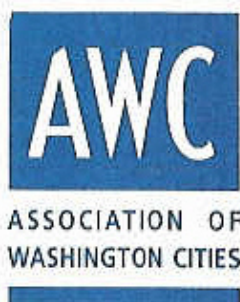




# Winning Local Ballot Measures

## Building a Strategic Campaign Plan



Association of Washington Cities  
March 2004

Prepared by  
Northwest Public Affairs, LLC

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## Building a Strategic Campaign Plan

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# I. Fundraising

## **Strategic Considerations**

- Set a goal
- Budget drives Strategic Decisions
- Finance Chair, Committee
- Lead - Large, Medium & Small Contributions
- Campaign Cash flow
- Who Best to Ask

## **Best Prospects**

- Most Likely Orgs. & Individuals based upon Measure
- Traditional Political Givers
- Previous Campaign Contributors
- Donors of local/state Elected Officials
- Compatible Non-profits
- Political Party contributors
- Major Local Fundraising Events
- Constituency Organizations
- Business and Labor
- Vendors

## **Keep in mind**

- Gather Lists, Consolidate
- Low Overhead, In-kind Contributions
- Credit Card option
- Mail with Phone Follow up (Message Reminders)
- Electeds/Opinion leaders Help Make the Ask
- Give Deadlines -- tied to Campaign Needs
- Thanks and Ask Again!

# Campaign Work Plan

## Fundraising

**Most Likely Suspects (Individual/Groups/Orgs.)?**

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**Who Best to Make the Ask?**

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**Most credible voice(s) on this issue?**

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- 

**Lists -- Ideal Membership/Organization or donor lists?**

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-

## II. Public Opinion Research

### Strategic Guide for campaign

- Timing of election – Best Voters for you
- Budget Considerations
- Other issues/candidates on ballot
- Ballot Title – Split sample tests?
- Allies, Opponents, Up for Grabs
- Credible Messengers – Titles
- Geographic and demographic data for targeting – Who, Where, What Message
- Internal Use – Expectations
- Tracker questions

### Sample Survey

- Mood of Local Voters – Right Direction/Wrong Track
- If the election were held today...
- Tax sensitivity/thresh hold
- Messages in support
- Messages in opposition
- Key elements of plan – positive and negative
- Now that you know more, if the election were held today...
- Geographic/Demographics

### Information on Voters

- Who responds to what message
- Absentee Voters
- Election Day Voters
- Frequent Voters – Vote all or most of the time
- Infrequent Voters – Only vote in major elections
- Party Affiliation
- Geographic/Demographic Information
- Education
- Children in Household
- Labor Household

# Campaign Work Plan

## Research

### Best Reasons to Vote Yes

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### Best Reasons to Vote No

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### Timing of the election – Options

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# III. Strategic Guide

## Timing of the Election

- Public Opinion
- Other Issues and Candidates
- Turnout and Likely Make-up of Electorate

## Voter Targets

- Votes Needed to Win
- Turning out the base – YES voters
- Persuading Undecided Voters
- Neutralizing No Voters

## Reaching the Voters

- Message of the campaign
- Earned Media
- Paid Media
- Direct Voter Contact
- Grassroots / Field Organizing
- Visibility

## Greatest Assets – how to Capitalize

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- 
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## Greatest Liabilities – how to Overcome

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# Campaign Work Plan

## Strategic Guide

- Greatest Assets – How to capitalize
- Greatest Liabilities – How to overcome
- Timing - When and Why
- Votes Needed to Win
- Who – Which voters are likely yes, no and undecided
- Budget Goal
- Message
- Coalition – Best Messengers
- Voter Contact - Persuasion  
Direct Mail, Phone, Door-to-door, Paid Media, Earned Media, Grassroots
- Turnout of Voters  
Absentee  
Election Day
- Campaign Profile/Visibility/Level of Debate



## IV. Message Development

### **Message is not a Slogan**

1<sup>st</sup> Research

2<sup>nd</sup> Message

3<sup>rd</sup> Theme/Slogan

### **Message will win or lose a campaign**

- Message can give meaning and purpose or say nothing
- Message can give focus or add chaos
- Message can inspire and unite or tear down and divide
- Message can motivate or cause complacency
- Message can differentiate or make the same
- Message can help or harm

## **The Seven C's of an effective Message**

### **1. Chosen**

- Research based
- Targeted to specific voters/audiences
- Right message to right audience at the right time

### **2. Clear**

- Simple, makes the point
- Commonly understood
- Coherent, logical
- Passes the “elevator” test

### **3. Credible**

- Believable, makes sense
- Connects to common understanding
- No “take my word for it” needed

### **4. Compelling**

- Makes a persuasive argument
- Connects personally with voters/audience
- Breaks through the clutter

### **5. Contrasts**

- Why the difference matters
- Offers voters a choice
- Clear comparison to the alternative
- Not “me too”

### **6. Controlled**

- Always makes the main point
- Returns to message, despite distractions
- Offense not defense

### **7. Consistent**

- Repetitious
- Constant, continuous
- Incorporates into all communications, formats, messengers etc.

# Campaign Work Plan

## Message Development

**Winning**

**Losing**

**Us on Us**

**Them on us**

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-

**Us on Them**

**Them on them**

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-

-

-

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# V. Targeting

## **Purpose**

- Turnout Yes
- Persuade Undecided
- Neutralize Opposition

## **Resources**

- Polling data
  - Geographic
  - Demographic
  - Persuadables
- Previous Elections – Voting Patterns
- Voter File

## **Every Voter**

- Gender
- Age (most)
- Address / Household
- 55-60% with Phone
- Voter Frequency – Turnout History
- Absentee/ Election Day Voter

# Campaign Work Plan

## Targeting

### Sample Scenario:

Registered Voters	1000	
Turnout Projection	40%	1000 (reg. voters) x .4 = 400
Votes Needed to Win	50%+1	400 x .5 + 1 = 201 Yes Votes
Votes Needed to Win	60% +1	400 x .6 + 1 = 241 Yes Votes

### Votes Needed to Win

Registered Voters	_____	
Turnout Projection	40%	_____ (Reg. voters) x .4 = _____
(substitute projection from County Auditor)		
Votes Needed to Win	50%+1	_____ x .5 + 1 = _____ Yes Votes
Votes Needed to Win	60% +1	_____ x .6 + 1 = _____ Yes Votes

### City of Woodland

Registered Voters	_____	_____ HH
Absentee Voters	_____	_____ HH
Voters with Phone Numbers	_____	_____ HH
0/4 Voters – Total	_____	
Female Voters 35-44	_____	
4 / 4, 3 / 4, and 2 / 4 voter with phones	_____	

## VI. Direct Voter Contact

### **Purpose - Targeted Group of Voters**

- Voter ID – Yes, No, Undecided
- Solidify Yes Votes
- Persuade Undecided
- Neutralize No Votes
- Turn out

### **Voter ID - Identification (Early in the campaign)**

- Request voter by name
- Identify yourself by name, volunteer with the campaign
- As you may know there's an upcoming election for X
- If the election were held today, Yes/No.
- If undecided, do you lean Yes/No.
- Short statement on message
- Thank you, appreciate your time and consideration

### **Voter Persuasion – UNDECIDEDS**

- 3 Pieces of Direct Mail
- Call Absentee Households first
- Then call election day Voter Households
- Volunteer with the campaign
- Key messages in favor
- Re-identify – Yes, No, Still Undecided
- Possible GOTV or continued persuasion

### **Get-out-the-Vote – YES Voters (3 weeks out – thru election day)**

- 1-2 Pieces of Direct Mail
- Absentee voters 2-3 three weeks before election.
- Election Day voters – Weekend before Election & Election Day
- Volunteer with the campaign
- Calling to remind you about election on Tuesday.
- Have you mailed absentee ballot yet?
- If yes, thank you. Is anyone else in household is voter – have they voted?

## VII. Staffing & Structure

### **Campaign Committee**

- Chair/Co-Chairs (1-2)
- Executive Committee (4-6), Kitchen Cabinet
- Steering Committee (10-50+) / Finance Committee
- Endorsers – Citizens for X (100s+)

### **Staff**

- Campaign Manager/Director
- Field/Speaker's Bureau
- Press/Communications
- Administration/Volunteer Coordination
- Others, depending on strategy & Volunteer Capabilities

### **Primary Responsibility**

- Day to Day Management – Campaign Manager, Chair/Co-chair as appropriate
- Key Decisions, Strategy – Campaign Manager, Executive Committee
- Fundraising, Strategic Updates – Steering Committee
- Coalition Building – Endorsers

## VIII. Timeline

### **Operations**

- Key Election Dates
  - Measure referred to the ballot
  - Campaign Committee Filing with PDC
  - Voters Statement Due
  - Rebuttal Statement Due
  - Voters Guides Arrive
  - Absentee Ballots Arrive
  - Primary Election?
  - Other Major Community Events?
- Headquarters Operations
- Staffing Plans
- Fundraisers, if planned
- Public Disclosure Reports Due dates
- Steering Committee Meetings / Updates

### **Strategy & Research**

- Campaign Plan
- Staffing
- Public Opinion
- Voter Targeting

### **Field Activities**

- Kick off
- Campaign Events
- Major Community Events
- Speaker's Bureau Opportunities
- Visibility

### **Communications**

- Press Events & Opportunities
- Debates, Voter Forums
- Editorial Boards



- Opinion-editorials
- Letters to the editor
- Paid Media? (radio/tv)

## **Voter Contact**

- List Orders
- Volunteer Recruitments/Sign-up
- Paid Calls

## **Identification**

- Script Draft/Approval
- Phone Capacity – Paid or Volunteer
- Volunteer Recruitment
- Data Collection

Voter Identification Absentee (6-8 weeks before election, depending on #'s)  
 Voter Identification Poll Voter (4-6 weeks before election, depending on #'s)

## **Absentee Voters - Persuasion**

- List Order
- Design/Approval
- Mail House – Postal Drop

Direct Mail Absentee 1 (3 weeks before election)  
 Direct Mail Absentee 2 (2 weeks before election)  
 Direct Mail Absentee 3? (end of week before Tuesday election)  
 Phone Follow up Absentee (following Mail 2 or 3)

## **Poll Voters - Persuasion**

- List Order
- Design/Approval
- Mail House – Postal Drop

Direct Mail Poll Voter 1 (2 weeks before)  
 Direct Mail Poll Voter 2 (1 week before)  
 Direct Mail Poll Voter 3? (end of week before Tuesday election)  
 Phone Follow up Poll Voter (following Mail 2)

## Get Out the Vote

- Phone/Mail Combination
- List Order
- Design/Approval
- Mail House – Postal Drop

Get-out-the-vote Absentee 1 (2-3 weeks before election)

Get-out-the-vote Absentee 2 (1 week before election)

Get-out-the-vote Poll Voter 1 (weekend before election)

Get-out-the-vote Poll Voter 2 (election day)

## In-kind Contributions

- Office Space (safe with parking visible familiar)
- Stationery/Envelopes/Remit Envelopes
- Banners/ Yardsigns
- Computers / Software
- Copy Paper
- Fax Machine
- Copy Machine
- General Office Supplies
- Work Tables / Desk / Chairs / Furniture
- Refrigerator/Microwave
- Telephones for headquarters
- Phonebanks
- Volunteer Food/Coffee/Softdrinks/Munchies/Pizza
- Design layout
- Printing
- Website Design/Management
- Other