

City of Eugene Parks Levy Survey

December 2022



1

Research purpose

- Assess voter support for renewing the city's parks levy and potentially increasing the levy rate.
- Gather information about community priorities for parks funding, including developing new parks and enhancing park safety with additional ambassadors and police officers.

2

Methodology

- Hybrid [Phone/Text-to-online] survey of N=400 likely voters in Eugene
- Conducted December 5–8, 2022; 12 minutes to complete
- Quotas and weighting were used by age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, political affiliation, and ward to ensure a representative sample.
- Margin of error $\pm 4.9\%$
- Due to rounding, some totals may differ by ± 1 from the sum of separate responses.

Key takeaways: Voter Mood and Satisfaction

- Voters are overall satisfied with their quality of life in Eugene, though not overwhelmingly so.
 - This is especially true among the youngest and oldest age groups, Democrats, and NAV/Other.
- Homelessness/unhoused, affordable housing, and crime/safety/drugs continue to be the top issues voters want to see addressed in Eugene.
- Voters are satisfied with most services tested except homelessness services, with top satisfaction in fire and emergency services, parks and open spaces, and libraries.
 - Satisfaction ratings have all increased since earlier this year, especially among parks and open spaces, which is better known than recreation services.

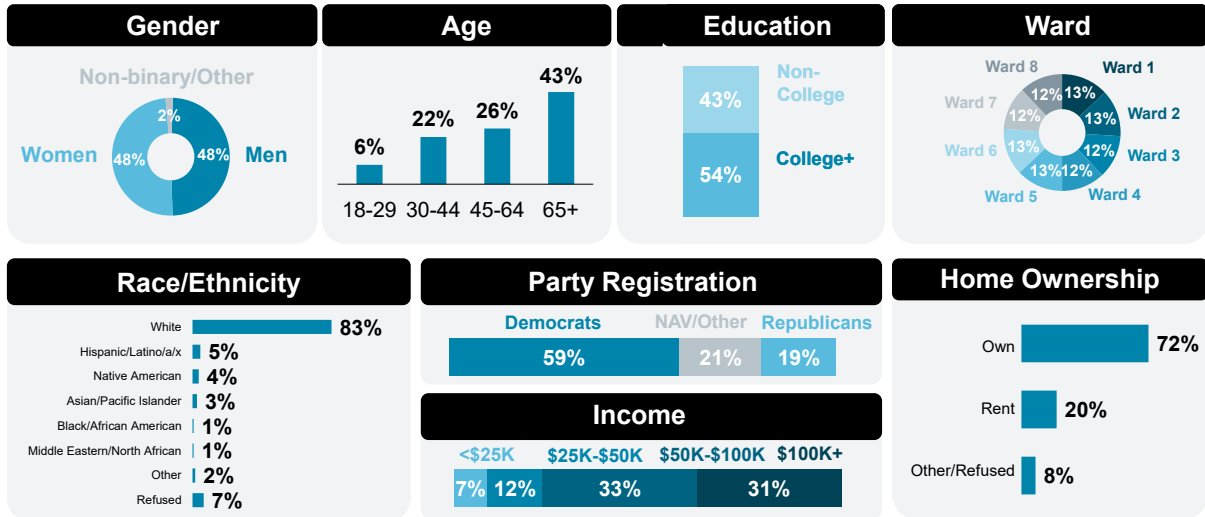
Key takeaways: Parks Levy Test Results

- Option A starts with the highest initial support. Support decreases with more information, and with each proposed price increase.
 - Democrats, non-homeowners, and non-middle-aged (45-64) voters are the biggest supporters of each option.
- However, most voters would prefer Option C if given the choice. This is likely a product of the extra information provided in the description of each levy option and messaging describing the services each option would provide. When services are described, even those who initially say no to the option are positive towards some proposed services.
- Support is split for the additional property tax to ensure the maintenance of parks but has support among continual supporters of the levy.

Next steps

- Option A is recommended if no further messaging and information can be provided to voters. If there is budget for a messaging and information campaign, Option C and even the extra property tax is viable.
- Focus on increasing support among ages 45-64, Republicans, NAV/Other, and homeowners.

Snapshot of May 2023 Likely Voters in Eugene



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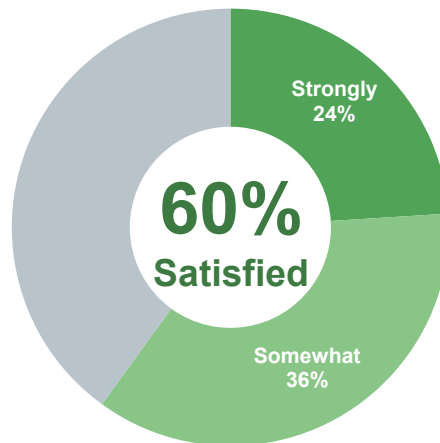
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Voter Mood and Satisfaction

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Over half of likely voters are satisfied with the quality of life in Eugene, but just under a quarter feel strongly about their satisfaction.



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**See notes for subgroup analysis*

9

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Homelessness, affordable housing, and safety are the top issues that voters would like addressed. There are few mentions of parks or recreation programs.

47% Homelessness/unhoused

11% Affordable housing

11% Crime/safety/drugs

4% Climate change/environment

4% Government/politics/leadership

3% Improve roads/infrastructure/bike lanes

<2% All other responses

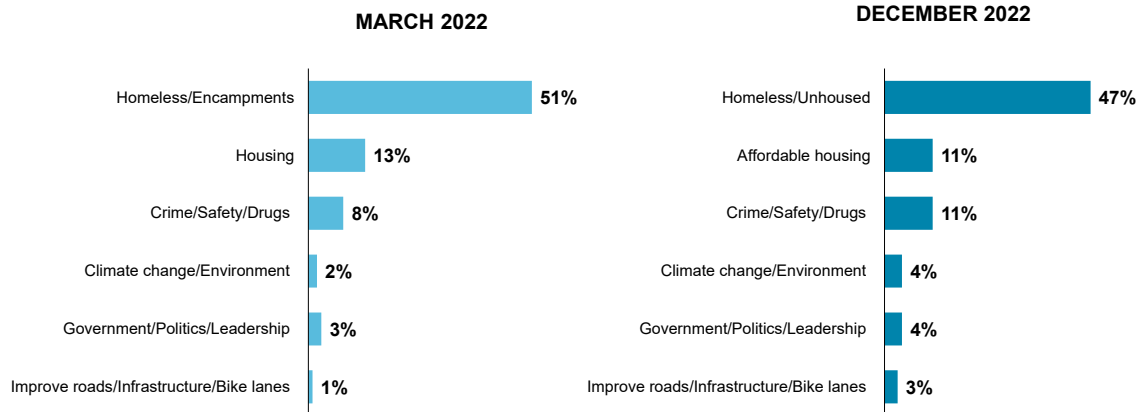
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**See notes for subgroup analysis*

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These top issues are not new, remaining the same since earlier this year.

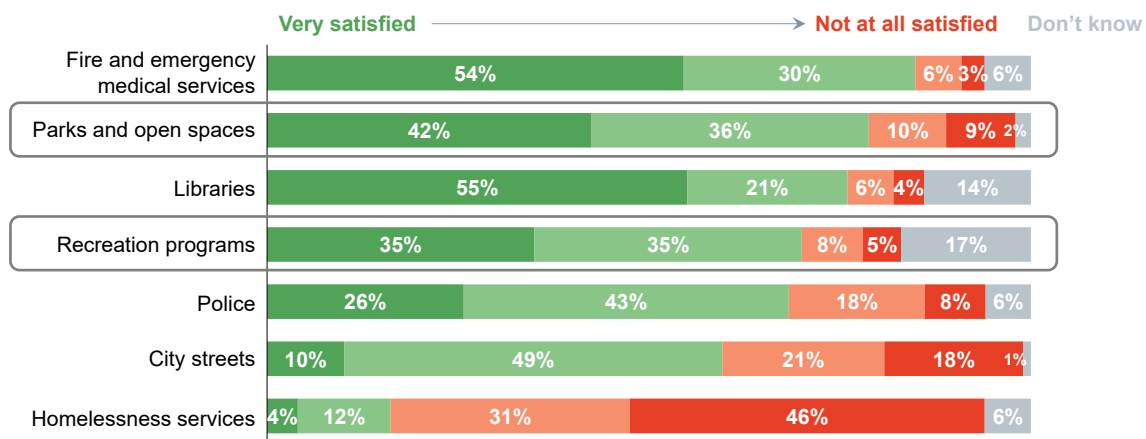


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A majority of voters are satisfied with fire and emergency services, parks and open spaces, and libraries. “Recreation” is less well known than “parks”.



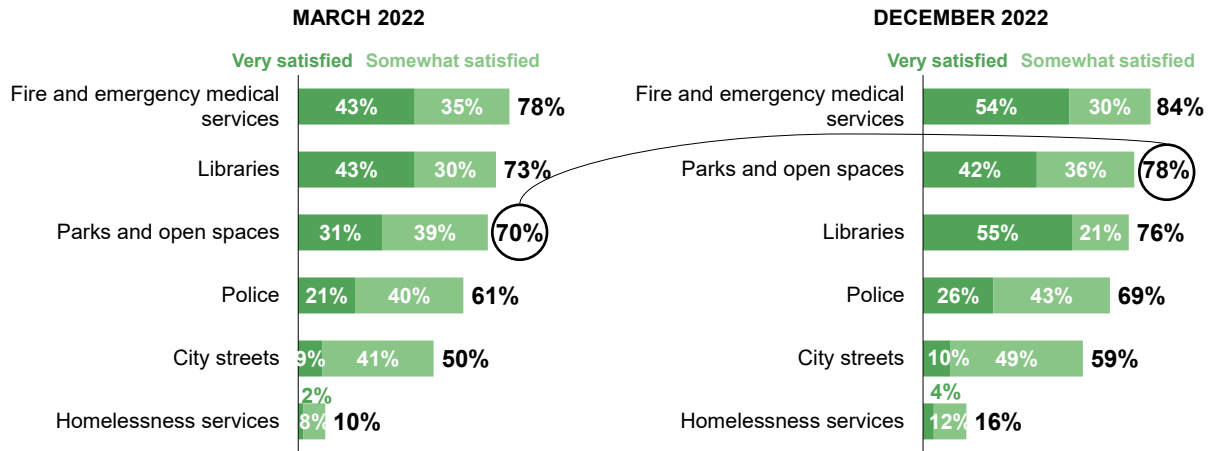
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*See speaker notes for subgroup analysis

12

12

Levels of satisfaction have increased among all services since earlier this year, but one of the biggest jumps has been among parks and open spaces.



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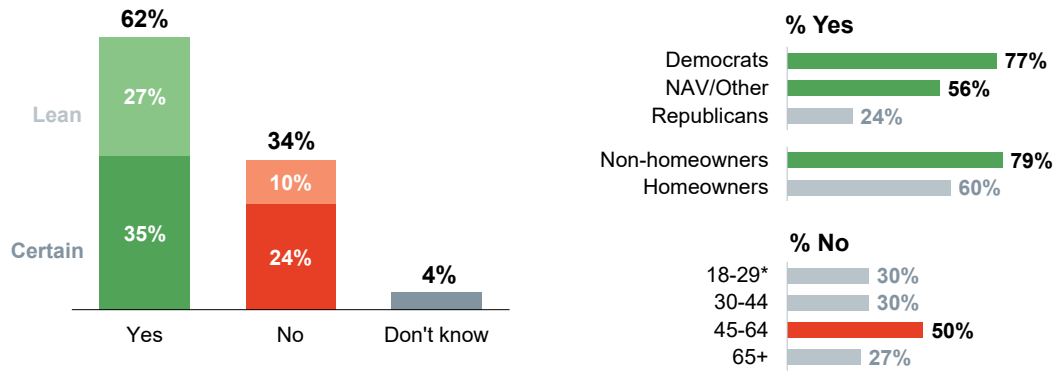
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Parks Levy Test Results

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Most voters support renewing the parks and recreation levy at its current rate, especially Democrats and non-homeowners.

Option A: To continue parks and recreation services, shall Eugene renew a five-year property tax of \$0.19 per \$1,000 assessed valuation beginning 2024?



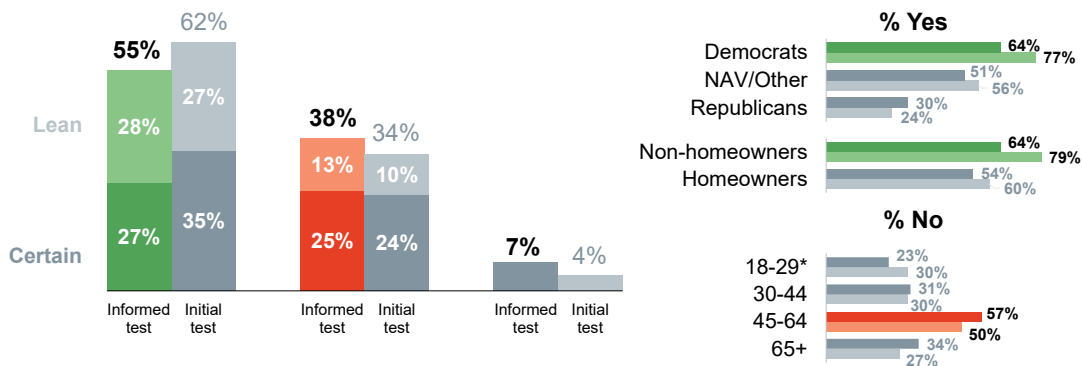
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15

15

Learning that some services and programs would be reduced at the current property tax rate lowers support and increases opposition among key groups.

Option A would renew an existing parks and recreation levy. If passed, property tax rates would stay at their current rates and cost the typical homeowner \$49 per year. However, due to rising costs, Eugene would need to reduce some services and programs.



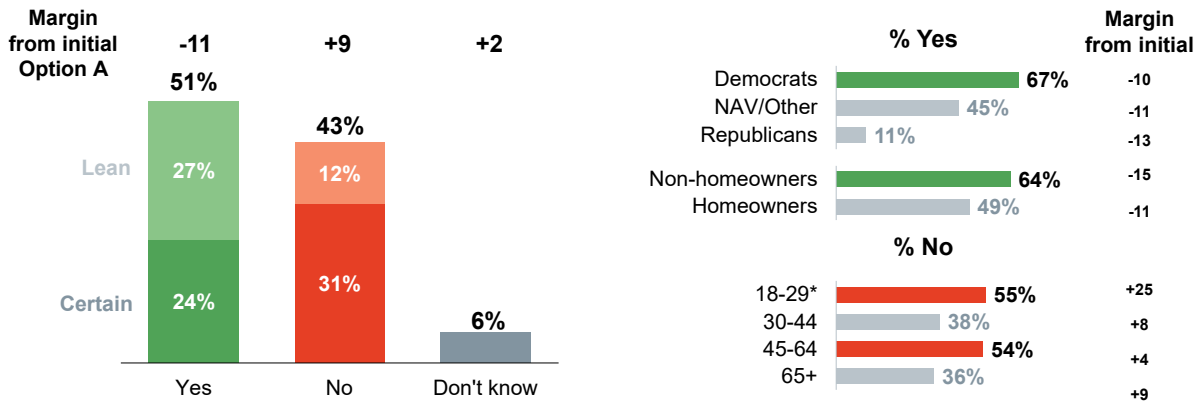
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16

16

About half of voters support Option B, still driven by Democrats and non-homeowners. But initial support for an increase is 11 points lower than Option A.

Option B: To maintain parks and recreation services, shall Eugene renew a five-year property tax of \$0.32 per \$1,000 assessed valuation beginning 2024?



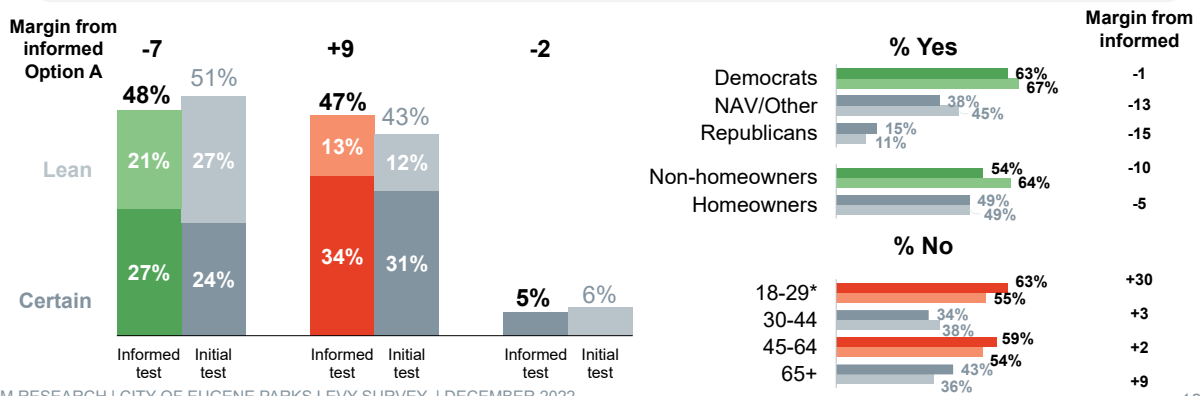
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17

17

Support decreases even further for Option B when voters get more information about the increased cost, especially among the youngest voters.

Option B would increase an existing parks and recreation levy. If passed, property tax rates would increase and the typical household would pay \$83 per year. However, due to rising costs, Eugene would only be able to maintain programs and services at their current levels.



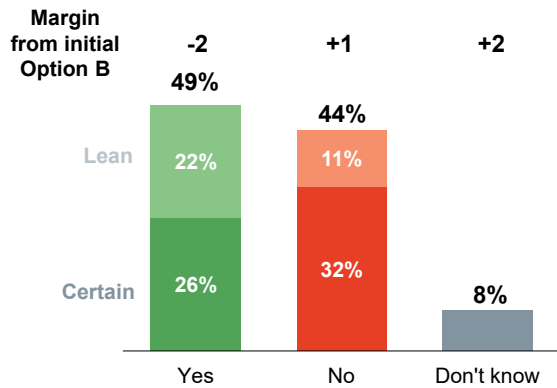
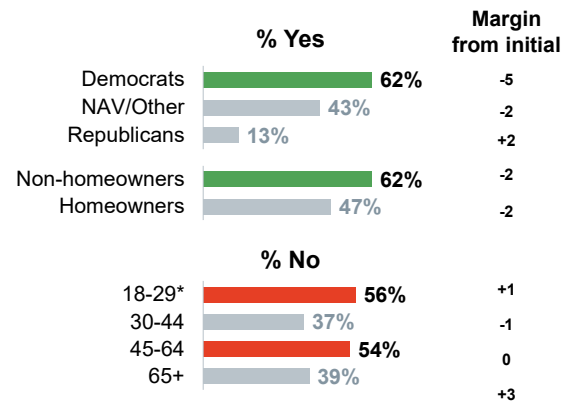
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Voter are split on whether to support increasing the levy to expand parks and recreation services.

Option C: To increase parks and recreation services, shall Eugene renew a five-year property tax of \$0.37 per \$1,000 assessed valuation beginning 2024?



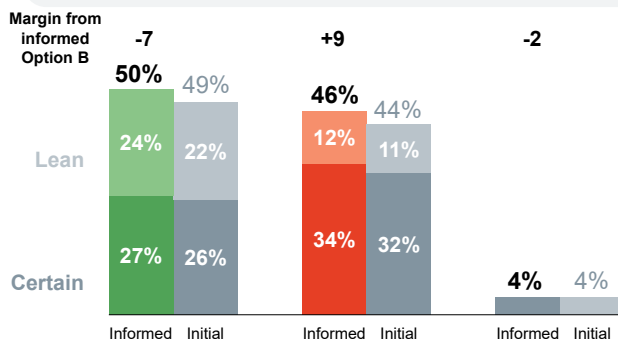
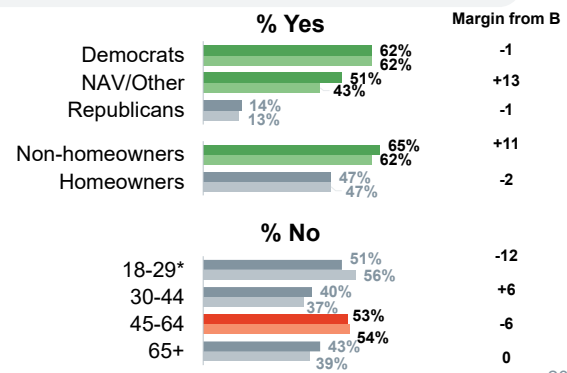
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19

Learning more about Option C does not raise support higher than 50%, but it does recover non-affiliated voter and non-homeowner support.

Option C would increase an existing parks and recreation levy. If passed, property tax rates would increase and the typical household would pay \$95 per year. This increase would allow Eugene to increase parks and recreation services focused on increasing safety and preventing illicit activities, including unsanctioned camping, graffiti, and litter.

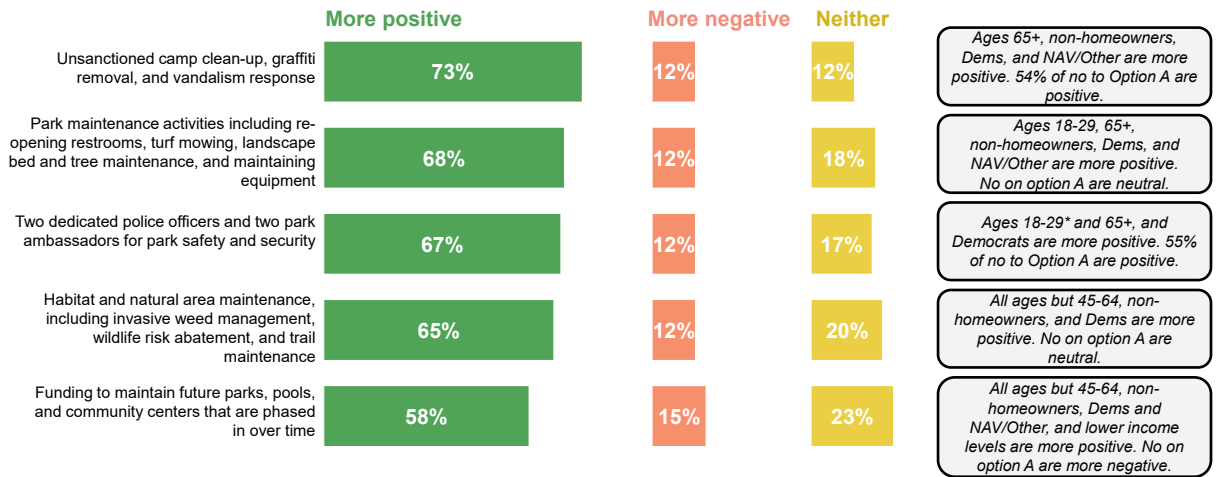


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Voters are more positive about Option A when provided with information about what services it will cover. Police and camp clean-up services fair well with the opposition.

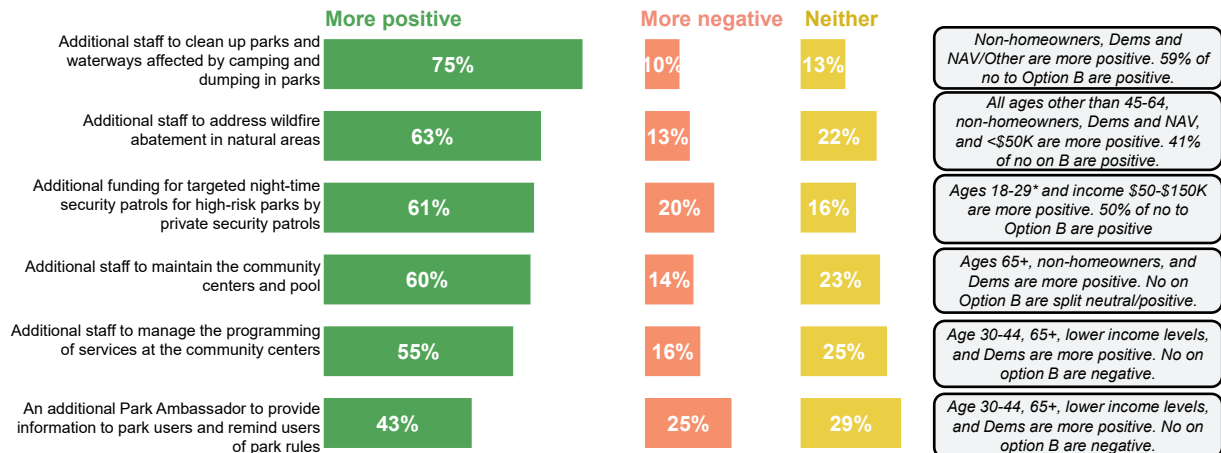


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In addition to Option A's services, voters (even opposers) are more positive about Option B knowing that additional staff will clean up waterways, parks, address wildfire abatement, fund nighttime safety, and maintain community centers and pools.

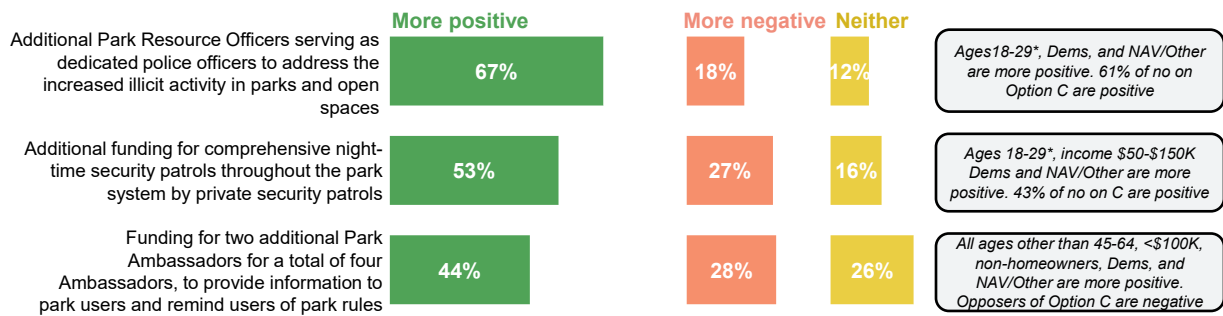


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22

22

In addition to Option B's services, voters are more positive about increasing the levy with additional Park Resource Officers to address illicit activity in parks and open spaces. Additional funding for nighttime patrols also performs well among support and opposition.



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23

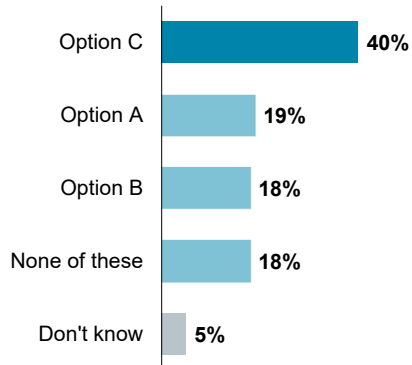
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Final test

24

Despite split support, Option C is the most preferred levy option across subgroups, except among Republicans and age 45-54, who prefer nothing.

After learning more information, which ballot measure option do you prefer the City of Eugene move forward with?



Dem	NAV/ Other	Rep	Own Home	Rent/ Other	18-29*	30-44	45-64	65+
51%	40%	9%	39%	52%	61%	43%	27%	43%
13%	23%	27%	20%	15%	16%	16%	18%	19%
22%	13%	12%	19%	16%	12%	19%	16%	19%
10%	21%	44%	19%	10%	9%	19%	32%	13%
5%	3%	8%	4%	7%	3%	4%	6%	5%

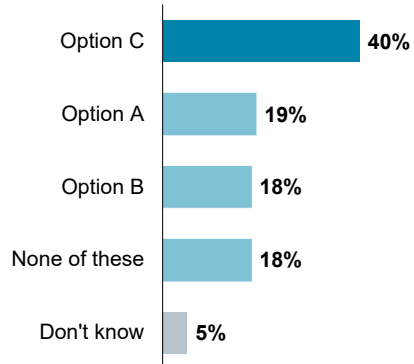
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25

25

Option C is preferred among supporters of all levy options as well.

After learning more information, which ballot measure option do you prefer the City of Eugene move forward with?



Yes on Option A	Yes on Option B	Yes on Option C
57%	60%	64%
12%	10%	10%
26%	25%	23%
0%	0%	0%
4%	4%	3%

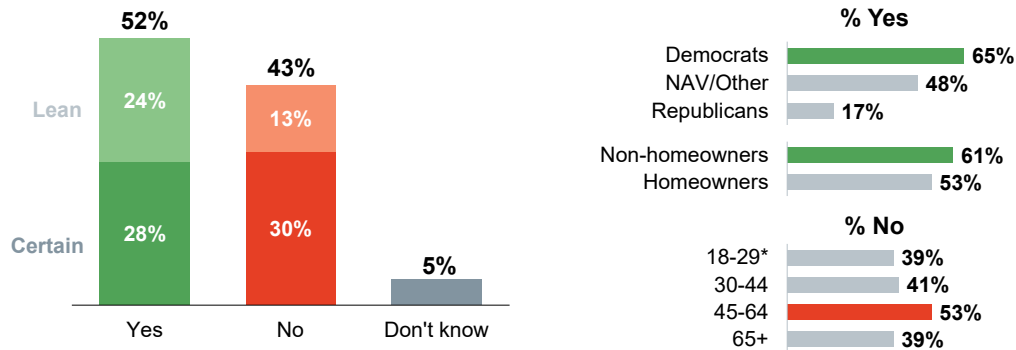
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Support for an additional property tax to ensure the maintenance of parks continues to be split, but has support from key subgroups.

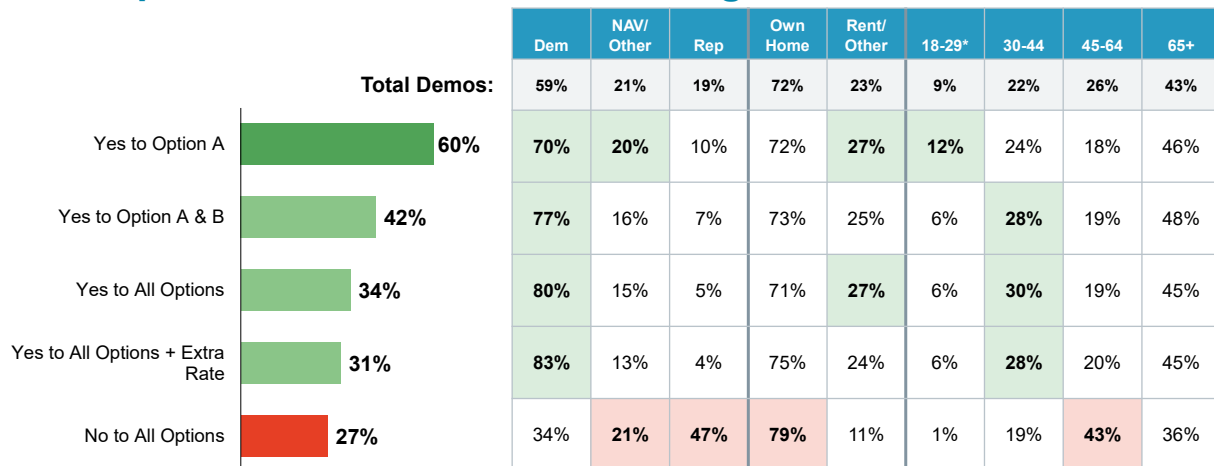
Recent budget reports to the City of Eugene show that there may be an unexpected budget shortfall in the City's General Fund in the next few years. If this happened, would you support or oppose paying an additional \$23 in your property taxes to ensure that parks and recreation services are maintained? This would be in addition to the property tax options previously discussed.



27

27

Democrats, ages 30-44, and non-homeowners are supportive of the highest levels of options. NAV/Other are split between A and none, 18-29 favor A, and Republicans, homeowners, and ages 45-64 favor none.



*See notes for subgroup analysis

28

28



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