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TO: Gary Graves and the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Emily Goodman and Ruth Bernstein, EMC Research
RE: Draft Sales Tax poll
DATE: January 23, 2016

The following is an overview of the draft poll questionnaire and methodology approach.

Research Goal The purpose of the poll is to evaluate potential voter support for a revenue measure to be placed on either the June OR November 2016 ballot by the County.

Overview The poll is designed to identify baseline (opinion today) and informed (opinion after more information is provided) support for three potential revenue measure options. In order to provide unbiased evaluation of each option, we recommend using a split sampling methodology whereby each sample hears only one of the revenue measure(s) options.

- “Sample A” will evaluate support for a general sales tax with an accompanying advisory measure directing funds to county services including transportation, housing, public safety and health care.
- “Sample B” will evaluate support for a general sales tax with an accompanying advisory measure directing funds for transportation improvements including BART, pothole repair, Caltrain improvements, bike and pedestrian safety and expressway improvements.
- “Sample C” will evaluate support for a special sales tax directed specifically to transportation improvements.

Survey structure The questionnaire follows a very standard format for testing a revenue measure.

- Questions 1-5 are general screening and warm-up questions.
- Questions 6-9 are the baseline tests of potential revenue measures. Each sample will only hear one of the options, not all of the questions. For the general tax measures, voters will hear the advisory measure first followed by the general sales tax question.
- In questions 7 and 9 we are testing an additional sub option. One version will include only transportation projects and an alternate version will include transit oriented development (“provide affordable homes near public transit”) in addition to the transportation projects. Respondents will hear only one or the other version. This methodology will allow us to

see if including housing in the ballot question has any impact on overall support.

- Questions 10 through 13 are general attitudinal and values questions that we have asked in the county before. We find these questions are valuable in understanding overall voter attitudes regarding taxes and we will be able to provide trend data to show how attitudes today compare with previous years.
- Questions 14-34 test voter support for the individual components of the potential measures. Samples B and C will hear about transportation specific projects, sample A will hear about transportation and additional projects that could be funded for the county.
- Questions 35-38 re-ask the ballot questions to see if support has changed after additional information.
- Questions 39-42 test voter reaction to potential opposition messaging.
- Questions 43-46 re-ask support for the measure(s) after hearing opposition messaging
- the survey finishes with a few demographic questions

Methodology

The poll will be a telephone survey of 1500 likely November 2016 voters in Santa Clara County. Our analysis will include a close look at the subsample of voters that are likely to vote in the June 2016 election to provide a comparison of the June and November electorates. The survey will be offered in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese and our sample will include both landline and cell phones.

Telephone Survey of Santa Clara County Likely November 2016 Voters

n=1500

English/Spanish/Vietnamese/Chinese

DRAFT 1/23/16

Hello, my name is _____, may I speak with **(NAME ON LIST)**.

Hello, my name is _____, and I'm conducting a survey for EMC Research to find out how people in Santa Clara County feel about some of the different issues facing them. We are not trying to sell anything, and are collecting this information on a scientific and completely confidential basis.

LANGUAGE OF INTERVIEW

1. English
2. Spanish
3. Vietnamese
4. Chinese

SPLIT SAMPLE TYPE

1. Sample A (general sales tax + advisory for general purpose), n=500
2. Sample B (general sales tax + advisory for transportation), n=500
3. Sample C (special sales tax for transportation), n=500

1. SEX (**Record from observation**)

1. Male
2. Female

2. Are you registered to vote in Santa Clara County?

1. Yes → CONTINUE
2. No → **TERMINATE**
3. (Don't Know/Refuse) → **TERMINATE**

3. I know it's a long way off, but what would you say are the chances that you will vote in the November 2016 General Election for President, Congress, and other offices and measures -- are you almost certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50/50, or do you think that you will not vote?

1. Almost Certain/(Definitely) → **Continue**
2. Probably → **Continue**
3. 50/50 Chance → **TERMINATE**
4. Will not vote/(Don't Know) → **TERMINATE**

4. Do you think things in Santa Clara County are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel that things are pretty seriously off on the wrong track?
 1. Right Direction
 2. Wrong Track
 3. (Don't Know)

5. What do you think is the most important problem facing Santa Clara County today?
(OPEN END, ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE)

Now I'd like to read you a/some measures that might be on the ballot in Santa Clara County this year.

6. **(SAMPLE A ONLY – General Advisory measure + general sales tax)**
The first measure reads:

Shall any new voter approved sales tax fund the following essential improvements:

- Transportation projects including the BART extension, pothole repair, Caltrain improvements, bike and pedestrian safety, and traffic relief on expressways
- Emergency services and public safety
- Job creation and economic development
- Housing for the homeless and low-income families
- Mental health and substance abuse services
- Improved access to specialty and emergency health care

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

7. **(SAMPLE B ONLY - transportation advisory measure + general sales tax)**

The first measure reads:

Shall any new voter approved sales tax fund the following essential improvements:

- Finish the BART extension to downtown San Jose, Santa Clara;
- Repair streets/fix potholes **(SAMPLE B1) in all 15 cities**
- Electrify, modernize Caltrain Rail service **(SAMPLE B1) from Gilroy to Palo Alto**
- Improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, especially near schools
- Relieve traffic on all 8 Expressways and Key Highway Interchanges;
- Enhance transit for seniors, students, low-income, and disabled
- **(SAMPLE B2 ONLY)** Provide affordable homes near public transit

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

8. **(SAMPLE A/B ONLY - both general sales tax measures)**

The second measure reads:

Shall the County of Santa Clara enact a 30-year, half-cent sales tax for general county purposes that includes annual public reports and a Citizen's Watchdog Committee to ensure the funds are expended properly and stay in Santa Clara County?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

9. **(SAMPLE C ONLY - transportation special tax)**

The measure reads:

To relieve traffic, fix potholes, improve safety, shall County of Santa Clara enact a 30-year, half-cent sales tax, maintaining Annual Audits and a Citizens Watchdog Committee to ensure accountability, to:

- Finish the BART extension to downtown San Jose, Santa Clara;
- Repair streets/fix potholes **(SAMPLE C1) in all 15 cities**
- Electrify, modernize Caltrain Rail service **(SAMPLE C1) from Gilroy to Palo Alto**
- Improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, especially near schools
- Relieve traffic on all 8 Expressways and Key Highway Interchanges;
- Enhance transit for seniors, students, low-income, and disabled
- **(SAMPLE C2 ONLY)** Provide affordable homes near public transit

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

For each of the following, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.

SCALE: 1. Strongly Agree 2. Somewhat Agree
 3. Somewhat Disagree 4. Strongly Disagree 5. (No Opinion/DK)

(RANDOMIZE)

10. Improving our local transportation system should be a top priority, even if it means raising taxes
11. Taxes are already too high, I would never vote for a tax increase no matter how it might be used
12. The County already has enough money, it is just not spent properly
13. I trust the County of Santa Clara to properly manage tax dollars

(END RANDOMIZE)

Now I'd like to read you some additional information about the proposed measure/s. After hearing each one, please tell me if it makes you much more likely to support the measure/s, somewhat more likely to support it/them, or if it makes no difference to you.

SCALE: 1. Much more likely to support 2. Somewhat more likely to support
 3. Makes no difference 4. (Don't know)
 5. (More likely to oppose)

(IF NECESSARY AFTER EACH: Does that make you much more likely to support the measure/s, somewhat more likely to support it/them, or does it make no difference to you?)

(BEFORE EACH): This/these measure/s will...

(Q14-22: FOR SAMPLE B/C – TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY & SPECIAL TAX) (RANDOMIZE)

14. Repair streets and fix potholes in all 15 cities
15. Electrify and modernize Caltrain from Gilroy to Palo Alto
16. Relieve traffic on all 8 Expressways and Key Highway Interchanges
17. Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety, especially near schools
18. Enhance transit and emergency services for seniors, low income, and the disabled
19. Finish the BART extension to downtown San Jose and Santa Clara
20. Provide affordable homes near public transit
21. Provide affordable homes near jobs to decrease commute times
22. Fund a countywide street resurfacing initiative to repair streets, pot-holes and sidewalks and improve landscaping in neighborhood corridors.

(Q23-32 SAMPLE A – GENERAL ADVISORY MEASURE) (RANDOMIZE)

23. Provide transportation improvements including the BART extension, pothole repair, Caltrain improvements, bike and pedestrian safety, and traffic relief on expressways
24. Provide housing for the homeless with supportive services to help people get back on their feet
25. Provide affordable homes for low-income families
26. Retrofit and modernize the county animal shelter to improve animal care
27. Improve access to specialty healthcare at Valley Medical Center
28. Expand access to mental health and substance abuse services
29. Improve trauma and emergency services at Valley Medical Center
30. Support job creation and economic development to avoid another downturn in the area
31. Maintain county parks and open spaces
32. Provide improved emergency services and public safety

(Q33-34 SAMPLE A – GENERAL ADVISORY MEASURE) (RANDOMIZE)

33. Make it safer to walk, bike, drive or take transit around the area with better bike lanes, improved trails, smooth pavement, new crosswalks, and pedestrian countdown signals.
34. Finally make it possible to extend BART service to San Jose and Santa Clara. This will not only connect Santa Clara County residents to the greater Bay Area region, but create jobs, enhance community, and eliminate tons of greenhouse gases per year.

Now that you've heard more information, I'd like to read you both/the measure(s) again.

35. (SAMPLE A ONLY – General Advisory measure + general sales tax)

Shall any new voter approved sales tax fund the following essential Improvements:

- Transportation projects including the BART extension, pothole repair, Caltrain improvements, bike and pedestrian safety, and traffic relief on expressways
- Emergency services and public safety
- Job creation and economic development
- Housing for the homeless and low-income families
- Mental health and substance abuse services
- Improved access to specialty and emergency health care

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

36. **(SAMPLE B ONLY - transportation advisory measure + general sales tax)**

Shall any new voter approved sales tax fund the following essential improvements:

- Finish the BART extension to downtown San Jose, Santa Clara;
- Repair streets/fix potholes **(SAMPLE B1) in all 15 cities**
- Electrify, modernize Caltrain Rail service **(SAMPLE B1) from Gilroy to Palo Alto**
- Improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, especially near schools
- Relieve traffic on all 8 Expressways and Key Highway Interchanges;
- Enhance transit for seniors, students, low-income, and disabled
- **(SAMPLE B2 ONLY)** Provide affordable homes near public transit

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

37. **(SAMPLE A/B - both general sales tax measures)**

Shall the County of Santa Clara enact a 30-year, half-cent sales tax for general county purposes that includes annual public reports and a Citizen's Watchdog Committee to ensure the funds are expended properly and stay in Santa Clara County?

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

38. **(SAMPLE C ONLY - transportation special tax)**

To relieve traffic, fix potholes, improve safety, shall County of Santa Clara enact a 30-year, half-cent sales tax, maintaining Annual Audits and a Citizens Watchdog Committee to ensure accountability, to:

- Finish the BART extension to downtown San Jose, Santa Clara;
- Repair streets/fix potholes **(SAMPLE C1) in all 15 cities**
- Electrify, modernize Caltrain Rail service **(SAMPLE C1) from Gilroy to Palo Alto**
- Improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, especially near schools
- Relieve traffic on all 8 Expressways and Key Highway Interchanges;
- Enhance transit for seniors, students, low-income, and disabled
- **(SAMPLE C2 ONLY)** Provide affordable homes near public transit

If the election were held today, would you vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? **(IF UNDECIDED):** Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

Now, I'm going to read you some things people have said to oppose the measures. After hearing each one, please tell me if it makes you much more likely to oppose the measures, somewhat more likely to oppose them, or if it makes no difference to you.

Scale: 1. Much more likely to oppose 2. Somewhat more likely to oppose
 3. Makes no difference 4. (Don't know)
 5. (More likely to support)

(IF NECESSARY AFTER EACH: Does that make you much more likely to oppose the measures, somewhat more likely to oppose them, or does it make no difference to you?)

(RANDOMIZE)

39. Taxes in our community are already too high and this just isn't the time for this measure. Rather than raising taxes the County should stop waste, eliminate unnecessary programs and improve efficiencies.
40. **(SAMPLE A/B)** Funds from this measure would go into the County's general fund which means the County can spend the revenue on whatever it wants. We can't trust that the money will be spent on things that really matter.
41. This measure will just end up inflating the salaries and pensions of local public employees.
42. This measure is nothing more than a backroom deal between the county and big tech companies. We can't trust that this measure is within the best interest of County taxpayers.

(END RANDOMIZE)

Now, given all that you've heard...

43. **(SAMPLE A)** Would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that would direct new sales tax revenue to essential county services?

(IF UNDECIDED): Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

44. **(SAMPLE B)** Would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that would direct new sales tax revenue to transportation improvements in the county?

(IF UNDECIDED): Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

45. **(SAMPLE A & B)** And would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that would enact a 30-year, half-cent sales tax in Santa Clara County?

(IF UNDECIDED): Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

46. **(SAMPLE C)** Would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that would enact a 30-year, half-cent sales tax in Santa Clara County for transportation improvements?

(IF UNDECIDED): Are you leaning toward voting yes or no?

1. Yes
2. (Lean yes)
3. No
4. (Lean no)
5. (Undecided/don't know)

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only.

47. Do you rent or own your home or apartment?
1. Rent/other
 2. Own/buying
 3. (Don't know/Refused)
48. Would you consider yourself to be Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, White, Chinese, Vietnamese, other Asian, bi-racial, multi-racial or something else?
1. Hispanic/Latino
 2. Black/African-American
 3. White
 4. Chinese
 5. Vietnamese
 6. Other Asian
 7. Bi-racial
 8. Multi-racial
 9. Something else
 10. (Refused)
49. In what year were you born? **(Do not read categories; code as appropriate)**
1. 1941 or earlier
 2. 1942-1946
 3. 1947-1951
 4. 1952-1956
 5. 1957-1961
 6. 1962-1966
 7. 1967-1971
 8. 1972-1976
 9. 1977-1981
 10. 1982-1986
 11. 1987-1991
 12. 1992-1998
 13. (Refused)

THANK YOU!