

South Bay Voters Fed Up With Potholes Show Support For Sales Tax Increase; \$6B Needed



Potholes. (Jeff J. Mitchell/Getty Images)

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SANTA CLARA (KCBS) — A new survey says more than two-thirds of likely Santa Clara County voters would support a sales tax increase to pay for over \$6 billion in transit and road upgrades for the county – just above the threshold required to pass such a tax.

President and CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group Carl Guardino told KCBS that only 25-percent of those surveyed oppose the proposal.

“This one was a clear winner with voters who said they are likely to vote yes, that was 69-percent,” Guardino said.

Santa Clara County officials plan to ask residents to approve a half-cent sales tax increase to pay for transportation projects in the fall.

Guardino said the tax address respondents’ most pressing concern – the crumbling conditions of the county’s streets and roads.

“This would repair streets, and fix potholes in all 15 cities and towns,” Guardino said.

The tax would also pay to complete the extension of BART to the CalTrain station in Santa Clara.

Guardino said the money would also go to bike and pedestrian improvements, increase CalTrain capacity and enhance transit service for seniors and the disabled.

The support found in the survey is the highest they've seen since the Silicon Valley Leadership group began polling voters over the past few years.

If approved the ballot measure would raise the county sales tax from 8.75 percent to 9.25 percent. Just below the maximum of 9.5 percent allowed by the state.

The tax would generate \$200 million a year for the next three decades.