

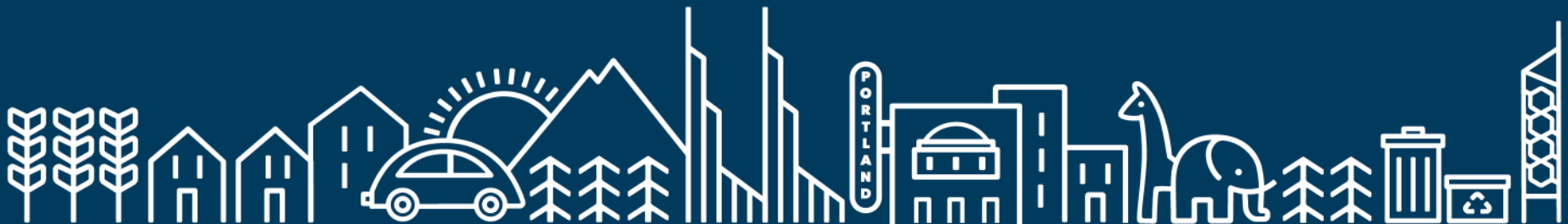
# Advancing outcomes regionwide through programmatic investments

Regional Transportation  
Funding Task Force  
July 24, 2019



**Notice: Verbal Public Comment will be limited to between 90 seconds and two minutes, depending on available time.**

**Please submit written comment at**  
**getmoving@**  
**oregonmetro.gov**





# Views of Key Transportation Issues in the Metro Region

*Key Findings from Recent Opinion Research*

*July 24, 2019*



OPINION  
RESEARCH  
& STRATEGY

# Survey Research Methodology

- 1,463 interviews with likely November 2020 voters in the Metro service area
- Conducted January 4-10, 2019, online and via landline and cell phones
- Margin of sampling error of +/-2.8% at the 95% confidence interval
  - 463 interviews in Clackamas County with a margin of error of +/- 4.6%
  - 594 interviews in Multnomah County with a margin of error of +/- 5.1%
  - 406 interviews in Washington County with a margin of error of +/- 4.9%
- Data statistically weighted to reflect the true geographic distribution of voters through the region
- Due to rounding, some percentages do not add up to 100%



# Focus Group Methodology

- Six focus groups conducted in greater Portland August 14-16, 2018
- Participants were recruited to generally reflect the demographic balance in the region
- Clackamas and Washington County groups were segmented by gender; Multnomah County groups were segmented by transit use



August 14	9 Clackamas County Women
	10 Clackamas County Men
August 15	10 Washington County Women
	10 Washington County Men
August 16	10 Multnomah County: Primarily Transit Users
	10 Multnomah County: Primarily Drivers



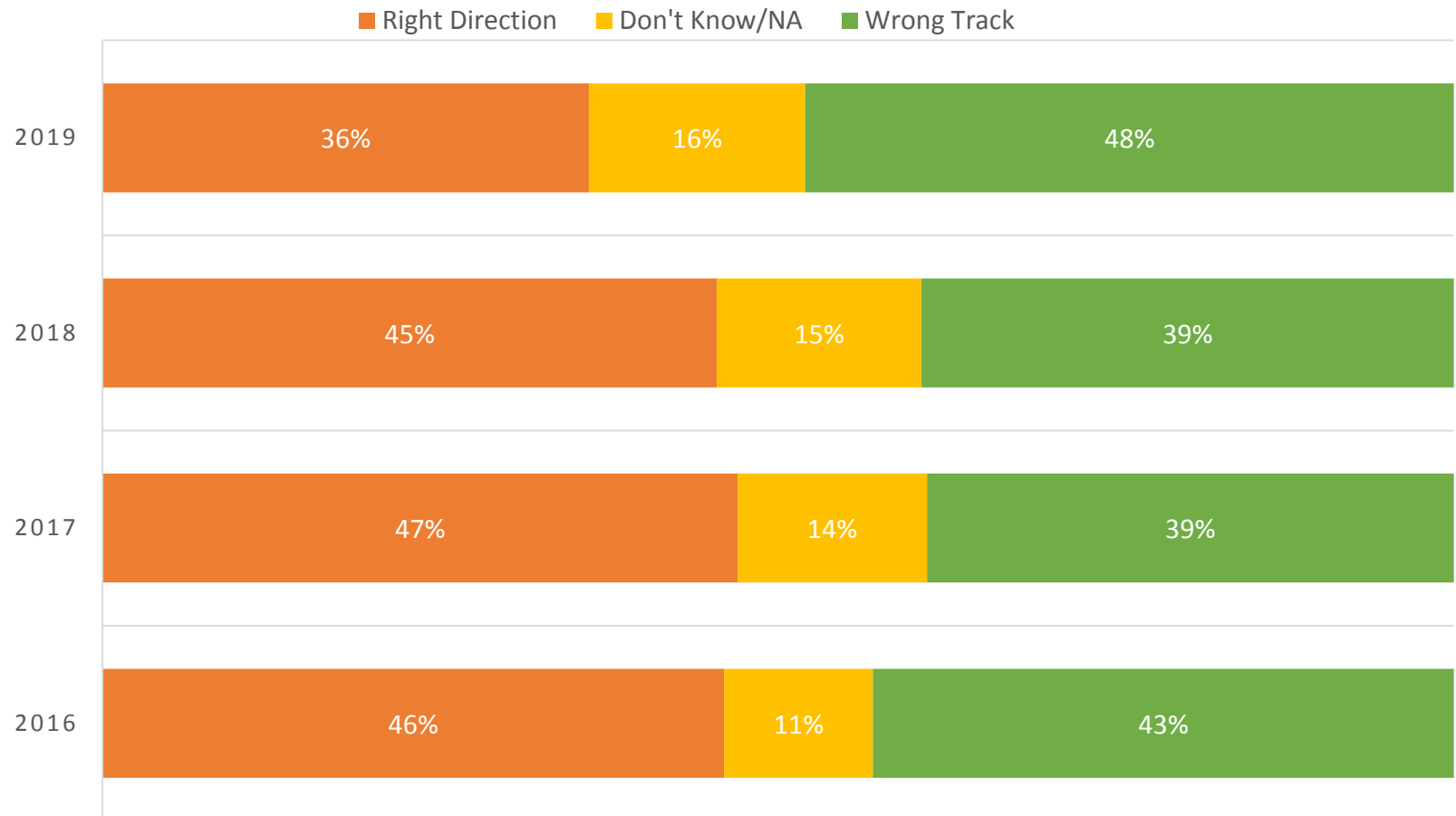
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# Issue Context

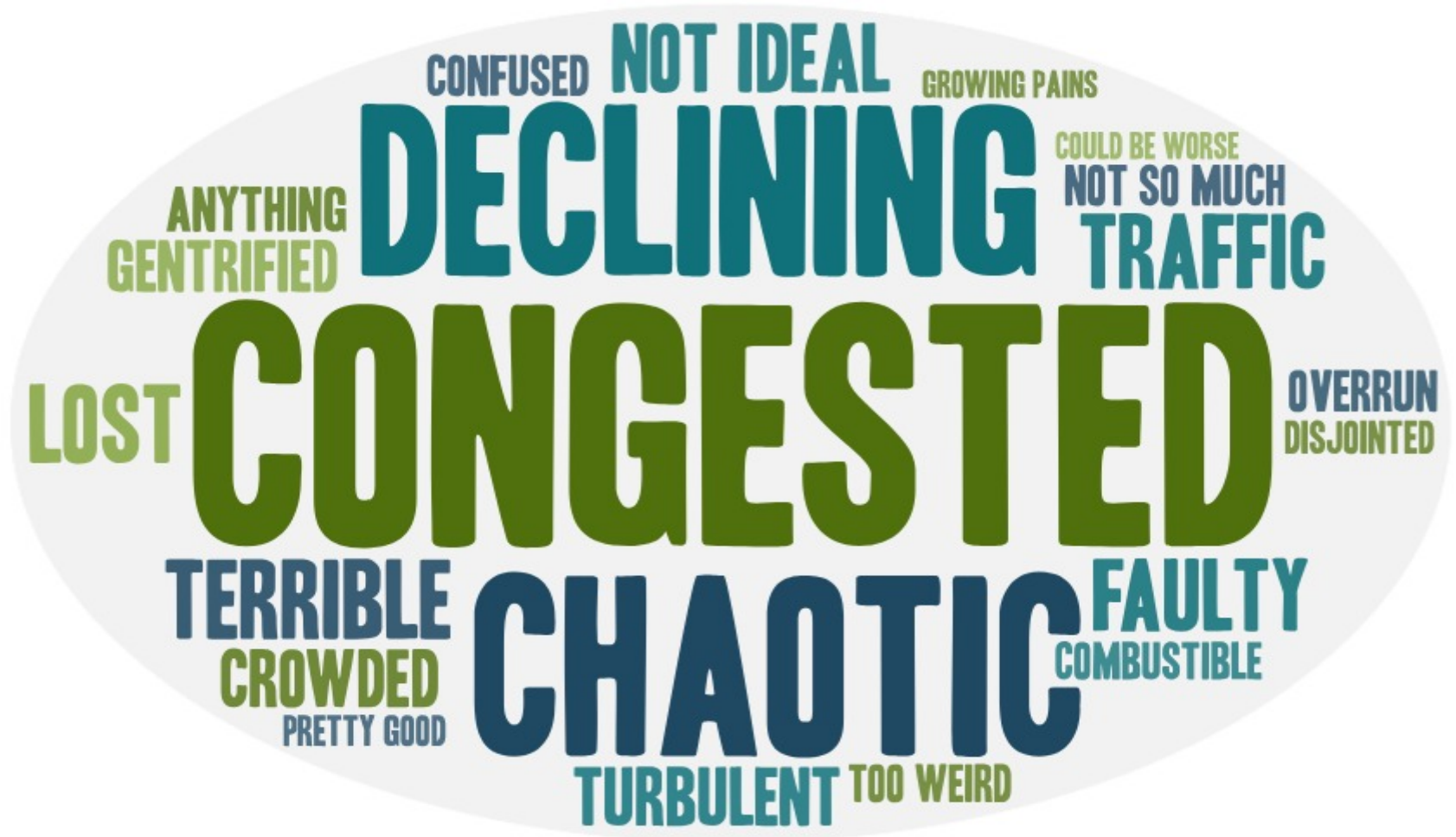
# Voters have adopted a more negative view of the direction of the region.

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



# Focus Group Impressions of the Metro Region

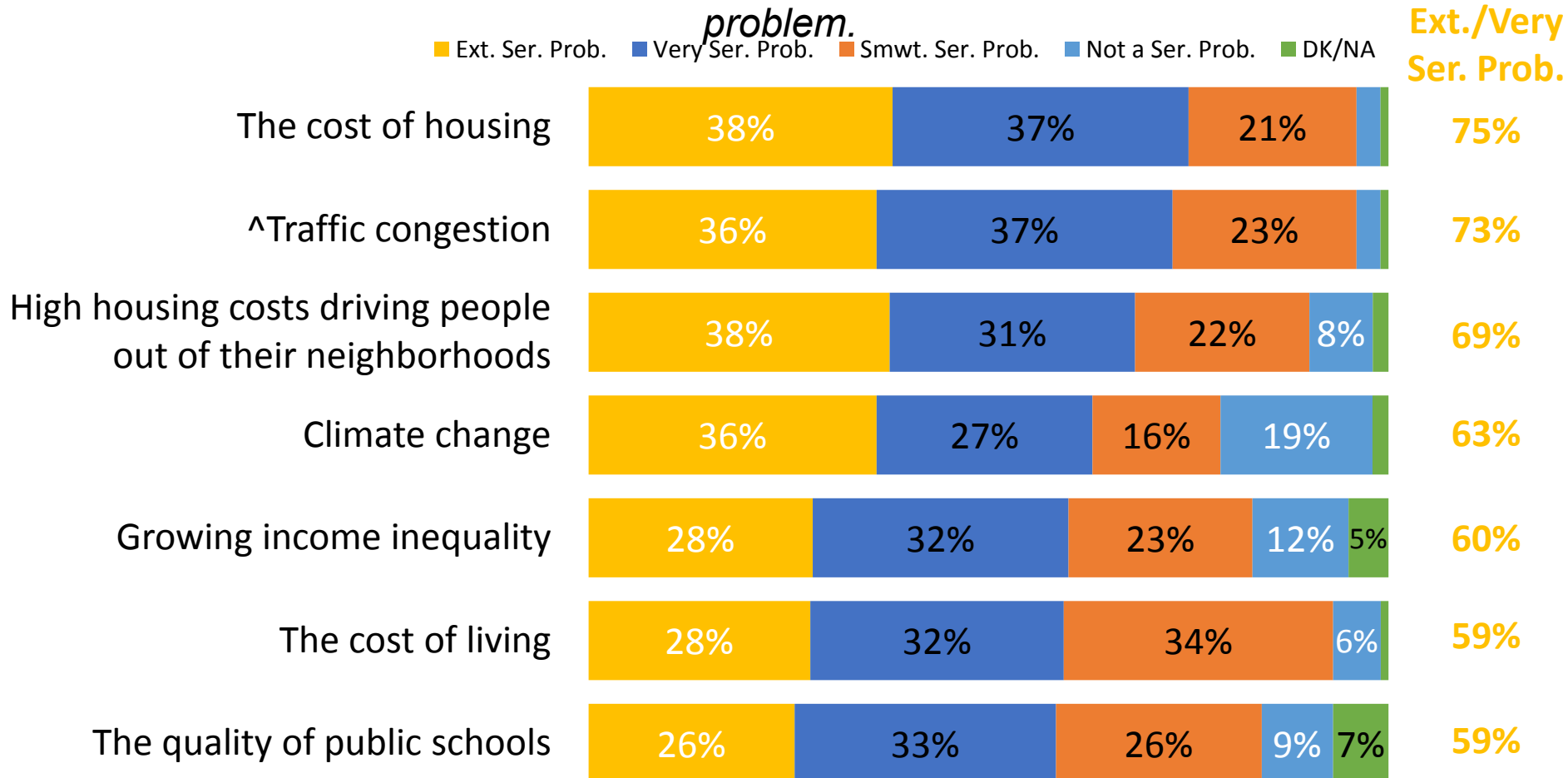
*(Responses When Asked to Summarize How Things Are Going in the Region in a Word or Phrase)*



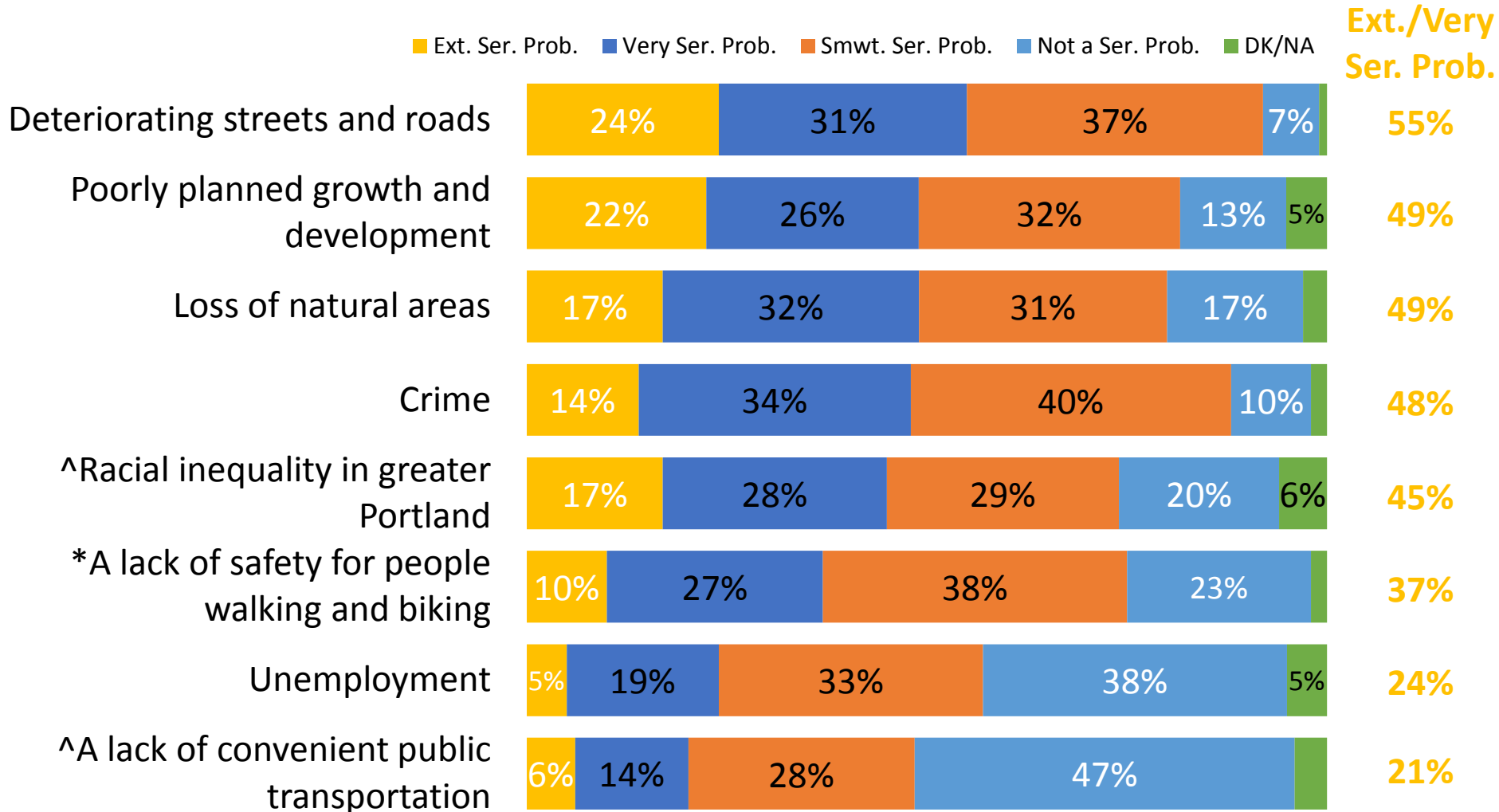


# Traffic and housing costs are major concerns.

*I'm going to read you a list of issues. Please tell me whether or not you think each one is an extremely serious, very serious, somewhat serious, or not a serious problem.*



# Lack of convenient public transportation and pedestrian and bike safety are relatively less urgent priorities.



Q3. I'm going to read you a list of issues. Please tell me whether or not you think each one is an extremely serious, very serious, somewhat serious, or not a serious problem. ^Not Part of Split Sample

# Traffic and housing costs have become much more intense concerns in the last four years.

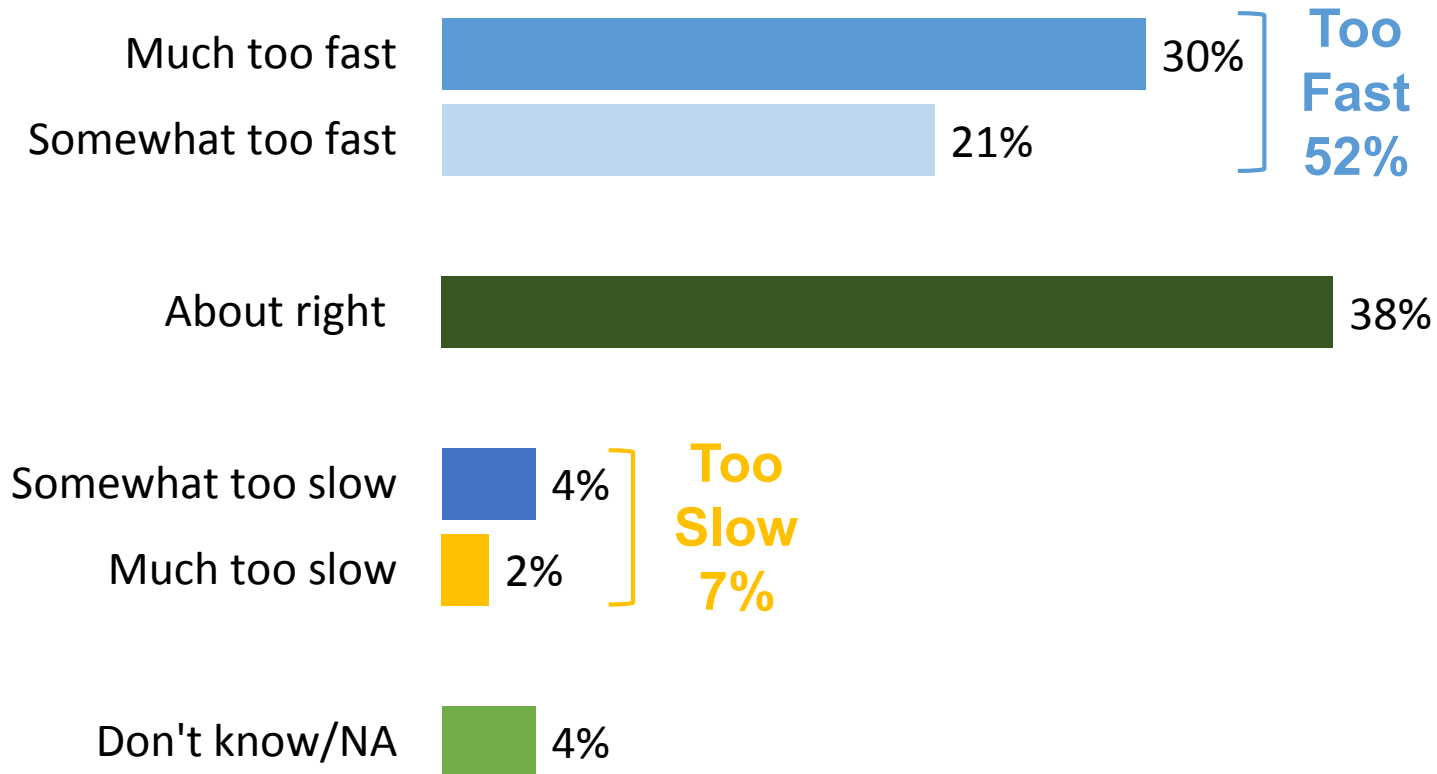
(% Extremely/Very Serious Problem)

Issue	2015	2019	Difference
^Traffic congestion	48%	73%	+25%
The cost of housing	56%	75%	+19%
High housing costs driving people out of their neighborhoods	51%	69%	+18%
Poorly planned growth and development	42%	49%	+7%
Loss of natural areas	42%	49%	+7%
The cost of living	54%	59%	+5%
Growing income inequality	56%	60%	+4%
Deteriorating streets and roads	51%	55%	+4%
*A lack of safety for people walking and biking	35%	37%	+2%
^A lack of convenient public transportation	25%	21%	-4%
The quality of public schools	70%	59%	-11%
Unemployment	57%	24%	-33%

Q3. I'm going to read you a list of issues. Please tell me whether or not you think each one is an extremely serious, very serious, somewhat serious, or not a serious problem. ^Not Part of Split Sample \*Wording Slightly Different in 2015

# A majority feels growth and development are moving too fast.

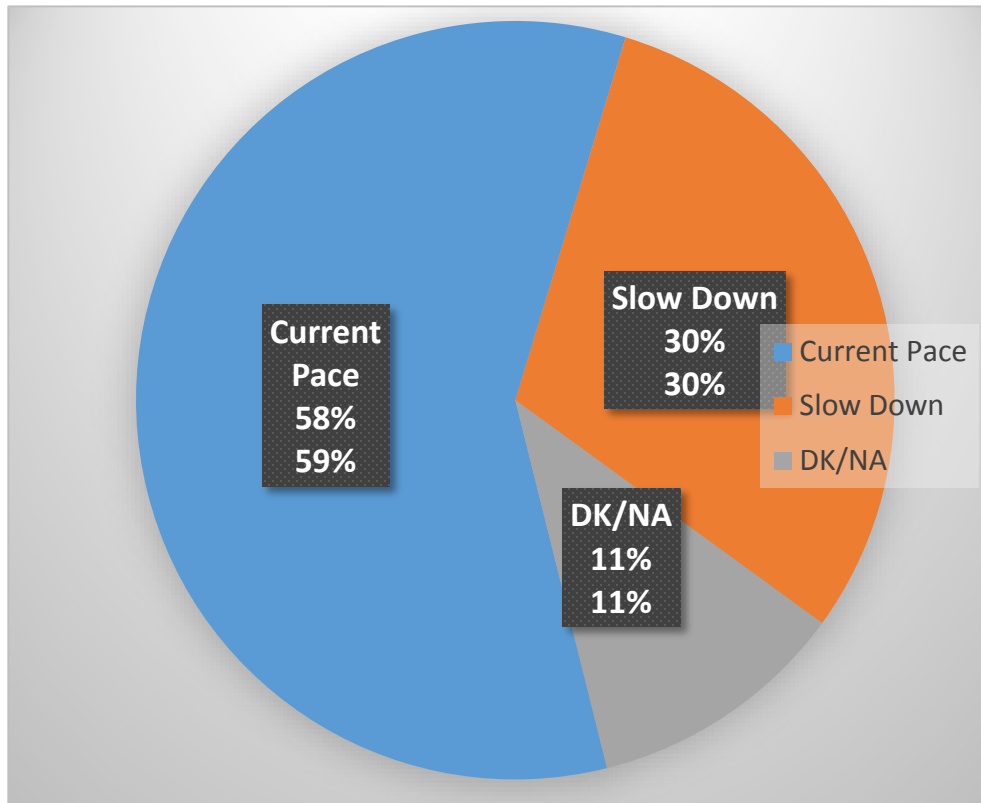
*Do you think the rate of growth and development in your community is too fast, about right, or too slow?*





# Voters have no illusion that the rate of growth will change.

*Over the next several years, do you think that growth in greater Portland will continue at its current pace, or will it eventually slow down?*



*Younger voters are slightly more likely to say they believe that growth will continue at its current pace, as are voters in Washington and Clackamas counties. Otherwise, demographic differences are minor.*

# Views of local government remain generally positive.

*I'm going to read a list of organizations. I would like you to tell me if you have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of that organization.*

■ Very Fav. ■ Smwt. Fav. ■ Heard of/DK/NHO ■ Smwt. Unfav. ■ Very Unfav.

**Total Fav.**  
**73%**

**Total Unfav.**  
**21%**



TriMet



The Oregon Department of Transportation, also known as ODOT



**65%** **25%**

Your County government



**58%** **29%**



Metro



**53%** **27%**

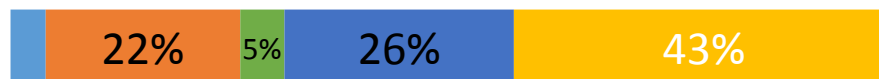
Your City government



**52%** **38%**



The federal government



**26%** **69%**



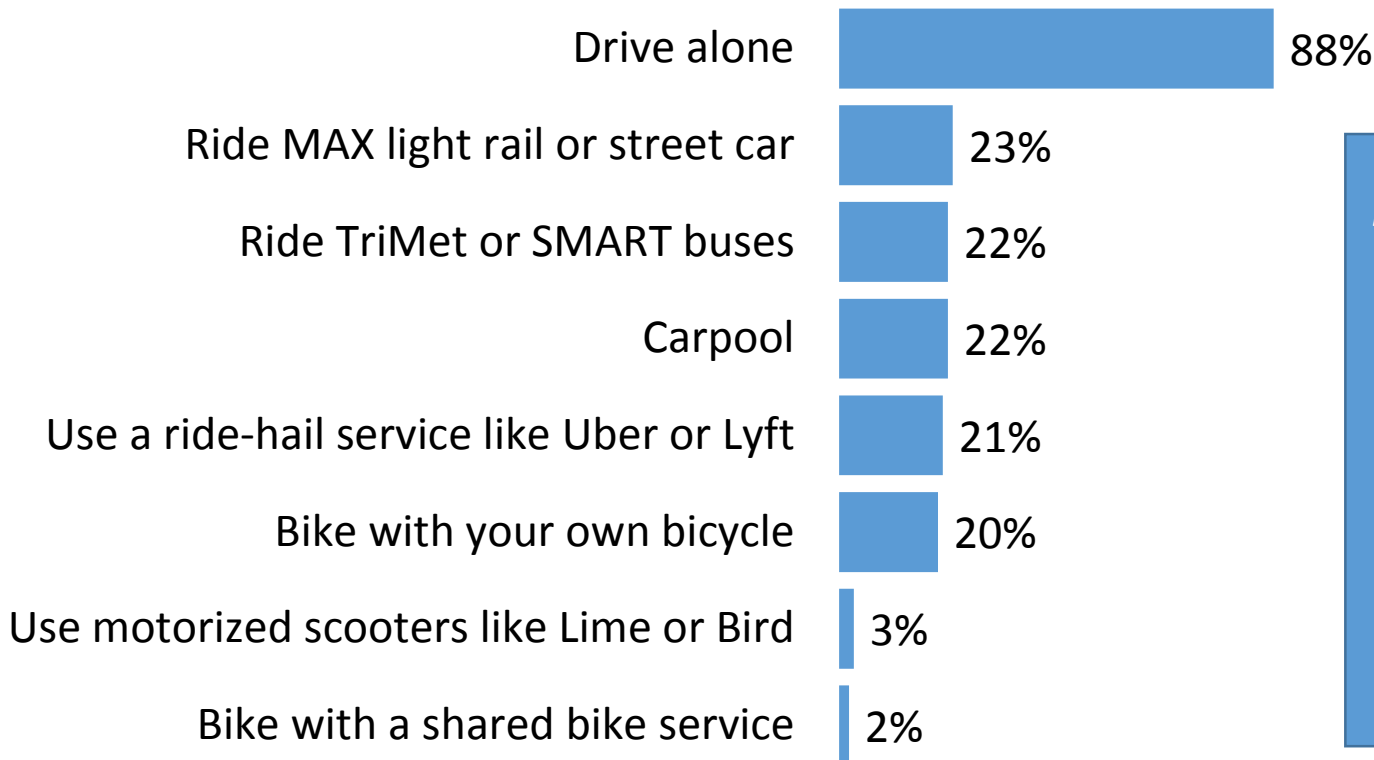
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# Views of Traffic and Transportation

# Most voters in the region drive alone as their main way of getting around.

*Do you regularly, that is at least two or three times per week, use any of the following modes of transportation? By that I mean for any purpose, including commuting to school or work, running errands, or recreation.*



*Portlanders, younger voters and lower-income households are more likely to ride light rail and buses. Voters of color are more likely to ride light rail.*



# Focus Group Transportation Concerns

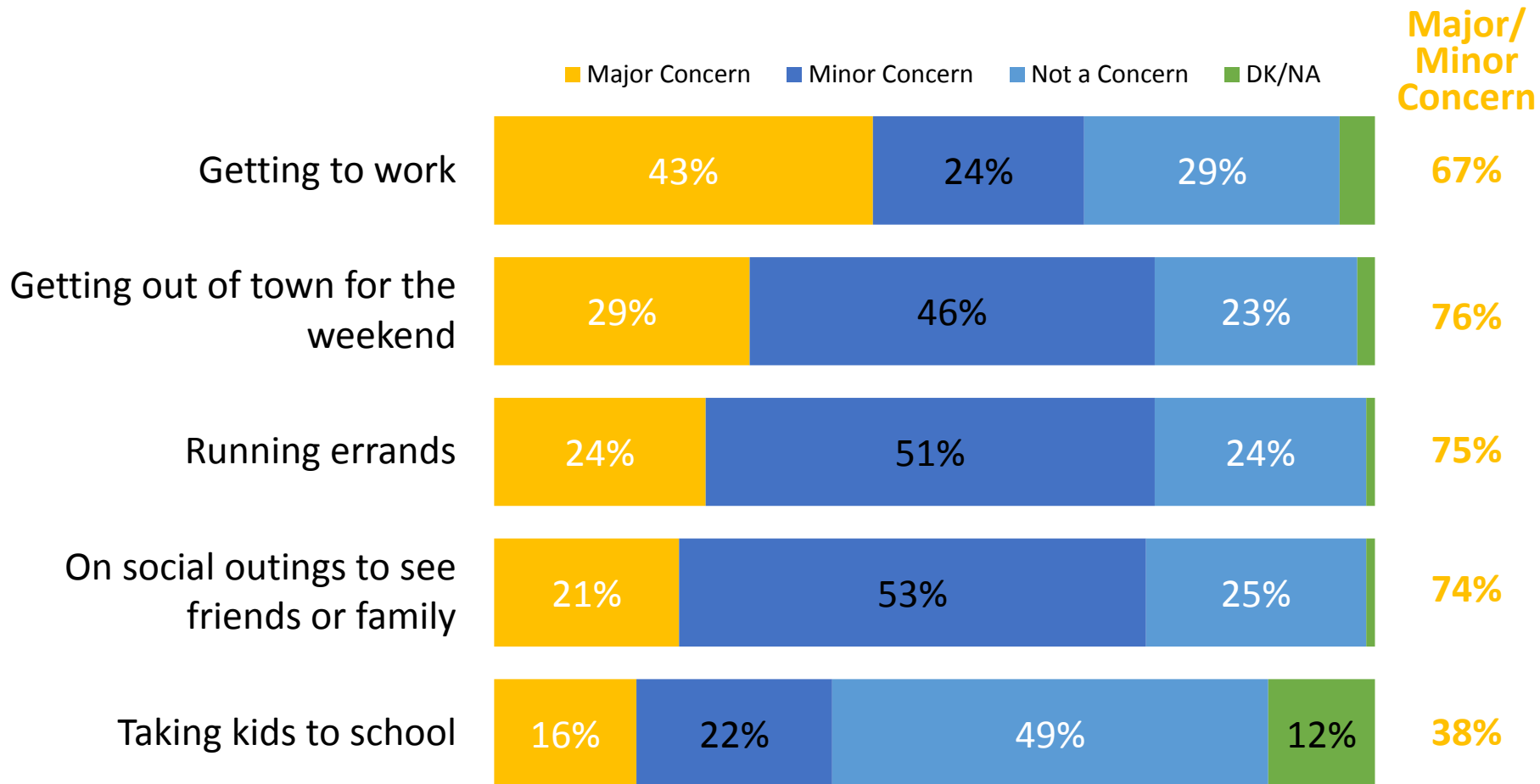
- For drivers especially, there was a sense that roads are simply not wide enough for any increase in traffic – and there is no room for them to grow. The issue seemed intractable at first blush, but they came up with alternatives throughout the discussion.
- They cited several specific pain points, particularly bridges over the Columbia, freeways (like I-5, I-84, 217 and 26) and major arteries like Tualatin Valley Highway, McLoughlin, Burnside, MLK, Cesar Chavez and Division.
- Those who moved around the region more saw it as much more acute; others restricted their work and life to a certain part of the region and were less concerned.
- While most had generally positive impressions of the transit system in principle, digging slightly yielded many concerns that prevented them from using it.

We're going to need to try to find new ways [besides cars] to get around in order to be comfortable.

35 years ago from L.O. to Hillsboro, Beaverton, and literally anywhere in Portland: it was 10 minutes away. Gradually it got to where everything is half an hour.

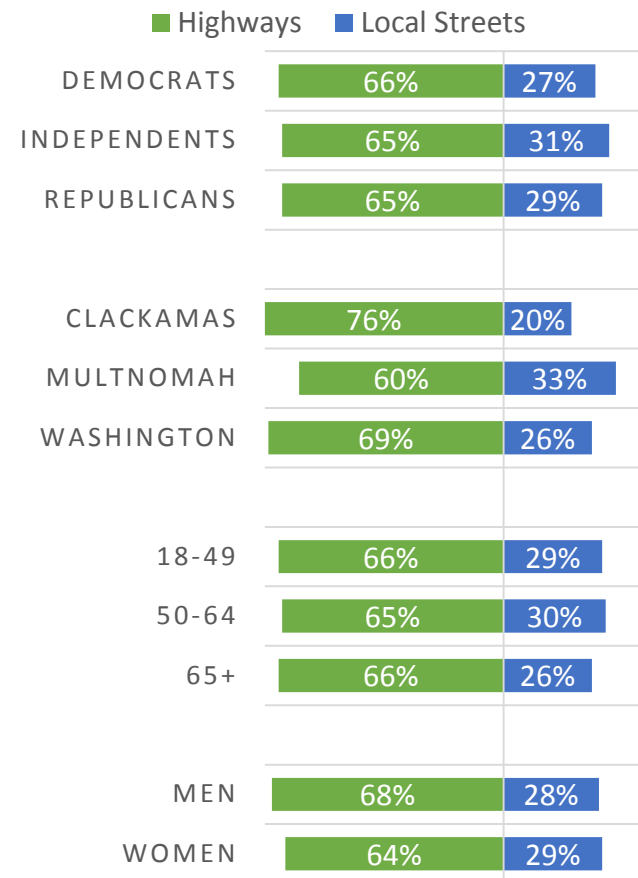
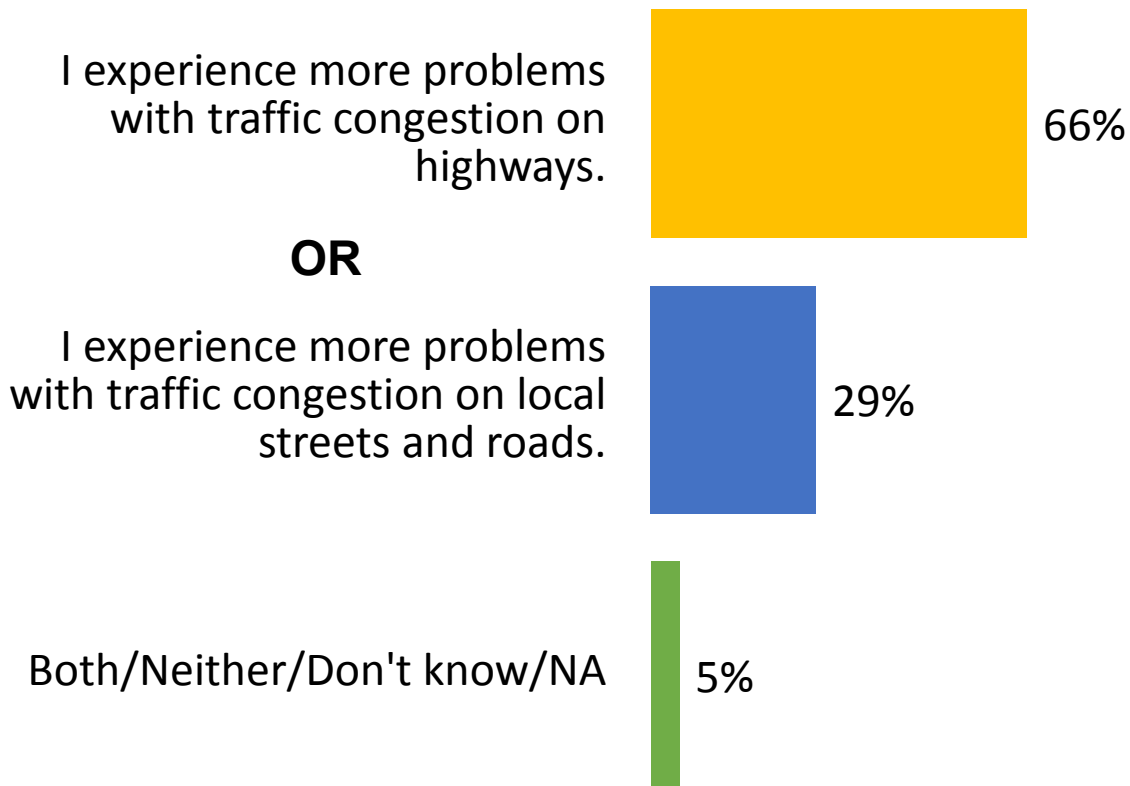
# Voters are most concerned with commute traffic.

*I am going to read you a list of situations when you may find traffic to be a problem for you. Please tell me whether traffic in greater Portland is a major concern in that situation, a minor concern, or not at all a concern for you.*



# Concern about traffic centers on highways.

*I am going to read you a pair of statements about transportation in greater Portland. This includes all types of ways to get around, including driving, walking, biking, and public transit like MAX and TriMet. Choose the statement that comes closest to your opinion.*



# Imagining a Better Transportation System

- Wider roads and highways and more bridges appealed to many – a handful, however, understood the concept of induced demand.
- Express transit routes were appealing as a way to simply take less time to get from place to place.
- Several respondents identified the “last mile problem,” and looked to car-to-transit solutions like park and ride.
- Several noted that transit passes were expensive – especially for someone also paying the cost of maintaining a personal vehicle, or for the types of people they imagined used it most (students, low-income, seniors, etc.).
- They spoke admiringly of places where you don’t even need to check the schedule because service was more frequent.
- Others felt the only way to drive less would be wait until retirement.

More bus routes close to different neighborhoods so you don’t have to walk so far.

As a car driver sometimes I use the [surface] streets, then it impacts the bus. If they would fix the highways that would make TriMet more efficient.



# Regional highways are a bigger priority than local streets and roads.

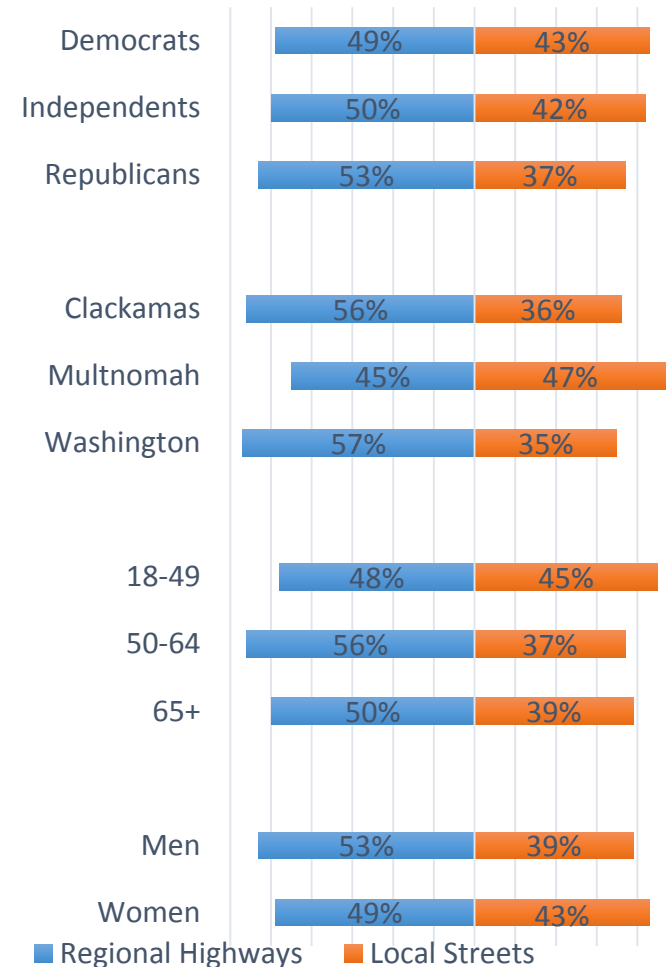
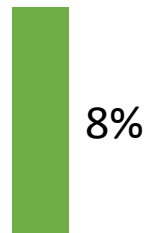
*I am going to read you a pair of statements about transportation in greater Portland. This includes all types of ways to get around, including driving, walking, biking, and public transit like MAX and TriMet. Choose the statement that comes closest to your opinion.*

We should put a higher priority  
on fixing regional highways and  
bridges.

**OR**

We should put a higher priority  
on fixing local streets and roads

Both/Neither/Don't know/NA

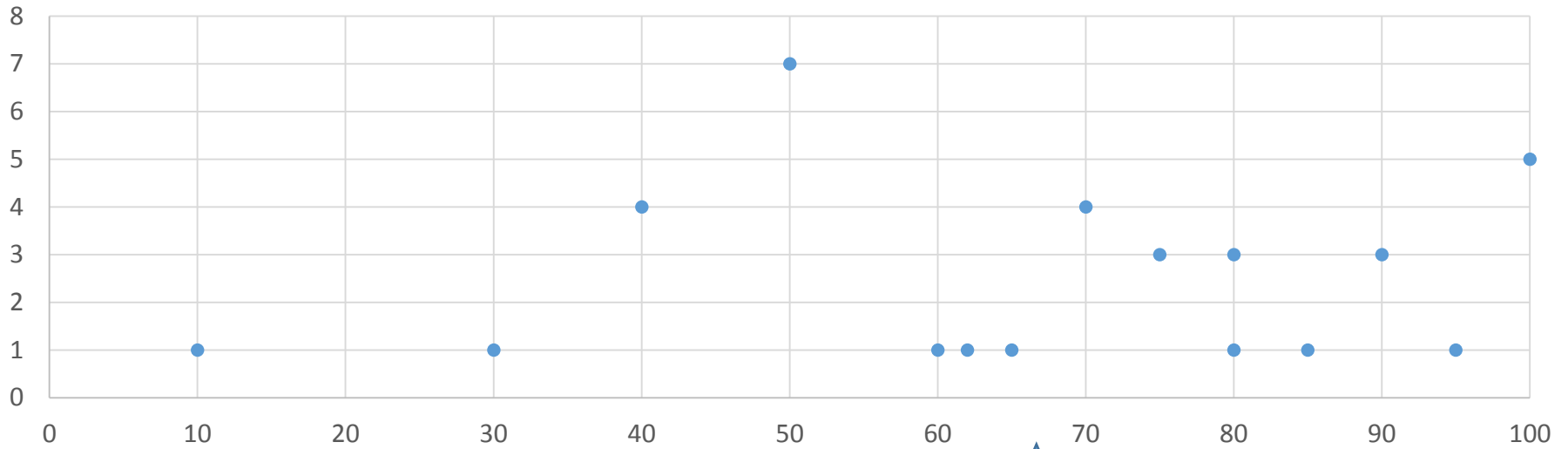


Focus group participants read this brief paragraph describing the concept of Enhanced Transit Corridors.

*In Enhanced Transit Corridors, buses will run every 15 minutes or better most of the day, every day. That means that a bus is coming soon whenever you need it, and it is easy to transfer from one line to another to travel in many directions. Improveents that make this possible include designing streets so that buses can “skip the line” at red lights, timing red-light signals to turn green when a bus approaches, or removing on-street parking and replacing it with a lane for buses and vehicles that are turning only. Buses can also move more quickly if they have fewer stops, and if people can pay their fare before they board (like a ticket machine at a train station), and if riders get on at “bulb outs,” which don’t require the bus to pull over or kneel as riders board.*

Initially, focus group participants rated the plan as important, but with only modest intensity.

*Importance of Investing in These Improvements, Rating on 0-100 Scale*



Profile	Average
Suburban Transit Riders	84.4
Suburban Drivers	57.7
Multnomah County Transit Riders	76.3
Multnomah County Drivers	59.0

**Average: 68**

# Initial Reactions to ETC

*I like it a lot, but I worry about unintended consequences. Parking is one. Bus turn lanes will intensify conflict with bike riders. – Portland Transit Rider*

*I still don't believe I would take a bus. However, this would be a great way to reduce traffic. – Suburban Driver*

*Buses should be in partnership with cars, not at the expense of them. – Portland Driver*

- ❖ Most indicated the approach sounded good in theory, but had very different reactions to the elements of the description.
- ❖ Removing on-street parking was highly unappealing; bulb-outs were intriguing.
- ❖ Many simply had a lot of questions, particularly where these routes might be implemented, how that might affect the streetscape and their commute, and how it might look.
- ❖ There was not much enthusiasm, in principle, for paying higher taxes for these kinds of improvements. Participants were skeptical about whether they would use it, how much impact it would have on traffic, and whether it couldn't be implemented with existing funding sources.



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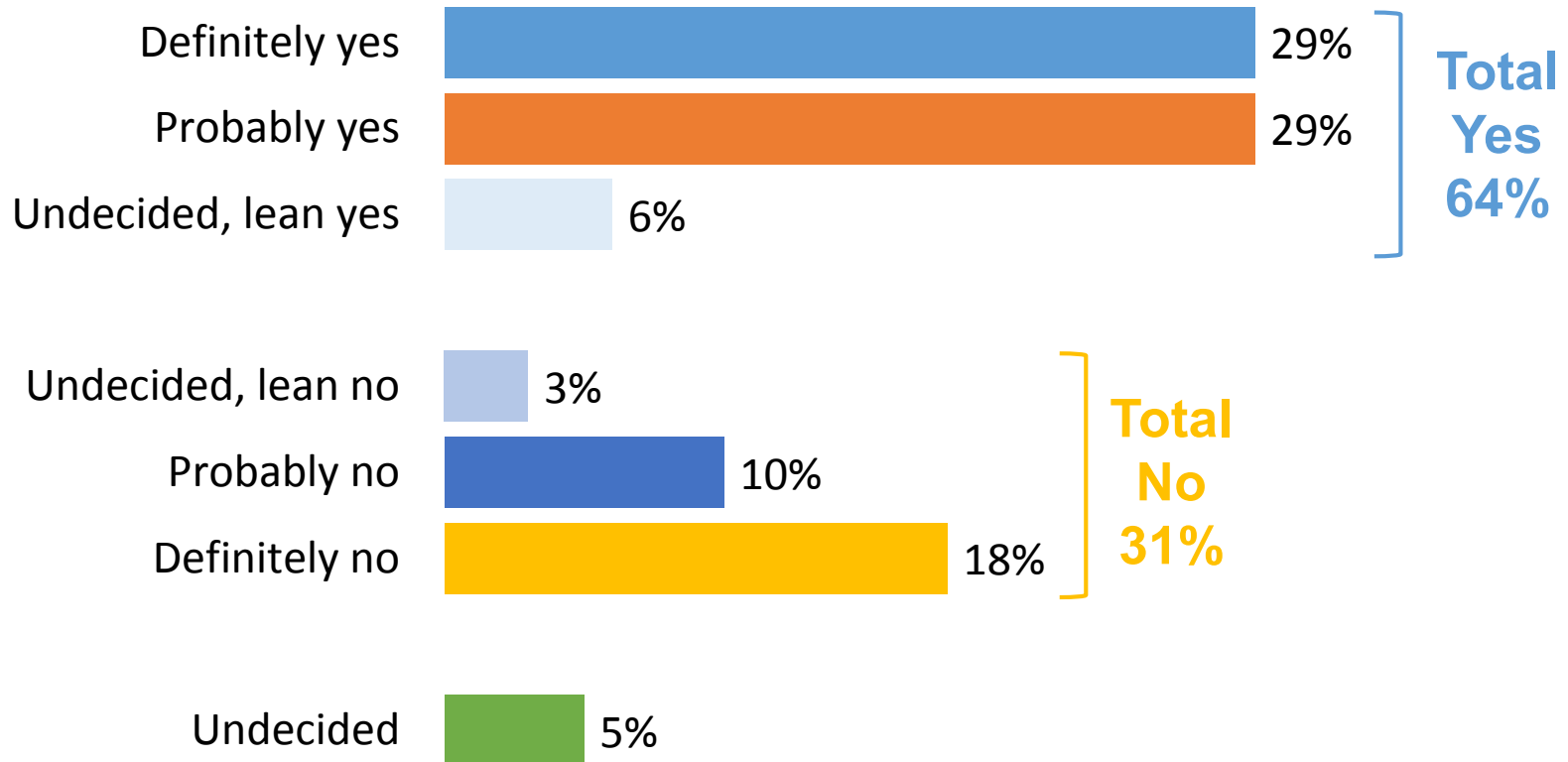
# Views of a Potential Ballot Measure

# Ballot Measure Concept Tested

Suppose there were a measure on the ballot in the greater Portland area to reduce traffic congestion, create additional transportation choices for residents, and make it easier and safer to get around the region. It would fund specific traffic relief projects; repairs to local streets and roads; new light rail and rapid bus lines; and projects that make local streets and roads safer. The measure would increase local taxes for thirty years, subject to a community oversight committee and independent annual audits.

# Nearly two-thirds of voters back a measure in concept, but support is soft.

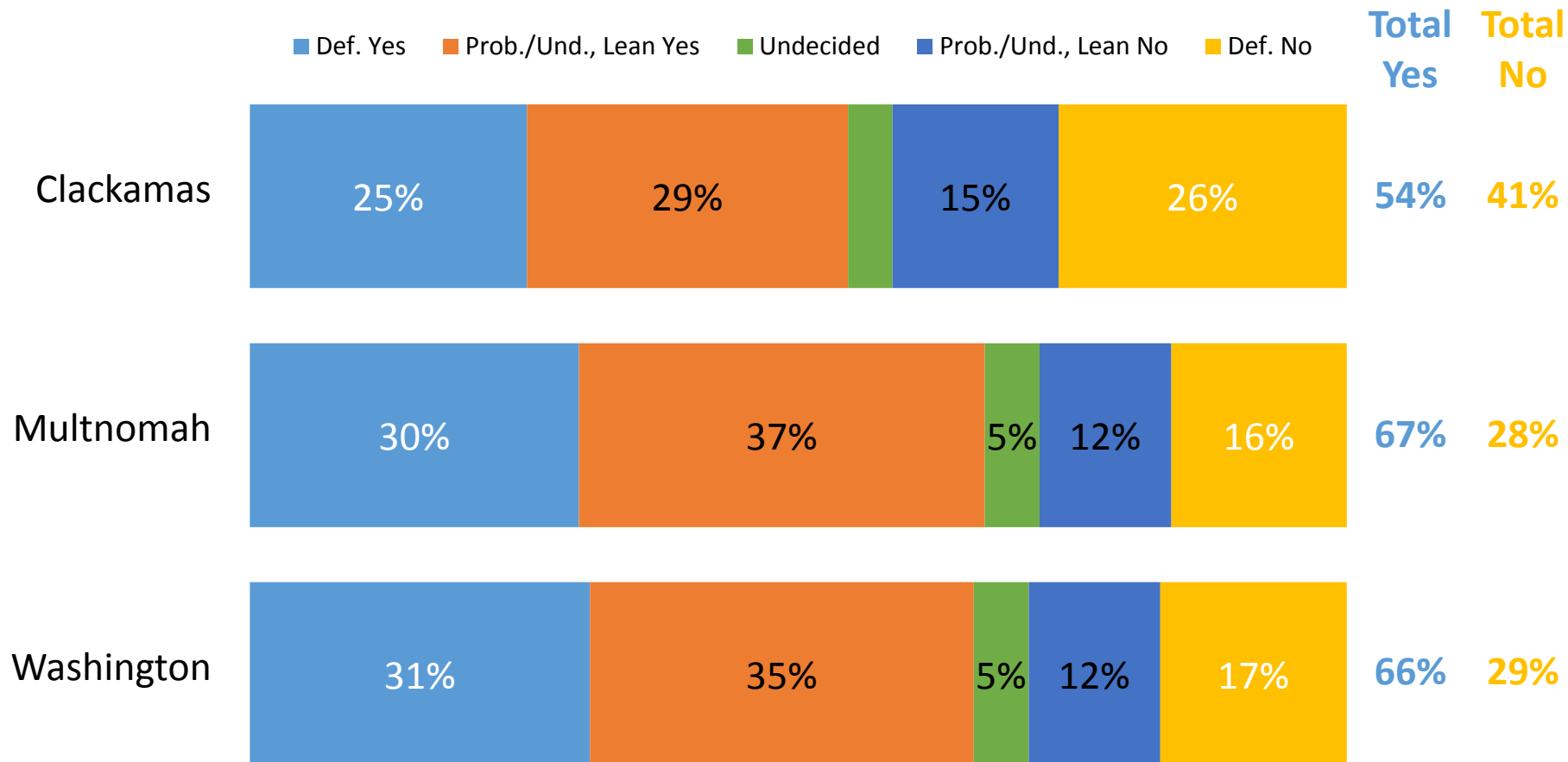
*In general, do you think you would vote yes or no on a measure of this type?*





# Two-thirds also back the proposal in Multnomah and Washington counties, though that support is soft.

*By County*





Metro



# Project Priorities and Willingness to Pay

# Seismic repairs and safety improvements are high priorities to seven in ten or more.

*I am going to read you six major goals that might be pursued if additional funding for transportation were available in the greater Portland area. Please tell me how important the goal is to you: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important at all.*

■ Ext. Impt. ■ Very Impt. ■ Smwt. Impt. ■ Not Impt. ■ DK/NA

Ext./Very  
Impt.

Repairing and upgrading bridges and other key infrastructure to ensure they can survive an earthquake



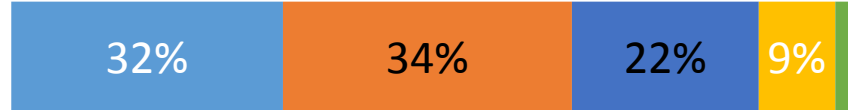
78%

Improving pedestrian and overall safety on streets and roads with a history of crashes, and near senior centers, schools and places where a lot of people walk



71%

Widening roads and highways to address bottlenecks



67%

Accommodating the growing population by providing more frequent and faster bus and MAX service



54%

Making it easier to travel short distances near where you live and within neighborhoods



37%

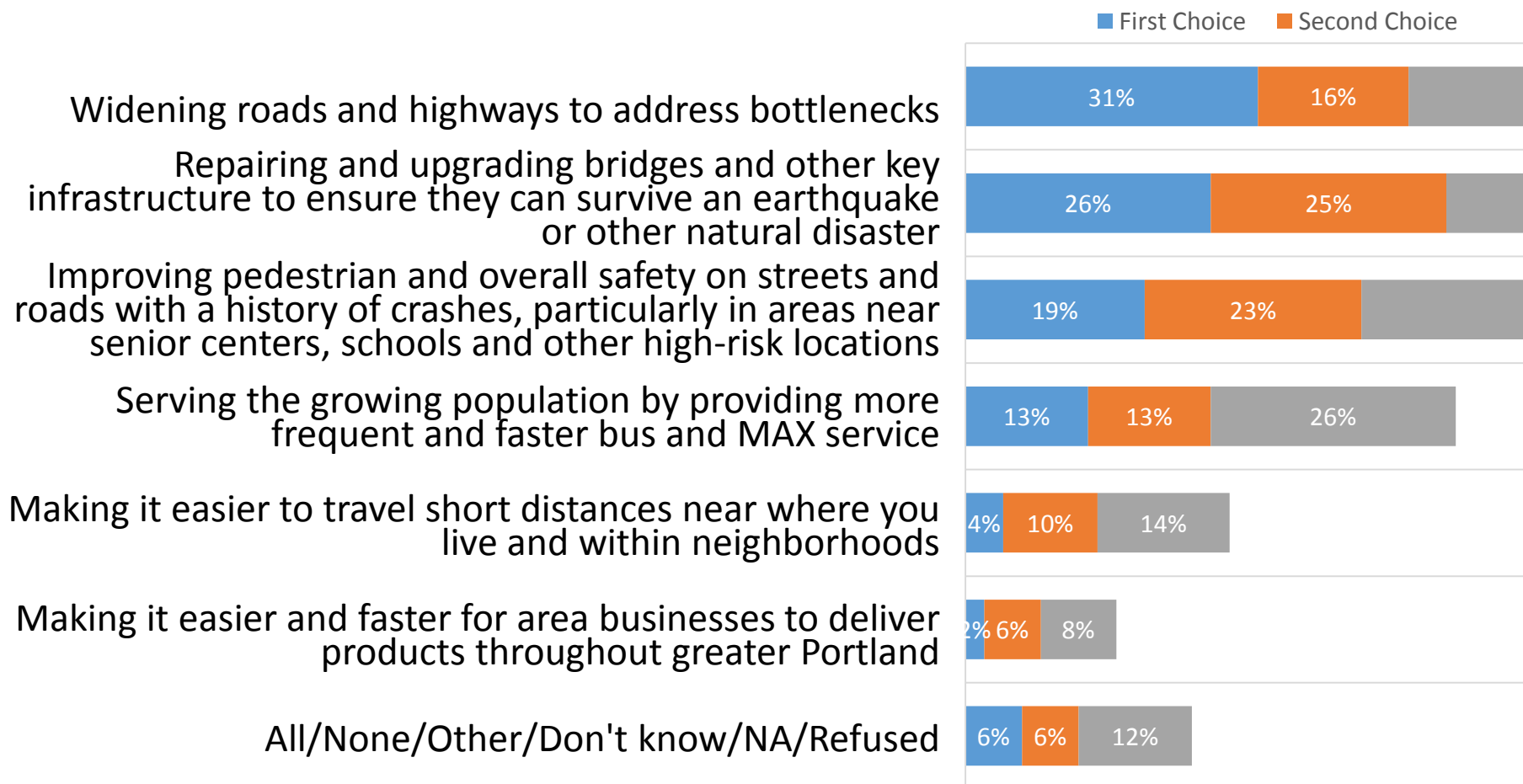
Making it easier and faster for businesses to deliver products throughout greater Portland



34%

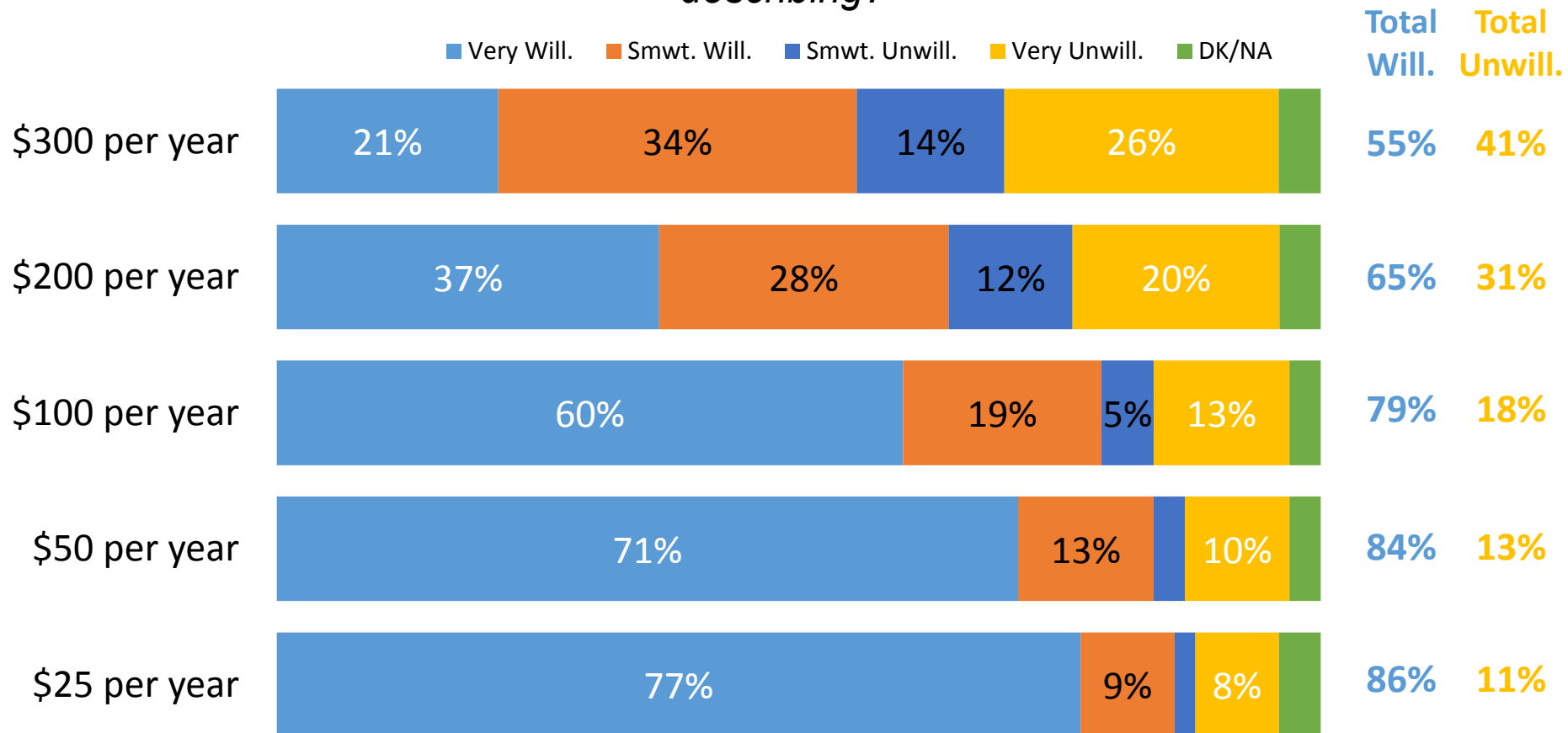
Asked to rank their choices, a majority rank repairs first or second, with nearly half saying the same of widening roads and highways.

*Which of these six do you think should be the most important goal for additional transportation funding?*



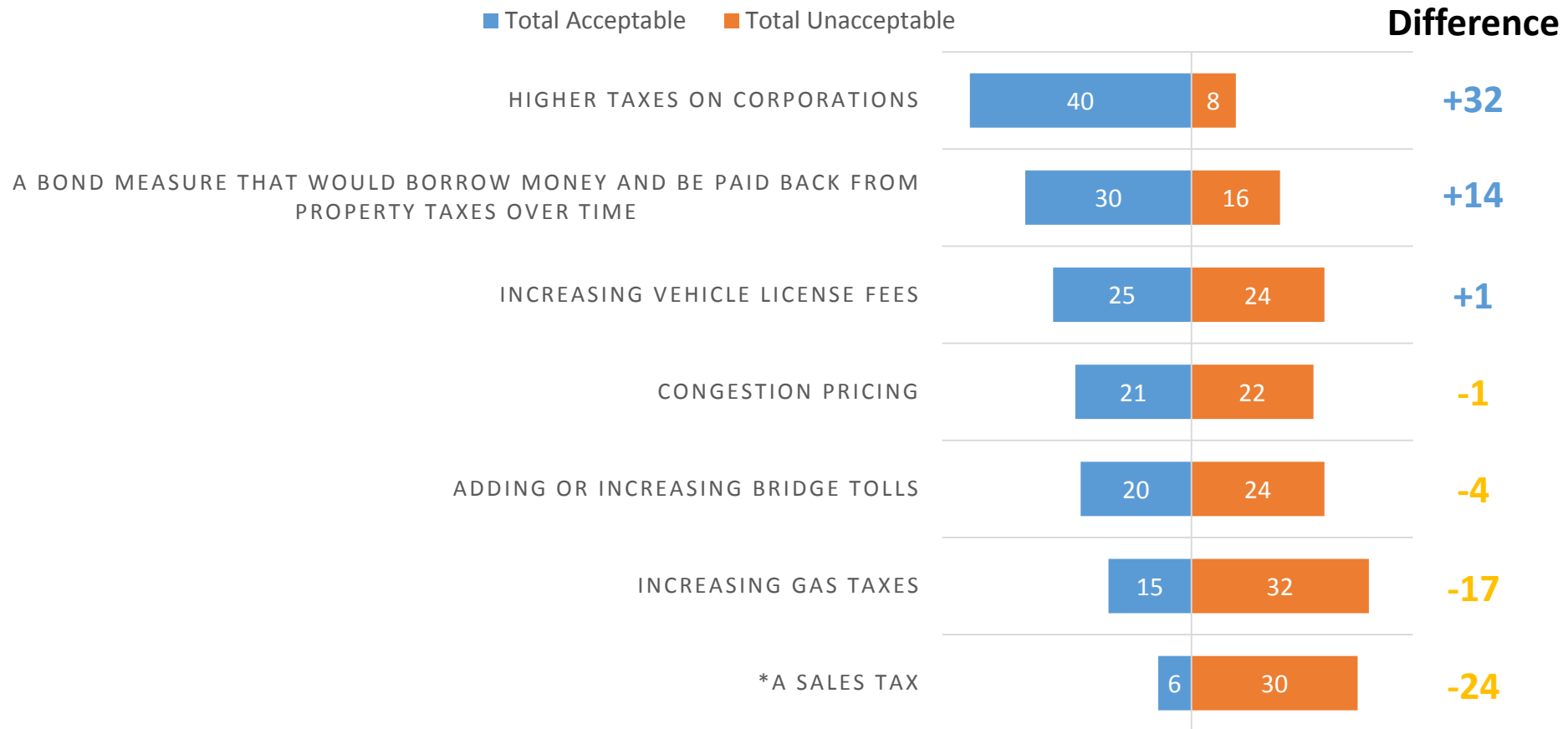
# Willingness to pay, as a general principle, is quite high.

*Regardless of how the money were raised, would your household be willing to pay \_\_\_\_ in additional taxes to fund the kinds of transportation improvements I have been describing?*



# Among funding mechanisms, focus group participants most broadly supported higher taxes on corporations.

*Please circle any of the mechanisms for raising money for transportation that you find ACCEPTABLE. Please cross out any you find UNACCEPTABLE.*



*\*Asked only in Washington and Multnomah Counties*



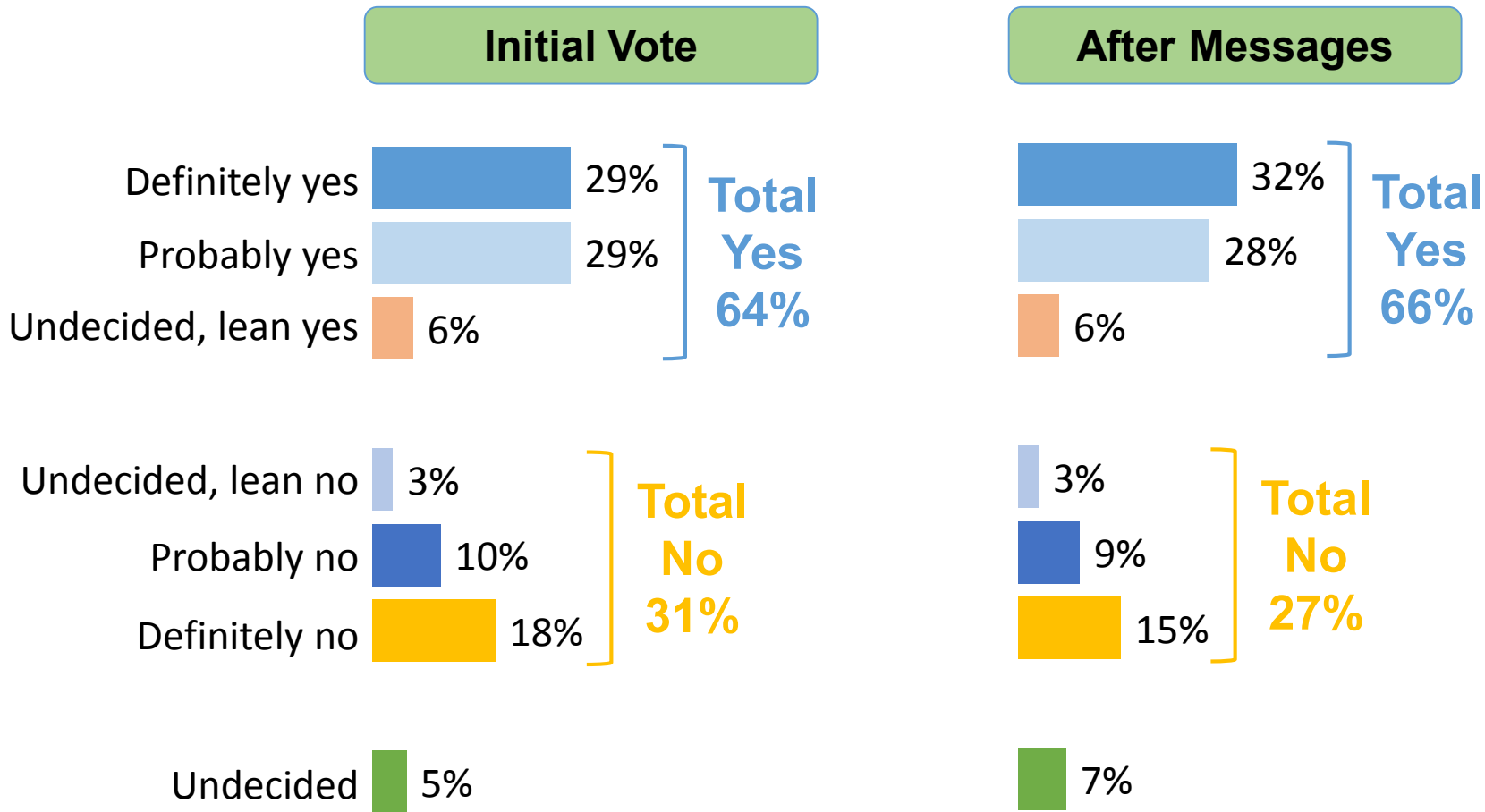
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# Messaging and Movement



# Offering voters additional information only slightly increases support for the ballot measure concept.



Q10/Q17. In general, do you think you would vote yes or no on a measure of this type?

# Top Tier Messages in Support of a Measure

## *(Ranked in Order of Effectiveness)*

**(EVERYONE)** We need a transportation system that works for everyone. Drivers need efficient commute routes, and we need safe, reliable and affordable options for those who bike, walk or take transit.

**(GROWTH)** Greater Portland is growing quickly, with more than two thousand new residents each month – more traffic backups are proof of that. It's fundamental to our future to have a variety of safe, affordable, and reliable options for people to get around.

**(VULNERABLE)** Investing in transportation improvements will help working families and those without cars have a way to get to their jobs or schools. And reliable transit for seniors and people with disabilities helps them live better lives.

**(COMMUTE TIMES)** Morning and evening commutes have gotten longer and longer as more people move to greater Portland. We need to invest in faster commutes for everyone.

**(BRIDGES)** Six major bridges in greater Portland are more than 90 years old. Almost all of the area's bridges were built before we knew about the risk of a major earthquake. We should replace the bridges in greater Portland before a really big one hits.

# Second-Tier Messages in Support of a Measure

*(Ranked in Order of Effectiveness)*

**(CONGESTION)** Too many Portland-area drivers spend hours and hours in traffic every week. These crucial transportation investments are needed to improve our quality of life.

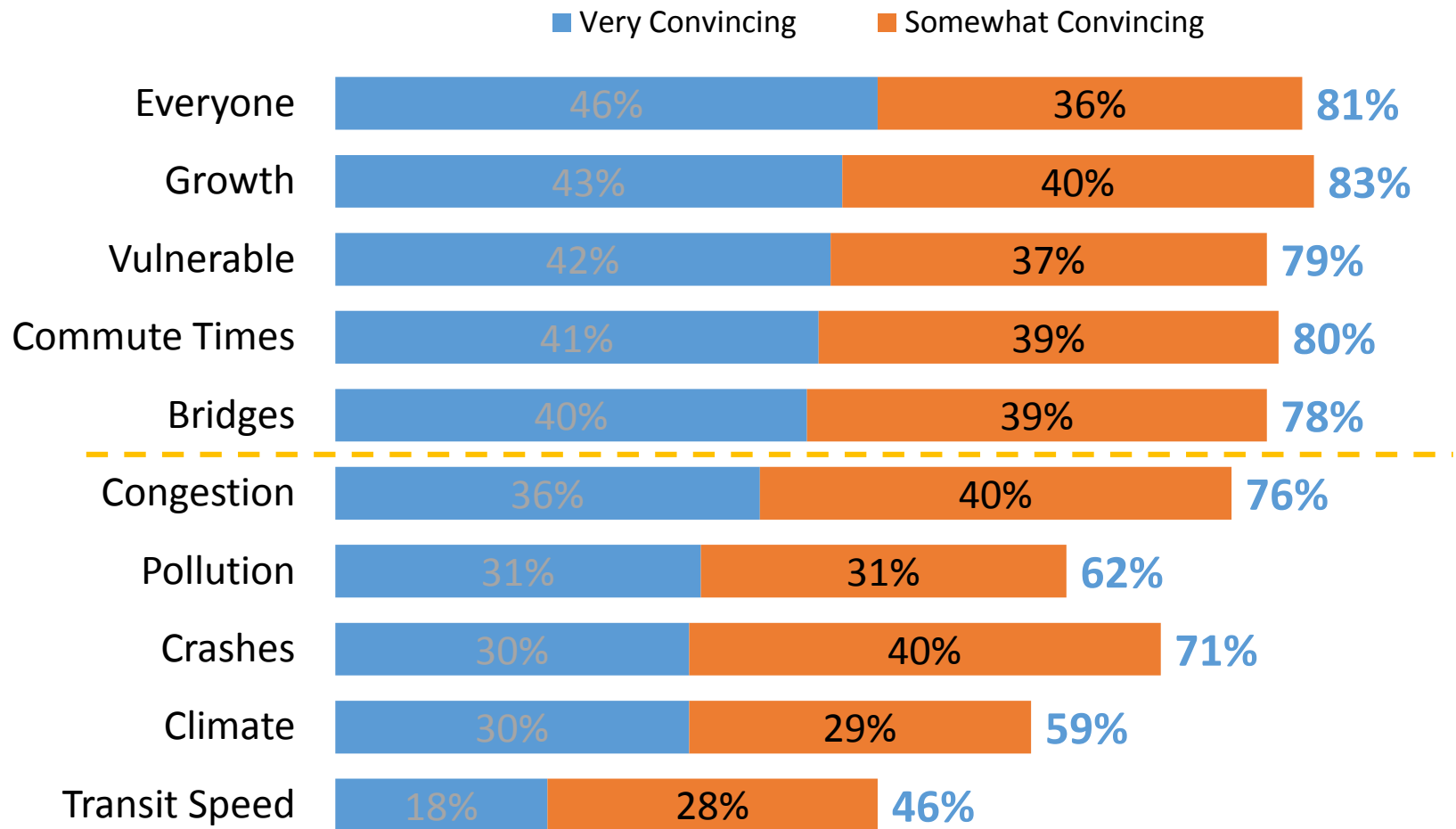
**(POLLUTION)** By expanding and improving public transit, we can take more cars off the road and ensure cleaner air.

**(CRASHES)** We need to do all we can to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries – and start investing now in designing and upgrading roads with safety as a top priority.

**(CLIMATE)** Investing in better transit and other transportation options will take cars off the road and limit the pollution that causes climate change.

**(TRANSIT SPEED)** Buses and MAX are too slow. A transit system that moved more quickly and ran underground downtown to speed up cross-town traffic would be easier for more people to use.

# Messages that focus on providing options or validate voters' views of growth and traffic congestion perform best overall.



Q16. Here are some statements from people who support a tax to generate additional funding for transportation improvements in greater Portland. Please tell me whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing. Split Sample



Metro



# Conclusions

# Conclusions

- Conceptual support for a potential ballot measure begins near two-thirds, though that backing is somewhat soft; messaging in favor (and no criticism) broadens support only slightly.
- At the same time, though, their willingness to pay is quite high – a majority is willing to pay as much as \$300 per year to support regional transportation improvements.
- Voters' perceptions of the region's overall direction are declining, with housing costs and traffic standing out as broad and rising areas of concern.
- A majority says growth is moving too fast, and voters expect that growth to continue. For the first time, a plurality says the impact of growth is more negative than positive.
- On its own, improving public transit is a lower priority than making road improvements and the more overarching goal of easing traffic – voters still overwhelmingly rely on driving alone to get around.
- At the same time, messaging that highlights the interconnected nature of the transportation system and the importance of providing a variety of modes of transportation for different types of people is effective.
- Highway congestion is more of a sore spot than local roads, overall; the daily commute to work is a stand-out concern. Voters have no clear preference between local versus regional road improvements, or between a small number of big projects and a large number of small projects (except in Multnomah County, where there is a slight preference for local work).
- Basic repairs and widening roadways are appealing projects; fewer are enthused about projects upgrading public transit.

# For more information, contact:



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OPINION  
RESEARCH  
& STRATEGY

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# Programs: Concept and purpose

Ongoing, flexible funding

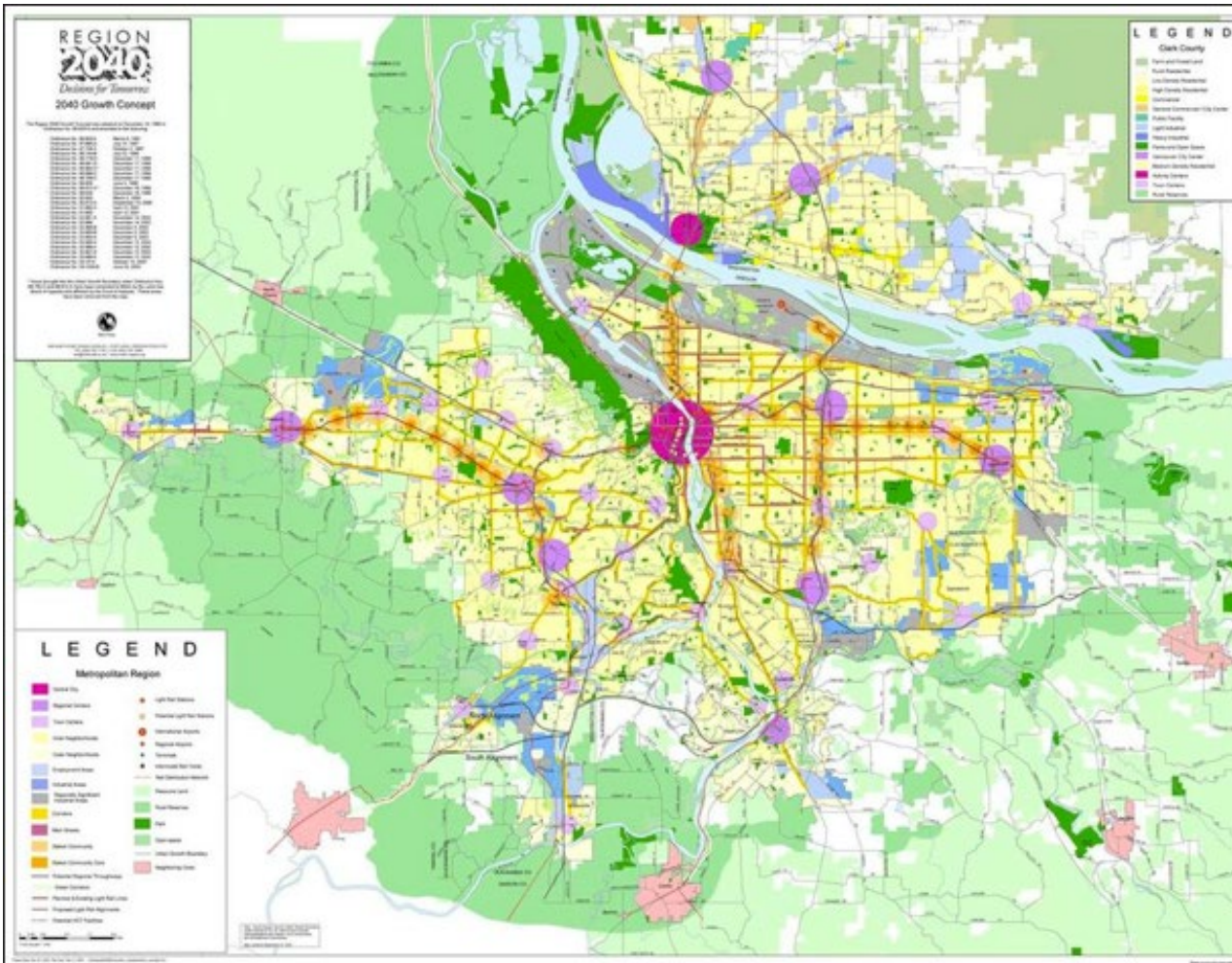
Benefits beyond corridors

Meeting community needs

Capital & non-capital



# A Shared Regional Vision



- Compact urban form prevents sprawl, protects farm and forest land
- Accept more density in order to preserve nature
- Focus mixed use development in centers and corridors, preserve employment land
- Reliable, high quality transit service, access to transportation choices
- Climate, Equity, Technology guiding the next 20 years

# Guiding Regional Policies

## Federal Transportation Policy

- Regional Transportation Plan

## State Climate Policy

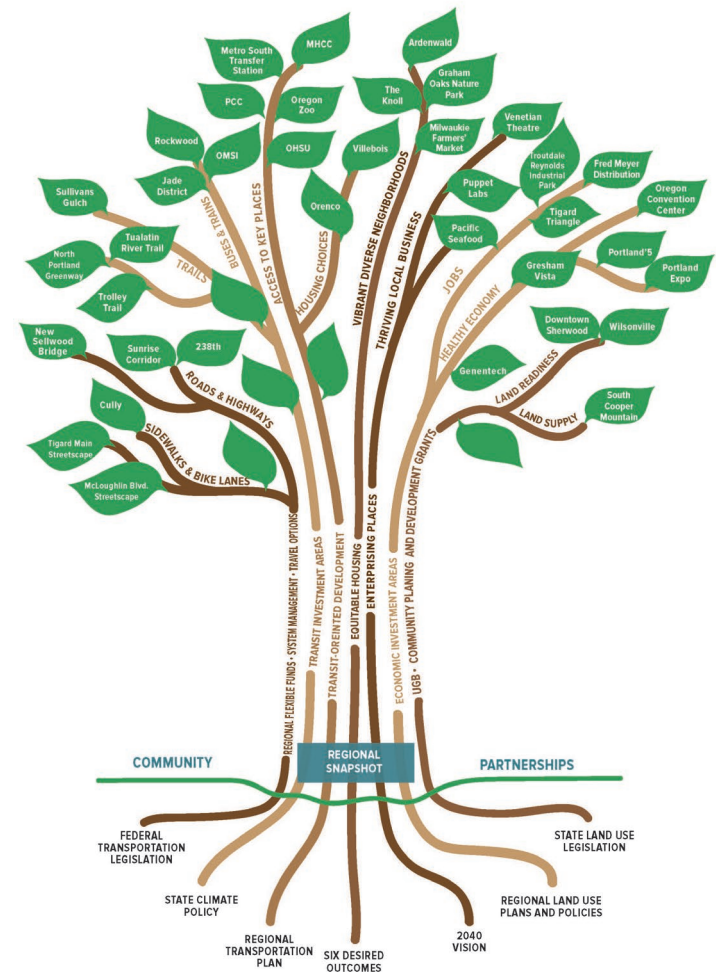
- Climate Smart Communities

## State Land Use Policy

- Urban Growth Management Functional Plan
- HB 2001\*

## Regional Policy

- Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



# Programs Accomplish Policy Goals

## Transportation and Climate Programs

- Regional Travel Options
- Safe Routes to Schools
- Transportation Systems Management and Operations
- Emerging Technologies
- Transit Project Development/Corridor Planning
- Transit Oriented Development

## Land Use and Development Programs

- Housing Bond
- 2040 Planning and Development Grants
- Community Placemaking
- Brownfields
- Parks in Nature

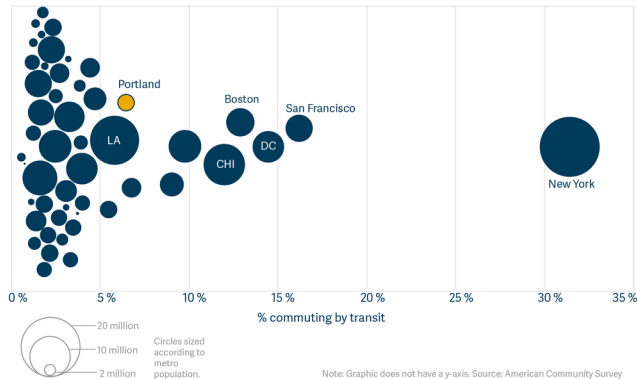
## Racial Equity Programs

- All of the Above

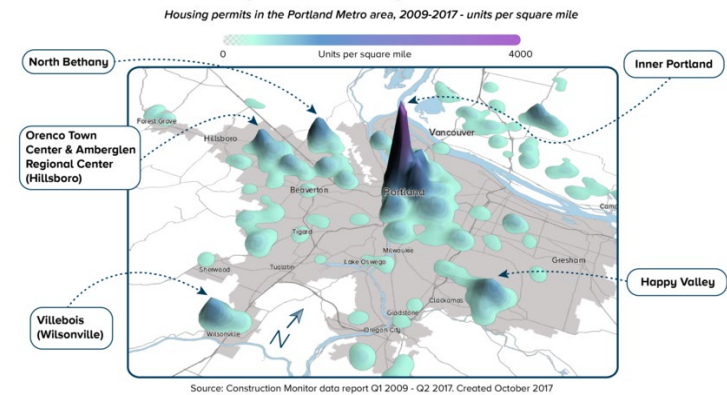


# Performance and Progress

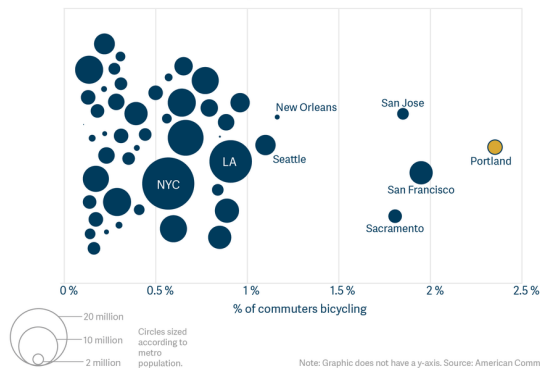
Greater Portland ranks 8th in commuting by transit, ahead of much larger metro areas.



The majority of new homes have been added in key town and regional centers.



Greater Portland has the highest rate of commuters bicycling to work in the nation.



## Housing Bond Phase I Project Endorsements

July 2019



# Safe Routes to Schools

Metro's Regional Safe Routes to School Program supports both safety project and programming investments to make it possible for all students to get to school and travel around the community safely, affordably, and efficiently by walking, biking and taking transit.



# Safety Hot Spots

Using crash data, Metro has identified both high injury corridors and high injury intersections in the region in order to identify and prioritize needed safety investments.





# Active Transportation Regional Connections

Many of the gaps in the region's active transportation networks are not within the T2020 corridors but are spread across the region.



# Smart cities

- Pilot projects that explore new opportunities
- Access to emerging technology
- Monitor and manage new transportation services



# Air quality monitoring

DEQ shares information on air quality monitoring and pollutant concentrations in Oregon, by region and by pollutant, but not at a corridor or neighborhood scale.



# Main streets revitalization

Many city centers and main streets across the region struggle with deferred maintenance, safety concerns and limited capacity for transit.



# Better bus

Small, strategic, capital investments to improve transit capacity, reliability and travel time along major service bus lines that are relatively low cost to construct, context sensitive and able to be deployed quickly





# School bus electrification

Transitioning from a diesel-powered fleet to an electric powered fleet would reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce students' exposure to diesel particulate matter.



# Transit vehicle electrification

Most of our region's transit buses run on diesel fuel, which increases diesel particulate matter along key transit corridors.



# Fare affordability: residents of affordable housing

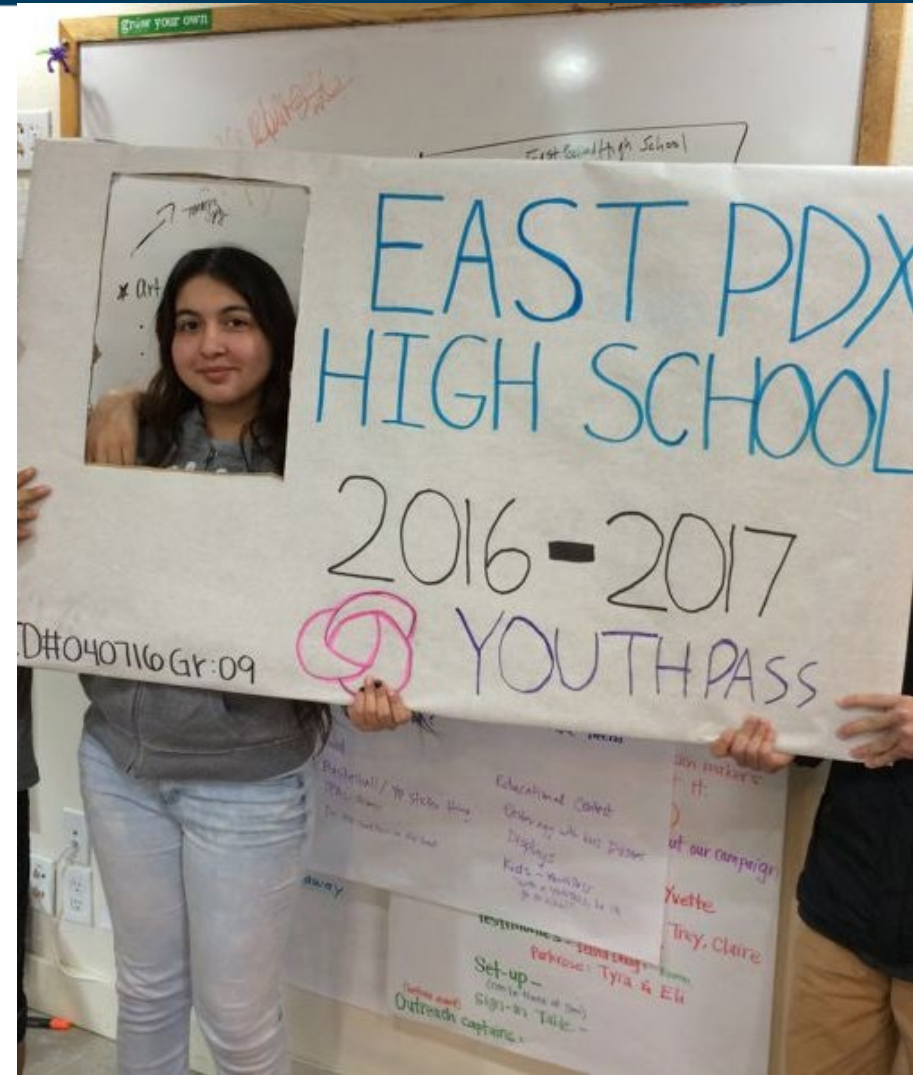
People who live in regulated affordable housing are among the most likely to rely on transit, but the cost of bus and MAX tickets can be a significant burden.





# Fare affordability: students

Access to transit can help expand job opportunities for students and make it more possible to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities that would otherwise be difficult.



# Community placemaking

Community Placemaking fosters neighborhood partnerships and provides rare and much needed resources enabling communities to have agency and influence over the public places they care about.



# Community strengthening

The strategy would support community members who live and work along each corridor to first identify the best strategies to strengthen their community in advance of significant transportation investments, and then implement those strategies.





# Protect and preserve multifamily housing

Preserving affordable housing that has naturally occurred in places that are important to communities, including housing near schools, jobs, transportation and other places people want to be.



The measure could fund an ongoing program to finance the building of affordable housing on land already owned by local government agencies, particularly in areas with access to living wage jobs, transit, and social services.

# Corridor planning

Creating investment strategies among partners in major transportation projects can make projects more competitive to receive federal funding and other resources.



**#getmoving2020**  
**getmoving2020.org**

