



## Center for Transportation Excellence

November 5, 2003

Contact: Stephanie Vance  
(202) 244-2405 (phone)  
(202) 528-0705 (cell)

### **“Voters from Maine to Houston, Texas Support Public Transportation and Transportation Choices”**

The Center for Transportation Excellence, an information clearinghouse on transportation-related issues, found that yesterday’s elections reflect overwhelming support for transportation options and investments around the country. In each case, successful initiatives recognized the value of transit and public transportation options to communities.

“Clearly, citizens favor more financial and policy support for transportation options,” said Stephanie Vance, CFTE’s program manager. “Of the initiatives we followed, all asked voters to support transportation choices in their community. Most important, over 75% of these efforts passed. That speaks volumes as to the depth and breadth of support around the country for increasing investments in transportation infrastructure.”

The Center’s analysis found a number of interesting points:

- Overall, voters approved approximately \$1 billion in funding, which will leverage 100’s of millions of dollars in state and federal funding.
- Voter support for transportation investments ran the gamut: from bus service in Colorado to light rail in Houston to roads, bridges, railroads and bike and pedestrian walkways in Maine. Voters embraced proposals that offered a range of transportation solutions.
- From sales taxes to bond measures, voters tended to support measures that clearly tied realistic benefits to proposed revenue increases. In Lone Tree, CO, for example, voters recognized the benefits of being annexed to Denver’s wildly successful regional transportation service by supporting a small increase in the local sales tax to achieve that goal. Voters in Kansas City, MO supported the Regional Transit Authority’s realistic plan to increase the sales tax slightly in return for eliminating deficits and maintaining and improving service.
- Citizens in communities that have already made commitments to positive transit choices, such as light-rail, will rally to support those long-term investments. In Houston, TX, voters fought back a well-financed campaign to reject rail expansion, and approved a \$640 million bond measure to help finance Houston Metro’s ambitious \$7.5 billion regional transit plan.

“Supporters of transportation choices should rejoice in the outcomes of these elections. It is clear that when questions of investing in the transportation infrastructure are taken directly to the voters, voters will support those investments,” said Vance. “Transportation advocates from around the country should be looking to leverage the momentum behind these elections to offer more quality transportation initiatives in 2004.”

CFTE’s analysis of the elections, including complete results and links to local stories, can be found online at <http://www.cfte.org/success/2003elections.asp>. The Center for Transportation Excellence is a non-partisan policy research center created to serve the needs of communities and transportation organizations nationwide. The purpose of the center and this website is to provide research materials, strategies and other forms of support on the benefits of public transportation. More information at [www.cfte.org](http://www.cfte.org)

##