

Coconino County Transportation Study: 2013



January 14, 2014

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ✓ 1200 likely Coconino County voters were surveyed: 400 likely voters living in Flagstaff, 400 living in the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning District and living outside Flagstaff, 400 throughout the rest of Coconino County. Likely voters are defined as registered voters who participated in the 2012 and 2010 General Elections. Voter names were matched with public databases to insure access to current phone numbers. Survey interviews took place between October 23 and November 12, 2013. Regional data is accurate at a margin of error of +/- 5 percent, with a 95 percent confidence level. County level data is accurate at a margin of error of +/- 2.9 percent, with a 95 percent confidence level.
- ✓ County voters are divided in their opinion of Coconino County government, with Flagstaff and Flagstaff area residents holding County government in higher esteem than voters living in other parts of the County. While voters from outside the Flagstaff area are less likely to have a positive impression of County government, they are no more likely than voters living in and around Flagstaff to have a negative impression of the County.
- ✓ Most voters living in Flagstaff and immediately adjacent areas are able to identify whether roads are maintained by Coconino County, the state of Arizona or the City of Flagstaff. Moving further away from the Flagstaff area, there is some confusion as to whether roads are maintained by the County or State.
- ✓ About three quarters of likely voters in each region of the County agree that County roads are in excellent or good shape. Eighteen percent of County voters say County roads are either in poor shape or impassable. Although most agree that the roads provide a smooth ride, half of likely voters (50%) across the County say too many potholes exist in the roads.
- ✓ More than half of likely voters in all three regions of the County say the County does an excellent or good job maintaining County roads. Two in five voters (40%) say the County only does a fair to poor job of maintaining County roads.
- ✓ Most voters know very little to nothing about how road maintenance is funded in Coconino County. When informed that the County projects a deficit of \$100 million over the next ten years if current levels of road maintenance and repair are maintained, a majority of voters across the County (55%) support increasing the County sales tax to maintain the current level of road service. Flagstaff voters are more supportive of this proposal (61%), than voters living just outside of Flagstaff (50%) or in other parts of the County (48%). There is more support than opposition to a tax increase in all areas of the County.
- ✓ Sixty percent of voters across the County support increasing the sales tax by one quarter cent for every dollar spent in the County to maintain the current level of road service. Support for a quarter cent increase ranges from 65 percent in

Flagstaff to 54 percent immediately outside the Flagstaff-area. Support for a tax increase drops when the proposed amount is raised to one half cent for every dollar spent. The County is statistically divided over raising sales tax one half cent (45% support, 48% oppose). In areas other than Flagstaff, however, a slight majority of voters oppose a one-half cent sales tax increase (52% opposed in the Flagstaff-area, 51% opposed in other parts of the County). Opposition to a sales tax increase solidifies when the proposed amount is raised to three-quarters of a cent on every dollar spent in the County.

- ✓ Messaging around the need for snow plowing on County roads to get workers to the workplace and children safely to school resonates with a large proportion of County voters (70%).
- ✓ A similar proportion of voters (69%) are more likely to support a tax increase when faced with a choice between maintaining roads now or paying more for road repairs later.
- ✓ 59 percent of voters say they are more likely to support a tax increase knowing that the County and the City of Flagstaff are coordinating their transportation plans.
- ✓ Concern for poorly maintained roads leading to car repairs resonates with slightly more than half of likely voters (57%).
- ✓ County voters share some concerns about a sales tax increase. About half of likely voters (54%) say they are less likely to support a tax increase if the County is not effectively spending the money it now has. Half also express concern over taxes being too high (51%). Preference for using money for alternative transportation rather than road repair resonates with only 43 percent of County voters, mostly with likely voters living in Flagstaff.
- ✓ Likely voters in Flagstaff were asked about levels of support for repairing existing city streets and bike lanes, and building new city streets and bike lanes. Voters express greater support for repairing current infrastructure (55%) rather than building new infrastructure (50%).
- ✓ More than half of Flagstaff voters (57%) indicate that knowing Flagstaff was considering asking voters to also support a transportation sales tax increase did not affect their support for the County proposal. One in five Flagstaff voters (21%) said this information would make them less likely to support a County proposal.