

**Item #67**



# **Survey on 2014 vs. 2016 Ballot Measure, and New Sales Tax vs. Extension**

Key Findings from a Survey  
Conducted December 2013

# Survey Purpose & Background

## ■ Purpose

- Determine potential ballot success in **2014** versus **2016**
- Determine support for an **extension** versus a **new tax**

## ■ Background

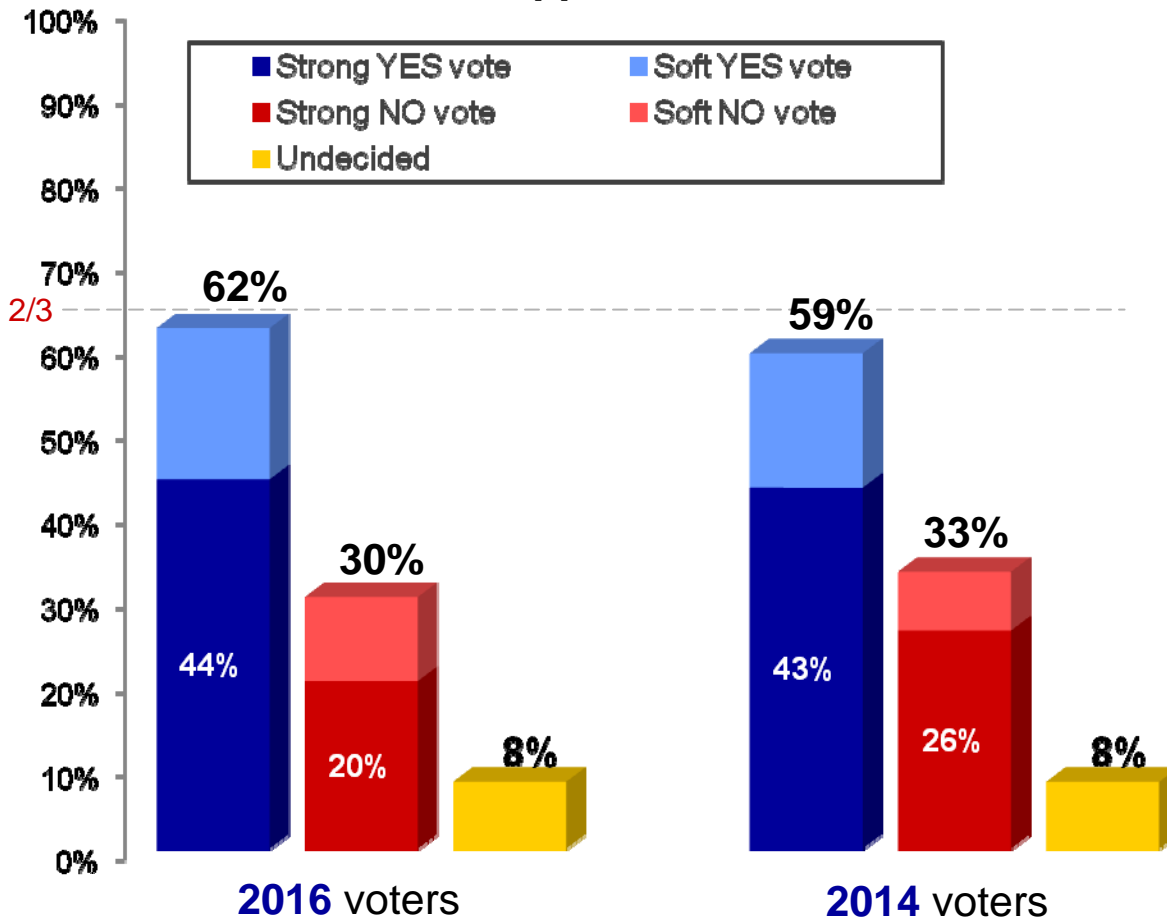
- June 2013 Board directed staff report in 6 months on recommended ballot measure for 2014 or 2016
  - COG input due Oct. 2013
- Staff prepared ballot measure schedules in Nov. 2013 for Board review; 2016 schedule recommended
- 2016 schedule permits greater stakeholder input
- Poll results needed Jan. 2014 for 2014 Schedule

# Survey Methodology

- Telephone survey (average length 13 minutes) conducted December 18-22, 2013
- 800 respondents interviewed countywide
- Respondents contacted on landlines and cell phones, bilingual interviews
- Survey results based on TWO representative samples of LA County voters:
  - Likely 2014 general election voters (“midterm voters”)
  - Likely 2016 general election voters (“presidential voters”)
- Overall margins of error (higher among subgroups)
  - Midterm voters:  $\pm 3.9$  percentage points
  - Presidential voters:  $\pm 4.1$  percentage points

# There is strong support for a sales tax **EXTENSION**, but less than a two-thirds' threshold even among the more favorable presidential electorate.

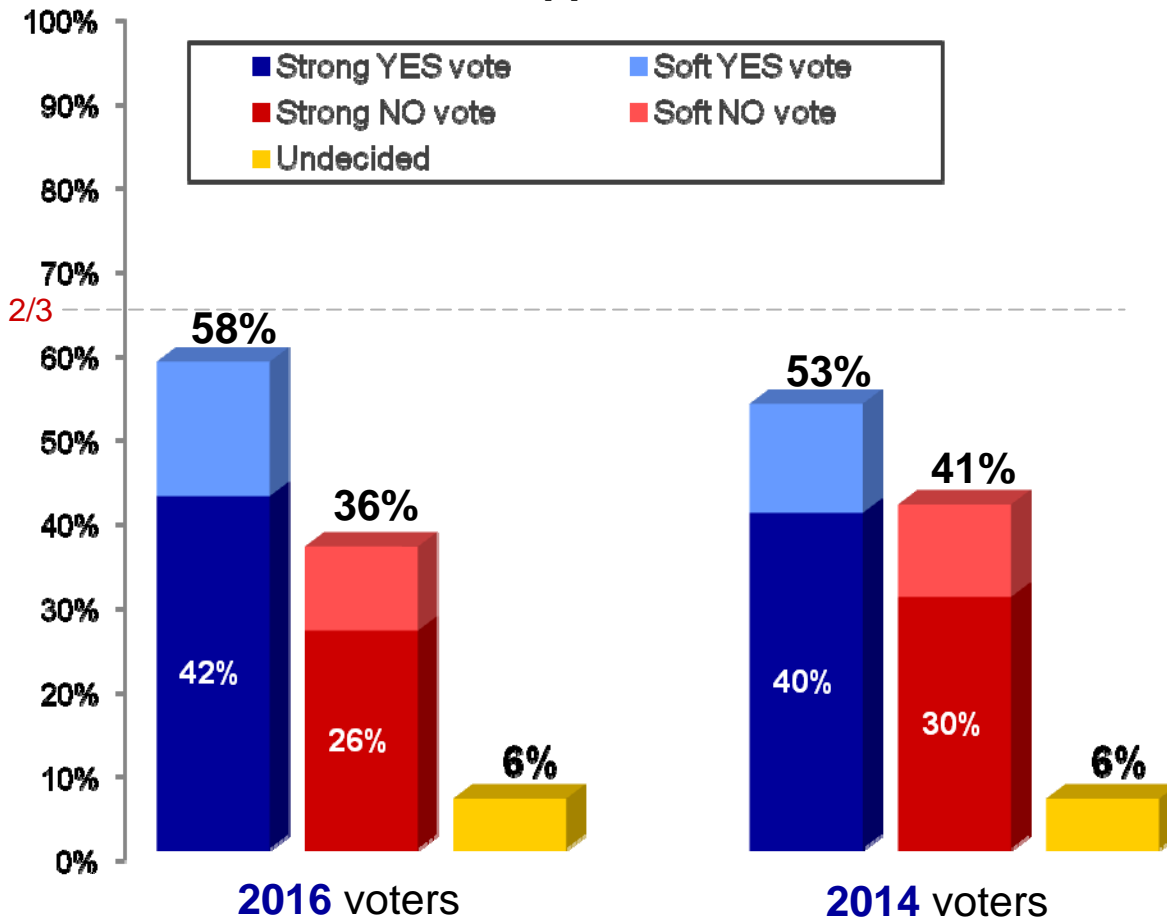
*Support for Traffic Relief Sales Tax Extension*



Wording of measure included in question:  
 "To advance Los Angeles County's traffic relief, economic/job growth by accelerating light rail/subway construction and airport connections, within five years, not 20, funding countywide freeway, bridge, safety and traffic flow improvements, fixing potholes, keeping senior, student, and disabled fares low, Shall Los Angeles County's voter-approved one-half cent traffic relief sales tax continue without increase for another 30 years or until voters decide to end it, with independent audits and keeping funds local?"

# A sales tax INCREASE achieves majority YES support, but falls short of the two-thirds threshold even among the presidential electorate.

*Support for Traffic Relief Sales Tax Increase*

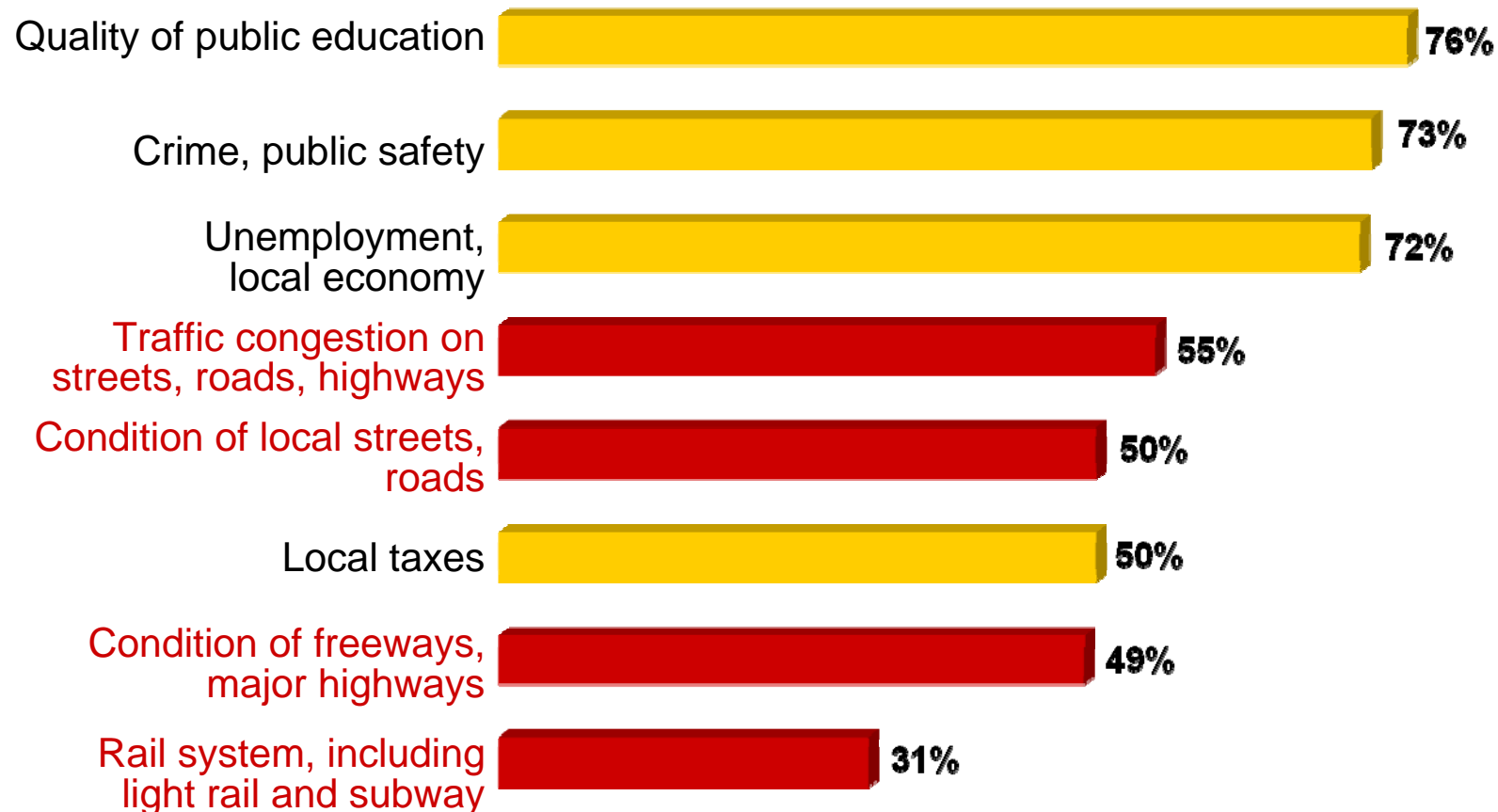


Wording of measure included in question:  
 “To advance Los Angeles County's traffic relief, economic/job growth by accelerating light rail/subway construction and airport connections, within five years, not 20, while also funding a number of NEW projects that include five new Metro rail line extensions, 130 new miles of carpool lanes, traffic flow improvements, fixing potholes, and keeping senior, student, and disabled fares low. Shall the Los Angeles County sales tax be increased by one-half cent for 30 years, with local control, independent audits and public review of expenditures?”

# Transportation-related issues have MODERATE importance on voters' issue agenda.

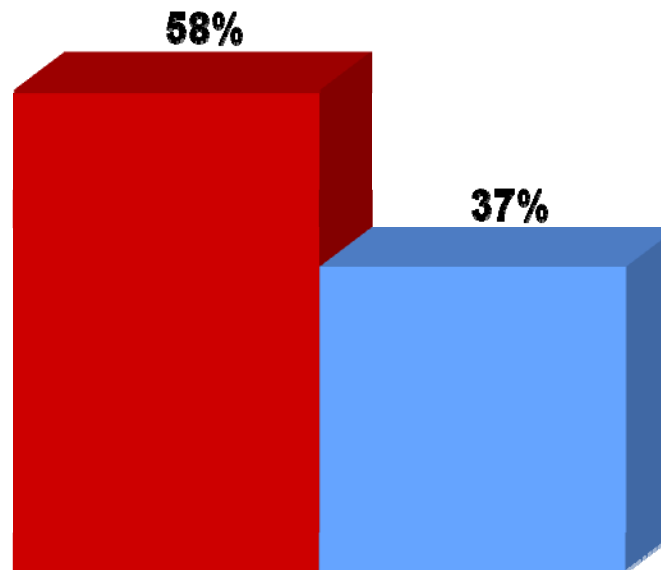
*Proportion Saying Each Is an Extremely Important Issue Facing LA County*

2016 VOTERS



# A two-fold challenge faces Metro LA: (a) The electorate is very tax-sensitive.

## *Assessment of Current Level of Local Taxes in Los Angeles County*

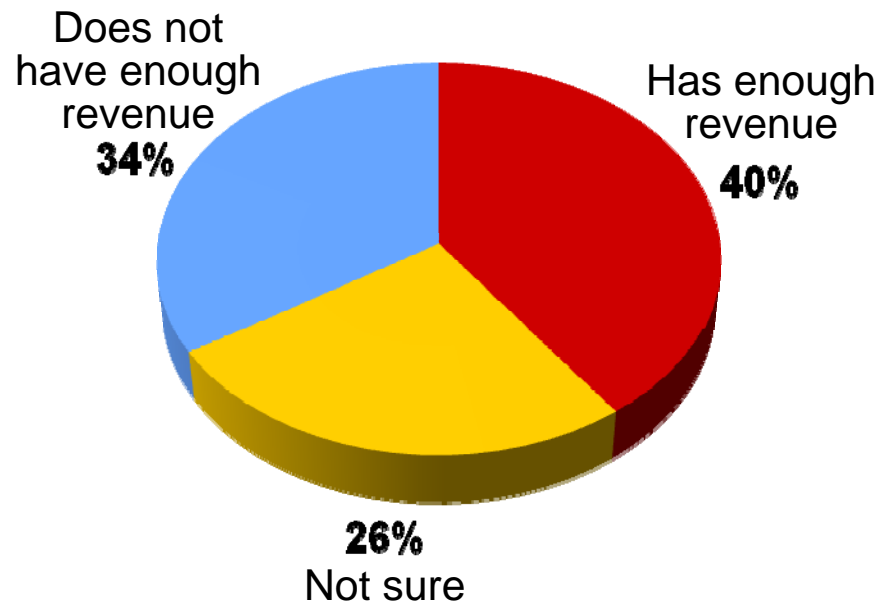


**ALL 2016 VOTERS**

# A two-fold challenge faces Metro LA: (b) A plurality believe the county currently has enough revenue for transportation.

*Does LA County's transportation system\* have enough revenue to continue operating at current service levels?*

ALL 2016 VOTERS



\* Described as freeways, local streets, buses, light rail, and subways



# Metro faces a skeptical public that does not appear to grasp the funding realities.

*Which comes closer to your view of transportation funding in Los Angeles County?*

ALL 2016 VOTERS

The county already has enough money to fund needed transportation improvements.



The county's transportation needs are expanding at a rapid pace, and NEW sources of revenue are needed.



## Summary of Survey Takeaways

- The current issue/attitudinal environment is at best mixed for passage of transportation ballot measures. (*Voters do not YET perceive the necessity for more revenue.*)
- The 2016 election is the MORE favorable election for passage of transportation-related ballot measures.
- A sales tax INCREASE faces especially challenging prospects, even in the more favorable 2016 election.
- The best positive messages for the ballot measures are accountability, jobs and low fares, and “basics” (potholes/traffic flow).