



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joe Milazzo II, PE
919.664.7065
joe@letsgetmoving.org

Regional Transportation Alliance initial transit poll released

- >> Strong support for enhanced transit options in the Triangle region
- >> Local option sales taxes more popular than property taxes to fund enhanced transit

The Regional Transportation Alliance (RTA) business leadership group released its first transit poll since the approval of long-range transit plans by our region's two metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) earlier this year.

"Triangle voters support all modes of transit, and they would be far more likely to vote for sales taxes than additional property taxes to expand transit options for our rapidly growing region," noted Joe Milazzo II, RTA Executive Director. "More than 50 percent of registered voters would vote for a half-cent local option sales tax to improve public transportation in the Triangle – a promising level of initial support given the current focus on the economy here and elsewhere. On the other hand, a majority of voters in Durham, Orange, and Wake counties would oppose more property taxes to expand transit."

"More than 60 percent of voters support a regional transit planning approach, and a majority of voters have a favorable opinion of the efforts of Triangle Transit, our area's regional transit agency. More than two-thirds of respondents report that their local community is on the right track overall, which is heartening given the economy."

Milazzo noted that voters supported light rail, buses, or a combination system, along with dedicated lanes for circulators in downtown areas. All options exhibited greater than 60 percent support, with several options garnering more than 70 percent approval. Voters identified travel to Research Triangle Park as their highest priority, with travel between counties also important to many respondents.

Survey participants identified the concerns of whether or not transit would benefit them, along with the time required to implement new mobility solutions, as the biggest drawbacks for new or expanded public transportation. Both of these concerns highlight the need to develop future transit implementation packages that are meaningful to the community and that can provide relief in the short- as well as long-term.

1,006 registered voters in Durham, Orange, and Wake counties were surveyed by live interviewers from March 7-11, 2009. The margin of error is +/- 3.08 percent. Fallon Research supervised the poll. The RTA will be conducting a series of community feedback initiatives during the upcoming months as the region explores transit alternatives. For more information on this poll or on transit in the Triangle, please visit the Regional Transportation Alliance Web site: www.letsgetmoving.org.

About the Regional Transportation Alliance

The Regional Transportation Alliance business leadership group focuses on relieving traffic congestion and enhancing mobility in the extended Triangle region. Spearheaded by more than 100 companies and anchored by more than 20 chambers of commerce in the region, the Alliance identifies, promotes, and accelerates transportation policies and solutions to ensure economic vitality and preserve quality of life.

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