How we won in St. Louis

Third Time’s the Charm: St. Louis County’s Initiative to Pass a Transit Tax

Rail~Volution 2010
Budget

- $300,000 – CMT Reserves/operating budget
- $100,000 – St. Clair County Transit District
- $25,000 – Miscellaneous Donations
- $100,000 – in kind, phoning, door-to-door, website, volunteer coordination, CMT staff time (estimate)
The Challenge

- Overcome negative perceptions of Metro
- Establish need to resume service cuts
- Establish need to expand the system
Campaign Strategy

- Broad-based campaign committee
- Business community support
- Coalition building
- Targeted messaging
- Sufficient campaign budget
- Research and polling
- Follow keys to success
- Two-phase campaign: Education & Advocacy
What CMT Did
Organized the Education Campaign

- Organized Steering Committee
- Identification of champions—community and business leaders
  - Endorsements
- Focus on transit’s role in community, not Metro specifically
- Transit Alliance
- Student Campaign
- Volunteer phoning and canvassing
- Assisted with Fundraising
Education Campaign

- Financial Contribution to Advance St. Louis -- $50k cash and in-kind
- Create educational website
- Develop Speakers’ Bureau and collateral
- Design winning messaging strategy
  - Television
  - Radio
  - Outdoor
  - Direct Mail
- Implement Social Media
- Stay on message
Keys to Success

Get on Message and Stay on Message
TRANSIT.

SOME OF US RIDE IT.

ALL OF US NEED IT.

CITIZENS FOR MODERN TRANSIT
cmt-stl.org
Radio
Radio
Long-term Vision

- Educational Website
SOME OF US RIDE IT.
ALL OF US NEED IT.

Great cities have great transit systems. MetroLink is one of the most successful light rail systems in the country with 35,000 riders per day on a typical weekday and reaches as many as 40,000 on days with special events. Without MetroLink, St. Louis would not be at the level it is today.

Click here to see who has endorsed Prop A.

VOTE YES on PROPOSITION A this TUESDAY, APRIL 6!

Transit in St. Louis County is at a crossroads. On April 6, 2010, voters will have the opportunity to secure its future.

On November 8, 2006, a transit proposition failed by a narrow margin. The proposition requested a 1/4 cent sales tax increase in St. Louis County for MetroLink expansion and operations. Had it passed, it would have raised more than $90 million per year for transit. It also would have triggered a 1/4 cent sales tax increase in St. Louis City from a tax that the City passed in 1997.

However, failure of the proposition resulted in agency-wide layoffs, a transit fare increase on January 1, 2009, and massive service cuts on March 30, 2009. The service cuts were so damaging to the County that the Missouri legislature approved a one-time appropriation of $13 million to restore some of it. However, that appropriation expires in May 2010, and unless a 1/4 cent sales tax is approved in April, more severe cuts will occur.

In April 2010, voters will have the opportunity to approve Prop A, which again requests a 1/4 cent sales tax increase in St. Louis County for transit service expansion. The Greater St. Louis Transit Alliance is currently working to ensure that this vote is passed on April 6. Without the passage of the referendum, transit service will be deplorably. The 1/4 cent sales tax increase would cost the average family in St. Louis County about $50 a year or $4 per month. We need your help – and your vote – to avoid making the same mistake again.

Remember, some of us ride transit, all of us need it.

VOTE YES on Proposition A.

Benefits of Better Public Transit in St. Louis

Economic Development: $75 Billion in economic development creating jobs and money for the region.

Save Money: average public transit commuter saves $2,000/year versus driving.

Lower Congestion: without MetroLink, where would the 70,000 riders a day go?

No Smog: MetroLink can carry 300 people at a time.

Cleaner: 90% less DOES per gallon of emissions each year.

Accessibility: for all – alternative mode of transportation for all ages.

Live Better: increase your activity by getting out and exploring our city.

Make sure your organization supports MetroLink today. Download this sample resolution to get on track in support of a regional MetroLink plan.
● Speakers’ Bureau Collateral
Archbishop Robert J. Carlson Calls for Consideration of Prop A

On April 6, 2010, we have the opportunity to exercise our civic duty to vote. I want to bring to the attention of St. Louis County voters an important issue that affects especially the working poor, the elderly, and the disabled.

MetroBus, MetroLink, and Call-A-Ride services in St. Louis County are facing massive cuts that will disproportionately affect the working poor, the elderly, and the disabled during this already difficult economic time. These cuts in services will affect our grandparents and our elderly neighbors whose only way to get to the doctors' offices or medical centers in public transportation. These cuts in services will affect our disabled friends who are dependent on public transportation as their only means of getting to work, and they stand to lose those jobs if these severe cuts take place. The working poor who don't own cars or can't afford gas will not be able to get to work, go grocery shopping or visit friends and family if MetroBus, MetroLink and Call-A-Ride services are cut.

The cuts were so damaging to St. Louis County that, last year, the Missouri Legislature approved a one year appropriation of $12 million to reinstate some of those services. This one year appropriation will expire next month and will, again, result in severe cuts in services.
Strong, united clergy push for Prop A

By American staff

“Next Tuesday, the future of public transportation is in our hands,” U.S. Rep. Wm Lacy Clay said yesterday morning. Clay was speaking about the county-wide vote on April 6 on Proposition A, which would impose an additional half-cent sales tax in St. Louis County to fund the continued operation and expansion of public transit (with some money also going to highways).

A group of clergy gathered with Clay at the UMSL Metrolink Station, hosted by Normandy Mayor Patrick Green.

Chesterfield Mayor John Nations, the West County Republican who chaired the Advance St. Louis committee that led the effort to pass Proposition A, also was in attendance.

To reach North County voters, and African Americans sprinkled throughout the county, Advance St. Louis has relied on several clergy groups, including an ad hoc group called The Black Clergy for Public Transportation.

Metropolitan Congregations United staged a press event Sunday to coincide with people taking public transit as they left the NAACP games.

“We hit it pretty hard today,” the Rev. Tommie Pierson, senior minister for the Greater St. Mark Church, said of his Sunday service that morning.
Keys to Success

Build a Coalition of Support
Community Leadership

Use respected community leaders, to step up and deliver the truth about public transportation.
Build Coalition of Support

“I Love Transit”
Keys to Success

Get on Message and **Stay** on Message
Stay on Message

“Hitchhiker”
Stay on Message

- Local Bus Shelter
Advocacy Campaign

- Citizens For Modern Transits’ Education campaign softened the ground by educating voters about the value of public transit for everyone.
- Advance St. Louis’ Advocacy Campaign, headed by Mayor John Nations of Chesterfield, then told voters what to do: Vote Yes on Prop A.
Advocacy Campaign

Let's Get St. Louis Moving

Advance St. Louis

VOTE YES on A!
Advocacy Campaign

- Assisted Pro Vote get-out-the-vote phone bank
  - Voter turnout for April elections usually at 13-15%
  - April 2010 voter turnout exceeded 22%
Advocacy Campaign
The Results

- Overwhelmingly won the early vote
- Opposition demoralized by election day
- Tracking polls positive
- Higher voter turnout
- Dramatic change in “yes” votes across campaign years
- Final margin of victory 63% to 37%
The Results

- Increase of Support for Proposition A Compared to Proposition M
Prop M Results - Nov '08

Proposition M
Results from the November 2008 vote in St. Louis County

Chart showing the November 2008 results for Proposition M in St. Louis County. Current and proposed MetroLink lines are overlaid in black.

Prop A Results - Apr '10

Proposition A
Results from the April 2010 vote in St. Louis County

Chart showing the April 2010 results for Proposition A in St. Louis County. Current and proposed MetroLink lines are overlaid in black.
Proposition A
Results from the April 2010 vote in St. Louis County
Increase in support compared to Proposition M from 2008
Proposition A
We Win!

Thomas R. Shrout, Jr.
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