



DATE: June 1, 2017

TO: Transportation Authority of Marin Board of Commissioners

FROM: Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Review Polling Results on Renewal or Expansion of Local Transportation Sales Tax (Discussion) – Agenda No. 9b

RECOMMENDATION

Discussion Only.

Staff recommend the TAM Board review the topline results from the baseline transportation needs assessment public opinion study of likely Marin County voters conducted by Godbe Research. Note that Bryan Godbe will be presenting these results at the Board meeting.

BACKGROUND

As part of TAM's effort to gauge the public's priorities regarding transportation, several outreach efforts have been used over the past 2½ years. In June 2014, TAM conducted a poll of likely voters in the 2014 and 2016 election cycles to determine their priority transportation needs and willingness to consider a sales tax revenue measure. This information guided the development of further outreach, such as the Outreach Plan adopted by the TAM Board in April 2015 for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), efforts carried out through 2015.

As part of that RTP Outreach Plan, TAM engaged the public in an exercise of how they would recommend spending limited funds. This TAM outreach exercise yielded over 600 completed survey responses, and guided TAM in its selection of candidate projects to be included in MTC's Regional Transportation Plan. Aided by public workshops held in May and July of 2015, TAM captured priorities and submitted a pool of candidates into the RTP/SCS in November 2015, adjusted in June 2016 to meet new reduced revenue estimates from MTC.

Most recently, in September and October 2016, TAM engaged in an online survey vehicle through distribution over email, Facebook and Next Door, supported and in close coordination with our local cities and towns. With almost 3800 results, TAM has further data on priority transportation needs, for guiding the finalization of TAM's Strategic Vision Plan in Summer 2017.

DISCUSSION

In February 2017, the TAM Board authorized a baseline poll regarding transportation needs and priorities of approximately 700 likely voters. After a Request for Proposals, and interviews of potential polling firms, Godbe Research was selected as the polling firm and conducted the poll in May 2017. As is common practice now, the poll was conducted as a hybrid internet and telephone survey of voters rather than a telephone-only survey to counteract declining response rates to telephone surveys.

This scientifically based poll, weighted to reflect the likely voter universe, will provide the TAM Board with valuable information to help guide decisions when considering a sales tax renewal.

Poll results will be presented at the TAM Board meeting. The TAM Board will consider polling results when determining appropriate next steps in the process. Note that the TAM Board will determine in a related Board item whether to take the next step of forming an Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee and authorizing staff to manage the EPAC.

ATTACHMENT

None