



Communication and Process Review

June 16, 2020

Joy Kummer, Partner

Outreach and Communication on City Needs

July – August 2019

- Work with City and community leaders to identify City Needs
- Developed comprehensive communication plan
- Began developing informational materials
 - Fact Sheet
 - FAQ
 - PowerPoint

September – December 2019

- Finalized informational materials regarding City needs
- Web page with survey
- Internal and external stakeholder outreach
 - City Staff conducted 24 Meetings
- Provided information about needs in City Newsletters with link to survey
- Provided online information via social media pages
- Completed Survey by True North Research

VOTER OPINION SURVEY

CONDUCTED FOR THE
CITY OF REDLANDS

PRESENTED BY
TIMOTHY McLARNEY PH.D.





PURPOSE OF STUDY

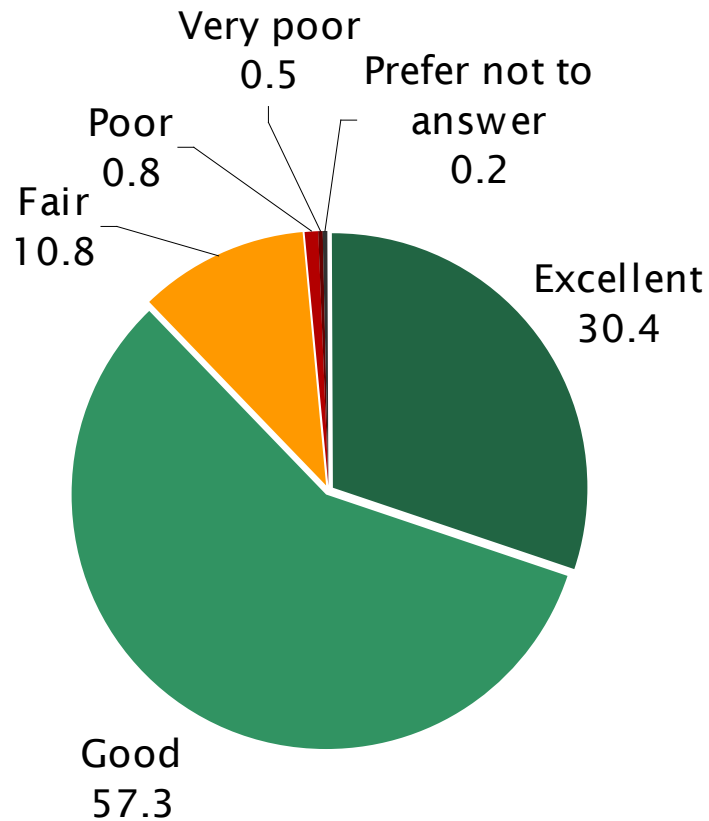
- Gauge the feasibility of a sales tax measure in the current environment
- Identify how to create a measure consistent with community priorities
- Gather information needed for communications & outreach



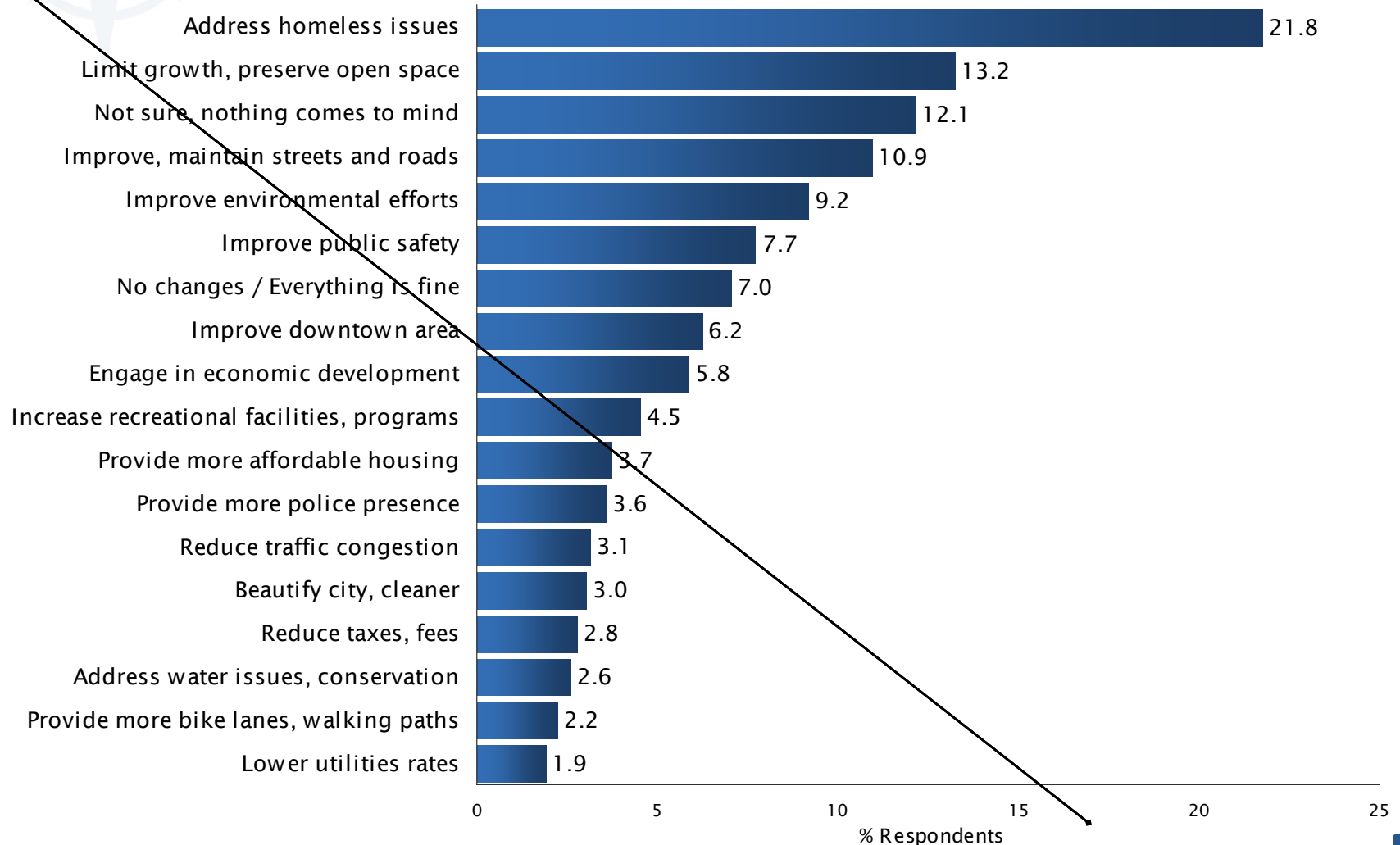
METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

- Conducted May 7th to May 12th, 2020
- Random sample: 937 District voters likely to participate in November 2020 election
- Mixed-Method approach
 - Recruited via phone and email
 - Data collection via phone and online
 - 17-minute average interview length
- Overall margin of error is $\pm 3.16\%$

QUALITY OF LIFE

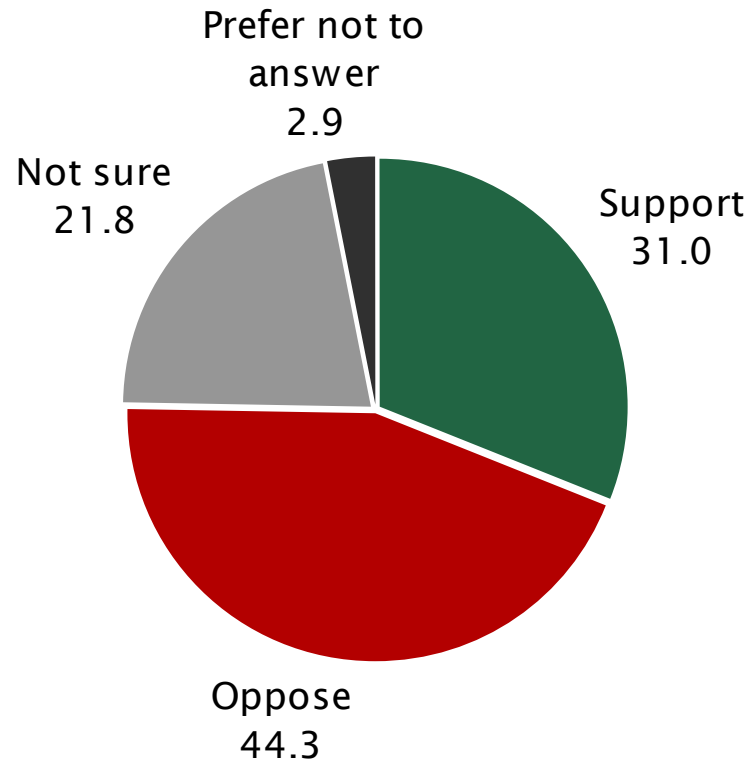


CHANGES TO IMPROVE CITY



SUPPORT FOR SPLIT-ROLL MEASURE

AFTER PRO & CON ARGUMENTS





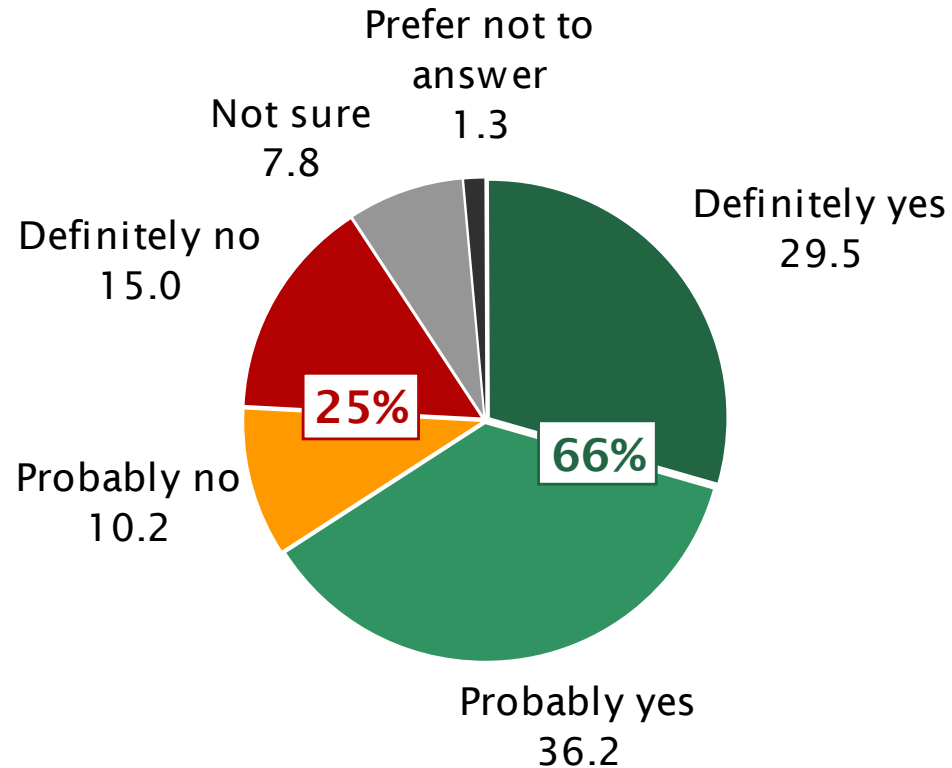
INITIAL BALLOT TEST

To provide funding for:

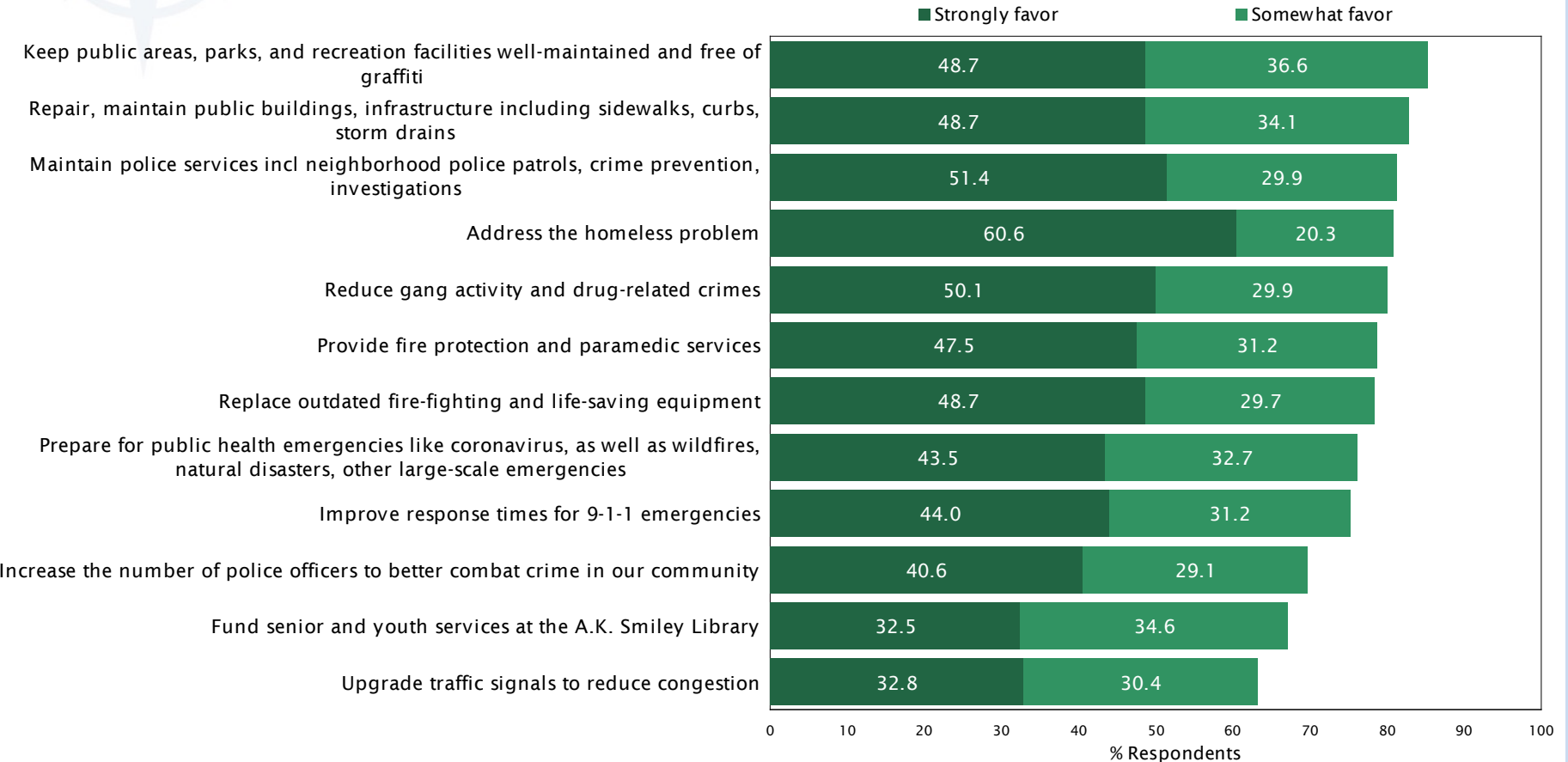
- Police patrols, gang, drug and crime prevention
- Fire protection, paramedics, and 9-1-1 emergency response
- Maintaining library services
- Addressing homelessness
- And maintaining parks, sidewalks, infrastructure and other general services

shall the City of Redlands' measure establishing a one-cent sales tax be adopted, providing 10 million dollars annually for city services until ended by voters, and requiring citizen oversight, independent audits, and with all funds controlled locally?

INITIAL BALLOT TEST



PROJECTS & SERVICES



POSITIVE ARGUMENTS TIER 1

Redlands one of few cities in County with own Police, Fire, which guarantees they are avail when needed, not diverted to service other cities

Response times for 9-1-1 have increased dramatically in past 4 yrs, are much longer than what experts recommend; measure will help reduce 9-1-1 response times

Fast response times for 9-1-1 critical for saving lives; measure will ensure necessary facilities, police officers, firefighters, paramedics to respond quickly to 9-1-1

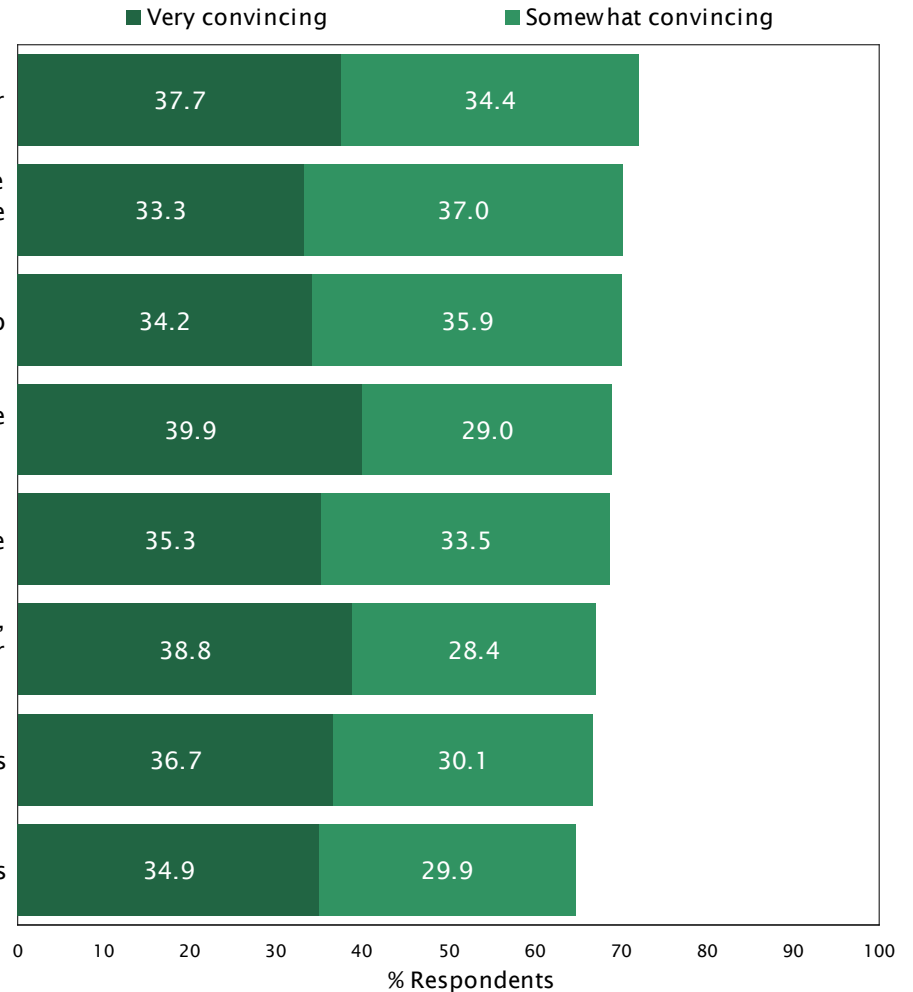
Calls for 9-1-1, crime rates, fire risks much higher than in past, yet we have fewer police officers, firefighters, paramedics than 10 yrs ago

Funding will allow City to keep up with repairs, maintenance to facilities, storm drains, sidewalks; if we don't take care of it now, will be more expensive to repair in future

All money raised by measure will be used to fund essential services, facilities here in Redlands; by law, it can't be taken away by State or used for other purposes

Currently, nearly all sales tax generated locally goes to State of CA or County; measure will ensure that a higher percentage of sales tax dollars stay here in Redlands

There are over 12 miles of damaged sidewalks, 15 miles of damaged curbs in Redlands; measure will provide funding needed to fix City's aging infrastructure



POSITIVE ARGUMENTS TIER 2

If we want to reduce homelessness, it is going to take addit'l public safety resources; measure will provide facilities, staff to help address homeless issue in Redlands

Much of City in 'Very High Fire Hazard Area' according to experts; wildfires getting larger, faster, deadlier, need to make sure we have resources, staff to respond quickly

There will be a clear system of accountability incl independent citizen oversight, annual reports to community to ensure that money is spent properly

More than 80 traffic signals are so old that they can't be timed correctly, contributes to congestion; also need to be upgraded to improve pedestrian safety

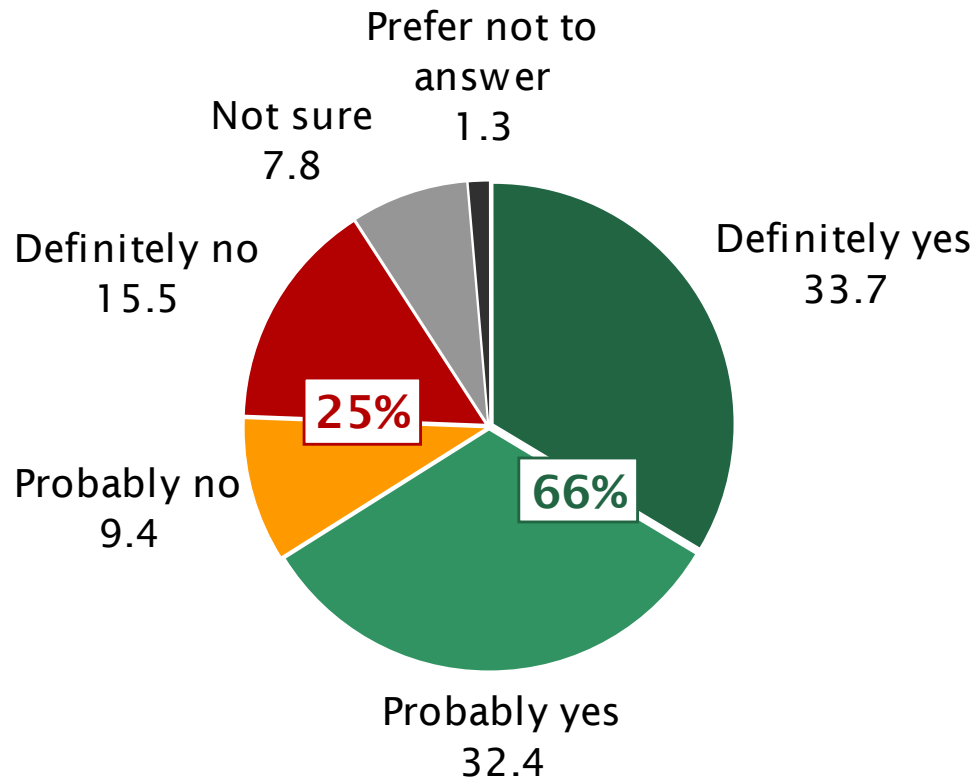
Coronavirus pandemic has made it clear we need to invest more in public safety so we are better prepared for large-scale emergencies

Measure will provide funding to maintain current levels of service; if measure does not pass, will require deep cuts to police, fire, 9-1-1, street maintenance

Despite being fiscally conservative, keeping costs down, City facing \$6M budget shortfall next yr that is expected to widen in future



INTERIM BALLOT TEST



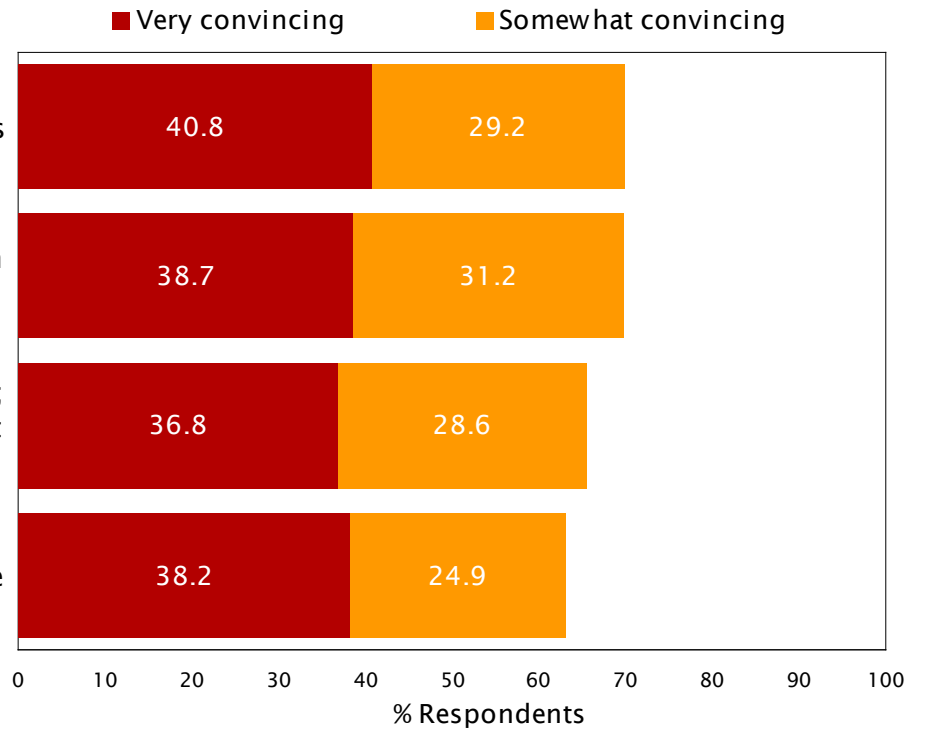
NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

Taxes already too high, can't afford another increase; especially true for seniors, others on fixed-incomes; City needs to tighten belt before asking residents to pay more

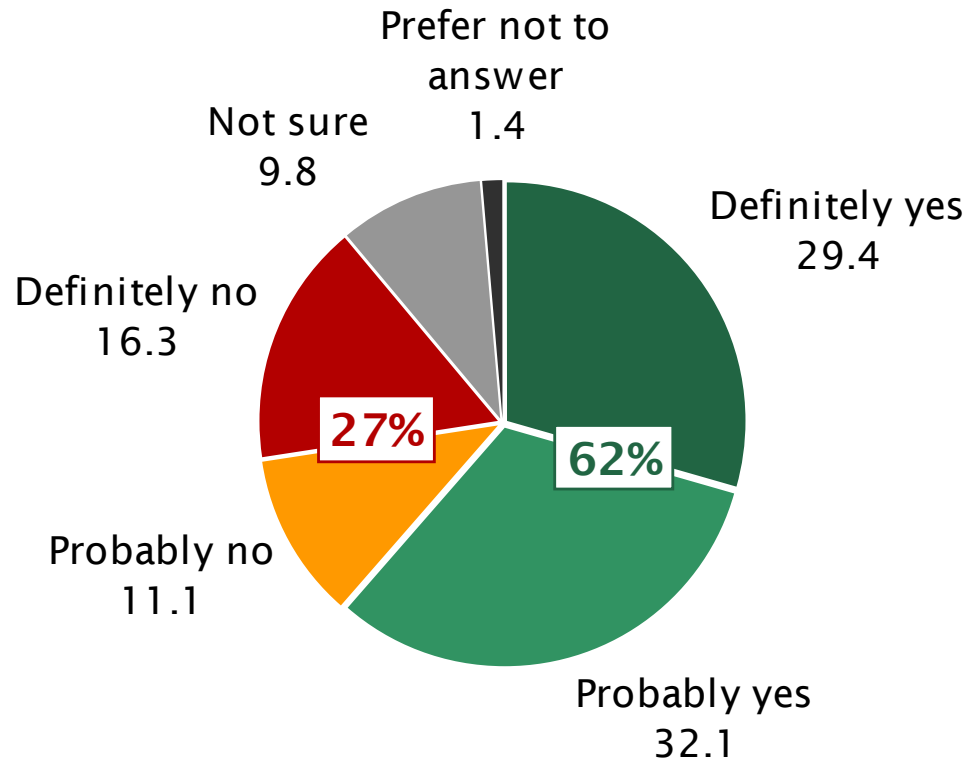
There are no guarantees on how funds will be spent, which means City can divert money to pet projects

Local businesses have been hit hard by coronavirus shut-down; many are struggling to stay open; raising sales tax will make it harder for them to recover

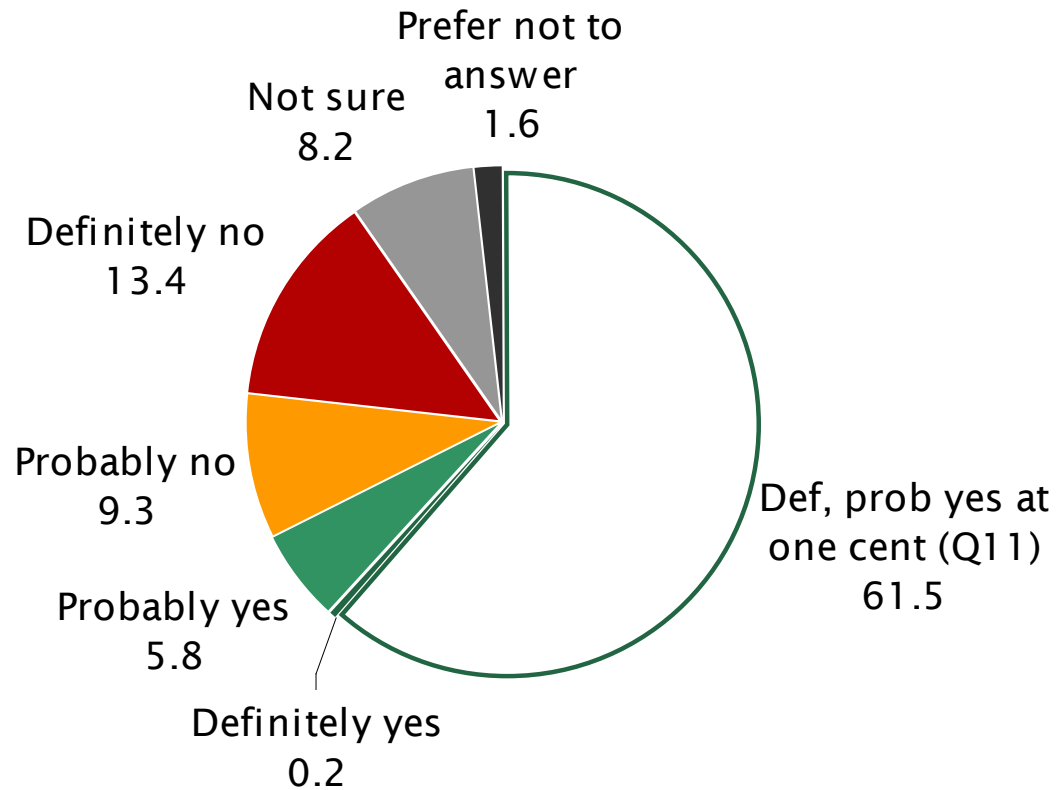
This tax will last forever; there is no expiration date



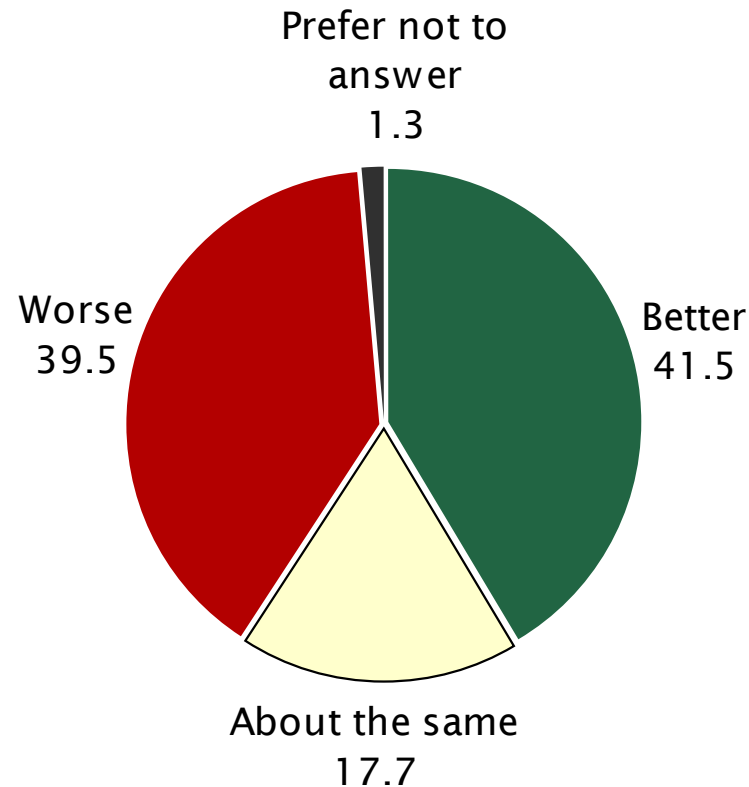
FINAL BALLOT TEST



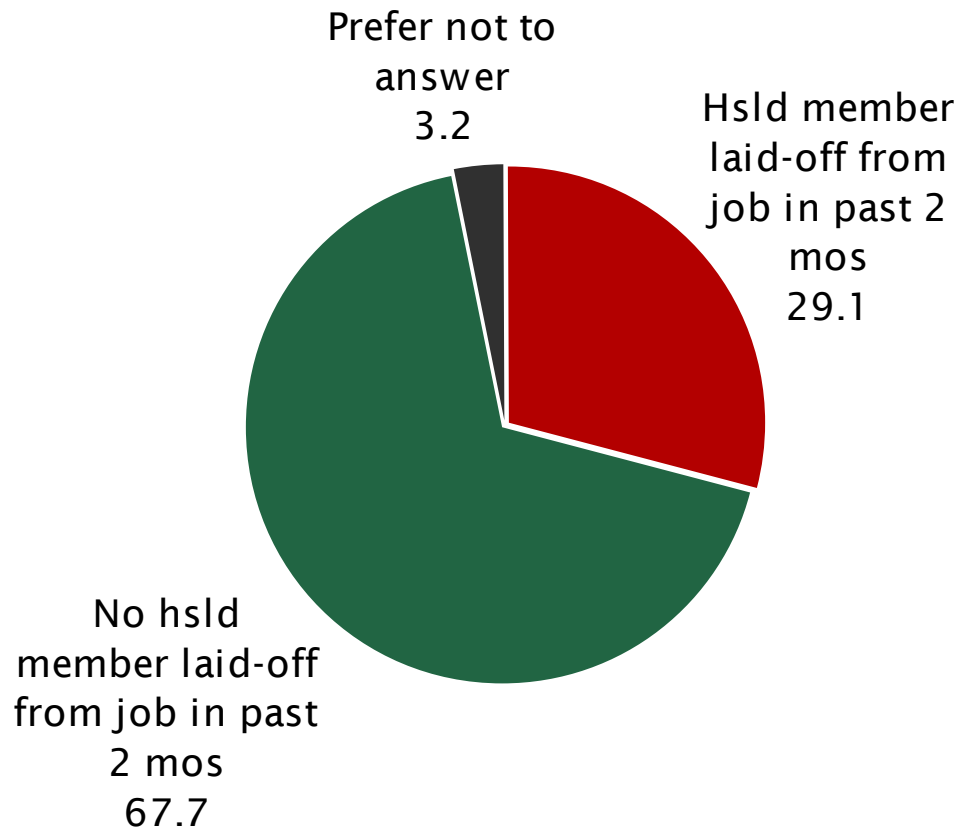
FINAL BALLOT TEST AT ONE-HALF CENT



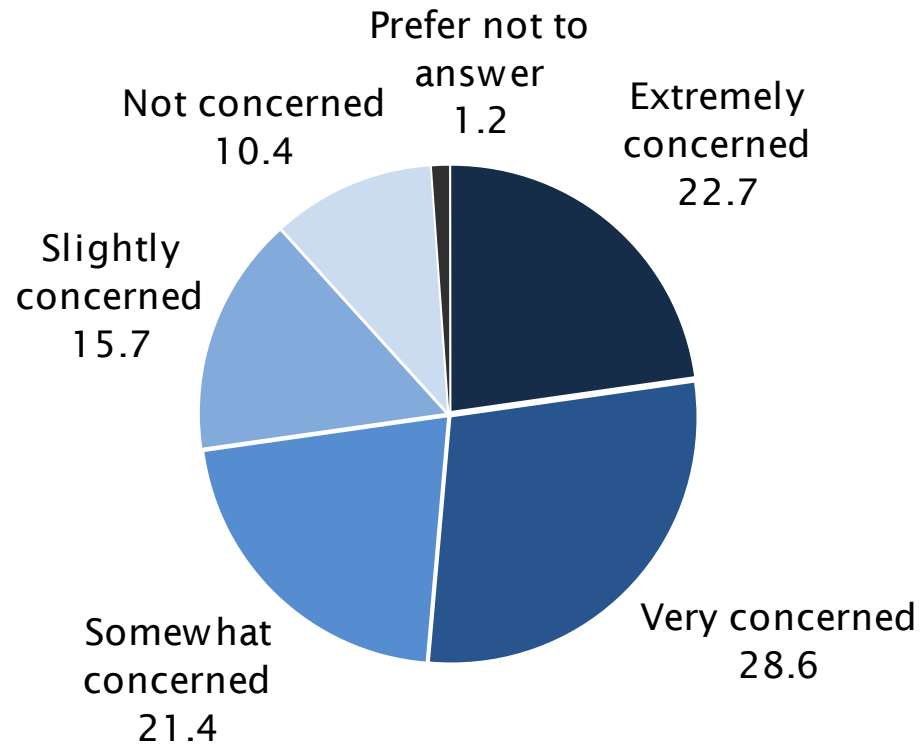
OPINION OF ECONOMY IN SIX MONTHS



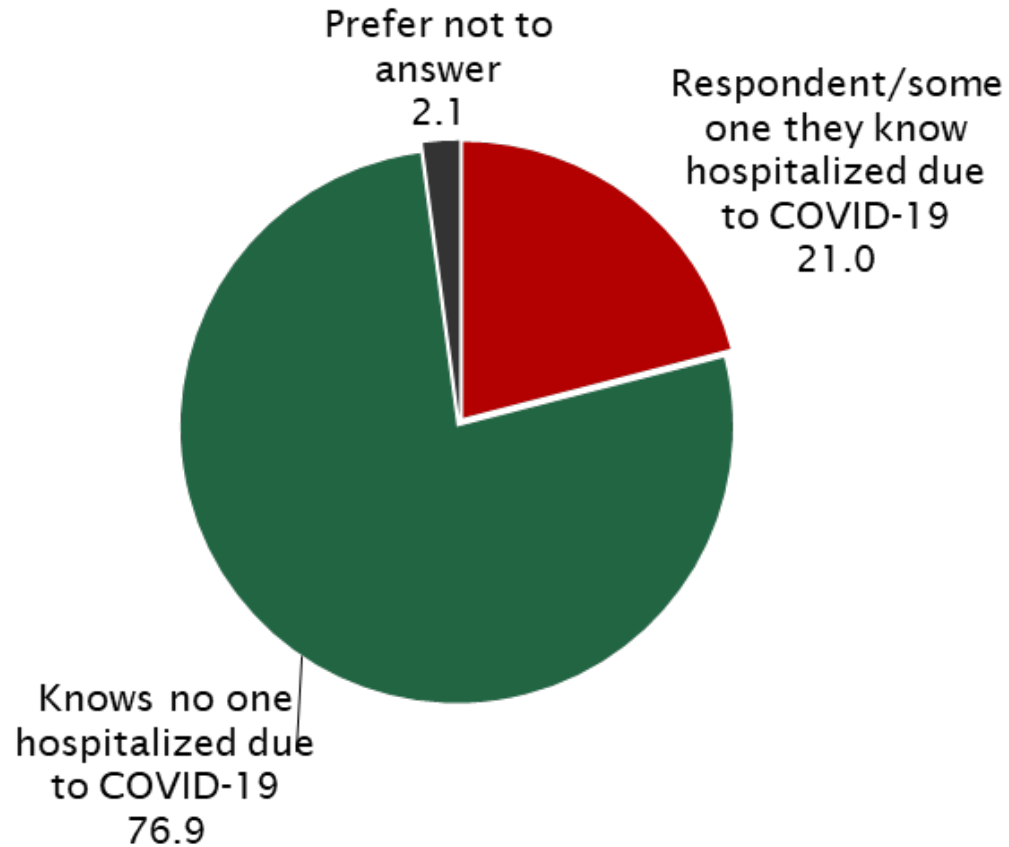
HOUSEHOLD MEMBER LAID-OFF FROM JOB IN PAST 2 MONTHS



CONCERN ABOUT COVID-19



KNOWS SOMEONE HOSPITALIZED DUE TO COVID-19





KEY CONCLUSIONS

Support for a local sales tax measure has been very resilient considering the challenging conditions

- Support is 5% lower than baseline study in 2018, but we're also testing a one-cent tax rate (up from the ½ cent tested in 2018)
- Presidential impeachment, COVID-19, and steep downturn in the economy are all historic events that can be expected to undermine support for tax measures, yet we find two-thirds of Redlands voters still support a measure at the Initial Ballot Test
- Those concerned with COVID-19 and the economy were actually a bit more supportive of the proposed measure, arguably reflecting voters' recognition of the important role that local governments have played/will play in the recovery



CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Poll is a snapshot in time, not a crystal ball
- **Price Tag:** Solid support for 1 cent measure. Reducing the tax rate does not significantly improve measure's chance for voter approval.
- **Service Priorities:** Public works, public safety & addressing homelessness.
- **City Communications:** Expand the conversation with the community to educate and build consensus on a proposal.
- **Independent Campaign:** November 2020 is going to be a noisy election with crosscutting issues and 'anti-tax' initiatives. Need to bring A-Game communications and effort.

Next Steps

- Outreach documents edited based on new information from Survey
- Continue public outreach and seeking input
- Maintain online survey and include in any City communications with residents
- By August 7: deadline to put potential measure on ballot
 - If City decides to move forward, continue informational communication regarding potential measure
 - Ballot Argument Due August 20