



# Comparative Information about other Cities' Bond and Revenue Measures

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Committee on Infrastructure



# Recent Tax Measures in San Diego County

- San Diego County voters approved 8 of 19 tax measures (42.1%) between 2008-2014
- General tax measures had a greater rate of success than special tax measures, which could be due in part to the fact that general tax measures require a majority vote while special tax measures require a 2/3rds vote to pass
- 14 of the 19 measures were for the purpose of general government, while 2 were for beach sand replenishment, 2 were for fire fighting and emergency response efforts, and 1 was for road repairs

TAX MEASURE RESULTS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY 2008-2014				
	Pass	Fail	Total	Passage Rate
General Tax	7	7	14	50.0%
Special Tax	1	4	5	20.0%
All Ballot Measures	8	11	19	42.1%

TAX MEASURES BY PURPOSE				
	Total	Percent of Total	Passed	Passage Rate
General Government	14	73.7%	7	50.0%
Beach Sand Replenishment	2	10.5%	1	50.0%
Fire Fighting/Protection	2	10.5%	0	0.0%
Road Repairs	1	5.3%	0	0.0%
Total	19	100.0%	8	42.1%



# Recent GO Bond Measures in Other Large Cities

- The six large cities we studied placed 27 bond propositions on 8 ballots, and all but 1 passed
- 6 of the GO bond propositions were for transportation/infrastructure including streets, sidewalks, and bridges, but others focused on:
  - public safety
  - parks and recreation
  - municipal facilities
  - libraries and other cultural facilities
  - housing
  - miscellaneous purposes

<u>City</u>	<u>Election</u>
Atlanta, GA	March 17, 2015
Charlotte, NC	November 4, 2014
San Francisco, CA	June 3, 2014
Fort Worth, TX	May 10, 2014
Austin, TX	November 5, 2013
San Francisco, CA	November 6, 2012
Austin, TX	November 6, 2012
San Antonio, TX	May 12, 2012

<b>GO BOND PROPOSITIONS BY ASSET TYPE</b>			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Passed</b>	<b>Failed</b>
Transportation Infrastructure	6	6	0
Public Safety	4	4	0
Parks and Recreation	4	4	0
Municipal Facilities	3	3	0
Housing	3	2	1
Libraries, Museums, & Cultural Facilities	3	3	0
Open Space/Watershed Protection	1	1	0
Health and Human Services	1	1	0
Drainage/Flood Control	1	1	0
Animal Care/Control	1	1	0

# Recent GO Bond Measures in Other Large Cities Cont.



## Amount and Source of Funds:

- Amount requested ranged widely
  - \$400 million bond for Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response in San Francisco
  - A total of \$596 million for five bond propositions in San Antonio
  - \$65 million for an affordable housing bond in Austin
- None of the cities proposed tax increases
  - In most cases, as outstanding bonds matured, the property tax level that supported them was used to pay the debt service on new bonds
  - In addition to collecting property taxes from new construction, Atlanta committed to implementing numerous cost saving initiatives identified by the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Waste and Efficiency in Government

# Recent GO Bond Measures in Other Large Cities Cont.



## **Election Results and Voter Thresholds:**

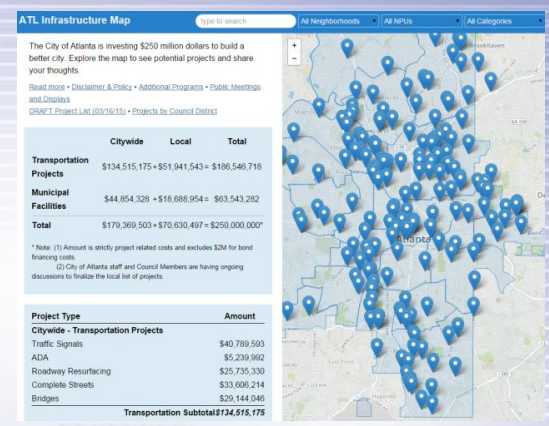
- 26 of 27 GO bond propositions passed
- Voter thresholds varied by state:
  - California: 2/3rds voter approval required for non-educational GO Bonds
  - Other states like Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas: majority
- Despite the majority threshold in GA, NC, and TX, 16 of 27 (59%) bond propositions passed with more than 2/3rds of voters' support
- The bond propositions that had the highest passage rates were related to:
  - transportation (5 of 6 passed with 2/3rds support or more),
  - municipal facilities (all 3 passed with 2/3rds support or more), and
  - public safety (3 of 4 passed with 2/3rds support or more)



# Recent GO Bond Measures in Other Large Cities Cont.

## Citizen Engagement:

- Citizen involvement and participation in the prioritization of projects is a critical component of successful bond measures
- Multiple methods were used in large cities to gather widespread citizen feedback on capital priorities:
  - San Francisco: 1) set aside \$195,000 for a Citizen’s General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee (CGOBOC); and 2) included \$12 million for a Community Opportunity Fund Program
  - Austin: began collecting input from citizens early through *Imagine Austin*, and used its community engagement portal *Speak up Austin* to solicit input and educate citizens about ongoing projects
  - San Antonio: used Community Bond Committees
  - Atlanta: created a website with an interactive map of proposed projects, and solicited feedback from citizens through DISQUS



### Huber Street

Resurfacing from Chattahoochee Avenue to Glidden Street

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**Endru Harpar** - 8 months ago  
The west midtown traffic is becoming insane. There have been too many new developments without any thought as to what happens when more people start coming into the area. We need new turn lanes, light timing, street widening, 2 ^ | v • Reply • Share

**Niky** - 6 months ago  
About time Huff Rd gets repaved, the pot holes are everywhere, additionally maybe widening the road especially near the intersection of Howell Mill Rd might alleviate some of the traffic that has started to become a problem due to the rapid growth of the Westside



# Conclusion

**In reviewing what other revenue measures local as well as larger cities across the country have pursued, we highlight the following:**

- Locally, general tax measures had a greater rate of success than special tax measures, but this may be due in part to the fact that general tax measures require a majority vote while special tax measures require a two-thirds vote to pass
- All of the larger cities we studied were able to propose GO bonds without raising property taxes above current levels; in most cases, as outstanding bonds matured, the property tax level which supported them was used to pay the debt service on the new bonds
- Citizen involvement and participation in the prioritization of projects for GO bonds is a critical component of successful bond measures
- Multiple creative methods were used in large cities to gather widespread citizen feedback on capital priorities