



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

NOTICE: This document is not screen-reader compatible. We are working with our consultant to create an accessible version. If you need assistance reading this document before then, please contact Marcella Aranda at maranda@bayareametro.gov. A verbal presentation of the poll results will be made at the December 8, 2023 Legislation Committee meeting which can be streamed live or afterwards at <https://mtc.ca.gov/>.



Bay Area Regional Transportation Effort Voter Survey: Executive Summary

October 2023

Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee

December 8, 2023

Handout

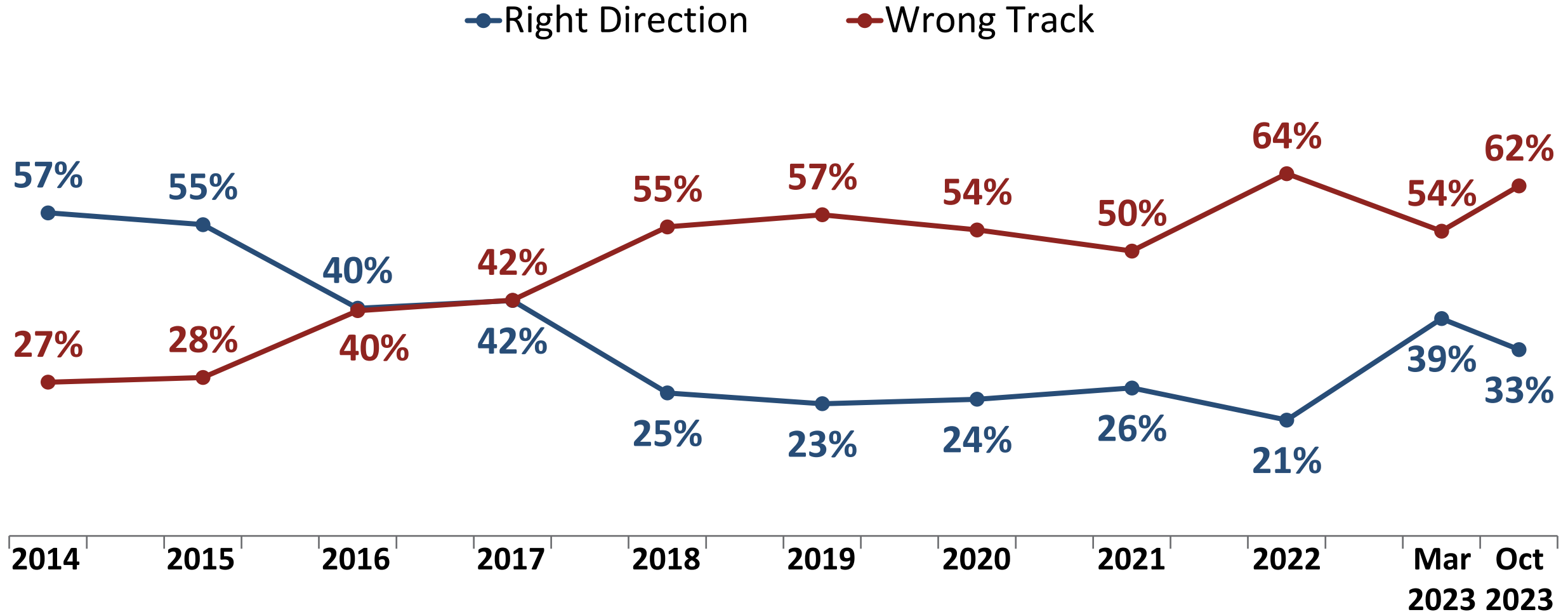
Methodology

- ▶ Survey of 9-County Bay Area registered voters
- ▶ Conducted October 16 – 31, 2023
- ▶ 2,700 total responses; overall margin of error ± 1.89 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval
- ▶ Multi-modal methodology using live telephone interviews and email/text invitations to an online survey
- ▶ Available in English, Spanish, and Chinese
- ▶ Where applicable, results are compared to similar survey conducted March 2023

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

Direction of the Bay Area

Bay Area voters continue to be very pessimistic.

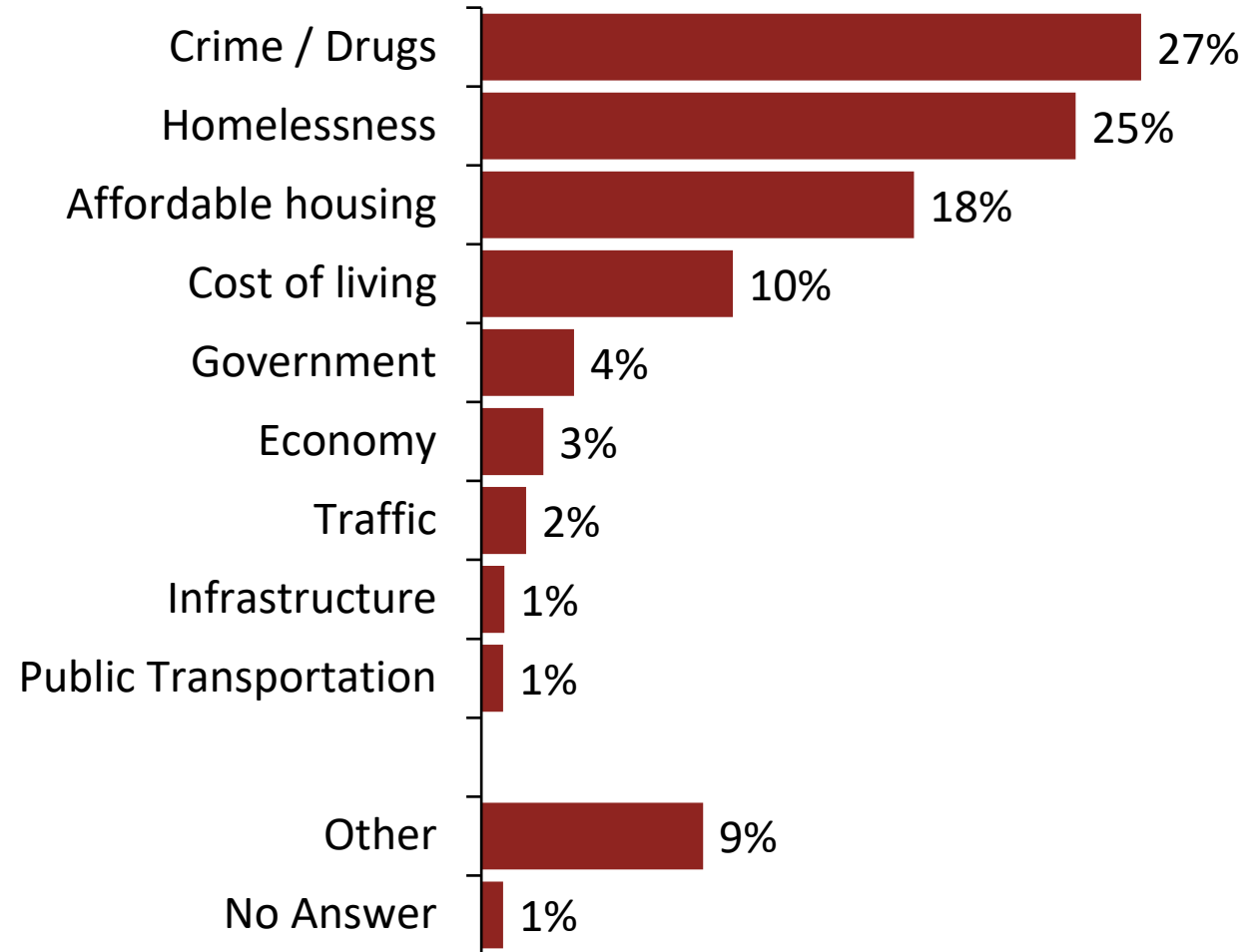


Do you feel things in the Bay Area are going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track? 2014-2022 source: Bay Area Council, Bay Area Poll

Most Important Problem

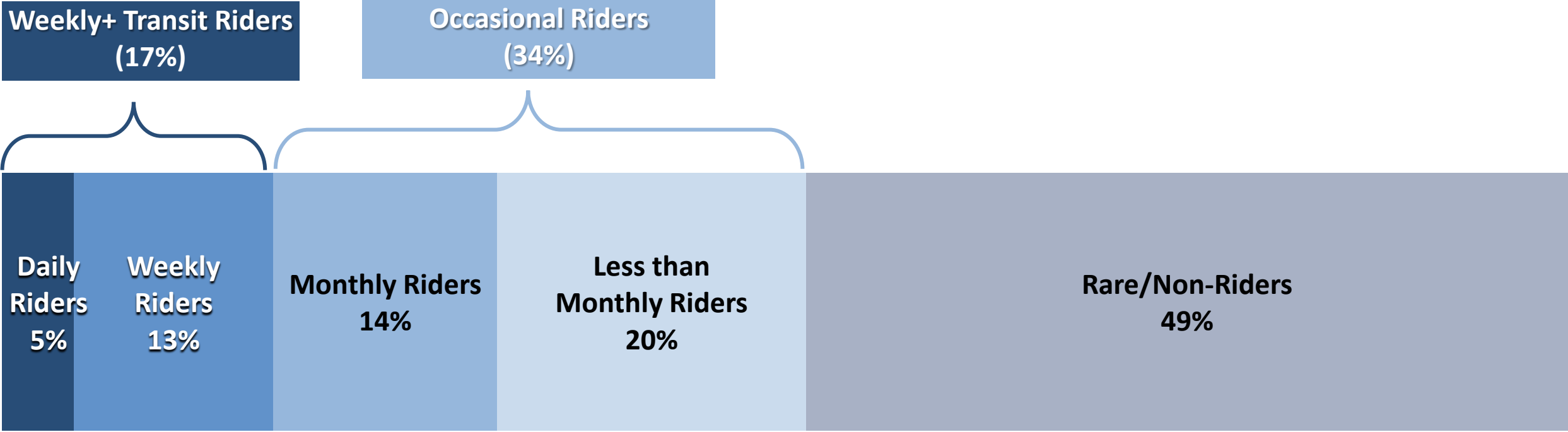
Traffic and transportation are top of mind issues for only a few.

What do you think is the most important problem facing the Bay Area today?



Transit Ridership

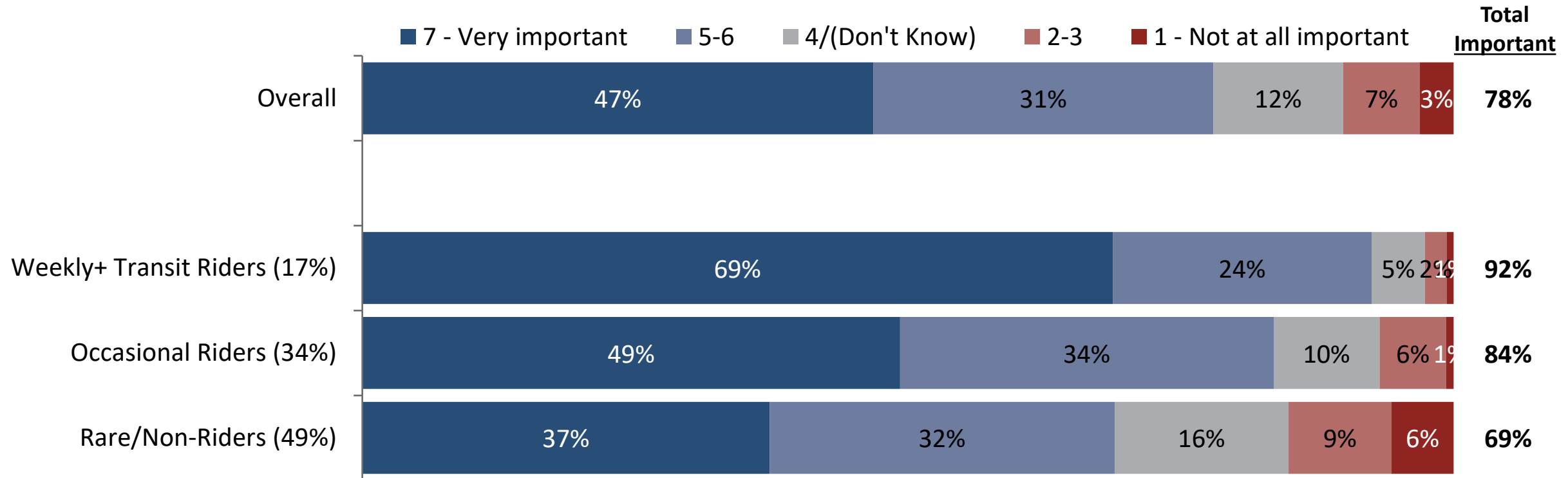
Although few voters report being daily riders, about half say they use transit at least occasionally.



Importance of Public Transit

Public transit is important to most, even those who don't use it.

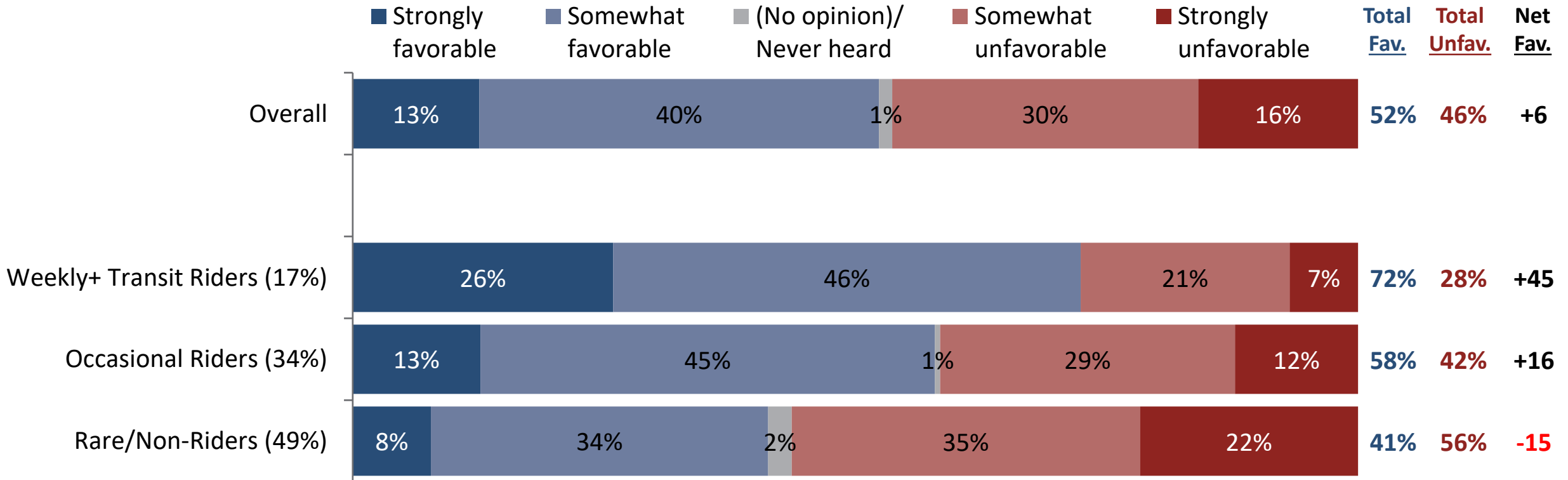
How important would you say public transit is for the Bay Area?



Public Transit Favorability

While frequent riders are generally positive, many others have negative perceptions of local transit.

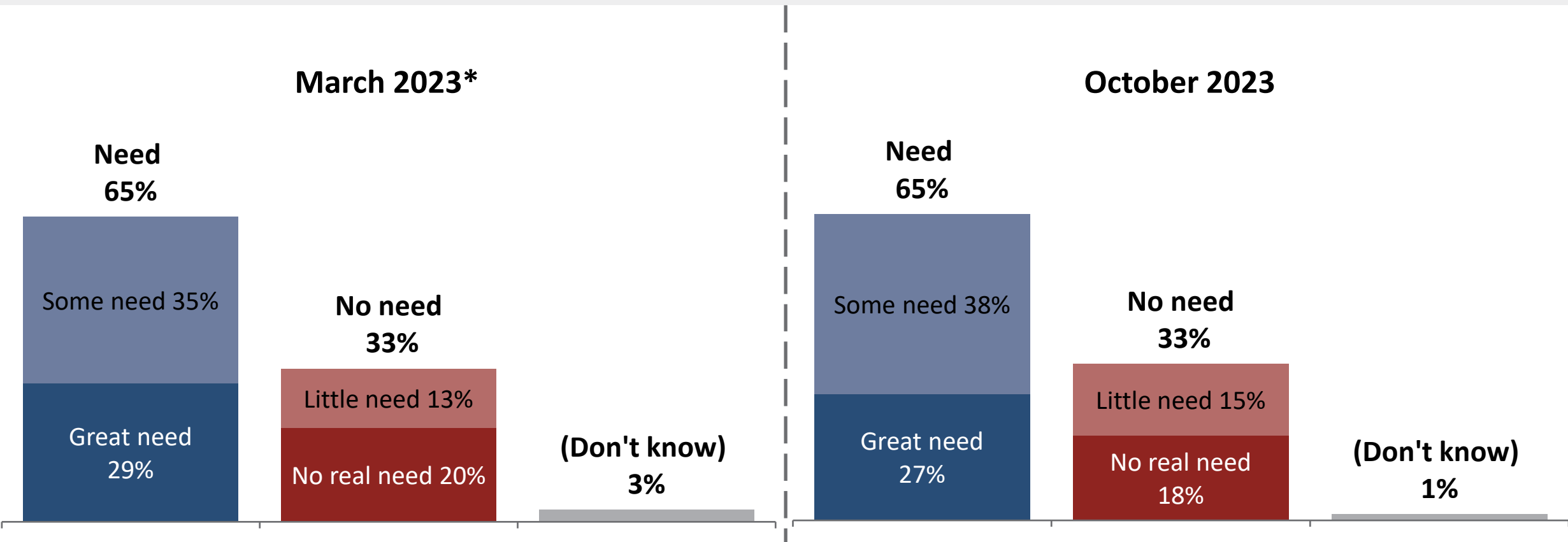
In general, would you say you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of public transit in the Bay Area?



Need for Transportation Funding

Nearly two-thirds continue to see a need for increased funding for Bay Area transportation.

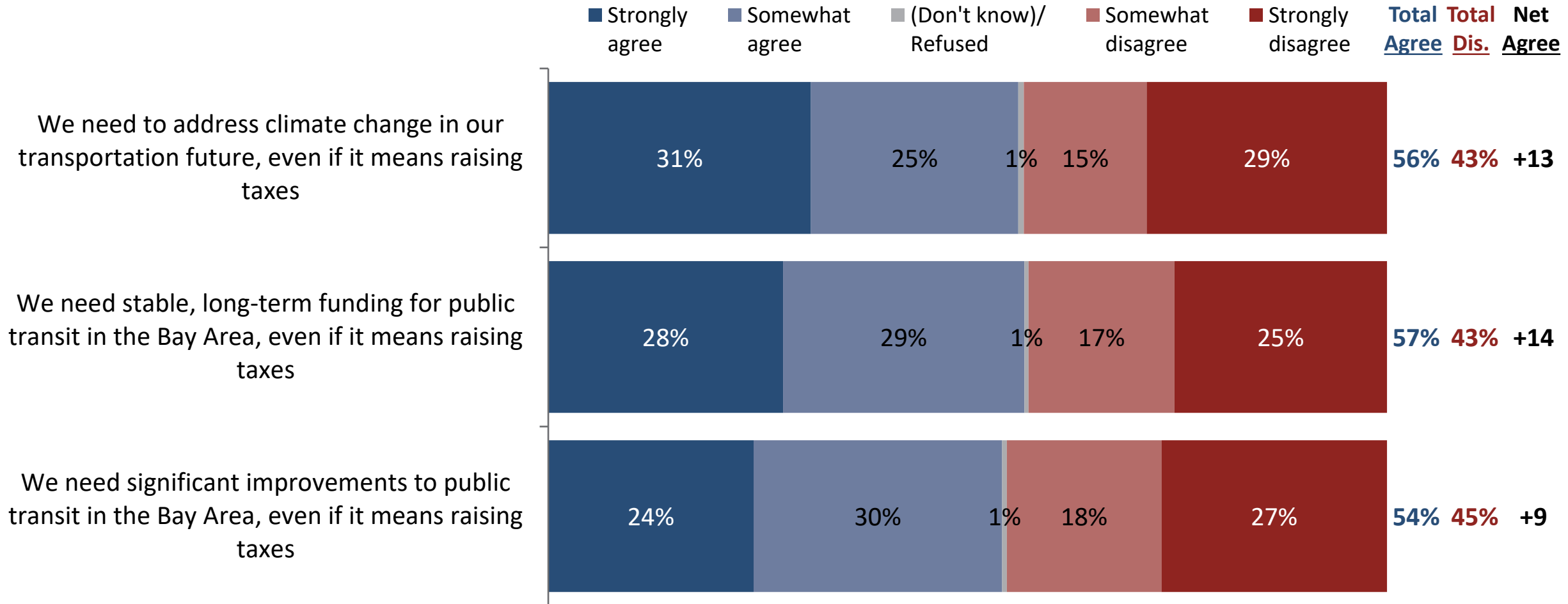
Please tell me if you think there is a great need for more money, some need for more money, little need for more money, or no real need for more money to address transportation in the Bay Area?



*March 2023 sample size: n=900; MoE ±3.3 percentage points

Tax Attitudes

A majority of voters are willing to consider a tax increase to fund transportation needs.



Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

Transportation Revenue Measure

A slight majority of voters support the revenue measures tested.

To improve safety and cleanliness on BART and other local public transit; reduce Bay Area traffic; expand and improve bus, BART, light rail, ferry and train service reliability and convenience; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; repair potholes; make transit easier and more affordable to use and make streets safer for walking and biking...

Sales Tax

*...shall the measure enacting a **half-cent sales tax** for 30 years generating approximately \$1 billion annually, subject to oversight and audits, be adopted?*

55% Yes

Income Tax

*...shall the measure enacting a **0.17% income tax** for 30 years generating approximately \$1 billion annually, subject to oversight and audits, be adopted?*

51% Yes

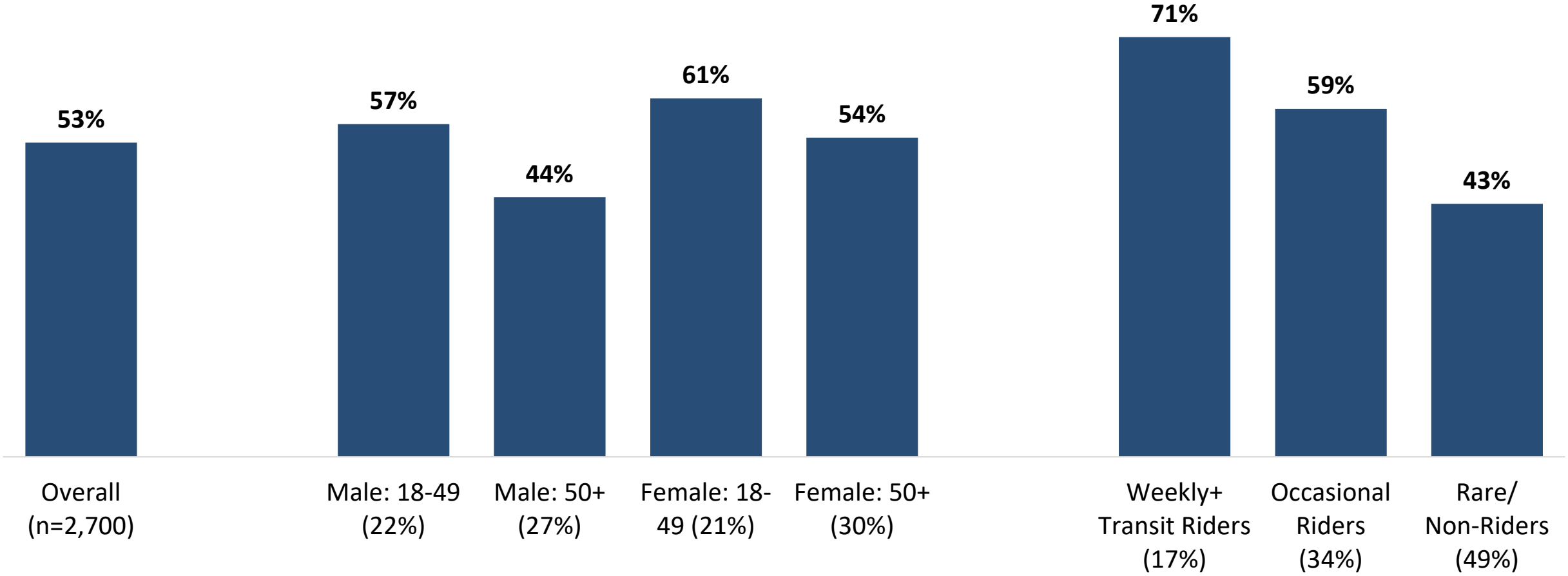
Payroll Tax

*...shall the measure enacting a **payroll tax of 0.36%** for 30 years generating approximately \$1 billion annually, subject to oversight and audits, be adopted?*

55% Yes

Combined Measure Support by Subgroups

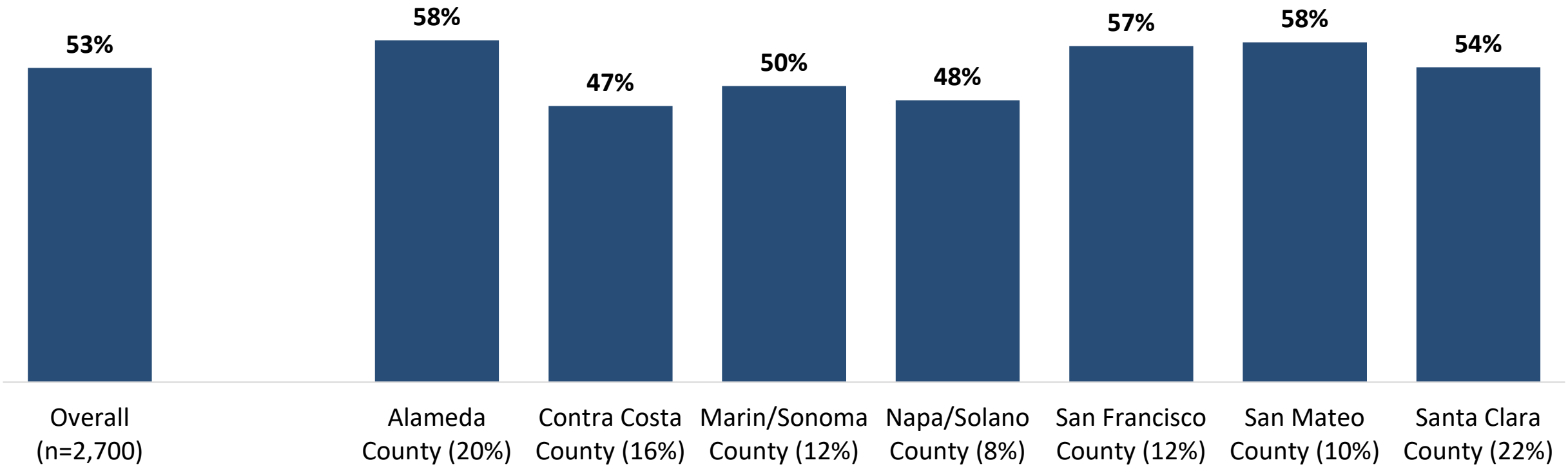
% Yes



Margin of error for each subgroup shown ranges up to ± 4.5 percentage points
Measure support aggregated across all three revenue mechanisms tested

Combined Measure Support by Region

% Yes

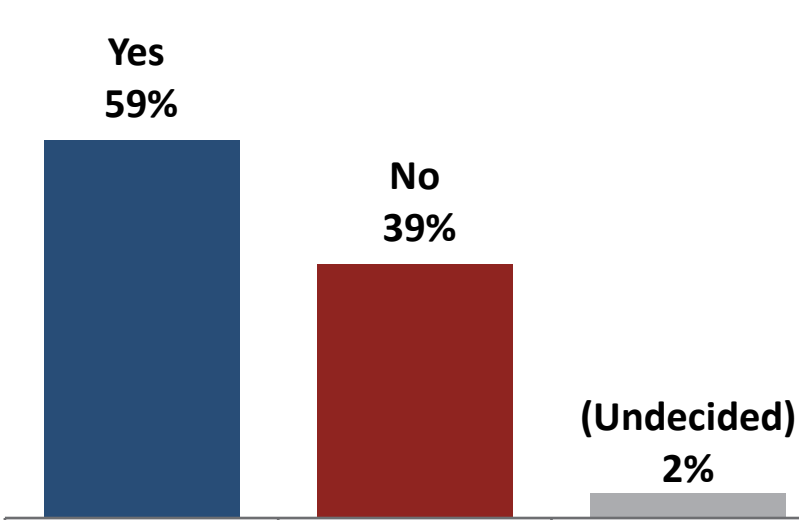


Margin of error for each subgroup shown ranges up to ± 6.7 percentage points
Measure support aggregated across all three revenue mechanisms tested

Comparison to March Survey

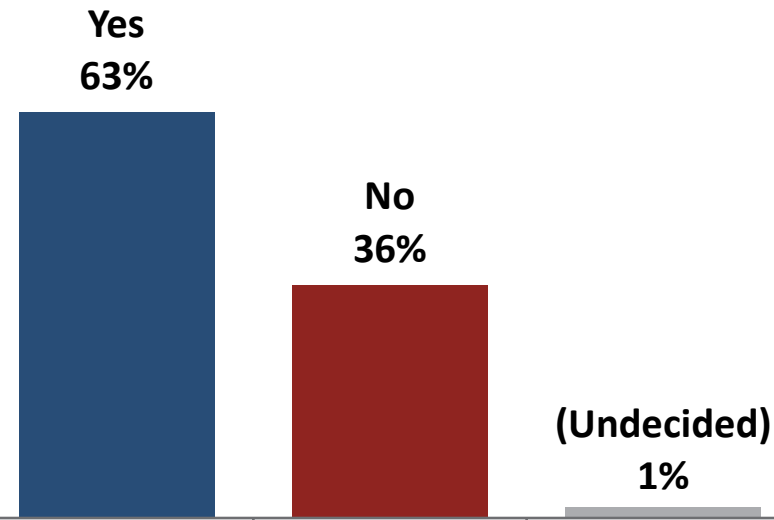
March 2023: Transit Only

To address the Bay Area's transportation needs, reduce greenhouse gases and decrease traffic congestion by: providing reliable, affordable and connected BART, train, ferry, and bus service; improving access to public transit for seniors and persons with disabilities; reducing transit wait times; and improving rider safety; shall the measure enacting a half-cent sales tax for 30 years generating at least \$816,000,000 annually, subject to oversight and audits, be adopted?



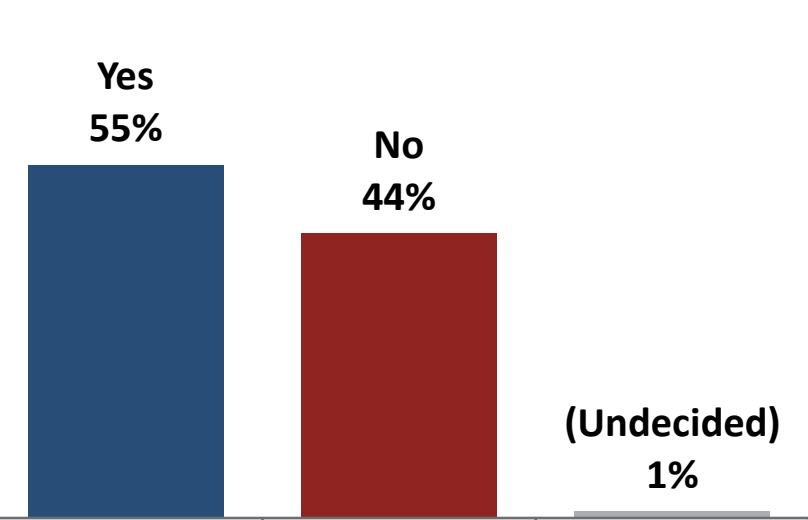
March 2023: Transit & Transportation

To address the Bay Area's transportation needs, reduce greenhouse gases and decrease traffic congestion by: providing reliable, affordable and connected BART, train, ferry, and bus service; improving pedestrian, bike and transit rider safety; repairing potholes; adding carpool lanes; and protecting transportation networks from sea level rise; shall the measure enacting a half-cent sales tax for 30 years generating at least \$816,000,000 annually, subject to oversight and audits, be adopted?



October 2023:

To improve safety and cleanliness on BART and other local public transit; reduce Bay Area traffic; expand and improve bus, BART, light rail, ferry and train service reliability and convenience; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; repair potholes; make transit easier and more affordable to use and make streets safer for walking and biking, shall the measure enacting a half-cent sales tax for 30 years generating approximately \$1 billion annually, subject to oversight and audits, be adopted?

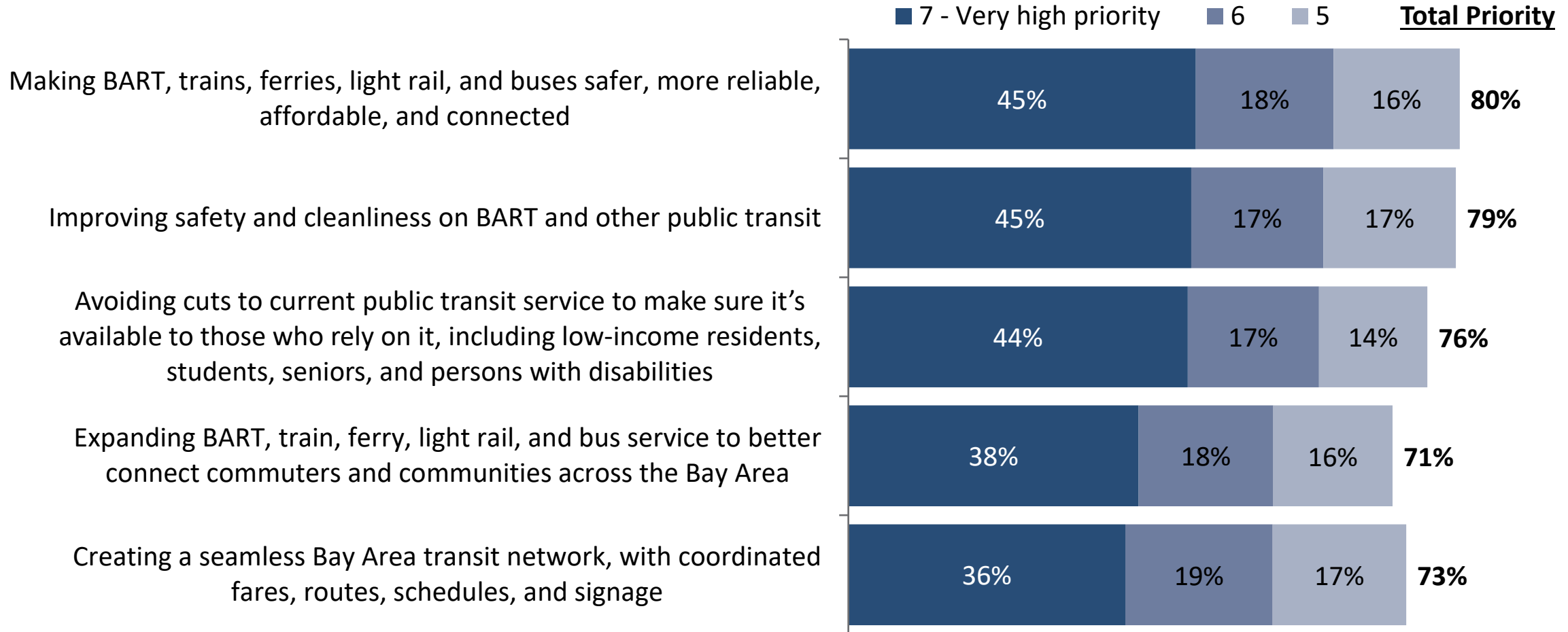


If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?

Each has sample size = 900n, with a margin of error of ±3.3 percentage points

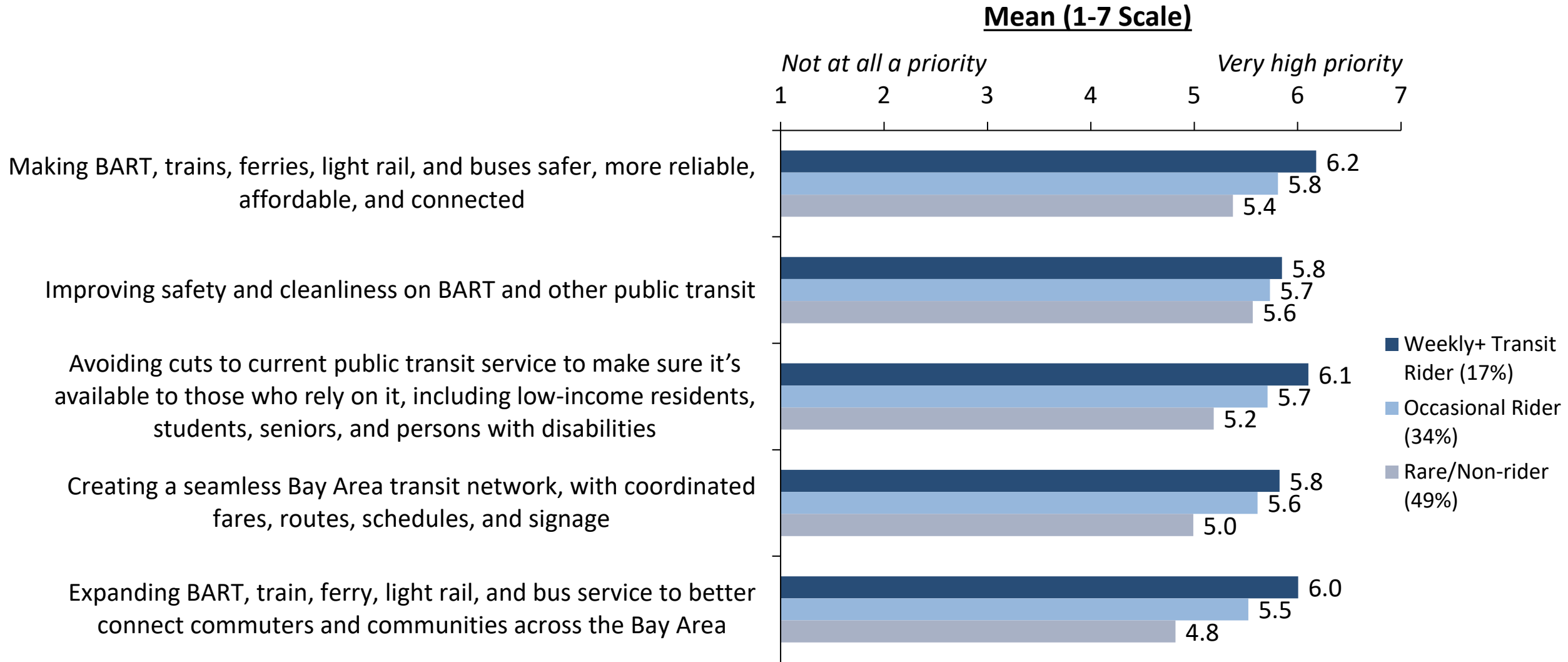
Potential Measure: Transit Items

Potential transit improvements are popular.



I'm going to read you a list of potential items that could be included in the proposed Bay Area transportation measure. After each one, please rate how much of a priority that item is to you.

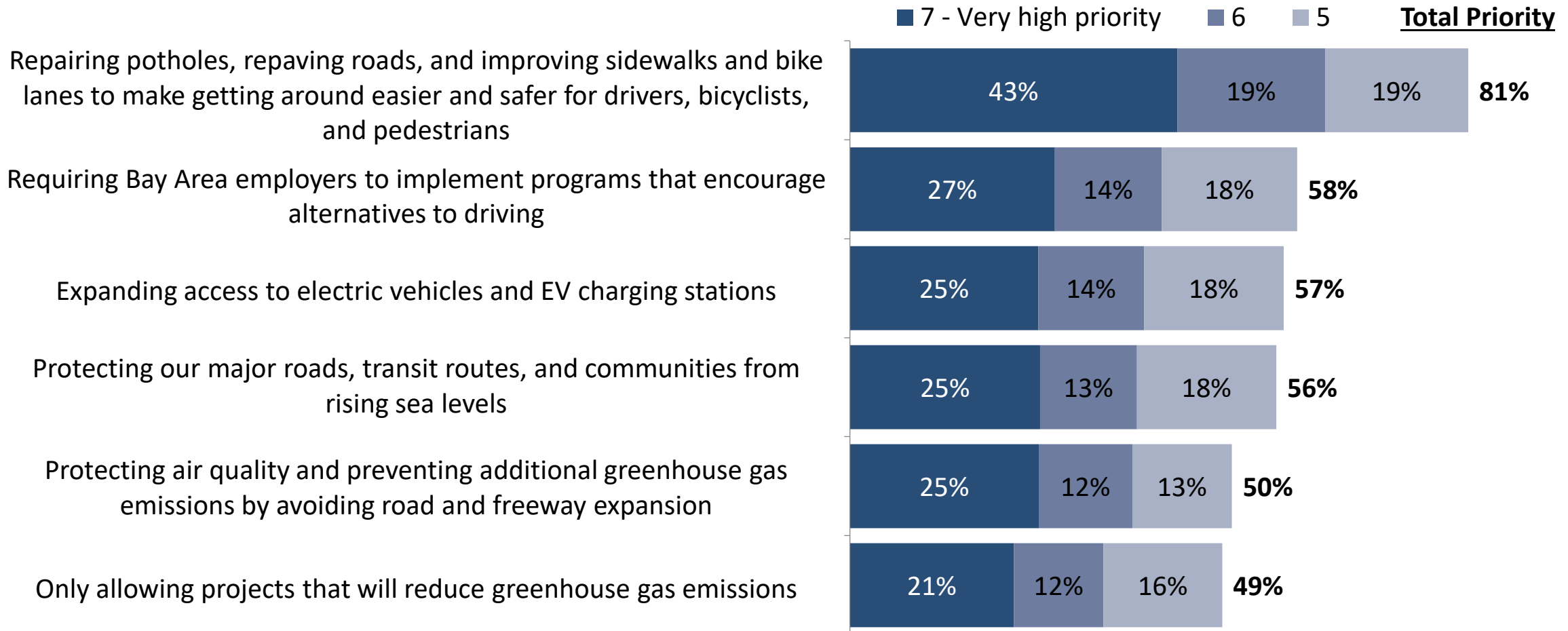
Transit Items by Ridership



I'm going to read you a list of potential items that could be included in the proposed Bay Area transportation measure. After each one, please rate how much of a priority that item is to you.

Potential Measure: Roads and Climate

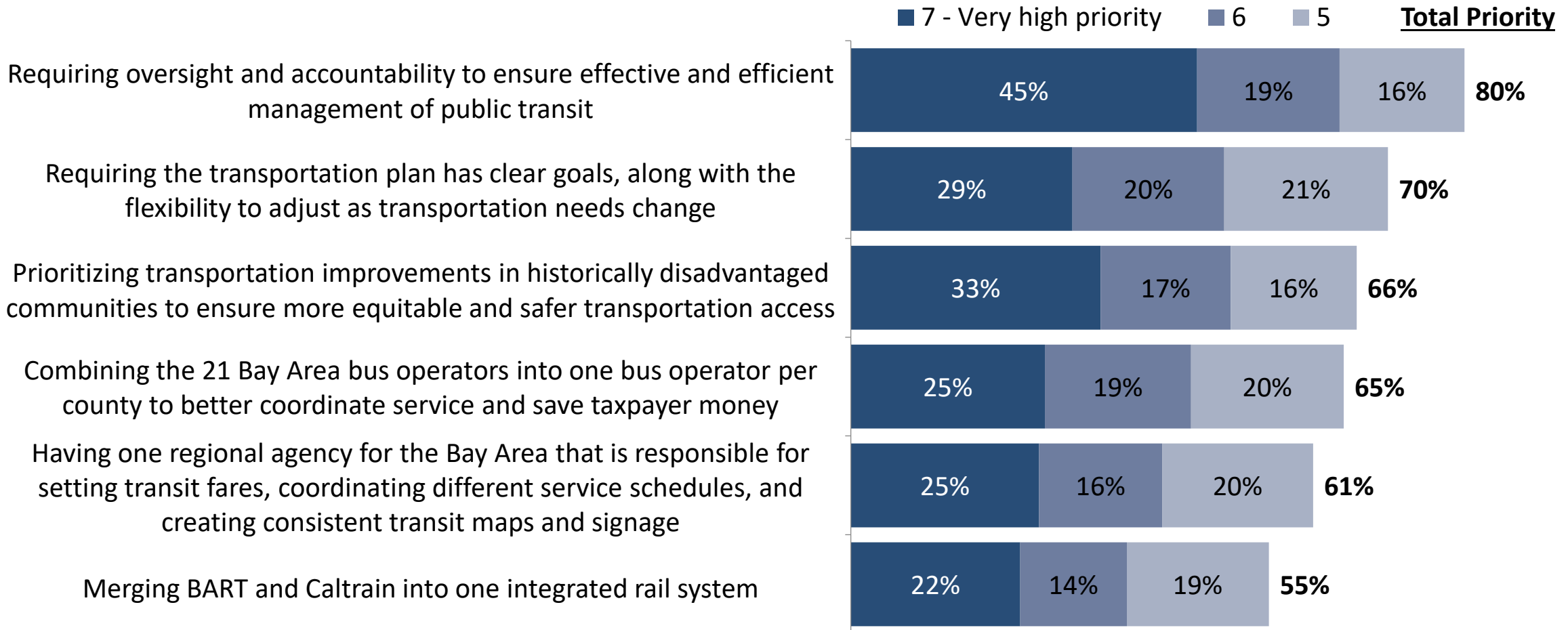
Pothole repair and safety improvements are important to most.



I'm going to read you a list of potential items that could be included in the proposed Bay Area transportation measure. After each one, please rate how much of a priority that item is to you.

Potential Measure: Reforms

Voters want accountability, and reforms that could bring change have significant support.



I'm going to read you a list of potential items that could be included in the proposed Bay Area transportation measure. After each one, please rate how much of a priority that item is to you.

Flexible Goals vs. Detailed Plan

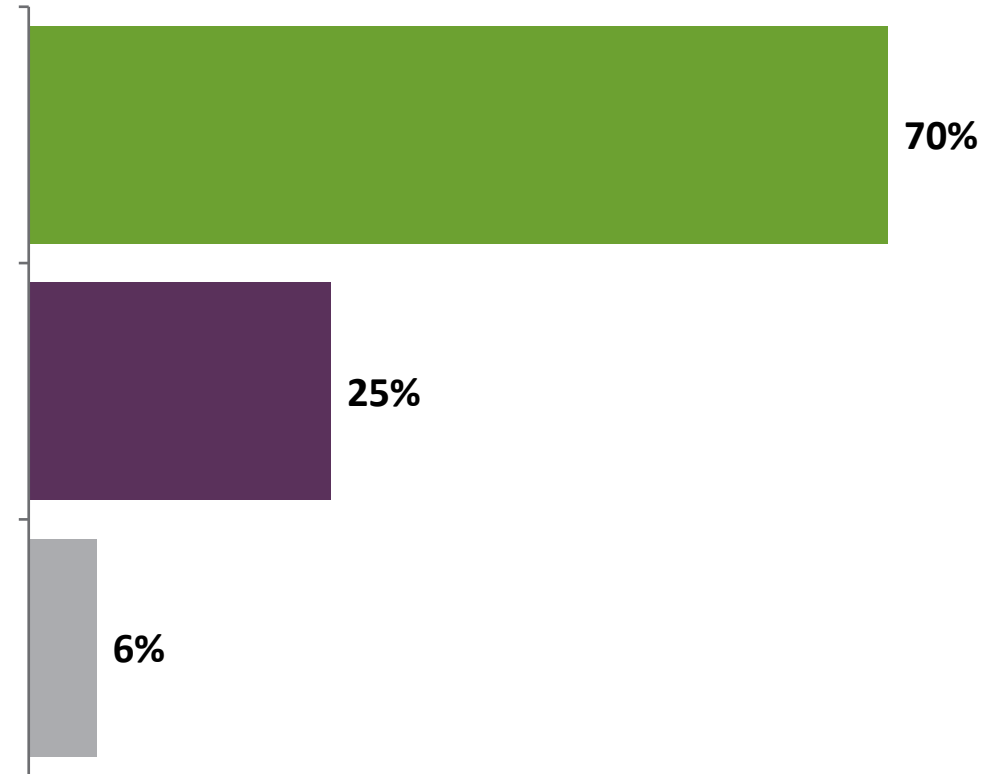
Flexibility is better than detail for the vast majority.

Which of the following statements is closer to your opinion:

A transportation measure for the Bay Area should have clear goals for how money will be spent while also allowing flexibility based on changing circumstances and transportation demand.

A transportation measure for the Bay Area should have a detailed expenditure plan with limited ability to make changes.

(Both/Neither/Don't Know)



Measure Vote Progression

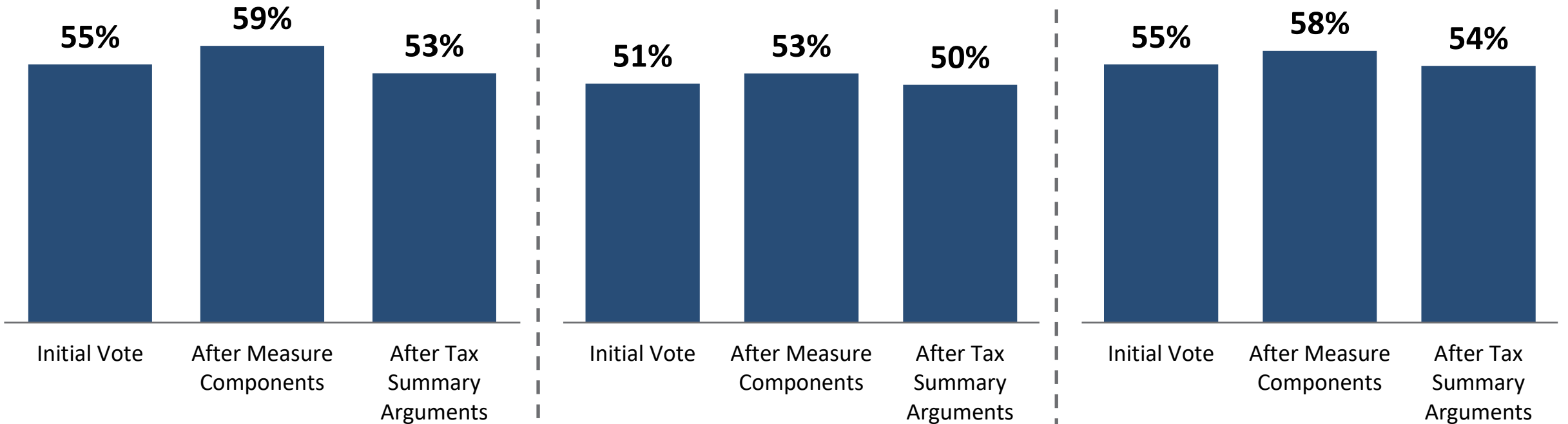
After voters are presented with potential projects as well as short pros and cons about the revenue mechanism, support moves very little.

Sales Tax

Income Tax

Payroll Tax

% Yes

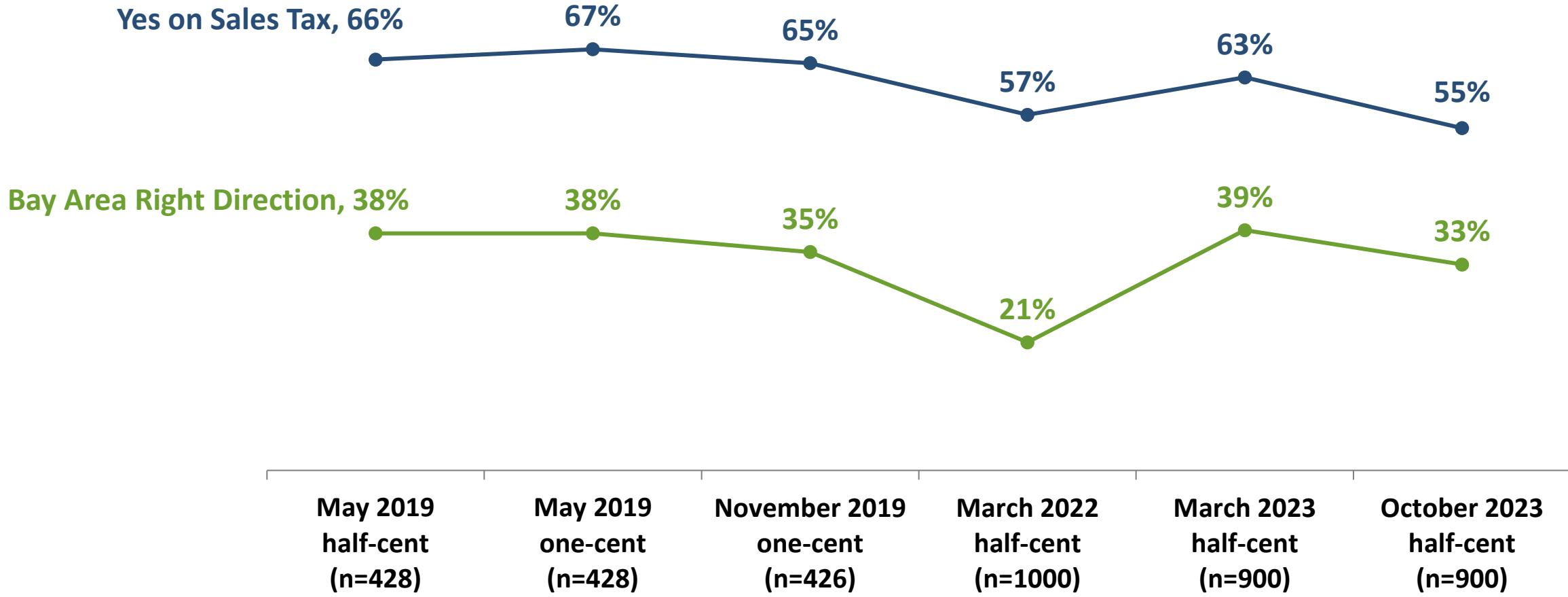


Given what you've heard, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject the proposed transportation measure?

n=900 for each measure; MoE ±3.3 percentage points

Sales Tax Support and Overall Mood

It appears that overall mood may be an influence on support for a measure.



Conclusions

- ▶ Bay Area voters believe **public transit is important**, want to see improvements, and favor reforms that could bring change.
- ▶ Support for the revenue measures tested is **slightly above a majority**.
- ▶ This poll is reflective of the attitudes of Bay Area voters today, **three years ahead of** a potential Nov 2026 election.
- ▶ **Attitudes may shift over time** based on a number of factors, including changes in commute habits, office use patterns, and attitudes towards Bay Area transit.



Ruth Bernstein

Email: ruth@EMCresearch.com

Direct phone: 510.550.8922

Sara LaBatt

Email: sara@EMCresearch.com

Direct phone: 510.550.8924

Harrison Louie

Email: harrison@EMCresearch.com

Direct phone: 206.204.8048