



Alameda Voter Views of Potential Finance Mechanisms

Key Findings of a Survey Conducted February 2-13, 2022



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

Survey Methodology

Dates	February 2-13, 2022
Survey Type	Dual-mode Voter Survey
Research Population	Likely November 2022 Voters in the City of Alameda
Total Interviews	480
Margin of Sampling Error	(Full Sample) $\pm 4.9\%$ at the 95% Confidence Level (Half Sample) $\pm 6.9\%$ at the 95% Confidence Level
Contact Methods	 Telephone Calls  Email Invitations
Data Collection Modes	 Telephone Interviews  Online Interviews
Languages	English, Spanish and Chinese

(Note: Not All Results Will Sum to 100% Due to Rounding)

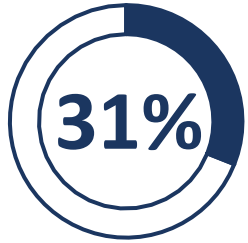
Survey Goals



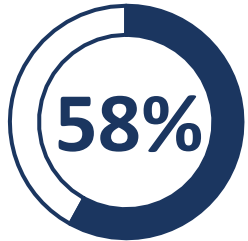
- Update views of the City's overall direction and ratings for particular City departments
- Assess voters' priorities for community investments
- Identify potential revenue measure mechanisms that may be able to achieve the level of support needed for passage in a future election
- Determine support for a police oversight commission measure



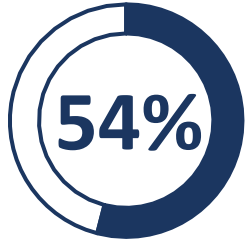
Key Numbers



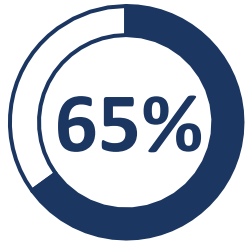
Think the City is headed in the “right direction” – down 11 points from 2020



Approve of Alameda City government overall



See a need for additional funding to provide City services



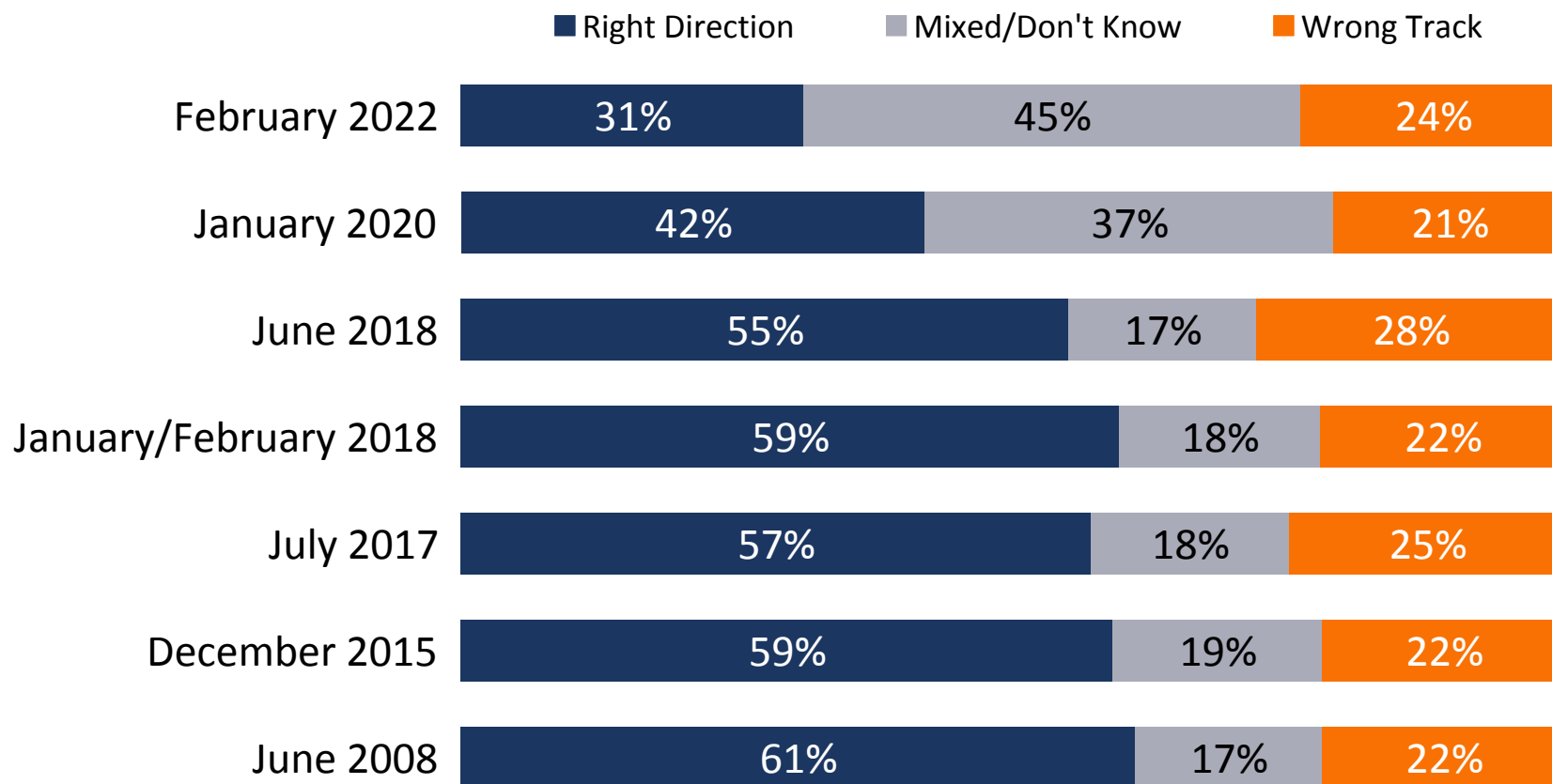
Support the creation of an independent police oversight commission



Voter Mood and Perceptions of the City

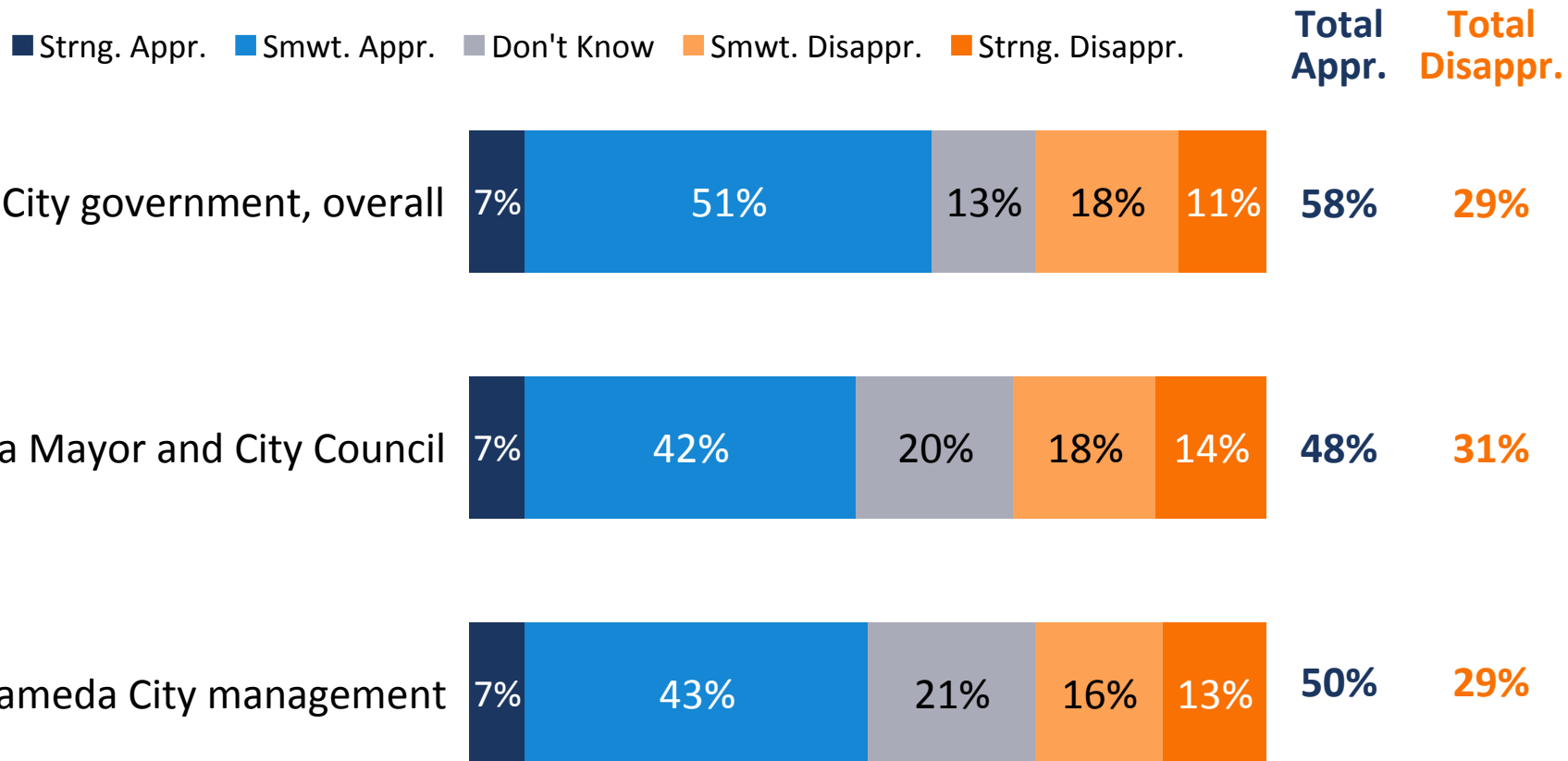
More voters are divided on the direction of the City than ever before, and just three in ten say things are headed in the right direction.

Would you say that things in the City of Alameda are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel that things are pretty seriously off on the wrong track?



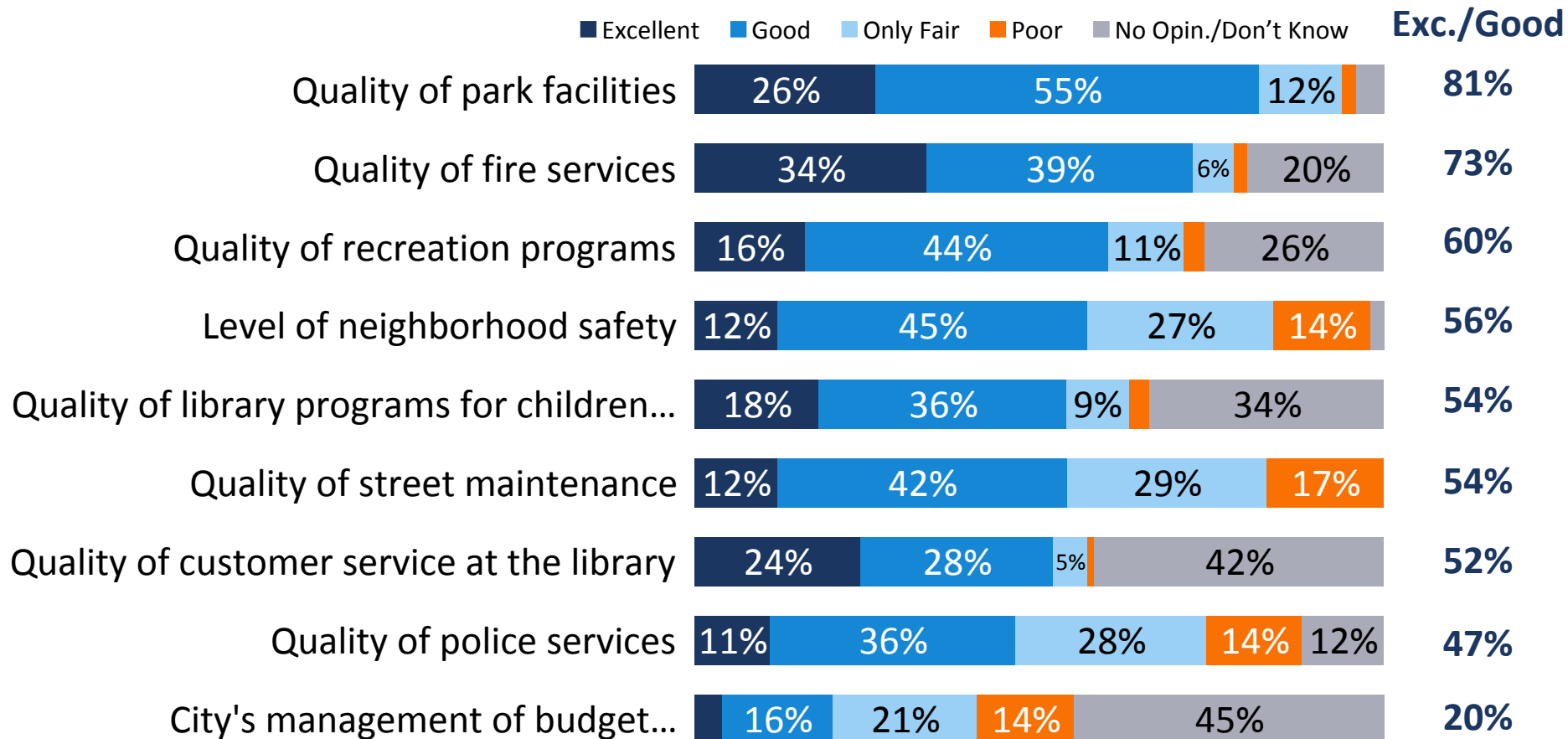
Majorities approve of Alameda's city government, overall; half approve of the City's management and elected officials.

*I am going to read you a brief list of public officials and agencies.
Please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of the job each is doing.*



Broad shares give high marks to the City for the quality of its park facilities and fire services.

I am going to ask you about some specific services that the City of Alameda provides. Please tell me whether you think the City is doing an excellent, good, only fair, or poor job in providing that service. If you have no opinion or don't know about a particular function of government that I mention to you, you can tell me that too.



Ratings for police services, neighborhood safety, and library services have declined.

(Excellent/Good)

Public Official/ Agency	July 2017	January 2020	February 2022	Δ Between Jan. 2020 & Feb. 2022
Quality of street maintenance	57%	49%	54%	+5%
Quality of park facilities	80%	78%	81%	+3%
Quality of fire services	81%	74%	73%	-1%
Quality of library programs for children and adults	65%	59%	54%	-5%
Quality of recreation programs	70%	65%	60%	-5%
City's management of budget and finances	32%	26%	20%	-6%
Level of neighborhood safety	81%	65%	56%	-9%
Quality of customer service at the library	66%	68%	52%	-16%
Quality of police services	78%	68%	47%	-21%

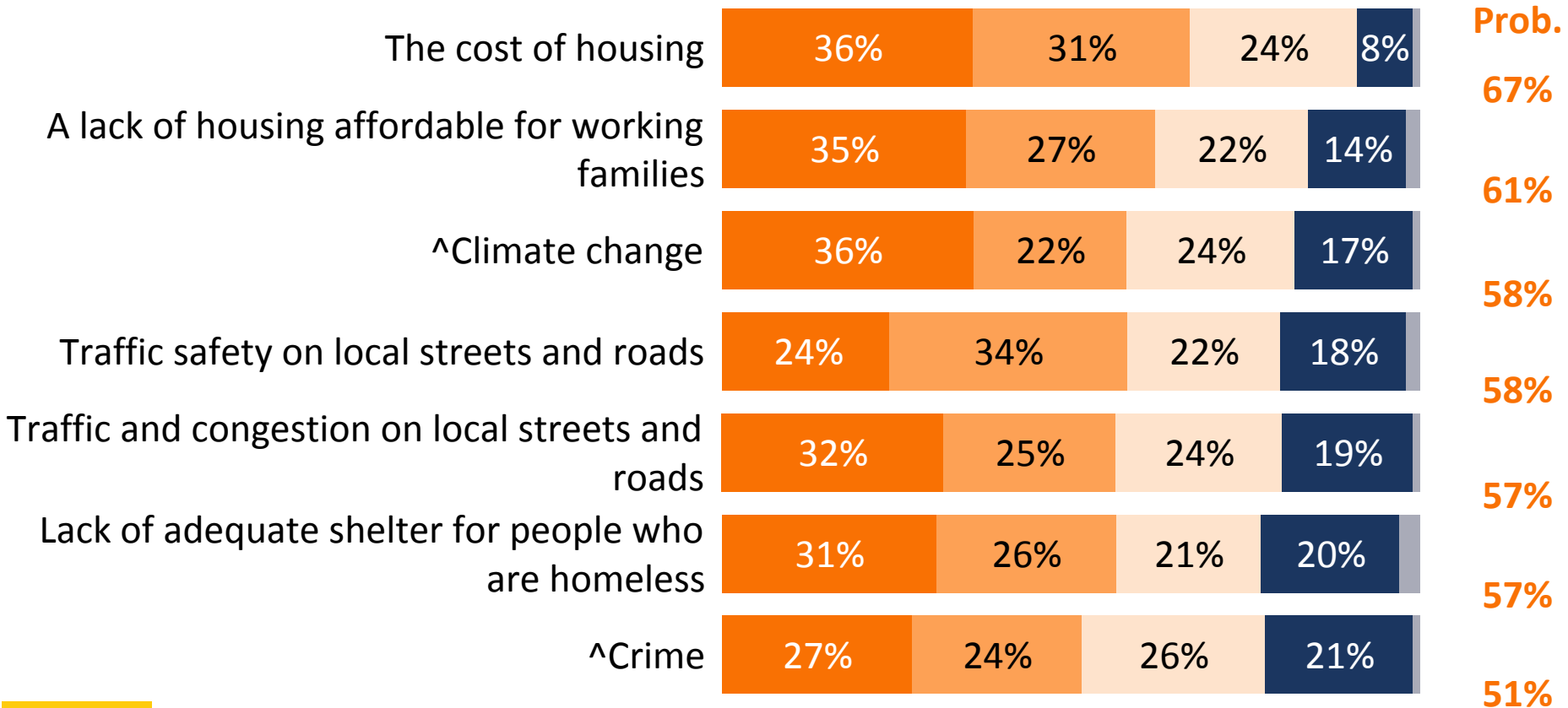
Q4. I am going to ask you about some specific services that the City of Alameda provides. Please tell me whether you think the City is doing an excellent, good, only fair, or poor job in providing that service. If you have no opinion or don't know about a particular function of government that I mention to you, you can tell me that too.

Housing costs are a top worry; broad majorities are concerned about climate change and traffic safety.

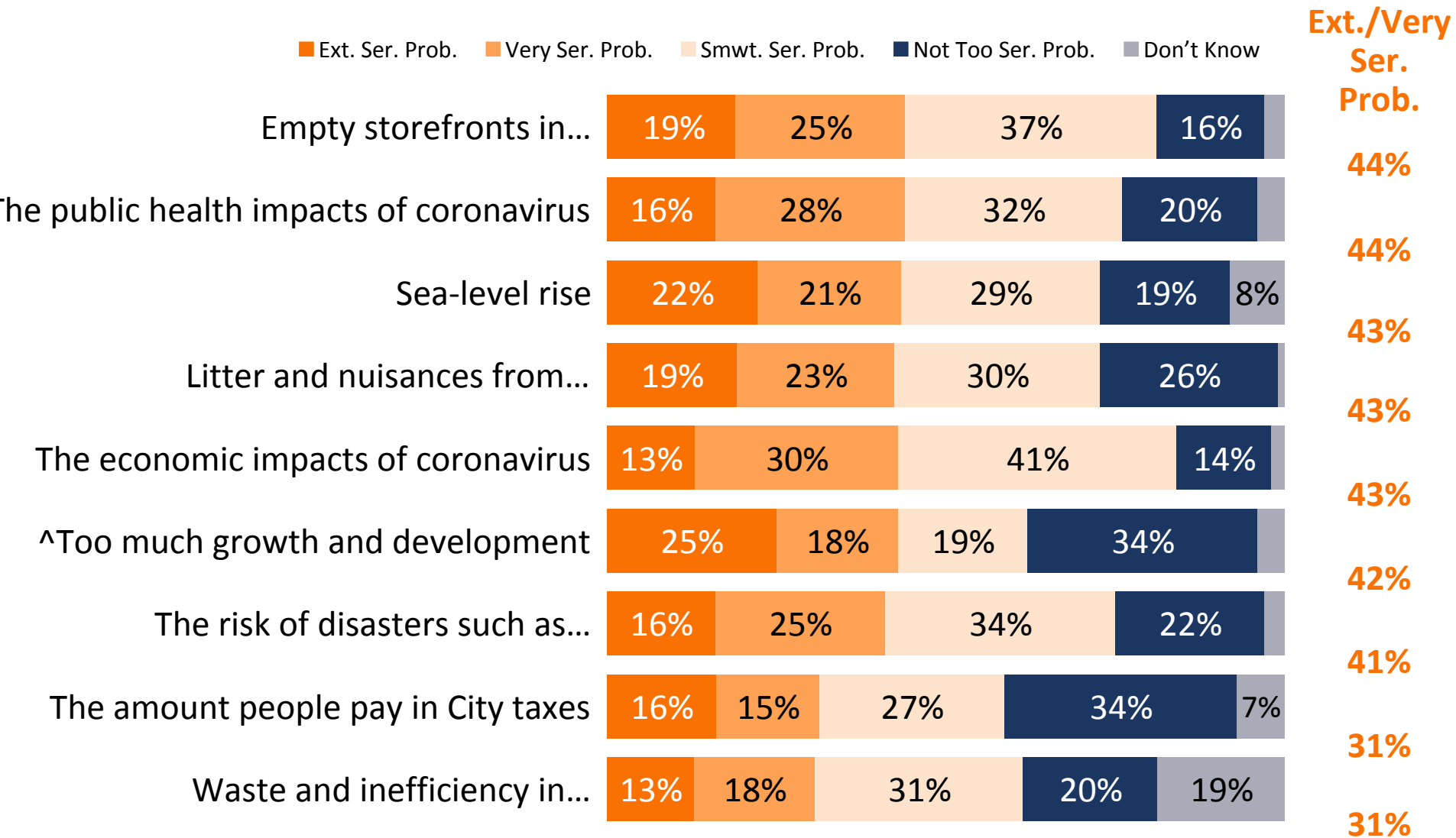
I'd like to read you some problems facing the City of Alameda that other people have mentioned. Please tell me whether you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, or a not too serious problem in Alameda.

Ext. Ser. Prob. Very Ser. Prob. Smwt. Ser. Prob. Not Too Ser. Prob. Don't Know

Ext./Very
Ser.
Prob.



Relatively few are concerned about City tax rates and waste in local government.



Concern about crime and traffic safety have increased in the last two years.

(Extremely/Very Serious Problem)

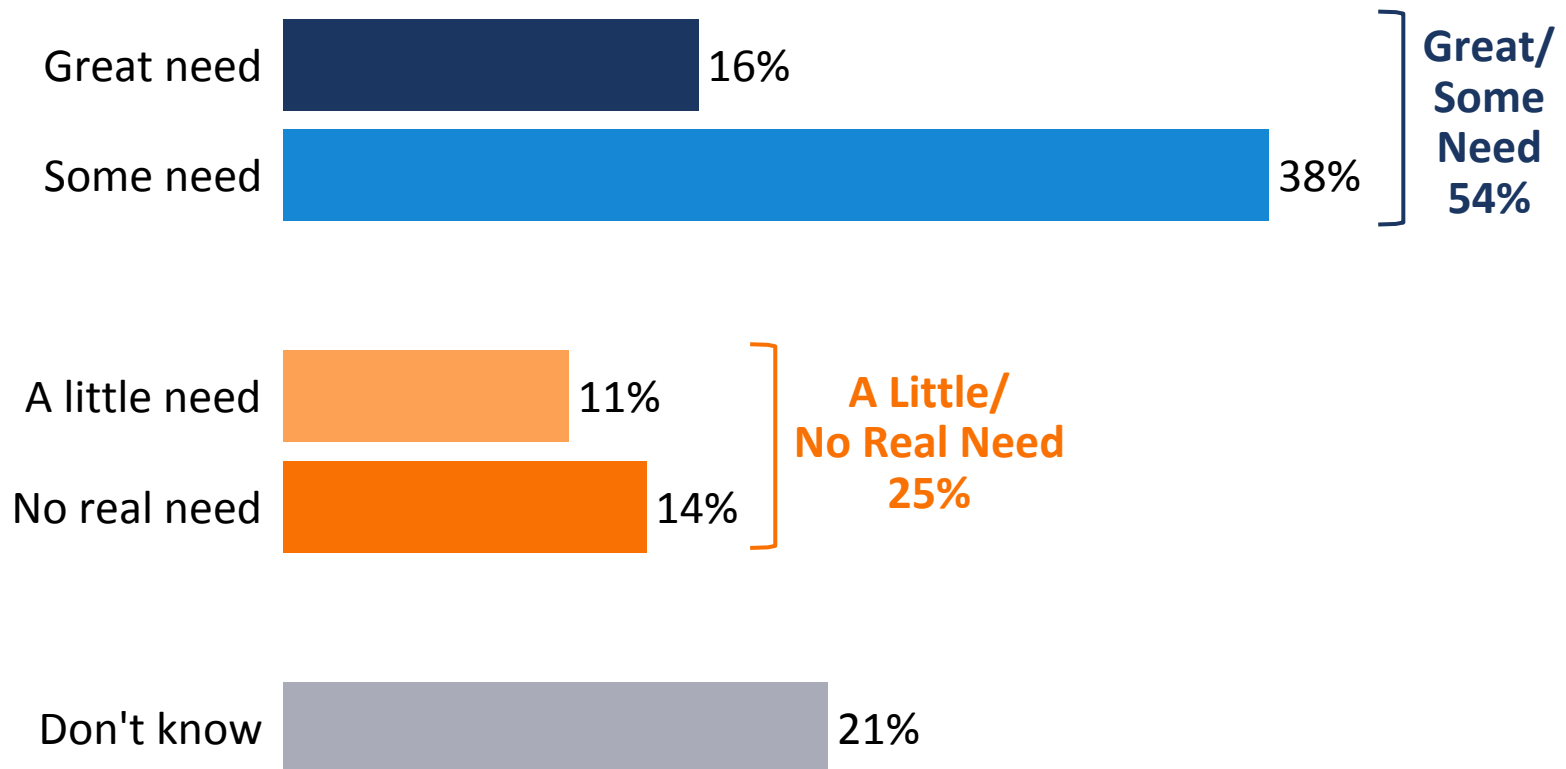
Problem	June 2008	Dec. 2015	July 2017	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2022	Δ Between Jan. 2020 & Feb. 2022
^Crime	28%	9%	17%	36%	51%	+15%
Traffic safety on local streets and roads	--	--	--	45%	58%	+13%
Traffic and congestion on local streets and roads	27%	47%	60%	52%	57%	+5%
Litter and nuisances from homeless encampments	--	--	--	41%	43%	+2%
^Too much growth and development	--	38%	47%	40%	42%	+2%
The risk of disasters such as floods or earthquakes	--	--	--	40%	41%	+1%
Lack of adequate shelter for people who are homeless	--	--	--	57%	57%	0%
^Climate change	--	--	49%	59%	58%	-1%
The amount people pay in City taxes	32%	15%	26%	33%	31%	-2%
Waste and inefficiency in local government	43%	18%	23%	33%	31%	-2%
The cost of housing	55%	69%	73%	71%	67%	-4%
A lack of housing affordable for working families	--	--	68%	67%	61%	-6%
Sea-level rise	--	--	42%	53%	43%	-10%



Spending and Investment Priorities

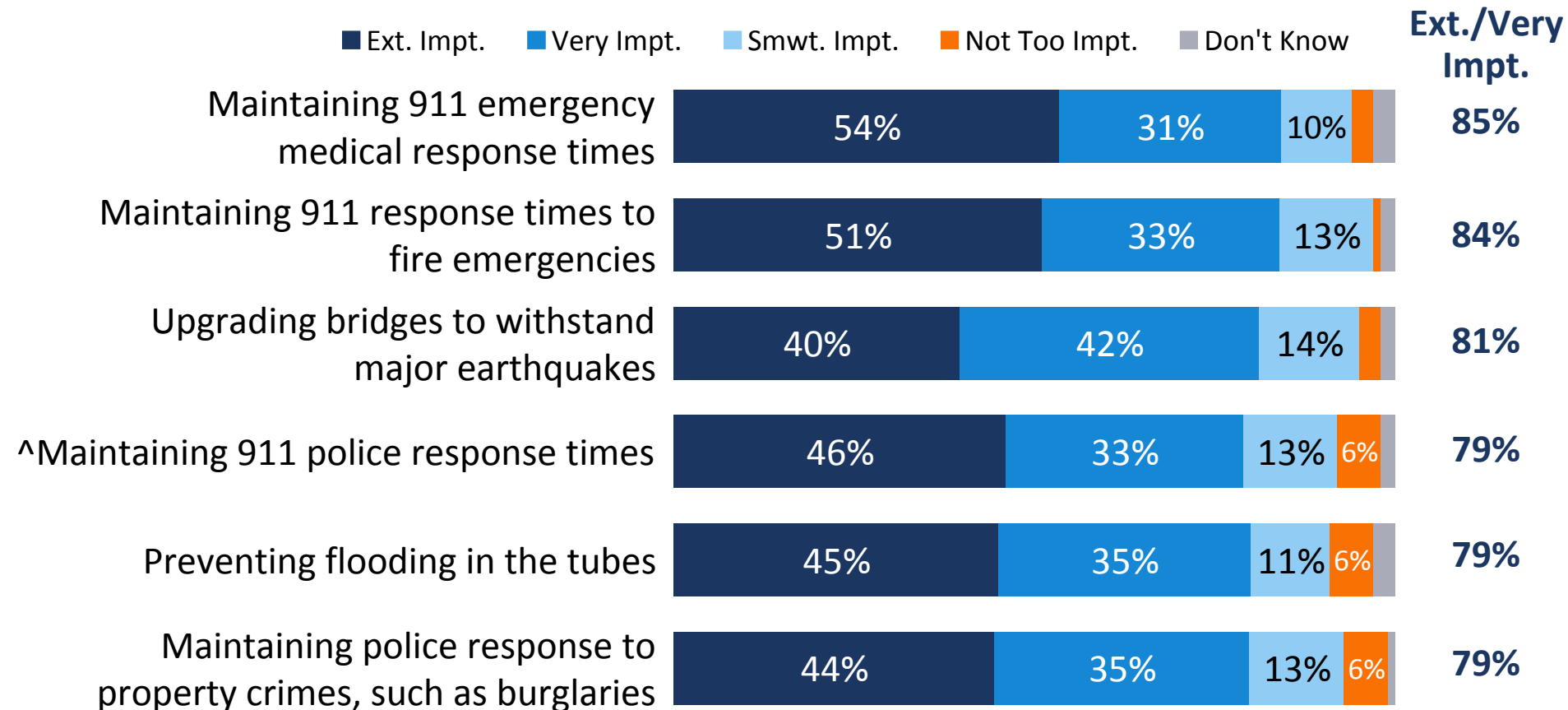
A majority of Alameda voters see at least some need for additional funding for city services.

Would you say that to provide city services in general, the City of Alameda has a great need for additional funding, some need, a little need, or no real need for additional funding?

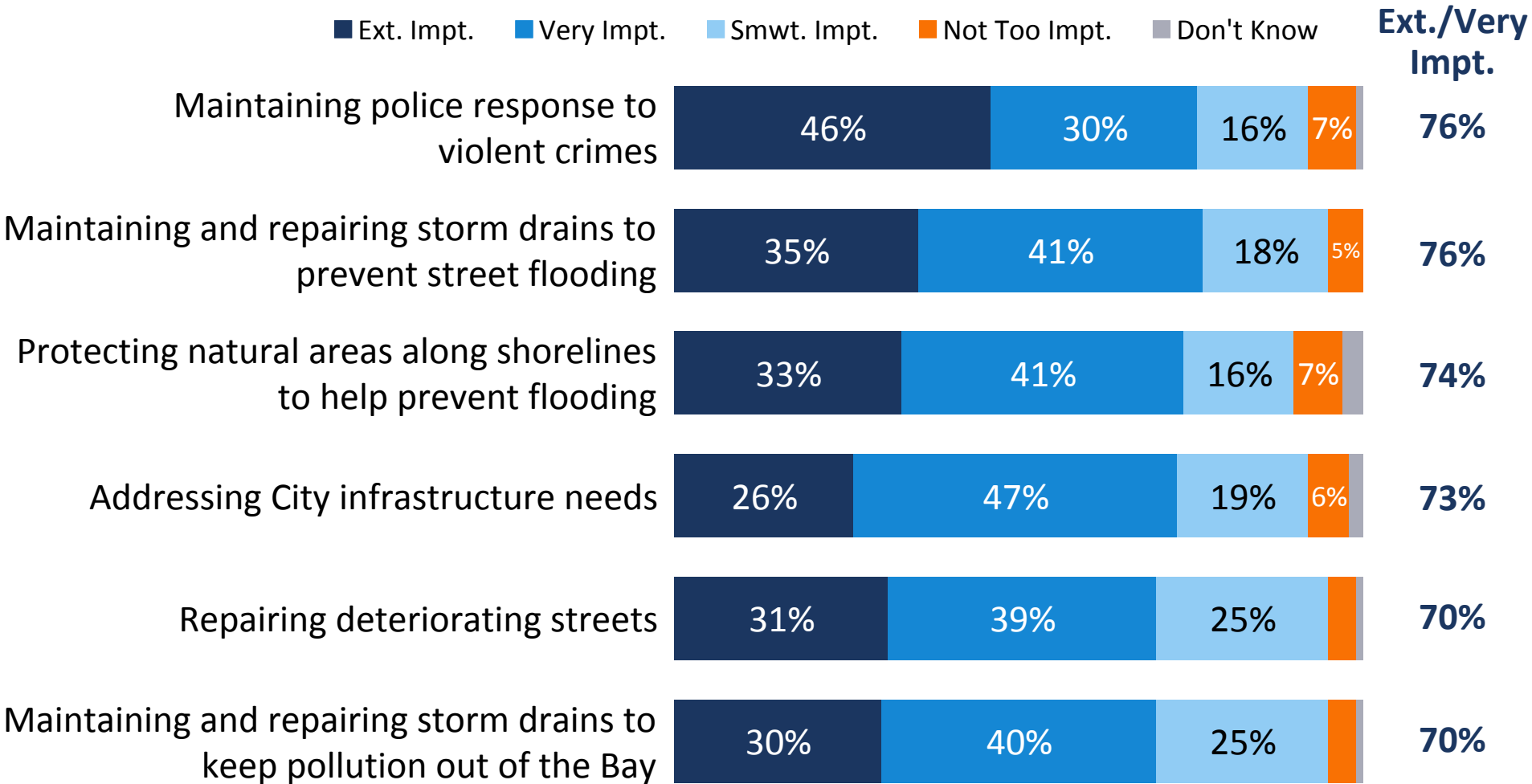


Their highest priorities for funding include response times, bridge upgrades and flood prevention.

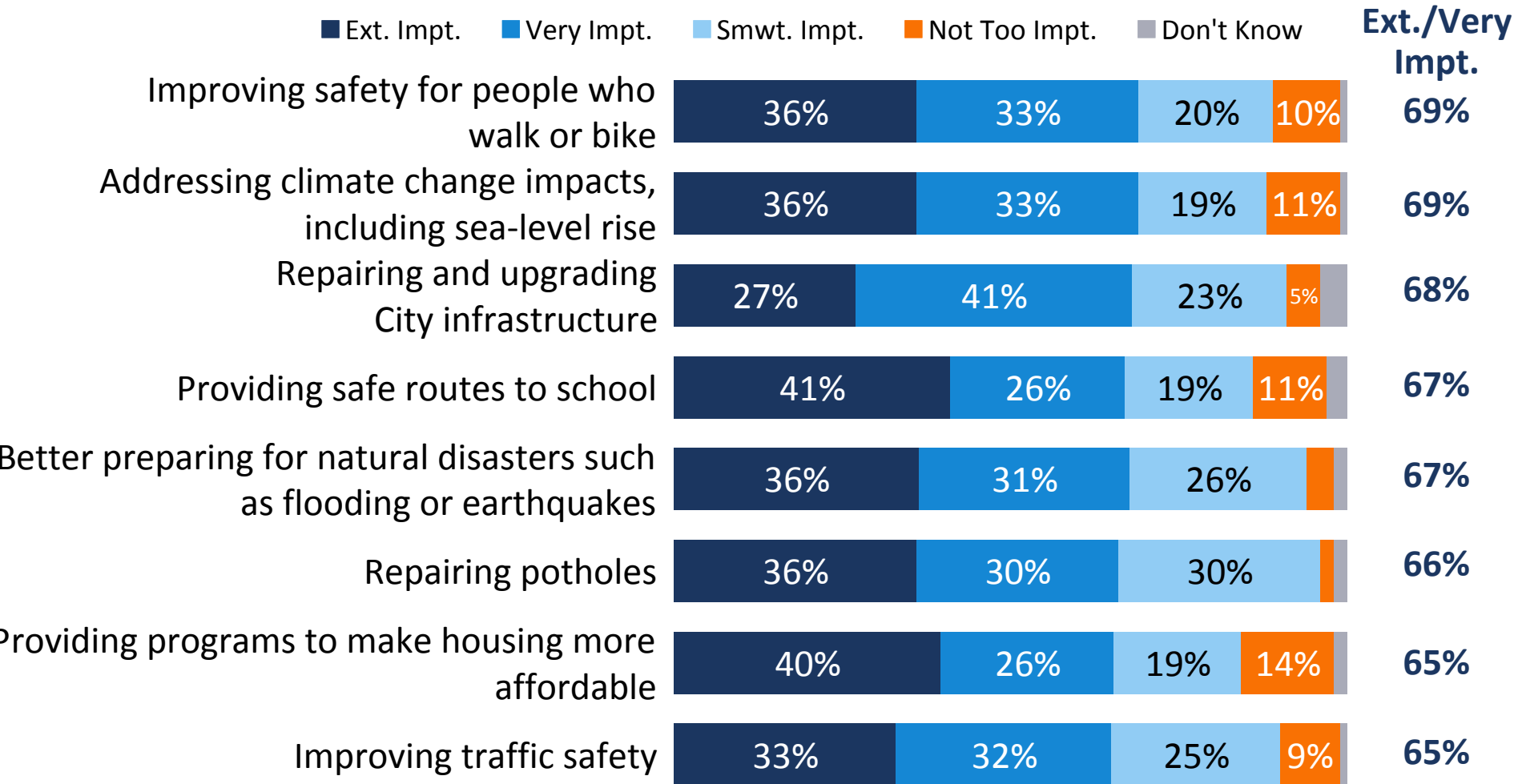
I am going to read you a list of ways in which any additional funding provided to the City of Alameda could be spent. Please tell me how important each project or element would be to you personally: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important.



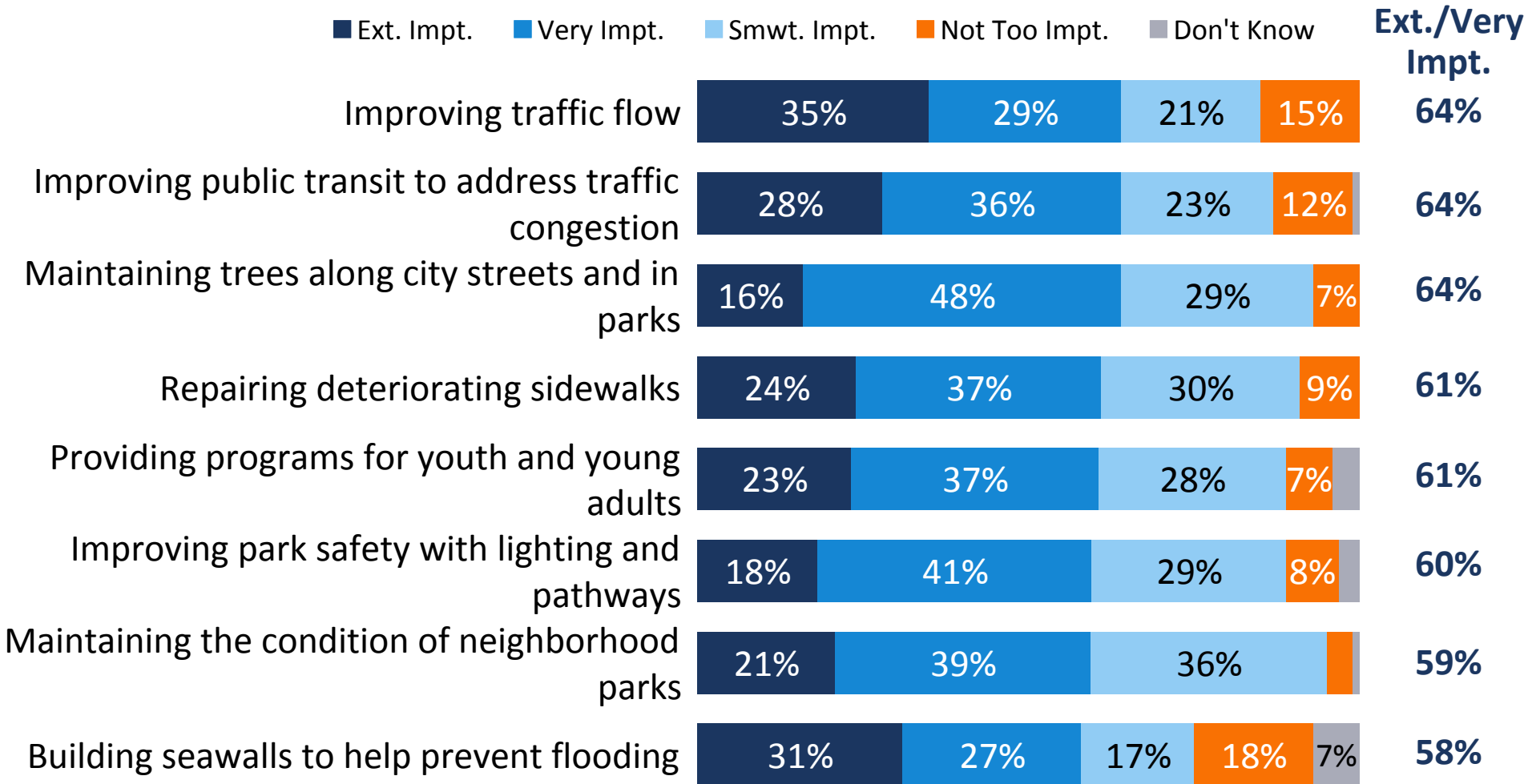
Seven in ten or more also rate infrastructure repairs and response to violent crime highly.



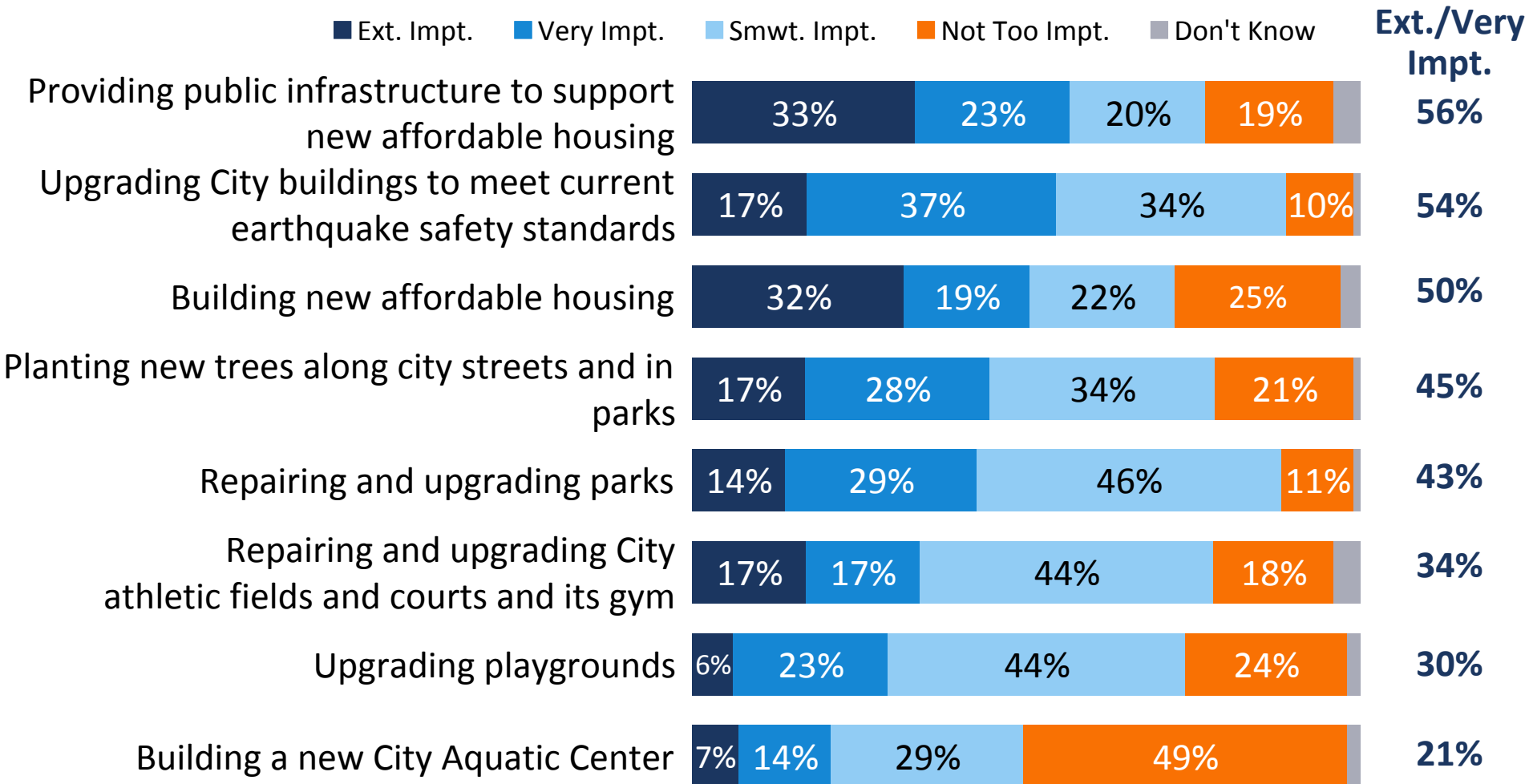
Two-thirds or more value improving cyclist and pedestrian safety and preparing for disaster.



Majorities value improving traffic flow and public transit and improving parks.



A new Aquatic Center, upgraded playgrounds and athletic fields, and trees rank lower.

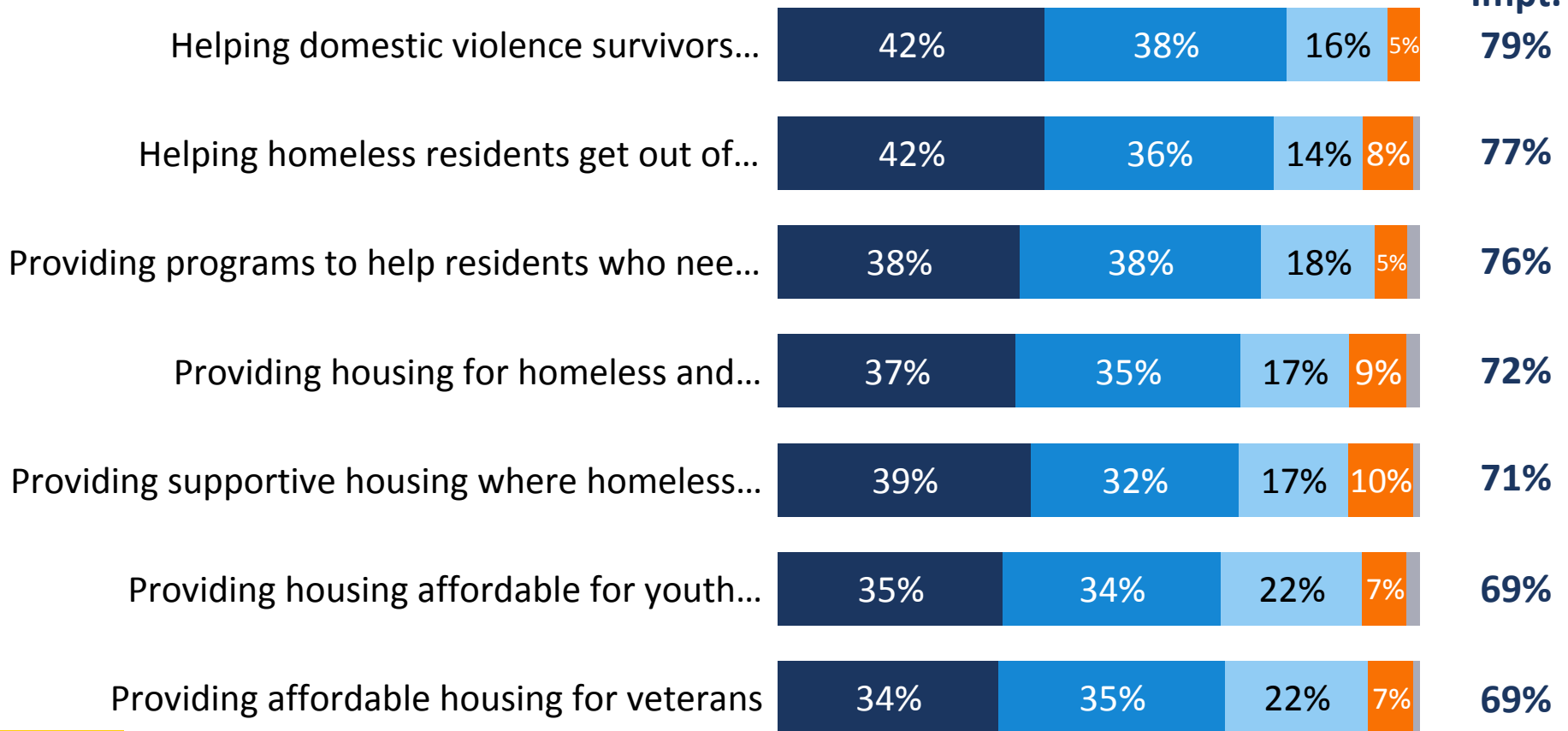


Voters value affordable housing investments for a variety of key populations.

There are several specific populations that could be served by investments in affordable housing and housing supports. Please tell me how important each type of housing or service is to you: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important.

■ Ext. Impt. ■ Very Impt. ■ Smwt. Impt. ■ Not Too Impt. ■ Don't Know

Ext./Very Impt.





Assessing Revenue Measure Mechanisms

Only two of the two-thirds requirement approaches begin with bare two-thirds support.

Two-Thirds Requirement Measures

■ Def. Yes ■ Prob. Yes ■ Undec., Lean Yes ■ Undecided ■ Undec., Lean No ■ Prob. No ■ Def. No

**Total
Yes** **Total
No**

^Issuing \$95 million in bonds to fund major infrastructure projects



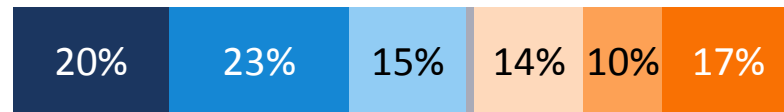
68% **25%**

^Establishing a real estate transfer tax for homes over \$2 million to fund...



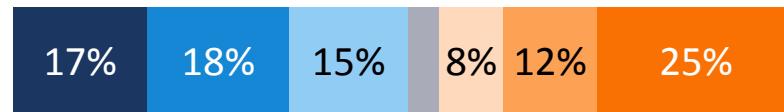
67% **30%**

Issuing \$95 million in bonds to fund building affordable housing



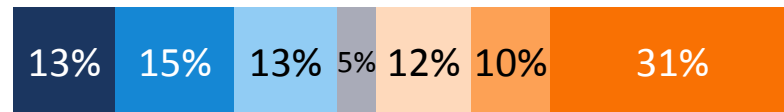
58% **41%**

Establishing a property tax of 25 cents per square foot to fund building affordable...



51% **46%**

Establishing a property tax of 12.5 cents per square foot to support programs make housin...



41% **53%**

Q8 b, e, g, i, j. The City is considering placing a measure or measures on an upcoming ballot in a future election, though the final structures of these potential measures have not been developed. However, I am going to read to you a list of different approaches to raising funds the City is currently considering, and after I read each one, please tell me whether you would vote "yes" or "no" on that measure. ^Not Part of Split Sample

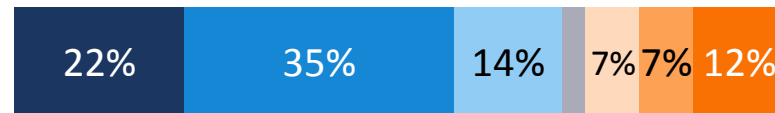
All of the simple-majority requirement measures exceed 50%, but to varying degrees.

Simple Majority Requirement Measures

■ Def. Yes ■ Prob. Yes ■ Undec., Lean Yes ■ Undecided ■ Undec., Lean No ■ Prob. No ■ Def. No

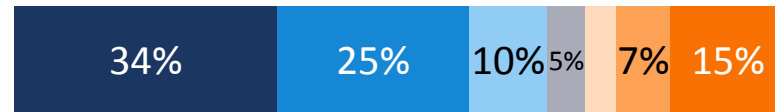
**Total
Yes** **Total
No**

Increasing the business license tax for medium and large businesses to fund general city services and bring the tax rate up to that of neighboring cities



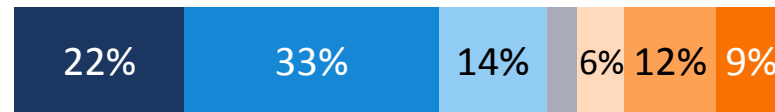
70% **26%**

^Establishing a tax on cannabis to fund general city services



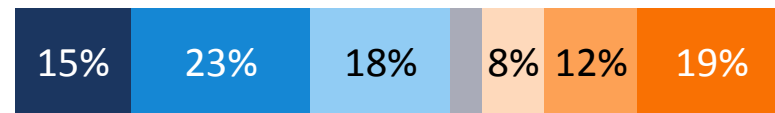
69% **27%**

^Increasing the transient occupancy tax, also known as a hotel tax, paid by hotel and Airbnb guests, from 10% to 14% to fund general city services



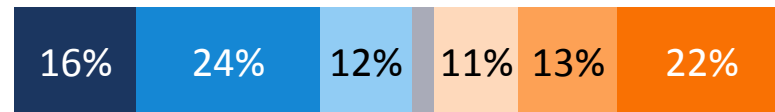
69% **27%**

Increasing the business license tax to fund general city services and bring the tax rate up to that of neighboring cities



56% **40%**

^Increasing the tax on natural gas to fund general city services and discourage its use in homes and businesses to address climate change



52% **45%**

Q8 a, c, d, f, h. The City is considering placing a measure or measures on an upcoming ballot in a future election, though the final structures of these potential measures have not been developed. However, I am going to read to you a list of different approaches to raising funds the City is currently considering, and after I read each one, please tell me whether you would vote "yes" or "no" on that measure. ^Not Part of Split Sample



The Impact of Pro and Con Arguments

Voters heard or read support and opposition messages applying to all measures.

Supporters say that now is the time for the City of Alameda pursue one or more ballot measures over the next few years to address a variety of critical issues. To begin with, a ballot measure could create locally controlled funding that will be used to address our backlog of infrastructure needs now, while interest rates are low and before construction costs rise even more. Repairing and maintaining our streets, protecting the Bay from pollution, and keeping our parks safe and clean will help maintain our quality of life. In addition to addressing those critical basic infrastructure needs, the City needs additional funding to address urgent, near-term problems like traffic safety and housing affordability and longer-term problems like sea-level rise caused by climate change. And all funds generated from any measure will be subject to tough fiscal accountability requirements, including full public review of all spending and independent financial audits, to ensure that the money is spent consistent with community priorities.

Opponents say the cost of living in the Bay Area is out of control, with many people being priced out of our community by the cost of rent and other basic needs. Additionally, the City has a windfall of tens of millions of dollars from the taxes generated by the booming housing market, and the state and federal governments are sending millions more to local cities. They should use that before coming to existing residents and struggling businesses to ask for more money. We simply can't afford any more tax increases for any reason.

The infrastructure retains two-thirds support, while other two-thirds requirement measures fall well short of the margin needed for passage after pros & cons.

Two-Thirds Requirement Measures

Measure	Initial Vote		Vote After Messaging	
	Total Yes	Total No	Total Yes	Total No
^\$95 Million Infrastructure Bond	68%	25%	67%	26%
^RETT >\$2 Million	67%	30%	62%	34%
\$95 Million Housing Bond	58%	41%	57%	35%
Property Tax for Housing	51%	46%	50%	46%
Parcel Tax for Housing	42%	53%	35%	61%

Q8 & Q9. (b, e, g, i, j) The City is considering placing a measure or measures on an upcoming ballot in a future election, though the final structures of these potential measures have not been developed. However, I am going to read to you a list of different approaches to raising funds the City is currently considering, and after I read each one, please tell me whether you would vote "yes" or "no" on that measure. ^Not Part of Split Sample

The tax on medium and large businesses, cannabis tax, and TOT measures retained strong support after pros & cons.

Simple Majority Requirement Measures

Measure	Initial Vote		Vote After Messaging	
	Total Yes	Total No	Total Yes	Total No
Medium/Large BLT	70%	26%	64%	31%
^Cannabis Tax	69%	27%	67%	29%
^TOT	69%	27%	67%	28%
BLT	56%	40%	48%	48%
^Natural Gas UUT	52%	45%	48%	45%

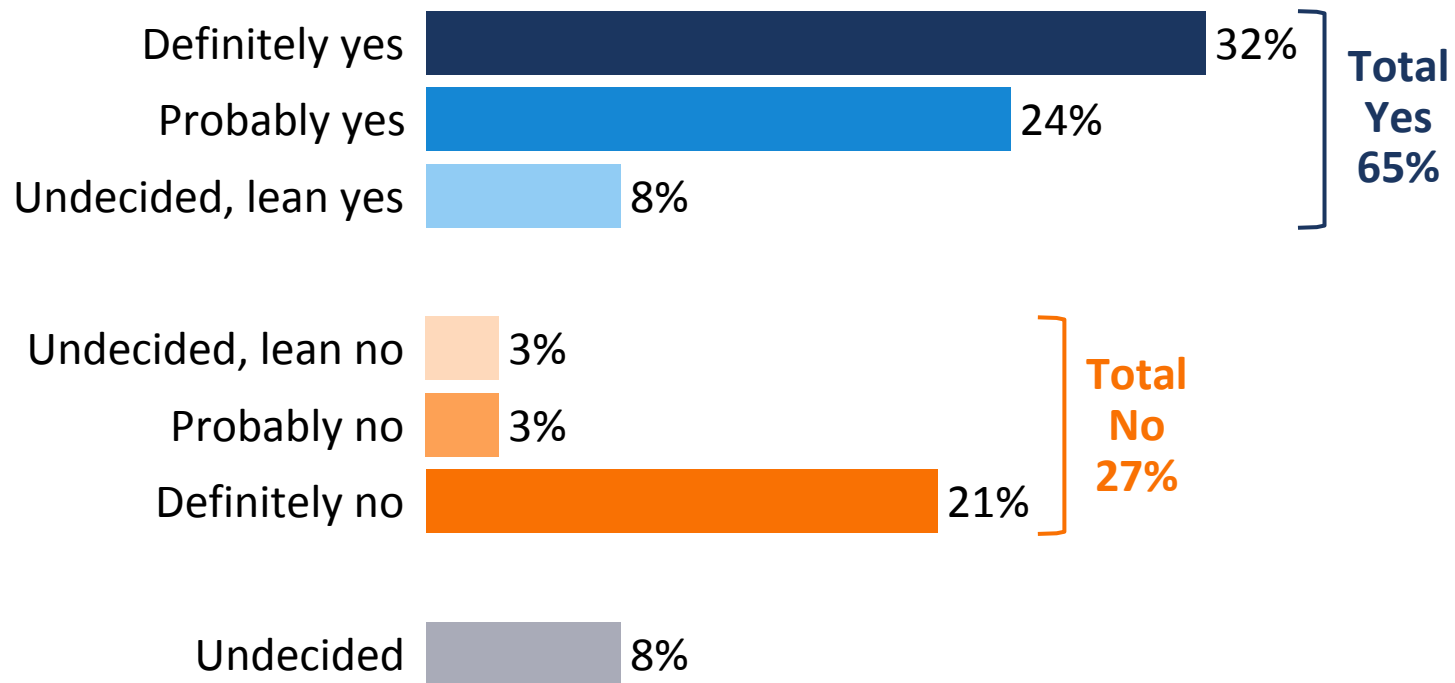
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Police Oversight Measure

Two-thirds of voters said they would support an independent police oversight commission.

I am going to ask you about an entirely different ballot measure that some people have proposed in the City of Alameda. This measure would create an independent police oversight commission, with a group of residents appointed to review police policies, training, and other issues. Please tell me whether you would vote “yes” or “no” on that measure.





Conclusions

Overall Conclusions

- While Alamedans hold increasingly mixed views about the direction of the city, they overall approve of City government and management. They are more mixed in their views of the Mayor and City Council.
- Housing costs are a broadly shared concern. Notably, concern about traffic safety has increased over the last two years, as has concern about crime.
- A majority believes in principle that the City has “a great” need or “some” need for additional funding, though most say “some” rather than “great” – an indication that voters are unaware of the investments the City requires.
- Voters most highly prioritize investments in maintaining emergency response times, infrastructure upgrades, and preparation for and prevention of natural disasters including flooding and earthquakes.
- Specific to housing, voters highly value support for victims of domestic violence, housing and services for people who are homeless, and other key communities

Ballot Measure Conclusions

- Mechanisms with a two-thirds vote threshold appear challenging for November 2022, evenly those addressing the high-priority issue of housing.
 - ♣ As concepts, a \$95 million infrastructure bond and establishing a real estate transfer tax for home greater than \$2 million start essentially at two-thirds, though only the bond stayed at that level after an exchange of pros and cons.
- However, three simple-majority measures begin with support from broad majorities, and retain that support after an exchange of pros and cons.
- These approaches include:
 - ♣ A business license tax for small and medium businesses in the city
 - ♣ A cannabis tax
 - ♣ A transient occupancy tax
- Notably, this survey tested these in a very limited fashion. These approaches may next merit further exploration, including testing voter reactions to potential 75-word ballot labels (which include the amount each would raise, accountability provisions, and the projects and services the measures would fund) and assessing the impacts of a more-robust set of pros and cons on support. In the case of a cannabis tax, a rate and mechanism would also need to be tested.

Ballot Measure Cheat Sheet

Likely Viable in 2022	Borderline Viability	Not Currently Viable
- Increasing the business license tax for medium and large businesses to fund general city services and bring the tax rate up to that of neighboring cities - Establishing a tax on cannabis to fund general city services - Increasing the transient occupancy tax, also known as a hotel tax, paid by hotel and Airbnb guests, from 10% to 14% to fund general city services	- Issuing \$95 million in bonds to fund major infrastructure projects - Establishing a real estate transfer tax for homes over \$2 million to fund affordable housing - Increasing the business license tax to fund general city services and bring the tax rate up to that of neighboring cities - Increasing the tax on natural gas to fund general city services and discourage its use in homes and businesses to address climate change	- Issuing \$95 million in bonds to fund building affordable housing - Establishing a property tax of 12.5 cents per square foot to support programs make housing more affordable - Establishing a property tax of 25 cents per square foot to fund building affordable housing, and supporting programs to making housing more affordable

For more information,
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