



**GODBE RESEARCH**  
Gain Insight

## **CITY OF RICHMOND**

### 2013 Revenue Measure Feasibility Survey

#### Topline Report

n=602 / 2 ballot test splits

20-minutes

Likely November 2014 Voters

English & Spanish

January 2, 2014

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## **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

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Godbe Research was commissioned to conduct a survey to assess potential voter support for a bond measure within the City of Richmond. The survey was also designed to: (a) gauge satisfaction with City services and financial management of public funds; (b) identify the tax type and amount at which voters will support the measure; (c) prioritize projects and programs to be funded with the proceeds; and, (d) test the influence of supporting and opposing arguments on potential voter support.

### Survey Methodology

Godbe Research conducted a total of 602 interviews representing 25,549 registered likely November 2014 voters in the City of Richmond. This includes a subsample of 301 likely Vote By Mail Homeowners. The error rate is plus or minus 5.6% for each of the samples. Interviews were conducted from December 13 through December 22, 2013. The average interview time was approximately 20 minutes.

Once collected, the sample of voters was compared with the respective voter population in the City to examine possible differences between the demographics of the sample and the actual universe of voters. The data were weighted to correct these differences, and the results presented are representative of the voter characteristics of City of Richmond in terms of gender, age, political party type, and election timing.

### Questionnaire Methodology

To avoid the problem of systematic position bias, where the order in which a series of questions is asked systematically influences the answers, several questions in the survey were randomized such that the respondents were not consistently asked the questions in the same order. The series of items in Questions 5, 6, and 7 were randomized to avoid such position bias. Further, Questions 6 and 7 were rotated so that the sample was balanced in whether they first heard arguments in favor of or opposed to the ballot measure.

### Mean Scores and Rounding

In addition to the percentage breakdown of responses to each question, results for the questions relating to features of the measure (Q5), and the positive and negative arguments (Q6 and Q7) include mean scores. For example, to derive the overall importance of a feature of the measure (Q5), a number value is first assigned to each response category (in this case, "Much More Likely" = +2, "Somewhat More Likely" = +1, "No Effect" = 0, "Somewhat Less Likely" = -1, and "Much Less Likely" = -2). The number values that correspond to respondents' answers were then averaged to produce a final score that reflects the overall importance of that issue. The resulting mean score makes the interpretation of the data considerably easier. Responses of "Don't Know" (DK/NA) were not included in the calculations of the mean scores for any question.

Conventional rounding rules are used in this report (.5 or above was rounded up, and .4 or below was rounded down). As a result, the percentages may not add up to 100 percent.

## **RICHMOND CLIMATE**

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### **[ENTIRE SAMPLE]**

1. Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of Richmond is doing to provide city services? Is that very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?

Very satisfied	23.1%
Somewhat satisfied	45.7%
Somewhat dissatisfied	12.9%
Very dissatisfied	11.8%
DK/NA	6.5%

2. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the job the City of Richmond is doing to effectively manage and spend taxpayer dollars and public funds? Is that very [favorable/unfavorable] or somewhat [favorable/unfavorable]?

Very favorable	13.4%
Somewhat favorable	34.1%
Somewhat unfavorable	19.9%
Very unfavorable	16.7%
DK/NA	16.0%

## UNINFORMED BALLOT TESTS: SALES TAX & PROPERTY OWNER ASSESSMENT

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In the future, voters in Richmond may be asked to vote on local ballot measures for essential city services and facilities. Let me read you the description of one potential measure. Here's the first one:

### [SAMPLE A – PERMANENT ABSENTEE HOMEOWNERS ONLY]

3. To improve residential streets in all neighborhoods and enhance road safety citywide by
- fixing potholes; sealing cracks; maintaining, repairing and repaving streets;
  - improving sidewalks, handicap ramps, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes; and
  - maintaining road markings and signage,

shall the City of Richmond enact a \$300 assessment, that can't be taken by the State, used exclusively for street improvements, with citizens' oversight, annual independent audits, with all funds spent only in Richmond? [71 words]

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

	Likely Vote By Mail Homeowners
Definitely Yes	27.4%
Probably Yes	21.9%
Probably No	12.4%
Definitely No	29.9%
DK/NA	8.4%

**[SAMPLE B – LIKELY VOTERS]**

4. To improve our quality of life and maintain and enhance city services and facilities, including:

- neighborhood police patrols;
- fixing potholes, streets, sidewalks and street lights;
- crime and gang prevention;
- fire and emergency response;
- library, park and recreation for youth and seniors; and
- other city services,

shall the City of Richmond enact a half cent sales tax, that can't be taken by the State, with citizens' oversight, annual independent audits, with all funds spent only in Richmond? [77 words]

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

	November 2014
Definitely Yes	52.7%
Probably Yes	23.1%
Probably No	6.6%
Definitely No	11.5%
DK/NA	6.2%

## FEATURES OF THE MEASURE

### [RETURN TO ENTIRE SAMPLE]

5. Now, let's talk about the City services and facilities that would be maintained and enhanced with the funds generated by the measure. For each of the following statements, please tell me if it would make you more or less likely to vote for the measure.

If you heard the money would be used to \_\_\_\_\_, would you be more or less likely to vote for the measure? Is that much (more/less) likely or somewhat (more/less) likely?

	Mean Score	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	No Effect	Somewhat Less Likely	Much Less Likely	DK/NA
A. Fix potholes; seal cracks; maintain, repair and repave streets	1.03	47.1%	29.0%	8.1%	6.8%	7.3%	1.6%
B. Improve sidewalks, handicap ramps, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes	.79	40.3%	26.6%	11.0%	8.6%	10.8%	2.7%
C. Maintain road markings and signage	.70	36.8%	27.2%	11.3%	13.1%	9.4%	2.1%
D. Fix potholes, streets, sidewalks and street lights	1.10	50.4%	26.5%	8.9%	5.1%	7.3%	1.8%
E. Maintain and repair local streets and roads	1.00	45.0%	30.6%	8.0%	5.5%	8.8%	2.1%
F. Keep streets from falling into disrepair	.98	44.0%	30.4%	9.6%	5.7%	8.3%	2.1%
G. Repair 125 miles of roads in Richmond	.78	36.4%	29.3%	12.5%	7.5%	9.8%	4.4%
H. Fund the current \$114 million backlog of road work	.76	37.8%	26.2%	12.2%	8.2%	10.8%	4.9%
I. Fund \$7 million ongoing road maintenance per year	.58	34.8%	23.2%	10.5%	12.0%	13.2%	6.3%
J. Repair and maintain major roads	.97	45.4%	27.8%	8.6%	7.0%	8.7%	2.6%
K. Fix streets in every neighborhood, including yours	1.07	52.8%	22.3%	8.2%	5.7%	8.8%	2.1%
L. Repair drainage to prevent flooding	.94	42.2%	29.1%	9.7%	8.1%	7.5%	3.3%
M. Resurface streets throughout the City	.90	40.6%	30.5%	10.6%	6.7%	8.9%	2.7%
N. Improve the quality of pavement throughout the City	.86	39.0%	32.4%	8.6%	7.9%	9.5%	2.6%
O. Improve and beautify with public art the entrances to the City	.23	23.7%	25.3%	15.4%	15.3%	17.3%	2.9%
Sample B – Likely Voters Only							
P. Provide library, park and recreation programs for youth and seniors	1.14	46.3%	30.0%	10.9%	5.8%	3.5%	3.5%
Q. Increase neighborhood police patrols to improve resident safety	1.30	58.1%	23.8%	6.2%	3.5%	5.4%	3.1%

Sample B – Likely Voters Only continued	Mean Score	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	No Effect	Somewhat Less Likely	Much Less Likely	DK/NA
R. Enhance rapid police and fire response times	1.39	60.1%	24.5%	7.0%	2.1%	3.7%	2.6%
S. Enhance anti-gang and youth violence prevention efforts	1.27	54.3%	27.2%	6.8%	4.8%	4.0%	3.0%
T. Maintain recreation programs to keep kids off the streets and out of gangs and drugs	1.41	63.1%	21.5%	7.4%	3.0%	3.0%	2.1%
U. Maintain neighborhood services, including graffiti removal and vandalism prevention	1.00	42.0%	32.8%	9.8%	6.6%	6.3%	2.5%
V. Maintain library hours, services and programs	1.18	53.4%	23.0%	10.3%	4.7%	5.3%	3.3%

Computation of Mean Scores:

“Much More Likely” = +2, “Somewhat More Likely” = +1, “No Effect” = 0, “Somewhat Less Likely” = -1, and “Much Less Likely” = -2.

## SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

### [ENTIRE SAMPLE]

6. During the next several months, voters will hear arguments from supporters in favor of the measure we have been discussing. As I read each of the arguments for the measure, please tell me if you would be much more likely or somewhat more likely to vote “YES” on the measure, given the argument.

Here’s the (first/next) \_\_\_\_\_. Does hearing this make you much more likely or somewhat more likely to vote “YES” – or does it have no effect on your opinion?

	Mean Score	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	No Effect	DK/NA
A. The City of Richmond has done a good job working with existing, revenue and bond funds. Now we need this measure to finish the job	.97	34.6%	25.0%	37.0%	3.4%
B. Maintenance of many streets has been deferred for years and if the streets are not repaired quickly, it will cost even more in years to come	1.12	43.2%	23.5%	31.0%	2.3%
C. If the measure is approved, the streets that are in worst shape will be fixed first, and all neighborhood streets will be repaired within 3 years	1.20	47.4%	22.7%	28.1%	1.8%
D. Street repairs will improve road safety for cars, pedestrians and bicycles	1.10	40.2%	27.2%	30.5%	2.1%
E. The measure will give Richmond local control over local funds for local needs. No funds can be taken by the state	1.23	48.7%	20.2%	26.6%	4.4%
F. The City has been very fiscally responsible, balancing budgets during the recession, but State take-aways over a 2 year period, have taken more than \$4 million dollars from Richmond. We need an additional, reliable source of local revenue to prevent severe cuts to essential services	1.06	38.3%	24.2%	32.3%	5.1%
G. Upgraded streets, roads and neighborhood safety funded by this measure is necessary to enhance our quality of life and improve local property values	1.12	41.9%	25.5%	30.4%	2.2%
H. Richmond’s streets, sidewalks and public facilities will continue to deteriorate and fall into disrepair. It is important to fix these streets, sidewalks and public facilities now so that they do not deteriorate further or cost even more to fix	1.18	46.0%	23.3%	28.6%	2.1%
I. The measure requires independent citizen oversight, mandatory financial audits, and yearly reports to the community to ensure that all funds are spent as promised	1.19	46.6%	22.5%	28.0%	2.8%

Sample B – Likely Voters Only	Mean Score	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	No Effect	DK/NA
J. All residents, businesses, and visitors from outside Richmond will pay their fair share to fund City services and maintain City streets and roads; the responsibility won't fall solely on homeowners	1.29	48.9%	25.1%	21.4%	4.7%
K. The measure will improve lighting, safety and public use of parks, to provide safe places to play and keep kids out of trouble	1.30	48.1%	28.4%	19.1%	4.5%
L. The measure will improve our neighborhood cleanliness and safety	1.23	46.3%	24.7%	24.6%	4.3%
M. The measure will provide programs for children and teens that keep them off the streets and out of trouble	1.34	50.4%	28.7%	17.3%	3.6%
N. This measure is needed to improve current levels of public safety and police services, including neighborhood patrols, and crime and gang prevention programs	1.36	53.6%	25.2%	18.3%	2.8%
O. Groceries and medicine are not taxed	1.32	54.1%	19.6%	23.4%	2.9%
P. Maintaining vital city services and fixing potholes will cost the average resident just 13 cents a day	1.16	42.0%	27.2%	26.8%	4.0%

Computation of Mean Scores:

"Much More Likely" = +2, "Somewhat More Likely" = +1, "No Effect" = 0.

## OPPOSING STATEMENTS

### [ENTIRE SAMPLE]

7. During the next several months, voters will hear arguments from opponents against the measure we have been discussing. As I read each of the arguments against the measure, please tell me if you would be much more likely or somewhat more likely to vote “NO” on the measure, given the argument.

Here’s the (first/next): \_\_\_\_\_. Does hearing this make you much more likely or somewhat more likely to vote “NO” on the measure – or does it have no effect on your opinion?

	Mean Score	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	No Effect	DK/NA
A. The economic recovery is very fragile, now is not the right time to raise taxes	.72	26.3%	18.0%	54.3%	1.5%
B. The City Council is responsible for the current problems, they can’t be trusted to manage the funds raised by this measure	.81	28.2%	19.6%	45.6%	6.6%
C. The City wouldn’t need this measure if employee salaries and pensions were not out of control	.72	24.3%	18.0%	49.9%	7.8%
D. The State just increased sales and income taxes, and the School District has imposed over a billion dollars of property taxes, and wants even more. We can’t afford this new tax too	.81	29.2%	20.0%	47.5%	3.4%
Sample B – Likely Voters Only					
E. There are no rules that direct the spending of these tax dollars, and no guarantee that the funds will be spent where they are most needed	.91	31.9%	24.0%	40.4%	3.7%
F. Increasing the sales tax in today’s economy will drive shoppers out of Richmond and hurt local businesses	.69	24.8%	16.3%	54.3%	4.6%
G. If the sales tax measure passes, sales tax in Richmond will be one of the highest in Contra Costa County	.83	29.6%	21.8%	46.1%	2.6%

Computation of Mean Scores:  
 “Much More Likely” = +2, “Somewhat More Likely” = +1, “No Effect” = 0.

## UNINFORMED BALLOT TESTS: SALES TAX & PROPERTY OWNER ASSESSMENT, & SALES TAX THRESHOLD

Now that you have heard more about the measure, let me read you the summaries again:

### [SAMPLE A – PERMANENT ABSENTEE HOMEOWNERS ONLY]

8. To improve residential streets in all neighborhoods and enhance road safety citywide by

- fixing potholes; sealing cracks; maintaining, repairing and repaving streets;
- improving sidewalks, handicap ramps, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes; and
- maintaining road markings and signage,

shall the City of Richmond enact a \$300 assessment, that can't be taken by the State, used exclusively for street improvements, with citizens' oversight, annual independent audits, with all funds spent only in Richmond? [71 words]

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

	Likely Vote By Mail Homeowners
Definitely Yes	31.3%
Probably Yes	17.0%
Probably No	13.3%
Definitely No	32.7%
DK/NA	5.8%

9. Right now, the exact tax rate has not been decided improve residential streets in all neighborhoods and enhance road safety citywide by fixing potholes; sealing cracks; maintaining, repairing and repaving streets; improving sidewalks, handicap ramps, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes; and maintaining road markings and signage.

If you heard that the annual property tax for an average household would increase by \_\_\_\_\_ per year, would you vote yes or no on this ballot measure? Is that definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

Likely Vote By Mail Homeowners	Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Probably No	Definitely No	DK/NA
A. \$300 per year	20.2%	15.6%	18.4%	40.3%	5.5%
B. \$250 per year	24.5%	15.0%	16.8%	40.6%	3.2%
C. \$200 per year	27.3%	17.3%	16.4%	35.3%	3.7%
D. \$150 per year	34.9%	20.3%	10.1%	32.0%	2.6%

**[SAMPLE B – LIKELY VOTERS]**

10. To improve our quality of life and maintain and enhance city services and facilities, including:

- neighborhood police patrols;
- fixing potholes, streets, sidewalks and street lights;
- crime and gang prevention;
- fire and emergency response;
- library, park and recreation for youth and seniors; and
- other city services,

shall the City of Richmond enact a half cent sales tax, that can't be taken by the State, with citizens' oversight, annual independent audits, with all funds spent only in Richmond? [77 words]

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

	November 2014
Definitely Yes	47.4%
Probably Yes	26.9%
Probably No	8.8%
Definitely No	11.9%
DK/NA	5.0%

11. [If Q10=Probably yes, Probably no, Definitely no, or DK/NA, ask:] Instead of the half cent sales tax rate we have been discussing, the City may place a one-quarter cent sales tax on the ballot to maintain and improve neighborhood police patrols; fix potholes, streets, sidewalks and street lights; crime and gang prevention; fire and emergency response.

If the election were held today for this measure instead of the other measure, would you vote yes or no on this measure? Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?

	November 2014
Definitely Yes	56.5%
Probably Yes	17.4%
Probably No	6.0%
Definitely No	13.9%
DK/NA	6.2%

## DEMOGRAPHICS

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Now, just a few background questions for comparison purposes.

A. Do any children under the age of 18 live in your household?

Yes	26.4%
No	72.5%
DK/NA	1.2%

Those are all the questions I have for you. Thank you very much for participating.

B. Respondent's Gender [Recorded from voice]

Male	42.8%
Female	57.2%

### Information From Voter File

All information is included in voter registration records, and these items will not be asked during interviews.

C. Age

18 to 29	7.9%
30 to 39	10.7%
40 to 49	15.3%
50 to 64	35.8%
65 and over	30.2%

D. Ethnic Surname

African American	31.7%
Hispanic	16.7%
Italian	1.5%
Jewish	1.5%
Japanese	.8%
Chinese	.7%

### E. Homeownership Status

Owner	71.4%
Renter	28.6%

### F. Phone Type

Cell phone	23.5%
Landline	76.5%

### G. Individual Party

Democrat	71.9%
Republican	8.4%
Other	4.0%
DTS	15.8%

### H. Household Party Type

Democrat (1)	41.3%
Democrat (2+)	23.0%
Republican (1)	3.9%
Republican (2+)	2.1%
Other (1)	11.6%
Other (2+)	3.4%
Democrat & Republican	2.9%
Democrat & Other	10.2%
Republican & Other	1.2%
Mixed	.5%

### I. Registration Date

2009 to 2012	19.6%
2005 to 2008	26.4%
2001 to 2004	15.4%
1997 to 2000	8.9%

1993 to 1996	6.3%
1981 to 1992	11.5%
1980 or before	11.9%

#### J. Voting History

	No	Poll	Mail
June 2006	55.5%	24.7%	19.8%
November 2006	34.4%	36.8%	28.8%
November 2007	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
February 2008	27.7%	39.1%	33.2%
June 2008	55.1%	18.1%	26.8%
November 2008	7.1%	51.2%	41.8%
May 2009	58.9%	16.4%	24.8%
November 2009	99.5%	.1%	.3%
June 2010	47.3%	23.7%	29.0%
November 2010	4.8%	47.7%	47.6%
June 2012	46.4%	22.6%	31.1%
November 2012	7.8%	43.7%	48.5%

#### K. Times Voted in Past Elections

1 of 11	.3%
2 of 11	7.1%
3 of 11	7.1%
4 of 11	12.8%
5 of 11	9.5%
6 of 11	13.2%
7 of 11	9.1%
8 of 11	10.9%
9 of 11	9.8%
10 of 11	20.2%
11 of 11	.1%

#### L. Times Voted Absentee

0 of 11	35.9%
1 of 11	12.0%
2 of 11	6.0%
3 of 11	7.7%
4 of 11	5.5%
5 of 11	4.4%
6 of 11	5.1%
7 of 11	3.6%
8 of 11	4.3%
9 of 11	4.8%
10 of 11	10.6%
11 of 11	.1%

#### M. Permanent Absentee Voter

Yes	49.6%
No	50.4%

#### N. Likely Absentee Voter

Yes	54.6%
No	45.4%

#### Language

English	91.1%
Spanish	8.9%