to rail transit in smaller communities. We think that there are a lot of smaller communities that once had rail transit, that once had streetcar lines. We think that can be done again if, and this leads to the second purpose of the study, the cost can be kept down. We see Mr. Cox and company as the second greatest danger to rail transit. The first and greatest danger is what it's doing to itself by inflating its own costs. The standard cost for light rail is now $40 million a mile, it's creeping up towards $60 million, there's some at $80 million. Seattle has something it calls Light Rail at $150 million a mile. This is suicide**.**

There are a number of things that should be done to try to control this. In our view, FTA should set a $20 million "should cost" figure. If it exceeds that, except in special circumstances, it gets a "not recommended" rating.

We also think that there should be a rule that there should be no Federal funding of any rail transit system where the consultants are paid as a percentage of the value of the project. Because that is definitely one of the things driving the gold plating. We are hoping in this study, at the same time, to show a much less expensive way to get started with rail transit. Remember what I said—that people don't know what you mean by "rail transit." Most of it disappeared 50-60 years ago. Streetcars can be brought back very inexpensively. So we are hoping, through this new study, to show that and to get a lot of towns that look at light rail and say, "Well, we can't possibly do that. Hey, here's a form of rail transit we can do." Once people see what it is, they want more.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, why don't we call it a night or at least, let's get a glass of wine, all right, and then we can call it a night. The buses are going to be departing in front of the hotel at 5:30. We're going to start precisely at 8:30 tomorrow morning. There's going to be, I guess, a little breakfast, coffee and rolls and stuff like that out here around 8:00. So we will see you tonight and see you tomorrow morning. Thank you all.

[Applause]

[Break]

DOING IT RIGHT: SANTA CLARA'S NOVEMBER 2000 ELECTION

PETER CIPOLLA:

I hope you had a nice evening last night, whether you joined us out at Mirassou or were out on your own. I know the folks at Mirassou really did, I think had a nice time. I know my drivers did, even though they weren't able to sample the wine, but we feed our drivers that way all the time**.**

Today's discussion is going to focus on everyone's experience on transit ballot measures and transit ballot initiatives. We're going to hear from those people and this afternoon we're going to be sharing a lot of experiences and observations and such from everybody at round-table type discussions. But this morning what we're going to do is jump right into San Jose's experience and doing it right—Santa Clara's November 2000 election.

Here comes Jude Barry, our last speaker, our final speaker. I don't know if you really noticed it yesterday, but I'm sure you did, that we had several reports on subject matter. A lot of the bickering that was going on back here was of people not agreeing with whatever the other speakers were saying and such. So I think it proves one fact that should come across very clear—there is no right way, there is no wrong way. There's the successful way. You have to kind of pick and choose whatever is going to be able to work in your particular situation, your particular community. The suns and the stars had to be perfectly aligned. After all the work, the effort, the crystal balling, we still had to have a little bit of luck. That's what we had going into our successful ballot measure last year. As much as anything, I think it means that you have to take whatever can you learn here and gather it and funnel it and come out with your own proposal. Technically, we in Santa Clara Valley, mostly these gentlemen that are behind me and Rod, as we pointed out yesterday, took pieces of all the approaches that we had talked about over the past several ballot measures that we've had. In one instance, the effort was heavily on the roadway side. The very first ballot measure was just pure transit and that's what funds us pretty much on an ongoing basis. Then there was following a roadway effort.

Another was a balanced roadway/transit effort, and that was... [missing text]

...had talked about over the past several ballot measures that we've had. In one instance, the effort was heavily on the roadway side. The very first ballot

measure was just pure transit. That's what funds us pretty much on an ongoing basis. Then there was a following, a roadway effort. The other was a balanced roadway transit effort, and that was in 1996. And then most recently the transit only effort.

We're fortunate to have with us four of the individuals who in one way or another had a major role in one or all of these recent transportation sales tax efforts. The first speaker that we're going to be hearing from I'll describe as the strategist. Mr. Max Besler is from Townsend Raimundo Besler and Usher (TRB&U). Now where would we be, as we were talking about yesterday, without the individuals like Max, the "consultant," who could help us wade through the tons of data, the public opinion surveys, and help us reach viable strategies and approaches that get our message across to the voters that we need to get to the polls.

Then we have the campaigner, Mr. Carl Guardino. He is President and CEO of the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group. This organization represents the core of business of Silicon Valley. Not only are they instrumental in raising the necessary funds for a viable campaign, they also loan their CEO, Carl, to the campaign to help lead the effort. Carl can technically chalk up four successful transportation sales wins. Although one of them was ultimately overturned by the State Supreme Court, we still classify it in the "W" column. We definitely would not have had success without his skills, his campaign knowledge, and most importantly, his passion for the effort.

Then there's the media, Gary Richards. Probably Gary has as good a feel for what this community wants, needs, and desires in transportation as anyone in the field. You can see his column in the morning papers. Mr. Roadshow as we described him yesterday. He not only has the pulse of those loyal readers who correspond with him daily, I can't remember exactly, I think he gets 400 e-mails a day… somewhere in that area—and to his credit, Gary is as knowledgeable as any so called transportation professional I know, on what it actually takes for project delivery. Credibility with the media—we touched on it a little bit yesterday but credibility with the media is essential for any successful campaign. That credibility doesn't begin with the inspiration with, "Gee, let's have a campaign." It begins long, long before that and it takes a great deal of time and effort on everybody's part to nurture and come to a trust factor with the media.

Finally, we have the political force, or in this case, Mr. Jude Barry. Now a political consultant, but at this time last year, he was the Chief of Staff to San

Jose's Mayor Ron Gonzales, who unabashedly, was a political strength behind the campaign. During the sales tax effort, Jude took a leave of absence from the Mayor's office and served as Co-Chair of the campaign. His professional skills, knowledge, record of successes, and know how of what it takes to win a campaign, served us all well. He was a major factor in our success.

Our format for this morning's session will include a 10-15 minute presentation by each of the speakers, followed by an open discussion and Q&A. Please, really probe into these folks. They are very knowledgeable people. Our focus as you know is on the November 2000 30-year sales tax measure that we passed in November. I mentioned it yesterday; it will generate about $6 billion for transit only transportation projects.

There are just a couple of things though that I think it is important to set the stage and perhaps reflect upon this from a general manager's perspective. The transit system is benefiting from this.

Like most communities, transportation and housing are two of the most critical issues facing us in Silicon Valley. Unlike many communities, this one has taken the action steps to deal with those issues. An organization like VTA must constantly be working towards those moments in time, being ready to take full advantage of these opportunities, as we were last year. During the time frame that we will be discussing, our focus at VTA, candidly, was the 1996 sales tax measure. Now this is last year, about this time last year, a little bit earlier in the time frame. But, our goal at that time, and our entire focus at that time, was to really bring in… It was a nine-year sales tax measure split pretty evenly between transit and highway programs. At the time, we were really focusing on trying to bring all these projects in under 2004/2005 time frame, in order to bring them in under budget, which is always a trick. But, it actually was to prime ourselves to go back to the electorate in 2006. So that was where our focus was. I don't recall the precise time line, but I think it was the early spring, maybe March, perhaps Carl can verify that. But, I got this phone call from Carl. We were moving into the presidential election year. He along with some of his organization's leaders had done some polling. Things seemed to look good for an add on measure, like the one that we had passed before, except not in 2006, but now, ready to move right now. We had just opened our Tasman West line and many of you have ridden that, in December of the year before December 1999. We had opened it up a full year ahead of schedule. We had continuously increased our level of service at VTA about three to five percent per year for the past five years. We kind of cleaned up our act a little bit in many respects. We were also riding on the success of a very good economy.

Our sales tax revenues were high. We had good labor relations. We had resolved our contracts in a professional business like manner. There wasn't a whole lot of internal strife going on at VTA.

The seeds of the previous sales tax measure, which also had [Inaudible] management issues and other rapid transit projects in it, were really starting to take root. We promoted the hell out of… every time we had a new project, we made a spectacular display of this project going on and we put up a lot of signage, "Paid for by your Measure B dollars." Perhaps you have seen some of those efforts continuing and going on.

So, everything is really going pretty good for us. In a nutshell, people knew what we were working on. They knew that there were a number of transportation projects that were in the mill. Based on our economic conditions here, congestion was reaching just horrific heights, and I think it goes to the issue of crisis proportions in Santa Clara Valley. Two or three of the roadways were number one or two in the country when it came to congestion issues. So, people wanted more done in transportation and they didn't want to wait. They wanted it done now.

I don't remember exactly what Carl said to me when he told me the results of that poll, but it was something monumental like, "Well, Pisan, what do you think?" So, the rest is history. And now I am going to have these good folks tell our their story from their perspective. The first speaker we are going to have is Mr. Max Besler.

MAX BESLER:

…represented as something other than a slime ball, which is usually the way people in Jude's and my business tend to get described these days. So it's nice to wake up one morning and find that we actually provide a service that people want.

One of the things that I want to talk about today—because you get a lot of folks talking about what happened on this campaign and what happens generally in these types of campaigns—is to talk about a lot of the work that goes on beforehand. In a sense, a campaign for transportation campaign, a sales tax campaign, any kind of an initiative campaign is basically rather different from a candidate campaign. Most of the work goes on, I think, way before. It's a little bit like an iceberg. Everybody looks at an iceberg and they think they know what it looks like, until they read in a book that most of it is underneath

the water. Well that's the case here. What happens is, most of the work has been going on for a long time. I want to talk a little bit about that because it's all very important about the way in which a successful campaign actually coalesces and works.

But, I just want to describe, very briefly, the stark contrast that I think exists between a candidate campaign and an initiative campaign. In a candidate campaign, you do absolutely anything that you can in order to get attention. It doesn't make any difference what it is. You remember the old song, "I don't care what they say about me, just make sure they spell my name right"? Well, that is pretty much how it is. You try to put as much mail in the boxes as you can. You get as much television as you can. And radio and so on and so forth and on it goes.

You get a phalanx of people who, if you're lucky, will go out into the precinct and talk to folks and spread the good word about it. You do everything every day you possibly can to get somebody like Gary Richards to write about you in the newspaper. You know that the other guy is going to get something to say, so what you try to do is to try to knock the other guy as much as you possibly can so he or she is back on his or her proverbial heels trying to field something. In an initiative campaign, it is sort of the opposite. It becomes kind of corporate in a sense. There is a lot of planning beforehand, but we'll describe that.

The other thing that goes on is that the tone of the campaign is different. It should be positive, not negative. When people start hearing negative messages about the side that is supporting a measure, they wonder what is going on. The other thing about it is that voters have a tendency, a very strong tendency, to try to figure out on their own, to separate the fact from the nonsense. Which is another reason why you want to try to stay away from fluffy, atmospheric stuff and try to give them as much information as possible. They really are interested in what they see. If you're positive about the presentation of it, they understand that a lot better as well.

Finally, the other thing you have to do is that you have to find that marvelous combination of just enough communication and not too much communication. In the closing two weeks of a highly contested campaign for say a state senator, state assembly seat in the state of California, actually for most congressional seats too, you'll find that the goal will be to get at least one piece of your own mail in the mailbox every day. If you get two or three in there, so what. That's better. Because that means that you'll have more competition on that day to be able to get your point across. Here what we try to do is to do something that is

just enough so that we can get people to think about it, but not do too much. Because if you do too much, people sit back and they say, "Well, who is paying for this? What's going on here? Is there an agenda that is going on?" Of course, the problem is that on the day after the election, you're trying to figure out if you've sent enough or too much or too little. The way you determine that is whether you win or lose. But generally speaking, you have got to be a little less voluminous.

Now let's move into the underside of the iceberg for a second. First off, there has to be a greater deal of need. Voters have got to understand. They have to be so angry with what's going on in transportation that that issue rises up to the top. If you take a look at a listing of all the major issues in this county, what you'll see is that transportation is right up at the top. So, here we knew that there was a major desire for it. Now the reason that is important is because, sooner or later, someone is going to come along and an opponent is going to say, "Transportation is fine, but don't you think we should do education? Don't you think we should do cops? Don't you think we should do fire? Don't you think we should do homeless?" I mean, there are going to be a variety of things put forth. If your issue isn't up towards the top, people will think, "Well, maybe he is right. Maybe the priorities are wrong."

Then you have to figure out what the wants are. Now there are two sets of wants—what the transportation planners want and, what the voters want. Occasionally they collide, but often times, they don't. So what you have to do is find a way to be able to separate the two. Since most of you out there are on the planning side, what you'll have to be aware of is that when a gang like this, minus Gary, shows up at your door and says, "We think that's good and that's bad," don't throw the baby out with the bath water. Because what happens is that there's got to be a balance in there. Often times what a transportation planner will come up with is something that voters aren't interested in. And, how you handle that will depend upon the size of the expenditure plan and whether or not you can fit it in. Barring that, if there's not enough money, then you excise it and do it on the next go around.

But it's important to make sure that you cannot view one of these ballot measures as just a simple grab bag to get everything you've ever anted into here. There has to be a need that fits the voters desires to see something fixed.

In order to do that then, you have to come up with the projects and services the public wants. Polling is absolutely necessary to do that. We did a couple of polls on a previous go around where we tried a really cockamamie scheme of putting

two measures on the ballot. At one point, a general tax increase which only required a five percent vote, and a company advisory measure where there was none binding to let voters know what we would spend it on. That took a lot of polling. I think we did about six or seven polls and we did almost as many focus groups, which again are little small groups of conclaves. You get people in there asking questions about things. Because we had to figure out every little nit and nat of how people regarded this thing. So polling becomes real important because it allows you to determine what projects are important, what projects and services are important, where your strengths lie, where your weaknesses lie, who are good spokespeople, who aren't good spokespeople. When the taxpayers or somebody else decides to whack you, you can determine whether or not you have got an opportunity to being able to get past it.

Now there's another element in this and that's trust. Santa Clara County has loads of trust. What I mean by that is—they have done four or five of these things. When somebody like Carl says, "We're going to put another one on there," it actually does have an impact. Because people realize that they've done it in the past, they've done what they said they were going to do, they did it on time, they can be trusted in doing this. The important elements are need and trust. Because the need tells me I have to do it. Trust is will they do it. So what happens here is you have got a very good nexus between those people who are saying, "we can do it, "and the needs." Of course, the trust [Inaudible] is also important. There are another couple of things you can do to make sure that people understand that there are some reasons that things will be carried out, which I'll talk about in a second.

Raising awareness is important. We talk about that because it's just not the campaign. What we're talking about now is the pre-campaign stuff. What Carl has done for a number of years, and what his predecessors have done at the manufacturing group, is in effect beat the permanent campaign. It's not just on this issue. It's other issues. But the importance of it is two fold. Number one, what they do is to work on telling the entire community about these issues. In other words, it's important for us, it's so *important* for us, that we the members of this organization, want to go out into the community and let other people know abo ut it. We're going to sell them on what we think is an important plan. You need to have almost a permanent engine doing this. Because a permanent engine means permanent funding. Permanent funding means permanent presence. That's what you have to have in order to make sure that these notions go foreword. So an organization such as the manufacturing group or some of their equivalent in your community, I think, is absolutely important if you're going to be able to set the stage.

Then the other thing about it that is important is that that becomes your funding base. If you think you can put a measure on the ballot and just let it go, forget it. Nine times out of ten you'll lose. The tenth time is because you just happened to get everything totally right and everybody was asleep at the switch when they voted you in. But what happens is that you've got to have a permanent funding mechanism to do things. Now you have got to come from a variety of states and communities. So there are lots of ways in which this can be done. But in some instances, public education at the early part can be done through public expenditures. Because you're telling people about what is going on. You're not advocating anything, but you are telling people. You are educating the public and that is a legitimate expenditure. Then there's the other side that comes with the advocacy. That's where you need to have somebody who [Inaudible] private funding because that group migrates into the campaign when it goes forward.

Then there is ballot labels and ballot language. After you have done the polling and you've decided what's going on, and after you've put together these expenditure plans based upon all this good research, and you've got tons of people around supporting you, then you've got to put the ballot label together. Here in California, it's a maximum of 75 words. That 75 words, the ballot label, is the single thing that everybody will see when they go into the voting booth. Because that's the one things that tells them what they're voting on and it's got a yes behind it and a no behind it. You have got to work that as best you can to get the strongest possible language for it. Just to give you an example of what is good and what is bad in a general way—what's bad is tax on a tax with a half cent [Inaudible] tax on tax is a good thing right? As opposed to passing a measure which will provide the construction of freeways and maintenance of roads in the county. That's a different thing. Because people look at the word tax and they immediately think all those bad things that are associated with tax. What you have got to do is get beyond that. So what you really need to do is to make sure that you focus them on what the measure is about. So that by the time that they come to the notion of tax, which will be brought up by the opponents, they'll already understand that not all taxes are the same. Unfortunately, you're fighting an uphill battle because that is what people automatically look at as a bad thing. They think of tax. So that's a really important thing to get right because if you get it right, you've done probably 5 percent of the work right there.

Then there are the ballot statements that are made, the arguments. Those are very important too because you want to get the best signers that you can in your community and hammer home your notions as strong as you can.

Finally, and then I'll turn it over to Carl so he can talk next, the campaign itself is really based upon, I think, a few simple premises. Number one, we call it "run silent, run deep." Sometimes there are variants of it. In Santa Clara County, you can't be too silent about it because everybody knows about it. But what we try to do is communicate very specific messages by targeting specific groups within a community. We split Santa Clara County into about 30 or 35 different areas of interest. An area of interest can be a neighborhood or an aggregation of neighborhoods, or a whole city or a half a city. Then what you do is talk about those specific kinds of projects and specific kinds of services that are going to be provided. Then you let the people in those communities carry the message about that so that you've got people who are in the local communities, and people in other communities saying, "Well, you know what? The reason I think that Measure A and Measure B, Measure Q, whatever it is, is important, is because that measure is going to fix those potholes out there; it's going to fix that street over there." Remember the accidents that took place on that interchange down there? That's what we're going to fix by this measure. That's what you want people talking about. It's that local kind of impact that takes place.

As I say, focus on projects and be positive about it. Don't be negative about it. The other side is going to go negative on you, but resist the notion to go negative. All you have to do is to talk about projects. If you have good projects and good services, you have got a good chance of being able to prevail.

The other thing about it is don't be too slick. You don't have to be real slick. You just have to have a presence. You have to be able to get the presence across. You have to be able to do it in a way that people understand that all local folks are being involved in the measure.

Finally, you have got to be well-funded. Whatever it costs to do it, you have got to do it. Because if you come up short, you lose. And, in a state like California, which requires a two thirds vote at the local level to pass these things, when you specify what kinds of projects there are, it becomes really important to be able to make sure you get the message out in every possible best way. That takes a lot of money.

Finally, the one last thing is don't talk about taxes. Don't try to decide, "You know, I'm just going to tell them that it's going to be less than half the cost of a newspaper per day, or just a couple of pennies per day." Because as soon as you set foot on that slippery slope, they'll start talking about it, you'll start talking about it, and the next thing is you've lost control of your message and

you're talking about taxes. So when somebody talks about taxes, believe me, that will be aired enough. What you want to talk about is projects, because that won't be aired enough.

So, I'll get off the podium now, and I think Carl is next. Then we'll all answer questions. Thanks.

[Applause]

CARL GUARDINO:

Thank you. It is such a pleasure to be with all of you this morning. As Max and Pete mentioned, my name is Carl Guardino. I have the pleasure of working for an organization called the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group. I want to mention quickly what the group is, to put it in context, and then jump right into the message.

The organization was formed 23 years ago by a legend here in the valley, David Packer, cofounder of Hewlett Packard, as a way for private sector employers at the executive level, to get positively and proactively involved in the issues impacting their community. Not only for their companies and the economic health of the region but also for the quality of life of their employees. That's just good business. Because the toughest issue facing employers in Silicon Valley is the ability to recruit and retain a world class work force. So, being aggressive and proactive, I think the quality of life issues is the key to success here in this valley. I was asked to talk today about doing it right, relative to transportation sales tax measures. So I would like to share some of the best practices for the next ten minutes. I want to emphasize that we need to learn from each other. So to the extent that we have done anything well here, please take that home with you, and then during the Q&A we're hoping to learn from you ways to improve our next measures. Plagiarism may no have been okay in college, but it is truly okay when we are talking about trying to improve our communities in providing the transportation infrastructure that our commuters and citizens deserve. So with that, three quick themes and then a few choices that we need to make as we conduct these campaigns. The three quick things that help to set the stage for success are: horrendous traffic, a history of results, and a healthy economy.

First, we'll look at horrendous traffic. We are either blessed or cursed with that here in Silicon Valley. The average urban highway speed, in the nine county Bay Area, that includes Silicon Valley, during commute times, is about 23

miles an hour. And in Santa Clara County alone, until recently, we lose our commuters about 40,000 a morning, stopped in speeds below the speed limit. So convincing folks that we need to do something about traffic is not the issue. It's what do we need to do. So, we have met that hurdle.

Second is a history of accomplishments. Pete alluded to this. Then there is the 1976 permanent measure that Rod Diridon ran—and I hope you've had a chance to pick his brain about that—and then the three sales tax measures that expired in 1984, 1996, and 2000, those were all delivered—the 1984 measure and the 1996—the improvements were delivered on-time and on budget. When you have that history of success, your voters trust you. Will you then come back to them and say, "We need to do more."

The third vital ingredient is a healthy economy. When the economy is going well, it's easier to raise funds for the campaign, obviously. But consumer confidence is up as well. That helps in terms of voters' willingness to reach into their own wallets to tax themselves and to move forward. Now that was a key ingredient last year. Because as we met with our CEOs and spoke with Jude Barry and Mayor Gonzales, we knew that the economy was at risk. It was probably at risk sooner rather than later. If we were going to strike, we were going to need to do it soon. That bode very well for a successful raise last November 7, 2000. Because, I tell you, I would hate to be running for co-directing that campaign in this economy climate. That's the overall 20,000 foot level. What I would like to spend the next few minutes on is choices.

First choice, are you going to seek good data or are you going to guess? I am referring of course to polling. As Max mentioned, in 1996, to run that very uniquely structured half-cent sales tax campaign, we conducted five major public opinion polls and two major focus groups over an eight-month period, just to determine if we were going to go to the ballot. Those polls went macro to micro. The first polls being very board and the final poll really focusing on the specific language that we would use for those twin ballot measures. That's how narrow it got. What's important about polling besides getting good information though, is that you can actually use it as a coalition building tool. Let me give you an example. When you go macro to micro, and you want to bring everyone into that tent to build that coalition, that first group meeting of your coalition, everyone has a different feel of how you should go forward.

The type of tax mechanism; the projects; how many of the projects are transit how many are road; how long the tax should go on, etcetera. We always use that polling to narrow that down, so that well meaning can come in and say,

"You know, the right type of tax is $5 a gallon gas tax. I just know it. I would pay for it. I know everyone else would pay for it. All my friends would pay for it." So you say thank you, and you poll on it. When the poll comes back and finds out that only two percent would support it, then that person feels hurt. They helped to write the language for the poll. Their question was included for the poll. Then they had the data coming back. And reasonable minds would then say, "Well, that was my idea, but now what is practical and pragmatic?" So we use that polling, macro to micro, to keep everyone around the table, and make sure they feel heard.

The other key about good data is a good pollster. We use a gentleman out of Sacramento named Jim Moore. I've known and worked with him for 15 years. To date, I have never seen Jim smile. I really like that in a pollster. Because Jim Moore doesn't care what Carl Guardino or anyone else thinks about him. He cares about one thing, giving you accurate data. Let me give you an idea about how accurate he has been for us. In the 1996 Measure A and B campaigns, the general purpose sales tax, what we call Measure B—four months before the election, in the last poll he conducted for us other than spot polls those last couple of weeks, he said, "Carl, if you do everything right, and it breaks our way, we'll get 52 percent of the vote." Four months later on election day, where we had tried to do as much right as we could, we received 51.8 percent of the vote. He was within $1/5^{th}$ of 1 percent percent of accuracy. This year, the focus will be on the spot polls he did leading up to Election Day. He had to within 1 percent. He said—with Jude Barry and I running it together—he said, "It looks like you can get 72 percent of the vote." We received 71 percent of the vote. So find a good pollster.

Second, when you are deciding who to work with you have a choice—pros or "schmos." As we have gone around the stage and country trying to share with folks, hopefully, what we have done right here—and we make recommendations on folks to use… I'm always amazed months later, those communities who say, "Yeah, we really liked your recommendation but it was too expensive." Or, "We really liked your recommendation but we have this really good friend who lives here and we're going to use this person." You see this kind of thing a lot. What we have found is that those are usually the communities who come up short. Use the best people you can. It's not a popularity contest on who you hire. It's the campaign to hire the best anywhere. That's why, at least in this community, we've always used Townsend Besler Raimundo and Usher. They have run more transportation sales tax measures in California than any other consultant there is. If I was going to run a school board campaign, I would use Larry Framatola, because

he has that record in that niche market. Use the best you can find. I'd rather invest up front rather than have to run another campaign. You don't want to loose all the capital, financial, and political contributions that were invested in the first campaign.

The second of course is your in-house team, not just your consulting team. Jude Barry, who is speaking next—I had an opportunity to work with him, and from his background that I hope he'll describe, we knew we were going to have the very best. He truly is probably the sharpest political mind in Silicon Valley. When it was a chance to work with him and build that team, we knew we have pros, and not "schmos."

The third choice is coalition or confrontation. There's an old quote, "It's amazing what you can accomplish when you don't care who gets the credit." That is the key with coalition or confrontation. Public and private sector partnerships on these campaigns are key. Let me describe it.

Public sector. You'll notice the campaigns that we've run here for the limited term sales taxes—1984, 1992, 1996, and 2000, all four successful with our voters—there was never an elected official who said, "I have to be out front running this campaign." They put ego aside and played a support role, a huge role. A critical role, never the "I have to have my face on the brochure" type of role. By having private sector partners actually run the campaigns, we are able to go to our fellow taxpayers, private citizen to private citizen, and say, "We need to do this if we are going to protect the long term health and viability of Silicon Valley." That resonates with voters. Because it's me as a private citizen to another private citizen. We also have found that rewards those elected officials who are doing so much hard work and leadership on these campaigns by helping them to avoid the six words that elected officials never like to use, "I want to raise your taxes." They can simply go out to the constituents who really care for them and trust them and elected them time and time again and say, "You know, that private group is running Measure A. I don't know how you're going to vote on it, but I'm going to vote yes and let me tell you why." So, they can go to their key constituency with the credibility they have and garner those votes that we would never be able to get because they're Lofgren. In 1992 and 1996, it was then supervisor Rod Diridon. In 1996, joining Rod and in 2000, it was San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales. It was scores of other elected officials too. But there were always those key elected officials who didn't care about the limelight. They cared about meeting the needs of commuters and citizens in Silicon Valley. That coalition rather than confrontation always put us over the top.

The next lesson learned in the choice we have is empowerment or imperialism. John F. Kennedy once said that a committee is "Twelve people doing the work of one." We want to avoid that and make sure that twelve people are doing the work of 120, and really maximize that. I'll give you three quick examples of empowering folks rather than dictating to them.

The first one is finance. In the 1996 campaign, as an example, we had a finance committee of about 45 folks. I still remember the first meeting. My boss at the time, Lou Platt, who was President, CEO, and Chairman of Hewlett Packard company, was the co chair of that finance committee. With 45 public and private sector folks really reflecting the diversity of Silicon Valley, we went around the table and we said, each of those finance committee members, how much they were going to raise. Out of a $1.2 million dollar campaign and nine days to raise it, Lou Platt said, "I'll do $750,000." As we went around the table, Jim Sayer from the Green Belt Alliance, a wonderful environmental organization under his leadership in 1996, said, "Well I can't do that but I can do $500." He owned that amount. He was empowered. I must tell you, Jim Sayer felt just as much ownership on that campaign because he had pledged publicly to raise $500 as Lou Platt did when he said he'd raise $750,000. It empowered everyone around that table and they owned it and they knew it. And it worked. That was kind of fun. Lou Platt raised $750,000 with 12 phone calls. Jim Sayer, I think, labored much more to raise $500. The amount didn't matter. The ownership did.

Second example is the speakers' bureau. This last campaign, with Jude and I, we were able to bring 25 votes. A lot of elected officials go out to the Elks, the Lions, and all the other neighborhood associations, and lined up 150 speeches with a speakers bureau of about 25 folks so that we could match message to messenger. So if it was an environmental group, we had Barry Boltan from the Sierra Cub going to speak to fellow environmentalists. If it was a labor group, we would have John Niece of the Building and Trades Council go speak to labor audiences, etc. So that they were empowered with the right message, the right messenger to go forward.

The third example is employer in-house information campaign. We had six lone executives from companies working part-time, where their job was to call other companies and say, "At Intel, we are going to communicate to our employees, not telling them how they should vote, or how to vote, but just giving them the information they need to make an informed decision on election day. We are going to do it through email messages, through desk drops, through newsletters, through posters, etcetera. What are you going to

do?" That peer to peer positive pressure resulted in well over 100 employee in house education campaigns to nearly 200,000 employees peer to peer. That is a huge impact in empowering those companies to own the campaign.

The last choice, on the campaign side, is carrot or stick, benefits or cost. We talk about the carrot, not the stick. Max Besler covered this so ably that I'll only touch on it. Taxes may be spent with five letters, but it is still a four letter word. We never use it. When we would go out and give speeches, when we would write opinion pieces, when we would meet with folks, you talk about the benefits, about what it costs. That will come up on its own.

The last item is what to do after the campaign. It's why we have had the pleasure now of passing five of these, four of them implemented them. And that's—deliver or dither. That's the final choice. That's why every ground-breaking, Pete Cipolla and his team kindly let us say a few words. We thank them. Because it's easy for us private sector folks to promise we're going to deliver, and if you'll just trust us to raise your taxes for these improvements, we will deliver them. But unless these professionals are delivering the improvements on time and on budget, there's never, ever going back to another campaign. They've allowed us the ability to go back because they keep delivering on our promises.

Thank you very much for letting me be with you this morning.

[Applause]

PETER CIPOLLA:

We're going to deviate a little bit from the campaigner side now. I'm going to ask Gary Richards to come up and give a perspective on the media side.

GARY RICHARDS:

For ten years, I've been writing about traffic problems in the Bay Area. We started a column called "Roadshow" ten years ago. The idea was to open up our phone lines to the public and take questions. I have to tell you, I used to be in sports. The questions you get in sports are questions you can't usually print in the newspaper. For example, people will call up at 2:00 in the morning and they'll say, " Hey," this guy has a slurry voice and he's stumbling, "Joe Montana wore number 22." And you'll go, "No, no, sir. He wore number 16." Then they start screaming bloody murder at you.

So now we're going to open up our phone lines to the public about traffic. I'm thinking, I don't know if this is a good idea. Well, it's been the best thing I think we've ever done. We now get 400 to 500 questions every single week. A great way to have the pulse on the public—what they're thinking and what they want. With these transportation taxes, there was one surprise for me. The surprise, I'm going to go back to 1996.

Now in 1976, they put a half-cent sales tax on the ballot, basically to fund mass transit. In 1984, they put another half cent sales tax for ten years on the ballot, to build Highway 85, widen 101 to eight lanes, convert 237 from a city street with traffic lights to a freeway. It passes and all the projects come in. In 1992, they put on another half-cent sales tax for 20 years, and it passed and then got thrown out by the courts. Okay so now they come back in 1996 with, because of the shaky legal climate, "Does it need the two-thirds vote? Does it not need a two thirds vote?" They're going to come up with a measure on the ballot. And the measure is this—"We want a general half cent sales tax for nine years." That money could have been spent to give the supervisors a raise. It could have been spent for a new county jail. It could have been spent on anything. Oh, by the way, "We are going to put an advisory measure on the ballot. If we have to get $1.1 billion over the next nine years, here's what we want to do. On that list, we're widening Interstate 880, which runs right by the San Jose Mercury News, from two lanes in each direction to three lanes." To give you an idea of what traffic is like, you can drive up there at 4:00 on a Sunday afternoon and you're going to hit gridlock.

The other one was to widen Highway 101 outside Morgan Hill where at 10:00 on a Saturday morning about a month ago, I'm stuck in traffic. These are the two biggest bottlenecks, the two biggest entry points, into the South Bay. You get traffic jams at all times of the day. They put this on the ballot. This is the slam dunk. This is going to pass. It's going to pass big. Carl keeps talking 51 percent, 52 percent. I'm, going, Carl, Carl, Carl. This is going to win easy." Well, we do a poll about a month or so before the election and show 35 percent, some ungodly low number, favored this tax. I'm thinking, "What's wrong with these people? They've been through this." They don't trust the money. They don't know where the money is going to go for sure, they don't trust you, these guys back here. It was overwhelming, that distrust that was out there. The one thing that our poll showed us. There was a huge support of undecided out there. Our pollster, she said, "Watch these people. They will determine the election. They will tend to vote yes." Because when you get in that ballot booth, if you want to relieve traffic, you say, "Oh yeah, why not?" So, that is in fact what happened. It gets 51.8 percent of the vote and it passes.

Now fast forward to 2000. There are two questions that I get more than any other question. The one question is—"Why is my traffic light always red?" I tell them, "I can't do anything about that."

The second question is—"Why doesn't BART come to San Jose?" The public out there want BART, and that is sheer stupidity that BART does not come to San Jose. They could not understand that. The one thing the Mayor realized, was that was what connected to the voters out there. And so, now we had an election in 2000. There was opposition to it saying, "You can wait. You don't need to do this now." We take a poll. Remember that poll that showed 35 percent support for these two bottlenecks? The poll showed 65 percent, off the top, to bring BART to San Jose. It's time to vote in it now. They didn't want to vote in 4 years, 6 years, or 10 years. They wanted to vote for it now.

The other interesting thing was, when we wrote our story, our poll showed 60 percent. That's not two-thirds, which a San Francisco Chronicle columnist pointed out in the paper and she mentioned me by name. That was fine. Because what I knew, what our pollster knew, was that these "undecideds," which were about 20 percent, or about 60 percent yes, 20 percent undecided, and about 20 percent were going to vote no. Of these 20 percent, our pollster said, "You know, it's just a small fraction of these people needed to vote yes for this thing to pass." That's in fact what happened. Over half of those people voted. So it was a great way to have a pulse on what the community wanted. They got BART coming to San Jose because they think it's sheer foolishness that it isn't here now.

The other thing that has happened over the years. When I started doing this, I would say the first five years, 99.9 percent of the questions came in about the automobile. In the 1990 census, Santa Clara County had more solo drivers in this county, in the state of California, than anywhere else. We drive solo. We didn't car pool at that time. We didn't have any car-poolers at that time. The idea was that it's got to be highways or it's got to be nothing. That changed about 1995 and 1996. The tone of the questions began to change. I always look at that year because something happened in 1996 and the economy took off. Something else happened out there. I started getting questions from these people who come over Interstate 680 from the East Bay and into the South Bay. And they're saying, "Gary, what's happening out here? I have to get up at 4:00 in the morning to beat traffic." I'm thinking this can't be this bad. In 1995, the 680 commute ranked the 28th most congested commute in the Bay Area. That isn't even on the radar screen. If your commute is the 28th most congested commute in the Bay Area, take it. You'll love it. 1996, it jumps to number 2.

That was an incredible change. Of course, we started writing about this. What's going on? It's jobs, it's everything. In the next year, it goes to number 1. And for the first time since Caltrans began doing their congestion reports, which I believe they started in 1981, it wasn't the Bay Bridge anymore. Now, since then, it's bounced back and forth between 68 and the Bay Bridge. But, you've got these people here. In 1990, 68 was widened to three lanes, each direction. I can remember a person I talked to about a year ago said, "They widened this freeway and we wondered why. No one was out there." Well, six years later, everyone was out there. So now, we're writing these stories about "they widened this freeway."

They built Highway 85, a six-lane, 18.5 mile freeway. Everyone said, "This will solve our traffic problems." Within two years, Interstate 280, which is basically a parallel freeway, was more congested than it was before 85 opened up. At one these conferences, Carl was up there and a lady stood up and she said she didn't know if she was going to vote for any new sales taxes because she said, "You know, Carl, I voted for the 84 Measure that built Highway 85 and now my options are—I can get stuck in traffic on Highway 85 or I can get stuck in traffic on the 280. So why should I vote for any more of these measures?" Well, all this was starting to come home, I think, with the voters out there that we can't build our way out of this with more freeways. So the questions began to change. One question came from a guy who lived in Hayward and he said, "Gary, I want out of my car. But I can't get out of my car. I can't do that." He wanted to take the AMTRAK service in here and had a great train that would leave his office, right outside of his office at 6:00 in the evening, but the first train into the valley was like at 10:30 in the morning. So he wasn't talking about BART. But he was talking about train service. Those are the questions I began to hear. I don't want to say it was a flood, but it was a consistent theme—"I want out of my car, how do I get it?"

The 1996 measure had some train service from the East Bay to the South Bay. What I call CalTrain-type service. It was run from a BART in Union City and came down into the valley. Ron Gonzales called me up about 1998, "We're going to take a trip out there"—I guess it was earlier than that—"We're going to take a ride on a train like this just to show you what it's like." And I said, why bother. It's never going to happen. And he kept calling, bringing BART to San Jose and I'm going, "Ron, Ron, I don't know what you're smoking right now, but it's not going to happen." So I didn't even bother going on the ride because I was convinced it would never, ever happen. The 1996 measure passes and it has some money in there for what we call CalTrain interim-type commuter service. It's pretty popular, I would think, on the polling. And what happens? The neighbors

along the corridor start fighting. They don't want it. It runs at street level. Their kids could wander out. If you know anything about Caltrans, and the upper Peninsula one of the big concerns there is pedestrian safety. People walking on the tracks and getting hit by trains. They didn't want CalTrain. The message came back, "We want BART. Why bother with CalTrain when you can have BART?" Much of this type of problem doesn't occur. The groundswell began—"Bring BART to San Jose. Bring BART to San Jose."

The other thing they'll talk about is developing trust. The one thing I knew was back in 1992, what their polls said on their measure. They predicted 54 percent and they got 54 percent. Their poll predicted 52 percent in 1996 and it got 51.8 percent percent. This last year, their poll has shown 70 percent, which I still think is unlikely. But, I'm also dealing with what I am hearing from the public and I'm thinking it has a chance. I was talking to a political analyst about two days before the election and I said, "Terry, what do you think? You think this has a chance?" He said, "Oh, it will get 63 percent, 64 percent. It will be an overwhelming support. But it won't get two-thirds. And he said, "What do you think?" And I said, "I think it has a chance." Then he says to me, "I think you're too close to it. I don't think anything has a chance for two-thirds." So I was really torn. I knew what I was hearing and I knew what the reality had been. I think at that time there had been 33 or 34 sales tax measures in California. Only one or two had ever gotten a two-thirds vote. They're fighting uphill but a lot of factors were coming together. They got it; it passed. It was stunning. You know about Alameda County. I think they received 81 percent. It shows what traffic is, what it means to people around here. It also shows that this image that they won't pass a transit measure simply isn't true. Today, I drove down to Highway 85 and Highway 87 and took the light rail up. So I am sitting there and I am talking to people, it's almost August. We're in the peak of vacation season. It seems like everybody has been laid off. So I'm wondering if anybody is going to be on the train. It's about two-thirds full. I'm thinking this is pretty good. So I start talking to people asking, "Why do you take the trolley?" And they say, "Well I don't want to deal with parking downtown. I go to San Jose State. They've got this Ecopass. It's a great thing. Hey, I can read the paper." One guy was reading the column. I said, "That's a pretty good paper you're reading." He looks at me kind of funny like, "That's you." So, we've done enough stories over the years about the increase in transit ridership. So I think this idea that people won't ride the trolley, people won't ride CalTrain, people won't ride BART. When I was writing one of the BART stories, I went into our archives, which are in this dusty room way in the back. I'm looking at stories written in the '50s—"No one will ever ride BART. It won't work. No one will get on BART and go into a tube under the Bay. This is

earthquake country. They won't do it." Well, today BART is being upheld as that's what we want in the Bay Area. So you get a perspective for how things have changed over the years. Again, doing what I do, having this [Inaudible] of the community, the best stories I have ever done have come from what readers have suggested. We have Highway 87 out here that was built in 1993 and about a year later, people started calling up and saying, "Why is the freeway sinking?" Caltrans isn't going to call you up and say, "Gary we built this new freeway, and by the way, it's sinking." The public keeps you on top of things. The public is right in this. They voted like they were talking to me. I'm still amazed that it happened. But the beauty of this whole sales tax issue now is you can do a scorecard.

About two weeks ago, I wrote a story about Measure A and B. We listed all the projects. Where do the projects stand? Is it under construction? When will it be under construction? When will it be completed? I think in the scorecard, of the 18 projects there, basically only some of the Cal Train improvements were the only ones that lagged behind. Everything is going to be under construction by next year, or is under construction right now, including those two freeway projects—880 and 101. The public likes that. They like that direct connection. Of course, in California, if it's a legally tied measure, you need two-thirds now. That's a large hurdle. Had this energy crisis not occurred, I think you would have seen movement in Sacramento to lowering that threshold. I still think there's a possibility to even get it down to 55 percent. I think that will be a winner in most counties.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

PETE CIPOLLA:

Jude, as I said before, was Chief of Staff to the Mayor during the time of the campaign, [Inaudible], Jude was a political consultant.

JUDE BARRY:

Good morning. I'll keep my comments fairly brief because you heard a lot of very insightful things from the gentleman who preceded me. But I want to say a couple of things about that. One is that Max Besler has one of the best slugging percentages of anyone in California in these measures. As Carl so

articulated before. You can tell how successful Max is because when he speaks publicly these days, he wears neither a tie nor sport coat.

[Laughter]

In this valley, that's a true sign of success.

Gary Richards who is also really insightful in writing and speaking, is I think unique among local journalists, and perhaps other journalists, because he is not only extremely knowledgeable about his topic, but he is an extremely nice guy. I think part of this comes from his sports training where he wasn't always looking for what you're doing wrong, but kind of how you move forward. Not that he's not objective or does his job as a news reporter, but I think he is someone who has become real popular in this community. His column, by the way, "Mr. Roadshow," is the number one read, most popular item in the *San Jose Mercury News*, which tells you something about our community and traffic.

Finally, my good friend Carl Guardino. I have to tell you a funny story. One is that no one in Silicon Valley works harder and has done more to advance the cause of transportation traffic here than Carl. I'll tell you one story that depicts that. This was during the… when we were trying to get Measure A/B on the ballot, this was a contentious move of the Board of Supervisors. They did not want us to put it on the ballot for a whole host of, I think, mostly political reasons. But one night Carl had just spoken to the Mountain View City Council. He calls me at home, it's about 10:00. I answer the phone and I hear this huffing and puffing like an obscene phone call on the other line. It's Carl who is running through the streets of Mountain View on his cell phone saying, "Jude [huff, huff], I just got done speaking to the Mountain View City Council and they supported putting this on the ballot." I said, "That's great, Carl. But why are you out of breath?" He says, "Well, I'm training for a triathlon and I'm just trying to get some miles in." Then all of a sudden he says, "Oh, oh, there's a cop pulling me over. I better call you back." Well the phone rings later and I said, "Well, what happened?" And he said, "Well, I was running in the bike lane and the cop pulled me over." And I said, "Well that's not illegal. What's wrong?" Then he said, "Well, I wasn't wearing my shoes." I said, "But Carl, why weren't you wearing your shoes?" He said, "Well, I left them at the office, but I had to get my miles in and we have an important meeting in the morning. So I didn't have time to go back and get them." But that's a demonstration of not only his level of sanity but also dedication to his measure.

[Laughter]

Let me tell you about my background. One is that I've been working since I graduated from college in politics and government. One of the things I really like about it, as many of you probably do, is that you an make lots of things happen. Lots of things that are important enough not to just our generation, but to future generations.

I started working in the United States Senate for Senator Kennedy. Then I worked on two Presidential campaigns—one for Gary Hart and one for Dick Gephardt. As you can tell I know a lot about how campaigns should not be run.

[Laughter]

But then I came home to San Jose, which is a capital of Silicon Valley, and one of the most beautiful places in the world. The place where Pete Cipolla is going to spend about $6 billion to make even better. I began to work for Supervisor Ron Gonzales, who is now Mayor. I worked for him as Chief of Staff the first two years he was in office. I started a new firm called Catapult Strategies, which is a public relations and pubic policy firm. This is an opportunity for me to continue to do what I like which is to be at the intersection of politics and public policy. We work for companies or organizations like BART, but also private sector companies where you are going to see a lot of collisions at those intersections, particularly around Internet privacy and genetic privacy in the next coming years.

But let me tell you sort of four keys, I think, to why Measure A won. The reason I want to talk about four is that I can't really think of five. But also, you've heard a lot of great things earlier.

One is we had a history of success which you heard before. The original Measure A, then Measure A/B, projects that won and were successful because they served the community, The planners were involved early in what was on the ballot. This gentleman sitting over here named Rod Diridon, who runs the Mineta Institute here, who was really sort of a visionary and a trail blazer, who started way back with Light Rail when no one thought it was possible. No one would ride it. He was really the gentleman whose shoulders we stand on to get to our place today. He was one of the cosigners of the ballot for Measure A.

So history is real important. You've got to have some success, whether it's a project or series of projects or measures.

Number two is timing. For transportation measures, like life and comedy, timing is everything. Let me tell you a little bit about the timing and how we kind of figured out this was the year to go. By the way, I think if you asked this town the question, "Could you win Measure A this year?" My answer would be no, I'm not sure what their answer would be but, timing is critically important.

Before the so called "Pisano" phone call between us and Carl Guardino—and I'll tell you that in 1999 when Mayor Gonzalez was elected, there was a measure on the ballot called Measure O that would have essentially stopped the expansion of the San Jose International Airport. That was really cleverly done by the opponents because it didn't argue that the airport was bad. It just argued that traffic would be tremendous because of improvement of the airport. We did polling on that and discovered that there was absolutely no way to defeat Measure O. So the Mayor was looking at coming into office in his first major challenge and would have lost expansion of the airport. Which if you're a first-time Mayor is not a good thing. So, we actually ended up negotiating a deal with the opponents or the proponents of Measure O, to put it on the ballot and try to stop the airport. Would they support a new plan that was, in essence, a better traffic plan for the airport? So we actually twisted that around. We won Measure O because we argued that we have a new plan, a better plan. You defeat Measure O, you get a new airport, expansion, and a better traffic plan. But what that demonstrated to us is that traffic was such a powerful weapon. People hated it. People would vote for solutions to it. People would vote against something that would cause traffic. We had an opportunity. Then, Paul and I, we were training together for a run.

So this was actually a good run that Carl and I had one Saturday morning when I said, "Carl, you know what we just discovered in our polling was this—that we think we can actually go now because traffic is so bad, and the economy is so good, and win the son or the daughter of Measure A." So that's when Carl initiated a poll, got his members behind it, and really began to build the consensus and coalition to move forward for a ballot measure.

46 percent of people thought it was greatly needed. Expanding light rail service—52 percent. Increasing number of buses—26 percent. Expanding, building new highways and freeways—42 percent. Establishing commuter rail service—58 percent. Expanding BART, the Bay Area Rapid Transit service—66 percent. This was I think unique to our community and perhaps many others that potholes and highways, as you know this, potholes, highways and buses tested lower than transit measures. I think it's quite simple. People know that we can't build our way out of the problem entirely, and that, even if I'm not

going to use transit, somebody else will. If someone else is getting on a train, that means there's one less car in front of me. So people began to see, in this community, that transit was a real option to solving some of our transportation problems.

I thought that, this was of course, the high hurdle, being two-thirds. But when a gentleman by the name of Murphy Sabatino, who also signed the ballot argument, who is head of our local taxpayers' association, a very conservative gentleman, said to me he would sign because he felt that he wanted BART in this community before he passed away, I thought we had a real chance. If Murphy stays in good health and Pete Cippola does what he's supposed to do, I think we'll have that opportunity.

But, my third point is that, in these campaigns, you've got to keep it simple. Carl and Max mentioned, don't talk about taxes. I think they're absolutely right. A former colleague of mine, James Carville, would put it this way—"It's the traffic, stupid." That's what you want to talk about and I think our campaign was quite simple. That is, "BART's Good and Traffic's Bad." Tarzan could have written our campaign plan. But, what you want to do is, again, talk about the benefits, keep it simple, let your opponents talk about all the negative things.

Finally, number four, and my final point is—pray. These are not easy. Two-thirds is hard. We hope that we will someday have a 55 percent threshold, but they're not easy. So you have no margin for error. The campaign has to be managed well and ours was. But also, there's a saying that "the opposition can be deadly." In our case, we had opposition from the Board of Supervisors, who actually raised and spent money against this, and from the environmental groups, who felt that they were excluded from putting this together. But we overcame all that. So, I actually would edit that last statement to say that, sort of smart, well-organized opposition can be deadly. You don't want that.

In conclusion, what we did was, in two months—this was a very brief campaign by the way—in two months we raised $2 million, and went to the ballot and won with 71 percent of the vote, I think surprising most people. Even some of the people who are up here today. That was done, again because we had good timing, a good plan, and good management. Those are all really key. I have here, if you want it afterwards, some of the polling data we used. I have a few copies I could share, but I could send you some additional ones that might be helpful to all of you as you proceed with what you want to do. We hope that you're as successful as we've been. But thank you for listening and I'm happy to answer your questions.

[Applause]

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, who's first? Q and A time. Yes, sir? Can you stand up so everybody can hear your question?

ROBERT MILLER:

I'm Robert Miller from Houston. How much did your polling cost? And is there a rule of thumb, if you say, are running a $2 million campaign, is there some rule of thumb that you could expect to spend on this polling the year in advance and the focus groups?

MAX BESLER:

The rule of thumb is—get a lot of money and spend it all. Actually, that's not too flippant because the reason is it depends upon what the numbers show. As Carl said, you know, when we did the A plus B campaign, that was 6 polls plus two huge focus groups, I mean, focus groups including more than just one focus group at a wash. So we probably spent a $100,000 on polling and focus groups. The second time around it was cheaper, but what you have to look at a minimum is this. First off, you have to have kind of a benchmark poll and what you do is to determine exactly where this issue fits overall. Within this poll, you also want to determine, you know, what people see are the problems, what kinds of projects need to be done, what sorts of services need to be done. You want to find out how much they're willing to pay and in what form they're willing to pay it—gas tax, sales tax or some other kind of thing, depending upon what your tax laws allow. Then you want to get a kind of an idea of what happens when you push them a little bit on simulating a campaign and asking pro and con questions. Then, after that, you'll have more polling to do, more focus polling. But after that point where you've got an idea of what the elements are, you want to go back and you want to test the ballot label itself and then some of the elements of the ballot label to make sure that works. Because you remember, that's one thing everybody looks at.

In terms of specific cost, the pollster we used, Jim Moore, again, it's going to depend on the size of the sample and the length of the poll. As a rule of thumb, though, those were between $15,000 and $25,000 a poll. So, for the 1996

measure with five polls, that was about $100,000 for the polls, plus the focus groups were on top of that. Incredibly wise investment.

The other rule that we have though, that I think Jude and I could expand on briefly, is when we raise money for campaigns, almost every dime goes to direct voter contact. Everything else is donated. As much of the staff as we can are community volunteers and loaned executives from companies. The office space, the computers, everything down to the pencils, pens, pads and Post-It notes is donated, so that all the money goes to voter contact. That's mainly because I like the term frugal, but other people call me cheap. I know Jude's the same way, and we don't want to waste folks' money. We want it to go where it's supposed to go.

Just one last real quick thing: Get the best pollster you can possibly get. Don't go cheap, and if somebody says, "Well, you know, we can get so-and-so for $12,000, as opposed to somebody else for $25,000, the likelihood is that you'll get a major difference between a $12,000 poll and a $25,000 poll. A poll can be kind of long. Don't be afraid if the poll is 20 minutes long or even 25 minutes long. Don't think, "Oh, nobody's going to stay on the phone and do that." They do stay on the phone. Don't let that scare you. What you're looking for is information and you want to get the best information you can get.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Do you have a question? Go ahead…

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, I'm wondering if you could comment a little bit about, if I understand right, your 1996 Campaign was a mix of highway and transit projects and the 2000 Campaign was entirely or almost entirely transit. Could you comment a little on the difference between running those campaigns and any lessons you learned from that?

PARTICIPANT:

Sure. It's "Give the voters what they want" and what they're willing to tax themselves to pay for. In 1984, that was a 100 percent Road Campaign: 3 major road projects, 10-year initiative that would raise about a billion dollars, because that's what voters wanted to solve that year. In 1992, we ran a

campaign that was 92 percent transit, 8 percent roads, because that's what voters were willing to tax themselves to pay for. The good thing about Silicon Valley, by the way, we have so many transportation problems, that there's a ton to do in transit and there's a ton to do in roads. So when you put these together and give people what they want and what they're willing to pay for, there's no stinker projects. That's how big the need is. In 1996, it was 60 percent transit, 40 percent roads. In 2000, for political reasons of being able to get on the ballot and the incredible creativity that Jude Barry had, and Pete Cippola sticking his neck right under the chopping block, that's why that was 100 percent transit. That one was more based on the politics and the realities of the day than strict voter desire. Because I think some road projects in there probably would have had voter support, but voter desire was to do something and that something better include BART.

PARTICIPANT:

Just for purposes of this audience, I want to clarify what was happening in California and I'll just take a minute to do that.

In the 1996 Measure, we used an Advisory Measure and a sales tax that would go into general revenue because we would only require a majority vote and not have to get the two-thirds vote required for a special tax. Under that scenario, the sales tax flows into the general fund of the county and the county basically contracts with VTA to do the projects. That was the philosophy that actually was going to be going for the subsequent measure in 2000. But members of the Board of Supervisors, we actually needed four votes, four out of five votes at the Board of Supervisors, in order to put that type of a measure on the ballot. We saw that it was marginal at best whether we were going to get the four votes. So basically in our hip pocket, the VTA Board of Directors said, essentially, that if the Board of Supervisors does not concur, then we want to be prepared to go forward with the sales tax measure on our own. The limitation was, in that case, that it could only be a transit measure. It could not have any roadway projects in it, because VTA could not tax for a roadway project. So, what basically happened was the Board of Supervisors did not concur, we didn't get the four votes, the Board of Directors put a transit-only tax measure on it. Because we are also the Congestion Management Agency, what we were also able to do was to promise, verbally promise, and actually subsequently, and by some votes on the Board of Directors, just say that all flexible funds that would be flowing in, that normally could be used for transit or roadway projects, would be used for roadway projects only, if we had this sales tax measure. So that's kind of a packaged type

of a thing. It's a political scenario that was going on at the time. I just thought it was important to kind of clarify that.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Next question. Yes?

STACEY ABEL:

Basically, I said that in Austin, Texas, we have a significant environmental community and you had talked about having opposition from the environmental community here. I don't know that we could win without support in Austin, so I'd like whoever of you to talk about that.

PARTICIPANT:

Without getting into a great deal about why they opposed, yes, they opposed by not supporting. Some groups even came out against us. What we did to counter that, by the way, is one, there were a lot of environmentalists who did support us, so we had very prominently in our brochures and other voter contact information, them leading the charge. So, former member, former Chair of the Sierra Club endorsed us, or former Co-Chairs, etc. for Audubon Society. So, we used a lot of prominent environmentalists to, in our literature, to demonstrate the support we had. The leadership of the local organizations did not. But no, obviously, if you can get them you should.

Well, we moved so fast on this measure that they felt that, like the members of the Board of Supervisors, that we didn't include them fairly early on in how the package was put together. I think that's a valid criticism. I don't think they should have opposed us. But we did move very fast, very early on, primarily because of the timing. Also, they felt that too much money was being devoted to BART, which is a project that could, if cost overruns, happen. It would jeopardize funding for other transit measures. So I think those are sort of the two most prominent arguments. Again, voters didn't care. Voters didn't want to wait. They want us to do something. They want us to do something they thought was "Big Bang,"' like BART. So even though the environmentalists opposed us, we were again able to kind of mix it up a little bit by having prominent environmentalists supporting us. But also the message was too strong. The message was, "Traffic was bad and we need to do something now.'"

PARTICIPANT:

If I may tack onto what my Co-Director just mentioned, Austin and Silicon Valley are very similar in this way. When we poll, 9 out of 10 Silicon Valley residents say that they are an environmentalist. I've always wondered who that tenth person is. So, there's that shared belief and really loving the physical environment in Austin and in Silicon Valley. So, one would think, without the major environmental groups, we'd really be in trouble and that's accurate. You never want to take that for granted. Some history—the 1984 measure, which was 100 percent roads, was universally opposed by environmental organizations throughout Santa Clara County. That campaign, similar to 2000, we went to key leaders, current or former leaders, and really employed those folks well in our literature. So if the group didn't support it, that's okay. They have to get their message out. They're not going to have a very easy time doing that. But we can certainly show key leaders within those groups as supporting it. So, that was the bookends—1984 and 2000. In 1992 and 1996, in 1992, when we did a 92 percent Transit measure, almost all environmental groups were with us. In 1996, with more than 60 percent Transit, we still had some environmental opposition or groups like the Sierra Club, who still wouldn't endorse it. They stayed neutral for a 60 percent Transit measure. So, you're not always going to get everyone. It's how you best utilize those who will support you and then recognizing that, as you know, elections are expensive and it's very hard for folks to get their message out and without dollars, they're not going to very well. So, with the dollars we have, making sure that we utilize those contacts we have and hoping that they don't have the dollars to get out their message. The key to bringing them in though, as Jude mentioned, is try to bring them in early. Not because of anything that we were trying to sneak by folks this year. We just had very little time in terms of the window of opportunity to build the coalition we had. 60 days to run a whole campaign that usually takes a year or two, just isn't much time.

PARTICIPANT:

There was groundwork for the projects that were in the transit tax, because the groundwork had been done our VTP 20/20 plan, our Valley Transportation Plan. So there really had been about 18 months of work—public hearings, public meetings. But the campaign picked up that project list and used that. So there are a lot of nuances that go on. Let's go all the way to the back.

CHARLES SHANNON:

Yes, Charles Shannon from San Antonio. As I see, every pollster considers itself a great pollster. So how do we determine who's really a good pollster? How do you really tell who's a good pollster or not?

MAX BESLER:

There are a couple of ways you can do it. There are some directories of political consultants that you can look at. I guess probably the best way to do it is probably to call the state parties and find out who would be good in Texas. You can find some pollsters who have got some good experience there. Also let me kind of distinguish among pollsters too.

Believe it or not, some of them have got specialties in certain kinds of things. Now Jim Moore, the one Carl was talking about, I think he's the best pollster in the country. Jim does candidate stuff very well. He seems to have a real niche on some of these initiatives. He understands them very, very well.

Fairbank, Mullin and Maslin, the folks Jude likes, have got a similar kind of ability. But I think that one of the things that you can do is to go to the state parties there and go to both of them, and say, "Who's a good pollster? Who really knows his or her stuff? How much do they charge? What kind of background do they have in doing initiative campaigns?" Okay? Yes, sir?

BOB FOY:

Bob Foy from Flint, Michigan.

Yesterday, in talking about campaigns, we alluded several times to the fact that in the newspaper support, many times you had editorial support. But then when you had the beat reporter, they were writing articles that were absolutely devastating to the support of the campaign. The net effect of that is what I would ask is that—first of all, it kind of leaves a person who's a reader of the newspaper to believe that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. And then the second part about it is—why does this really occur within a newspaper? Then, what would you recommend that, in a campaign, we do with regard to that?

GARY RICHARDS:

I was in an actually unusual position because I write both a column and I report. There can be a huge conflict of interest. Long before this sales tax came up, I had written a column that BART should be a top if not the *number one* priority of extending BART into San Jose. We early on decided that we needed another reporter. Michelle Guido, who covers the county for us at the time, became that reporter. So, I was writing columns and writing some BART-related stories, but not as many as I probably would have had I been just a beat reporter. The editorial page can do whatever they want. We don't talk to them. They don't talk to us. That's the way it has to be. I know I've sat in meetings where Carl and Jude came in and we would, you know, the editorial people would be in there. And it was their meeting. So I could sit and basically listen, but not ask many questions. I could tell there was a lot of skepticism about the ballot measure. I could tell that I knew which way some of these editorials were going. So, some of our editorials, I believe our editorial supported the tax, but it was the kind of support… it was a backhanded slap. It basically said, okay, we need this, but here's what's wrong with this, and that's what the whole column was about.

On the other hand, the Barry Witt story, showing the downtown skyline, what San Jose would look like if rider-ship projections would be met in BART, showed Manhattan. You don't want to say Manhattan in Silicon Valley. It's the connotation—this is awful. So, we ran the story with this skyline of downtown San Jose, which showed everything looking like the Empire State Building. We did a follow-up story a couple of weeks later and Jude's comment was, "Thank God you didn't run that map." That story was fine. But there's a reason for that. I mean, we don't want to know what the editorial page is doing and we don't want them to know, necessarily, what we're doing. Sometimes their editorials will feed off our stories, but it's sort of a separation of powers.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Carl, did you want to…?

CARL GUARDINO:

Sure, thank you. Gary's absolutely right. The editorial page and the news page are different. If polling is correct on media, only about one out of every five folks who open their newspaper open the editorial page. So, when Gary talks about the editorial coming out and it endorsing the measure, but it being a backhanded

slap, it was more like a backhanded slap, a knee to the groin, and then a kick in the pants. It was a difficult editorial to read, but it did have the endorsement. What was key, because the paper's support is important. That big, huge editorial that runs, one must remember, isn't going to be read by everyone. But those last two or three days before the election, when the slate comes out from the paper, where they say "Here's a recap of everything that we're endorsing," you want to have that check box on the "Yes" there, not on the "No."

One other quick point Max alluded to earlier. When we run these campaigns, relative to free media, it's mainly "Run Silent, Run Deep." You want to control the message yourself through your radio and television, which Jude did masterfully through our print, that Max and his shop did so well for us. You want to get your message out to specific audiences and do your best to avoid being in the paper. That doesn't always work, but that's what you want to try to accomplish. When it didn't work was, as Gary alluded to, the paper ran front page, with pictures—"This is what San Jose would look like." Now whether that was accurate or not about whether that would look like, that was what was in voter's minds. I still remember the morning, because I had no idea the story was coming out. I was getting up at 5:00 a.m. to do free media that morning, thinking I was going to some positive push on what we were doing on the radio. Getting my paper and seeing that and then the phones at my desk started to ring from media. I called Jude and I said, "Jude, what is this? I didn't know about this and my phones are ringing like crazy." He said "Where are you?" I said, "I'm under my desk." And he said, "Oh, you're at your desk?" I said, "No, I'm UNDER my desk." I literally was not answering the phone to deal with it. So, they can be devastating, but you can overcome that. The key, though, is "Run Silent, Run Deep." When you're working with a pro like Jude, don't lose your head.

JUDE BARRY:

Well, thanks for the compliment Carl. But Carl's reaction I think was absolutely right. He just did not answer his phone.

A newspaper can be very harmful if there are a series of bad stories, but most people today don't get their news from the newspaper. They get it from TV. I think, by some studies, it's two-thirds of voters get their information, or two-thirds of the populace gets their information from TV. So what you want to do, I think, is two things. One is have someone in your organization or campaign who's going to interact with the media who knows what they're doing, because it can be very harmful if they don't. But also number two, consider television.

In California, direct mail is very effective because it's targeted, it goes to the people who are going to vote, it's very cost-effective, and people like Max's firm do an excellent job with it. TV, though, is broadcast, so you're reaching a lot of people who don't vote. So you're wasting money, but it can really set the tone. We did early TV. We were up six weeks before the election and I think that helped us when it got to crunch time. People kind of had in their psyche a sense of what this measure was about. So I think we used sort of early TV and radio pretty effectively in sort of a broadcast medium. Then when we narrow casted with direct mail right to voters' mailboxes, they had a very good sense of our message and what we wanted people to think. So one or two bad stories did not really penetrate. We got one or two bad stories. Thankfully, we didn't get ten.

MODERATOR:

Okay, let's go to the back. You had a…?

RICHARD BRANDMAN:

Yeah, mine's a little bit of a follow-up. We had that situation in Portland where we had actually strong editorial board support, but we had negative stories in the front page of the paper, almost day after day in the two weeks preceding the election day. Part of that was due to a reporter who felt in his guise of objectivity he had to print any statement said by an opponent of the measure. So I guess the question is—when you're in that situation, Jude, you just said, well, you need to be smart, you need to have somebody experienced knowing how to handle this. It's hard to go after a newspaper, because they've got the ink and they're reaching their audience. So, what is the smart thing to do in that? I mean, in Portland it was sort of like, take the high road, let it go. I don't think that worked, because in the last two weeks we lost a bunch of points because of all these odd numbers that were coming out that had no basis in fact. We couldn't reason with the reporter. He just said, "I know your numbers are right, but these guys have other numbers, so I'm going to print them too." Can you comment on, when you're in that situation, what you may need to do to get back on the right track?

JUDE BARRY:

I can tell you what we did during the campaign to sort of debate with the newspaper about the story they ran about San Jose becoming Manhattan. But

every reporter, every newspaper's different. So you have to sort of keep that in mind. Well, I went and talked to the editor and I did this by letting the reporter know first, out of respect to the reporter that "I think that you giving our opponents, at this time the Board of Supervisors on this issue, a little bit too much credibility in their arguments, because they're making up things that don't necessarily sound good, but don't have a lot of basis to them." So I went and sort of very respectfully raised points, brought copies of back issues and made sort of a very strong case. I walked out of there having lost the debate, because no editor will, and I think Gary will tell you this, no editor who's worth his or her salt will agree with you, at least in person, over his or her reporter. But I think what happened then is that they actually downplayed some of the criticism that came out later. For example, they ran a follow-up story, no picture, because I made the case that this is, I can debate whether this is accurate, but it's certainly inflammatory, and you know, there's really no basis for it. They didn't agree with me in person, but we saw some change in coverage. So, I think if it's well-reasoned, well-measured, and you do it being respectful, both to the reporter and editor's role, you can do that. But again, you have to have someone who has some expertise in doing that, because that could blow up too.

PARTICIPANT:

Now, that's the good side of things. I've been on the bad side of things, even though that isn't exactly what we can call the best of all possible worlds. We did a campaign right after the A+B Campaign was successful here. We tried to do some cloning in some other communities, but unfortunately, cloning the A+B idea, you know, the general tax associated with a non-binding advisory measure was like trying to clone a chicken from a rock. It just didn't work. We went to Sonoma County where there is also a very significant problem—lots of anger. There had been some instances where they had tried to pass a sales tax. And there what happened was—even though the paper was, the *Santa Rosa Press-Democrat* was sort of on our side, there were articles in the news section on average of about twice a week. Now, if you were scoring the articles the way you'd score a boxing match—the number of blows that have been received by both sides—we would have won, you know, maybe like 12 to 9. But the problem is 9 on the other side is very devastating. We did numbers. We'd been doing a lot of polling and before our campaign got started, the paid portion of the campaign got started, our numbers were the best numbers. They were better even than they were in Santa Clara. Then, all of a sudden—and this is like three months out—I'd say about six weeks before the election, one piece of mail had gone out or two pieces. We were trying to look at what had

happened. We went again. Numbers had gone completely upside down and they stayed upside down. Although we were able to regain some of it, it ultimately became a very close race, you know, a couple points. Although we picked up some opposition, paid opposition on the other side, which I think ultimately helped to sink us. But the point of it is, that when there is a constant din out there, and you have no way of being able to counter it, you're in trouble. There's no way you can control a newspaper. You have to forget about those sorts of things.

I think what Jude did was totally right. The only thing you can do is go in and make your case and maybe it works, maybe it doesn't, maybe it doesn't have any, who knows what happens? I think what you have to do in those circumstances then is to begin to pull out the people who are the "white hats" in your community, the people who don't have a stake in it, the people though who have credibility. And those folks, you've got to pound and pound and pound with those folks, so that people know that it's supported by just folks and people who are good in the community. But there will be some times when you've got to have some massive newspaper opposition. I think it's worse on the news side than it is on the editorial side. Because people look at the news side and they think, "Well, this is real." They look at the editorials and they say, "Well, I agree or I disagree." So they have a preconceived notion of what's going on ideologically when they hit the newspaper, when the few of them who do hit the editorial page do hit them.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Rod, let's go over there and then…

ROD DIRIDON:

There was a question yesterday, Pete, that this panel didn't get to hear. But I think it's significant as a foundation stone to being able to run the kind of classic campaign that you just heard presented. That related to the 1976 Campaign that was successful primarily because of luck. That was that rifle-shot campaign with the very low turnout and a marginal win. But in that was a requirement for every five years to have a referendum on the Transportation Master Plan in the county. Now, it turned out to be every fouf years because we don't run campaigns every five years, but in preparation for that, Pete's agency ran what was called a Systems-Level Alternative Analysis, back in the old ISTEA vernacular. Now it's called a Major Investment Study on a systems level, not on a project level, to update the Master Plan. As part of that, the

Transit Agency spent millions of dollars, a couple of million dollars each time they did that kind of System-Level Alternative Analysis and conducted public hearings in every corridor—hundreds of them. Now that's a legal way you can use governmental money to prepare the constituency, the population, to understand what happens when these folks then come out and run a campaign based on the merits. That's absolutely legal. In fact, it's required that you spend a substantial amount of money of that Major Investment Study, on outreach. So if you conduct those outreach hearings up and down the various corridors that are under consideration and do that saturation, so it's every home and school club and every PTA and every Boy Scout troop and every Girl Scout troop and every City Council and Chamber of Commerce and so on in your area, multiple times, then you educate the public. They have a feeling also that they've contributed to creating that Master Plan because they give you advice. Pete's staff always writes the advice down and tries to include it, gives them feedback as to how they used it. So pretty soon, after conducting those every four years, since 1976, this valley understands then when somebody talks about Light Rail or commuter rail or the other kinds of things that are kind of esoteric in the minds of many people who are just beginning to talk about mass transportation. So it's a way you can create the foundation so that these folks can be successful when they come in to run the campaign.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Thank you Rod. Sharon? And then we'll come over…

PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I was just wondering about the tradeoffs that were made when you were all debating how to shape the program and the level of funding and the time period for how long the tax would be in effect. You have a project in there—the extension of BART—which is a big unknown. A lot of things in its implementation are not directly in your control. How, if the cost is higher and you're not successful in implementing it as some other measures that are in effect now, they've promised packages that they can't deliver, and how did you estimate, you know, what were your decisions back and forth about how long, how much, what projects?

CARL GUARDINO:

Well, we've done a few of these now, and I'm going to turn it over to Jude in just a second. But let me speak briefly on historically, how we've done that.

First, when you're blessed with a history of success, the trust element is so important and I can't state enough how important that is. So, put that on the table. In 1984, we promised 10 years, on time, on budget—we delivered. In 1996, same thing. Pete is delivering all 18 of those improvements, on time and on budget. So the 2000 came along and you get the same questions we received in 1992, 1996—2000, they'll never do it. We can point back to that history of success.

The second thing—we've done well in these efforts, historically, we've had much less time this year. I'll turn it over to Jude for 2000, but months ahead of time, we would pull together a group of transportation professionals. In the 1996 campaign, over six months, they met about 30 times, where we gave them five criteria to consider the improvements: cost-effectiveness, rail versus road, "deliverability" within the life of the measure, etc. Those transportation professionals, without elected officials in the room that they felt they would have to answer to, were able to take off their parochial hats and really do the work that they're so good at doing. They estimated incredibly well what each improvement would cost. That gave us the ability to then say, okay, nothing ever comes in on cost, so we add 20 percent or 30 percent or whatever it is, so that we are conservative on the cost—worst case scenario on the cost, based on their really fine work. Then on what the tax would generate, we don't go with the rosy scenario. We always go with the pessimistic scenario. So that we are conservative on how much money we think we're going to have, we estimate low. We are conservative on the cost of improvements. We estimate high, and that's why we're able to deliver. I think it will be the same with this case.

I'm going to turn it over to Jude for more on this year's approach. I have to leave though, for another meeting, so I want to thank you for letting me be with you.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Thank you, Carl. Appreciate you being here.

[Applause]

We've got about seven or eight more minutes.

JUDE BARRY:

Carl's organization originally tested a Measure A/B approach for 20 years, and that demonstrated some potential. We ran into some political roadblocks. It looked like the VTA was going to put the measure on the ballot, because the County Board of Supervisors would not. So what I did was had our pollster, through the Mayor's Office, test 20, 25 and 30. I actually have those numbers and I'll share them with you.

For a 30-year measure, 48 percent of the people said they would definitely vote for it—we tested in actual ballot language—24 percent said probably. For a 25-year measure, 44 percent said definitely yes; 23 percent probably. For a 20-year measure, 44 percent said definitely yes; 22 percent said probably. Those numbers are all pretty close. What that showed us very clearly is that people didn't care how long it took. What's the difference between 20 and 30 to us? Really nothing. It's do it right, do it comprehensively, and do it well. So, people will give you the opportunity to do it.

Now that Carl's gone, I can tell you that what I argued for was actually doing it in perpetuity. But I think he made a very good case that if his membership, meaning the business leaders of those communities, like something with an end date with some accountability… I think there's good arguments for both, but I think we could have won one that did not expire.

PARTICIPANT:

Realistically, a 30-year measure is, I mean, if we're able to deliver the projects in it, there will be success in a subsequent measure. At that point in time, an in perpetuity is very, very viable. Let's go back to Sandra Antonio.

SANDRA ANTONIO:

Beyond the meetings that were mentioned earlier, what role did the Transit Authority play in terms of the public information strategy and how was that coordinated with the actual campaign activity?

ROD DIRIDON:

We were the database. We were the professionals. While our political leadership was very deeply invisible in it, the staff, myself particularly, was

very, very low-key, in the background as far as we could push ourselves, except the week before the election, when about half the agency is out on the street corner holding the signs and everything, joining Carl and Jude and everybody else out there. I mean, we're out there. A lot of our people devoted their own time, but they are the, I'm going to say the invisible people in the organization, not the directors, not the General Manager, and not anybody of the very visible staff.

Okay? Yes?

PARTICIPANT:

Yesterday, we heard that the conventional wisdom is that you're going to lose your first referendum try. I guess you guys didn't hear about that. But I wondered—if your polling had shown that you weren't going to make it, would you have pulled the plug or would you have just gone ahead and figured you had to take that lump and then move on?

JUDE BARRY:

That's a hypothetical question. I'd say we pull the plug. There's a time to do it and there's a time not to do it. For example, I don't think Measure A could win this year, given what's happening with the Silicon Valley economy, with the national economy. It would be a particularly bad time on this cycle. Perhaps next year won't be any better. Last year, for us, the moons aligned, sort of perfectly, and that opportunity probably won't exist for awhile.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that was one of the questions, or that was one of the statements where there was some bickering back here on the stage.

PARTICIPANT:

Let me bicker slightly. I think Jude is totally right, but let's take a look at Santa Clara.

First off, Santa Clara has run four or five of these things, so if they put something on that's not going to win, peoplel aren't going to look at it and say, "Oh well, they'll come back with another one." While there will be a

substantial number of people who are going to say that, what people are really going to be thinking, or a lot of folks, and particulary leaders are going to think is, "Well, we just don't have it. We've gone as faar as we can go. We've ridden this and now it's done." So, that would indicate some pessimism.

When you've got to geet like 67 percent of the vote, you can't deal with that. If it were a simple majority, I'd say that's a little bit different thing. Of course, if it were a simple majority vote, Jude is right, you probably could have gotten something in perpetuity. So that's an entirely different thing.

Oftentimes though, it does happen. You know, you do it once or sometimes twice. Orange County did it three times before, on the third time they finally passed it.But you try to get it, you know,naturally. You try to win it the first time.

Here's the other problem. If you're close, thenpeople look at it and say, "Well, you know, a little dickering, they could probably get it right." If you get srushed, then they're going to look at it and say, " Forget it." So you have to be strategic even in the way in which you take a look at the way a potential loss may be achieved."

PARTICIPANT:

There's history in Alameda County. Alameda County lost one, they came back and were successful by massaging it again. I think that is one of the most broad-brush statements yesterday that I wouldn't take to the bank. I think it depends upon the individual circumstances. Yes?

ALICE WIGGINS:

Alice Wiggins from MARTA in Atlanta, y'all.

All of you talked about emphasizing projects and benefits and I need to know what drives that list, that final public media list of projects and benefits? Now, what I expect you to tell me is your polls will drive that. But your polls reflect certain people who typically respond to polls. It doesn't necessarily mean the diversity within your entire community. So ultimately what drives the development of that project list that goes out to the public that drives your campaign? Do you take into consideration the whole issue of equitable distribution of services throughout the community in developing your final plan?

MAX BESSLER:

That's a great question. The answer is, I believe in the "spaghetti on the wall" way of doing this. That is, as Carl had alluded to earlier, you get everybody in the community involved in this, and let them have their projects, and if their projects work, they do and they don't. I would try to edit out on the first go-around, as few projects and services as possible. Let everybody have his or her say, I think. Then if it works, then it works. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. Those people that don't get it this time around have just got to say, "Okay, well fine, I accept it." They can't go suddenly on their own and say, "Well, I'm going to push for my own thing." That's what ultimately determines what would be in the plan.

The other thing about whether or not the poll gets to everybody in the community, a real poll, a poll scientifically done by somebody who knows what he or she is doing, will get to everybody in the community. It will be accurate.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Jude?

JUDE BARRY:

The Measure A Program included lots of spending throughout our entire community. In fact, the majority of the capital expenditure is in East San Jose or the East Valley, which is the poorest community in Santa Clara County. But I think the analogy is again—what's the engine that drives the train? For us, BART was the most popular project, and that pulled the train. That doesn't mean that everything on that train was popular or could, in and of itself, have won a two-thirds ballot measure. But I think if you have one or two really popular things, that could be a mass transit option, that could be potholes. But I think if you want to do something comprehensive, you've got to look for something real popular. But we did do it equitably, and we have transit that's going to serve our entire community in Measure A.

PARTICIPANT:

Our initial approach was going to be the same as the 1996 ballot measure where we had an advisory measure and a sales tax measure. That very well,

from the polls, could have been a mixture of highway and transit projects. That may very well have driven that. Since we were forced to do a transit-only measure, then really the only thing we had to look to was the project list that we had already been working on in our transportation plan, that had already had a lot of public input. Then the polls were able to focus on that. What was thrown in there was a replacement of our commuter rail project with the BART project. That was the only addition. Everything else was actually driven in the VTP 2020.

PARTICIPANT:

Just real quick, one thing. Let me say also to kind of argue for getting as wide a range of folks as you can. We did a poll down in Merced County which, for those of you who don't live in California, is a rural county in the middle of the state. At a meeting we were trying to determine which projects should be tested in the poll. Somebody in the back raised their hand and said, "Fog reflectors." Being the inclusive, kind of caring person I am, I said, "Yeah, right." So, we did put fog reflectors on the poll. Guess what turned out to be the strongest project? Fog reflectors.

MODERATOR:

Go ahead. And then we have time for one more question.

JANLYN NESBETT:

Hi, Janlyn Nesbitt, Community Transit, Washington State.

As many of you know, Washington state experienced just a slap in the face with the passage of Initiative 695. Our agencies, statewide, lost between 20 to 75 percent of our funding, our transit funding, and we've all been scrambling. Most of us, there are many people here from Washington state seeking out answers. So, knowing that some of us are running on reserves—my agency in fact cut weekend service; people lost their jobs, people couldn't get to work or couldn't get to their medical appointments—knowing these dynamics, how do you keep a campaign positive, when there's not a lot of positive things to talk about?

PARTICIPANT:

Well, you've got a unique situation up there. Because of the passage of that statewide measure, there's been a fair amount of writing about the impact that it's had. I think what you have to do is to distinguish between the building of the case, so to speak, which comes simply because it's an issue of public. It's a public issue. Something is discussed in newspapers. I think what you need to do is let people who are writing stories about local government, statewide government and the impact of that measure, understand what kind of impact it has. I think you ought to use your public information office in a very legitimate role to tell people exactly what's going on since it does have an impact on that. Then test it in polling and find out what impact it does have on folks. There's, for every negative way in which you cast something, there's a positive way of being able to do it. So, if you're talking about the loss of revenue, I mean the loss of things, you can just say, "Look, loss of revenues due to such and such means that we've got to find new ways to do it. Here are the services that we want to provide and here's, this is how we would go about doing it." So, you can talk about the circumstances that have led to it. You can't whine, you can't bitch and you can't do the "woe is me," "sky is falling" number. What you can do is to say, "We've got to make choices and the choices mean this is what's happening and we're going to, we're gonna let you know, we're going to let everybody we can possibly know about it." That then, in turn, becomes part of the underpinning which gets you to the point where, later on, you can begin to get folks to support a measure.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Go ahead.

PARTICIPANT:

[Inaudible]

PARTICIPANT:

No, it's not positive, but it's reality and so what you just have to say is, "Look, because of funding, this is what's going to happen. We're going to lose these routes." Remember, you're talking about routes more than people. For you, it's you're talking about people because they're important to you. But to voters,

they're thinking about routes, not bus drivers. So I think what you want to talk about is curtailing service as a result.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Final question.

PRISCILLA INGLE:

Priscilla Ingle, San Antonio. There was some discussion yesterday about whether or not to engage in debates with your opposition. So I wanted to hear what your position was on engaging in a debate with your opposition, particularly when a media outlet, a major media outlet, is staging the event and asks you to participate.

JUDE BARRY:

Oh, I think at that point you have no choice. Max likes to talk about "run silent, run deep." You do that as much as you can, but you have to be respectful of the public deliberative process. We engaged in actually lots of debates. Most of them were 10 people in the audience, which is just fine for us. But again, with our opponents not having the opportunity to do the level of voter contact that we wanted. That, I think, was our great advantage. But if I could just quickly answer the woman from Washington state's question, I think another thing you should consider is to have third-party validation of your issue and problems. For example, the business community and academic community could and should come forward and say, "Here's the impact on these cuts and the lack of service to our state economy." That's something that I think that people would understand. It may take awhile and it may take a lot of effort to get those people involved. But it's a lot more credible because a public transit agency saying, "We need more transit." That's not news. A business organization like the manufacturing group here saying "We do," is newsworthy.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Shall we thank our panelists?

[Applause]

Thank you gentlemen. Really do appreciate it. I'm going to ask them to hang around during the break. Unlike yesterday, we're going to give you a 15-minute break today. But, we do need to have all the table leaders come up front and for a short little meeting, and then we'll come back at 10 minutes till, okay?

[Break]

GROUND RULES FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

PETER CIPOLLA:

… with Halick and Associates of Wisconsin, and it will be his job to pick your brains and help us work through this afternoon's session, this session, and this afternoon's session. So Jeff, it's all yours**.**

JEFF HANAN:

Very good, thank you. If we could make sure that everyone has an opportunity to have a seat at one of the numbered tables, that would be most appreciated. That will be your opportunity or your conduit to get in on this conversation.

You've had an opportunity to listen to some experts, very well-versed in these issues. The reality is that there's just as much expertise on this side of the podium as there has been over the last day and a half on that side of the podium. So what we have available for some time, both this morning and this afternoon, is a process by which 120 or so folks are going to have a conversation. To do that, we've got some roles and some things that I'll describe in just a second.

As far as the discussion format, this is the format that we're going to be using, which is—we have a specific topic segment I'll talk about in just a second and a few framing questions that might be useful to get the conversation or the dialogue going at your table. We're going to allow people some time, a couple of minutes to collect their thoughts, and then the table leaders will in fact facilitate a conversation for about 25 or 30 minutes. During that time, there will be interesting ideas, advice that's going to be very useful, some thoughts, some specific reactions, some questions, maybe some contrarian points of view. What we want is we want some of that information to then become part of a large group conversation. So my job, essentially, is to just keep people on track. I'm not a subject matter expert as it relates to this topic.

One of the roles that I'll describe in just a second is somebody who can in fact record some of the highlights of the conversation. In fact, what we'll be doing is that at the end of each discussion piece, one of our staff will collect that information so that we can document it and begin to create a body of knowledge based on the people that are at this meeting today.

The topics that we're going to spend time on, both before lunch and then after lunch today, are: Organizing the Campaign; The Importance of the Media; Handling the Critics; a topic called "It's All in the Details;" and then finally, our last discussion for today is "The Essence of What Wins an Election."

Here are some ground rules that I'd like you to consider or think about, just so that we can keep the conversation as productive and as focused as we can. These are on your table. You'll find them on that bright orange piece of paper, so there should be one within eyeshot for everyone. As far as ground rules, we would like full participation at the tables. We want everyone to contribute their voice to this conversation. In terms of balancing inquiry with some of the available expertise, because you've not yet worked on a referendum, that doesn't mean that you don't have thoughts, ideas or contributions that are as important as those people at your table, that have both successfully won and unsuccessfully lost elections. But everyone around the table has contributions. You might, in fact, at the table, have a specific question. John may have a very good answer that he'd be more than happy to tell you about during that discussion time. All questions are in fact useful in the discussion piece. We'd ask you to personally monitor your own airtime, okay? What we don't need is we don't need an individual spending way too much of their personal airtime in the discussion because again, we want everyone to contribute and participate. Just simple courtesies in terms of speaking. Help the recorder create the key summary. There will be somebody at the table trying to jot down the highlights of each of the pieces you've discussed.

And then, finally, one of the things we'll do at the end of each conversation that you have as a table, is that we're going to report out in the large room, again, some of the highlights. And in fact, people can listen to different perspectives or, in fact, some of the similar perspectives people are sharing around key issues. We are making no attempt to create any form of consensus in any of these discussions. That's not our objective. Our objective is to, in fact, understand perspectives, collect useful advice, and get the different perceptions that you have, as experts, out on the table, so you have a voice in this conference.

We have a couple of roles. These are also at your table, and they basically talk about three people who will be helping each of these conversations. First of all, a table leader, who is, in fact, there to really keep things focused, monitor airtime and make sure participation is, in fact, balanced. For those table leaders in the room, could you just stand up please for just a second?

So, ladies and gentlemen, your table leaders or facilitators for today. Thank you very much.

The role of recorder—I want to stop here and just talk about this role. This is an individual who, in fact, will record some of the summaries of the key points. We'd like you to use complete sentences and we'd also like to have you please print. In terms of the method or vehicle for recording, you'll find conveniently in the center of each of your tables is this large white tablet. So you might search for it or, in fact, get it out of the briefcase of the person sitting next to you. But in any event, this can be used for recording of some of the key points. Rather than just jot down thoughts, though, we'd like to actually have you translate the conversation into some sentences, so that for people documenting it after the fact, they'll be able to make some sense of it. And we'd like to, if you could all please just print, as it relates to the summary. We're going to invoke spelling amnesty from now until about 5:00 tonight, so we're not going to worry about that particular feature. We're going to collect information at the end of each segment. (Included as appendix)

And this is the one role we're going to talk about today where we suggest you rotate or spread the wealth, rather than having one person attempt to summarize or provide notes. Let other people at the table also contribute in terms of your table production. So, that's the role of recorder.

And then finally the role of reporter. We're going to use the handheld mikes. And it will be an opportunity for your particular reporter at the table to, in fact, describe, discuss or, in fact, present one or two useful pieces of advice that your table spent a lot of time talking about. Okay? So, in a loud and clear voice, we would like the reporter to paraphrase some of the key points in a concise manner. Generally, what we'll do is spend about 30 minutes to discuss and then about 30 minutes to, in fact, present. And my only job is to basically keep us on track and make sure we get out as much information as we possibly can. The reporter helps with the flow of discussion by adding new information without being redundant. So if, in fact, the prior four tables have described everything you've talked about, then you might just literally say, "Nothing to contribute in this conversation. It's all been said before." Okay?

And so, I think that will keep things from getting too boring. And, again, not all tables need to contribute to the debrief. What I'd like to have you do, if you haven't done so already, is please just simply introduce yourself to the person sitting at your table. Tell them your organization and a little bit about yourself, very briefly. But then provide them with maybe one, maximum of two things

that over the course of the next four or five hours you really want to get out of the conversation, okay? So please give them a heads up to that end. I'll give 10 minutes now for your introductions. One to two things you'd like to get out of the discussions. That 10 minutes starts right now.

ORGANIZING THE CAMPAIGN

JEFF HANAN:

I've been advised that the only thing standing between you and lunch is this debrief and so what I'd like to do is I'd like to start the debrief.

This is what we're going to do. We're going to have a couple people running mikes, because it's important that everyone in the room hears other people in the room. We're going to talk about some of the highlights based on the questions about key considerations or critical success factors in organizing a campaign, your advice, your opinions. And what we'll do is we'll try to get a table up and discussing, very briefly, their highlights. And we'll have one or two of the other tables sort of on the on-deck circle, and that will get the microphones going fairly quickly.

If we could, if for just the debriefs, if you could put your table numbers up, that will just facilitate sort of the quick and ready on this.

Anybody want to start the conversation, reporting out on a few of the highlights from your table discussion? Table 7? Very good, thanks Brian. Anyone else while Brian's getting ready?

We'll go then to five, and then I saw somebody make a motion on Table 9, so we'll put a microphone over on Table 9.

PARTICIPANT:

Speaking for Table 7, we have a free-flowing discussion and have some free-flowing notes too, but they're legible. So, I'll go with those.

One of the most key considerations in organizing a campaign, we talked about that you need to have an identified need for a campaign. What are the issues? What are you trying to address with this campaign? Is there a need that both the leaders in your community understand, and are supportive of addressing? And also, is there a perception among the community, by the voters, that there is indeed a need?

JEFF HANAN:

Okay.

PARTICIPANT:

A second consideration is the identification of a stakeholder associated with any proposal you might put forward. Stakeholders, we've heard some today—the business community, elected officials, the environmental community, but some others as well. Maybe the senior and disabled community, the neighborhoods activists, and that kind of thing. In our community we include some of the ethnic representatives.

JEFF HANAN:

In some of our work on visioning and communities, we might identify as many as 45 stakeholding groups. It's a lot more than you think it might be.

PARTICIPANT:

We actually have a kind of a burgeoning effort [Inaudible] County, as we build the transportation collaborative. It involves 60 stakeholders and different representatives.

JEFF HANAN:

Yes, that's a big number.

PARTICIPANT:

It's unwieldy, but, hopefully, we'll come together.

A second feature, or a next step in identifying stakeholders, is to take those stakeholders and build them into a coalition where they all agree on a direction that needs to be put forth, and that is… I've got so much skipped over, but we did… My first thing was identifying the need, and that has to do with… The next thing would be identifying a plan of projects to address that need, and the coalition has to be built around that plan of projects.

You want me to go through all three questions first?

JREFF HANAN:

No, no. I think just a couple of the highlights, and then we're going to give the…

PARTICIPANT:

Those are a few of our highlights.

JEFF HANAN:

That's good. I appreciate that. Let's see, Table 5, a couple other highlights to add to that, if you can imagine a growing template around organizing a campaign. Some good concepts here about starting with the need, starting to identify state…

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, well we had a just a real loud discussion around here. But anyway, one of the things we thought was very, very important was timing of the issue. Make sure you know what the issues are, and then identify the need of the campaign. But let me just highlight the top three things—timing, clarifying issues of the campaign need, and building coalitions, based on community polling, and etc. One of the other things that I think everybody agreed on was sharing reality and orientation—self-examination, prior to developing a plan. In other words, have a true plan.

And one of the things… I didn't get to see it. I know it's on paper here, and I'm true and dear to it. It's about going back and dealing with the grass roots level. It's that we can put as many heavy-weight politicians out into the community to push this thing, but then we're also dealing with reality. Politicians do not like talking about raising taxes, but we can find some really smooth, sharp community leaders from a grass-root level that can rise to the top like cream, and get our message out. I think when we do that, we will have a successful referendum. Then you bring your politicians along, and let them be the glory seekers. You know, we don't care who comes out the glory seekers, as long as the job is getting done.

In summary, I'll end by saying, I know I didn't cover everything, and does anybody want to say anything else that you thought was very, very critical?

And we just believe we're going to win our next referendum.

JEFF HANAN:

There you go. Let's go to Table 2, and then we'll go to Table 9. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT:

Well, here we also talked about some of the same things that have already been mentioned, and were mentioned by the panelists. But a couple of things that you may want to mention as much are, pay attention to the other issues that may be on the ballot. For example, if there's an anti-tax measure coming on the ballot at the same time, well it's probably not a good time to be talking to people about, you know, raising a tax issue.

Another one is, be clear—have a very clear and simple measure. You know, nothing that's going to be too lengthy, a long list of projects or anything like that that would just make it much more difficult for people to understand. Another item was to make sure you work together with the people that are framing the ballot language so that you get the best language possible to make sure that you get what you want out there, and have a successful campaign.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Table 9, jump up. Who's in the on-deck circle? Table 12, and then Table 11. Then I'll come to Table 4. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT:

A lot of this stuff that we discussed at Table 9 was stuff that you've all heard earlier today, as well as yesterday afternoon. But what we focused on mostly was, who was going to champion the effort, or who was going to be in the lead, whether it be a certain person, or a group. It became apparent that it's very important that you do your research ahead of time, and you know exactly who you want to be the champion, and you don't want, necessarily, the elected official. We were able to compare and contrast things that had worked and did not work. One of the things that seemed to work well was using a broad coalition of people, such as they did in Denver, in which you had various groups that normally, or don't necessarily always agree with each other. But they came together for this, and they supported it, and that tended to give it a

little more support. So we kind of focused on that, and then we also, basically, looked at just having something that met the public's needs. So, basically, being clear, and that was stuff that we had already discussed earlier. I think that's it.

JEFF HANAN:

Good. Thank you for that. Let's go to Table 12.

PARTICIPANT:

One thing I learned is that, when you walk away from the table, you get elected reporter. I'm also, perhaps, the only elected official this afternoon and this morning, and that's not an advantage, I assure you of that fact.

A couple things that I'd like to bring out that our table discussed. First of all, we think it's extremely important that you consider the role of the consultant, and whether or not that consultant be a local consultant who's familiar with a constituency and citizen issues. But whether you spend the money and go out and hire a national consultant who has national experience, in terms of transportation referendums… We started off with the discussion that we thought local consultants were better. They know what your issues are, and they can help you work with your citizen groups. But toward the end of the discussion, we came to the feeling that, perhaps, you need to have both. Perhaps, use a local consultant to deal with local issues, but bring in a national consultant, and that will help you put your campaign together, and share with you the experience that that person has had in other cities across the country. So I think those were good points.

Then the second, I think, real important issue we talked about is clearly defining, early on, the role of the transit agency and your coalition. What do you want your agency to do? I think we've heard various comments from different tables about what that role should be for your transit agency, and some of those certainly involve some potential litigation, and you want to stay away from that. But they do have a role to play, but from the very beginning, you need to decide what you want your agency to do, and what is the role for your coalition groups.

JEFF HANAN:

Very good. Let's go to table 11. If you could just introduce yourself, and then... by all means.

BOB FOY:

I'm Bob Foy from Flint, Michigan. We're at Table 11 here. We spent most of our time talking about the early stages of what the key issues where, and it's in developing a sound plan. We said, in developing a sound plan, it's important that you have a major investment study as one of the inputs into that process, and that you have strong public input, and that there's strong coalition building during the plan development phase. That it's of utmost importance when in that phase, you also do polling to ensure that your development of a plan is consistent with the communities view. Then after you complete that and develop a plan, you're dealing with establishing the private sector leadership that you're going to need in order to sell the plan. That's really when the transition takes place, where the transit authority has been in a very strong leadership role in the development of a plan, and, at least, one of the very prime players. Now we're going to turn it over to the private sector, and let the private sector kind of take the lead on selling what we have here.

We also talked about then formalizing the coalition support at that time to a more formalized structure, and then the need to start developing the financial structure to be able to support the campaign.

JEFF HANAN:

You've done a tremendous job of not being redundant, but actually adding to sort of a panorama of organizing issues, so this is really quite good.

Let's go to Table 4.

ANNE LOUISE RICE:

I'm Anne Louise Rice with the Southern California Regional Rail Authority. We're the operators of MetroLink, the commuter rail service in Southern California, and I'm the Government Affairs Manager.

Our group had a very lively discussion, primarily based around cautionary tales. So, to put some finer points on the some of the subjects that have been mentioned, one is to make sure that you keep your own house in order. That is, to be sure that your employees, and also your riders, are supportive of your measures. You know, some people talk about how those folks were actually some of the least supportive. This is, again, in retrospect. They found out they were some of the least supportive of those local measures. So make sure your local house is in order.

Have a strategy for building those developing relationships that you need to sell the measure. It's easy to say you need 5 or 10, or you need 45 stakeholder groups, or that kind of thing, but you really need a strategy behind that to develop and sustain those groups. You also need to know how many votes you need to get. We had, again, a cautionary tale about an agency that thought they needed 100,000 votes. That's what they got out of their pollster, but then, all of a sudden, a whole bunch of anti-measure folks showed up and killed the measure. So you've got that. Again, it's speaks to having a very good pollster.

Then, fourthly, you need a successful fund-raising component to the measure.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, let's go to Table 8.

JENNY WILLIAMS:

I'm Jenny Williams. I'm from Lexington, Kentucky.

Although we did talk about a lot of the points that have already been mentioned, we spent a lot of time…, because we do have legal counsel here at this table. We spent a lot of time talking about the legal restrictions and rules for the agency in the campaign, and how the campaign needs good legal advice, and also identifying the risk that you are willing to take in order to get your referendum to pass. I think sometimes you have to take some legal risks, and if you don't take those legal risks, then you're not going to get your referendum to pass.

We also talked a lot about fundraising and how important it is to have a pack or some kind of organization that can do your fundraising advocacy for you.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, let's go to Table 6. We'll finish up with Table 1, and we'll spontaneously erupt into lunch, okay?

BILL DRAPER:

Bill Draper with the Sacramento Regional Transit District. I work there as the Public Information Manager.

First on our list was just to take a realistic assessment of whether or not we can even succeed. Of course, we need a lot of good data to make that determination. Timing, budget, you know, those are obviously major considerations with that. Talking about budget, kind of, again, we made a few points that… Or if we can expand on a few points that the rest of you were talking about, contrary to what was stated yesterday, we have experienced at this table…that would indicate that we might not want to depend on getting a lot of money late in the game. So what this person…, and our consensus at the table was, is that maybe we should take a more realistic approach, develop a budget up front, try and get the money up front, and then, if we get some money later in the game, great, maybe have a plan to use it. But that's got to be part of the realistic assessment of whether or not we can make a go of this.

Somebody mentioned, "Make your message simple in understanding." Somebody at this table said, "Make it fit on a bumper sticker." I think that, if it doesn't fit on a bumper sticker, maybe that's just sort of an acid test to determine whether or not it really is a simple message, or whether it will get people's attention.

Also, somebody else at the table said, "Make sure it resonates with the community." I love that word. Resonate, you know, is an emotional response, so if we can get an emotional response out of the community, I think that counts for something.

We were talking about solid leadership. I don't think that was mentioned here. I think we talked about champions. We spent a lot of time… In fact, there was some fairly impassioned discussion about the leadership. Some elements of the leadership should be that we need to have somebody that's full-time running the project, that they be well recognized within the community, somebody who's influential, a very good leader. By that, we would define that as meaning good at rallying support among all of your stakeholders, and respected by all of

your stakeholders, preferably someone who does not alienate anyone, or more of the stakeholders.

We did talk about identifying the champions, and having them not be from transit, and seeking opinion leaders. I think everything else would be redundant, so that's it.

JEFF HANAN:

Very good. We're going to squeak in Table 10 as well, I believe. But let's go to Table 1 right now. A couple more comments?

NINA WALFOORT:

I'm Nina Walfoort with the transit authority in Louisville, Kentucky.

We are a little bit at the bottom of the barrel. Everybody was really good, and there were just a few things, I think, that we touched on that maybe didn't get mentioned. One is, we agreed with the assessment that it's a great idea to hire the best, in terms of management of the campaign, to go with professionals, but a third point we added was to listen to them. Sometimes the transit agencies and the leadership think they know better, and then they pay for good advice and don't use it.

The other point was in the assessment of what could be done differently, if you fail. It's that sometimes you do pick leadership that is not—that either has baggage, or enemies, and that can backfire. So the message was to be very strategic in picking out your community messengers, and your out-front people so that it doesn't backfire on you.

JEFF HANAN:

And, finally, Table 10.

TOM FOSS:

I'm Tom Foss with the Memphis Area Transit Authority.

We talked a good deal about which entities should put this measure on the ballot, to the extent that you can have anything to say about that, whether it's a

central city, or a region. Or, in one case, we were even talking about maybe a state-wide referendum. That could effect how you structure your message, and also what mix of projects you include in the measure.

The other point that hasn't been mentioned really too much is the role of the transit agency, and, of course, the trust factor with the transit agency, and the importance of having a communications officer within the transit agency that can help spread that consistent message, and get the right information out on the transit agency projects.

JEFF HANAN:

All the recorders in the room, just simply give your sheets of paper to Margaret, who will go around and start to pick them up. This material can be organized and documented, and, I think, can be a fairly rich template of really important ideas and considerations around campaign organizing.

What I'd like to do is suggest that we stop for lunch. Lunch you'll find outside the doors right there. I believe it's a buffet, and it'll enable you to come back in. We're going to have about a 45 minute lunch period, during which we'll have a couple comments from a speaker—very short comments sort of in the middle of lunch. But, by all means, we're declaring lunch at this point.

[Break for Lunch]

IMPORTANCE OF THE MEDIA

[Recording of resumed session starts in the middle of a speaker conversation.]

PARTICIPANT :

… of the revenues being raised from this, and then once that was accomplished, and we had a measure, we took responsibility for our own area. Our vendors raised about 40 percent of the funding that paid for the campaign to make this successful. Then we focused on our core urban service area in northern Alameda County, about educating people who care about bus transit—about the importance of the sales tax measure. It included a whole variety of things, including endless community meetings with every little crime watch group, everybody that we could find that would give us a forum. …car cards on the buses, a lot of informational pieces.

Then, tied to it, at the culmination, we ran some TV commercials that were designed, in part, to improve the image of the bus, so people would see buses as part of the solution to the congestion problem. So we just were delivering our little piece of a much broader campaign. But these are the TV commercials that ran. We got them professionally produced, and then we got our advertising… I'm telling you this because, as transit operators here, it's of value to you to see it, I think. We got our transit advertising company to leverage some time on network television to run these commercials, so they got great exposure, and I think that… Well, again, they're just a piece of a kind of broader campaign.

JEFF HANAN:

Great. Thank you.

... had the attribute of a highly-successful media partnership. If, in fact, we see some hands, that's the good news. If, in fact, we see no hands, that, in and of itself, is something very interesting.

PARTICIPANT:

I have a question. When you say partnership, what do you mean "a media partnership"?

JEFF HANAN:

I think a partnership can be defined as a relationship with the media, where, in fact, it was a positive relationship, it was productive, it was collaborative, it, in fact, was [Inaudible], in terms of the effort. Maybe that's a way to define it. Maybe for those—if anyone, who's willing to raise their hand, has and would like to describe it, they may add to that definition.

Your hand shot up very quickly, and if Margaret, the mike lady, can get right over to her…

PARTICIPANT:

That's not Margaret.

JEFF HANAN:

Art, the mike man, got to you quicker than Margaret, the mike lady.

Talk a little bit about… And maybe the answer is, "Why did you raise your hand, as it relates to media?"

PARTICIPANT:

Well, the editorial page editor, the newspaper reporters in a smaller town, like I live in, are people you can get to, and they become your friends. I work with our newspaper, and our television and radio people by going to them before they come to me with news. I'm not afraid—I'm not too shy to call up and say, "Please, please, please, cover something we're going to do."

Press releases that are positive... You can't sell anybody a pig in a poke, that's for sure. First of all, you've got to have a transit system that's sellable, and doesn't have bad news about it. But I've developed a real warm relationship with the editorial page editor. He gets taken out to lunch a lot, and he likes it. The newspaper reporter is someone I've practically grown up with. We can sit and have a drink and talk about all sorts of interesting things that go on, and have gone on. Cultivate them, go to them, trust them. They will treat you right, if they're absolutely convinced that you are telling them the whole story. I don't know if that is necessarily characteristic of a smaller community, that's

all I know about. But I would think… You say one of your most popular writers is here today—Gary Richardson, am I correct?

GARY RICHARDS:

Richards.

PARTICIPANT:

Richards?

GARY RICHARDS:

Yes.

PARTICIPANT:

Obviously, someone has cultivated that relationship very well. He's here, he's comfortable. [Laughter heard.]

JEFF HANAN:

The comment was, it cost him a lot of money. [More laughter.] He's only kidding.

VICKIE SHAFFER:

But in that sense… It doesn't hurt… Your advertising dollars don't hurt you either, in terms of the support that you get through the back door from the people who publish papers and report news—television news. They've got to have money to do that, and if you're spending money with them, they're always going to be just a little bit gentler with you, unless you give them something terribly scandalous to report.

And that would be my summary of the working relationship with the local press.

JEFF HANAN:

Your community is where?

VICKIE SHAFFER:

Huntington, West Virginia. It's a one-newspaper town. It's a very negative paper. It tends to make news with the negative, and we have succeeded over many years to be good news in our city and not bad news, which they would prefer.

JEFF HANAN:

How about other stories of success partnerships? Yeah, please. Why don't we go…

PARTICIPANT:

Can I get a mike?

JEFF HANAN:

Yep. Why don't you just run back and she'll pass it, and hope she avoids hitting you in the head with that.

NANCY PEARL:

I'm Nancy Pearl. I currently work in Reno, but previously I lived in LA., and my background was working in the media before I got into public relations and marketing, and media relations. Understanding and knowing what the media's needs are, and what their deadlines are, I think, is really very effective and very critical. We were talking at our table here, narrowing your message down to a key message, and something that's very relatable that people can understand clearly and quickly.

We just did… It wasn't a political campaign, but we just did our 20-30 regional transportation plan, and we decided to do a very, very expensive community outreach program as an element to that campaign, or that program, and we had incredible editorial and newspaper, and broadcast support for the thing. It was so easy, because we just related it to the needs of the community, and why we were doing this, and why we wanted the community involvement, and why we wanted public involvement. We had the newspaper printing editorials the days of, or the days before our public meetings, and encouraging people to come

out. Everything they said was supportive of what we were doing, because we were doing the right thing, and we were communicating it very effectively.

Again, I'm in a smaller community now, so it's also very easy to get to these people. But even when I was in a larger community—Los Angeles is just one of the biggest—you're dealing with a little bit more skepticism, your dealing with… But you're still going to have key reporters that you're going to deal with, and if you deal with them honestly, if you give them something that's newsworthy and valuable to them on their deadline, and you're accessible to them if they call you, you answer them, and you give them information that's meaningful to them, you'll build those relationships. You don't even have to take them to lunch. In the larger communities, they won't go, because they don't want to be bought. They don't care if you're buying advertising, if you're in a bigger town. They don't want to know any of that, they're completely separate.

So, everything that you have to offer is of newsworthy value to them, you're accessible to them, you're honest with them. You can occasionally go off the record, but I don't even recommend doing that. Know that what you say to them could very well come back at you, and be very cautious with what you say. Know that they're your allies. You're the one in control of the message, and this is something that a lot of people don't believe, or don't understand. They think that the reporter, or the editor, or whomever, is the one that has all the responsibility and all the power, and that is absolutely not true. You're the one with the power to communicate the message. That's all I'm going to preach on today. [Laughing.]

PETER CIPOLLA:

I need to disagree.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Good. We have a contrarian point of view, then we'll go to Table 9. Go ahead.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Mr. Humble Pete, you know, the wallflower. After years of building up a relationship with both the editorial board staff, and with Gary, and a couple of

other reporters, I think it is possible to go off the record, especially going into in-depth discussion, and really giving the media, editorial board too, a really full-blown picture—in being able to explain why, at this particular time, you can't run out and print it, you can't run out and make a comment on it. We've done that, and we did that in-depth on several occasions, not just when it came to sales tax measures, but on other things which have, in fact, given us more credibility. What they're always going to come back with is, "Okay, now I've got to take you on record. What can you give me?" So you have to be prepared to be able to give them that bite of something…

You're shaking your head, so you do agree, at least, in some part.

NANCY PEARL:

If you know how to manage it, if you know the person, and you have a relationship with that person, then absolutely.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Yeah, and it really is… I mean, I would not have done that day one on the job. It was after years of knowing these people.

JEFF HANAN:

So, to date, I'm hearing cultivating relationships, I'm hearing understanding the operating needs of the news gatherers, their deadlines. The issue of accessibility I've heard, making sure the salient message is, in fact—I don't want to say bite size, but, in fact, they can get their arms around it versus a very complex type of a message.

This notion of building a relationship over time, providing a lot of deep background off the record, going on the record to, in fact, be clear about the message, that's what I'm hearing so far.

Go ahead.

AMY TERANGO:

I think all those things that have been said are, to some extent, true. But it seems to me there's three points in dealing with the media in a small community like the one live in, and…

JEFF HANAN:

That community is?

AMY TERANGO:

The Fairfield-Hamilton area, Bubba County, Ohio. I've got some experience with that. I'll sit and watch the Cincinnati media from a close distance, and I don't know how that works, let me tell you that. But in a rural world, they're looking for three things—three aspects. One is the editorial board and the policy that they're going to make, and you have to be willing to spend the time convincing those folks who determine editorial policy that what you're about is in the best interest of the community. You have to work at it, and you can't baloney them, you've got to be factual, and passionate, and timely.

The news reporters are looking for stories, and I think if you expect more than that from the reporter on the street, you are going to be disappointed, because some day they're going to get their story from the guy on the other side of the fence. You should not take that as a sign that they hate you, or they're out to kill you, or to submarine your program. It just happens to be, the other guy got there with the story first, and you need to anticipate that, and try to prevent it. But accept the fact that it will happen, and you can't say, "You dirty S.O.B., you'll never get another press release from me again," and I've heard politicians say that. You know, of course, it's suicidal.

But the real tricky part that worries me is that most newspapers open their opinion column up to letter writers, and they will accept any kind of garbage that somebody can put into the English language. And, generally, not reflect in any way that that's pure, unadulterated baloney. So you have to have your advocates out there who will counter punch that as soon as it appears in the press, and hope that that balancing story gets out also.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Good. Yeah, please.

RON POSTHUMA:

One of the things that we've been doing lately that's now had some good effect is, we're doing sort of a proactive approach of trying to get a specific transportation story out each week, which forces us… You know, feeding the reporters a proactive story… I can guarantee they're positive stories. The issue is, they don't always take them, but one or two every time just about does, and I think that's very effective.

I'm Ron Posthuma from King County, Seattle, Washington.

We also post those things on our county Website, so even if the media doesn't pick them up, you know, we get a few hundred hits a week, just via the Website. So putting together… And you can do this as a public agency, because you're communicating with the public. Getting that stuff together for the Website once a week is a useful self-discipline kind of thing, of coming up with that positive story. I mean, we get a lot of follow-up press attention that's been almost uniformly positive.

JEFF HANAN:

Great. A couple more ideas. Let's go over to Table 5. Anyone on this side of the room?

PARTICIPANT:

I'll just mention that I think a major coup for us recently was hiring the TV anchor of a major television station who's been in the business for 30 years and knows everybody in that market. Whatever relationships we think we can establish with the media has nothing to do with what they establish within their own media families. What she's been able to do in a sort amount of time, just based upon 30 years of relationships in the market, has been incredible, in terms of our being able to manage a message.

JEFF HANAN:

Is she, in fact, your chief…?

PARTICIPANT:

She's our key spokesperson, but she's very much involved in strategy development for our whole media relations strategic planning effort.

JEFF HANAN:

That's interesting.

BRIAN RASMUSSEN:

I'm Brian Rasmussen with R&R Partners, we're the communications agency that works with Utah Transit Authority, and, as was mentioned yesterday, we were successful last November… Many factors, one of which is probably one of the most important, is the grass roots support, especially with our employees and operators, and so forth, and getting them motivated, and telling them…, especially the help from the local transit union as well. But early on, we knew that we had to have unified messages coming from both the transit authority as well as from the coalition. We took the General Manager from the Transit Authority, along with the leader of the coalition, and met with editorial boards early on. W knew that we had to have a single message, and that message, through research, we found was…

Just to step back a bit, in 1992, we knew we lost because we did not have the support of the white collar male, age 35 to 54. So we knew that's who we had to target this time. Knowing that many of them probably never have ridden a bus or a train, or may never, what message would motivate them? So we came up with the simple message, "Even if you don't ride it, you use it." That really became kind of the center of the focus of our message, and it's going to let us run a couple of those spots now.

JEFF HANAN:

Thank you. Any other suggestions, ideas or concepts about creating a partnership, if you will, with the media? Final call. Okay. Good, people are pointing somewhere—to Table 8. Very good. Thank you.

JENNY WILLIAMS:

Jenny Williams from Lexington, Kentucky. I'm the marketing director there, and we have cultivated a relationship with the media over the last ten years. It's taken a long time to cultivate those relationships. We find that we have different reporters coming in probably every month. A new one comes to us, so we have to educate over and over and over again. We find, with the newspapers, it's much more in-depth. With the broadcast media, you know,

you're going to get a 30 second sound bite. They may interview you for 15 minutes, but you'll get maybe one or two sentences in the interview, so you've got to be sure that you know how to talk in sound bites on broadcasts. On the other hand, in the newspaper, they're going to want reams of paper, or at least in our town they do. It's a mid-size community.

We do have accessibility. I feel like that accessibility to them is as extremely important as well, if you can give them a number where you can be accessible at all times. As some of the others have said, I think it's very important that you're always up-front and honest with the media. If they find that you're not, at any point, then they'll bury you. So it's very much important that you be up-front and honest with them at all times.

I also am the advertising director for like [Inaudible], so we do some advertising on the media. I don't think that it helps us in the stories, but sometimes in doing very creative campaigns, things that get giggles, or that are really warm to the community, you can get some coverage in the media for your advertising, and we've been able to do that very effectively. That will also give the media a warm feeling about you. So, we've been able to use that very effectively in the past.

The most effective, I think, was a campaign where we used our drivers—the singing bus driver campaign, and they were very well accepted by the community. The media covered it extensively, I mean in funny things, and also in articles in the newspaper. It was on television—all over, and I think it really helped our media relationship. So you may think about sometimes using the advertising side in that way to improve your media relationships.

JEFF HANAN:

I heard this morning that the targeted mailing concept seems to be extremely effective, but they began to talk about more of a television sort of aspect creeping in, and it just strikes me, as you watch these short pieces, just sort of the flavor and the spin that that almost provides. I also am reminded of… How many of you watched the Superbowl, in part, to see what commercials come out for that coming year, and then subsequently talked about them for about a week or two later? So it seems to me, as a non-marketing type of observer of some of this, is that these types of interesting, funny, amusing…, the ones that will elicit a response, that get people talking, are exactly the kinds of things that you want sort of preemptively going into a campaign.

The other point that I heard was the amount of time it takes to create the relationships. To the extent, if you, in fact, are considering some type of a measure a year or two or three out, how many of you are actively creating those relationships, providing the education, doing some of the sort of building block stuff today versus at the point you get your campaign pulled together? You go racing down to the local newspaper and go, "Have we got a story for you. Oh, by the way, it's got to be in the news in the next three weeks." It's like, well, that's now how it works, I'm getting a sense. So it's that relationship building in years, not months, which is probably what we're talking about. For some of you, that's just a replay back.

We have a third piece, please? If you'd like to introduce yourself, and just set it up on what we're going to see.

TOM SHRAPPE:

I'm Tom Shrappe from St. Louis. These are three spots… Since this is show and tell, I brought mine. So these are three spots from our 1994 successful campaign, and I think they kind of illustrate some of the things we did well, and then some of the things we didn't do so well that set us up for a loss in 1997. This is just a bit of a preview. This was not the final cut, so there's no… The two gentlemen you will see on the very first one are former Senator John Danforth, and former Senator Tom Adelton. So, I'd like to show that one, and then comment a little bit on it.

All of us who sat around the room and thought about these things… We did in 1994 have time for focus groups, and so we showed this commercial to a focus group. Both of these guys had been out of office for less than two years, and the people in the focus group said, "Who are those guys?" So, while we had the important names, and so on, leading our campaign, there was still a lack of understanding of exactly who these two people were. So we were kind of surprised by that. This commercial did not show all that much. We did rotate it in to try to get the highly educated voter to know that this enjoyed broad-based support from both sides of the political spectrum.

The next two commercials are the ones that people remembered, and I'd like to show those next. …jobs in1994. Remember, this is 1994, still in the recession.

[Commercials are played.]

Unfortunately, the voters remembered that in 1997, when we went back…, because, as you recall, the federal participation for operating funds occurred in what, in 1994, 1995, 1996, along in that time period. So, when we went back in 1997, asking for additional funding so that we could do all those things, the voters in the suburban area said no. They remembered seeing those head signs of Chesterfield, and the guy tapping on the glass saying, "Well, you promised the first time you'd do all this, and now you're not able to do it." So we were in a position of having over promised in 1994 what we were able to do, and now having to go back and repair some of that damage.

JEFF HANAN:

Good. Thank you for doing that. [Applause.]

I'd be remiss in not asking who else brought videos that we can look at, at this point, that are commercials? Any other commercials out there that we can take a peak at before we proceed? Okay.

Well, it seems like in this media segment we've talked about 12 or 15 or so attributes as they relate to ingredients that go into the partnership—the issue of relationship building long term, the issue of understanding their terms and their needs, this notion of on the record, off the record types of issues, the use of a variety of media. Targeted mailing, apparently, is very popular and productive. Some of the notions of getting in front of people, in terms of the television sets, especially as you go closer. In fact, the top of mine might be critical or important.

Are there are any final comments that people have, or are there any mishaps that you'd like to share that, in fact, might be illustrative, or even demonstrate a particular point that we've made? Any mishaps? Because often times we really learn from the mishaps more quickly than the success stories.

Go ahead.

INGRID REISMAN:

My name is Ingrid Reisman with the RTC in Las Vegas.

Mine's not so much a mishap, but I want to clarify something that I learned. Before I started with the RTC I was in private sector, and now that I'm in government, I've learned that a lot of the reporters have an inherent mistrust of

PIOs, which is what I am. So, what I learned is, what I really need to do is build those relationships, like we talked about, and it's even more important to be as honest and open with them as possible. We have done a pretty good job in building the relationships, but it's an uphill battle. Especially if you're in government, and you have reporters who have that mistrust of government, and are sure that they're not getting the whole story, it's even more important to go to them in the front.

MODERATOR:

Thank you. Let's go to Table 8, and then we'll go back to way over there to Table 9. Thank you.

BRIAN MCCANN:

Brian McCann, Columbus Ohio.

In 1999 we had two things on the ballot. We lost one and won the other. I'm not on the Authority's payroll, so I think I can speak pretty unbiased here. But what we did is, we failed to underestimate the power of the alternative media. So, while we did a nice job of cultivating relationships with the television, with the newspaper, and with the editorial board, we completely missed on the radar screen the alternative paper, and we have two alternative papers. One is kind of like an entertainment guide, but does some very deep, in-depth responsible type journalism, and the other one is strictly an entertainment tabloid. The entertainment tabloid is distributed almost exclusively downtown, and it basically is in the nose of the main paper, since we're a one-newspaper town, so all the political leadership reads this alternative paper.

Our opponent, who basically derailed our rail plan, and spent $250 to do it, got all kinds of face time in this alternative paper, which caused the main paper then to pick up on these stories, because they would pick up the stories that the alternative paper—I mean that the major newspaper was afraid to get. So you have to go see those people too.

JEFF HANAN:

Go ahead, please.

PATTI MUCK:

Hi, I'm Patti Muck. I'm from Houston, and we're trying to build our first—we are building our first light rail there. But one thing that might help you in Las Vegas over there is… One of the things that we do… As spokespeople, we can't know everything that's going on at one time, and one of the things we try to do is hook the media up with the best source. We have a chairman who speaks with the media a lot, our president and CEO speaks with the media a lot, our vice president of construction and engineering does. We don't try to tell them everything, because there's no way we can know it all, and I think that helps too. If they can get to the good—the best source, they are more willing to tell a good and accurate story. So you might want to keep that in mind too. They're not always there, but when they are there, let them talk to the media.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Yes, please. A couple more points, and then we're going to move on. But this is a building story here. Please.

PARTICIPANT:

I just wanted to expand on that. I was a reporter for 18 years, I'll admit it, and went to work for the transit agency, so I've seen this from both sides. But I think your point to put them in touch with the best source… I don't think they have an inherent mistrust of PIOs, it's just that we know their information is limited, and we know what their job is, which is to screen the information. So I would go back to what we were talking about in your campaign—you control the message, and you craft the message.

So, Ed [Inaudible], our executive director, does most of the media conversations, and they are conversations. We have a very friendly relationship with the press, and it's partly because of the way Barry handles these talks, where he brings it around to whatever he wants to talk about with them, and generally he's really successful. It's partly just a matter of his personality.

But I would suggest that you not view these…as like automatons that you want to control, but rather partners that you want to have a conversation with. You know, it's best to view them as allies from the start. The more suspicion there is between you and them, the more that's going to poison the relationship and inhibit the conversation. So I think, if you're having a hostile relationship with the press, you kind of need to maybe find a new spokesman, take it down to

square one again, and try to rebuild, because, you know, the only way I think you can get really positive press is to basically make friends out of them and control the conversation.

PARTICIPANT:

As a reporter, I'd like to say that the alternative media, I think that's very important. Be mindful of it, the weekly. In fact, I used to write for one, and they're [Inaudible] weeklies, and they're free. Often, they see themselves as a check on the single paper published in that city. They do in-depth reporting, so it's… They see themselves as pretty independent.

Then the other thing is, there are many reporters that are on one beat, like transportation, and then they're switched, you know, every two years, or who knows. So I guess I would say, even if you build a relationship, be mindful that that particular reporter may leave to cover a different beat. But even if that's the case, it's good to have a relationship with them and build a trust, but also with the editor. You know, people that are in a position that you know will be there no matter what.

I would say with press releases, I would be careful sometimes with not sort of bombarding a news room with too many press releases, like week after week, because that sometimes triggers… You know, it just flags, "These people are trying to spin me" or something. Sometimes it's better to build a relationship, a trust, and put a phone call in when… Or put out a press release when you really need them, as opposed to…, because you lose credibility I think. So I think that's all.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Good. Thank you. Thank you all.

What I'd like to do… It appears that the post-lunch sleepies are starting to effect some of you. Might I suggest that you all stand up at your spot and wiggle your arms and your legs, and get the blood and circulation going to your brain.

The next topic that we are going to spend a few minutes on has to do with our good friends the critics and the nay sayers. I've heard already, to date, from the experts, several comments…

You can all have a seat now, now that you're fully exercised and sort of ready to go.

We're going to tee up our conversation. We will take a break, unlike yesterday, so I'd encourage you to hold off until we just have the next break.

[Session Resumes.]

HANDLING THE CRITICS

JEFF HANAN:

I learned about the traveling road show on a professionally paid basis goes, and apparently, it begins to talk about the same themes. There was a report from the Bookings Institute… In fact, Bill Lynn, we're going to bring him up in a few minutes, so he can either answer additional questions, or help us collectively theorize on a response to the notion of critics. I also heard several different points of view—debate, not debate, debate if you're drawn into it, don't proactively or preemptively debate, it's not a good proposition. So I heard a number of aspects around the whole notion of a debate issue.

With that being said, we'd like each of the tables to spend about 15 or 20 minutes, not more than that, talking about this notion of other ideas or other issues around successfully working with—I'll use those words advisedly—working with critics or naysayers in the campaign process. I'd be especially interested in those things that you believe have very effectively worked for you, and then we're going to, again, like I said, invite Bill up. If you have additional comments about either his research, or his perspective, or if we want to collectively theorize about a strategy, we can do that at that point.

So in the next 15 or 20 minutes, ladies and gentlemen, issues of the notion of successfully handling critics. Who are the critics typically? Are they the same four or five groups, if that, in fact, proves to be the case? Finally, a couple of things, in terms of either do differently, or do better, some suggestions that you have, and then we'll bring Bill up, okay?

Ladies and gentlemen, I've been reminded by Art that for this segment, could you please… Team leaders, if you could, in fact, get a note taker to make sure that some of your ideas are written down. The last session, of course, we've recorded, so that's all going to be available. Art, at the end of the session, will speak more about the notes associated with these sessions, and how you're going to get that information.

So, ladies and gentlemen, those 15 or 20 minutes start now.

JEFF HANAN:

…about the notion or the issue of critics. Hopefully you've got a couple good key contributions. The question is, how have you successfully handled those individuals in the past campaign? Who are some of these folks? What suggestions or recommendations…? Bill's going to help us react to issues, and possibly we can devise some new approaches.

I would ask the people who are, in fact, being the recorders, in addition to the topic, put your table number on the material as well. That's just a little organizing note for us. With that, let's talk about the critics and the nay sayers. Who wants to kick off the conversation?

Table 3, thanks very much. Go ahead.

JO NOBLE:

I'm Jo Noble with Sacramento Regional Transit, and I first felt that… The critics consist of the anti-tax, which we all kind of identified that previously, anti-government. Talk radio we felt could be a critic, only because they give access to the critics, and give them a really viable means of expressing their opinions. Road builders and highway lobbies, those competing for the same resources, now and/or in the future. Those who are looking for a direct, or immediate benefit that they may not see coming to their area with this particular measure. Then came the crime issue, the fear of crime. So those are the critics that we identified.

How do you deal with them? For the anti-tax, we felt that showing that you're a good steward of public funds. This, of course, coming from a third party, and a third-party confirmation of the legitimacy of your agency, that you are doing what you say, and that you are spending your funds appropriately. Again, in dealing with talk radio, and using that as a vehicle to help you out, we felt that having supporters, not within your agency or a popular coalition group, but just people in the community that would take an active part in participating in talk radio as well, to alleviate some of the negative messages that are brought in. So those are some of the ideas we had.

BILL LIND:

Let me add a little on talk radio, because we worked a lot with that at Free Congress. We have a network of over 500 conservative radio talk show hosts

around the country that we send material to on a daily basis. These conservative talk show hosts are very influential, and the key to dealing with them is, you've got to get pro-transit conservatives who will go on their shows. Simply having a spokesman doesn't do it. Remember, they are conservative, and they're talking to conservatives. The guest who is pro-transit, to the effect that he has to have conservative credentials himself. There will be some locals conservatives who will be pro-transit, and you have got to make sure that they're the ones who represent you on those shows, okay?

JEFF HANAN:

Go ahead, please. Table 6, right behind you.

PARTICIPANT:

I'm actually not the spokesperson. I wanted to comment on this. Rush Limbaugh, who most of you know, originated… I shouldn't say originated…, but he really made his reputation in Sacramento, and that was where he kind of springboarded into national fame. He was a huge detractor of light rail. He used to call it late rail, and that was before it was built. If you were to look at the video tapes of the opening of light rail in Sacramento, you'll notice the person who basically is at every station is Rush Limbaugh. He was… He ended up being… Once it opened, we ended up recruiting him to be the master of ceremonies at each celebration we had, so we could get these people to buy in. He did a little bit of damage, but he made up for it at the end.

JEFF HANAN:

Interesting.

[Comments from audience. "How'd you do it?"]

PARTICIPANT:

We did it, that's all. We just did it. We built it.

JEFF HANAN:

Was the question, "How did you get Rush Limbaugh…?"

PARTICIPANT:

The question was, "How did we get Rush?" We did it by fulfilling our promise, by living up to what it was we had promised. We built light rail, we came in… At least RT—once RT took it over, basically, we fulfilled pretty much of the promise that we had made. The trains were running, people were getting on, everybody was excited. He could either stand in the vacuum, and try and continue to criticize us, or he could embrace us and… We basically were in a win/win situation, we couldn't lose.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Next contribution, right over here. Go ahead.

PARTICIPANT:

Regarding the critics, I think… Table 1 mentioned tax for advocacy organizations and the anti-big government groups, and we came up with those as well. But, also, depending on the nature of your expenditure plan, the program that you're proposing, you can develop critics. For example, in California, many of the county-wide sales tax programs have had a substantial transit and roadway component. The environmental organizations have come out against many of those, based on the roadway component. Also, you'll find, occasionally, neighborhood and community groups, which you think might support you, will come out in opposition, if the project is too nearby. The perceived impacts are too great. So you'll have to deal with those folks as well.

Some of the ways that the folks at this table have successfully handled their critics… those counties or regions that have an existing program, and it's operating successfully. Like Santa Clara can use the existing program and demonstrate their ability to deliver projects, and to provide for their community.

Also, some critics who have specific problems with a proposal, if you include them in your final proposal, can help you out. Obviously, there are some critics who will never go along, so you can't include them, but you can work with those critics. Finally, you need to counter your criticisms forcefully, honestly and briefly with accurate information, and be prepared to move on. Don't let your message get sidetracked by detractors. Now you have a campaign to run, and you need to move on.

What are some of the things that might be done differently in the future would be to avoid any on-going debates with critics. That can, again, sideline your efforts.

Another idea has to do with this kind of forum right here. We probably need to coordinate more with each other, and learn from our mistakes and our successes.

JEFF HANAN:

I have an interest in… One of the concepts that you talked about is essentially bringing the critic into the tent, in effect. I'm wondering if someone at your table could just say a little bit more about, essentially, how do you do that, or how is that accomplished?

PARTICIPANT:

An example I have… I was not involved in our existing measure in Sacramento County, which was passed in 1988, but the first measure… Well, the first measure in June of 1988 failed; we went back to the voters in November, and were successful. The first measure in June was opposed by a well-funded group of auto dealers who feared that people would buy their automobiles outside of Sacramento County, and not pay the tax. They were included in a discussion to find a solution, because you're right, that's not fair. So, when the State of California… These are not sales taxes, these are transactions and use taxes, and regardless of where you buy your car in California, the tax goes back to the County where you live. Once that was established and made known, those auto dealers, indeed, supported the second addition of the measure.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Good.

BILL LIND:

Let me add that, when you say, "Don't get bogged down in debate with your critics," don't interpret that as meaning don't answer them. You have got to answer them. Remember, again, your situation and the critics are not symmetrical. To get a "yes" vote, you have to create near certainty. To get a

"no" vote, he only has to create doubt. So, if you allow him to criticize and repeat his criticisms over and over and over again without answering, it's going to kill you.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Good. Let's go to Table 11 and then 12, and we'll come back…

BOB VOIGHT:

There are a couple of points in dealing with that issue that need to be brought up and that is that you need to research the issue, make sure you understand it and understand the point and the counterpoint before you send the individual into the discussion and the debate. The other is—be sure to prepare. That is—develop possible questions, fire those questions at the individual, get the answers down pat, develop [Inaudible] so that they can go through and develop it, and if they feel comfortable in being in the debate environment.

The next is to not get into a debate on taxes. Keep all of the discussion on programs, and the value of the programs involved. Finally, we talked about the value of having the speaker bureaus, so that they can go out with a common message to all different areas within the area that you're dealing with and be able to respond to them in a consistent way.

JEFF HANAN:

Kind of combining the speaker bureau with the transit ready conservative so as to in fact get that resource.

Your name again, just for the audio-tape?

BOB VOIGHT:

Bob Voight.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, Bob, thanks very much.

BOB VOIGHT:

Let me add one thing also. One of the almost sure killers, and correct me if I'm wrong, but I think this was a major factor in the defeat in St. Louis, is not having consensus on a route, or not having the actual route crystal clear when you go to the voters for approval. Any kind of uncertainty about the route really puts people off. So, if you find that you're trying to go for approval and don't have consensus on the route and you can't tell people exactly where it's going to go and where the stops are going to be, you have gotten ahead of yourself.

JEFF HANAN:

We'll go to 12, come back to 9, and then we'll go to 8, and then we'll go to 5. Help me out with that because I don't quite remember what I just said. Please, number 12…

PAT REMMINGTON:

Thank you. Pat Remmington from Arlington, Texas. I add that is the largest city on the country without a form of public transportation. We're trying to change that next year. A couple of things I'd like to ask. Most of the points that our table talked about have already been mentioned. But we talked a lot about to what extent do you respond to the critics. The Phoenix experience was three elections that all failed in which they treated the opposition with respect and really in truly didn't respond as vigorously as perhaps they should have. Then the fourth election in which they took the critics on, and they won.

So perhaps you might add to that—to what level do you in fact respond to the critics? We think you need to be aggressive. That doesn't mean not polite, not respectful. But every time they're meeting and they're out trying to convey their message to the voters, you need to have people there. Every time you know what they're getting ready to do, you be prepared to respond to their game plan. Apparently, at least in the Phoenix experience, that was very successful. Then, the last suggestion was one that I made—is you buy all of your critics one way bus tickets out of town.

[Laughter]

PARTICIPANT:

There was a good discussion at Table 11, where I was sitting in, that relates to this point of how you answer your critics and specifically about Phoenix and about a failure in one of the earlier attempts on debate. I wondered if you would relate a little bit about that. Because I thought that was a good case of who they picked to do the debate for the pro-transit side and why perhaps this didn't work too well.

CINDA BOND:

Hi, I'm Cinda Bond, and I was a resident in the Phoenix area for the one that failed, very closely. I was struck at the time by the debates on public television that the opposition came up with the arguments of, "You're only carrying 1 percent of the transit passengers," and the typical kinds of things. The spokespersons that were doing the debates during that time were not well prepared for the debate. They didn't come back with, "Oh yes, that's true," you know, when you take a bus system that runs till 2:00 in the morning, but when you look at the focus commute times, "that's not true, we're trying to address a different issue." As a resident and transit knowledgeable, I wanted them to pull up the Ross Perot board, "Oh let me tell you about this." They didn't. I felt like as if I was an uninformed watcher, I would not be persuaded to vote at that point and time. I think that contributed.

PARTICIPANT:

Right. The point also came out that at least one of the debaters here was simply the PAO for the transit firm. Well, don't assume a PAO knows how to debate. A PAO may know how to put out a press release. But whether they understand opposition research, murder board beforehand… all the things… There's no reason to assume they were ever on a debate team in college. If they don't understand those things, particularly with the traveling transit critics being very good at what they do, then they're going to kill them.

JEFF HANAN:

Let's go to Table 9.

STEVE SPRATT:

Okay, well much of what we talked about has been said, but I'll just try to pick out some variances.

JEFF HANAN:

And you are, please?

STEVE SPRATT:

I'm Steve Spratt from Miami Dade County, Florida.

As far as who the critics are, basically, it can be any number of people. It doesn't necessarily have to just be the big guns, the Wendell Coxes . We've had some referenda down there where he was nowhere to be found, but then you had a large car dealer and the general anti-government activists just sort of pop up. Interestingly, it can also be an opponent, a political opponent of your champion. In our case, it was the people who opposed a key elected official who was out in front of it. They just decided to take that as the opportunity to jump out. So, that's kind of something to try to anticipate. In terms of how to deal with the critics, the consensus here was being ahead of the opposition. Try to anticipate all of the arguments from the various critics that will come about; and then make sure that you've armed yourself with all the right facts and try to get that information out very forcefully. We too didn't think that you should ignore inaccurate information. Frankly you need to kind of confront it and try to make sure that people get all the right facts. In terms of another strategy that the speakers bureaus—we happen to agree too that was very important. To select the right people for that, I think that was kind of, that was just made. It's not necessarily the General Manager of the transit agency if that person is perceived as having the biases, but try to pick somebody who that particular audience can relate best to.

JEFF HANAN:

Bill, comments before we move?

BILL LIND:

Make a careful distinction between two types of criticism, and critics. The traveling road show here, the empty transit troubadours, are one thing. Locals who are being critical about a very specific aspect of the transit system, like the route is wrong or the cost per mile is too much, or something like that, you want to handle differently. You can't ignore them. You can't ignore any of your critics. But those you ideally want to try to sit down with and work something out and in many cases you can. If their criticisms are legitimate, then you may need to do some rethinking. So there are really two different kinds of critic and criticism here. It's important to understand that. One that is specific and local and at least quasi legitimate. Even if they're wrong about a point, they're not someone who is automatically against whatever you do, the way the traveling road show is. Then of course it is the traveling critics themselves and that's why we have got our little book. The nice thing about the fact that they say the same things everywhere is that the same answers work everywhere.

JEFF HANAN:

We're going to go to 8, then to 5, then to 2, and then to 1. Okay? Please…

JENNY WILLIAMS:

We were discussing some of the critics. We mentioned realtors and… I'm sorry, I'm Jenny Williams with Lex Transit. And realtors, landowners… We did also mention a bus patron that was actually anti-rail and that was an interesting critic I think. They were, in that particular argument, I think they were trying to convince the critics of the bus patron that the current service would remain in place and that the new service, the rail service, wouldn't drain the bus service of its resources. That's one thing that you have to consider, especially if you have a strong bus service and you don't have any rail in the community.

Then we actually went on a discussion of the ways that critics work. What we talked about were how the local critics will team with national critics and media to get a strong message out there; and how the media feels obligated to show the other side whether it's substantiated or whether it's factual or anything. They just feel like they have to do something on the other side because it's a ballot issue.

We also talked about how voters will become confused and sometimes that is the plan of the critics—is just to confuse the voter. As we talked about earlier, a confused voter is a no voter. So if we could just confuse the voters, we've done our job.

Also we talked about how critics often use last minute arguments or they try to get on the media at the last minute to preempt the campaign and to disprove the assertions that the transit authority is making. So, while they may not be well funded, a lot of times the timing is where they get us. So what we decided that in order to handle those, then we're going to have to be well prepared for the last minute attacks. In other words, have media buy ready for the final weekend. Have a press release ready for the counter attack. Have budget ready. Because a lot of times the critics will be under funded and if we can get our funding together for the counter attack to get the proper information out there or get the factual information out there. Then we can make a case for the transit authority. Then also in portraying the critics—if they are the nationals, a lot of times they are outsiders to the community and especially some small communities. A lot of times, even bigger communities don't want to go with outsiders, so you can portray as critics or show their weaknesses or "chinks in their armor." If you are aware of who the critics are and what their arguments are, then you're going to be able to figure out what their weaknesses are and you can get some information out on their weaknesses.

PARTICIPANT:

That point about the relationship between the local critics and the national critics is a very good one because they do work together. Very often, the local critics will again have very little in the way of resources, but they are often quite skilled. They will select their timing. I mean, they love to do, about a week before the vote, they'll have done the local legwork so that the press is there. They will have figured out how to make maximum local impact when the outside critic arrives. They'll do that very well. It, again helps enormously if you think that the outside critics are going to come preempt by telling people, "Yeah, these guys are going to be coming and here's who they are, and they do the same thing everywhere and they say the same thing everywhere." That does help to [Inaudible] them.

JEFF HANAN:

Let's go to 5, 2, and 1, and then we'll take a break. Go ahead. Please.

LINDA WILLART:

Linda Willart, Birmingham, Alabama. The things we talked about as far as successfully handling… First of all, going back to a lot of the points that have already been made—know who the critics are. Know what their issues are know their main influences within their groups, whether it's a local group or somebody that's coming in. In particular, if it's somebody that is coming in, the points about letting your group or letting your constituency know that they're outsiders that are possibly going to come in and what to expect from them. It is important to have a strong alliance with the people, your stakeholders, that are in your own community, so that they too can be a part of helping you diffuse in getting the message out. Because, again, the point is that when the national people move on, the outsiders move on, you're going to still be left with that problem so how you going solve it and this is a local use, so—keying in on that. But again, knowing who, even the people who are local that may buy into that know who they are and try to find out what their issues are and who the influences are. Again, it goes back to the good citizens [Inaudible] a group, having that strong alliance with your people there.

Who some of the people may be? It could be your local critics. It could be radio talk shows and those people that come on. In our community, we have a lot of talk shows and people tend to listen to it. For whatever it's worth, it does make the news. It kind of gets out there, it's just open air. So you have to be able to have someone who is very articulate, who has their facts straight, and that will again confront the issues and address the issues and move on.

Some of the things that we talked about as far as when working with the critics in the future, what are some of the things we need to do or be aware of is—forming unholy alliances with those people that, you know… it says, "Politics makes strange bedfellows"? Well, you have to be careful about those persons that might get you in trouble. Yeah, you might be—on this issue—everybody might be together. But you always have to kind of look at the background of that group and find out how it's going to come back in maybe a boomerang to come back with some other issues. Also, the key that everybody has, I think, sort of brought home is that you involve all your stakeholders in all of these issues.

PARTICIPANT:

I would just again, drawing out one of your points there, which as a very important one, about the desirability of unholy alliances… Whenever you can

get a left-right coalition going, you have something very powerful You need to think about that in broad sense. For example, the excellent ads we saw here, that were aimed at Salt Lake City, at people who never thought of themselves as someone who would take public transit. So it didn't say, "Well get on public transit." It said, "Hey, it's going to take a lot of cars off the road so that you can have an easier time driving." You have got to talk to those people. You have got to talk to the people who are concerned about traffic congestion, but don't see themselves as someone who is going to take transit. The more you can do of that sort of thing, the better off you are. Remember what strategy is. Colonel John Boyd, probably the greatest American military theorist ever, who was a good friend of mine put it very well. He said that a lot of people in Washington like to use the work strategy. Most of them can even spell it. Very few of them know anything beyond that about it. He defined strategy—it's a brilliant definition—as "connecting yourself to as many different independent power centers as possible, while isolating your opponent from as many different independent power centers as possible." If you think of strategy in that sense, you begin to see the importance of unholy alliances.

JEFF HANAN:

Let's go to Table 2.

REESE MENDEZ:

I'm Reese Mendez from Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission. Most of what we talked about has already been said. But, there's a couple of items that I think might be new. One of the things that was mentioned was—identify whether you're dealing with critics or just skeptics. skeptics you just might address by providing better information to make sure you can bring them on board.

Then once you identify who your critics are, don't argue values with the critics and try to find some common ground with those critics. One of the members of our table here, he was able to develop a good, friendly relationship with the main critic in his area. He could actually just call the person over the phone and talk to that critic before he talked to the press, or after, or things like that. It really helped him deal much better with the message he would use to address the arguments of the critic.

Then, just use your great media relationships to address the critics arguments.

JEFF HANAN:

Go ahead, please.

INGRID REISMAN:

Ingrid Reisman from RTC in Las Vegas. I have just a couple of things to add also, or our table does. A possible critic group that wasn't mentioned [Inaudible] own employees, or specifically if you're a transit agency or drivers. I think that's an important group to make sure that we get the message out to. Also it was slightly mentioned that your riders in Las Vegas were a bus agency that is nationally recognized. But we still have a lot of routes that are hourly and it doesn't make for a very comfortable commute, especially when it's 110 degrees. So getting messages out to those riders is also important.

A couple of key points that had kind of been touched on is—knowing and anticipating what your [Inaudible] are going to say and possibly working that into your message, working the answers to those critiques into your message in the forefront, and staying on that message. Also, always being able to answer, "What's in it for them?" Possibly even being able to answer, "What's in it for them?" in the actual message.

This is on lessons learned and how to handle critics. If possible, identify those critics as early possible, bring them into the fold, and make them part of your staple or group.

I think that's it. That pretty much covers it.

PARTICIPANT:

[Inaudible]

JEFF HANAN:

One quick statement? We'll get you a microphone and if you could both introduce yourself and absolutely… Then we've got a couple of final comments on the topic as it relates to, I think, a union issue. But, go ahead.

LEWIS TARVER:

I'm Lewis Tarver from San Antonio, and I just want to mention one additional dimension to the traveling critics. I don't believe they have been properly presented because they are well funded in our area. They do not reveal who their contributors are, so their campaign reports, which are duly filed with the ethics commission, are incomplete and largely inaccurate. They are also close to people with great power. The Chairman of the Board is Wendy Graham, Senator Graham's wife. Congressman Delay has been extremely helpful to them. They have a related Texas Justice Foundation, which provides the legal representation in litigation everywhere, including Houston. My point is, when I was asked to arrange for some [Inaudible] to be filed by transit systems, in both the San Antonio case and the Houston case, many of the strongest transit authorities in Texas refused to do that. The fear of attracting their opposition is now formulating the policy. I think that's a dangerous point and I think that we're just going to have to take chances and say the truth, not be afraid, not be bashful, and challenge this, which I think is a very dangerous development.

BILL LIND:

Well, I agree 100 percent that you have to take this head on. I would agree also that in Texas, you have a somewhat different situation than elsewhere, because you do have some people in some pretty influential positions who are connected in strongly with the Libertarian critics. At the same time, I would point out that the dart is doing splendidly and expanding and so forth, So even in perhaps the strongest bastion of the critics, on a state by state basis, they're certainly beatable.

I want to however, follow up to a comment that was made over here and I want to call in Steve Booth for a little bit, to talk about what we talked about at dinner last night. It was mentioned here a possible problem from the bus operators from the union side. Steve is the president and business agent of the Amalgamated Transit Union in Salt Lake. The drivers there played a very important role in helping garner support for the light rail system. Steve, I wonder if you would talk to us a little bit about that. Because, these people can be very important allies.

STEVE BOOTH:

Thanks Bill. If I had known you were going to do this to me, I wouldn't have had dinner with you last night.

[Laughter]

The conversation that Bill and I had with each other and the people that we sat with last night surrounded a coalition. The union formed with the company in 1997. We came out of a fairly dark period of time in labor relations into a much better era with a new general manager. It was at that point we started talking about a referendum and expanding. What I told our general manager was in 1992, we failed because the former administration of the company refused to even recognize that we had employees let alone think that they were important.

There was an arrogance and that resounded through the community. We had about three strikes against us before we started with our image in the community, our image with our employees. Yet, the vote was fairly close. My contention was that if we'd had the employees onboard, we would have gotten it in 1992. So I said, what we need to do is start this. So in about 1998, we started a campaign of just getting a message out to the employees that—of we were going to have any future as far as expansion is concerned, that we needed to start thinking about that.

The next thing that happened was that we embarked—well in 1995 we got the Olympics and that's coming down next year—but shortly after that, 1996 I believe, we started the largest public works in the country in that our entire freeway system was torn down to be reconstructed. Halfway through that, we opened a light rail system which was torn apart by our critics but an immediate success once we got it going.

It seems to me, and I wasn't in on the inner workings of the conversation about the referendum, but the parts that I got, it seemed like the company was looking for a referendum maybe next year. The conversation, at least that I had with the general manager, was that we weren't ready. But the time was right. We had our crisis, which was gridlock. We had a success, which was the light rail system. We had started cultivating a relationship between the company and the union in that I felt the time was right. Some other people agreed with that. And so, we embarked on that. One of the first issues we did, was we started meeting with… we put together a task force of bargaining unit people and administrative types to start talking about educating ourselves, before we even announce the referendum, on what we could do, what we couldn't do, and how important it was to us, for our future. I mean jointly. They in turn. Became kind of an internal speakers bureau. If you think about it, and I don't need to tell you guys, you know this, your operators are your public face. That's all there is to it. As much as a bus operator will tell you that, "It will be a great job if you

didn't have to pick up people, " or, "Driving an empty bus is the best part of it," they're still social animals. They are there because they like people regardless of what they tell you; they talk to at least some of them. I mean, there are some they won't talk to. But they have their regulars. When I was driving—good Heavens. If somebody wasn't there, I was concerned, I was looking to see where they were at. If we have a positive personal face or public face, where does that spread to? That was the message. So, we go to that point. I don't want to carry on and…

BILL LIND:

No. What I'd like you to just wrap up with is—what specifically, once you got your operators on board, supporting the referendum, what did they do in order to reach out to the public?

You mentioned last night for example, that whereas the company could not distribute pro-referendum literature, you had the bus drivers passing it out on the bus because it was union literature.

STEVE BOOTH:

Yeah. What happened was—about four weeks before we got into the election, we had a poll that said we're behind, we're losing. That quite frankly, alarmed me. So I was in the habit of publishing a newsletter anyway. So I sat down and I pumped out a newsletter that said, "The referendum is coming. It's important to our future. If we don't get off our butts, we're in trouble." Then I do a presence report, and I have an alter ego that is—for any of you who know Mike Roiko, he used to have [Inaudible] that he'd meet in the bar—his nephew works for us. In fact, he's my field correspondent. So I did an alter ego piece with the same thing. And, we were able to… it was really interesting because this was the first time that we would put the union newsletter on a table or a counter and it wouldn't disappear. It stayed there. But we could pass this out on the buses because it was not done by the company. The union published it. That is not against the law. I can do anything I want. So, it was all over the company. It was all over the buses. It was all over town. You know, I usually did 600 of them. I think I did 2,000. And they went out.

BILL LIND:

The point is here, if you get these guys on board, there's a lot they can do for you. They talk to their neighbors. They talk to the people in their church. They talk to their riders. The union can do things legally that the company cannot. They can help be a megaphone for you to a substantial potion of the company. Yet, almost nobody thinks about the union as a potential resource when it comes to a transit referendum.

STEVE BOOTH:

Well, and the last comment I want to make—and I personally saw this in a couple, three areas—it really showed what the employees and the union thought about this because it was a positive issue. A week before the election, I was driving around. In fact on election night, I saw the same thing. I would have one or two of my members standing out on a street corner or out on a highway, and they were doing a one man or two man honk and wave, with the lawn signs that we had. I was going home on election night and one of my shop stewards was standing in… actually, it was kind of like a Y and he was right in the middle of the highway with his five year old, holding onto his hand with one hand and holding a sign up and they were doing a honk and wave.

JEFF HANAN:

A sign saying, "Vote for the referendum"?

STEVE BOOTH:

Yeah, yeah, "Vote for Measure One." It was a honk and wave. And these guys were, I mean, out all over the place doing this kind of stuff, so…

JEFF HANAN:

Anyway, it's a resource people don't think about a lot. I think it made a difference in Salt Lake.

JEFF HANAN:

Let's do this. There are still people lining up and what I want to do is get one question in, one comment in, and then we will for sure take our break. Please go ahead and ask the question.

STACY ABLE:

Thanks. I just think with all this…

JEFF HANAN:

Your name please?

STACY ABLE:

My name is Stacy Able. I'm from Austin, Texas and I think with the conversation about who are the critics and how do you deal with them, sometimes we should ask them. I know Tom Rubin, many of us know him. He was part of the traveling road show that came to Austin in opposition to light rail. We've shared a bunch of information in the last couple of days so I was wondering—what can you share with us about what makes a difference?

[Applause]

JEFF HANAN:

Well isn't that interesting? Go ahead.

MODERATOR:

You know, normally when you are a Hatfield at a McCoy funeral, you aren't asked to do the eulogy.

First of all, I don't sing at all. My voice is terrible for singing.

Second, I am pro-transit. I am anti-bad transit. There are a number of very bad transit plans out there.

So I would suggest you just start with—take a good look at your plans, and make sure that there is something in there.

In some cases, over emphasis on rail has done tremendous damage. Los Angeles is the case in point and I spent a lot of time there. I don't care how you slice it, it ruined transit rider ship for years. We're just now recovering. Then in large part, because of the lawsuit that was brought that forced the fares back down and the bus service out.

So my suggestion is—start with a good plan; know what you have in mind; know what transit can do and what it can't do. What it can do is provide mobility for people who need it. I think you need to look at that as your first and primary audience, your first and primary set of customers. Meet with the people who represent them. Speaking with someone who spends a lot more time with them than you do, they can be a very interesting group. But, see who is out there who is a spokesperson. If there isn't one, put together your own focus groups and try to find out what's really needed out there to serve the people who really need transit as a means of mobility. And, have that in the equation.

One of the most successful things in going after new money has been the "something for everybody" approach. It's a classic ploy and it works. It was discussed in Alameda County and where AC Transit, for example, went in and was working with the people who had a variety of interests and got a good hunk of the money for continued funding and some expansion of bus service for the people who are served by AC Transit, which frankly are not the high income group at all. There's money for a number of other projects, but by doing that, they had something that a lot of people could get behind and support.

So my suggestion is—try to figure out how you can help the people who are your current customers and who should be your current customers. Put some emphasis on that. Use that as a string point and have those people at the table.

Thank you.

JEF HANAN:

Table 4? Closing comments or finals on this topic before we move to break? Go ahead.

PARTICIPANT:

A few things. One sort of building on what's been said here is to try to put together a package that is difficult to attack, or at least is more difficult to attack. Then build on success stories. Salt Lake again is a good example of that. They were able to build a starter line without going to the voters and it has proved to be very successful. We talked to an opponent there and he was quite candid with us. It put them in a difficult position. They also didn't have much time. At least the anti-tax group there decided to attack the tax bases as aggressive taxation rather than attacking the rail and that didn't go over very good.

Another one and I wouldn't really say they're proponents, but their key proponent group is—do a very careful analysis of the business community. It's not a monolithic group. One of the things that opponents have done in some communities that is particularly effective with small business is basically say that the construction of rail is going to be very disruptive. That can create divisions within the business community. In Austin for example, though the chamber did support the measure and there were some aspects of the business community that were very strongly supportive, the chamber actually wrote a report that—I haven't read the report—but it appears that it was sort of neutral. I know proponents did some things from that report and opponents did.

PARTICIPANT:

[Inaudible question]

JEFF HANAN:

Well the chamber wasn't neutral, but they wrote this report.

PARTICIPANT:

That report wasn't neutral either. The report wasn't neutral either. In fact, the report was used throughout the campaign.

JEFF HANAN:

I know, but I know opponents… I've talked to somebody from the chamber and again I haven't read the report, so I could defer to you on that. But, I have heard that—

PARTICIPANT:

They were one of the top leaders of the proactive campaign and their report was used throughout the campaign. I mean, I'm just letting you know from somebody who is very close to it. I mean, there were other problems. But that wasn't one of them.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. Didn't opponents use it also?

PARTICIPANT:

That wasn't one of them. I think… if we want to talk about—and it's probably an issue that everybody needs to hear about, that we didn't handle very well—having to do with some of the small business. I think someone just talked about, some of the small businesses weren't adequately responded to about how construction would affect their business.

JEFF HANAN:

Yeah, that's right.

PARTICIPANT:

So there were some individual areas of town that were… but, that was not a majority of the chamber. But that was a vocal part of small business community and that needed to be addressed much better than it was.

JEFF HANAN:

Anyway, the basic point, and we found this in other communities, is that the business community isn't monolithic and it can very helpful to have them be a

really enthusiastic supporter as opposed to somewhat divided. So look at that very carefully when you're in the planning process.

JEFF HANAN:

Ladies and gentlemen, you worked incredibly hard this afternoon. What you'll find is that the refreshments will be arriving momentarily, or in about two minutes. In fact what I would suggest is we take a 15 minute break. After the break, we have one final conversation to work on. Then some final closing comments and maybe a little bit of the "what's in it for you" at the end of that time.

So, 15 minutes, please.

[Break]

THE ESSENCE OF WHAT WINS AN ELECTION

JEFF HANAN:

… issues, because the output has been incredible. The audio tapes of course are capturing all of these good things and in fact some of the written documentation will also be very useful and appropriate. We'll say more about that in a bit.

Before we have some sort of closing comments and a wrap up and sort of "where do we go from here?" discussion at then end, what we'd like to do is just focus the room on two points. What we'll do is rather than have these continuously, we're going to have them simultaneous. So I've arbitrarily broken the room in half. If you're seated at Tables 1 through 6, which would be, looks probably right around the front here, or something like that the way this is set up, I'd like you to look at segment 4 because there are two questions we'd like you to spend about 15 minutes or so discussing.

One is the issue of ballot title and language. We've heard two or three comments from some of our other experts as it relates to ballot title and language.

Then the notion of packaging the referendum with other issues. We've heard, of course in some of our conversations, there are a few issues you don't want o combine with because that in fact is not good. So for some piece that, for example, is tax related, or a prohibition of some sort, you wouldn't want to package that obviously. But we'd like to get both the packaging ideas and the ballot title and language issues.

Then from Tables 7 to 12, we'd like you to take a look at question 2 in Segment 5. Really question 2 is—when it is all said and done, what are the one or two most important factors in winning? What I'd like to challenge you to do is in your 15 minutes of discussion, conclude on one. What is the one thing? From those six tables, we'll get a sense of what they believe it is. I think that will be a useful way to start to close it.

So if in fact you need clarification, please as a table raise your hand. Tables 1 through 6, the first two questions on Segment 4. Tables 7 to 12, question 2 only. The friendly amendment is—what one thing is most important in terms of winning. I'll have you debate and discuss and conclude on that.

So, we're going to have a short discussion piece, a short debrief, and then we're going to finish off the day.

So, ladies and gentlemen, you can start.

[Pause]

JEFF HANAN:

… questions on ballot title and language. Then also the issue of packaging—yes, no, and with what? Then we're going to essentially hear from the last six tables as far as the number one item. Then we're going to close up the session.

So with that being said, I'd like to invite Table 1 and whoever is going to talk a little bit about what they've learned, to give us some advice that they have around these two topics.

Please…

NINA WOLVERT:

Okay, Table 1. I'm Nina Wolvert with Louisville TARK. We had a little bit of debate actually with some of these issues, so we don't really have definitive answers. But we think it's important to be specific about what the project is. Use light rail if that's what you mean d no use the more generic public transportation. So the more specific you are, the more people will understand what they are voting for. However, the caveat is that you lose some flexibility if you're too specific. So once you say that, you lose some of your own wiggle room.

The project should definitely be listed before the specifics of the tax. So you say, "Proposing a tax in order t build wonderful things." And the tax will be. So to try to get your projects listed in front of the tax, to try to answer even in the referendum language—what's in it for me? So they understand the benefit. Avoid gobblygook and the language unless you're required by the legislature to put it in gobblygook.

For the packaging, again, we had a little bit of—not dispute—but we feel like there's no answer to that. It depends upon the local situation and the local dynamics. But we thought it was important to respond to local concerns in the polling when listing the projects which we heard again and again during this

conference. Also, to be sensitive about proposing a light rail project that may appear or actually be coming at the expense of buses. It doesn't necessarily mean you have to have buses in your project but that is definitely a sensitivity.

So, that is Table 1's report.

JEFF HANAN:

So a couple of realistic answers with "it depends" is a part of it?

NINA WOLVERT:

Exactly.

JEFF HANAN:

Yeah. I think that makes good sense for those questions.

Let's go to Table 2, right up here.

LUIS MENDEZ:

Okay, here we have a couple of folks who have experience with ballots that fail, so we have a list of what not to do.

JEFF HANAN:

Oh good.

LUIS MENDEZ:

Don't use industry speak. Try to use language that will be easy to understand for everyone. Don't confuse everyone. Don't ask for too much at one time in your package. Maybe you can phase your requests. Don't use the word "tax," which is something that has been said a number of times. Then also—don't package your transportation items with the wrong items, maybe additional items that aren't transportation, or even the wrong transportation items. Poll your community to develop your package. And that package, of course, should be locally oriented so that you will get the support of the local community.

JEFF HANAN:

And your name please?

LUIS MENDEZ:

Luis Mendez from Santa Cruz.

JEFF HANAN:

Great, thank you. Let's go to Table 4.

KEVIN PHELPS:

Thank you. Kevin Phelps, Pierce Transport, Tacoma, Washington.

We want to make sure the ballot language is legal. Also, it doesn't get challenged by opponents. Or, it doesn't get thrown out. So we talked a lot about that.

We did talk about using the word "levy" or "fees," not "taxes."

And we did have conversation, and not necessarily a lot of… our critical use was—how much a degree of specificity should we have in the ballot bill? Some people say a lot, talk about benefits. Others say, "Keep it very simple." I don't think we reached consensus on that.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay. You had some specific or some recent experience with the legal issues

KEVIN PHELPS:

In our state, Washington State had two different initiatives of the people that were tossed out by the Supreme Court because the ballot language dealt with duplitive issues. And so, we wanted to make sure that… And I think in Florida, they were also challenged in Dade County for not having met the criteria that was in the ballot. So, just careful language wording that would meet the legal criteria.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, is some of the language related failures, is that something that can be either transmitted, discussed, duplicated, sent off to people, just so they can look at language that created eventual problems, so that they have comparisons to… Is that sort of readily available?

KEVIN PHELPS:

These weren't per se transit issues. They were mostly tax issues and again it was just our state constitution precludes two constitutional issues being on a single ballot issue. And so I don't know if that would be a necessary [Inaudible].

JEFF HANAN:

Yeah, it may not be applicable.

JOE ALEXANDER:

Sometimes, you know, legislative requirement, and constitutional requirement of language for state and local, where you have to take the language that the state requires you to put in. Not necessarily what you want to put in. So you have to be very careful about that. And you have to have either your county attorney or local attorney look at this with your [Inaudible] to make sure that you're in keeping with the constitutional requirements. But you also have something that looks decent and that people can interpret it properly. Because if you don't do that, you're going to have people vote against it just because they don't understand it.

MODERATOR:

And Joe, your last name again?

JOE ALEXANDER:

Joe Alexander.

JEFF HANAN:

Thank you, sir.

Let's go to Table 5.

ROBERT MILLER:

Robert Miller from Houston. We believe that the ballot language is very important. I've seen studies where it's worth as much as ten points on election day. But you obviously have to comply with what the legal parameters are. One thing you might consider is—is there any way to get the legislature to give you greater flexibility. We just, in Houston, the legislature just passed a bill this past session which gave us greater flexibility in drafting the ballot language. So, that's something if you have an election several years down the line, you can look at getting the strongest possible ballot language and how you get there. Keep it simple and then poll on it. Look at what you're polling is going to show on that ballot language and use your pollster to help you draft your ballot language within the legal parameters. In terms of packaging, again, poll on that and see what the polls tell you. Does it help the package? Probably, there's also a local factor there as well. In some communities, they're used to voting on every item of the plan and if you went to them with a package, they would be offended and would probably vote "no." Other communities, for example, Houston, we have traditionally done transit elections by voting on mobility plans as a whole. So you have that precedent and that does give you the ability to package, which can be very powerful.

JEFF HANAN:

Good, thank you.

Please, Table 6.

KEN REED:

Hi, I'm Ken Reed from Butler County, Ohio, in Southwestern Ohio.

It's interesting that in Ohio, we just went through a ballot initiative in May and unfortunately lost. But we didn't have to worry about the ballot language because the ballot language is dictated by the state legislature—straight up. I

mean, it's verbatim. It's terrible. Because it's tax, tax, tax. It's exactly what I heard the other day. So you have to work in your campaign material and your other material to overcome and help people what it's going to be when you go in.

Some of the things that we talked about here at the table, though, were—where you have flexibility, you need to use it. You need to work within the legal boundaries that you have. One interesting thing was to take your ballot language writers, your message people, and lock them in a room with your legal counsel and just don't let them come out until they've killed each other or they're done. You could probably sell tickets…

JEFF HANAN:

[Laughing] Fundraising.

KEN REED:

Yeah, fundraising. You need to do that.

The other thing was to use polling and focus groups and those kinds of things to see what resonates with the public, to see what is going to be the key hot buttons and try to work that into your ballot language when they hit the booth.

The other thing is to try to make sure that there is something for everybody. When you're doing your plan, when your doing your language, there's something that is going to resonate with all of the segments and all of the population that you need to pass whatever you have on the ballot.

As far as packaging, we had a pretty adamant conversation about looking at what else is on the ballot at the time and making sure that you package it in a way that understanding what the voters are going to be looking at when they go into the booth. In certain situations, it may be advantageous or it may a disadvantage to go after candidates that are running at the same time, for endorsements, to get you some extra exposure. That can backfire on you as well. So we kind of caveated that comment.

The last thing, that kind of piggybacks on the first thing that I said—packaging—be careful that you're not forcing voters to choose between you and something else. Any place that you can package and work in tandem with other initiatives and find ways to make it look like you're working together and teaming is better than going out and having opposing messages and creating a

situation where a voter walks into a booth thinking, "Well, I can't do both, so I've got to do one or the other."

JEFF HANAN:

Good.

One thing that Art asked me to mention is that if in fact you brought either ballot language or other materials specific to your campaign, if you could either provide them to Eric Cazzetti, and/or forward them to him, so that's sort of available. It's a question of seeing what others did and how they've said it. Then correlating that to some of the success characteristics or in fact failure related kinds of issues. So that might give your legal team and your ballot language team a head up to see some other examples or samples.

With that being said, let's go to the final six tables, starting with Table 7. The question is: What one thing is one of the most important things in terms of the winning in your opinion?

Go ahead please.

BRIAN WILLIAMS:

I'm Brian Williams, Sacramento Transportation Authority. The question is—What are one or two of the most important things.

JEFF HANAN:

I said one though.

BRIAN WILLIAMS:

Okay, well, okay we can do that as well. It's a very hard question. I think different tables would have different answers, but what we came up with, and it's kind of a long answer, but I'll go ahead and read it to make I get it all.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, go ahead.

BRIAN WILLIAMS:

The most important thing is a transportation expenditure plan, an expenditure plan of projects that addresses the communities identified transportation needs and have a buy in from a broad cross section of the community of stake holders.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, so it's the plan itself. Okay, good.

Let's go to Table 8.

JENY WILLIAMS:

Well, I'm Jenny Williams from Lextran, Lexington, Kentucky, and like I said, we have a couple of attorneys at our table so we were able to skirt this table pretty good.

[Laughter]

We decided that assuming you have an excellent, well defined defendable timely plan, the most important factor is fundraising. Because, no matter how good your plan is, and no matter how well timed you are, if you can't get out there on the media and tell them, using real money, your story, then you have the best kept secret in the world. It's not going to help you any.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, I'm hearing the plan, and the money to support the campaign. Right?

Go ahead.

JENNY WILLIAMS:

Well, we decided that if Bill Clinton can define his, we can define one. So our thought is that you must have a plan that the public can embrace that is effectively delivered by a credible institution. That's our one. Thank you.

JEFF HANAN:

Okay, again we hear the plan, the money to support it, and then effectively and credibly delivered. Okay? It's a building story.

Let's go to the next table.

PARTICIPANT:

Table 10 exercised a little civil disobedience on this question, We decided to answer Segment 4 because it was more interesting to us.

[Laughter]

JEFF HANAN:

There you have it. Welcome to America. Go ahead.

PARTICIPANT:

Thank you. Our most important point on the language was to keep it brief, keep it simple, and tell the people what they're going to get. And, as far as packaging, the general consensus was that packaging probably is a good thing in most cases and it doesn't have to be anything major. Seattle had some traffic signal synchronization as part of one of theirs that seemed to resonate very well with voters. We also learned that twos and threes are very good for advertising purposes. People resonate well with those numbers. So, they may want to look at a .32 cent sales tax.

[Laughter]

JEFF HANAN:

23.3? I mean something like that?

Okay, Table 11.

BOB FOY:

Bob Foy from Flint, Michigan. We had the same as the others have laid out. That is—must have a sound proposal and must have grass root politics, which have both been expressed. But we've also added as part of ours that timing is also an important element of the initial responsibilities.

JEFF HANAN:

So a complete and a comprehensively designed plan, with the money to promote it, credibly delivered, and at the right time.

Okay, Table 12, last comment.

TED BURKE:

I'm Ted Burke from Austin. We also agree with the plan and the money, but we also added that we need to convince those who will never use it why they should vote for it. So it's the "what's in it for me" which we think hurt us in our election in Austin.

JEFF HANAN:

In fact, that series of commercials, I thought, was a real good example of riding that particular fence post between "you're not going to ride it but there is something for you." That's to sell benefits, not cost.

Good.

Well, you've worked very hard today and I think the information and the discussion was not only complimentary to the other experts. In some cases, different. Based on, I think, a lot of expertise that is in the room that I think is incredibly important to harness.

What I would like to do is invite Pete to come up to basically begin the process of closing out the session. And, maybe build on some of the ideas and some of the issues and some of the momentum I think created over these last two days.

CLOSING DISCUSSION

PETER CIPOLLA:

Thank you, Jeff. Thank you, all. I think we had some really good discussion.

I think what we want to do is just take a few minutes of time now and kind of pick your brains. We've had a good day and a half of discussion—a lot of ideas, a lot of concepts going back and forth. Now what do we do with it? How do we package it? Who does the packaging of it? How do we best use this as an industry tool to help accomplish positive referendums, positive ballot measures, throughout the country. I guess very specifically what I am interested in is the role of APTA, the role of the Mineta Institute, the role of Center for Transportation Excellence. Where do you see, as this group is here? We have representatives from all these institutions. We obviously have people that are real near and dear to the problem of bringing a successful referendum. What kinds of tools do we need to produce and where's the best way for us to produce those tools?

So you're not done working yet. But, we have just a little bit farther to go, okay? Any ideas? We're just going to… Margaret, you're going to be able to put them up on the board? Danny? Well, don't worry about intros.

PARTICIPANT:

I think that part of is if we had the resources available so that the data that has been collected, the studies that have done, etcetera, can be tailored to the local situation. For example, when you talk about, you know, the issue of the 1 percent or the 3 percent etcetera, I've been using the argument that there are areas of the county where we have 0 percent of the [Inaudible], and there are areas of the country where we have 35 percent of the [Inaudible]. That, I think, is something that we could use to make sure that the data that we are putting out is in fact accurate and it comes from a source that is not going to necessarily [Inaudible] as being biased or something like that.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay, go ahead.

LOUIS TARBER:

Louis Tarber from San Antonio. I think that maybe one way to manage that data would be if we could establish, or if there could be established, a clearinghouse of some kind. I suppose that would have to be APTA. But it's a big job I would think to keep track of the information, keep track of the elections that are going on around the state, and be available to answer questions. I think another part of that would be to consider a repeat of this kind of conference, which I think has been extremely helpful but one shot is not going to do it.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Art and I were talking about that a little earlier that this has been a really good meeting and I have to tell you, I've been very, very impressed by it. I know we've gotten a lot of real positive comments. But we're not even cocking the hammer on this one. We need to be able to come up with some sort of a package that is going to be able to sustain this information and information flow. Where is the best resource center? I know that APTA has a role in it. Bill, you guys are constantly putting out great information for us. It's a great resource to all. I know the business members will continue to help us fund those types of projects and programs. I know that Mineta Institute… Trixie? I know that you guys have some other stuff…

TRIXIE JOHNSON:

I was going to say—one of the things that we would do with our separate funding—I've just applied for use of some of our Caltrans money to print the proceedings of this conference and you will all be getting a copy of that. That's part of why good printing on your reports out from the discussion sessions was important. It will be in the appendices, among other things. So we'll have a transcriber working on everything that was on the audio tape. We will use all of the printed materials that are available. We will use an editor to put it all together, as the proceedings for you.

So there will at least be a record, that others who were not able to come here, can get the information and share it.

Richard and I have had some discussions about—we've started some good data here, we've set up some systems, at least for looking at data, and wouldn't it be nice if we could continue that? But we haven't carried that discussion

beyond. So I'm interested in hearing what you have to say about how you would deal with the data on an ongoing basis.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Why don't you go ahead.

FRANKIE HAN:

My name is Frankie Han. I'm with LINKS in Orlando. Two things that we had talked about, and it may be in the Brookings Institute report, but it would be real helpful to see ballot language for initiatives that passed versus those that failed—the actual ballots, themselves. If that could be available, maybe on the actual web page or something like that.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Sure.

FRANKIE HAN:

Then the other thing would be a consultant/pollster of those consultants and pollsters that do transit work. If there was some type of index, maybe, through [Inaudible], which would be real quick. Because you can go to—I think it's the American Political Consultants Association…

PETER CIPOLLA:

Yes. Max was I think talking about that as a resource tool.

FRANKIE HAN:

Right. Just a resource to where there are known pollsters or consultants who have worked with public transit agencies before. Maybe one stop shops sort of speak.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Okay. Good idea.

JACOB SNOW:

I'm Jacob Snow from Las Vegas.

What I think the benefit of APTA's participation in transit, and in this role particularly, would be to function as peer review body. We do that in several aspects throughout the industry already. This would be another example. Fort example, when we get ready to go for a referendum, that we could conduct a peer review, take a look at language, take a look at approach. We've heard a lot of comments today from people about what exactly is the plan. Is it a good transit plea? Is it defendable? Peer review can help us accomplish that. Also I heard Mr. Lind here, several times, who I think was one of the most credible proponents for getting our message out there. But almost with a shameful plug of his company. But I really don't think it's that shameful in that if you call the Center of Transportation Excellence, and you ask for assistance and resources, you really don't have much that we have available to us, because I called. What we need to do as an industry, is we need to be putting together the slick road shows, we need to put together our own road show in essence, so that we can go around and we can, when we have a good transit plan that is definable, we need to put the best possible light on that plan. We need to put these resources together like Mr. Lind's Free Congress Foundation, and others, so that we can actually be the ones that are controlling the message. So we can be the ones that are clearing out the doubt in people's minds.

PARTICIPANT:

Good points. I would like to make one comment because this comment probably should have been made beforehand—about the Center for Transportation Excellence. Four partners started to create that. They being—APTA, the Surface Transportation Policy Project, the New Starts Working Group, and Parsons Brinkerhoff shipped in as well. We created the Center for Transportation Excellence sort if to create—there's these negative critics coming to town. But there was nothing that existed on the other side, and institute of sorts, to put out the more truthful type of information. Diana is here. Diana has got that started. We have a web site. We've had a kick off. But we've really never had the resources to do a whole lot, to be honest about it. However, now we have public transportation partnerships for tomorrow, which will be the biggest advocacy program in the history of our transit industry. Pete is at the helm of that. That is going to bring resources to the table to do that right. There will be more to be said on that. But, I think the Center for Excellence has been created and the bar will now be raised.

Thanks.

PETER CIPOLLA:

Let me go ahead and segue way into the PT squared program a little bit because I did want to talk about it. Because while it may not be evident on the surface that these are dots to be connected, the PT squared program, if you're not already participating in it, or if you do have doubts about it, or whatever, you need to get your questions answered and become a participant in it. Because while it is a national, sort of speak, effort to both educate key elements of our society throughout the United States, and is focusing very much on reauthorization, the overall plan of that program is to produce a continuing effort that will in fact be in a support role of individual, localized referendums. One of the first packages that we're focusing on getting APTA people to the participants is a tool box that has sample ads in it, has news releases, business element, local coalition building. All of these key elements that you're going to need as a resource to actually build a localized program.

I also want to divert a little bit. I want to pick up on what you said there. There are people that would be willing to participate in peer review. I think when you look at systems, it's one thing. But, when you look at the Carl Guardinos and the Max Beslers and Jude Barrys, these are all professionals now. So, you're going to pay their time. You're going to pay their freight. I think it's good to have them there because you got success after success after success. I could point to these folks. I know that Denver has them and other cities have them, Phoenix has them too. But, I just want to make sure you go into it with your eyes wide open, that when you talk about a peer review, often times with APTA, you pay a few expenses and that's it. When you're talking about these people, you're going to be paying a little bit of freight with them too.

Go ahead, in the back. Then we'll come back around over here.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah. In the general topic of peer review, I think one of the things that we owe to the tax paying public is to make sure that any proposals that go out are as realistic as we can help make them.

I know the general public in areas where there had not been light rail for example, the ones who are pro-light rail, attach too many blessings to it. They equate it to something like the bullet train, moving them from 40 miles out of

the suburb to downtown in 12 minutes and stuff like that. I'm exaggerating of course. So, we need to help it be reasonable both in what it can do and what it's going to cost and how long it is going to take. I think our collective experience can do that for the ones who are just now coming along.

PARTICIPANT:

Yeah, you go ahead and take your microphone back, Art, because he and you already made my speech and my question. Because I was sitting here listening to the table here, and it's like Houston has got a different problem than San Antonio. Although it's about the same issue. Las Vegas has got a different problem than Lexington or Louisville. The thing that occurred to me is that they've got a road show, why don't we have a road show? The thought occurs to me that we have a strike force that kind of like parachutes into a community with an oncoming ballot issue. And that strike force says, "Okay, a year out, think about this, think about that, think about this." It might augment some of the stuff that we talked about today as well as doing another one of these for more people. So that's the thought I had.

PETER CIPOLLA:

I honestly think while it's not specific in the program, of all the program projects of PT square, I think the PT square can in fact help fund those types of efforts. I'll make that a statement as one member of the AFTA executive committee. I would say—this would be a good solid use of some of this money to fund Bill and others who are nationally recognized people in this area. And can go into and help a community deal with the local referendum. I'm one member of the executive committee.

Other comments? Yes.

PARTICIPANT:

I think these are all good ideas and I see a lot of energy going in these directions and I'm very excited about that. I think one of the things we should not forget to do is do the basics and make sure… I know having worked in the Denver region on a couple of ballot measures, we have our own messengers and our own problems. What they need help with is getting them the facts. That's where the Wendell Coxes of the world have been really good in that. They just send the same old stuff out to their folks in the field and they look

like these third party kind of independent guys with credibility. They're shooting out the same numbers in every city. I think that's why Bill Lind's paper is so important to help refute some of that.

But for instance, when you go to the APTA site, there's very good information about rider ship, but there's no story behind that. What was the projected rider ship? What was the actual? The fact that it is actually way over projection? What's the development that's happening in Dallas due to their rail? CFT is starting to put the beginnings of that together. But I think if there was just more of doing the basics, of getting out what is already a very good story—but just frankly lacking the packaging—then the local groups can have their own messenger deliver that and be credible with it. But we spend a lot of time when they parachute in and go, "Portland actually stinks." Well then we have to call the Portland agency and try to figure out what they're talking about and what are they saying and what did that mean and blah, blah… It's twenty-five calls instead of just being able to find the information. All they did was spit out one fact or one untruth rather. So we need to do more of, I think, just telling the basics of our own story. Then I would like to see APTA and CFT help train local messengers to deliver what can be packaged nationally. I don't think we necessarily need to parachute APTA every time there's a ballot measure. But if APTA had it packaged and then there was resources to help train the local people that could be a very powerful combination. It's essentially what our opposition has done.

PETER CIPOLLA:

I'm going to put on another hat. In using APTA per se as: Number one, I think APTA is a good resource. Number two: I don't think APTA is a good resource to actually come in and start refuting things all the time because it is a self serving situation. So, from a local political motivation standpoint—and I'm giving you my personal opinion here—I'd much rather have a local business community and those people. I think APTA can serve as the educational tool to give to the agency to give to those people that are going to be doing it, but not as the spokesperson to come inside. So I think we really have to be very careful in role selection within the poll. I don't know if we really made it real clear in this morning's discussion, or even in yesterday's discussion. But one of the polls that these guys took was actually naming names of leadership—people in both the business community and people in the political community of who had positive feedback from the community. So those became the people that they then pinpointed to be the spokespersons for the measure. That's how bringing down the polls really got…

Other questions or other comments?

BARBARA MCCANN:

Barbara McCann with STDP. I just wanted to say that we're very excited about the PT squared effort and being able to have some resources. We've been involved with CFTE and it has been frustrating to not be able to do as much with it as we would have liked, just because there haven't been the resources. In immediate time frame, we are planning our next issue of our *Progress* newsletter. It's going to be about responding to the critics and some of the issues. I've already buttonholed several people here to write articles. That goes out to about 20,000 people around the country. It's free and we encourage people to take extra copies and pass those around. So that will be an immediate, very readable, 8 to 12 page resource for people on what's come out of here.

PETER CIPOLLA:

I see.

BOB FOY:

I'm Bob Foy from Flint. One of the things that we've done here over the last couple of days is identified 15 or 20 elements of a process that takes you through a successful growth in public transportation in your respective area, regardless of what it might be. Whether it's just building more bus routes or whether it's putting light rail or whether it's something even bigger or better. But we've identified certain basic elements of the process. One of the things that I think APTA could do for us is that after a campaign is complete, that we could really have a library of benchmarking. Each one of these items can be done in many, many ways. An example of what I mean. I'm sure that there are many people in this room when they said, "Well, to have a successful campaign to bring in light rail, you really ought to start with about 1.5 million in local funds that you have that you can deal with." I think that to most people, that's a pretty staggering number. But it's been done. It's been done many times. I think a benchmarking could say, "These are the steps that we took," and then you can then see about how to approach of that magnitude. But in each of these areas that we've talked about, the 15 or 20 or so, I'm sure that we could develop a very brief summary of what has taken place in a particular

village, particularly those who have been successful, and use those as a benchmarking document.

PETER CIPOLLA:

I agree. I think that's our intent—to try to at least package some of this into at least a "first shot out of the cannon" type of tool.

VICKIE SHAFFER:

I'm Vickie Shaffer, Huntington, West Virginia. I can't tell you all how jealous I am of the success of this last day and a half in addressing the needs of the larger community and the light rail systems. I would look forward to APTA perhaps expanding this effort to smaller urban and rural areas where all politics is the same really, and all politics are local. Perhaps take this effort and its success and extend it to other parts of the country where our mass transit constituency in Congress is equally as important.

Thank you.

PETER CIPOLLA:

You're welcome. Anything else? Okay.

Art, anything else to wrap up?

ART GUZETTI:

Let's see. The conference is not over because there is still tomorrow and I would like to just put a plug on for tomorrow and maybe mention the logistics.

Tomorrow, FTA is having a workshop specifically in New Starts and how to line up funds and how to get in queue for the funds. That will be at the San José State University. We'll have buses leaving from the hotel, the Hyatt Sainte Claire, at 8:00, 8:20, and 8:40. It's a ten block walk so you can also have the option of walking. But hopefully a lot of us will be there and I wanted to mention the bus.

Other than that, let's stay in the loop. There are referendums coming up as early as this fall. So, let's all talk to one another. The most important thing is

the attendance list because that tells you how to get in touch with everyone else that is here.

MODERATOR:

Thank you all.

ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, AND TERMS

BRT	Bus Rapid Transit - Bus Rapid Transit runs similar to a light-rail system, with a series of platform-type stations where riders are picked up at least every 10 minutes. But the system uses buses that run on regular streets or in special bus-only "guideways."
Center For Trasnportation Excellence	A non-partisan policy research center created to serve the needs of communities and transportation organizations nationwide. The purpose of the center is to provide research materials, strategies and other forms of support on the benefits of public transportation, particularly light rail transit.
Free Congress Foundation	A Washington, D.C. think-tank dedicated to protecting technology privacy rights, monitoring liberal judicial activists, combating political correctness, and promoting conservative governance.
APTA	American Public Transportation Association - APTA serves and leads its diverse membership through advocacy, innovation, and information sharing to strengthen and expand public transportation.

APPENDIX A: TABLE DISCUSSIONS

SEGMENT ONE: ORGANIZING THE CAMPAIGN

(No table number included)

What is the message(s)?

- Anticipate the opposition
- Get lots of input
- Be responsive on the local level
- Build buy-in

Who manages the campaign?

- Transit agency profile may have to stay low
- Pick the right people, professionals, and listen to them
- Do your polling
- Get grass roots support and buy-in
- Be careful of politicians
- Get leaders out front who won't benefit from the campaign

Doing differently?

- Be strategic about your "front" people
- Identify the right "community saints"

(No table number included)

- Already have a base set up
- Have groundwork done before campaign
- Begin public education, political coalition established, at least a year ahead, 2-4 years better
- Have balanced RTP

- Open mind as to what's on ballot
- Do you have to wait for congestion or be proactive
- If you can't articulate the necessity, it's hard to support
- Strong focal point for the campaign such as economic development
- Can be other issues, air quality, smart growth, economic issue
- Have to make compelling case to raise taxes
- Piggy back onto other political issue, economic, development
- Adequate funding
- Don't go forward without campaign funding – cautious use of staff
- With many unsuccessful initiatives, people were over confident of success
- Timing of initiative – polling key, publicize issues
- Economic development can also mean redeveloping areas around stations

(No table number included)

What are the key considerations?

- Most important is the pre-ballot phase
- Develop what the needs are, have public hearings
- Polling is an essential step
- Plan on what is needed and what voters will get

What is most critical?

- Good public opinion
- Research to tell you how to frame

Civic leadership makes it easier to sell to the public

(Most Important) Building coalitions broadens your ability to get the message out

Timing is critical

What would you do differently?

- Make sure you allow adequate time to run your campaign

(No table number included)

How do you start organizing a campaign?

- Is there a plan – Is there a need
- Campaign then is designed to implement the plan
- Need to build a consensus on the package – provide something for everybody
- Need to eliminate opposition as much as possible (especially for 2/3 vote requirement)
- Need to decide what areas to include, 1 city only – countywide – regional / multi-county
- Need to factor in local legislation authority – can impact
- Need to start with a solid long range plan and draw from projects with plan justification – then use polling to determine which projects are the most positive and weed out any negatives
- Trust is a key factor – having a track record of success is very helpful in getting a measure proposed. Agencies have to be well-managed etc. so people won't think $ will be mismanaged
- Forming a broad-based group to work on ballot package and build consensus along the way

Key Decisions

- What is need
- What will people support (projects)
- Who puts the measure on the ballot
- Find the best champion for the effort
- Who will be key sources of $ for the campaign
- Develop method to build grass roots support
- Transit agency communication officer

(No table number included)

Key Considerations

- Be able to define the question, the crisis. Use definitions that are real to people (hours lost waiting in traffic)
- Know what voters want: projects, tax level, type of tax
- Know the political environment
- Who else will be on the ballot, clear and simple
- Identify a champion
- Identify legal restrictions, rules for the agency in the campaign
- Campaign also needs good legal advice
- Identify risk to agency, and strategy (political and legal risk)
- Organize, recruit your citizens group, your employees – their union – can be part (not constrained)
- Who will oppose? Know them!
- Organize a PAC – for fundraising and advocacy
- Reach out to major stakeholders – who will benefit? How much will they pay or do? Look at developers, realtors and what benefit they can get?
- Public education in the campaign
- How do you do public education legally? (MIS, public records request mechanism)

What to do Different

- Polling, money, have a good PAC
- Watch timing; use all or nothing fear, find champion

(Table 2)

Key considerations in organizing the campaign/Considerations most critical to success

- Identify leader and champion

- Must have public trust
- Leader should be well known
- As a public agency representative, how do I strike the balance between informing the public and advocating?
- The purpose of the referendum must be clear as to the projects to be funded
- Purpose should be clear and simple
- Use polling to shape the referendum
- Ensure you're solving real problems as identified by polling
- In process to determine purpose, be inclusive in your project list
- Pay attention to other issues that may be on the ballot
- Strike balance between local supporters and paid professionals in conducting campaign
- Consider appropriate balance of backgrounds of campaign committee members in order to include cross-section of community
- Need plan that shows connection between ballot measure and funding projects in organizing campaign again
- Work to ensure that ballot language casts measure in most favorable light possible

(Table 4)

Key considerations in organizing the campaign

- Have good data – understanding of constituent needs / wants
- dentify key stakeholder(s) – diversity of needs, geographics
- Identify core group, (5-10) people, of supporters outside transit, if you can't identify 5-10 you may not be ready
- The core group can identify key stakeholders
- Start early working on a good image (PR campaign)
- Start working early on a good image within the organization, build support with these employees
- Know how many votes you need to win

- Know the context of the campaign, i.e. economy, traffic status, employment
- If you can't get a champion, think twice about running a campaign
- Have a vision – show it as a plan
- Begin with relationship building
- Look at the bigger picture of what our communities are/want to be, and how/what we want to do fits into that picture
- Have a strategy for relationship building
- If you have something really positive going for you, you may want to move forward with the campaign
- Successful fundraising
- Match the message to the messenger

(Table 5)

Top 3

1. Timing

2. Clarify issues of campaign; needs

3. Building coalitions based upon community policy.

What are all of the key considerations in organizing the campaign?

- Timing – make sure you know all issues involved
- Identify needs of campaign: why?
- Developing consensus
- Coalition: broad-based or targeted stealth
- Share reality orientation: self examination prior to developing plan
  - Constituencies
  - (SWOT) Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
- Polling- although some agencies may be short on time and image to commit during most favorable times (or before reauthorization)

- Funding of campaign
- Decide what kind of election in which you need to be placed
- Define stakeholders- their positions, the public's response to their roles
- Business driven- transit agency should not lead the drive to passing measure; in areas where there is enough polarization, local community and environmental support must be visible
- Trust is critical
- Staff should be low keyed; need political consultants
- Small suburban agency is hard-pressed to compete with neighboring larger transit authority; resources scarce; no "cookie cutter" approach to new local campaign.
- Tailored to community needs

4. Which considerations are the most critical to success?

- Match between needs & referendum package (does solution match problem)

5. In organizing a campaign again, what things would you do different based on your experience?

- Houston – go out and make it "self-actuating;" don't allow it to require renewal
  - Although some may feel more comfortable if provided opportunity to review and renew
- San Antonio – Don't take on such a large complicated project that confuses public; do a better job on educating the community; identify community needs up front. (they talked about too many modes of transportation, then switched focus to light rail, voters did not see the ownership of plan)
- Birmingham – don't get transit caught up in other social issues education, other unpopular development, be careful of linkages utilized in measure

(Table 6)

1. Can we succeed?

- Need good data

- Need good timing
- Need sufficient money

2. What is budget?

- Is it realistic?
- Is money available and when? Sooner better.
- Need to plan budget.

3. Need simple and understandable message

- Short message
- Should fit on a bumper sticker
- Must have clear understanding of needs
- Should resonate with community

4. Need solid leadership

They should be:

- Well recognized
- Influential
- Full time
- Good leader
- Good at rallying support
- Neutral
- Respected by all

5. Need a project list

- Seek compromise between political and technical needs

6. Identify champions

- Not from transit

- Seek opinion leaders with credibility

7. Timing is important

- Conflicts
- Good data

(Table 7)

Organizing the campaign

- Secure campaign funding
- Organize independent campaign staff
- Private industry is important
- Identify key stakeholders
- Develop plan based on real needs and developed with stakeholders
- Do groundwork with political leaders so they don’t oppose you
- Conduct early polls
- Get spokesperson from business/citizens group
- Get professional campaign advice from consultant who understands issues campaign
- Start early
- Give voters some immediate benefits in the plan
- Have a plan for dealing with the opposition
- Speakers' bureau
- Coalition

(Table 9)

I. What are all the key issues in organizing the campaign?

- Need a champion that is passionate about transit, well recognized by the public and is of high moral character, a true “white hat”

- Champion can be an individual or a recognized group that represents that issue
- Avoid the transit agency prompting itself and being the sponsor
- Develop coalitions, lots of “white hats” and do it in advance
- Do your research and have transportation solutions that meet the public’s desires
- Be sure you have the support of the transit agencies board and work force
- General governmental distrust can be a guilt by association situation
- Can’t run in spite of your transit agency

II. Which of these considerations are the most critical to your success?

- Picking the right champion or champions
- Be sure you have well defined projects that meet the public need

III. In organizing a campaign again, what things would you do differently based on your experience?

- Be careful in selection of a consultant to assist you
- Careful in how you spend your money in getting the message out; TV versus more grass roots media.

(Table 12)

- Citizen driven plan, people wanted to know what they would get
- Consultants must know the area
- Grass roots citizen effort to organize campaign
- Need one set of messages and one campaign / campaign manager who knows who they work for
- Transit agency needs to step aside and let coalitions lead efforts
- Need to find leader, respected in the community, strong leadership
- Challenge in getting item on ballot, need to educate elected officials (exposure to other systems)
- It takes $ to get issue on ballot
- Use the strengths of various groups within a strategic framework

Summary for Debrief

- Start fundraising
- Define leadership
- Develop coalition & define role of agency & coalition in process
- Politics of getting on ballot
- Focus on the message

SEGMENT TWO: HANDLING THE CRITICS

(Table 12)

- In Phoenix, took high road for 3 elections, didn't work
- During last election, consultant said take them head on
- Have a drumbeat / message and stick to it
- Answer the critics, then get back on message
- Turn it around – What's your (the critic's) plan?
- Discredit the critics.
- Talk radio, build relationships with hosts/producers
- Captain for talk show group – keep track of topics and get callers
- For example – Empty Bus Attack, get drivers to call in and say, "I drive buses, they're full."
- Who are critics? – monorail folks
- Organized critics – Goldwater Institute, Cascade Institute, The Public Policy Foundation

(Table 17)

Critics 1) critics to taxes / 2) critics to transit

- Critics have an issue on background against transit on the funding source
- Unresolved issues brought by critics can be dangerous if not answered prior to election

- Do homework, find objections early and answer before they become an issue
- Have more advocates then critics
- Need key person to respond to critics, other than elected official's business person – or other
- Sharpen bureau to spear on transit issues, need more advocates then critics

(Table 5)

How to handle successfully

- You have to know the group and their issues, including influences within the group
- Know the facts
- Treat local critics different from, "troubadours"
- Good citizen's advocacy
- Address issues and move on
- Real analysis of costs of critics ideas is sometimes required
- WTTO
- Public policy foundation
- Troubadours – mostly anti-rail
- Local critics – anti Gov./anti tax, sometimes media, talk radio, highway lobby, contractors, developers
- Opportunistic politicians
- Non-riders
- Philosophically opposed
- Fear based homeowners
- Nimbys
- Process issues distort factual issues, bolster credibility
- Consistency is important
- Beware "unholy" alliances of disparate critics, conservatives and minority groups

- Must involve all of your stakeholders

(Table 4)

How have you handled critics?

- Pay attention to how your message can be spun negatively
- Carefully construe your message into a soundbyte
- Handle critics by not handling them
- Be prepared to go into debate, be offensive with your counter
- Use your champions/supporters to argue your points or to debate
- Put together a package that will diffuse the critics
- Respond with success stories

(Table 3)

Who are the critics?

- Anti-tax
- Anti-Gov.
- Talk radio
- Road builders/highway lobby
- Those competing for the same resources, now or in future
- Those who are looking for a direct/immediate benefit
- Crime (fear of)
- Can't avoid debate
- How do you deal with talk radio

How do you deal with critics?

- Anti-tax – you are good stewards of public fund, the money will be well spent
- Third party confirmation of the legitimacy of the agency

- Anti-Gov. – using grass roots/business/third party groups to overcome the impression that this is an agency initiative, rather than a legitimate response to a community need

(Table 2)

- Overman – Arlington, TX – a local critic, but he is a friend. Don't stop communicating with them. Always can find common ground. They discuss it. Reporter played them off of each other. Overman calls the first critic.
- Sherre – don't argue values with them, strategize on commonalties. How can we find mutual benefit? Critics used the subsidy issue. Have a libertarian paper. Value is 0 govt. Used to think could discuss every issue. But you can't.
- Lind – ID audience: some people you will never get. Are they critics or just skeptics? Honolulu BRT plan – they laid out all potential opponents and figure out which ones are worth focusing on. Do not shut out the critics. Inoculate media against these guys: give their backgrounds.
- Lind – be a source to the media – so they come to you when there is a negative story

(Table 6)

Who are the critics? – Try to anticipate them

- Environmental Community – they see bus service being sacrificed for the LRT/rail program
- Anti-tax, anti-govt. – see any expansion of governmental institution as a negative
- Important to understand your critics motivation, not just what they say
- Anti-transit isn't necessarily anti-transit as it is anti-bad transit
- Criticism comes from not giving valid consideration to other alternatives

Ways to deal with critics.

- Have good, factual technical data/responses
- Need a sound operating plan for the project
- Treat impacted neighborhood groups with dignity

(Table 10)

Who are the critics?

- Citizens
- We need to answer the critics and not be silent
- Environmental
- Private business
- Contractors of highway
- Home builders association
- Anti-tax people
- Transportation junkies
- Politicians
- Conservative businesses

How do you handle the critics?

- Information to be provided to all critics to lower the number of critics
- Use other areas as examples to prove your point
- Private individuals need to assist in setting the record straight
- Timely issue of when you answer the critics and to avoid this we may need to look at when we/transportation try to go on a ballot
- Prevention during a political campaign

(Table 7)

How have you successfully handled critics?

- Demonstrate success of existing program
- Inclusive (depends on nature of criticism)
- Counter criticisms forcefully, honestly, briefly, with accurate info and MOVE ON

Who are the critics?

- Taxpayer advocacy organizations
- Anti-big government
- Environmental advocates
- Neighborhood/community organizations

What different in future?

- Avoid on-going debate
- Coordinate with other communities re: experience
- Maintain agenda – no sidetracking

(Table 8)

- Local critic teams with the national critics and media
- Media feels obligated to show 'the other side'
- Voters become confused by complicated concepts
- Critics often use last minute arguments to pre-empt the campaigns disproving their assertions
- Preparation is required for last minute attacks:
    - Media buy on final weekend
    - Have a press release ready for counterattacks
    - Must have a budget for last minute actions
- Critics might try to tie up campaign in court instead of legitimate arguments
- Portray the critics as outsiders (or show other weaknesses)
- Convince critics that current service will remain in place and new service won't drain it of resources

Critics will be:

- Anti-government
- Realtors
- Highway people
- Landowners

- Outside national groups
- Talk radio – pro transit conservatives
- Political opponent of champion
- Bus vs. Rail

(Table 1)

- Unsuccessful – critics capitalized on free media
- Arguments – empty bus syndrome
- Transit is higher cost per trip than individual car

Key Points

- Knowing and anticipating nay-sayers and in message work to answer questions critics will bring up – deflate argument
- Stay on message
- Keep in control of message – keep going back to what you want heard, don't go down critic's path – don't give their message a platform
- Use analogies i.e. highway is built to accommodate capacity, but that doesn't mean its going to be bumper to bumper at midnight (empty bus argument)
- Be able to answer "what's in it for them"
- If possible, bring them into the process and get them involved in the planning of the project
- Try to identify possible critics early, ahead of time and go to them to at least minimize public intrigues

Possible Critics

- Riders
- Drivers
- Employees

(Table 9)

- Being ahead of the opposition. Know where they're coming from and try to pre-empt them with accurate information
- Critics could be any number of people, anti-govt., activists
- Anticipate the big guns – Wendell Cox – but also the ad hoc groups that might pop up; could be neighborhood groups; champion opponents
- Know how to use the counter-punch and don't ignore inaccurate information, even from talk show hosts. Rebut when the misinformation surfaces
- Why is it we invest in highways – but transit is an expense. Why not reverse this and look at transit as an investment
- Figure out the opponents with real issues and those who simply don't like transit – these 2 groups must be treated very differently
- Must have trained speakers' bureau – good spokespeople able to go to meetings and have accurate, good information to give people – Need a lot of manpower for this. Transit agency is only a support for this – not part of speakers' bureau – They can do informational sessions

SESSION THREE: THE ESSENCE OF WHAT WINS AN ELECTION

Table 7

Most Important Factors in Winning

1) Transportation expenditure plan that addresses community's identified needs, and has buy in from, broad cross-section of community stakeholders.

2) Sufficient campaign financing and development of qualified campaign consultants and staff.

Segment 5 – Question 2

Table 9

What are the Most Important Factors in Winning

- Money – have to convince a sufficient number of voters that they have a need and that you have a solution

- Dade Co.: had $1.8 M and still lost – need credibility of organization and confidence in their ability to deliver – money alone will not carry the election. Do have the crisis – No agreement on solution.
- Very little can overcome a bad project
- Clear plan that voters will embrace, well delivered by a credible institution
- Voter assurances – have a citizen oversight committee monitor expenditure
- Have to touch everybody

(No table number included)

- Ballot Title and Layout
  - ²Keep it simple, keep it clear, talk benefits
- How Important is Packaging
  - Maybe worth 10 points
  - What are the legal parameters?
  - Keep it simple
  - If polling is positive packaging with other issue related items may be possible (constituency polling will dictate)
- Political Factors
  - Be very cautious of moving forward if agency has negative image
  - Communicate and touch/be straight up with issues/deal with perceptions (fact vs. fiction) must communicate with stakeholders
  - Identify and target the undecided votes
- Grass Roots Efforts
  - Involve them early on
  - Make them a part of the process
  - Empower them and educate them on issues to be advocates

(Table 11)

- What are 1 or 2 most important issues:
  - 1) Good plan, sound plan

•2) Grass roots, effective grass roots politics

•3) Timing

Question 2

1) There are legal constraints on ballot language and they vary from state to state

2) Don't use word "tax" on ballot measure use such terms as "levy", "fee"

3) A critical issue is the degree of spending in the ballot language

(Table 6)

Ballot Language

- Some jurisdictions have no ability to influence language
- Work within legal boundaries
- Get legal council and massage people together
- Do focus groups to see what resonates with voters
- Give something to everybody

Packaging

- ² Look at other things on ballot
- ² Go after candidates for endorsement
- ² Package your plan
- ² Are there other tax issues on ballot are you forcing voters to choose

(Table 2)

Ballot Title and Language

What not to do:

- Don't use industry speak when writing language, public will not understand, will get confused

- Don’t ask for too much at one time, phase the request
- Don’t use “tax” in the language
- Don’t segment vote, if you don’t have all passed – progress is difficult
- Don’t package with wrong items – poll community to develop package
- Package should be locally oriented

Table 1

Question 4/ Ballot Language:

- Be specific about what the project is (light rail not “public transportation”)
- Projects should be listed before the specifics of the tax
- Answer; what’s in it for me?
- Avoid gobbledegook

Packaging:

- Respond to local concerns
- Polling – when listing projects
- Be careful about proposing light rail at expense of buses

(Table 10)

Ballot Title and Package

- Use specific language
- Broaden the package to obtain support
- List and/or map projects to be funded

(Table 5)

What wins an election?

- You must have a strong citizen developed plan and let everyone know what it is
- Print up the plan and send it PLAN IT/PRINT IT

- Long range plan with score card of where you are
- Convince those who never use it why its important to them
- What's in it for me/them?
- How does it help everyone
- Must have money and message, need message to raise money and money to get message out

WRAP-UP ON APTA NOTES

- Need data source that is not considered biased.
- Repeat this conference!
- Need package to sustain this dialogue and provide data.
- Mineta Institute will produce meeting transcript/proceedings for attendees and others.
- Would like to see actual ballots that have worked.
- APTA resource list of pollsters/consultants who have done work w/local referenda efforts.
- ó Peer review activities by APTA to review proposed projects before going to ballot.
- Develop slick "road show" for use by local efforts - strike force of transit professionals.
- Pete: good use of PT(2) funds is to have Millar and others go into local ballot efforts to offer support.
- PT(2) national effort to educate/reauth/overall plan to produce support materials for local use.
- APTA info. on web doesn't till the story behind the numbers.
- APTA help train local people.
- STTP monthly article on this topic – please distribute widely!
- APTA develop library of benchmarking of completed campaigns (brief summary especially of successful campaigns).
- APTA expand this program and extend to more rural communities - effort basic transit.