

South Placer County Voter Support for a Transportation Sales Tax





**Key Findings of a Survey Conducted:
March 7-11, 2020**



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

220-5719

Survey Methodology

Sample universe	Likely November 2020 voters in the Cities of Lincoln, Rocklin and Roseville
Total interviews	616
Dates	March 7, 2020 – March 11, 2020
Contact method	 Telephone Calls  Email Invitations
Data collection mode	 Telephone Calls  Online Survey
Margin of sampling error	Full sample: $\pm 4.0\%$ at the 95% confidence level Half sample: $\pm 5.7\%$ at the 95% confidence level

Interpreting the Results

Why don't some results add up to 100%?

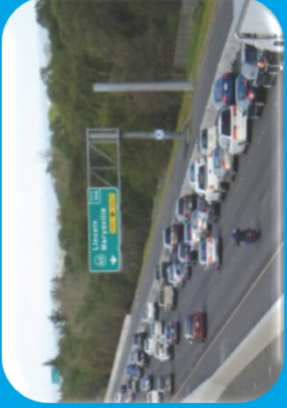
Due to rounding, summed response categories may not always equal 100%. For example, 5.4% and 5.3% might both be displayed as 5%, but when summed would equal 10.7% displayed at 11%.

Do you have any comparisons?

Yes, prior surveys were conducted as recently as January 2020 and as far back as June 2014.

When did this survey field relative to COVID-19 events?

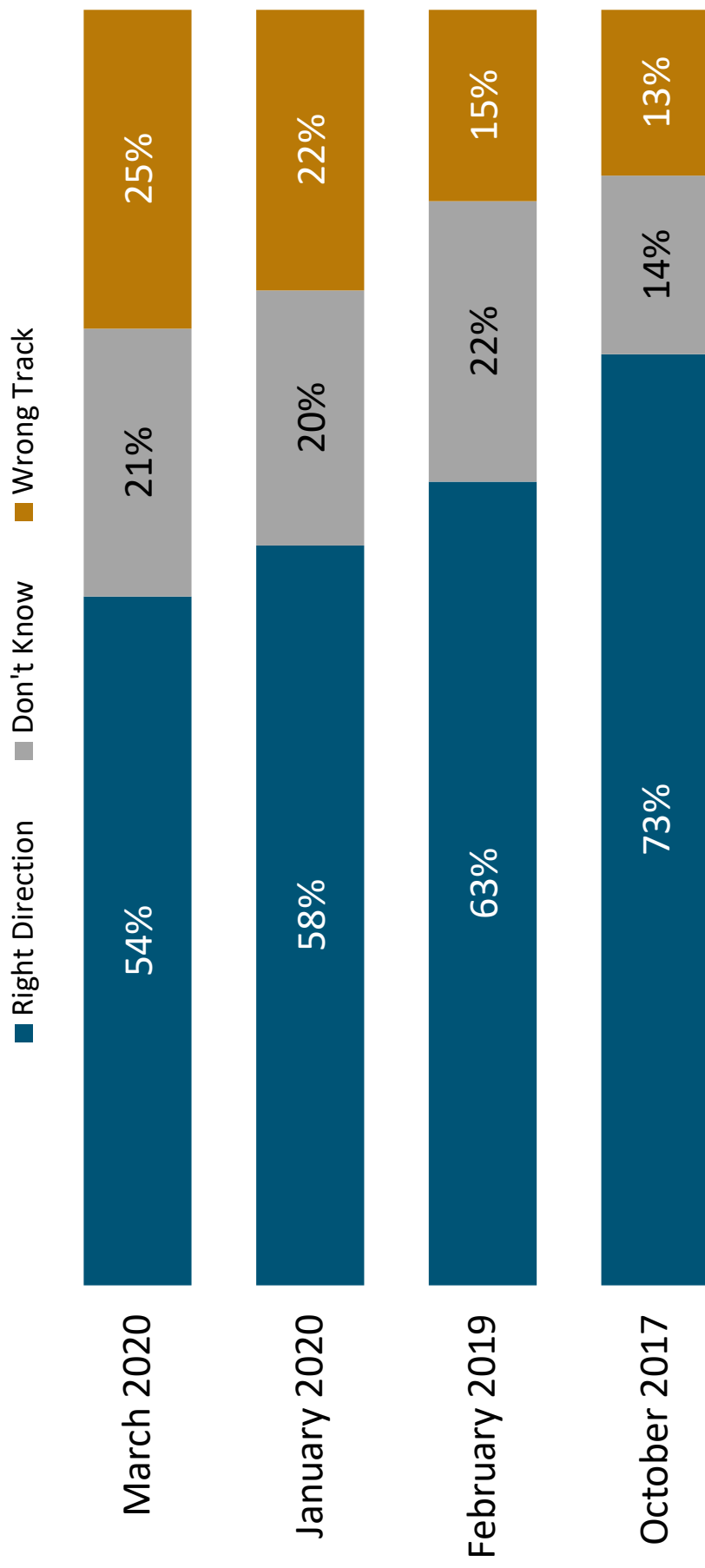
The survey fielded basically right at the beginning of the most negative information coming to light about the virus and when the stock market began its current decline and overall volatility. However, it concluded before widespread “social distancing” recommendations and the “shelter in place” directives.



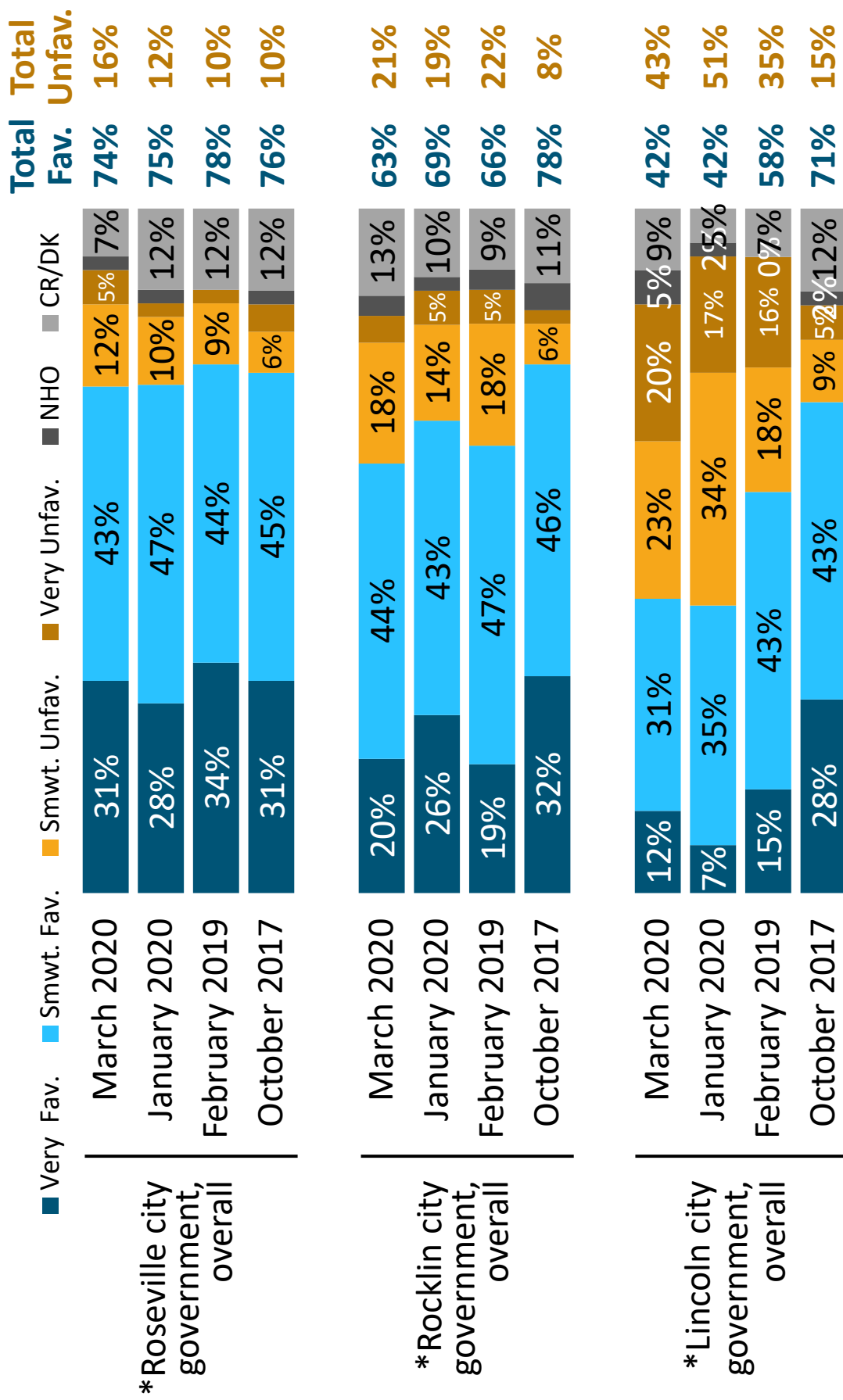
Community Attitudes

Voters appear to be continuing a trend of feeling less optimistic about the County's future.

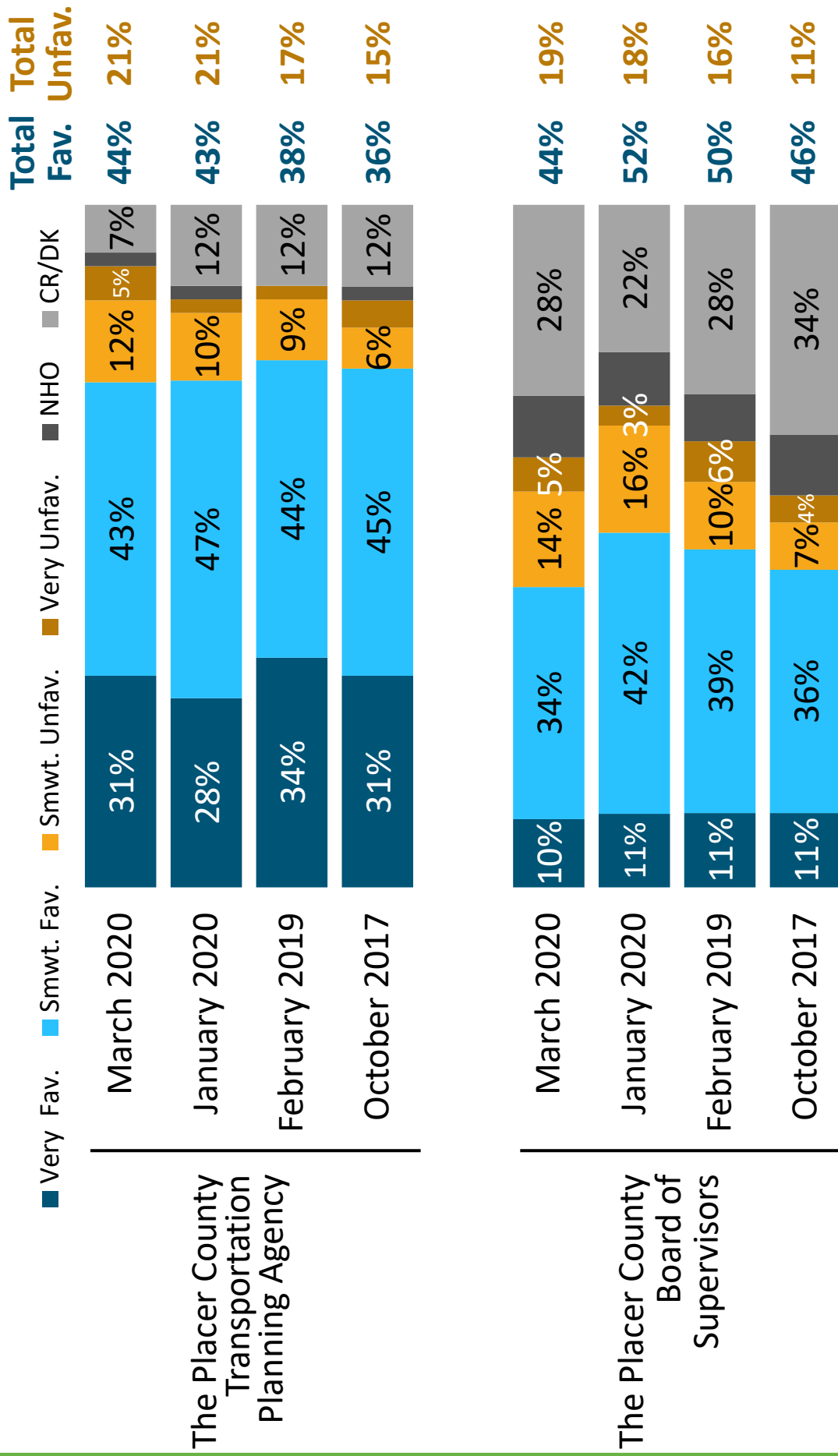
Do you think things in Placer County are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?



Roseville and Rocklin voters continue to view their local city governments favorably.

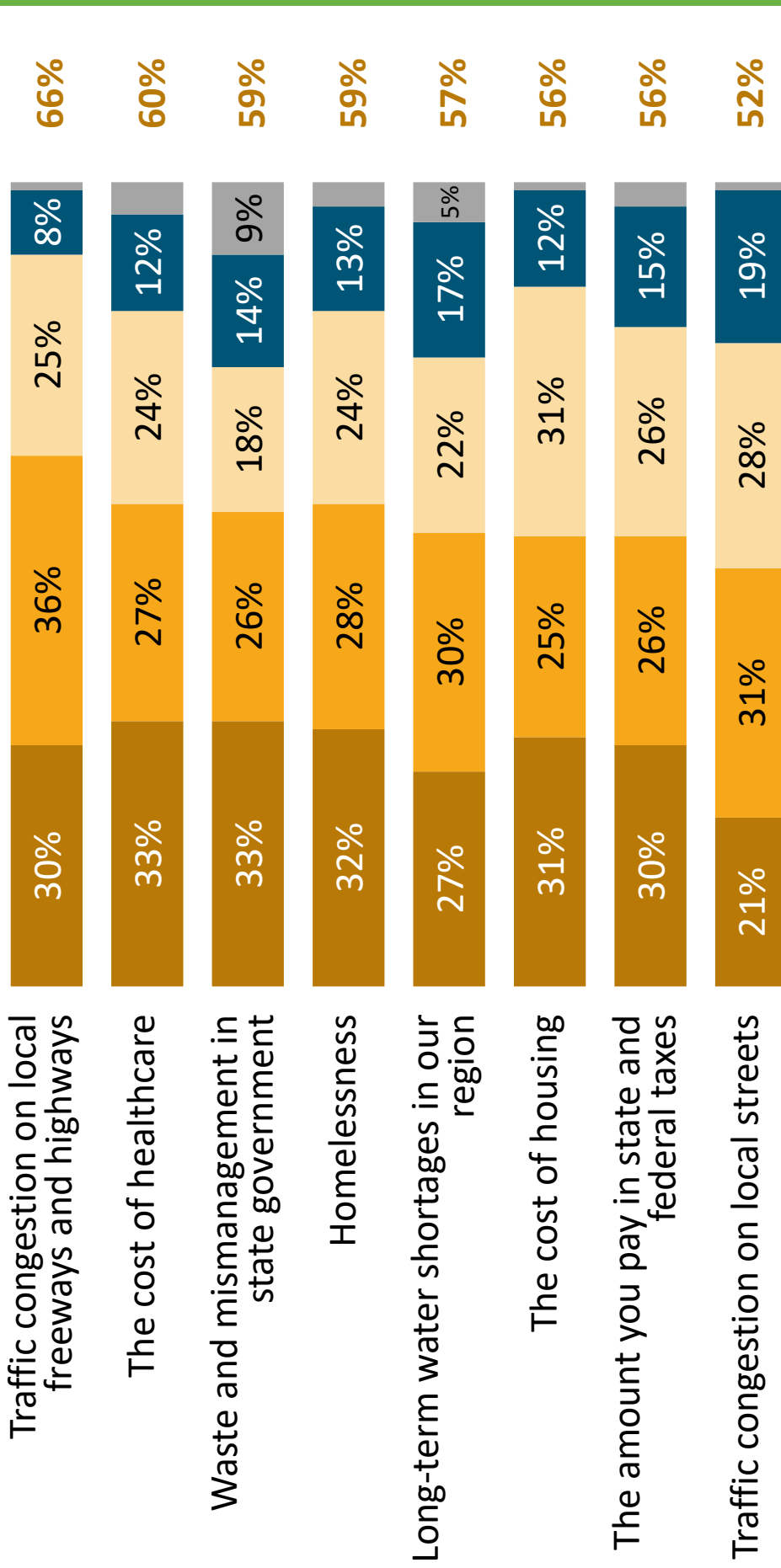


Views of PCTPA are consistent, while views of the Board of Supervisors have weakened slightly.



Traffic on freeways and highways is the top problem facing the area, according to voters.

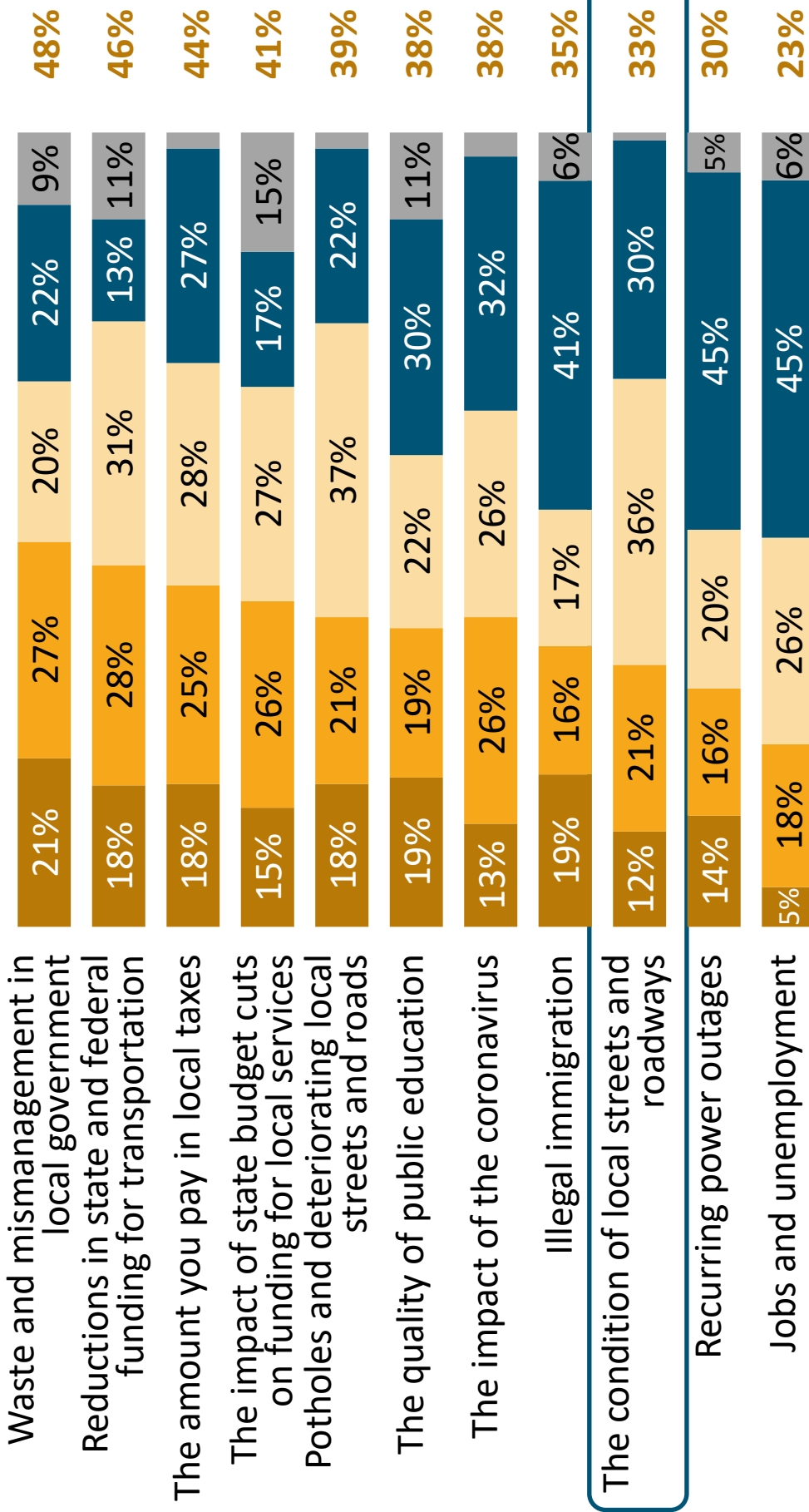
■ Ext. Ser. Prob.
 ■ Very Ser. Prob.
 ■ Smwt. Ser. Prob.
 ■ Not Too Ser. Prob.
 ■ Don't Know
 Ext./Very Ser. Prob.



The condition of local roads ranks low as a concern, as does the economy.

Ext./Very Ser. Prob.

■ Ext. Ser. Prob. ■ Very Ser. Prob. ■ Smw. Ser. Prob. ■ Not Too Ser. Prob. ■ Don't Know



Concern about long term water shortages and taxation have grown over time.

(Extremely/Very Serious Problem)

Issue	October 2017	February 2019	January 2020	March 2020	Jan-March Difference
Long-term water shortages in our region	41%	49%	50%	57%	+7%
The amount you pay in local taxes	29%	33%	37%	44%	+7%
Jobs and unemployment	22%	21%	17%	23%	+6%
*Waste and mismanagement in state government	47%	60%	54%	59%	+5%
*Waste and mismanagement in local government	47%	42%	43%	48%	+5%
The condition of local streets and roadways	31%	33%	28%	33%	+5%
Traffic congestion on local freeways and highways	58%	67%	63%	66%	+3%
The impact of state budget cuts on funding for local services	36%	40%	39%	41%	+2%
Homelessness	--	54%	58%	59%	+1%
Reductions in state and federal funding for transportation	31%	43%	45%	46%	+1%

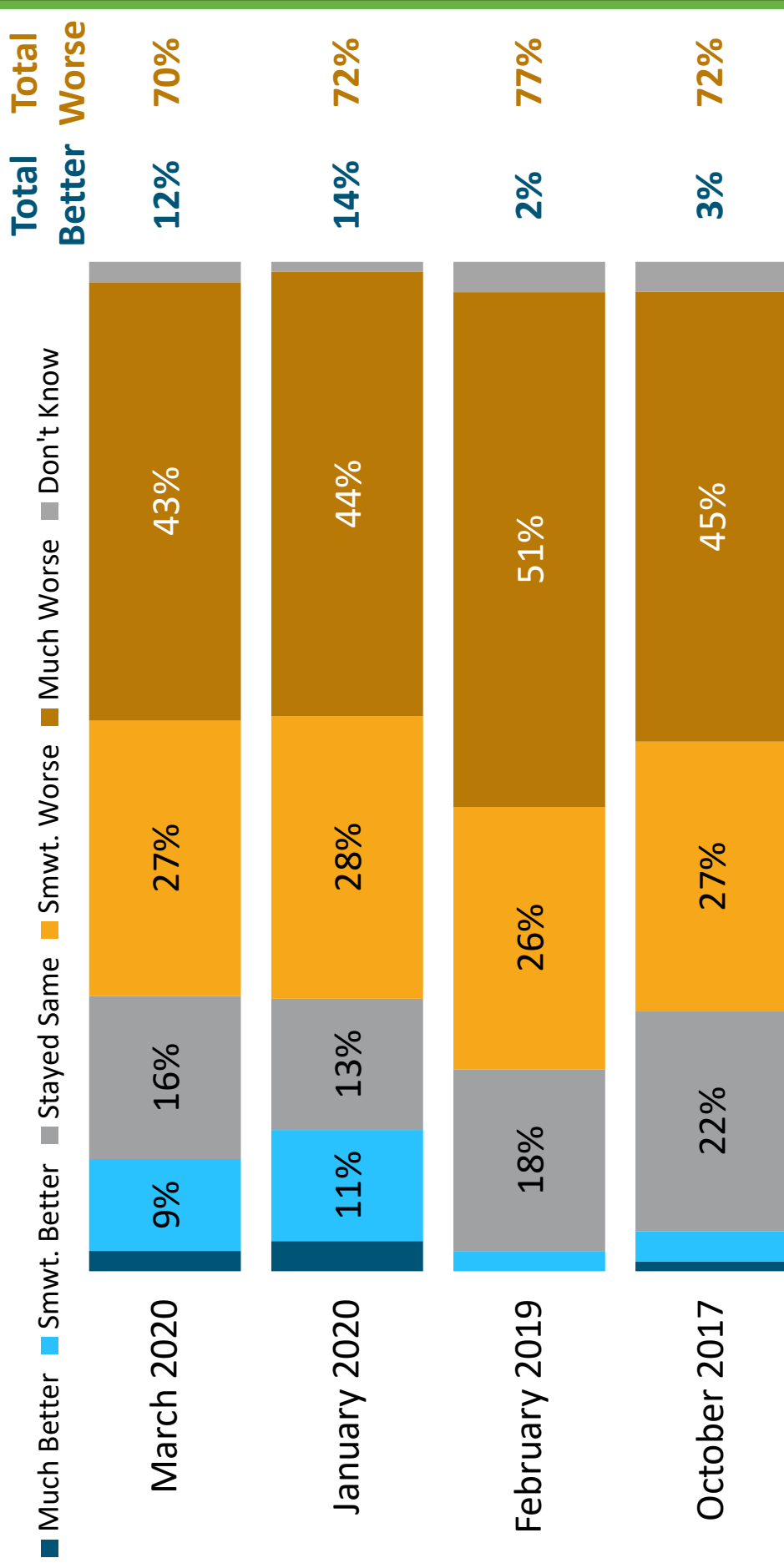
Concerns about traffic on local streets and potholes has remained comparable to earlier this year.

(Extremely/Very Serious Problem)

Issue	October 2017	February 2019	January 2020	March 2020	Jan-March Difference
The amount you pay in state and federal taxes	43%	52%	56%	56%	0%
The cost of housing	--	54%	57%	56%	-1%
The quality of public education	28%	37%	39%	38%	-1%
Recurring power outages	--	--	29%	30%	-1%
Traffic congestion on local streets	--	47%	54%	52%	-2%
Potholes and deteriorating local streets and roads	35%	43%	41%	39%	-2%
The cost of healthcare	57%	67%	63%	60%	-3%
Illegal immigration	32%	45%	43%	35%	-8%

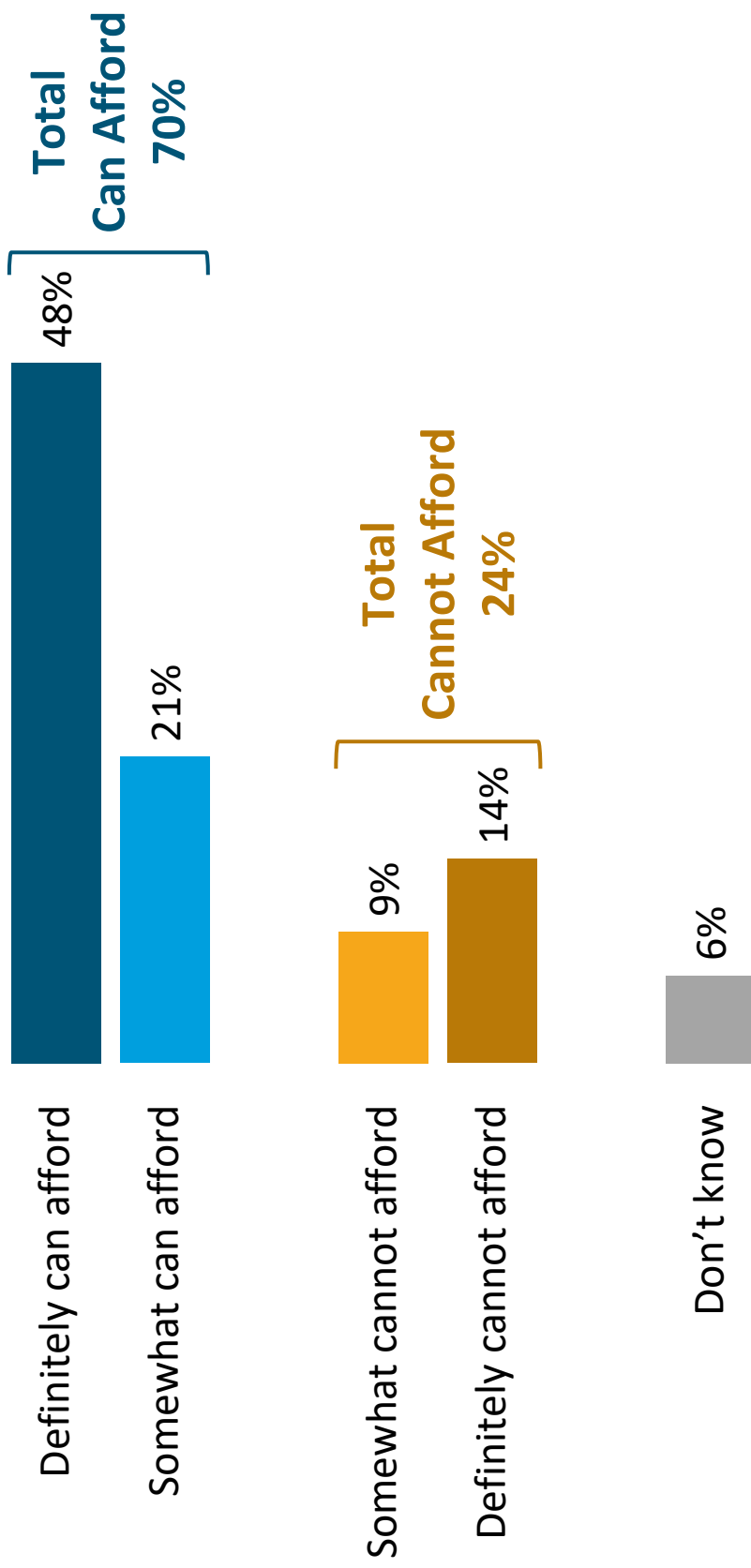
Perceptions traffic is getting worse are still widespread, but some do perceive improvement.

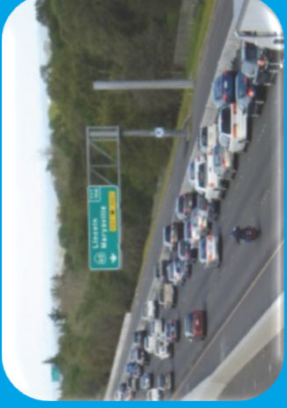
Thinking specifically about traffic congestion, do you feel it has gotten better, worse, or stayed about the same over the past couple of years?



Seven in ten voters say they can afford the proposed sales tax.

Regardless of how you may vote on this measure, do you feel you can or cannot afford the additional costs of a new one-half cent sales tax estimated at about \$5 a month?





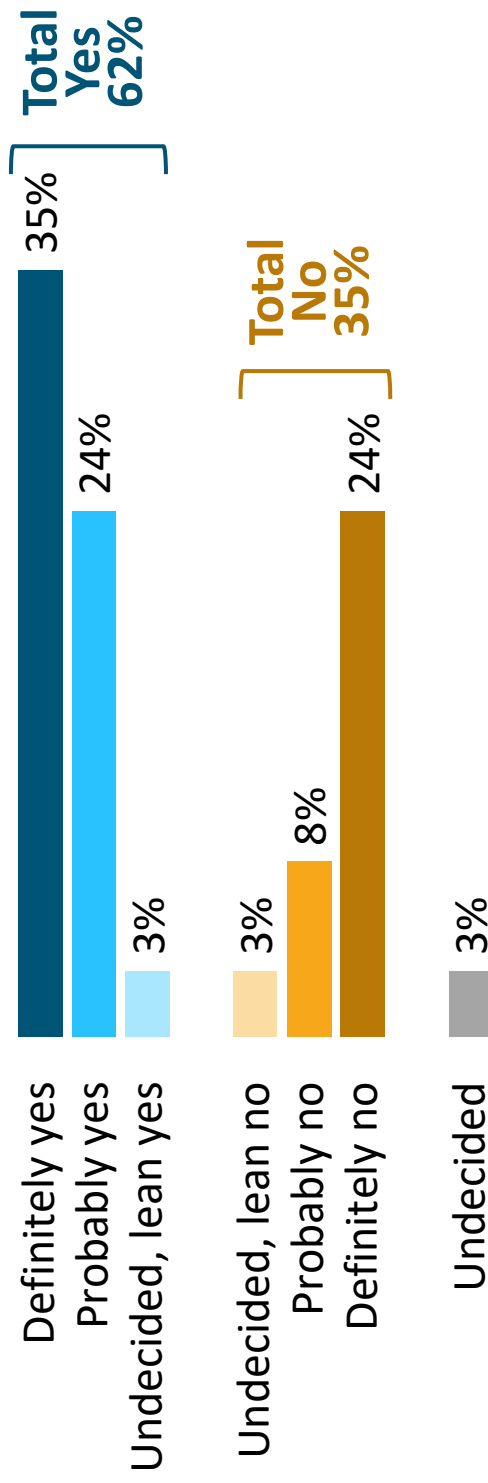
Support for the Proposed Transportation Sales Tax

More than three in five said they will vote “yes” initially.

Shall a measure to reduce traffic congestion and make transportation investments in Lincoln, Rocklin, and Roseville, including:

- Completing all phases of the 80/65 Interchange traffic congestion reduction and safety improvements;
- Widening Highway 65 in both directions;
- Improving emergency responder access/response times;
- Improving sidewalks/crosswalks increasing safety around schools;

By establishing a half-cent sales tax raising approximately \$41 million annually for 30 years, with independent audits, citizens’ oversight, and increasing eligibility for state/federal matching funds, be adopted?



Support for the measure is greatest among voters under 40, those 75 and over, and among Democrats.

Demographic Group	Total Yes	Total No	Undecided
Gender			
Men	59%	37%	4%
Women	64%	33%	2%
Age			
18-29	81%	18%	2%
30-39	66%	32%	2%
40-49	65%	34%	1%
50-64	49%	47%	4%
65-74	60%	35%	6%
75+	72%	27%	1%
Party			
Democrats	78%	20%	2%
Independents	65%	34%	2%
Republicans	49%	47%	5%

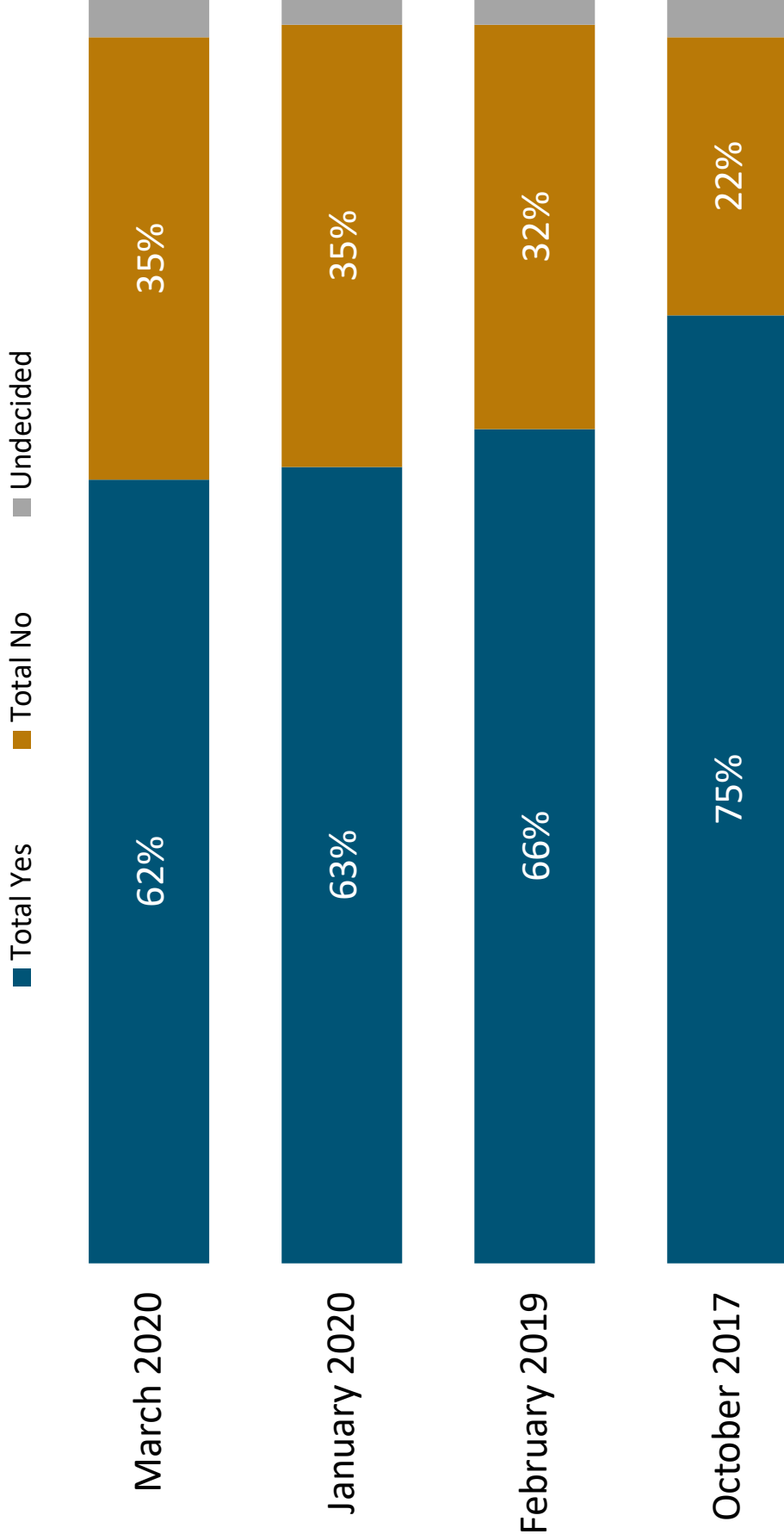
Support is greatest in Lincoln and Rocklin and Districts 2 and 4.

Demographic Group	Total Yes	Total No	Undecided
City			
Lincoln	64%	32%	4%
Roseville	57%	37%	6%
Rocklin	64%	35%	1%
Supervisory District			
1 – Gore	59%	40%	1%
2 – Weygandt	65%	32%	3%
3 – Holmes	51%	41%	8%
4 – Uhler	70%	28%	1%

Support is greater among those who see a positive impact from construction and those who say they can afford the tax.

Demographic Group	Total Yes	Total No	Undecided
Construction Impact			
Total Positive	68%	30%	2%
No Noticeable Impact/Don't Know	53%	43%	4%
Total Negative	32%	59%	9%
Traffic Impact			
Total Better	68%	28%	4%
Stayed About the Same/Don't Know	60%	34%	6%
Total Worse	61%	37%	2%
Affordability			
Can Afford	76%	21%	2%
Can't Afford	29%	67%	4%
Household Member Commuting Driving Cars			
1	63%	32%	5%
2	63%	37%	1%
3+	66%	33%	1%
None	64%	33%	4%

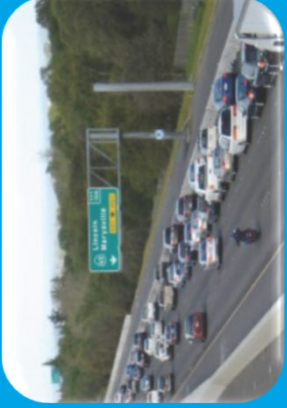
Support for the measure is comparable to January 2020.



Support in Lincoln has grown, while in Roseville it has weakened.

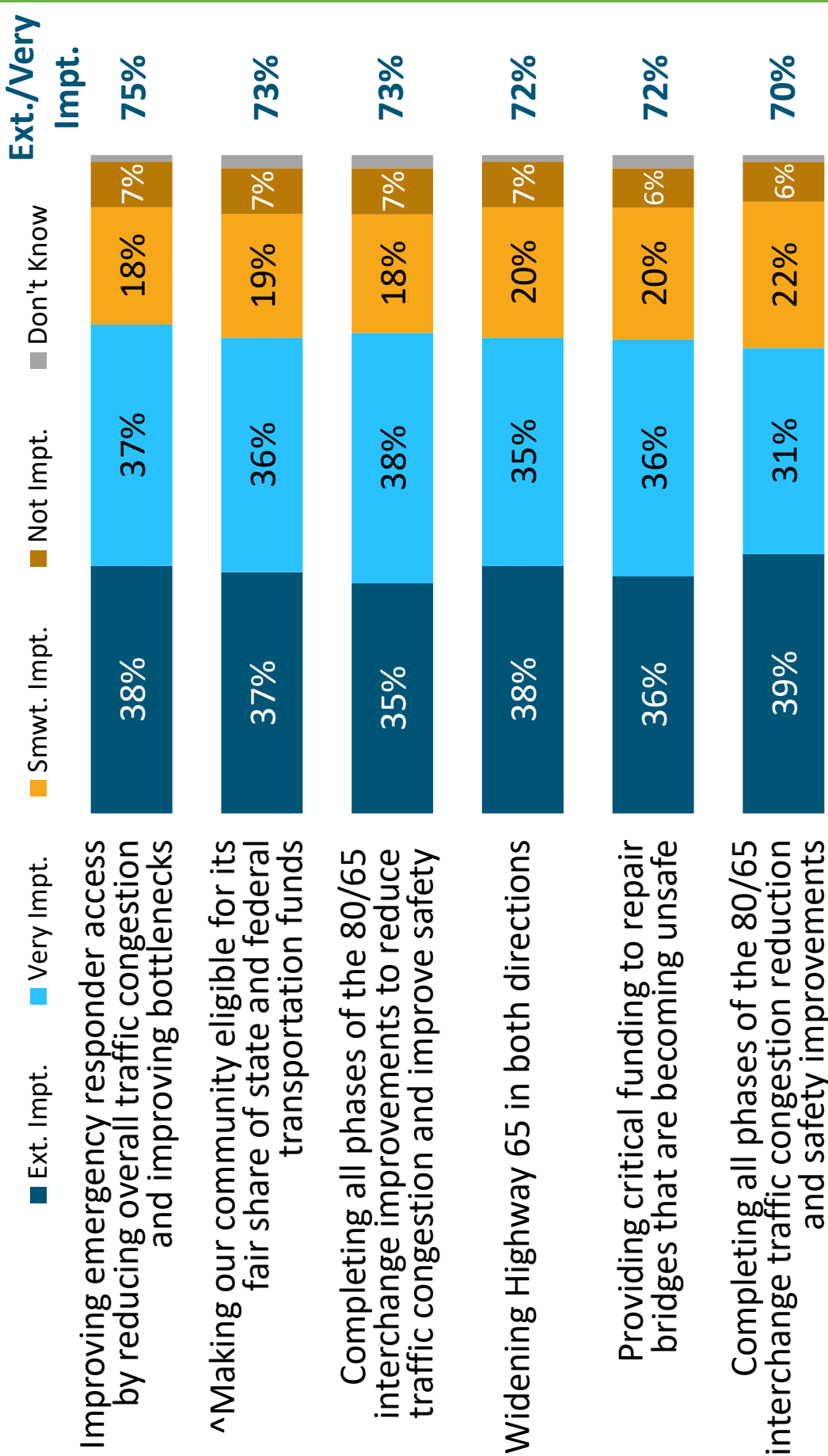
Total Yes

Demographic Group	January 2020	March 2020	Difference
City			
Lincoln	54%	64%	+10%
Roseville	64%	57%	-7%
Rocklin	67%	64%	-3%

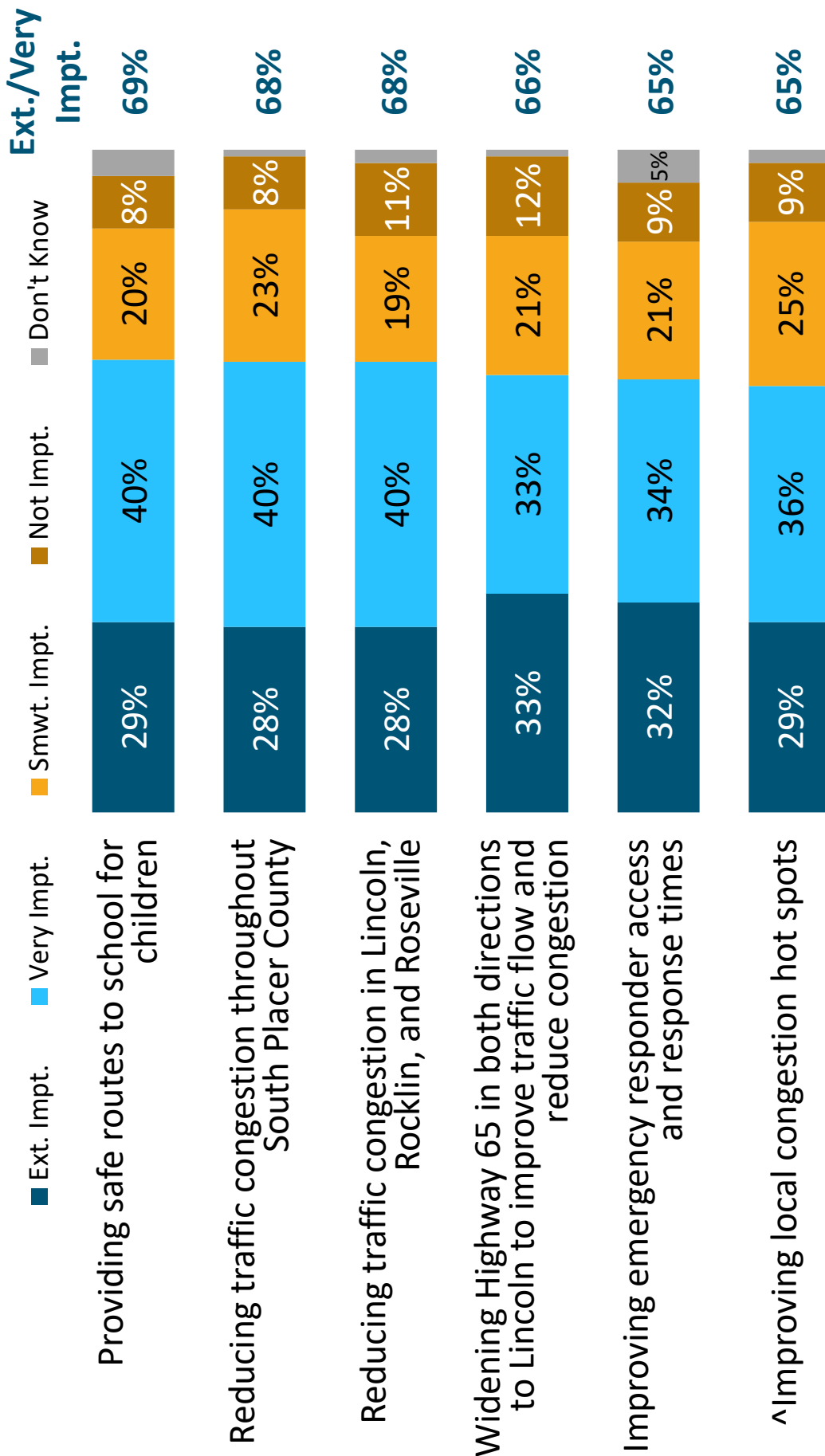


Structural Elements of the Measure

Emergency responder access, matching funds, and completing 80/65 are top priorities.



Providing safe routes to schools for children and reducing traffic throughout the area are important too.

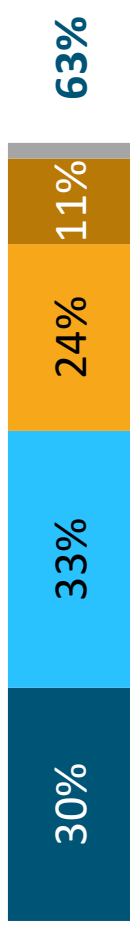


Placer Parkway and dedicated City funds are middle-tier priorities.

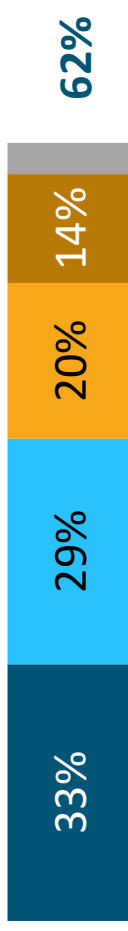
■ Ext. Impt. ■ Very Impt. ■ Smwt. Impt. ■ Not Impt. ■ Don't Know

Ext./Very Impt.

Building the Placer Parkway, a quick northern beltway expressway, linking Highway 65, between Lincoln and Roseville, to Highway 99 and the Sacramento Airport to create an Interstate 80 alternative



*Providing funds dedicated to the City of Lincoln for local road repairs and improvements



Maintaining senior and disabled transit services like Dial-A-Ride so residents who cannot drive can maintain their independence



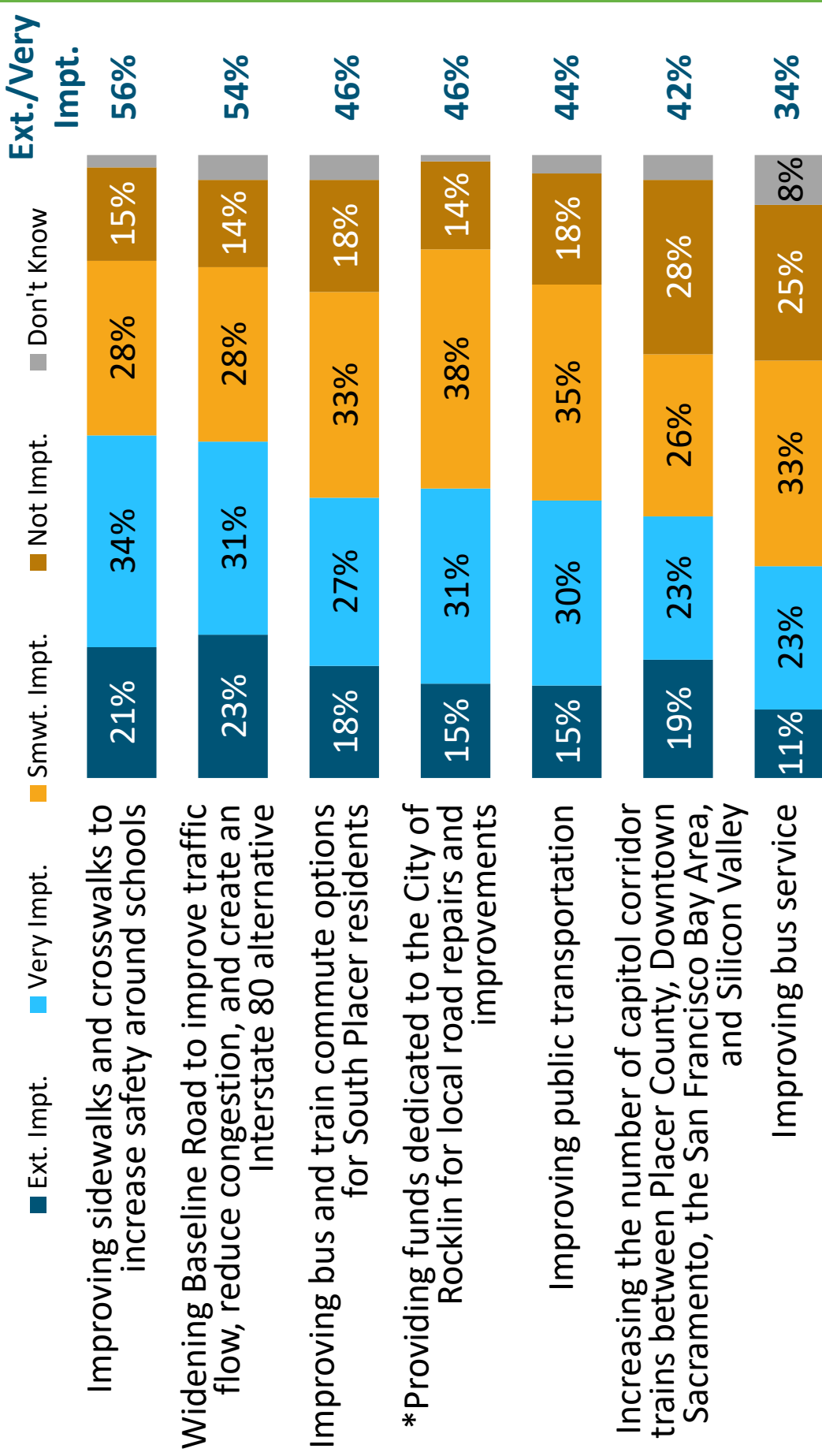
^Improving road safety

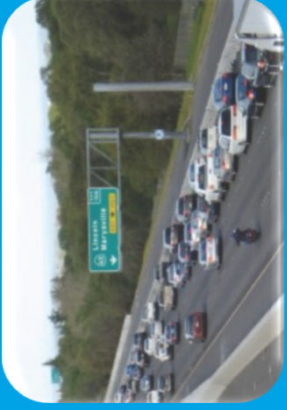


*Providing funds dedicated to the City of Roseville for local road repairs and improvements



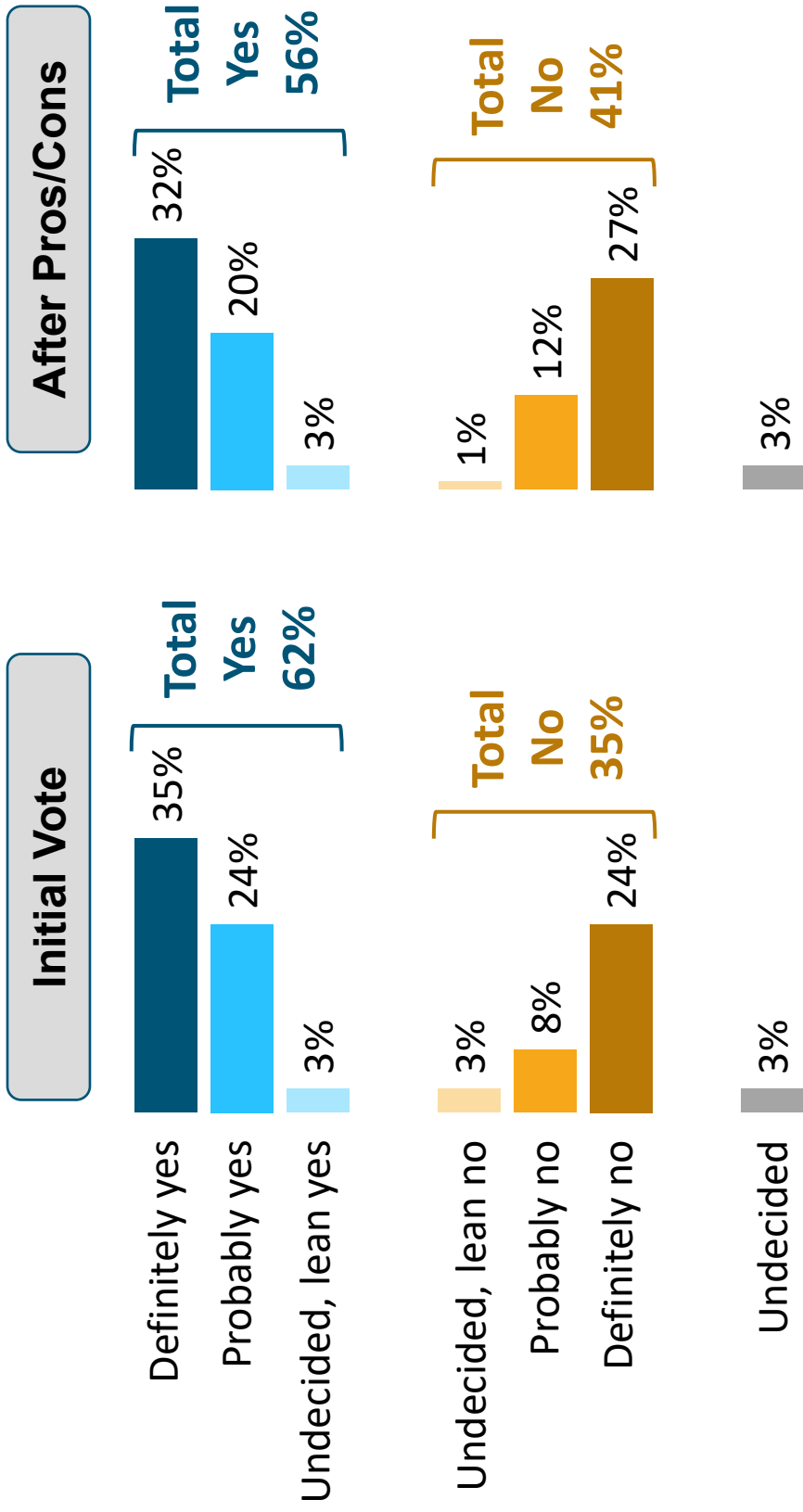
Public transportation, Amtrak and bus service rank lowest.





The Impact of Supportive and Critical Communications

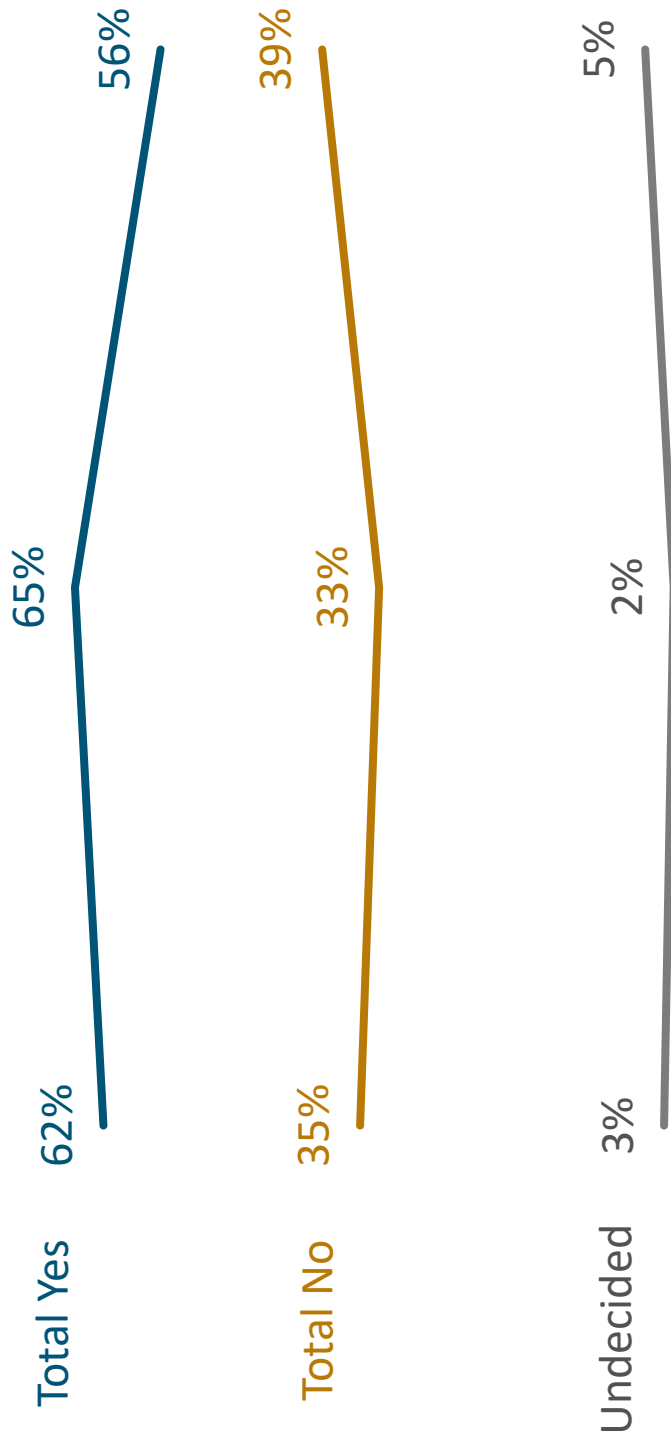
After an exchange of arguments, support for the measure weakens.



After supportive messages in isolation, support nears the two-thirds threshold.

Half-Sample Positives First

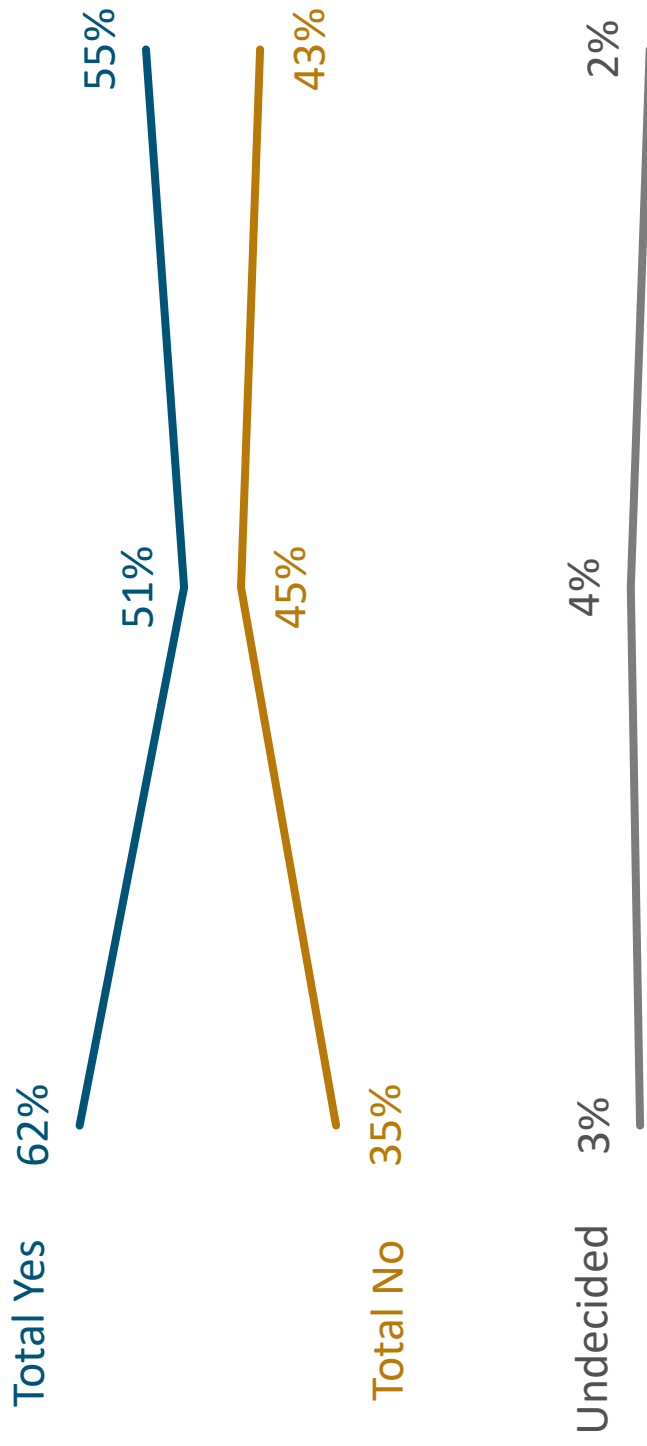
Initial Vote After Positives After Negatives



When negative messages precede positive ones, support drops well below the two-thirds threshold.

Half-Sample Negatives First

Initial Vote After Negatives After Positives



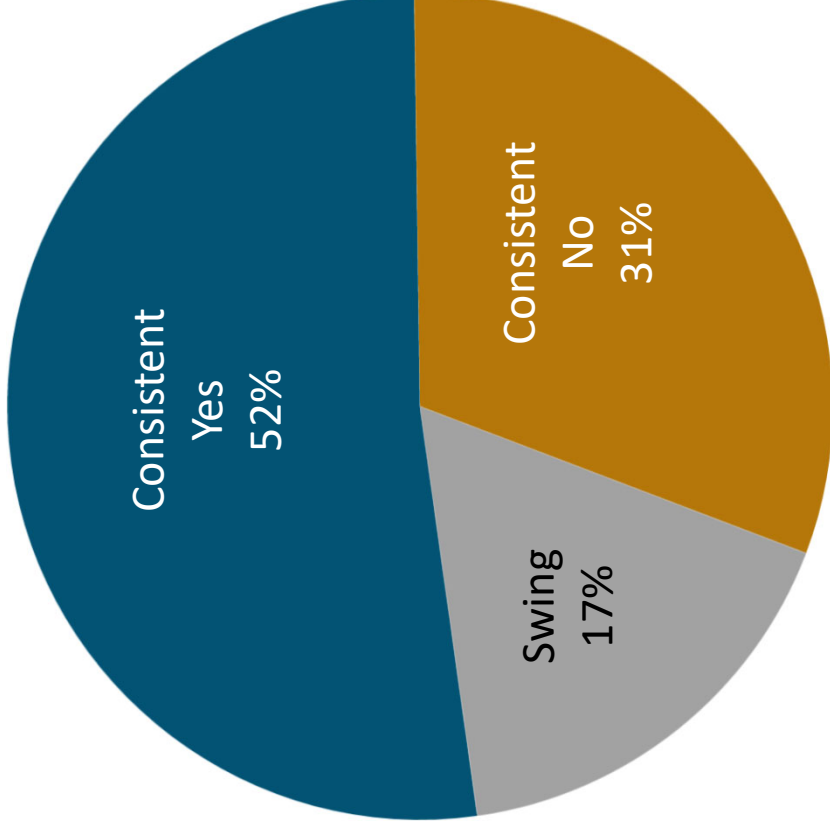
Segmenting Placer County Voters by Consistency of Support

❖ **Consistent Definitely Yes:** Voters who consistently indicated they would vote “yes” on the measure

❖ **Consistent No:** Voters who consistently indicated they would vote “no” on the measure

❖ **Swing:** Voters who do not fall into any of the other categories – remaining consistently undecided or switching positions

The following slide shows demographic groups that *disproportionately* fall into one category or the other.



Ballot Language Changes: January 2020 v. March 2020

January 2020

Shall South Placer County provide traffic relief, road repairs, and transportation safety improvements throughout Lincoln, Loomis, Rocklin, Roseville, including:

- Widening Highway 65;
- Completing improvements to the 80/65 interchange;
- Fixing local traffic/potholes;
- Providing safe routes to school;
- Improving emergency responder access; and
- Improving transit for seniors/disabled persons;

By establishing a ½¢ sales tax raising approximately \$41 million annually, until repealed by voters, with independent audits, citizens' oversight, and increasing eligibility for state/federal matching funds?

March 2020

Shall a measure to reduce traffic congestion and make transportation investments in Lincoln, Rocklin, and Roseville, including:

- Completing all phases of the 80/65 Interchange traffic congestion reduction and safety improvements;
- Widening Highway 65 in both directions;
- Improving emergency responder access/response times;
- Improving sidewalks/crosswalks increasing safety around schools;

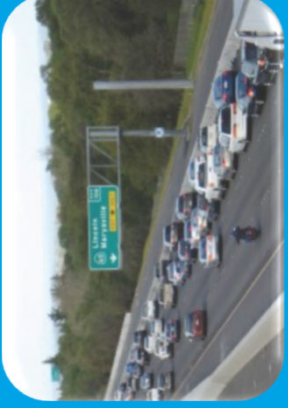
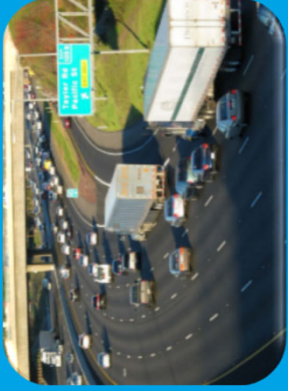
By establishing a half-cent sales tax raising approximately \$41 million annually for 30 years, with independent audits, citizens' oversight, and increasing eligibility for state/federal matching funds, be adopted?

Support is comparable to January 2020.

Comparing Initial and Final Votes in Past Surveys

Survey	Initial "Yes" Vote	Final "Yes" Vote after Pros/Cons
Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln		
March 2020	62%	56%
January 2020	63%	56%
South Placer County		
February 2019	66%	60%
October 2017	75%	68%
All of Placer County		
Measure M Outcome	64%	N/A
October 2016	59%	N/A
September 2016	69%	61%
February 2016	63%	53%
May 2015	61%	58%
June 2014	61%	55%

Last survey before placement



Pro and Con Arguments

Messages in Favor of the Measure

Ranked by % Very Convincing

^(**HIGHWAY 65**) Highway 65 is getting worse every year, and is now backed up for several hours each day. This measure provides funds to widen Highway 65 from two lanes in each direction to four all the way to Lincoln, relieving growing congestion on a key backbone for South Placer County.

(**ACCOUNTABILITY**) This has strong taxpayer safeguards to ensure the money is spent as promised, including an independent citizens' oversight committee; annual independent audits; and an annual public report to taxpayers. Additionally, 99% of the funds must be spent directly on transportation projects, and the tax will automatically expire after 30 years and cannot be extended without another vote.

(**I-80 ALTERNATIVES**) This measure will reduce traffic congestion on Interstate 80 by providing commuters new alternatives when traveling west from South Placer County. These include widening Baseline Road from two to four lanes, and building a new expressway called the Placer Parkway linking Highway 65 at Whitney Ranch Parkway to Highway 99 north of the Sacramento Airport.

^(**TRAFFIC - GENERAL**) Traffic congestion threatens our quality of life. Time stuck in traffic takes away from time better spent at home with family and friends. Plus, as our population grows, the number of cars will increase, leading to greater traffic gridlock. If we don't invest now in projects to better manage traffic flow, the problem will only get worse.

^(**80/65 INTERCHANGE**) Traffic comes to a crawl in and around the 80/65 interchange at almost all hours of the day, and it has become one of the most dangerous interchanges in the region. We need this measure to complete all phases of improvements to the interchange in all directions to both improve traffic flow and reduce congestion, and make the interchange safer to save lives.

Messages in Favor of the Measure (Continued)

Ranked by % Very Convincing

(EMERGENCY RESPONDERS) Many of South Placer County's streets, highways and freeways are backed up with traffic. These conditions make it hard for emergency responders to reach people in a crisis quickly or transport them to a hospital. Investing in our transportation system is also an investment in our safety.

(MATCHING FUNDS) There are large amounts of state and federal funding available to California counties for much-needed transportation improvements if the County provides local funds. This measure will make it possible for (NAME OF RESPONDENT'S CITY) to receive its fair share of matching funds, which would otherwise go to counties in the Bay Area or Southern California.

(LONG-TERM PLAN) This measure is a critical part of a long-term plan to address traffic congestion now and into the future. It will both address current freeway and highway hot spots and future regional growth by expanding the capacity of our major roads and highways and public transportation options for local residents and commuters.

***(ROAD REPAIRS - ROCKLIN)** This measure will significantly increase the City of Rocklin's budget for local road repairs and improvements. This would allow repairs to be made to 26 different Rocklin streets and roads in the first five years, including Sierra College Boulevard, Sunset Boulevard, Wildcat Boulevard, and Park Drive.

(SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL) Unfortunately, many intersections near our local schools are dangerous. This measure will build new sidewalks and bike lanes, and improve crosswalks and lighting near schools to ensure that students can safely walk or bike to their local schools.

Messages in Favor of the Measure (Continued)

Ranked by % Very Convincing

***(ROAD REPAIRS - LINCOLN)** This measure will significantly increase the City of Lincoln's budget for local road repairs and improvements. This would allow repairs to be made to a number of Lincoln streets and roads, including Lincoln Boulevard, 12 Bridges Drive, Joiner Parkway, Venture Drive, Aviation Boulevard, Nicolaus Road, East Avenue, and Moore Drive.

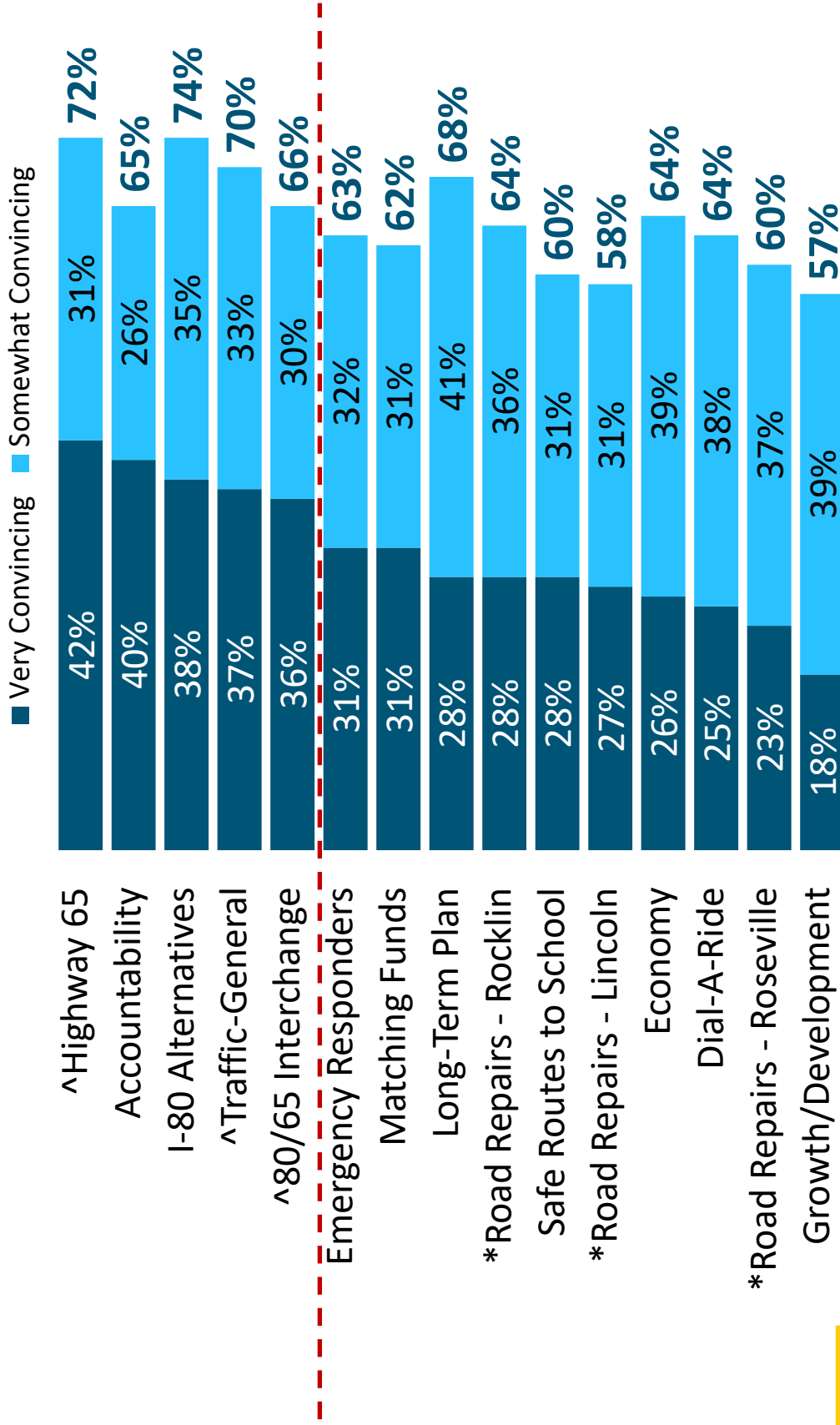
(ECONOMY) A properly functioning and well-maintained transportation system in our community – without crippling traffic congestion – is a key component of our local economy. We need this measure to retain our local businesses and to attract new, job-creating employers to our community.

(DIAL-A-RIDE) This measure will help maintain vital transit services like Dial-A-Ride for seniors and disabled persons. It will ensure these vulnerable residents who cannot drive have access to the transportation they need in order to maintain their mobility and independence.

***(ROAD REPAIRS - ROSEVILLE)** This measure will significantly increase the City of Roseville's budget for local road repairs and improvements, including Baseline Road, Foothills Boulevard, Rocky Ridge Drive, Professional Drive, Junction Boulevard, and Olympus Drive.

(GROWTH/DEVELOPMENT) Development has brought many new jobs to our region and strengthened our economy. Developers are already paying over \$2 billion - the legal maximum - in fees to cover their impact on traffic congestion. But that's not enough to pay for past shortfalls nor cuts in state and federal payments for transportation. This measure helps fund the gap to keep our region moving and our economy growing.

The most compelling supportive arguments relate to 80/65, widening 65, I-80 alternatives, accountability and generally reducing congestion.



Messages in Opposition to the Measure

Ranked by % Very Convincing

^(GAS TAX/VLF) We already pay billions of dollars in gas taxes that are supposed to pay for our roads and freeways. Plus, the state just recently increased the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon and increased the vehicle license fee specifically to fund more road repairs. They need to make sure every single penny we pay in transportation taxes now is spent wisely before asking us for a new tax.

(DEVELOPERS) Developers continue to build out South Placer County with little accountability to whether a community can actually support more people. They should be the ones paying to build the infrastructure that supports their money-making development deals, not taxpayers.

(HIGH SPEED RAIL) So much of our transportation funding is being wasted on high-speed rail. We should be spending that money on local projects and not costly boondoggles.

(POOR PLANNING) None of our traffic congestion should have been a surprise, especially given the unchecked rate of growth and development in our region. Instead of taxing residents even more, what we really need is better planning by local officials, less sprawling development, and more public transportation options.

(USE EXISTING FUNDS) Given the amount of money we already pay in local taxes, (CITY: NAME OF RESPONDENT'S CITY and the County simply need to tighten their belts), work together, and do a better job with the taxpayer dollars they already have.

Messages in Opposition to the Measure (Continued)

Ranked by % Very Convincing

(COUNTY RESPONSIBILITY) Local politicians and bureaucrats have created a new layer of government in an attempt to pass virtually the same tax measure that failed a few years ago. This is the County's responsibility, and we don't need more government or taxes. And, with a budget of over \$816 million, there's no reason Placer County can't find enough money to fund high-priority transportation projects.

***(TAXES - ROSEVILLE)** Roseville residents just passed Measure B which raised our sales tax by a half-cent. If this measure passes it will increase by another half-cent. Enough is enough. Local government needs to tighten its belt and make do with what it has.

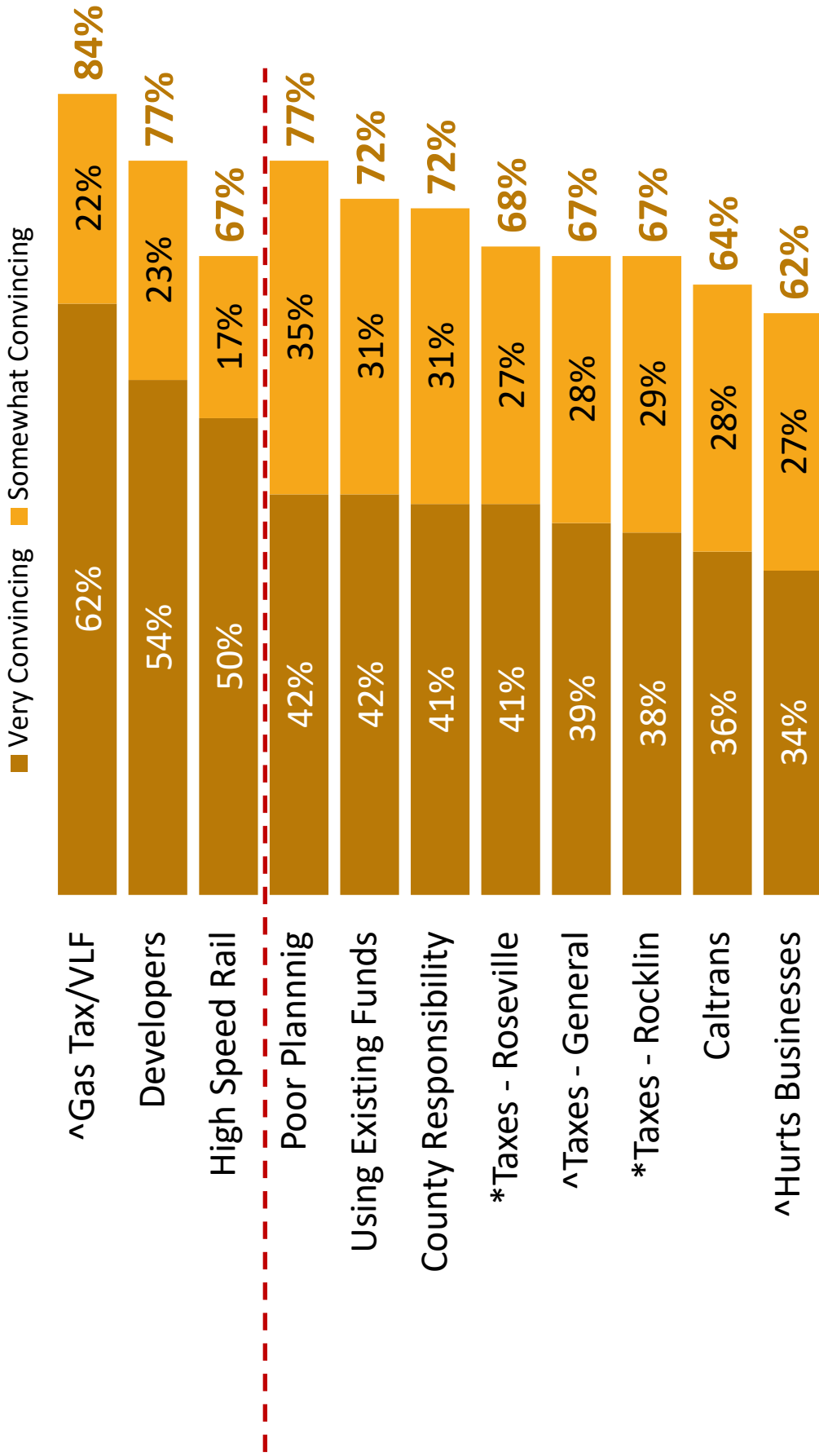
^(TAXES - GENERAL) Every election we are asked to pay more in taxes at the local, county, and state level for many different issues including public safety, libraries, parks, and schools. We just approved a county-wide bond measure for Sierra College. We simply can't afford to pay more.

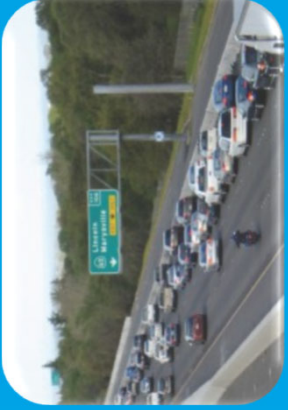
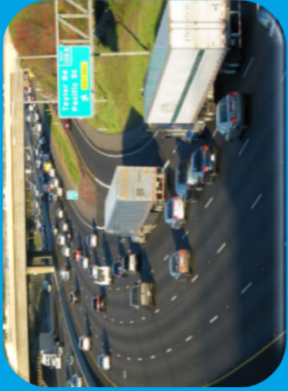
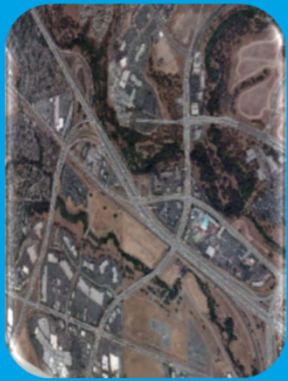
***(TAXES - ROCKLIN)** Rocklin residents can't afford more taxes, especially since we just renewed a \$30-parcel tax. Enough is enough. Local government needs to tighten its belt and make do with what it has.

(CALTRANS) Caltrans has a reputation as being one of the most inefficient and wasteful government agencies, but if this measure were to pass, Caltrans would be responsible for completing some of the major freeway projects. Why should taxpayers trust them when they have a history of construction delays and wastefulness?

^(HURTS BUSINESSES) Higher sales taxes drive up the cost of doing business in (NAME OF RESPONDENT'S CITY). This measure is a major tax increase that will make it harder for local businesses to survive.

Critical messages resonated extremely strongly.





Conclusions

Electoral Mood

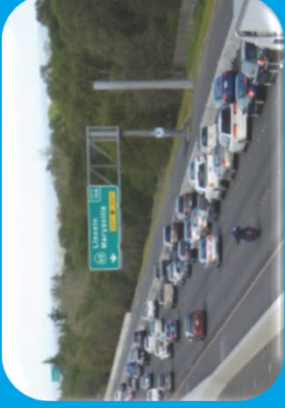
- While perceptions toward local government agencies have generally held steady since January, voters are somewhat less optimistic about the County's future, continuing an overall trend of the past several years.
- Traffic congestion is still a top local concern among two-thirds of voters, but one-third still at most see it as only a "somewhat serious problem."
- However, concerns about local tax levels have steadily increased in recent years, with more than one-third viewing them as at least "very serious problems."
- It appears that recent improvement projects have been favorably received, and luckily, haven't deteriorated support. In fact, those most likely to view those improvement favorably are more likely to actually support a measure.

Measure Viability

- Despite updates to the measure wording, support for a potential measure appears similar to that of the version tested in January.
- Given that this survey was fielding during the beginning stages of COVID-19's impact on the economy and stock market, maintaining this level of support could be seen as a positive.
- However, as in the past, when voters hear positive messages in isolation, support nears the two-thirds threshold, but falls short.
- An organized negative anti-tax campaign could be very damaging to the measure's chances of succeeding at the ballot.
- Overall, these support levels appear very similar to that of the final levels of support for Measure M prior to placement in 2016.
- So, on the surface, a November 2020 measure faces similar levels of viability with chances either a narrow win or narrow loss.

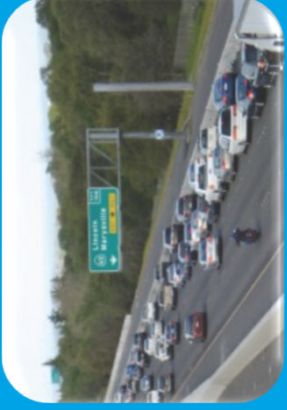
Taking Into Consideration an Uncertain 2020

- While support levels below two-thirds, after message refinement, community engagement, and ballot language refinement, are disappointing, given the timing of this survey it is likely they could have been a lot worse without all of these efforts.
- And we have seen past iterations exceed two-thirds is prior survey research after messaging, suggesting under certain circumstances a measure could exceed two-thirds support.
- But, the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19 are very uncertain. A deep recession would undoubtedly adversely impact a potential measure, but a quick recovery could put a measure on better footing.
- Consequently, we recommend that should the measure proceed that additional research be conducted this summer to provide an offramp if the economic and electorate climate worsens.



Recommendations

1. Recommend PCTPA Board Request Cities, Town and Town Consider Expenditure Plan on March 25
2. Cities and Towns consider expenditure plan only in April/May
3. PCTPA Board Condition Status Report and 1st Reading of Sales Tax Ordinance on April 22
4. PCTPA Board Condition Status Report Board 2nd Reading of Sales Tax Ordinance on May 27



Recommendations

1. If conditions warrant, conduct an additional poll in Early June, 2020
2. Present the polling results to the Board at June 24 Meeting
3. PCTPA Board requests measure on ballot or not depending on polling results
4. Approve additional funding in WE-60 in the amount of \$100,000 for polling and outreach services from Reserves