

BOND FEASIBILITY SURVEY

CONDUCTED FOR THE
NEWPORT-MESA UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESENTED BY
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6/20/2024



PURPOSE OF STUDY

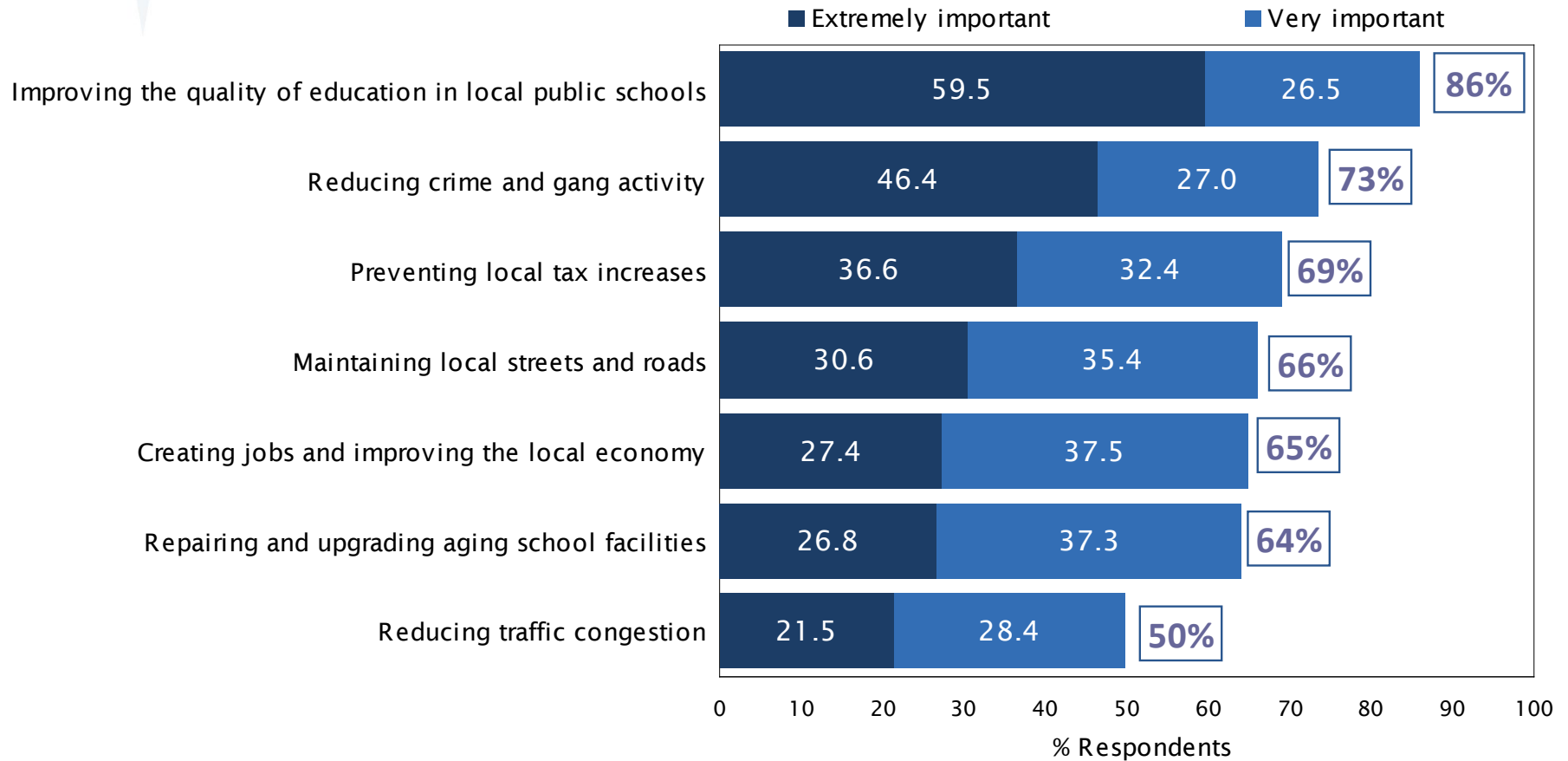
- Determine if a bond measure is feasible
- Identify how to create a measure consistent with community priorities
- Gather information needed for communications & outreach



METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

- **How did we select voters to survey?**
 - Stratified & Clustered Random Sample of likely voters (2024) using age, gender, partisanship, household party type, and sub-geographies
 - Ensures balanced, representative sample of likely voters
- **How did we recruit participation?**
 - Personalized email, text, and telephone calls
 - PINs to restrict access and ensure one complete per respondent
- **How were voters able to share their opinions?**
 - Secure, PIN-protected website that scales to the device
 - Telephone (land line or mobile)
- **What was the sample size?**
 - 535 completed interviews
 - Overall margin of error of $\pm 4.2\%$ @ 95% level of confidence

IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES





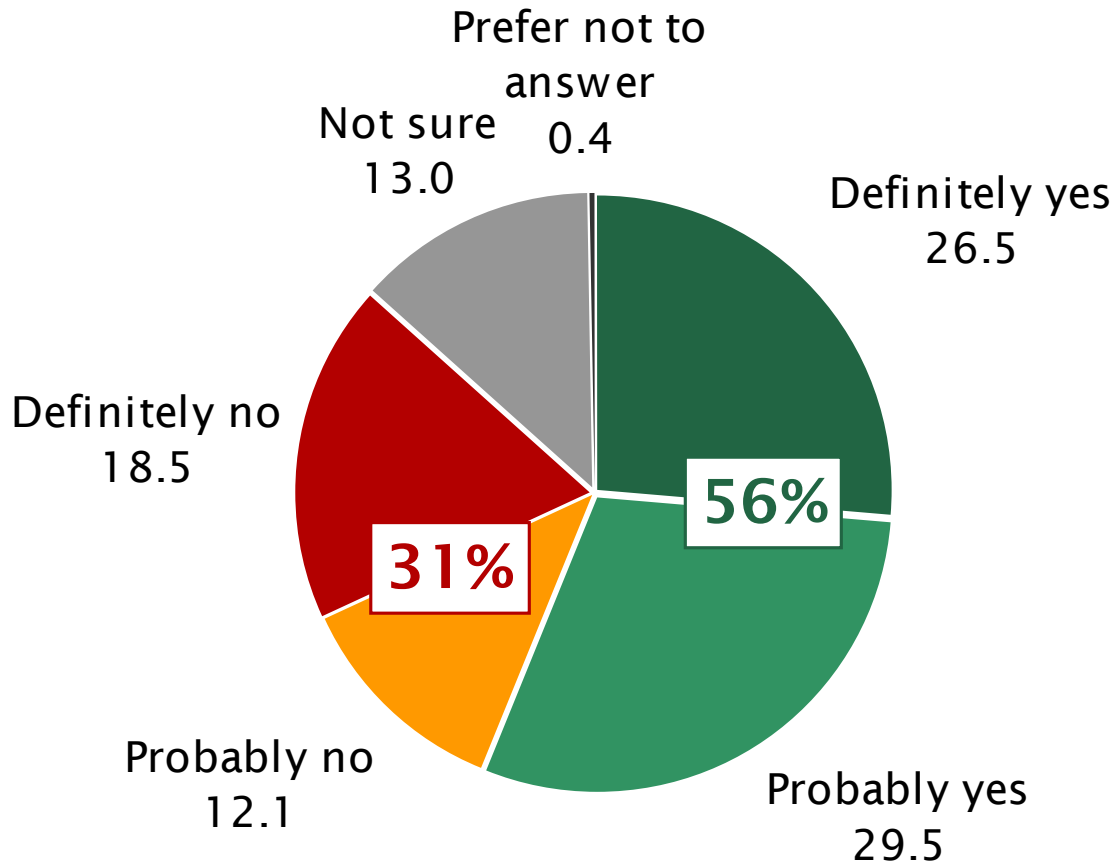
INITIAL BALLOT TEST

Newport-Mesa Unified School District Classroom Safety/Repair Measure. In order to:

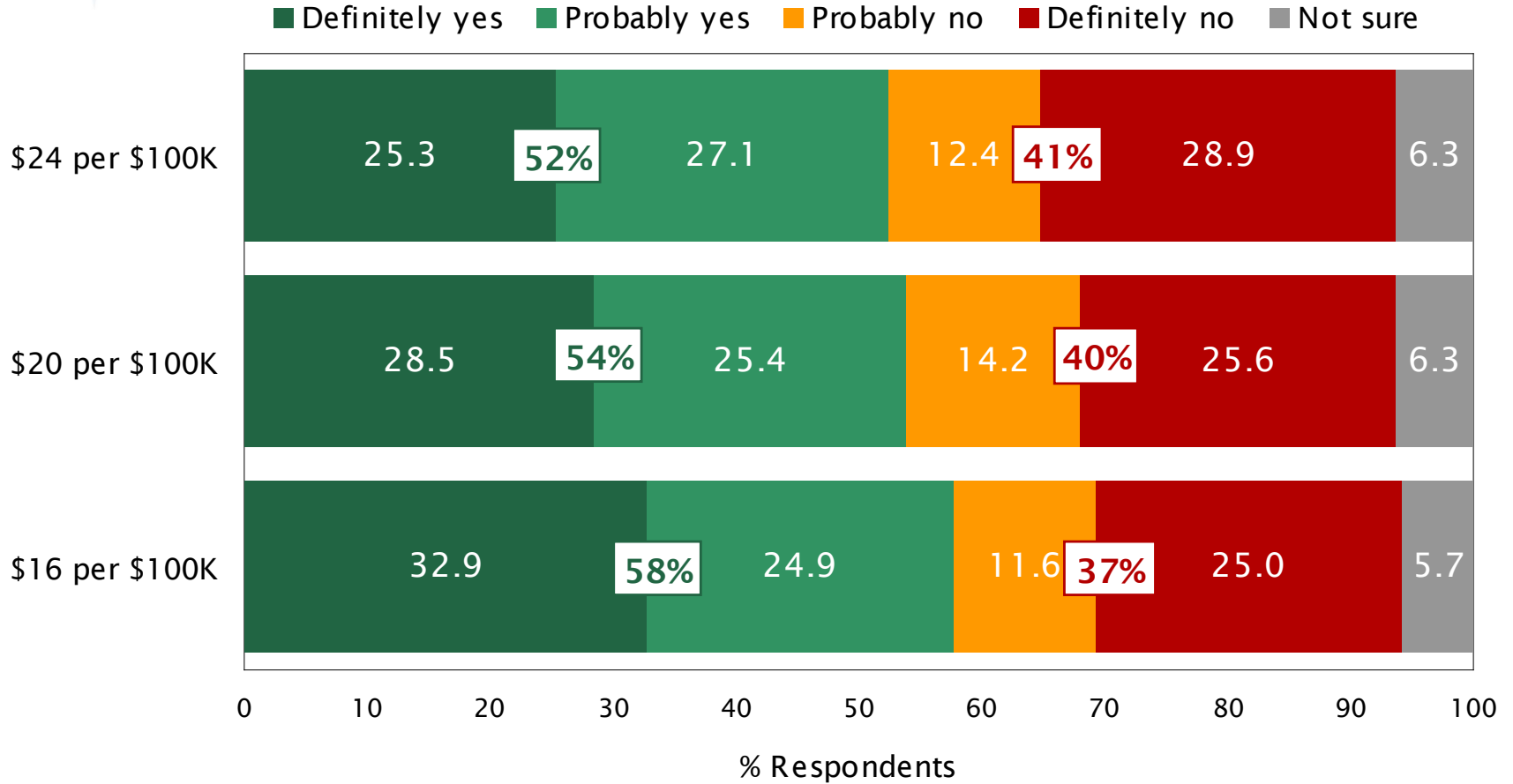
- Improve school safety/security
- Fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical and infrastructure
- And modernize/construct classrooms, science labs, school and career training facilities for college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades

Shall Newport-Mesa Unified School District's measure authorizing \$688 million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying \$24 per \$100,000 assessed value (35 million dollars annually) while bonds are outstanding, with citizen oversight, independent audits, and all money locally controlled?

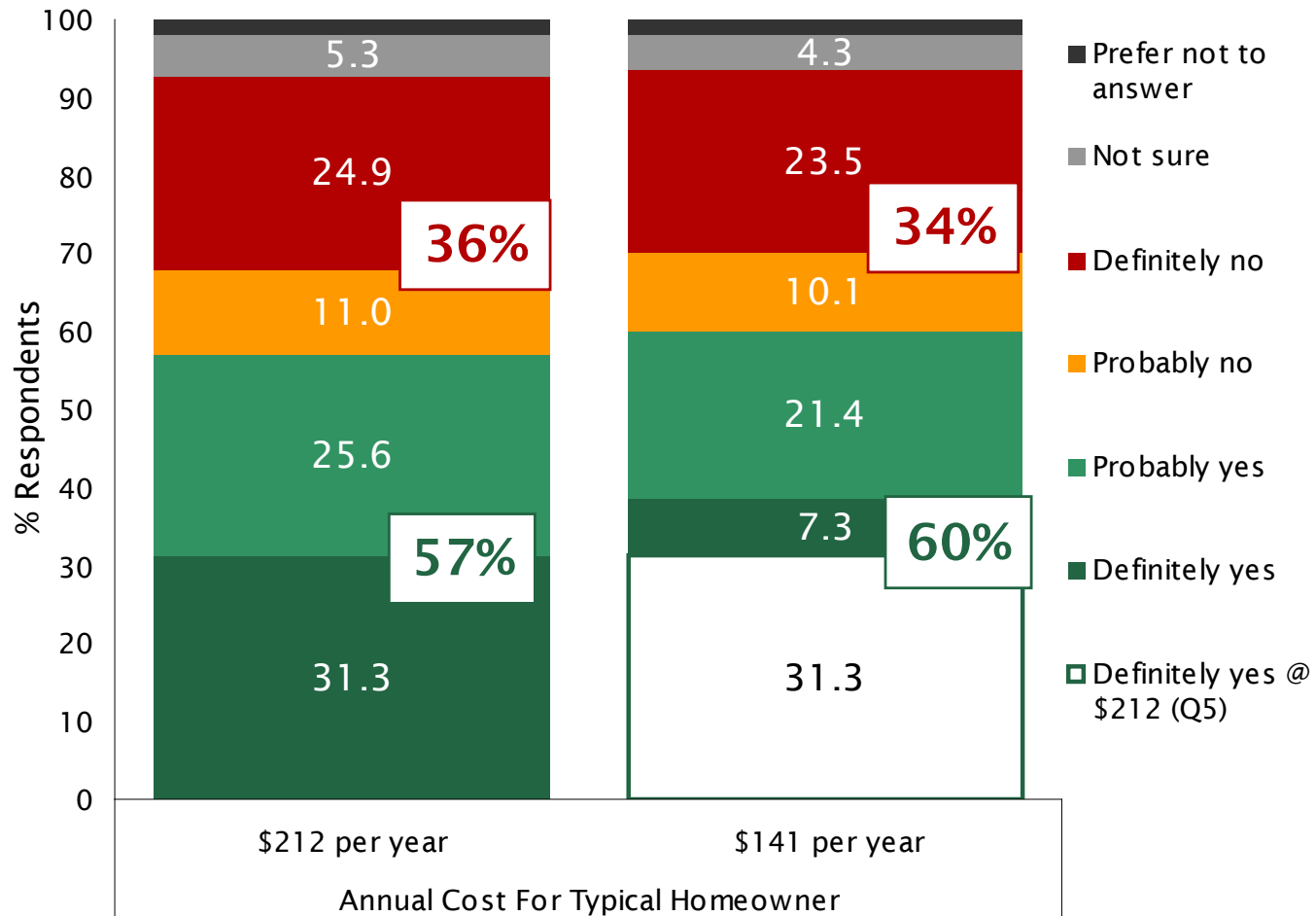
INITIAL BALLOT TEST



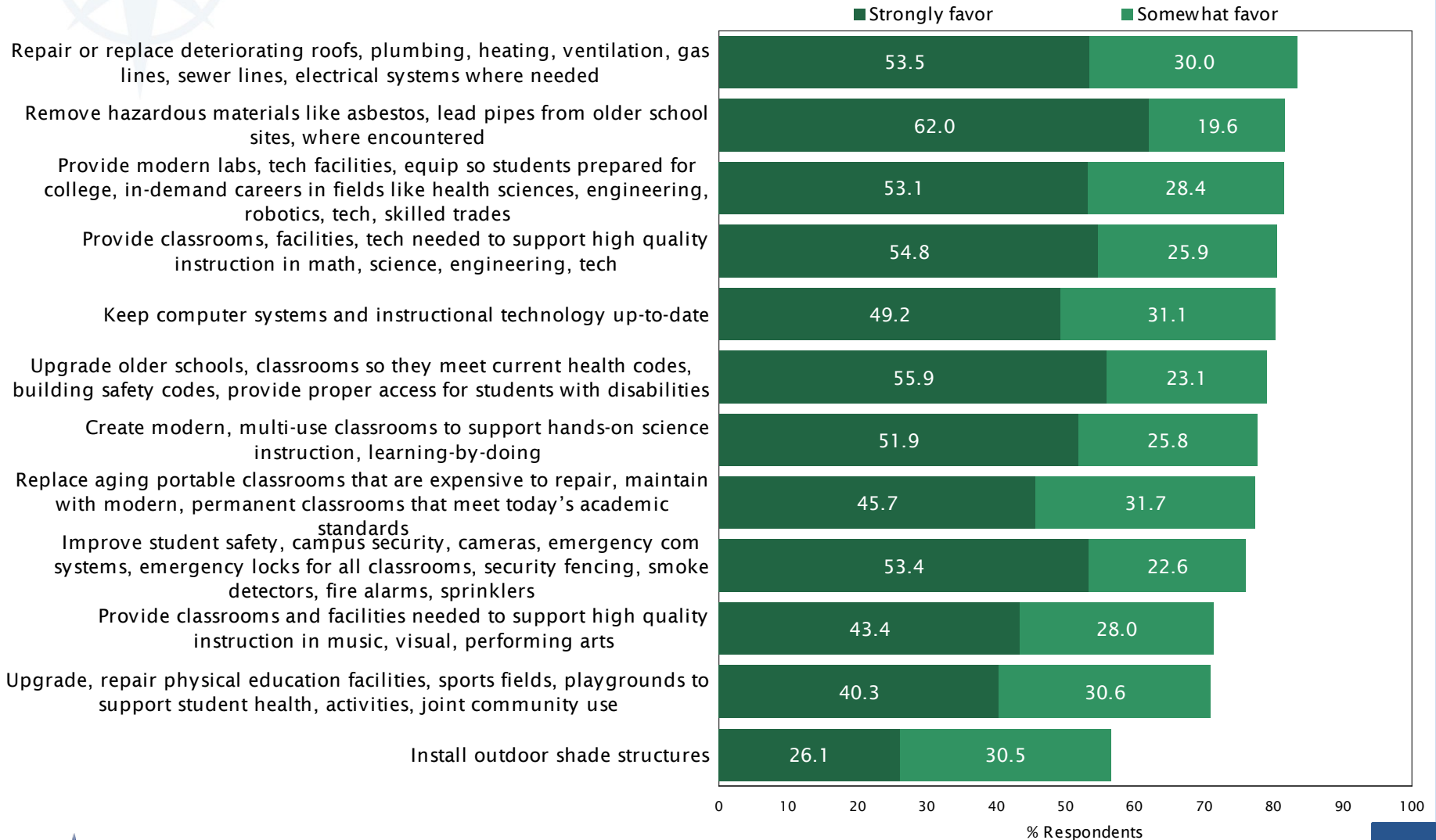
TAX THRESHOLD



IF \$212 OR \$141 FOR TYPICAL OWNER

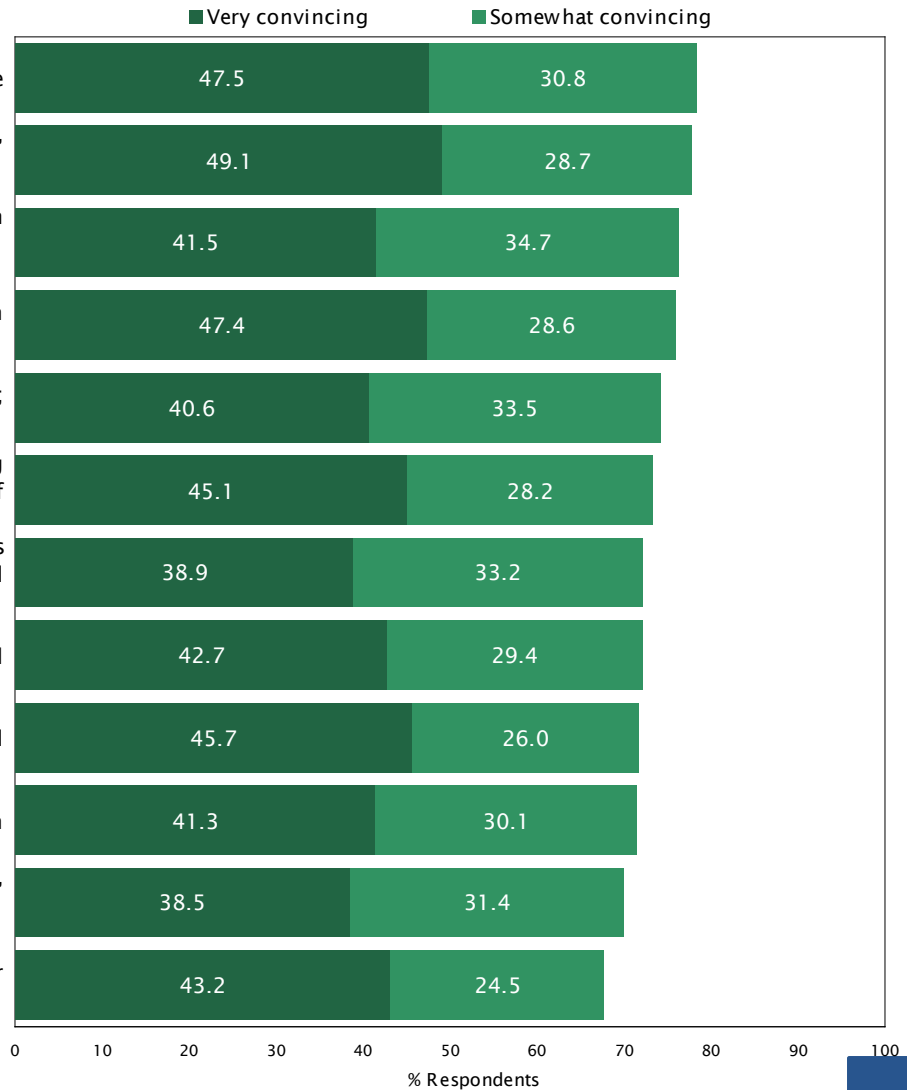


PROJECTS & IMPROVEMENTS



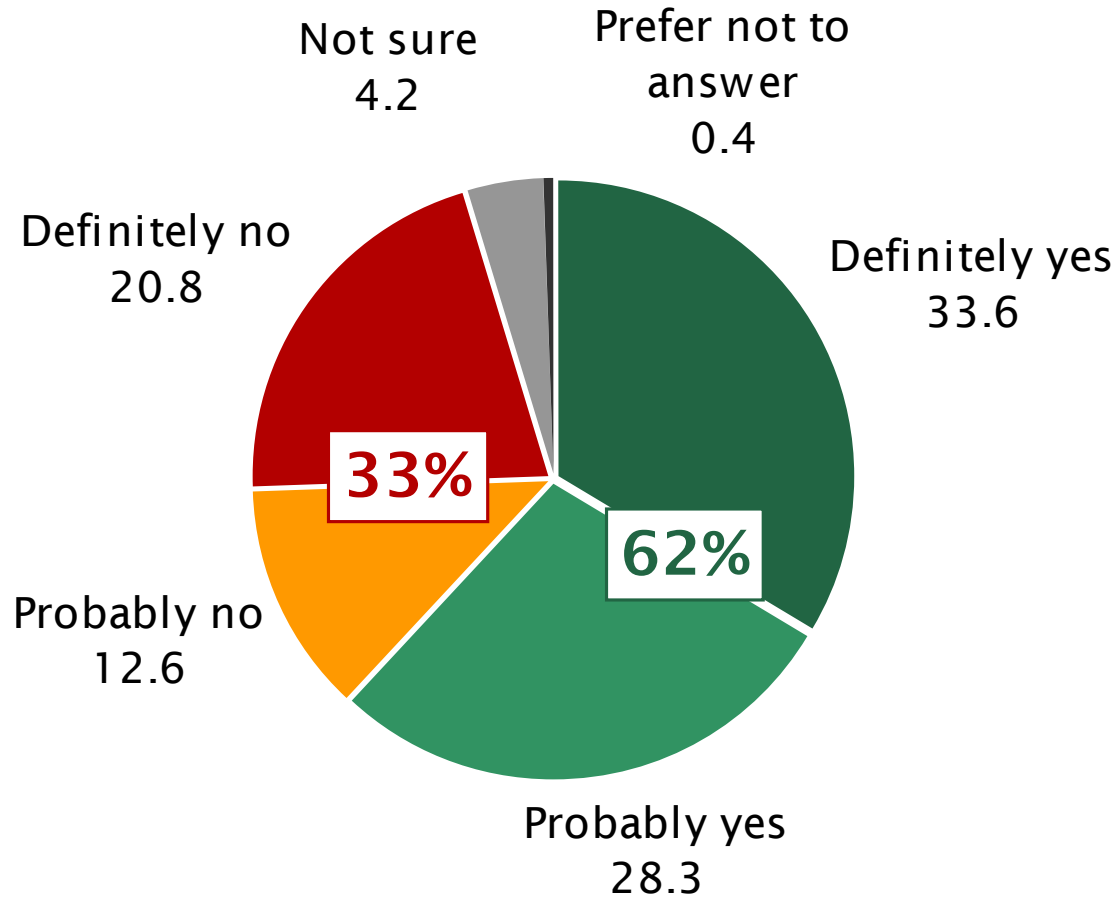
POSITIVE ARGUMENTS

- 241 portable classrooms 25+ yrs old, falling apart; many have structural damage, water leaks, mold; expensive to keep repairing; need bond to replace portables with modern, permanent classrooms
- Some schools built so long ago they don't meet earthquake safety standards, have asbestos, lead pipes, underground infrastructure failing, water leaks, sewage backups; need to fix these problems
- Most schools built 60+ yrs ago, most classrooms, labs haven't been upgraded in 20+ yrs; time to upgrade, repair schools so they can serve community well for decades to come
- All money raised by measure will stay local to support students; it can't be taken away by State or used for other purposes
- Even with no school-age children, supporting school bond is a wise investment; good schools improve quality of life in community, value of homes
- Measure requires transparent system of accountability, project list describing how money will be used, Citizens' Oversight Committee, public disclosure of how all funds are spent
- If we want kids to succeed in college, careers, must be skilled in use of today's tech, have solid background in science, math, engineering, tech; measure will make this possible
- Measure will ensure students who plan to go to college prepared to succeed, those who don't, receive career, skills training they need to compete for good paying jobs
- If voters approve measure, District will be eligible to receive \$250M+ in State matching money when it becomes avail that otherwise will go to other school districts
- Student safety, security has become a top priority for schools around nation; bond will provide increased safety, security that will protect students, staff in case of an emergency
- Local schools among best in County in academic performance, but classrooms, labs, facilities outdated, need repair; measure will ensure schools stay competitive with other top performing schools in State
- By law, no money from measure can be used for administrators' salaries or benefits





INTERIM BALLOT TEST



NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

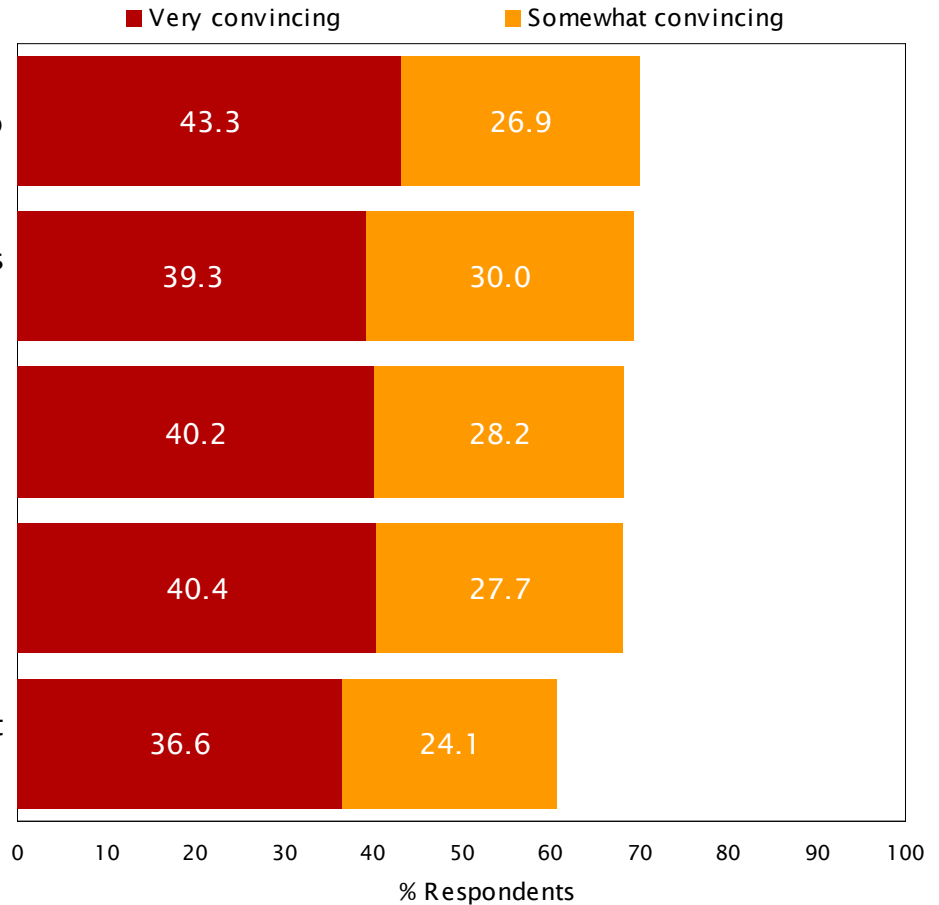
Local residents, businesses have been hit hard by inflation, high interest rates, high gas prices; many are struggling to stay afloat; now is not the time to raise taxes

Don't be fooled. Including interest, bond will cost taxpayers more than a billion dollars and will take 35 yrs to pay off

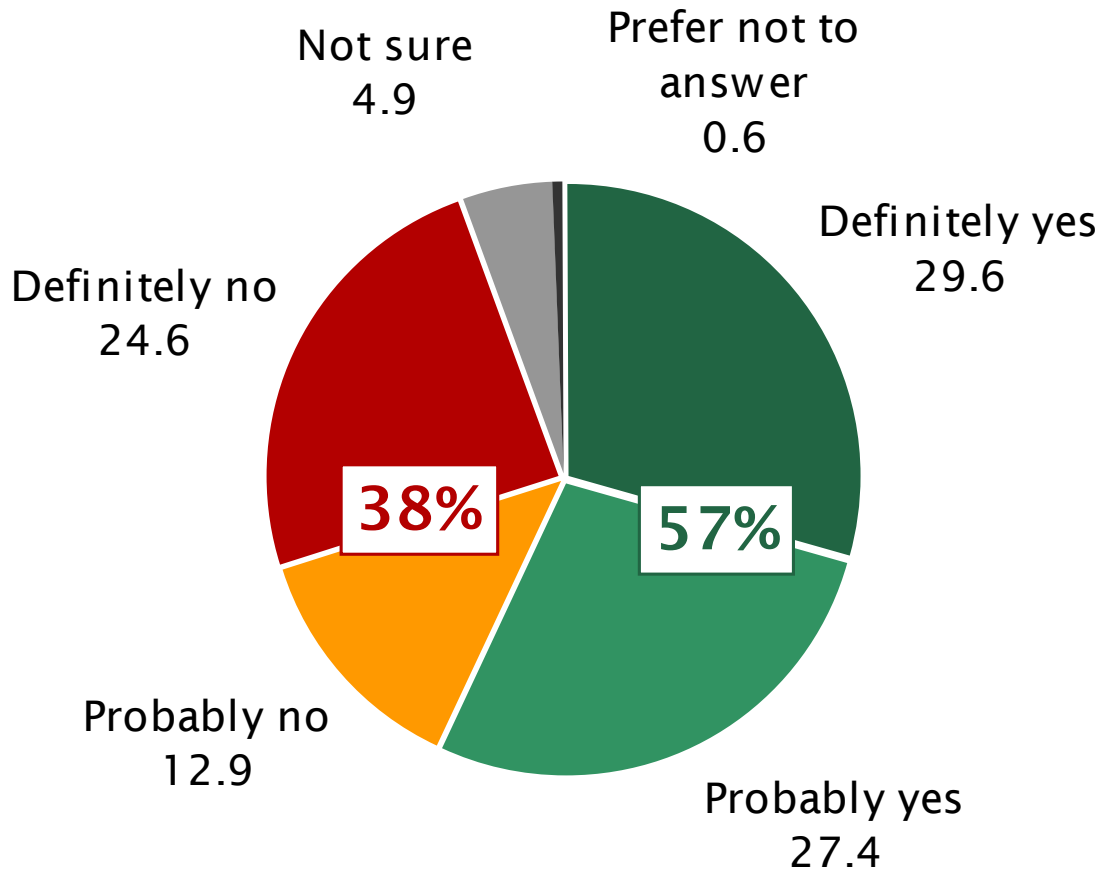
Residents already paying too many taxes; state and county, school bonds, other taxes; a lot of new tax proposals on ballot this Nov; enough is enough; we can't afford to keep raising taxes

Community is already an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, those on fixed incomes; passing bond will make it even less affordable

We can't trust District with this tax; like all government agencies, they will mismanage money



FINAL BALLOT TEST





KEY CONCLUSIONS

Does a bond appear to be feasible for a 2024 ballot? *It will require adjustments & robust outreach/engagement to be viable and is not without risk.*

Positive Signs

- Voters rank improving the quality of education in local schools as the *most* important issues facing the community
- Sufficient natural support for a bond measure (56%)
- Popular projects and improvements
- Strong positive arguments
- All ballot tests are above the 55% threshold required for Prop 39 bond, even after opposition arguments

Challenges

- Tax/Tax rate sensitivity
- Opposition arguments resonate (-5%)
- Electoral climate: Hyper-partisanship & statewide initiatives



OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Snapshot in time, not a crystal ball**
- **Tax Rate:** Will need to keep affordable
- **Project Priorities:** Repairs to older facilities/bring them up to code, hazardous materials, STEM, career tech, instructional technology
- **District Communications:** Expand the conversation with the community to strengthen awareness of facility needs, how they connect to educational opportunities/student achievement, and consensus on a bond proposal.
- **Independent Campaign:** Need to have an A+ independent campaign to navigate through the election cycle, communicate key messages, turn out supporters, and weather uncertainties.