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## BGR Media Release

*For Immediate Release – September 27, 2017*

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### **BGR Examines Proposed Jefferson Tax Renewals**

Today BGR releases *On the Ballot: Jefferson Parish Transit Tax Renewals, October 14, 2017*. Voters parishwide will decide whether to renew for 10 years two property taxes to operate and maintain the parish's public transportation system. One tax, at two mills, would generate about \$6.8 million annually for the fixed-route service. The other tax, at one mill, would yield about \$3.4 million annually for the Mobility Impaired Transportation System (MITS), which provides curb-to-curb service for the elderly and disabled. The report and a one-page summary are available on BGR's website, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).

### **BGR Position on Fixed-Route Millage Renewal**

**FOR.** The tax is a critical source of revenue for fixed-route transit, an essential public service. If voters do not renew the tax, serious cuts in service will be necessary, affecting thousands of riders. Given the lack of other viable revenue sources, and some positive signs that the Parish is working to improve efficiency and service, BGR recommends approving the tax renewal.

In making this recommendation, BGR has significant concerns about clear inefficiencies in certain routes. It calls on the Parish to take near-term action to eliminate these inefficiencies and direct the savings to areas with unmet service demands. The Parish should not delay solutions that it can

implement now to better deploy limited public resources. For the longer term, the strategic planning process should identify specific steps to make the service more efficient and effective, including improvements to regional connectivity. Finally, the Parish must commit to achieving the plan's goals and objectives.

### **BGR Position on MITS Millage Renewal**

**FOR.** The tax provides the vast majority of the funding for federally mandated paratransit services for the Parish's elderly and disabled residents. MITS provides an essential service for some of the parish's most transit-dependent residents. And, as long as the fixed-route service continues, the Parish is required to provide MITS. In that case, if the MITS tax renewal were rejected, the Parish would have to find other funds for the paratransit services.

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*BGR is a private, nonprofit, independent research organization. Since its founding in 1932, it has been dedicated to informed public policy-making and the effective use of public resources in the Greater New Orleans area. For more information, call 525-4152 or visit BGR's website, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).*