





Portland Parks Bond and Levy Feasibility Survey

Key Findings of a Survey Conducted November 8-13, 2023



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

Survey Methodology

Dates	November 8-13, 2023
Survey Type	Dual-mode Voter Survey
Research Population	Portland Voters Likely to Participate in the November 2024 Election
Total Interviews	780
Margin of Sampling Error	(Full Sample) $\pm 4.0\%$ at the 95% Confidence Level (Half Sample) $\pm 5.8\%$ at the 95% Confidence Level
Contact Methods	 Telephone Calls  Text Invitations
Data Collection Modes	 Telephone Interviews  Online Interviews
Survey Tracking	Selected Comparisons to 2020 Survey

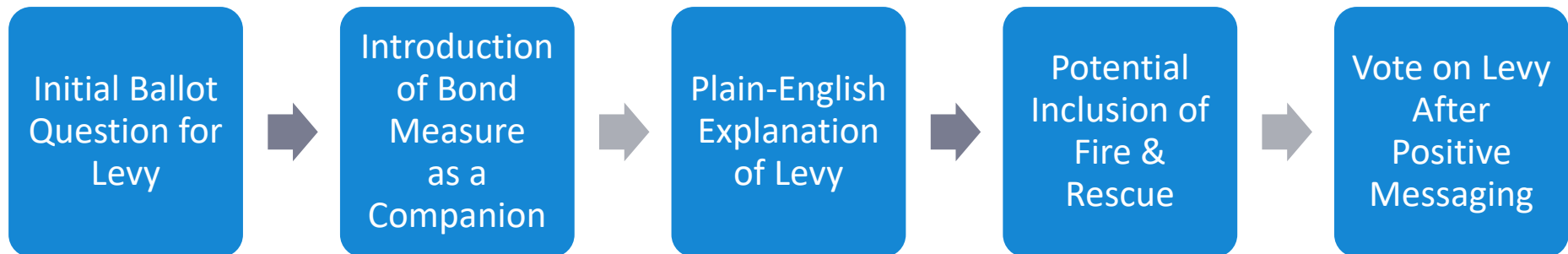
(Note: Not All Results Will Sum to 100% Due to Rounding)

Survey Structure

Half-Sample: Bond Focus



Half-Sample: Levy Focus

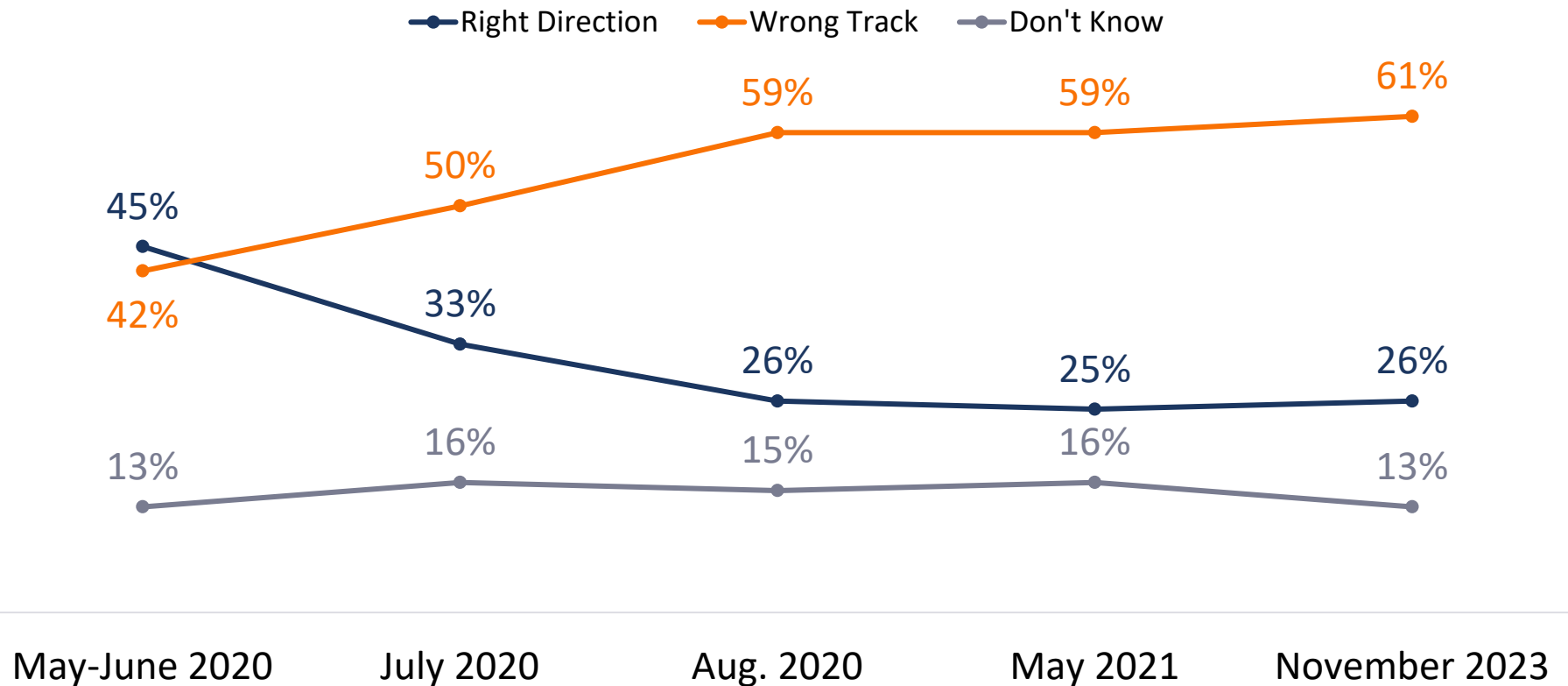




Political Context

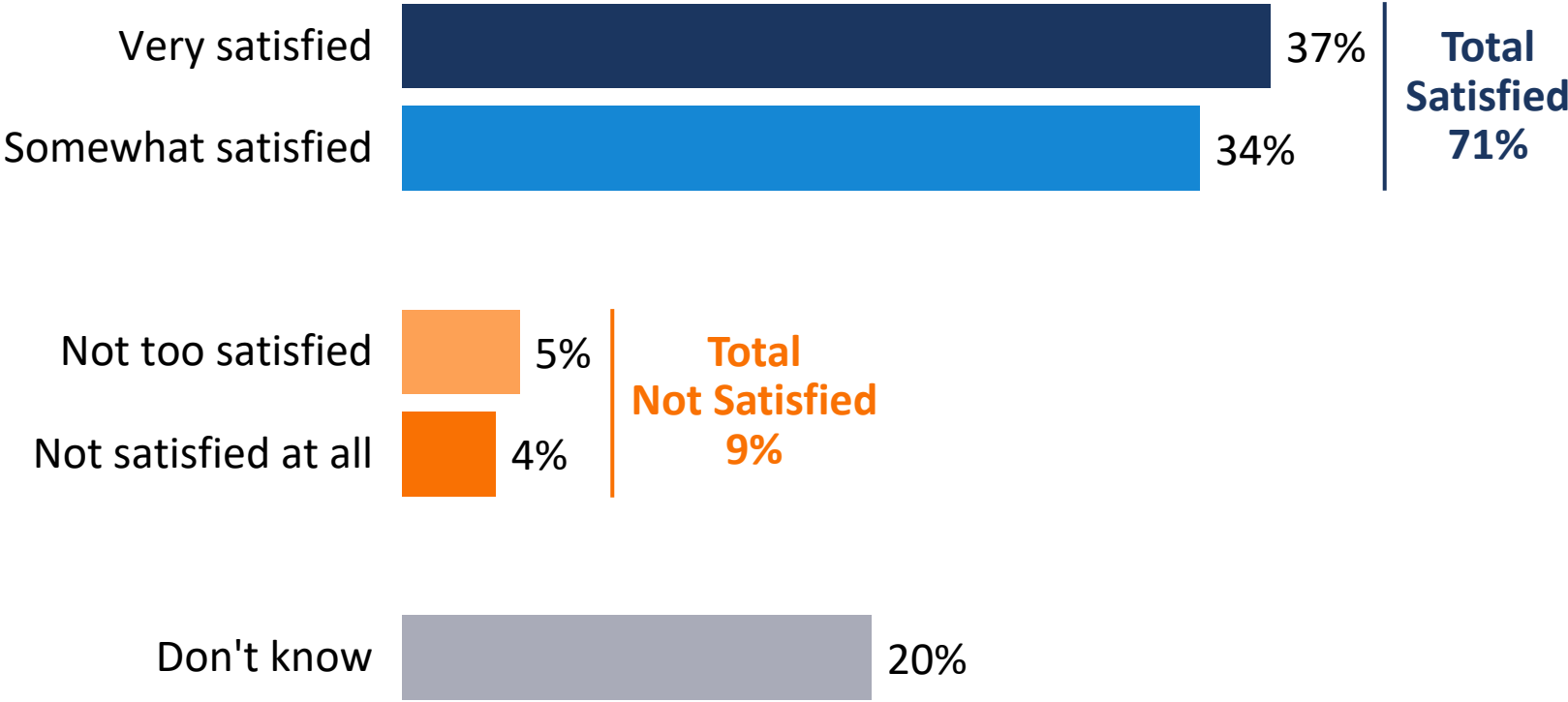
Three in five Portlanders feel the city is headed off on the wrong track.

Overall, would you say things in Portland are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel that they are pretty seriously on the wrong track?



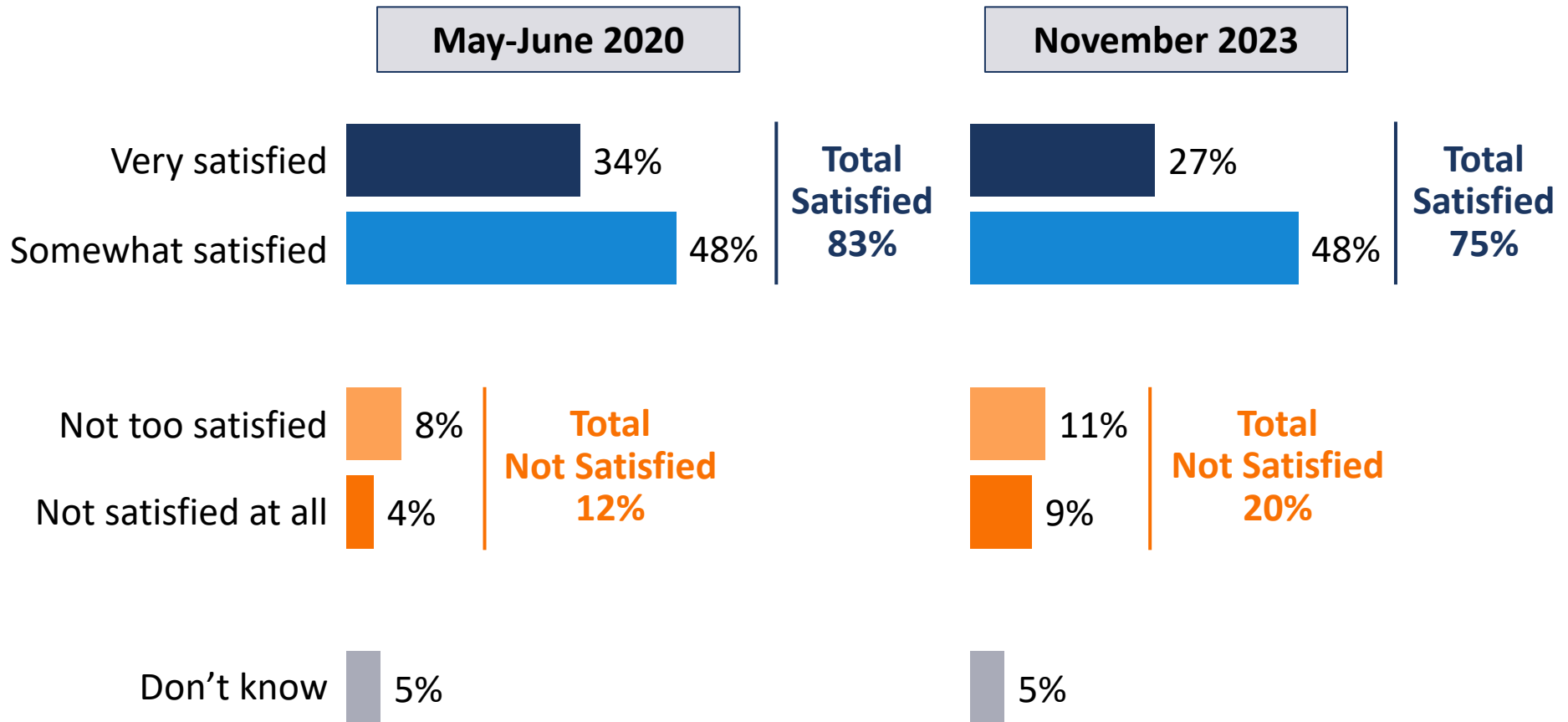
Seven in ten are satisfied with the quality of services provided by Fire & Rescue.

Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with the quality of services provided by Portland Fire & Rescue?



Three-quarters are satisfied with Parks & Recreation services – down slightly from 2020.

Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with the quality of services provided by Portland Parks & Recreation?

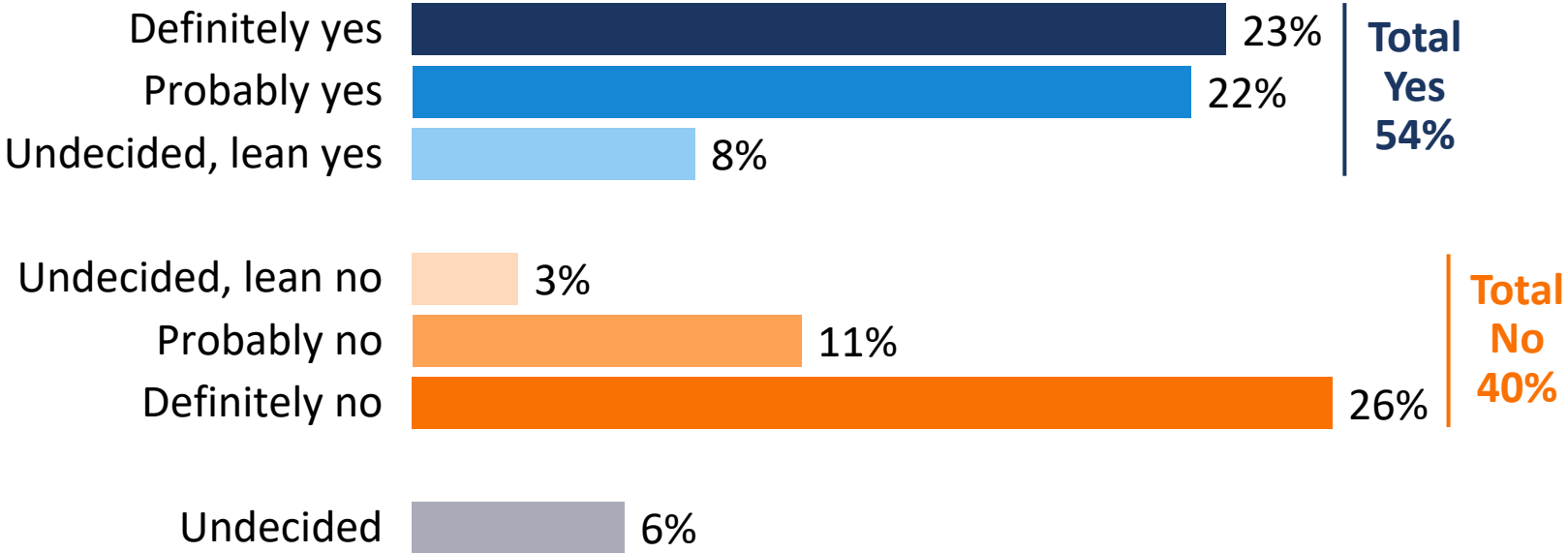




Views of a Bond Measure & Levy Renewal

A slim majority of Portland voters supports a \$600 million parks bond measure.

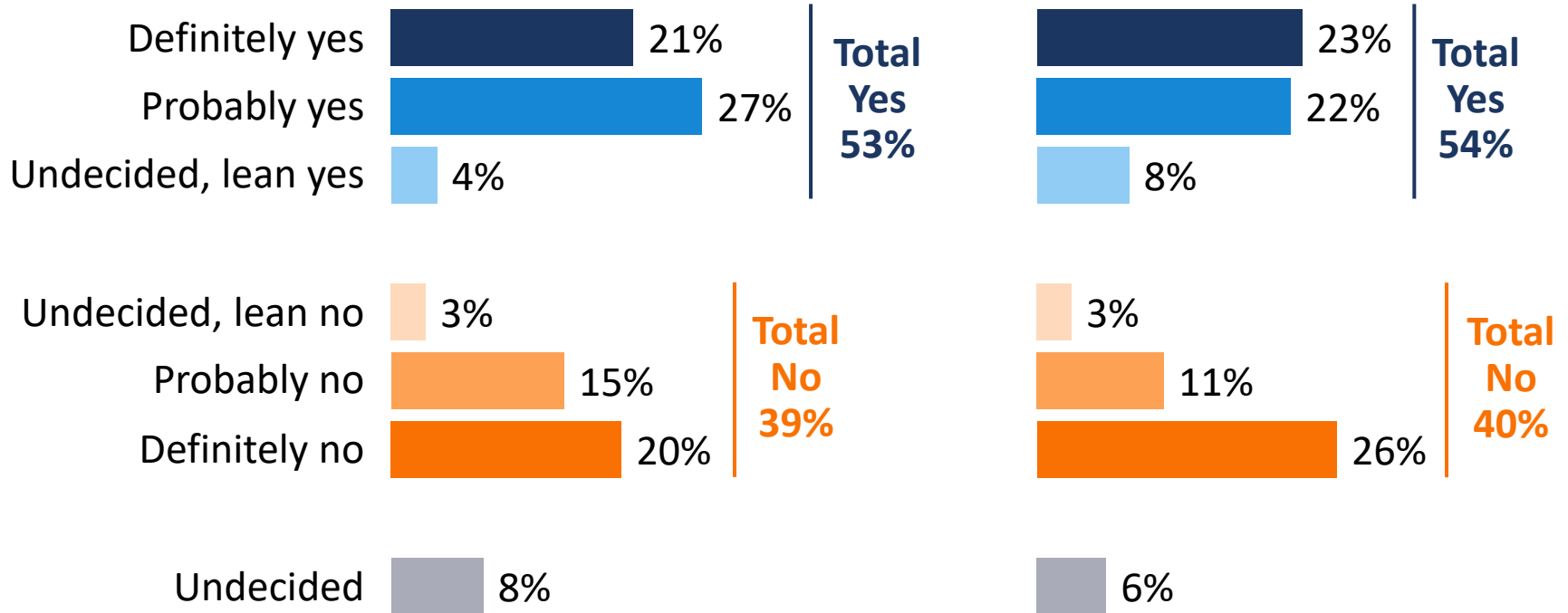
Bonds to repair parks, recreation facilities, nature; safety, water quality. Shall Portland repair parks, recreation facilities; improve safety by issuing \$600 million in general obligation bonds; require audits, public oversight? If the bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.



This support is consistent with polling from 2020.

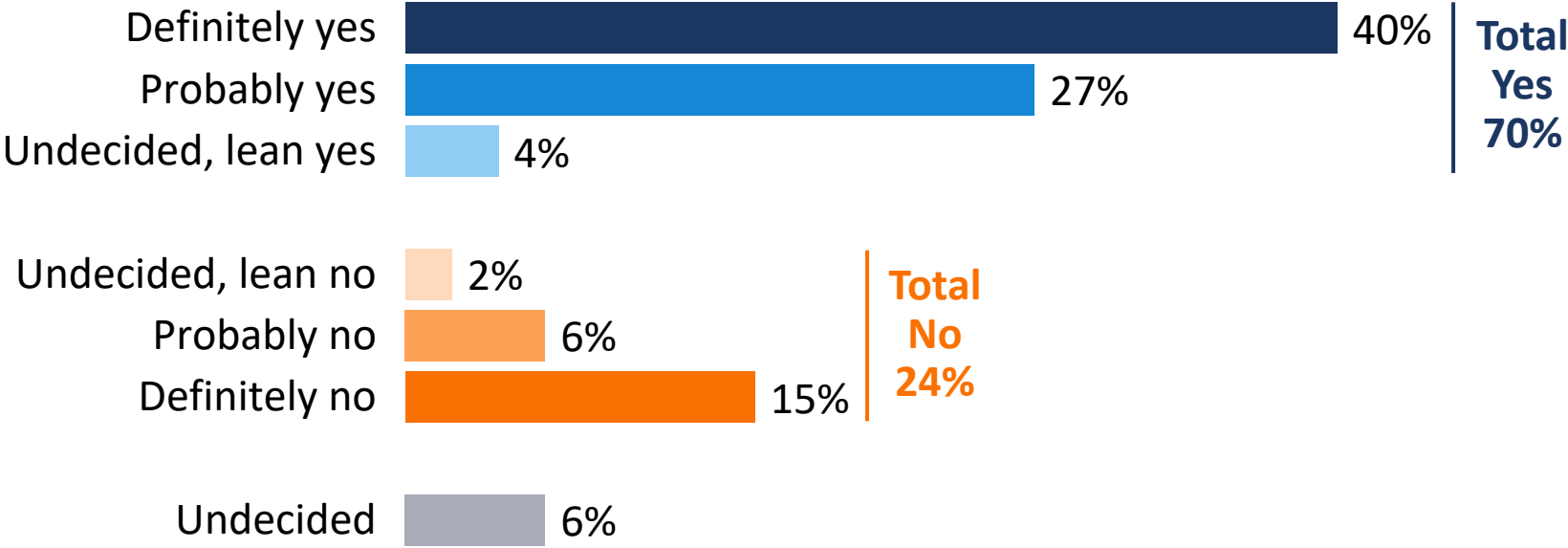
May-June 2020

November 2023

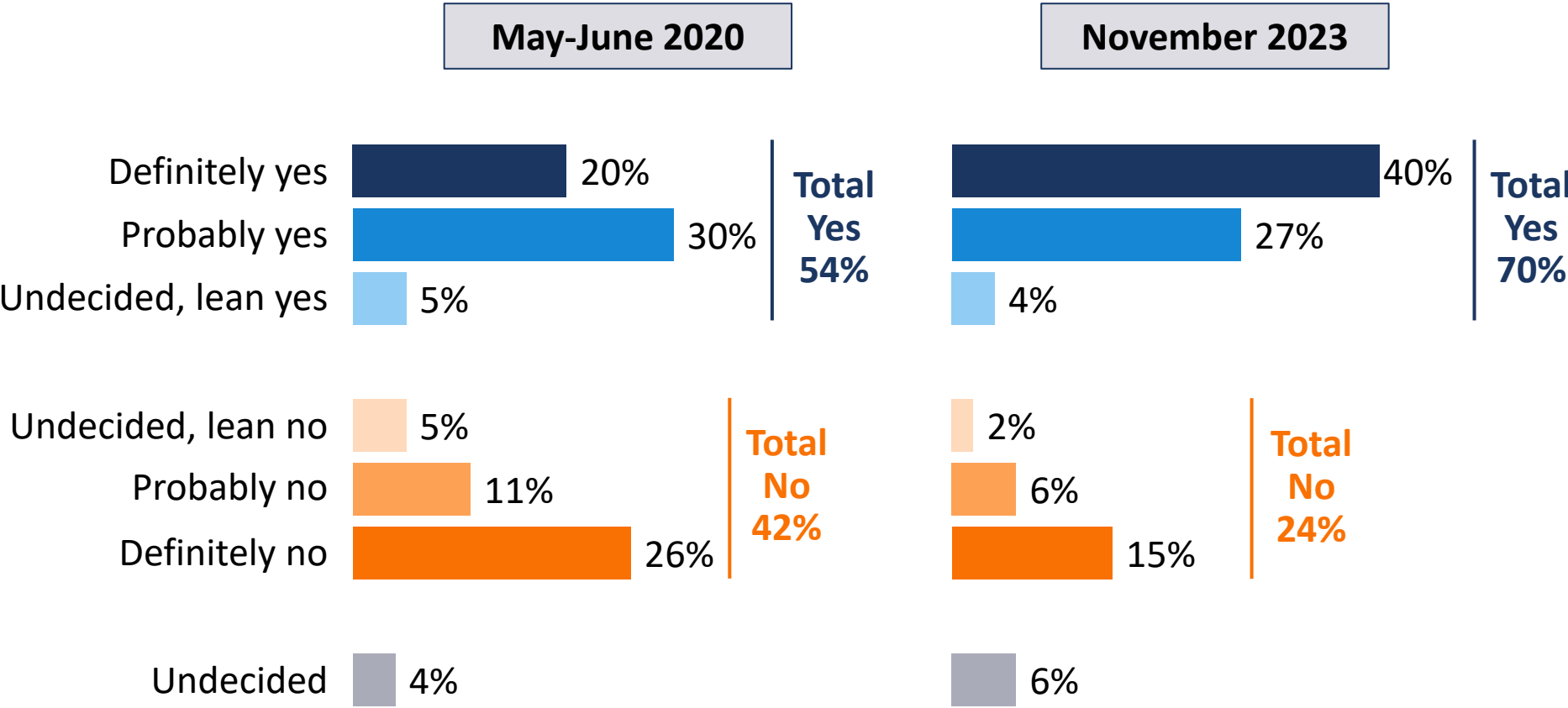


Seven in ten support a levy renewal – and two in five support it strongly.

Renews 5-year levy; preserves parks, recreation, nature, water; improves safety.
Shall Portland deliver recreation programs, preserve parks, nature, water; renew 5-year operating levy, \$0.80 per \$1,000 assessed value, beginning 2026?
This measure renews current local option taxes.



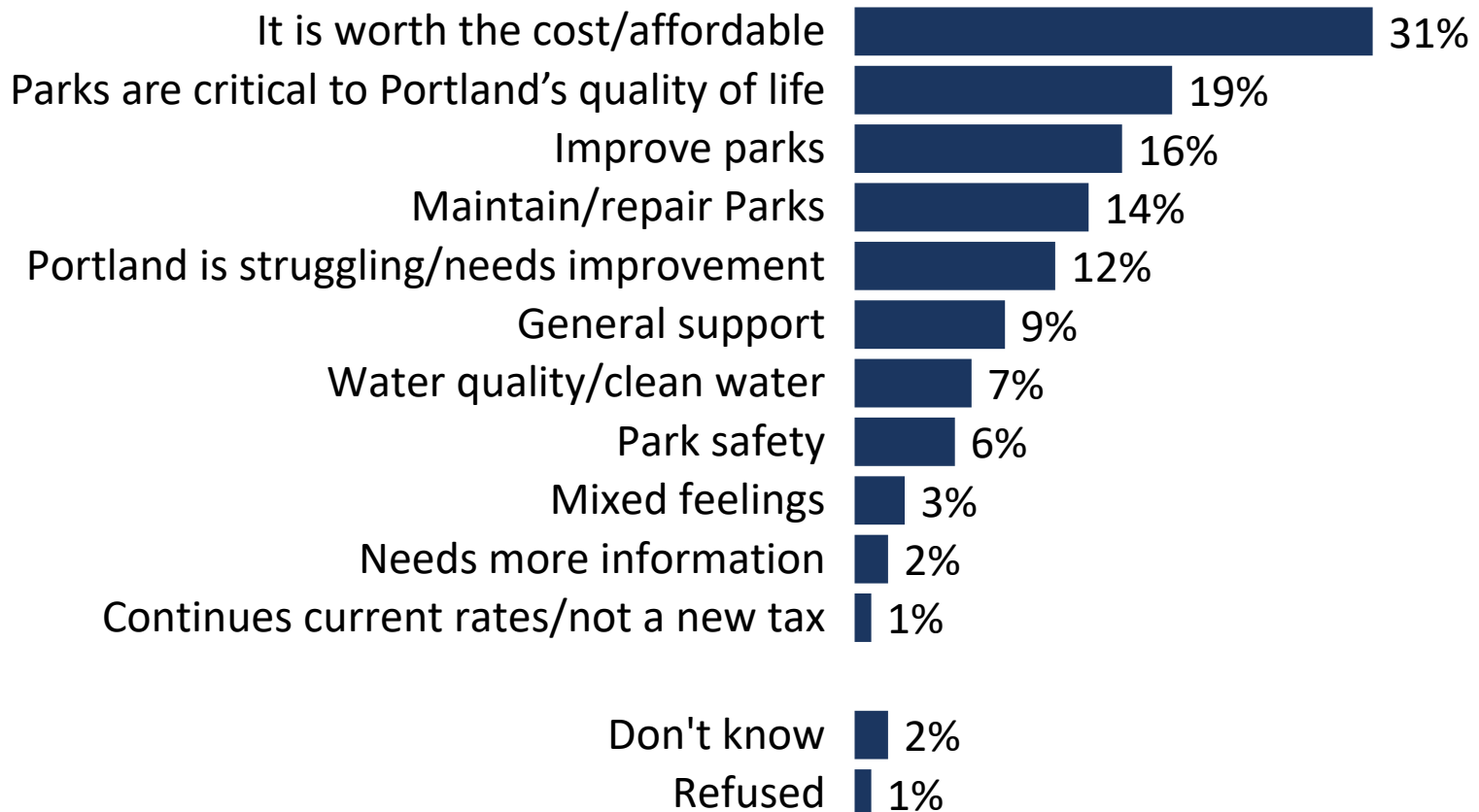
This support is much broader than in 2020 polling on the levy – which ultimately passed at 64%.



Supporters of the measures say they are affordable and that parks are critical to quality of life.

*In a few words of your own, why would you vote **YES** on this measure?*

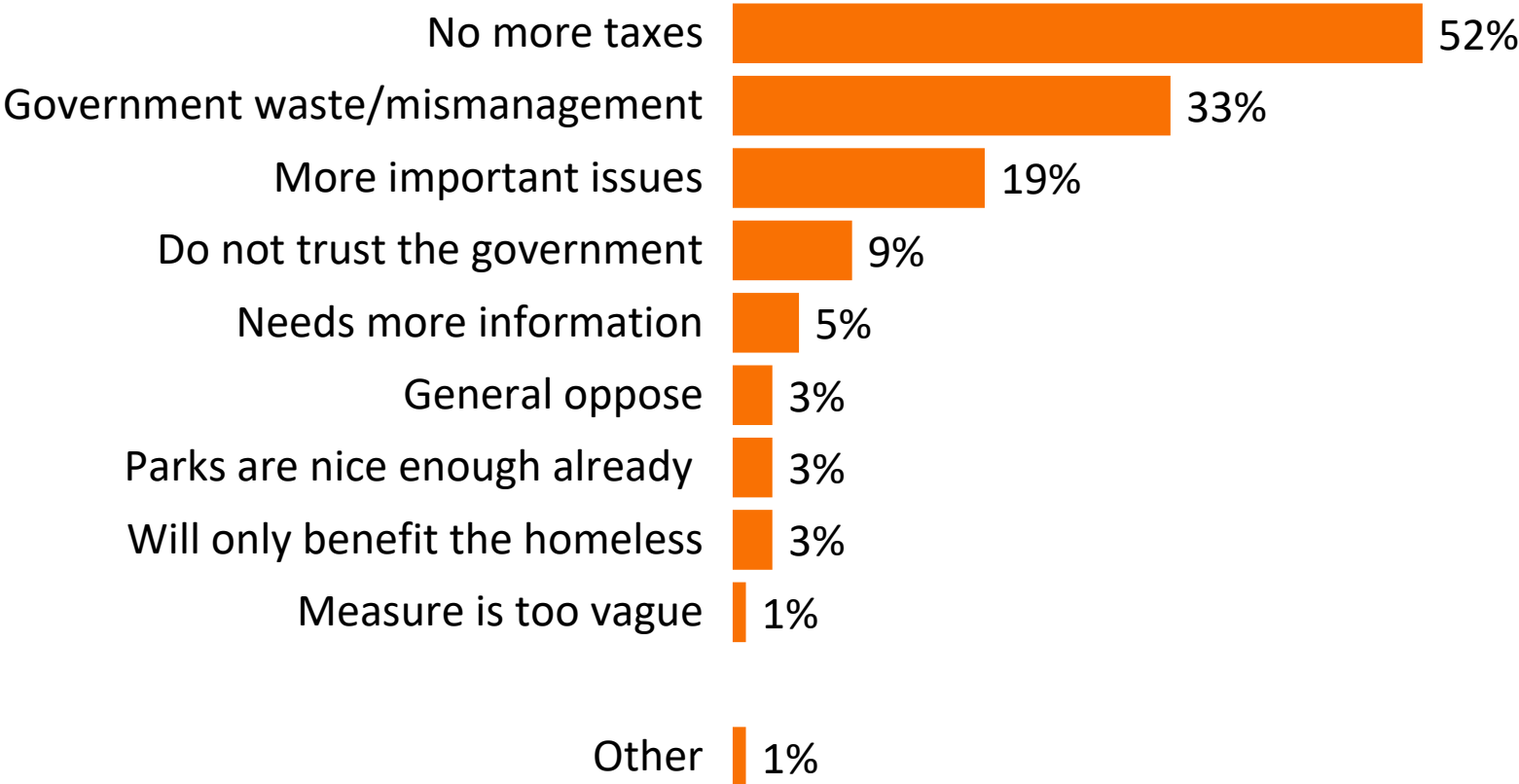
(Open-ended; Asked of Yes Voters Only, n=484)



Opponents are against taxes in principle or believe that the government will waste the funds.

*In a few words of your own, why would you vote **NO** on this measure?*

(Open-ended; Asked of No Voters Only, n=251)





The Impact of Additional Information

Voters heard or read additional information.

(BOND MEASURE)

It is a \$600 million general obligation bond to repair Portland's parks, recreation facilities, playgrounds, and trails. It includes improvements to accessibility for people with disabilities, safety improvements, and preserving and restoring natural areas, water quality and trees. Portland Parks & Recreation will require audits and public oversight, and issue bonds payable from taxes on property, estimated to cost the average residential property owner \$149 per year, or \$12.41 per month.

(LEVY RENEWAL)

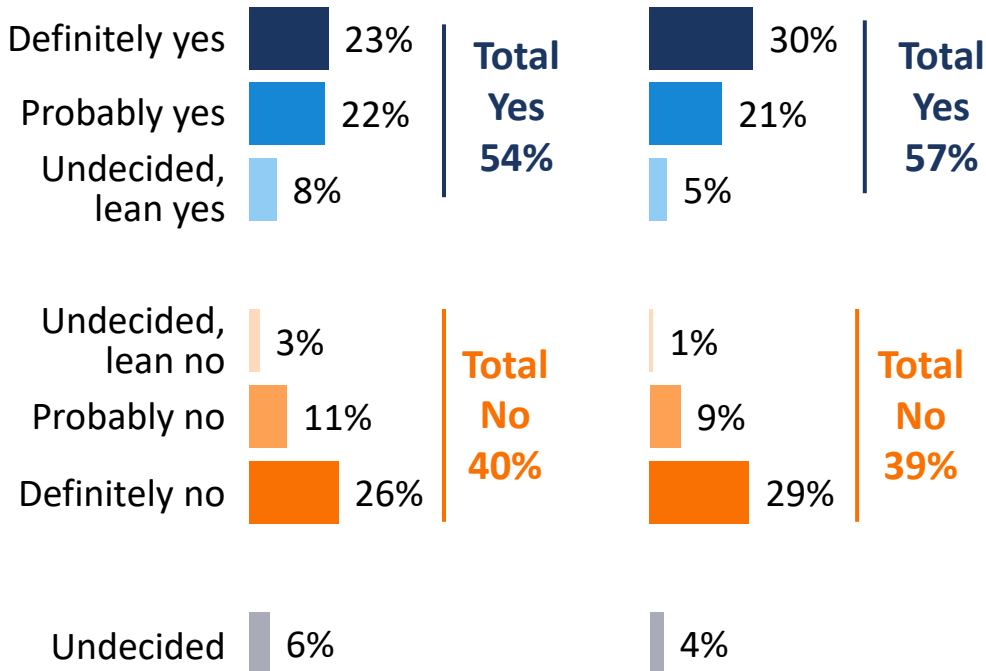
This levy does not increase tax rates. It continues the same tax rate previously approved by voters. It renews the existing five-year operating levy to prevent ongoing reductions to Portland Parks & Recreation services and programs and preserve and restore natural areas, water quality and trees. This includes keeping neighborhood parks clean and green; and providing life-saving swim lessons, fitness, arts, senior programs, environmental education, and a summer playground program serving free lunches to children in need. This would cost the average residential property owner \$188 per year or just under \$16 per month — with no increase to current tax rates.

This information lifts support for the levy renewal by six points; it increases intensity of support for both.

Bond

Initial Vote

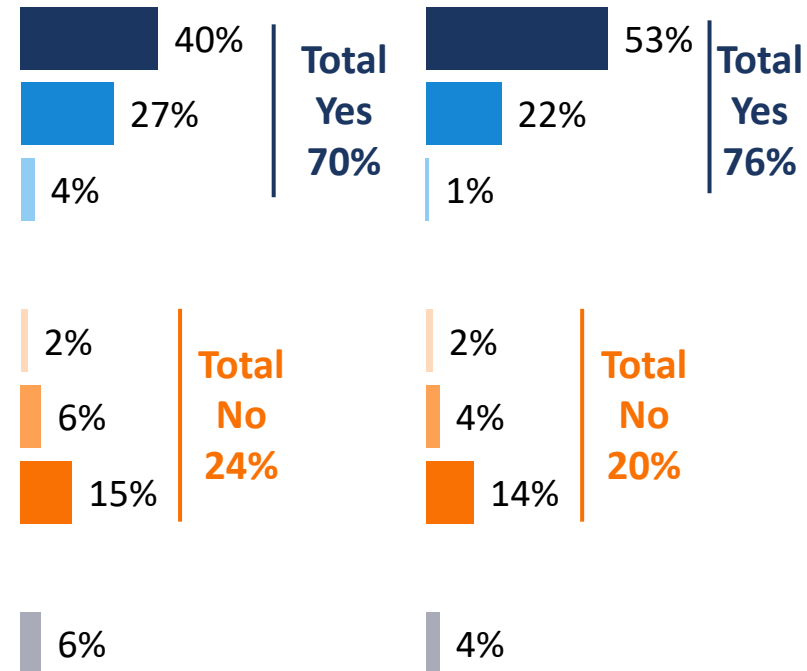
With Information



Levy

Initial Vote

With Information

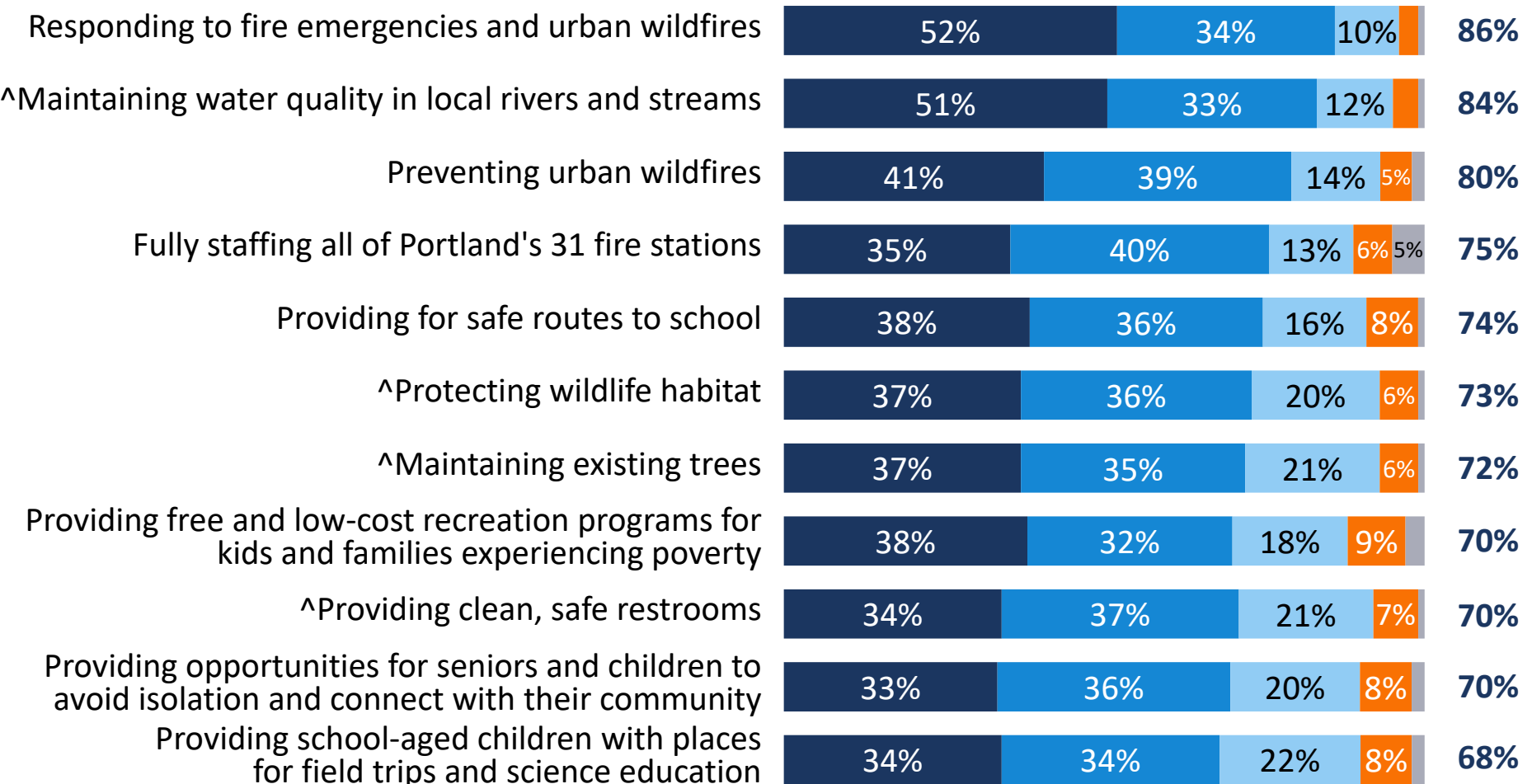




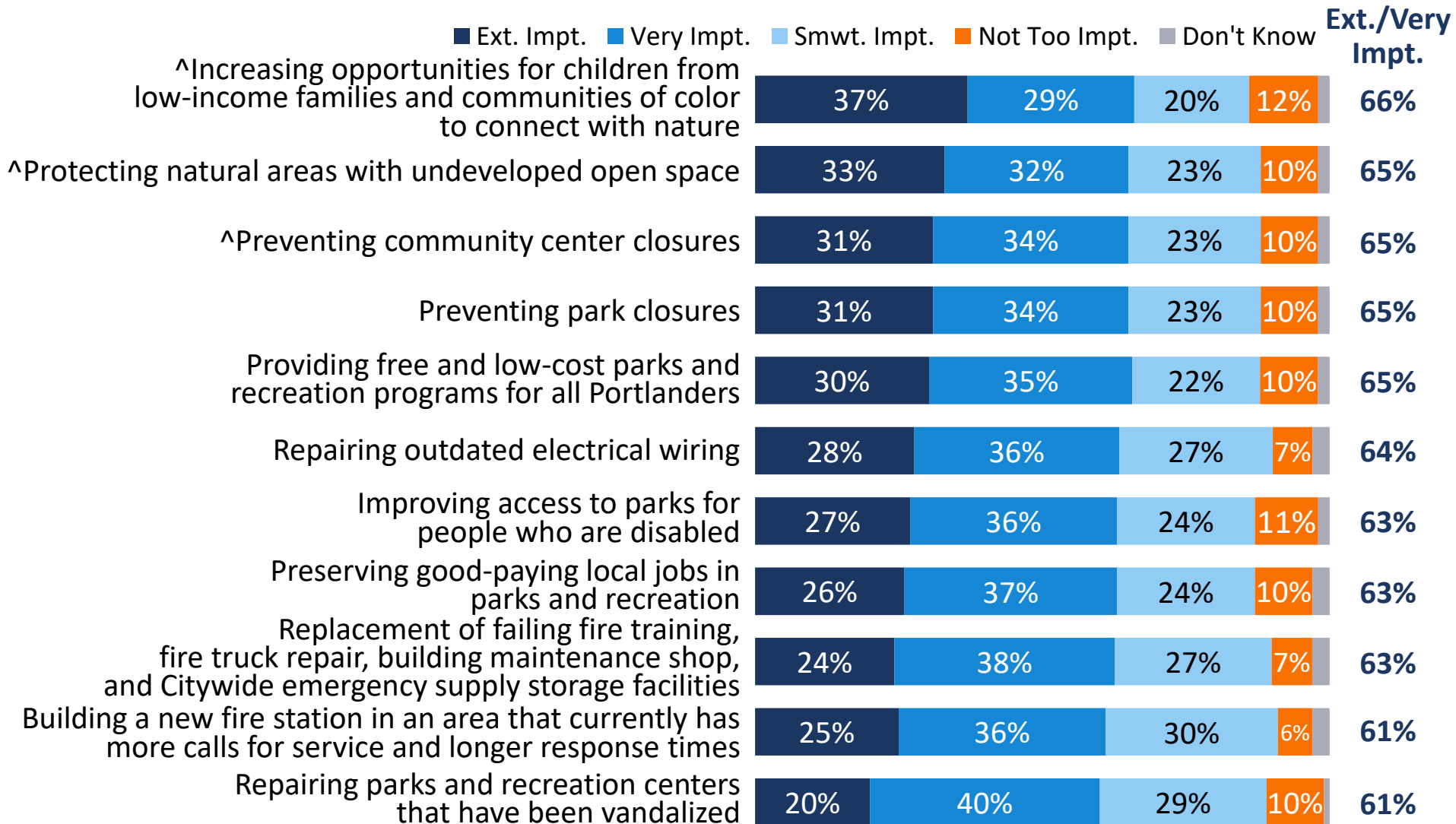
Voter Priorities and Willingness to Pay

Voters' top priorities for funding including fire prevention, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

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



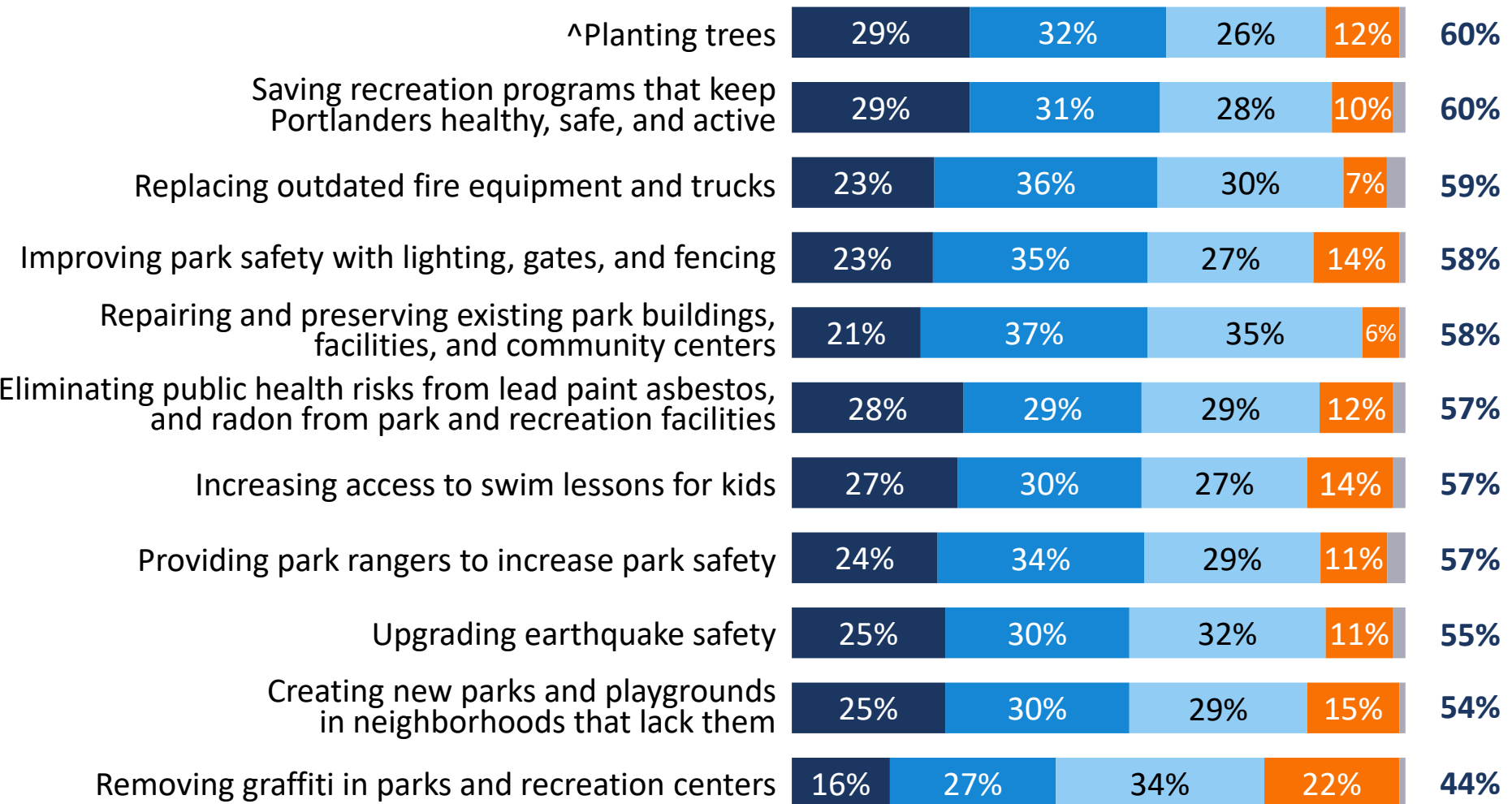
Broad majorities also support protecting natural areas and preventing park and community center closures.



Q12. I'm going to read you a list of some projects and services that could be funded by the ballot measure we've been discussing. Please tell me how important the project or service is to you personally: is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important? ^Not Part of Split Sample

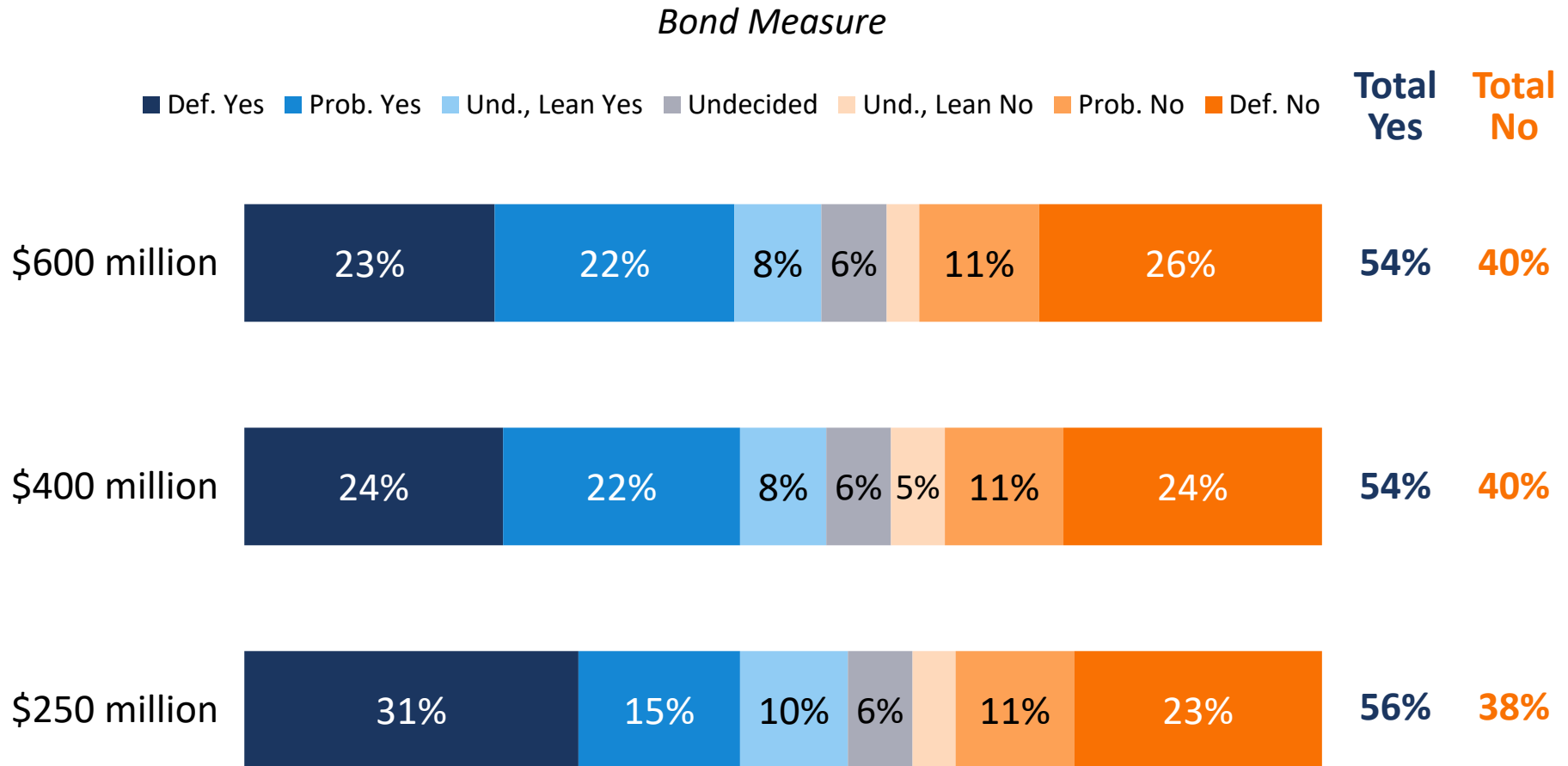
Graffiti removal, new playgrounds, and earthquake safety are relatively low priorities.

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



Q12. I'm going to read you a list of some projects and services that could be funded by the ballot measure we've been discussing. Please tell me how important the project or service is to you personally: is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important? ^Not Part of Split Sample

Overall support for the bond measure doesn't shift with lower amounts.

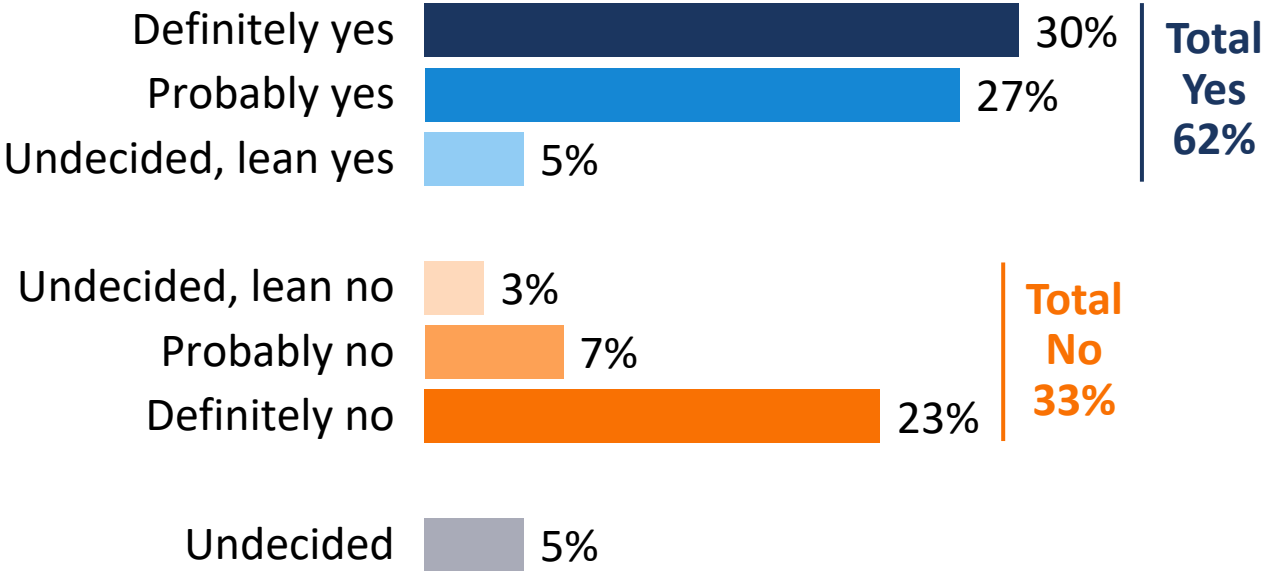


Q2 (Bond). Would you vote yes or no?

Q7. Suppose that the bond measure would authorize issuing _____ in bonds to improve Portland parks, rather than \$600 million. In that case, would you vote yes or no?

Three in five support a larger bond measure that includes Fire & Rescue priorities.

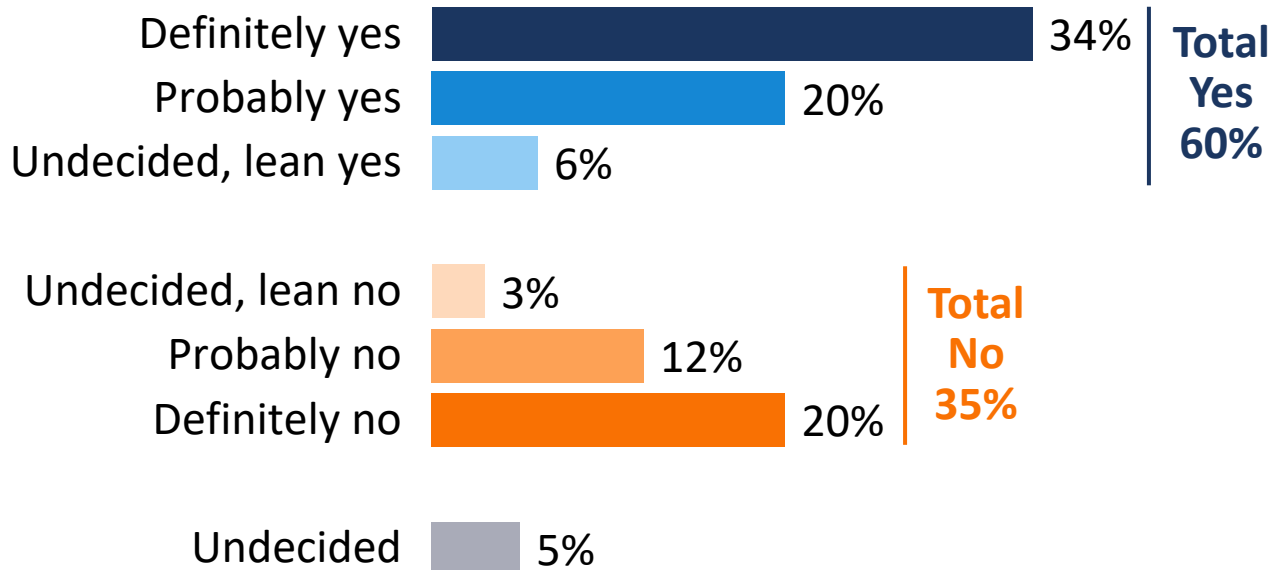
Some people have proposed that the Portland Parks & Recreation bond measure include funding for Portland Fire & Rescue. This would fund a new training facility to improve response to increased fire, medical, mental health and substance use calls, as well as improving urban wildfire prevention and response. It would also fund repairs or replacement of the fire truck repair and maintenance facility, building maintenance shop, and citywide emergency supply storage. Including Fire & Rescue, it would cost an additional \$200 million, estimated to cost the average residential property owner an additional \$49 per year.



This is 5 points higher than informed support for the bond measure without Fire & Rescue.

Three in five support an increased levy that invests in Fire & Rescue as well.

Some people have proposed that the Portland Parks & Recreation levy include funding for Portland Fire & Rescue. This would support firefighter staffing to improve response to increased fire, medical, mental health and substance use calls, as well as improving urban wildfire prevention and response. Including Fire & Rescue would cost an additional \$0.20 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, estimated to cost the average residential property owner an additional \$47 per year.



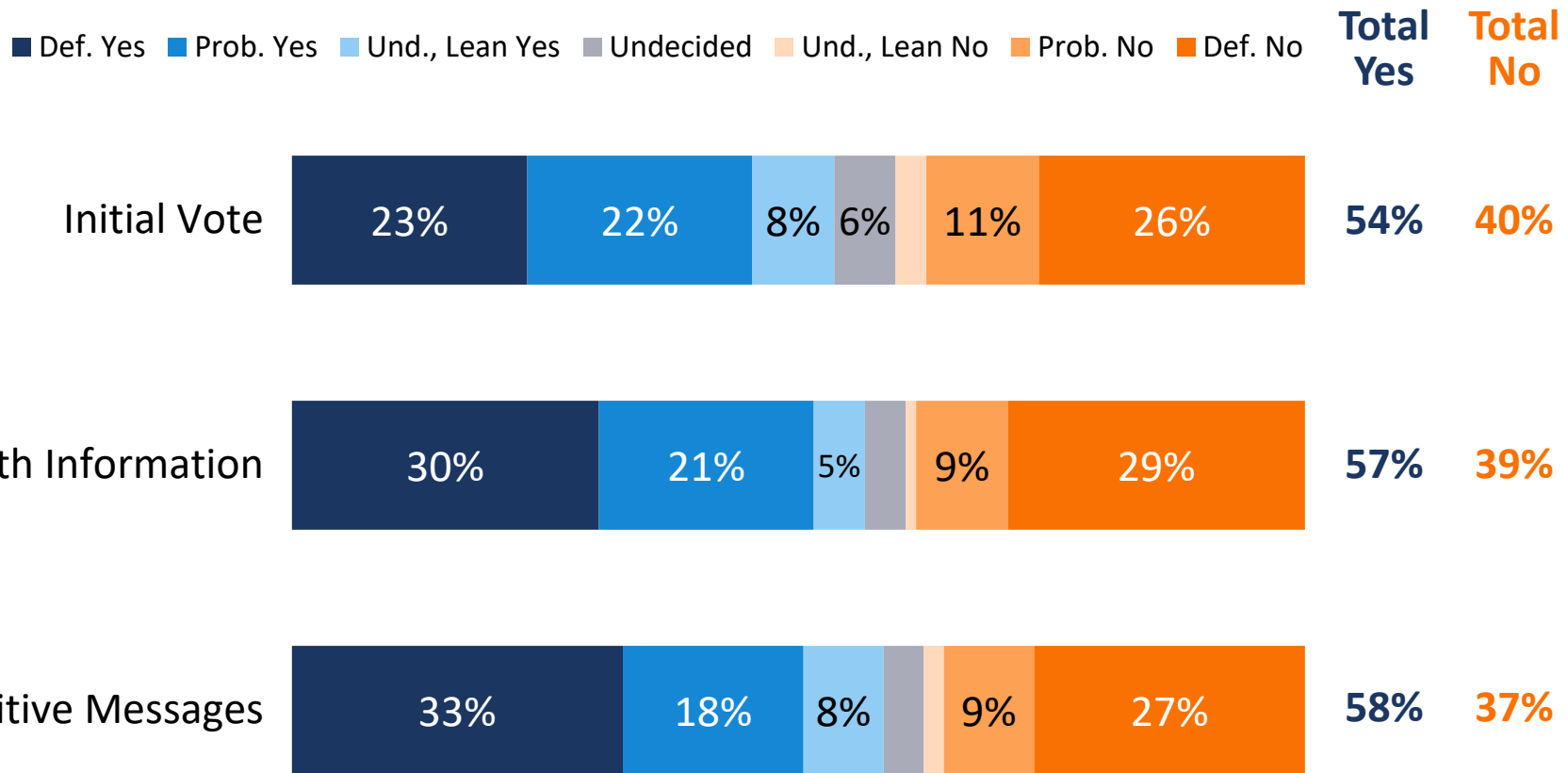
This is 16 points lower than informed support for the levy renewal, which was for Parks & Recreation alone.



Messaging and Movement

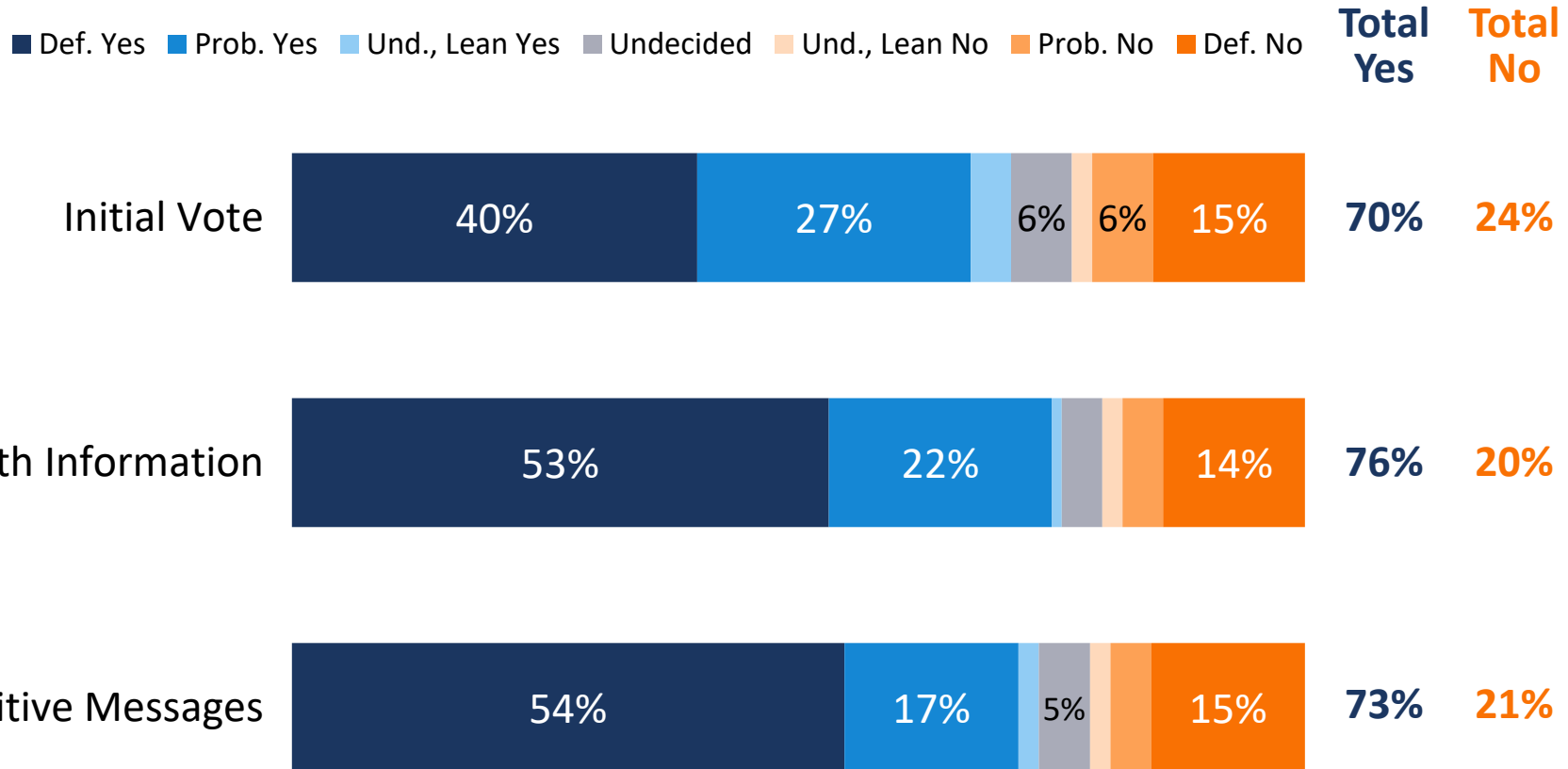
Support for a bond measure increases as voters learn more about it, ending near three in five.

Bond Measure Progression



Support for the levy renewal remains high as voters learn more about it.

Levy Renewal Progression



Messaging in Favor of a Measure

(Ranked by Very Convincing)

45%

(EVERYONE) Now, more than ever, we need parks and natural areas that are accessible to everyone and cost nothing to use. People need places to exercise, play, and enjoy beautiful natural areas, parks, and trails that are affordable, close to home, and open to all Portlanders.

43%

(KIDS RECREATION) Portland's recreation programs are crucial in providing free and low-cost opportunities for kids to stay safe and healthy, especially in critical after-school hours and in the summertime. This measure will help to support these vital recreation programs.

43%

(CLOSURES) If we don't continue current funding for local parks, the City will have to reduce cleaning schedules, delay needed repairs, and even close some parks, playgrounds or community centers. This measure simply maintains our investment in parks and recreation.

42%

(TREES) Portland's park system includes 1.2 million trees, which help to improve public health, reduce air pollution, cool our city, and fight climate change. This measure will protect and maintain our urban forest and plant more trees in parts of Portland that currently lack them like east Portland.

41%

^(TRANSFORMATION) Nature should be a part of every community. As our community grows and changes, we need to protect and preserve our parks, rivers, wetlands, trees, and other important natural features in every neighborhood for the benefit of all Portlanders and wildlife.

Messaging in Favor of a Measure: Continued

(Ranked by Very Convincing)

41%

^(**WATER**) This measure will help protect the over 8,000 acres of natural areas and 1.2 million trees surrounding Portland's rivers, creeks, and streams, which are vital to preventing pollution and ensuring clean water.

41%

^(**SPECIAL**) Our parks, trees and green spaces are why many of us live in Portland. We should keep investing in maintaining and repairing them to protect this crucial part of our quality of life.

41%

^(**CLIMATE/HEAT**) Climate change is causing more extreme heat in Portland. This measure will help take action to plant more trees, maintain pools and parks where people cool off, restore critical wildlife habitat, and keep our communities livable.

40%

(**ACCESS/NEGATIVE**) Unless this measure passes, Portland will face considerable challenges maintaining playgrounds, community centers, park restrooms, and more, and will be forced to close 1 in 5 of them over the next 15 years. Without this measure, we will not have the park system the community deserves.

39%

(**SAFETY**) Clean, well-maintained parks and recreation centers help keep our communities safe. By keeping them in good condition, we can give people safe places to gather, play, learn and relax.

35%

^(**EQUITY**) This measure will help to ensure that ALL Portlanders — regardless of race, income, or background - have access to the parks and recreation programs we rely on.



Conclusions

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- While a majority of Portland voters are pessimistic about the city's direction, three quarters are satisfied with the work of Parks & Recreation, and majorities visit a park or recreation center at least weekly.
- A Portland Parks & Recreation levy renewal looks well-positioned for passage, with broad initial support, much of it strong.
- A bond measure may be more challenging, particularly on the same ballot. It starts with a slim majority “yes” and the intensity of support and opposition is more evenly matched here. However, after messaging in favor, support broadens to nearly three in five.
- The bond that includes Fire & Rescue does better than one without it. However, a levy that includes Fire & Rescue (and is thus involves a tax increase) does worse than a simple renewal.
- Water quality is key as a priority for voters, as is protecting wildlife habitat, providing clean restrooms, and providing free and low-cost parks and recreation for all. Fire-focused priorities rank quite highly as well.
- Among a set of persuasive messages in favor, parks for everyone, prevention of closures, and protecting trees are all highly compelling.