



Survey of Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Likely November 2020 Voters



**RE: Parcel Tax Renewal
Conducted for POST**

Summary Report – July 23, 2020

Survey Methodology

- ▶ Survey of Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority likely November 2020 Voters
- ▶ Mixed mode (telephone and email-/text-to-web) methodology
 - Phone interviews conducted by trained, professional interviewers; landlines & mobile phones included
 - Email and text invitations were sent to complete the survey online
- ▶ Conducted July 6-10, 2020
- ▶ 720 interviews; overall margin of error ± 3.7 percentage points
- ▶ Split sample methodology was used to test possible ballot scenarios
 - Sample A: Renew existing \$24 tax until ended by voters (n=309; MoE ± 5.6 % pts)
 - Sample B: Extend existing \$24 tax by 15 years adding 60¢/year (n=411; MoE ± 4.8 % pts)
- ▶ Offered in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

Context and Timing

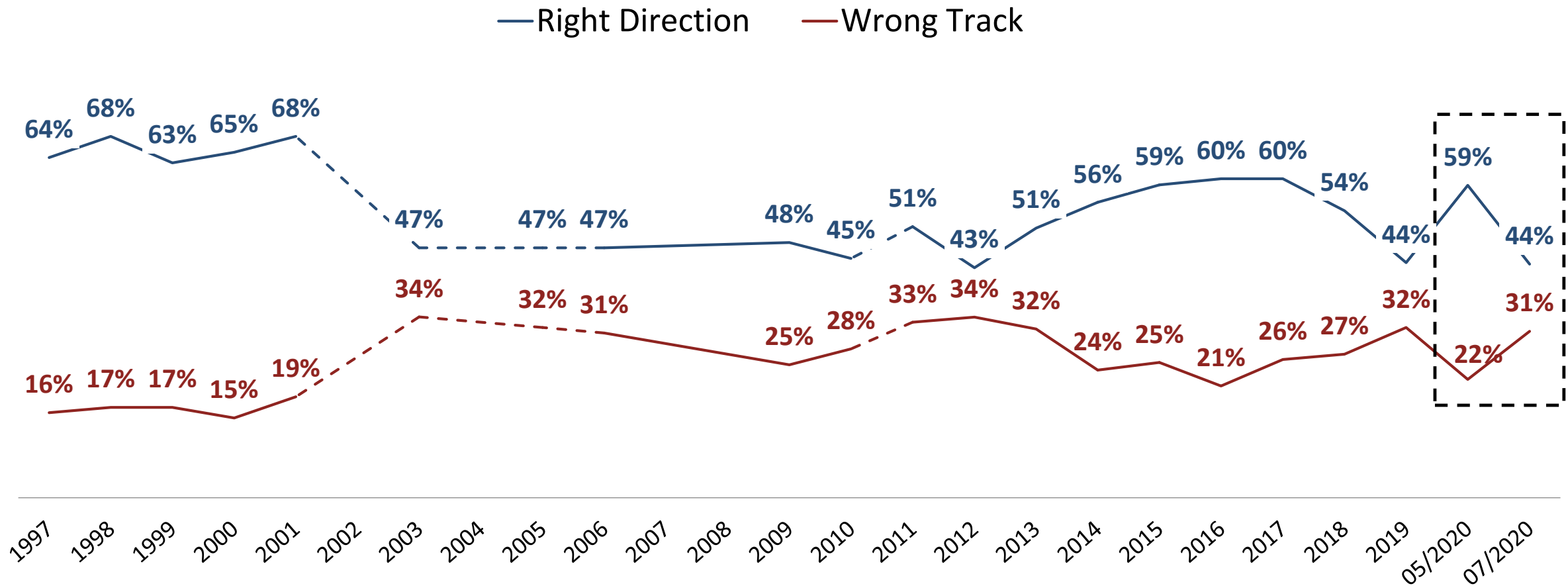
- ▶ Conducted during a surge in COVID-19 cases nationally due to attempts at reopening. California was also seeing an increase in new daily cases at this time.
- ▶ Nationally, approximately 127,000 people had died due to COVID-19, and an estimated 40,000,000 had filed for unemployment.
- ▶ Some businesses had started to reopen in June of 2020, but many sectors of the economy had been shut down since March of 2020.
- ▶ Protests and demonstrations were also taking place throughout Santa Clara County and the nation in response to police brutality.
- ▶ Please note that survey responses may be influenced by a public health crisis and national protests that were occurring at the time.



Right Direction/Wrong Track: Santa Clara County



Voter optimism has declined significantly since May, probably related to the increase in COVID-19 cases.

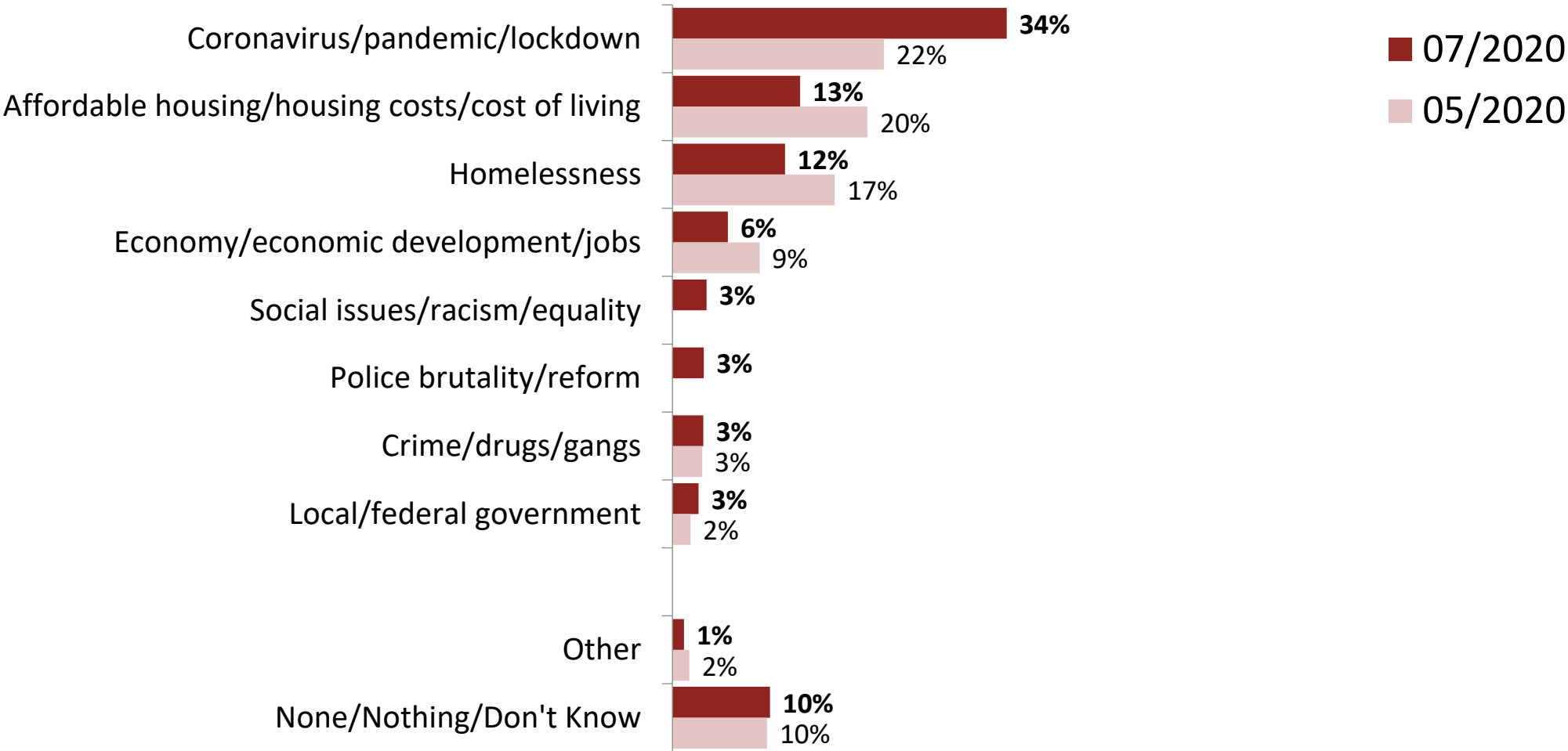


Q4. Do you feel that things in Santa Clara County are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

Note: Previous survey data is from county-wide voter polls; 2020 data is among OSA likely voters

Santa Clara County: Most Important Problem

Coronavirus is by far a top-of-mind concern; racism and police brutality are mentioned now when they were not a few months ago.



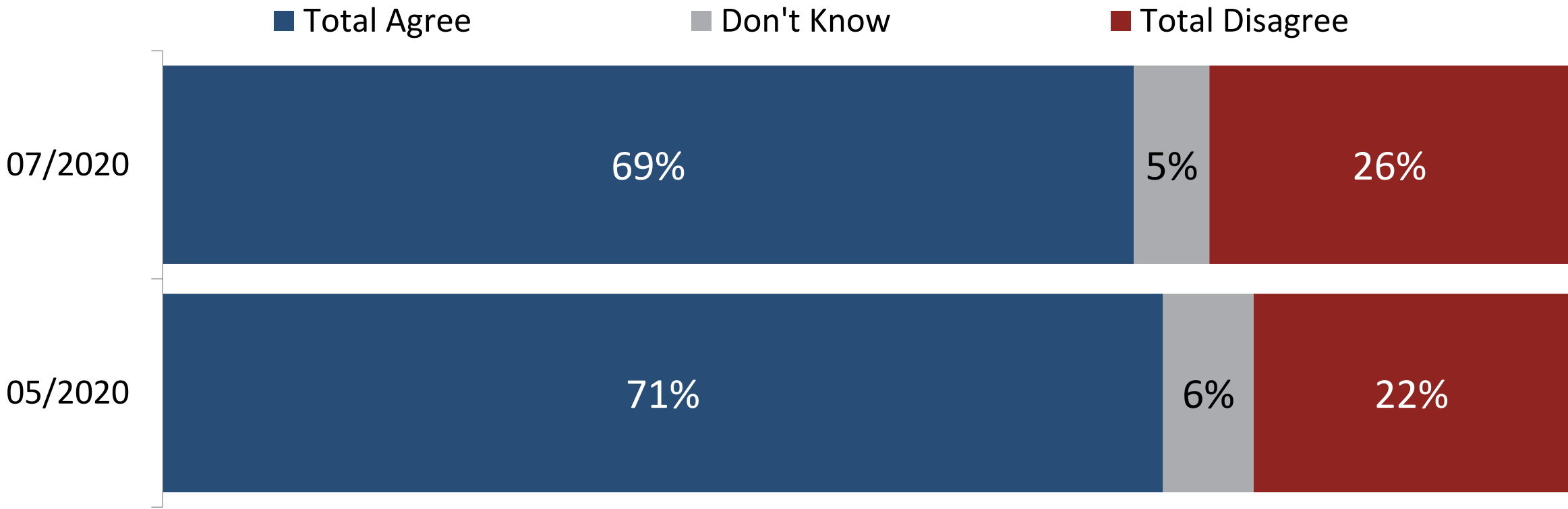
Q5. What do you think is the most important issue facing Santa Clara County today? (OPEN ENDED, ONE RESPONSE ACCEPTED)

Note: categories <3% not shown

Economy Sentiment

Just over two-thirds of voters think that the economy is going to get worse over the next year.

“I expect the economy to get worse, not better, over the next year.”

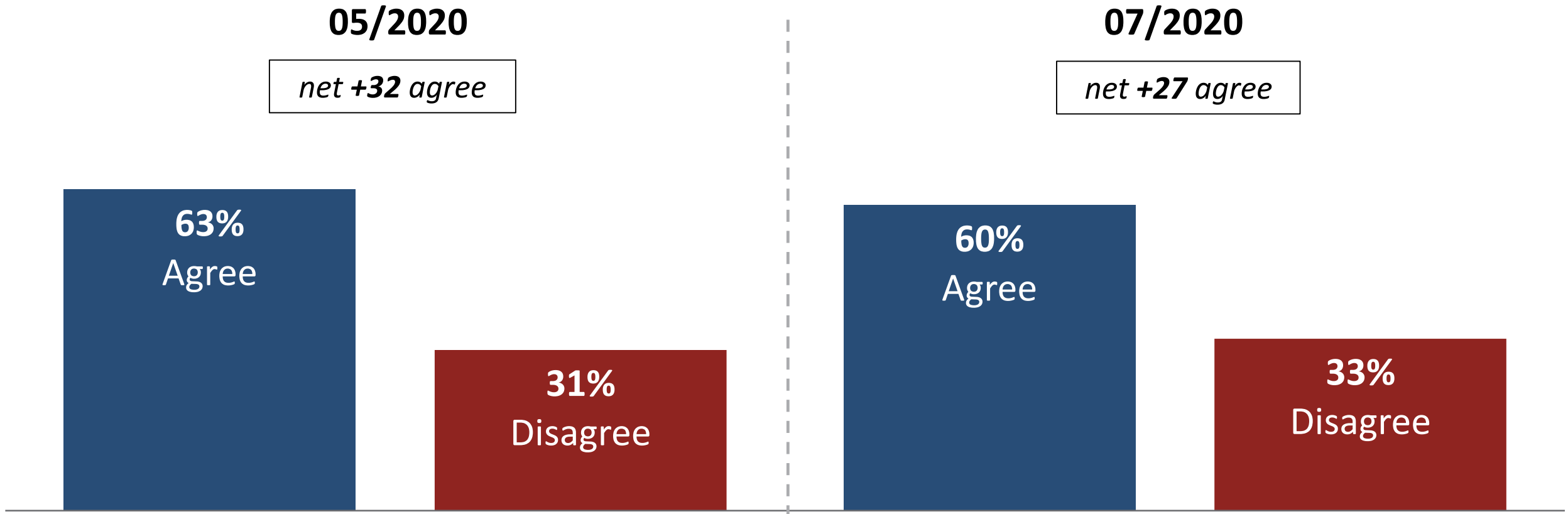


Q18. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

Tax Sentiment

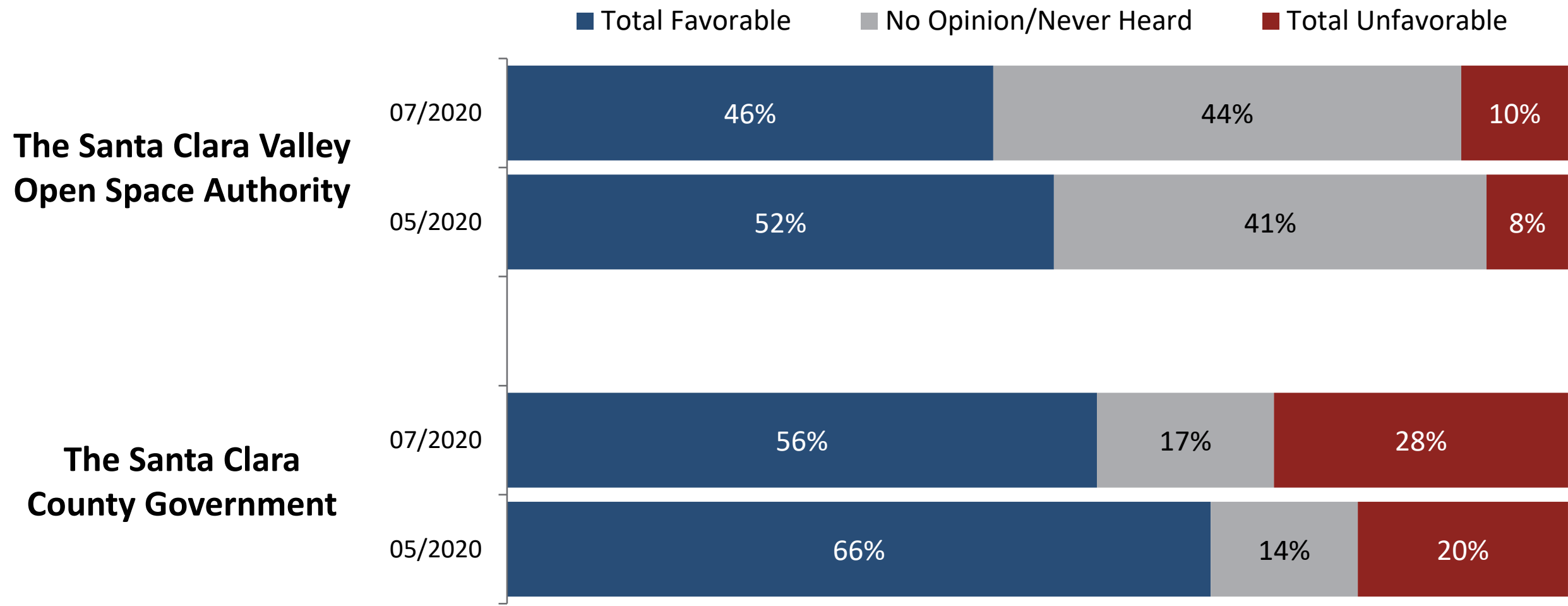
Although changes are slight, there has been a downward shift in tax tolerance since May.

"Taxes in this area are already high enough. I'll vote against any tax increase."



Favorable Ratings

Overall ratings of local agencies have dropped slightly since May, likely connected to changes in overall optimism.



Visiting Local Public Open Spaces/Parks/Trails

Nearly two-thirds of voters are visiting local public open spaces, parks, or trails at least a few times a month and many say they are visiting more often since shelter-in-place orders.



63%

visiting at least a
few times a month



24%

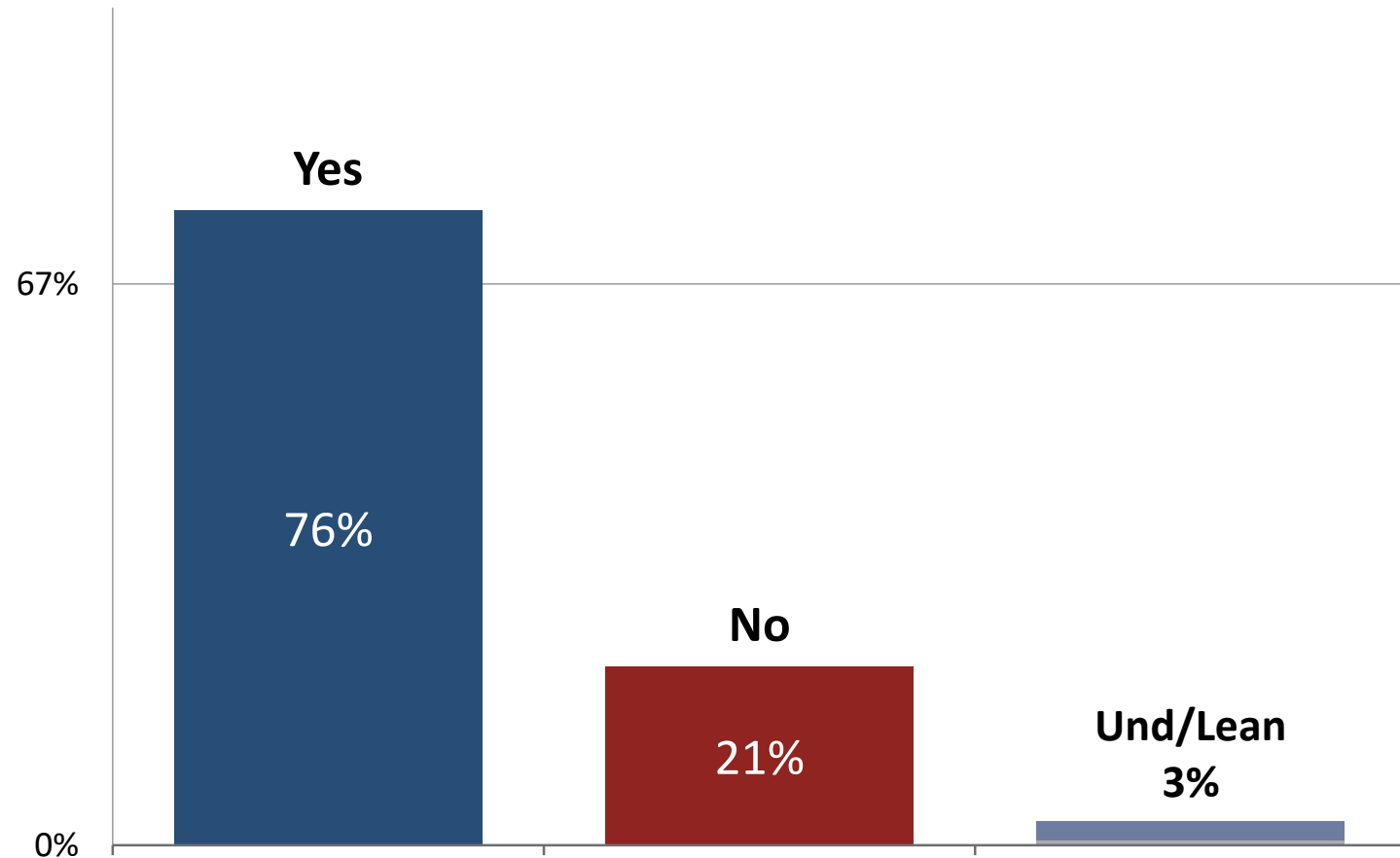
visiting more often since
shelter-in-place orders

Q33. On average, how frequently do you visit public open spaces, parks or trails in Santa Clara County?
Q34. Have you visited public open spaces, parks, or trails in Santa Clara County more often, less often, or about the same amount during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders?

Measure Q Renewal

Support today to renew Measure Q is above the two-thirds threshold required to pass.

To continue protecting and preserving natural open spaces without increasing tax rates by managing land and water to reduce wildfires and floods; protecting land around creeks to prevent pollution and improve water quality; creating urban parks; preserving wildlife habitats; and, preserving family farms, and healthy food sources; shall the measure to renew Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's existing \$24 annual parcel tax with no increase, generating approximately \$8,000,000 annually, until ended by voters, with oversight/audits, be adopted?

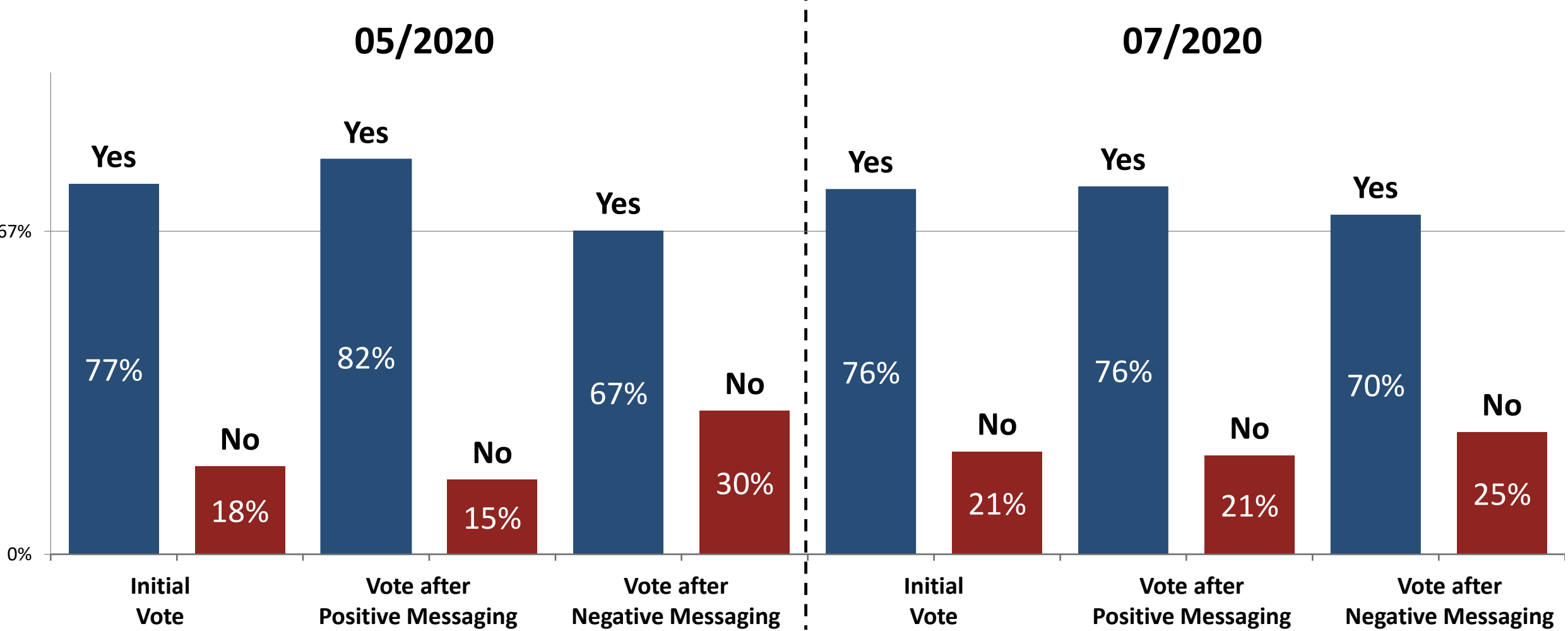


Q13. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?

Note: split-sample methodology used; 309n, MoE ± 5.6 % pts

Measure Q Renewal

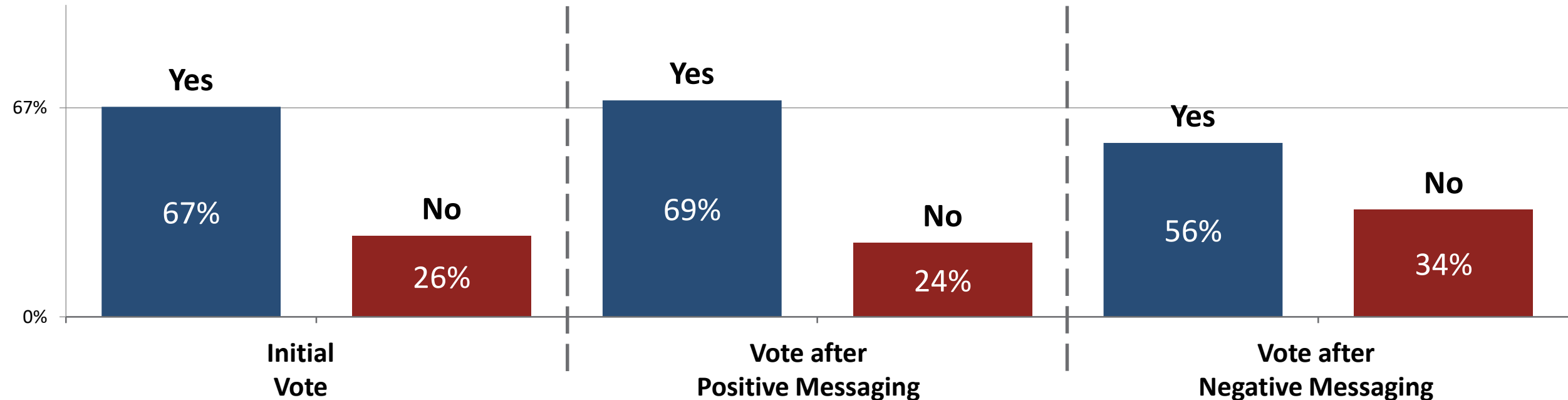
Despite differences in the environment, ballot question language, and poll structure, support to renew Measure Q stays at or above two-thirds in both the May and July polls, even when respondents are exposed to potential opposition messaging.



Extend Measure Q + 60¢/year

Two-thirds of voters support the measure to extend the \$24 tax with a small annual increase today; however, support drops after exposure to potential opposition messaging.

To continue protecting and preserving natural open spaces by managing land and water to reduce wildfires and floods; protecting land around creeks to prevent pollution and improve water quality; creating urban parks; preserving wildlife habitats; and, preserving family farms, and healthy food sources; shall the measure to extend Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's parcel tax by 15 years at the current rate of \$24, increasing by 60 cents/year, generating up to \$17,000,000 annually, with oversight/audits, be adopted?



Q13. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?

Note: split-sample methodology used; Sample A (Renew) 309n, MoE ±5.6 % pts; Sample B (Extend) 411n, MoE ±4.8 % pts

Top Messages

Ensuring access to open spaces, particularly in light of shelter-in-place orders, is a particularly compelling message to voters.



- ▶ In this volatile environment, voter opinion can change in a short period of time and although economic concerns are not top of mind among voters today that may change in the months ahead.
- ▶ Keeping that volatility in mind, renewing Measure Q without increasing the rate still has a very high likelihood of success with voter support testing above two-thirds today.
- ▶ Extending Measure Q with a small annual cost adjustment could also be feasible given the level of support among voters today; however, there is clearly tax sensitivity that should be considered.
- ▶ The heightened need for outdoor recreation and high usage of parks overall makes this an especially conducive environment for a measure that would continue to support open spaces.



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