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City of Belmont: 2014 Revenue Measure Feasibility Survey

June 2014

The City of Belmont commissioned Godbe Research to conduct a survey of local voters with the following research objectives:

- Gauge the public's perceptions of the job the City is doing to provide services and manage public funds;
- Assess potential voter support for a utility users tax measure to fund City services and facilities with funding that cannot be taken by the State;
- Identify the optimum tax rate and duration at which voters will support the measure;
- Prioritize projects and programs to be funded with the proceeds;
- Test the influence of statements about the measure on potential voter support; and
- Identify any differences in voter support due to demographic and/or voter behavioral characteristics.

Methodology Overview

- Data Collection Telephone Interviewing
- Universe 10,073 registered likely November 2014 voters in the City of Belmont.
- Fielding Dates May 6 through May 10, 2014
- Interview Length 18 minutes
- Sample Size 302
- Margin of Error $\pm 5.5\%$

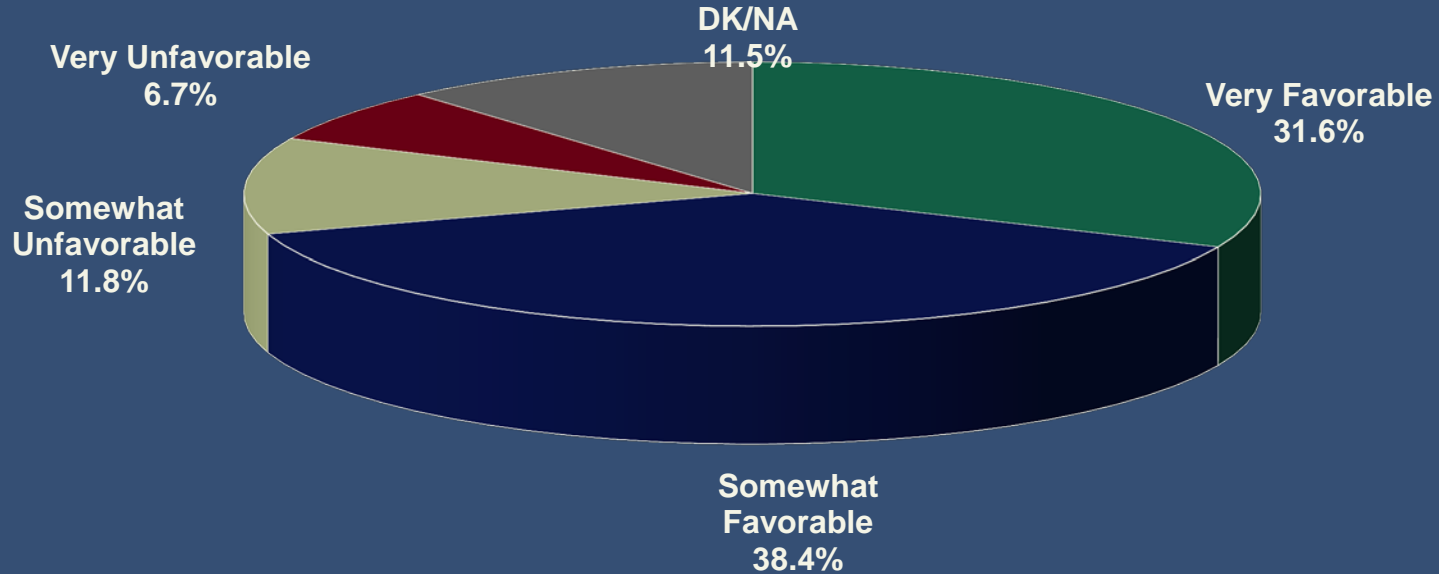


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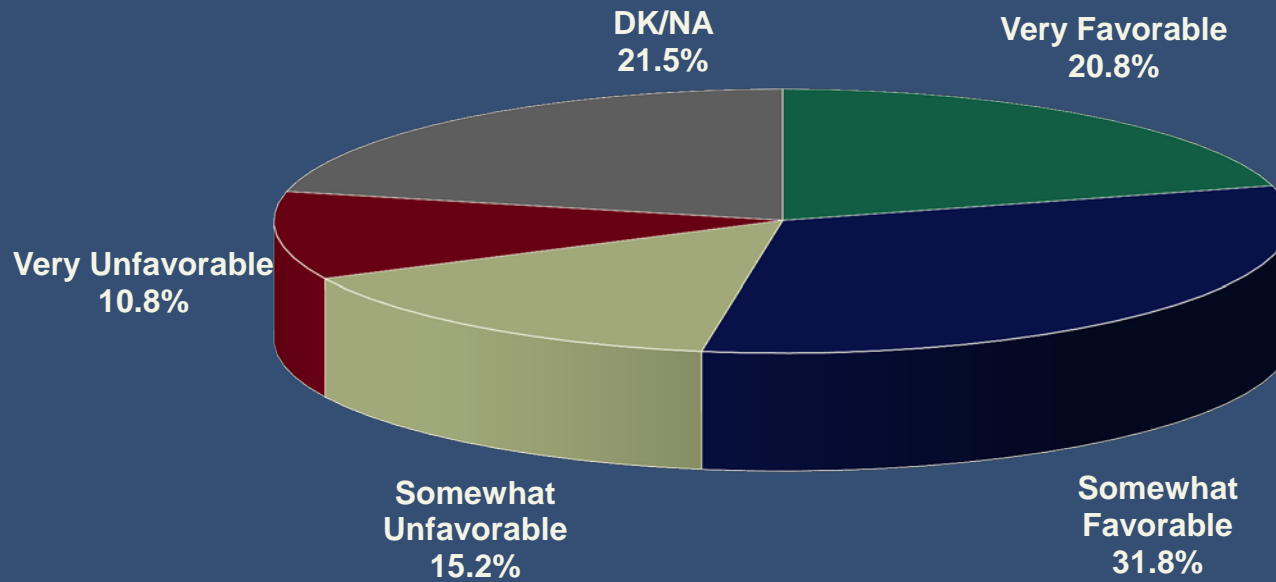
Key Findings

Opinion on the Job the City is Doing to Provide Services (n=302)



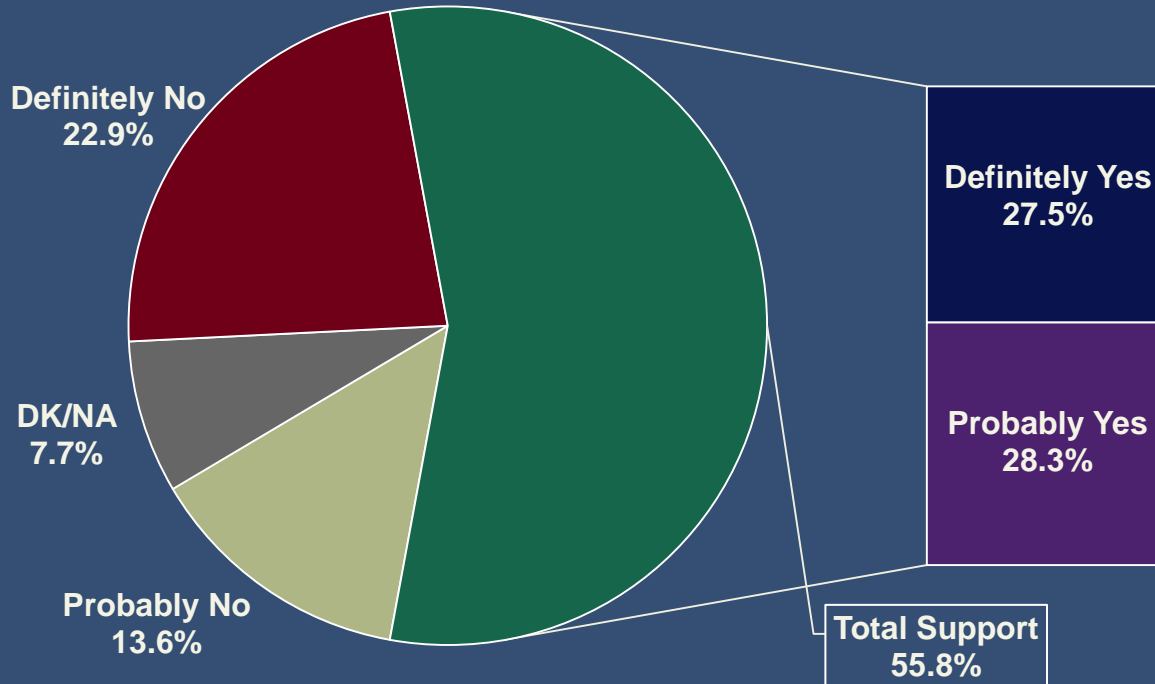
Fav / Unfav Ratio:
3.8 to 1

Opinion on Whether the City is Effectively Managing Public Funds (n=302)



Fav / Unfav Ratio:
2.0 to 1

Uninformed Support (n=302)

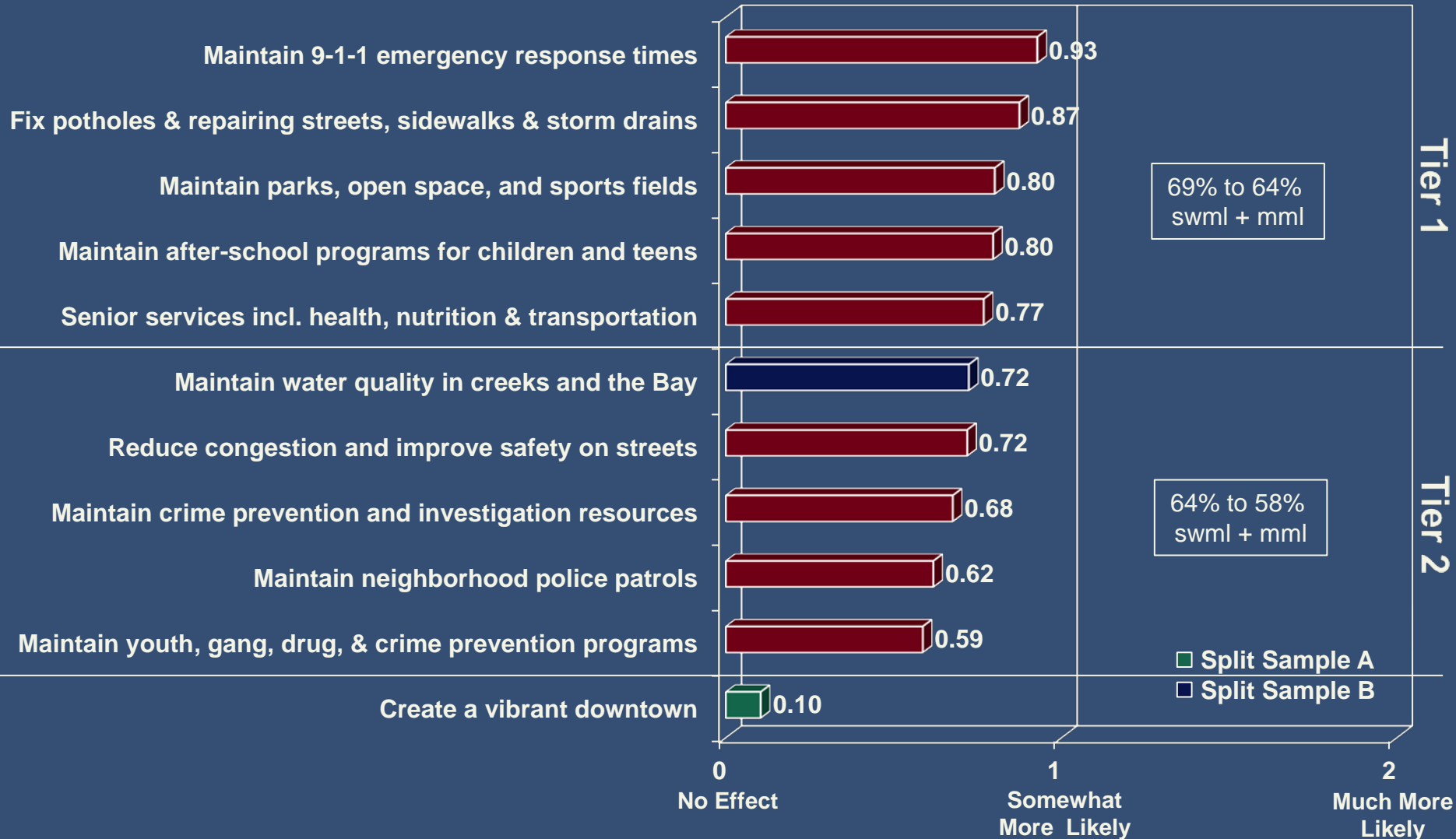


Shall an ordinance be adopted establishing a 5% utility users tax funding Belmont services and facilities, including:

- neighborhood police patrols, youth, gang, drug, and crime prevention programs;
- fixing potholes and repairing streets, sidewalks and storm drains;
- senior, afterschool, and preschool programs;
- reducing congestion and improving safety on streets including Alameda and Ralston;
- parks, open space, and sports fields; and
- other general city services and facilities

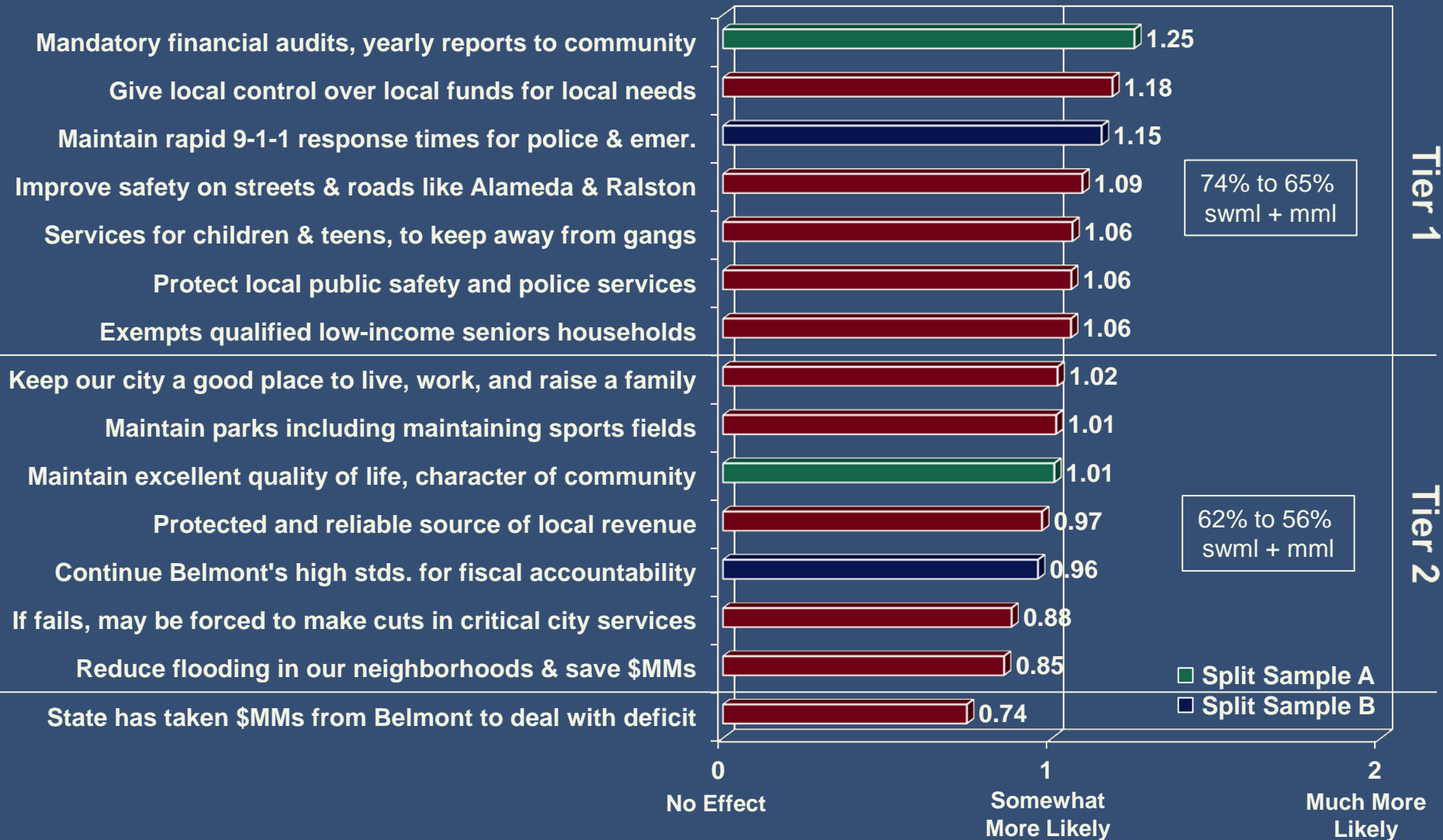
with exemptions for low income seniors and requiring annual audits?

Features of the Measure (n=302)



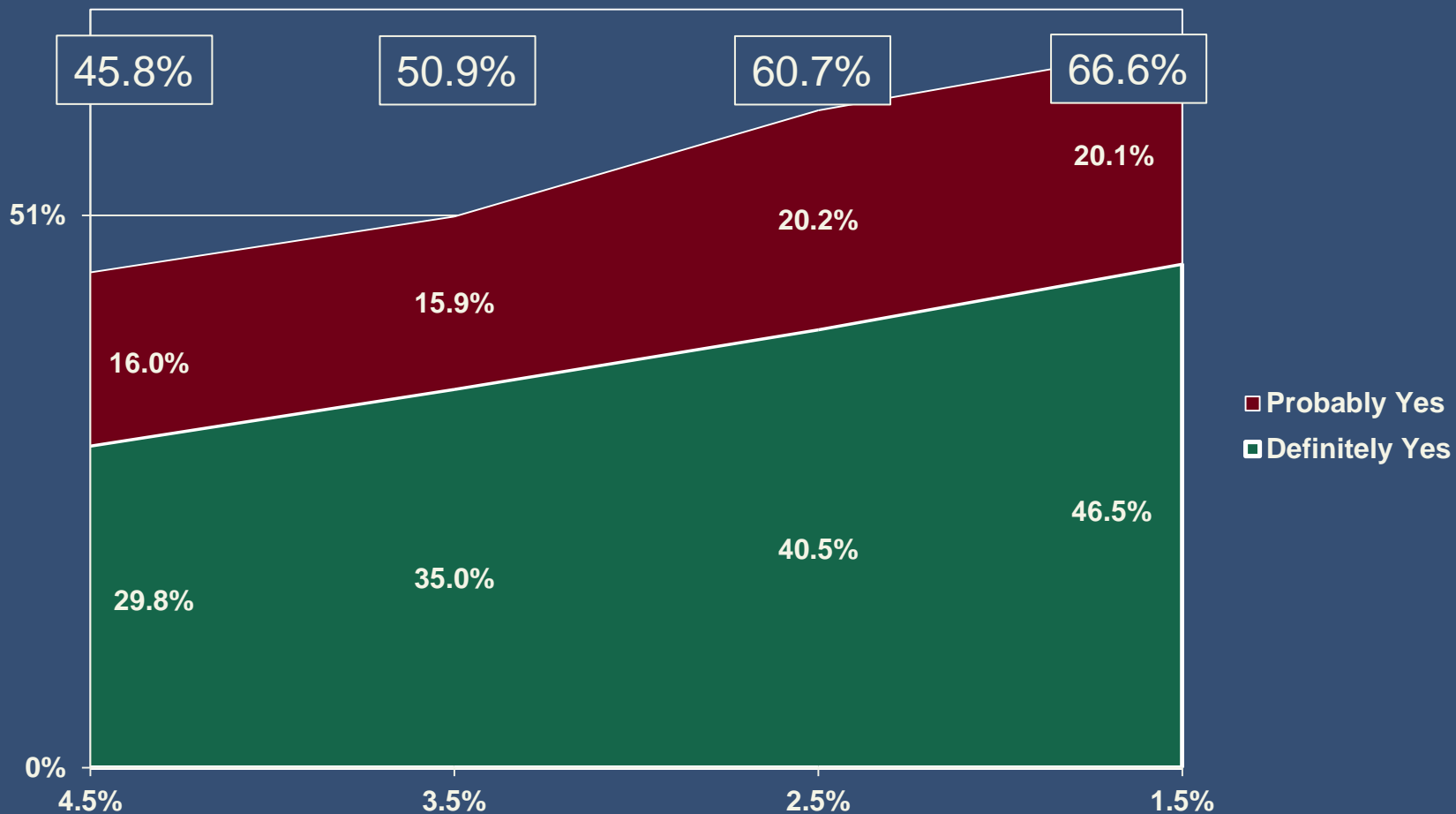
Note: The above rating questions have been abbreviated for charting purposes, and responses were recoded to calculate mean scores: "Much More Likely" = +2, "Somewhat More Likely" = +1, "No Effect" = 0, "Somewhat Less Likely" = -1, and "Much Less Likely" = -2.

Influence of Supporting Statements (n=302)



Note: The above rating questions have been abbreviated for charting purposes, and responses were recoded to calculate mean scores: "Much More Likely" = +2, "Somewhat More Likely" = +1, and "No Effect" = 0.

Support for Different Tax Rates (n=302)





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Summary

- The survey revealed a base of voter support for a general purpose utility users' tax measure.
 - Support for the measure was 55.8% in the November 2014 election.
- Support for the general purpose UUT measure increases as the tax rate declines, and is more feasible at a 2.5% rate at which 60.7% of the respondents support the measure.
- A combination of 9-1-1 emergency response times, fixing potholes and streets, and maintaining parks and after-school programs are the top priorities supported by the respondents.
- Given the data, Godbe Research recommends that the City begin preparing for future election and develop an public outreach strategy to explain the needs and the City's financial situation.



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www.godberesearch.com

Northern California and Corporate Offices
1660 South Amphlett Boulevard, Suite 205
San Mateo, CA 94402

Southern California Office
4695 MacArthur Court, 11th Floor
Newport Beach, CA 92660

Nevada Office
59 Damonte Ranch Parkway, Suite B309
Reno, NV 89521

Pacific Northwest Office
601 108th Avenue NE, Suite 1900
Bellevue, WA 98004