METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

EMC research

Bay Area Regional Transportation Measure Voter Survey Report

Metropolitan Transportation Commission

November 2025

Survey Methodology

- Multi-modal (live telephone/web) survey of Likely November 2026 voters, conducted October 6 – 21, 2025
- 2,800 total responses, overall margin of error ±2.3, weighted to be representative of the 5-county area
  - Alameda County (n = 500)
  - Contra Costa County (n = 500)
  - San Francisco County (n = 800, includes a 50/50 split-sample)
  - San Mateo County (n = 500)
  - Santa Clara County (n = 500)
- Offered in English, Spanish and Chinese
- Where applicable, results compared to prior EMC polling on behalf of MTC

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

Survey Timing Context

6:34 p.m. PDT, October 6, 2025

Government shutdown heading to day 7. Here's what to know right now

From CNN staff

SF Chronicle

BAY AREA // SAN FRANCISCO

How much money could you lose due to Trump's tariffs? San Francisco has done the math

By **Roland Li**, Staff Writer
Sep 15, 2025

CALIFORNIA

Barack Obama joins fight for US House control, urges vote for California districts to counter Trump

By Michael R. Blood | The Associated Press • Published October 14, 2025 • Updated on October 14, 2025 at 7:54 am

SF Chronicle

POLITICS

Santa Clara voters will weigh Measure A, a sales tax hike billed as an anti-Trump move

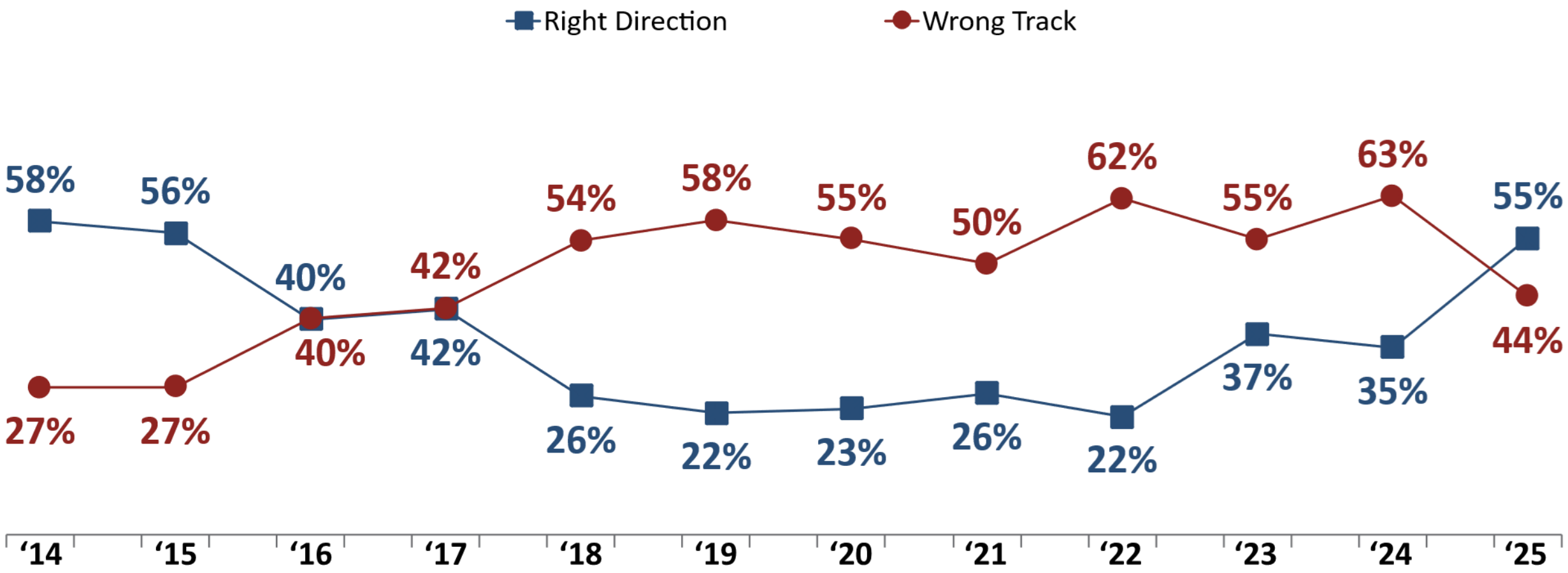
By **Sara DiNatale**, Staff Writer
Updated Oct 6, 2025 1:15 p.m.

Key Findings

- Overall **optimism** in the Bay Area has improved.
- Ratings of the local **public transit** system have **improved** as well, and more rate it important today compared to two years ago.
- Intended outcomes of a potential regional transportation sales tax are considered important, and many are passionate about the need for **maintaining reliable transit service**.
- Support for a measure is **above a majority**, even when San Francisco voters are told about a potential second transit measure.
- Concerns about the cost of, living, taxes and trust in government hold support for a measure **well below two-thirds**.

Direction of the Bay Area

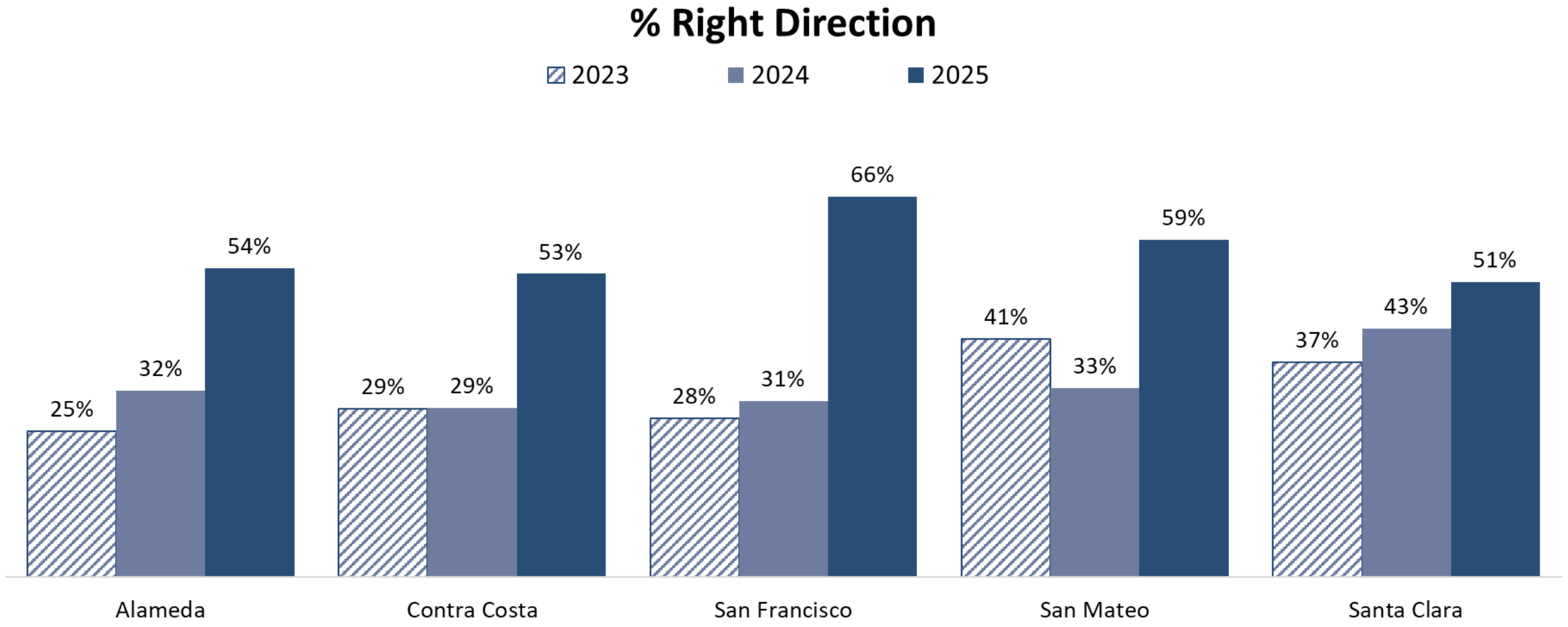
Overall optimism in the Bay Area is up.



Q3. Do you feel that things in the Bay Area are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track? *(Note: data reflects the 5-county survey area only)*

Bay Area Direction by County

While optimism has increased in every county since last year, voter mood is volatile and may continue to fluctuate.

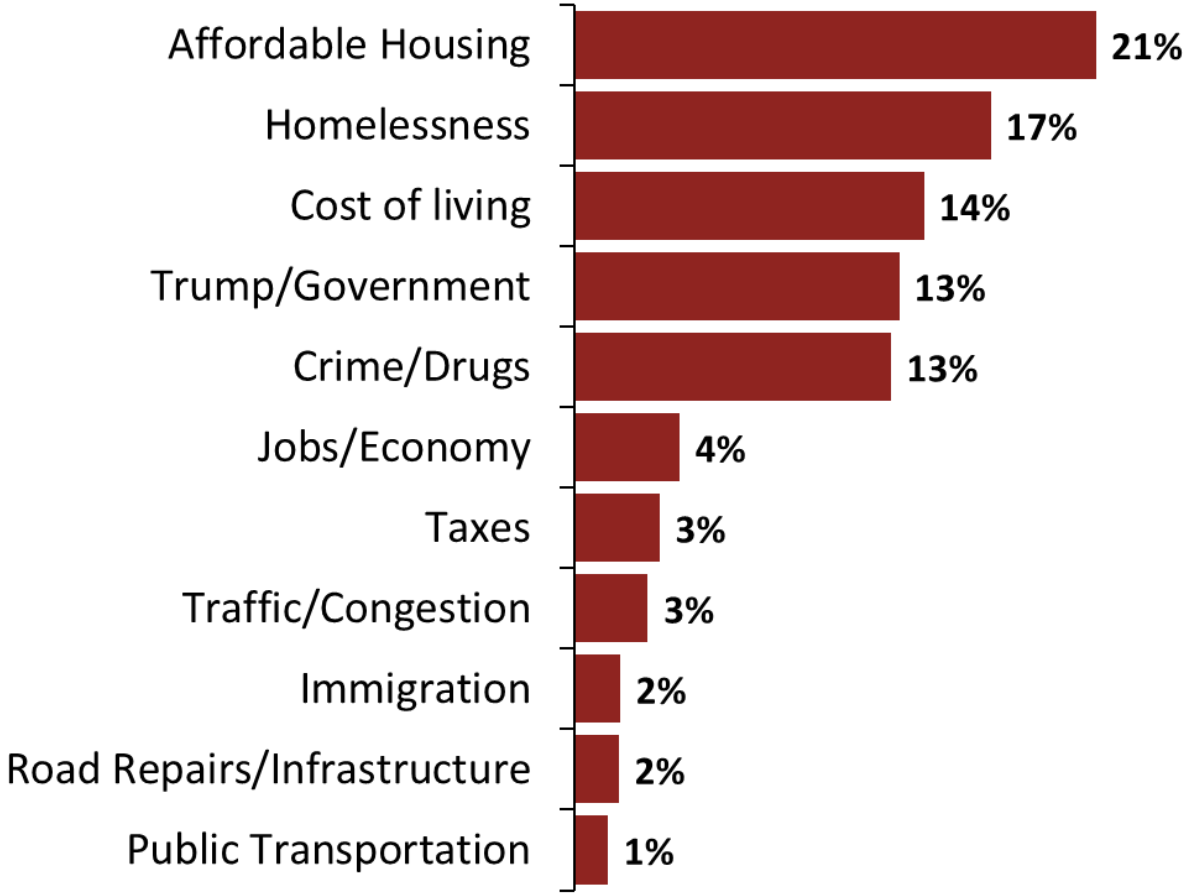


Q3. Do you feel that things in the Bay Area are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

Most Important Problem

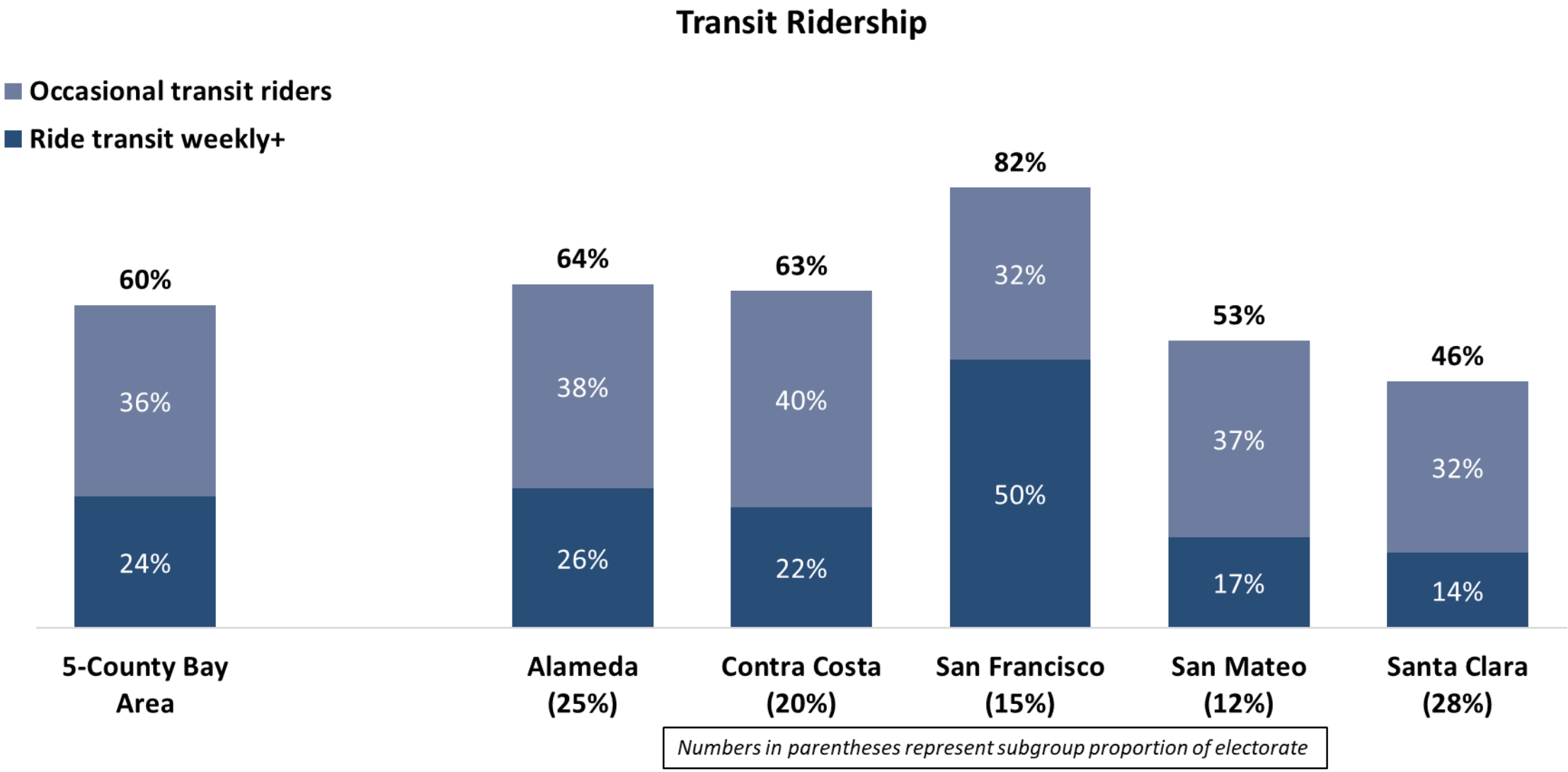
Affordability issues, homelessness, and crime have been the most prominent top-of-mind concerns for several years, while concerns about Trump have been rising. Roads, transportation, and traffic have consistently been a lower-tier concern.

What do you think is the most important problem facing the Bay Area today? *(open-ended question)*



Q4. *(Open-ended question, responses coded into categories and displayed if ≥1%)*

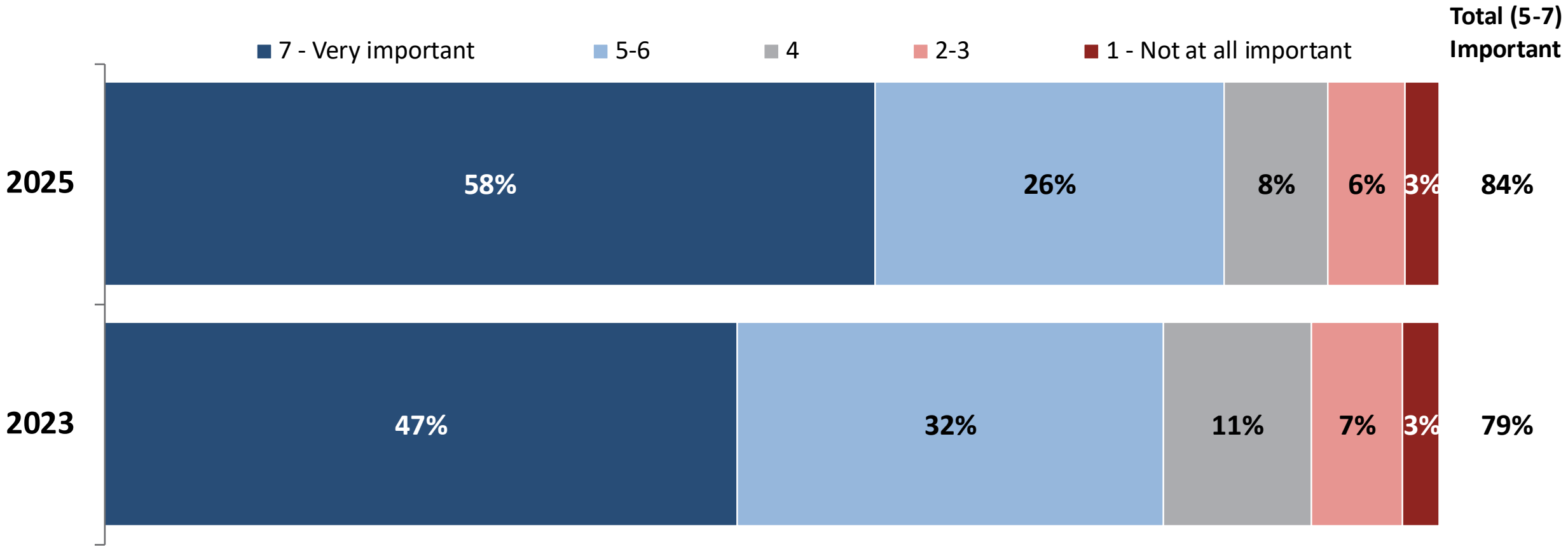
Transit Ridership (Self-Reported)



Importance of Public Transit

Public transit is even more important to Bay Area voters today than it was two years ago.

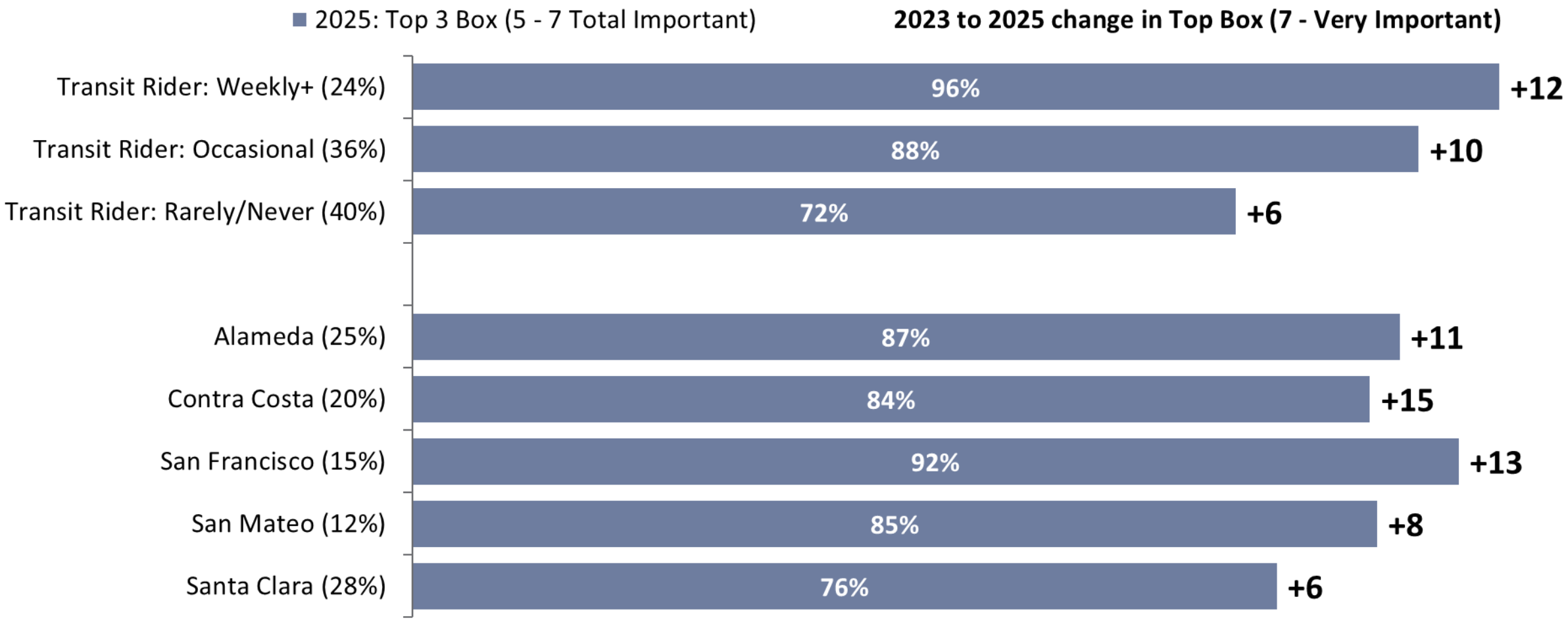
How important would you say public transit is for the Bay Area?



Q8.

Transit Importance Shift by Subgroups

Numbers in parentheses represent subgroup proportion of electorate

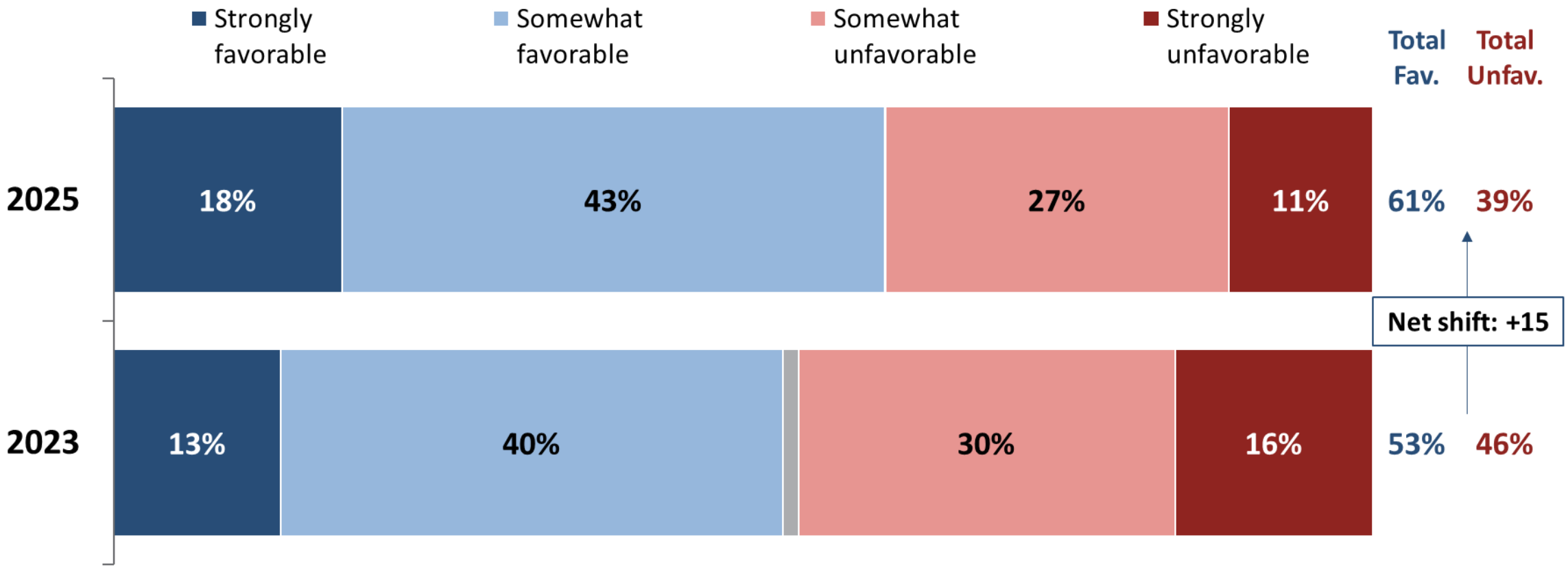


Q8. How important would you say public transit is for the Bay Area?

Public Transit Favorability

Overall perceptions of public transit have improved significantly.

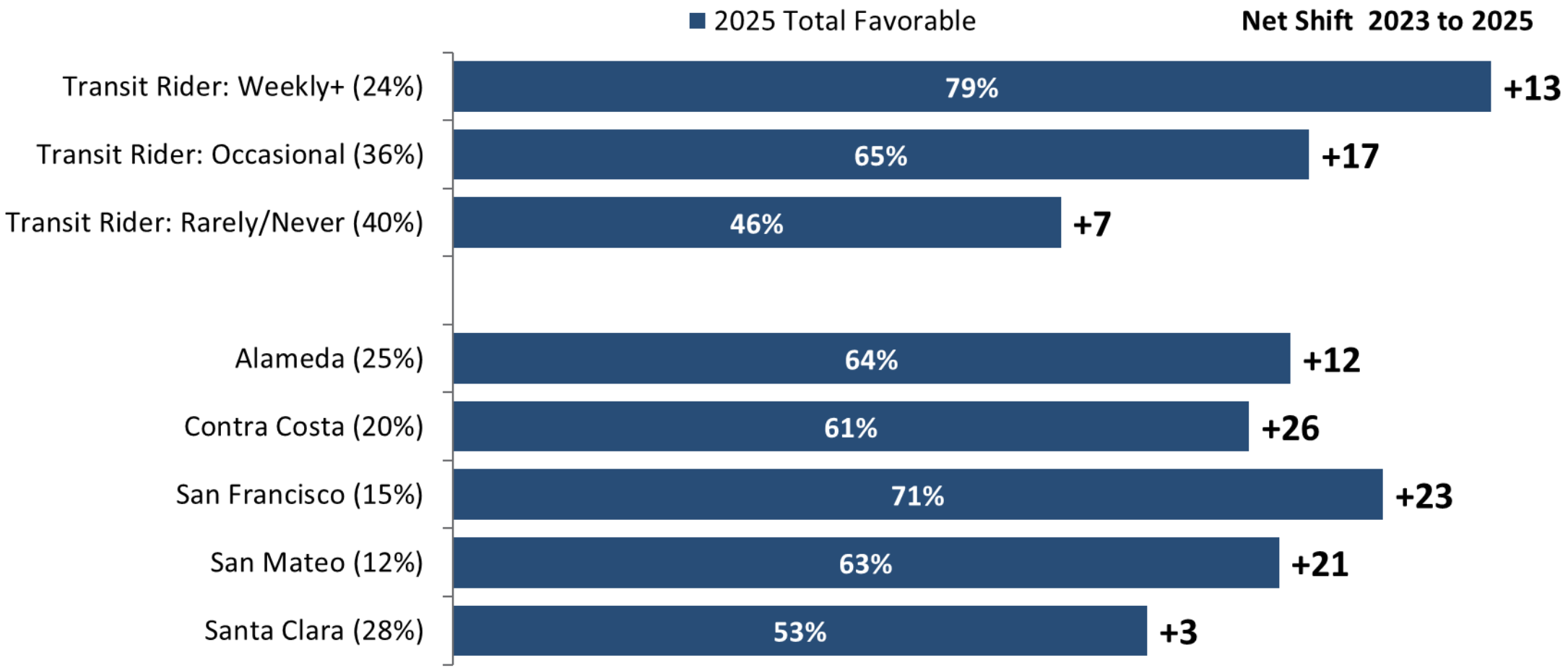
In general, would you say you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable opinion of public transit in the Bay Area?



Q9.

Transit Favorability Shift by Subgroups

Numbers in parentheses represent subgroup proportion of electorate



Q9. In general, would you say you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable opinion of public transit in the Bay Area?

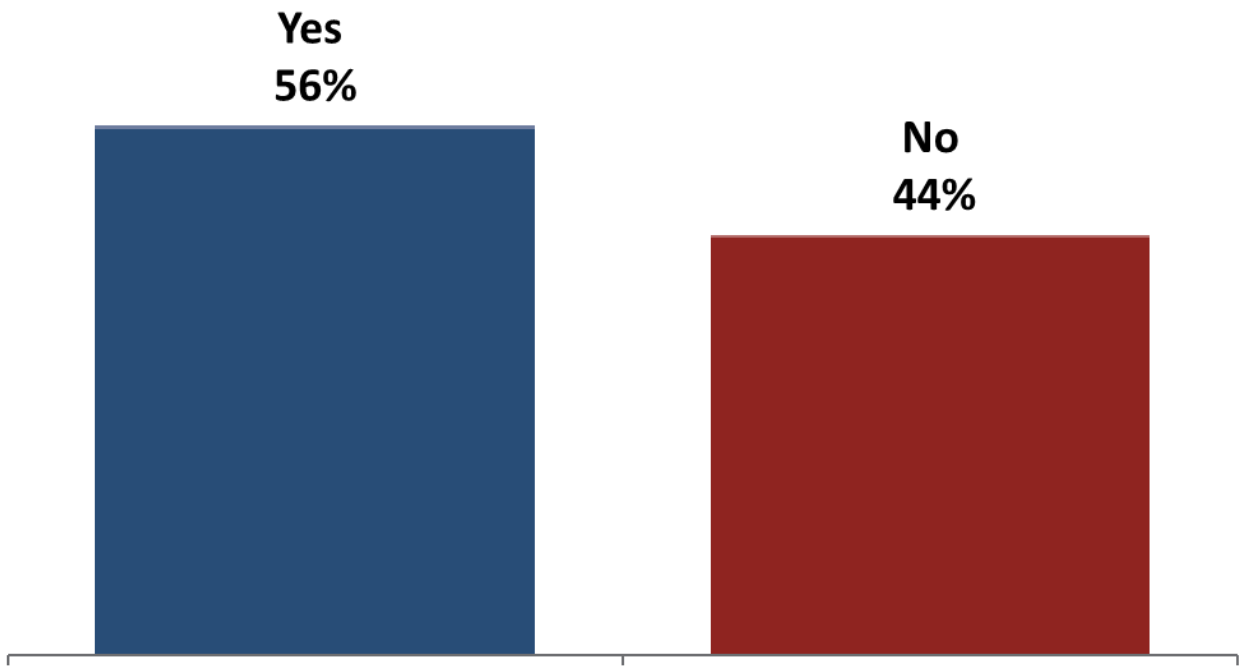
Regional Measure Vote

Support for a regional measure is above a majority, but below the two-thirds threshold.

To prevent major service cuts to BART and other transit, avoid increased traffic, and reduce pollution by:

- Preserving BART, Caltrain, VTA, SamTrans, AC Transit, Muni, other transit for everyone, including workers, students, seniors, persons with disabilities;
- Supporting transit safety, cleanliness, affordability, reliability;
- Repairing roads/potholes;
- Requiring financial transparency, oversight, accountability;

shall the measure enacting a 0.5% (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, Santa Clara counties) and 1% (San Francisco) sales tax for 14 years generating approximately $980,000,000 annually, be adopted?



Q6. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?
(Asked of all respondents; overall margin of error ±2.3 pct pts)

Measure Support Motivations

Why would you <u>support</u> this measure?

Transit Reliance

"I believe affordable transportation is a must for all is seniors, disabled persons, students etc."

"Public transportation is critical, especially for marginalized communities."

"I believe strong and accessible public transportation is vital for healthy communities, especially vulnerable communities that lack resources and need to commute for work or childcare."

Traffic and Pollution

"We need public transit. It's excellent for our community and the environment."

"Transit is essential to reduce congestion and keep the bay area accessible for everyone."

"Bay Area needs better mass transit to reduce congestion and pollution."

"We need to clear up space on the freeway, need clean air."

Avoid Cuts

"Public transportation is the present and future. Bus services and routes have been cut too much already."

"Because public transit needs to be preserved at all costs. Gutting it, reducing route frequency, or cutting services only punishes those who need it most."

"Because BART and other public transit is very important and something I rely on. I don't want to see it have to cut it services."

Q7. (Among voters who initially vote Yes on a regional measure; select verbatims shown for illustrative purposes)

Measure Opposition Motivations

Why would you oppose this measure?

Cost of Living

"I am all for it, but I can't afford it and think we need more public transportation. However, even the tiniest of increases is becoming to much for me to budget."

"No new taxes. Goods and services are already unaffordable for most."

"Cost of living is getting too high. Inflation is making purchases difficult. Another tax is not favorable right now and I'm usually pro-increases of taxes."

Tax Sensitivity

"Taxes are already high. Where is all the money going, when the taxes we have in place are supposed to cover all these already?"

"Our taxes are out of control in this area. We are taxed for everything yet there is very little results."

"Taxes are already ridiculous in all of these jurisdictions. We don't even get basic services for the taxes we pay."

Lack of Trust

"We continue to give BART more money, and they continue to mismanage it. The freeways are in bad shape. We already spend tax money for these transportation issues."

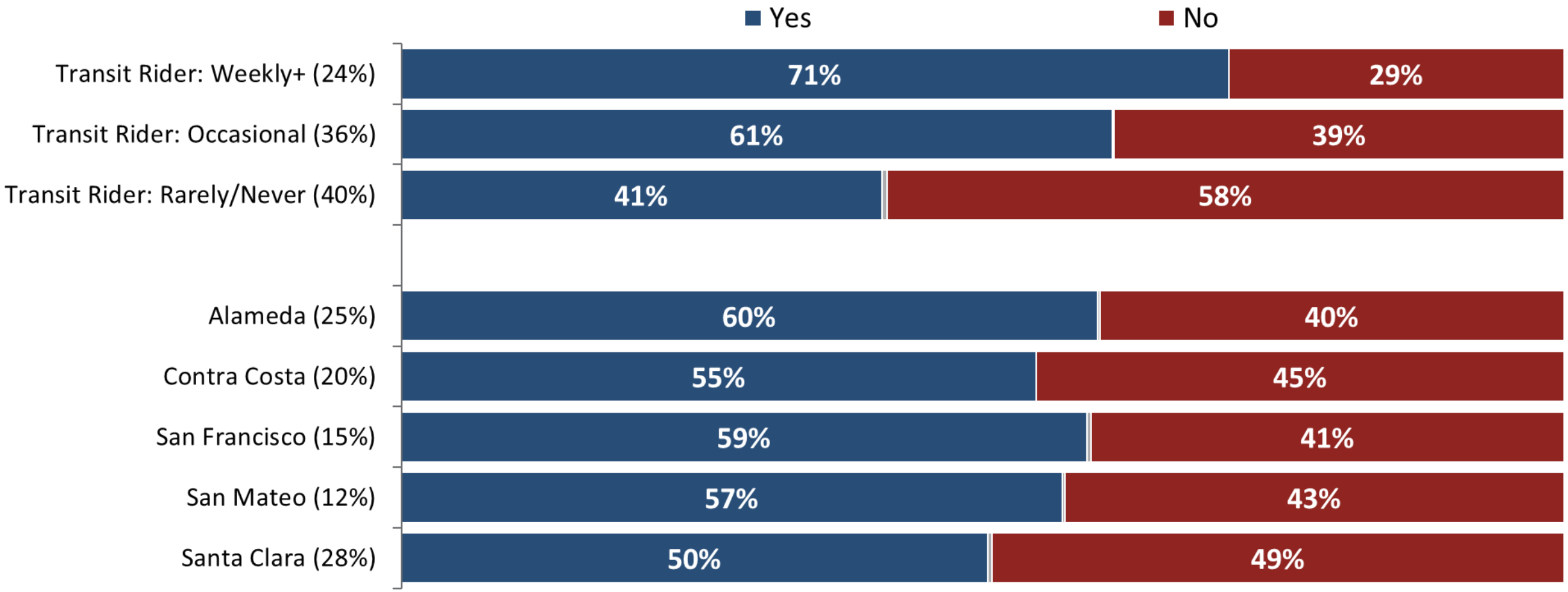
"Funds are so mismanaged at this point we can't trust the system."

"Ineffective management of transit systems. They already receive massive public funding."

Q7. (Among voters who initially vote No on a regional measure; select verbatims shown for illustrative purposes)

Regional Measure Vote by Subgroups

Numbers in parentheses represent subgroup proportion of electorate

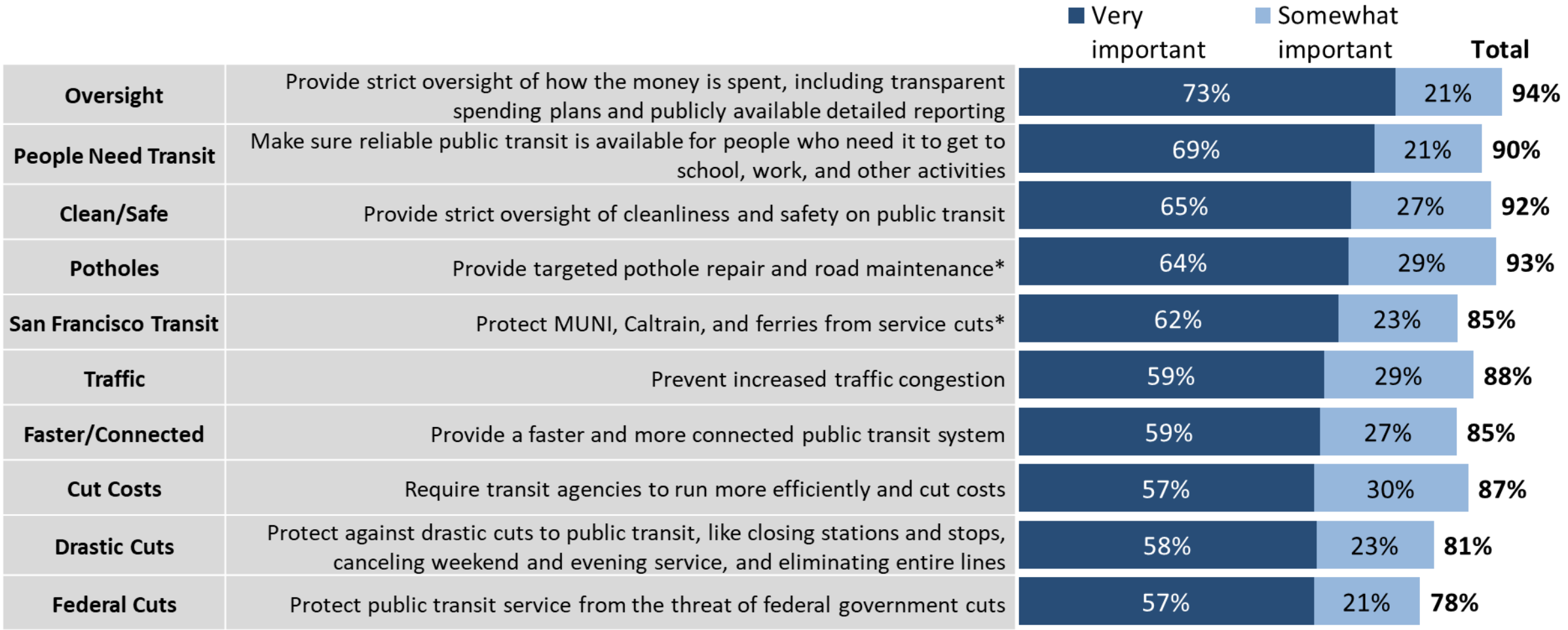


Q6. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?

MoE per county ranges from ±3.5 pct pts (San Francisco, shown as combined support across splits) to ±4.4 pct pts (in each other County)

Measure Outcomes

Intended outcomes of the measure are seen as very important.



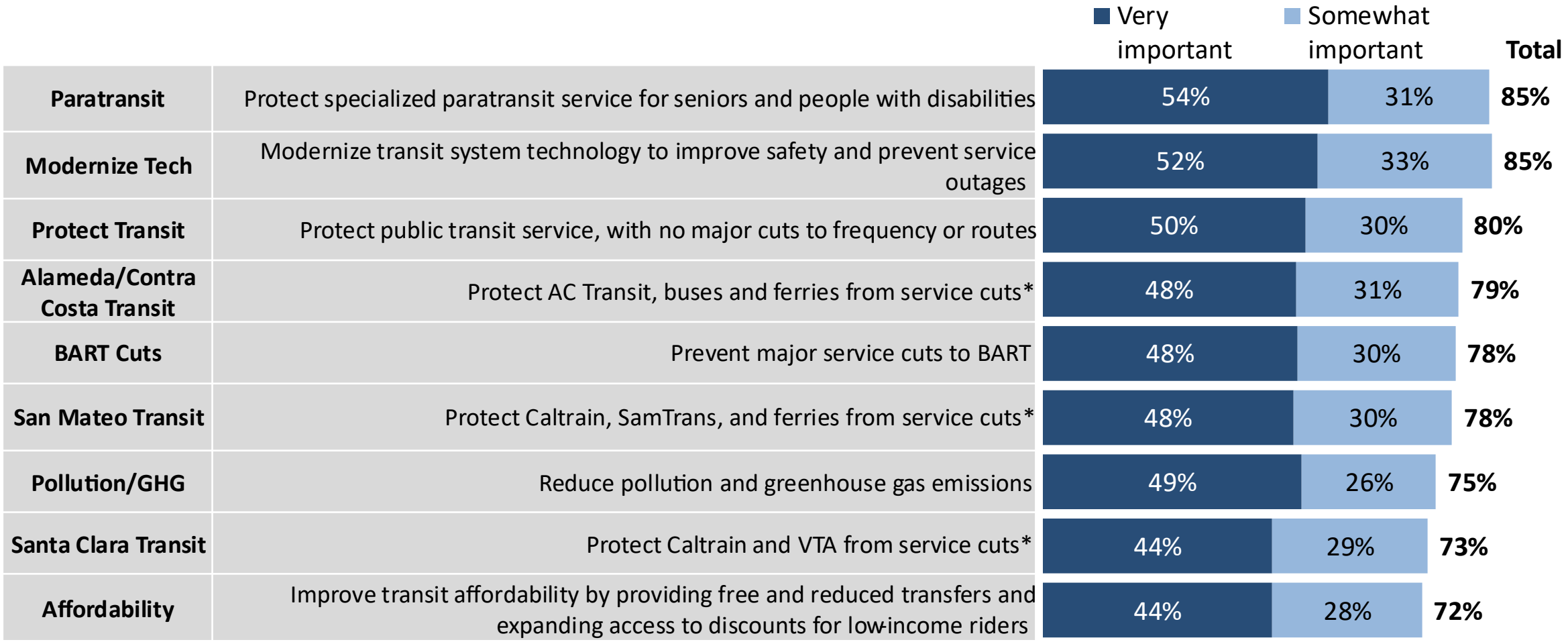
		Very important	Somewhat important	Total
Oversight	Provide strict oversight of how the money is spent, including transparent spending plans and publicly available detailed reporting	73%	21%	**94%**
People Need Transit	Make sure reliable public transit is available for people who need it to get to school, work, and other activities	69%	21%	**90%**
Clean/Safe	Provide strict oversight of cleanliness and safety on public transit	65%	27%	**92%**
Potholes	Provide targeted pothole repair and road maintenance*	64%	29%	**93%**
San Francisco Transit	Protect MUNI, Caltrain, and ferries from service cuts*	62%	23%	**85%**
Traffic	Prevent increased traffic congestion	59%	29%	**88%**
Faster/Connected	Provide a faster and more connected public transit system	59%	27%	**85%**
Cut Costs	Require transit agencies to run more efficiently and cut costs	57%	30%	**87%**
Drastic Cuts	Protect against drastic cuts to public transit, like closing stations and stops, canceling weekend and evening service, and eliminating entire lines	58%	23%	**81%**
Federal Cuts	Protect public transit service from the threat of federal government cuts	57%	21%	**78%**

Q10-28. Next, you'll read some things the measure would do. Please indicate how important each one is to you.

** "Potholes" item not shown in San Francisco; "San Francisco Transit" shown only in San Francisco*

Measure Outcomes (continued)

All of the intended outcomes listed are important to more than two-thirds of voters in the region.

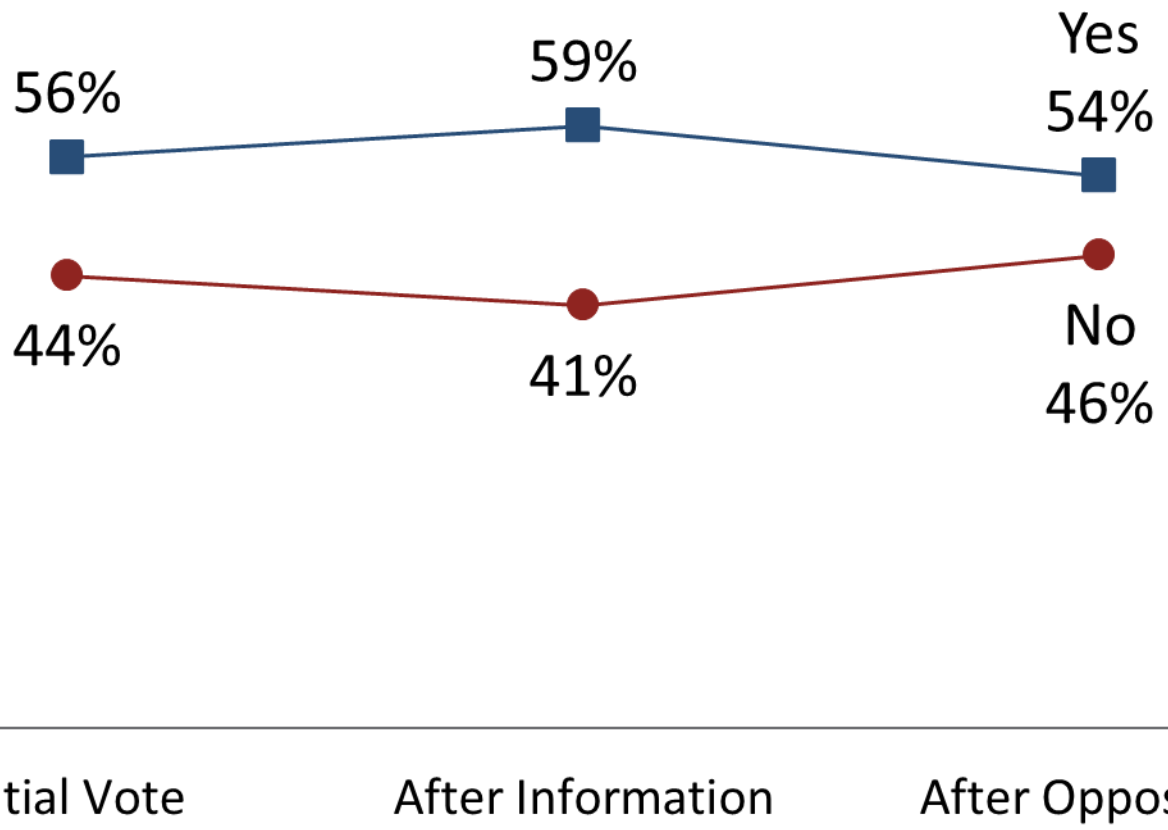


Q10-28. Next, you'll read some things the measure would do. Please indicate how important each one is to you.
County-specific transit items shown only in respective counties.

Measure Vote Progression

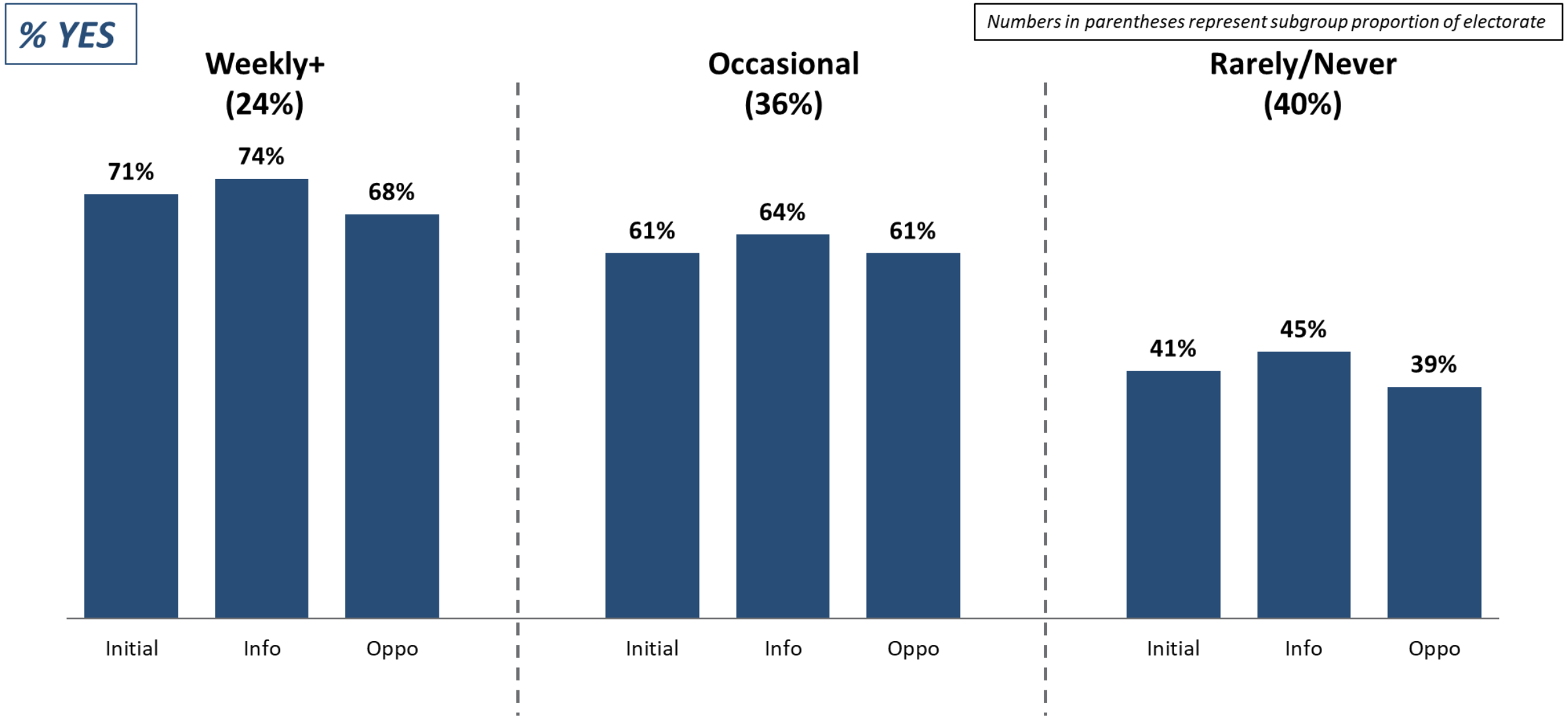
After a simulated campaign of information and opposition, support remains above a majority but short of two-thirds.

Opposition:
Some people say we simply can't afford to increase taxes when the cost of living here is already so high. We pay some of the highest taxes in the nation, and we still don't have safe or reliable public transit. More money won't do anything to improve transit here; it will just get wasted and misspent like the rest.



Q6/Q29/Q30.

Vote Progression by Transit Ridership



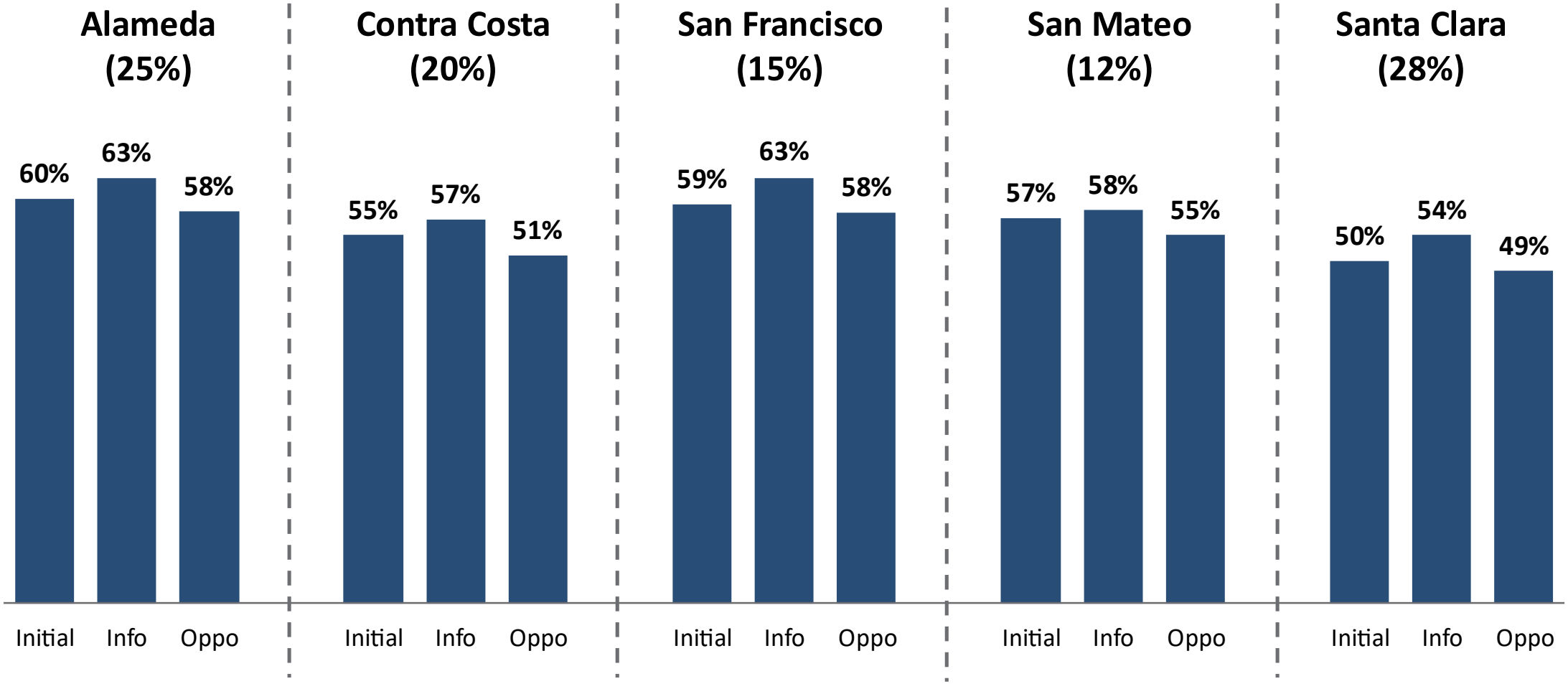
Q6/29/30. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?

Vote Progression by County

EMC research

% YES

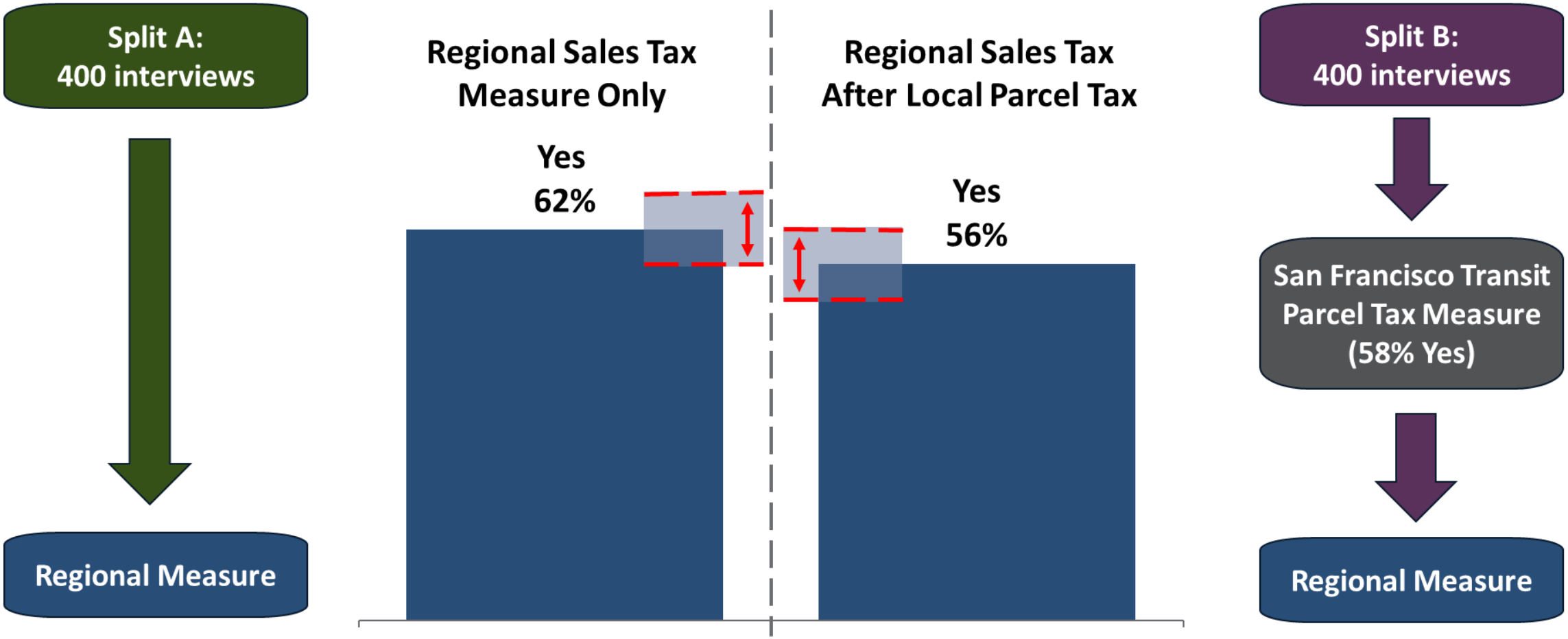
Numbers in parentheses represent subgroup proportion of electorate



Q6/29/30. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?

San Francisco: Potential Two Measures

The difference in support for the regional measure is slight.



Q6. *(400 interviews per split, **MoE±4.9%** displayed as a range within the dotted lines in **red**)*

Ridership Group Summary

Transit Ridership Segment (% of likely voters)	Initial Measure Support	Priorities	Concerns
Weekly+ Riders (24%)	71%	Transit service protection, reliability, affordability, environment, positive daily experience	Efficient management, accountability, paying more for no improvements
Occasional Riders (36%)	61%	Spending oversight and accountability, efficiency, congestion relief, regional benefit	Whether improvements extend regionally, trust in spending, accountability
Rare/Non-Riders (40%)	41%	Road repair, regional benefits like traffic reduction and cleaner air, spending oversight and accountability	Personal benefit, inefficient management, cost

Numbers in parentheses represent subgroup proportion of electorate

County Summary

County (% of likely voters)	Initial Measure Support	Priorities	Concerns
Alameda (25%)	60%	Regional mobility, preserving BART service, accountability and transparency, spending efficiency	Tax fatigue, distrust in BART management
Contra Costa (20%)	55%	Protect transit for workers and seniors, ensure reliable transit access	Benefits will not be seen locally, anti-tax
San Francisco (15%)	59%	Protect transit service quality (reliability, cleanliness, and safety), protect Muni from cuts, ensuring transit access for all	Cost of living, city waste and inefficiency
San Mateo (12%)	57%	Protect Caltrain and SamTrans service, mitigate traffic congestion	Recent transit tax measure, tax saturation
Santa Clara (28%)	50%	Investment in transit reliability, clean air, traffic mitigation	Transit inefficiency, transparency/accountability, fair share

Numbers in parentheses represent subgroup proportion of electorate

Conclusion

- Ratings of Bay Area public transit have improved, and there is overwhelming awareness of the **importance of transit**.
- Bay Area voters **want the outcomes** of a potential revenue measure.
- Support for a regional sales tax is solidly **above a majority regionwide,** and within each county, after information.
- Concerns about the **cost of living, taxes,** and **fiscal accountability** hold support under the two-thirds threshold.

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