



Hybrid Email-to-Web & Telephone Survey of City of Oakland Voters **Executive Summary**



September 2017

Methodology

- ▶ Hybrid email-to-web and telephone survey of Likely November 2018 voters in the City of Oakland
- ▶ Survey conducted September 20-25, 2017
- ▶ Interviews conducted in English, Spanish and Chinese
- ▶ 735 total interviews; overall margin of error ± 4.0 percentage points
 - Web - 435 interviews
 - Phone - 300 interviews
- ▶ 356 interviews among likely June 2018 voters; margin of error ± 5.7 percentage points
- ▶ Where applicable, results compared with a previous phone survey conducted February 2016 (n=400)

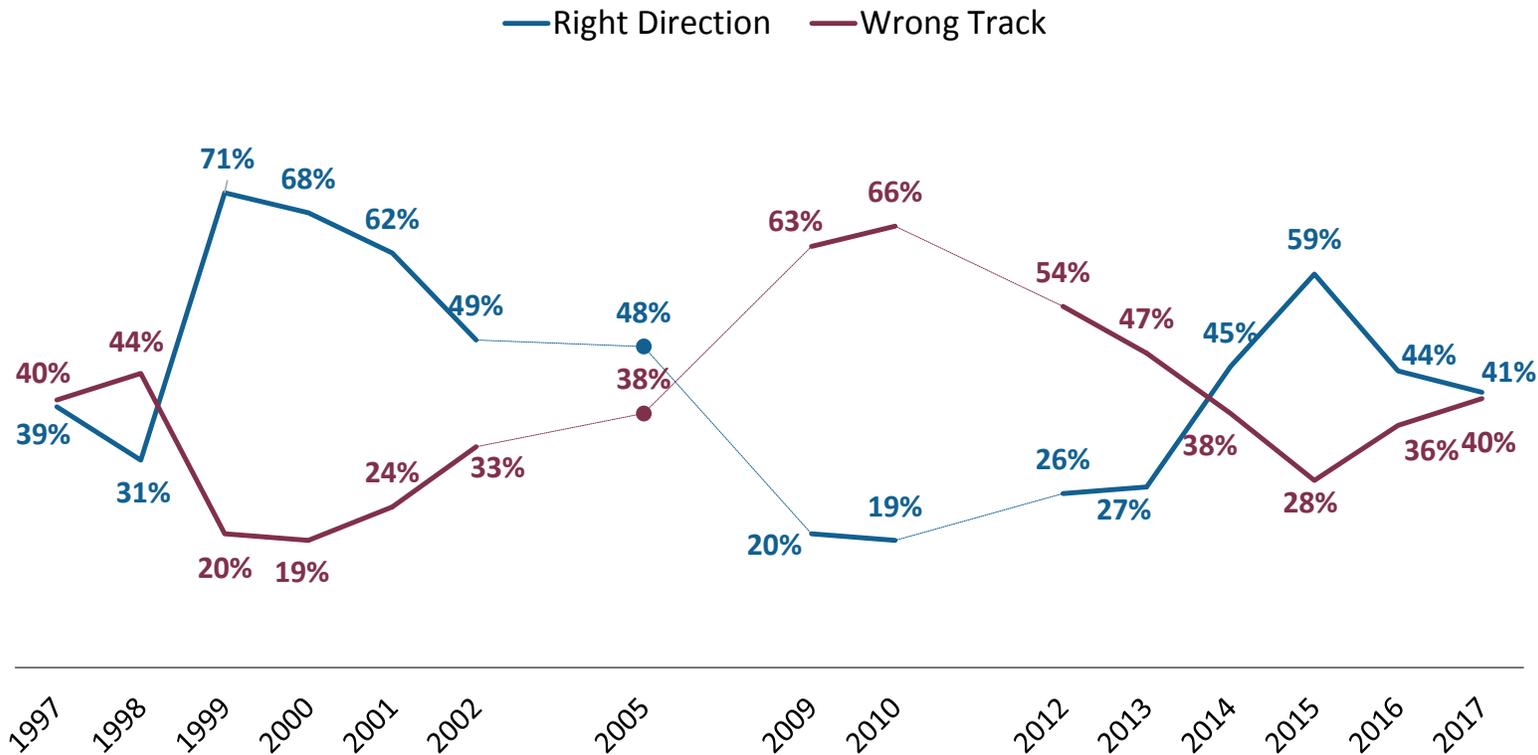
Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%

Key Findings

- ▶ Oakland voters are invested in the future of the City's public libraries.
 - The vast majority of Oakland voters have visited an Oakland public library in the last year.
 - Voters approve of the job the Oakland Public Library is doing.
 - More than two-thirds of voters see a need for additional funding for the Oakland Public Library.
- ▶ Voters are willing to tax themselves to improve and maintain library services: support for a potential parcel tax measure is well above the two-thirds threshold needed for passage.
- ▶ Voters prioritize programs that future funding could help pay for, including library services for children and teens, and preventing library closures.

Direction of Oakland

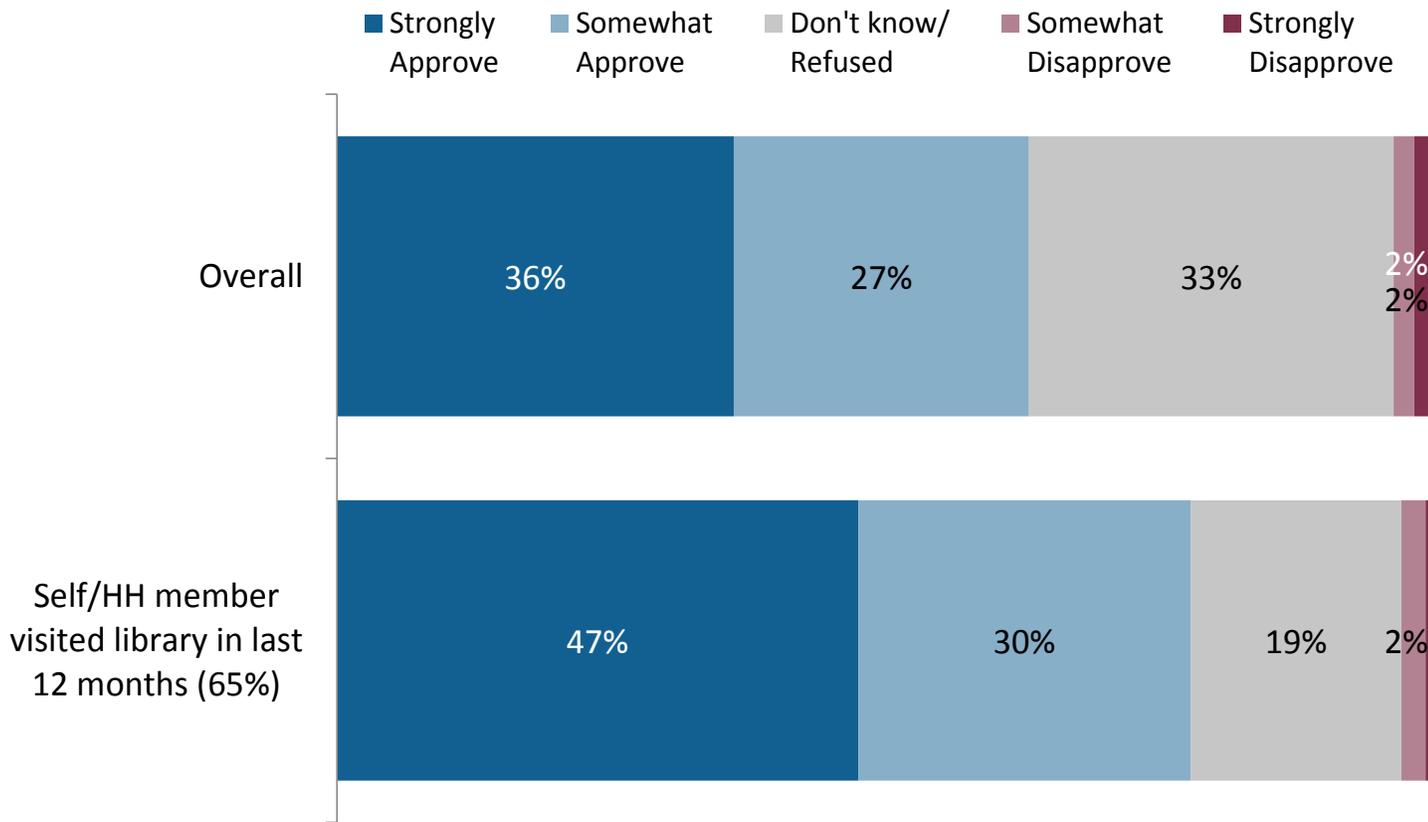
Voter optimism is on the decline.



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

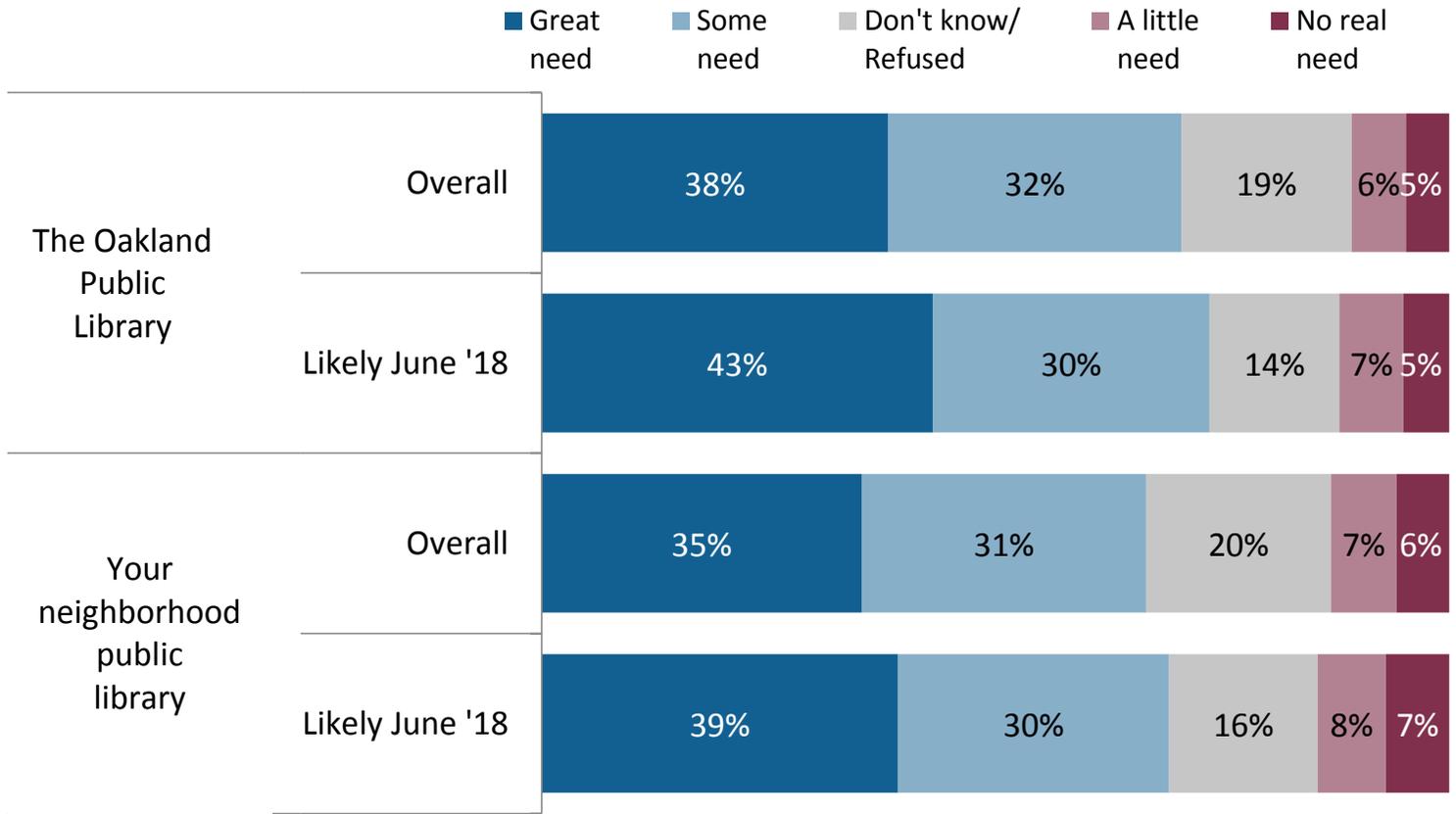
Job Rating by Personal Experience

Two-thirds have personal experience with the library in the last year, and their satisfaction is overwhelmingly positive.



Need for Funding

Oakland voters are aware that the libraries need more money; they will not have to be educated about the issue.

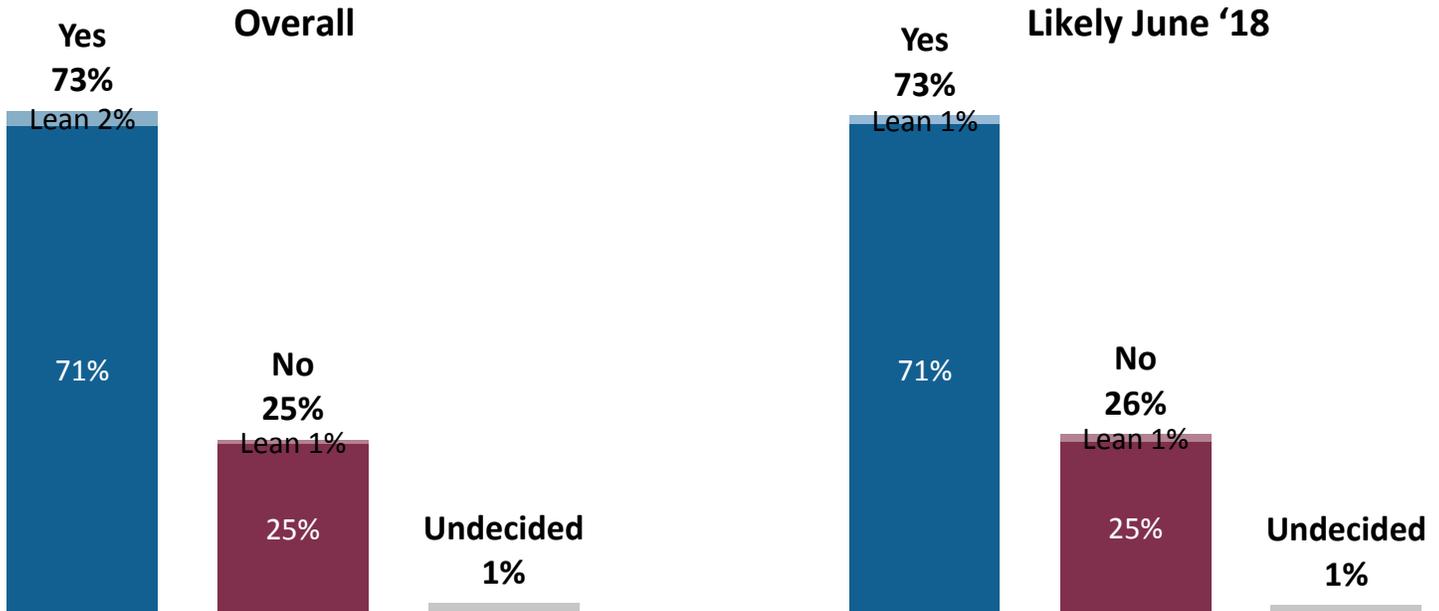


Q6-7. For each of the following, please tell me if you think it has a great need for additional funding, some need, a little need, or no real need for additional funding.

Initial Support

Initial support for a \$75 parcel tax is above the two-thirds threshold required for passage.

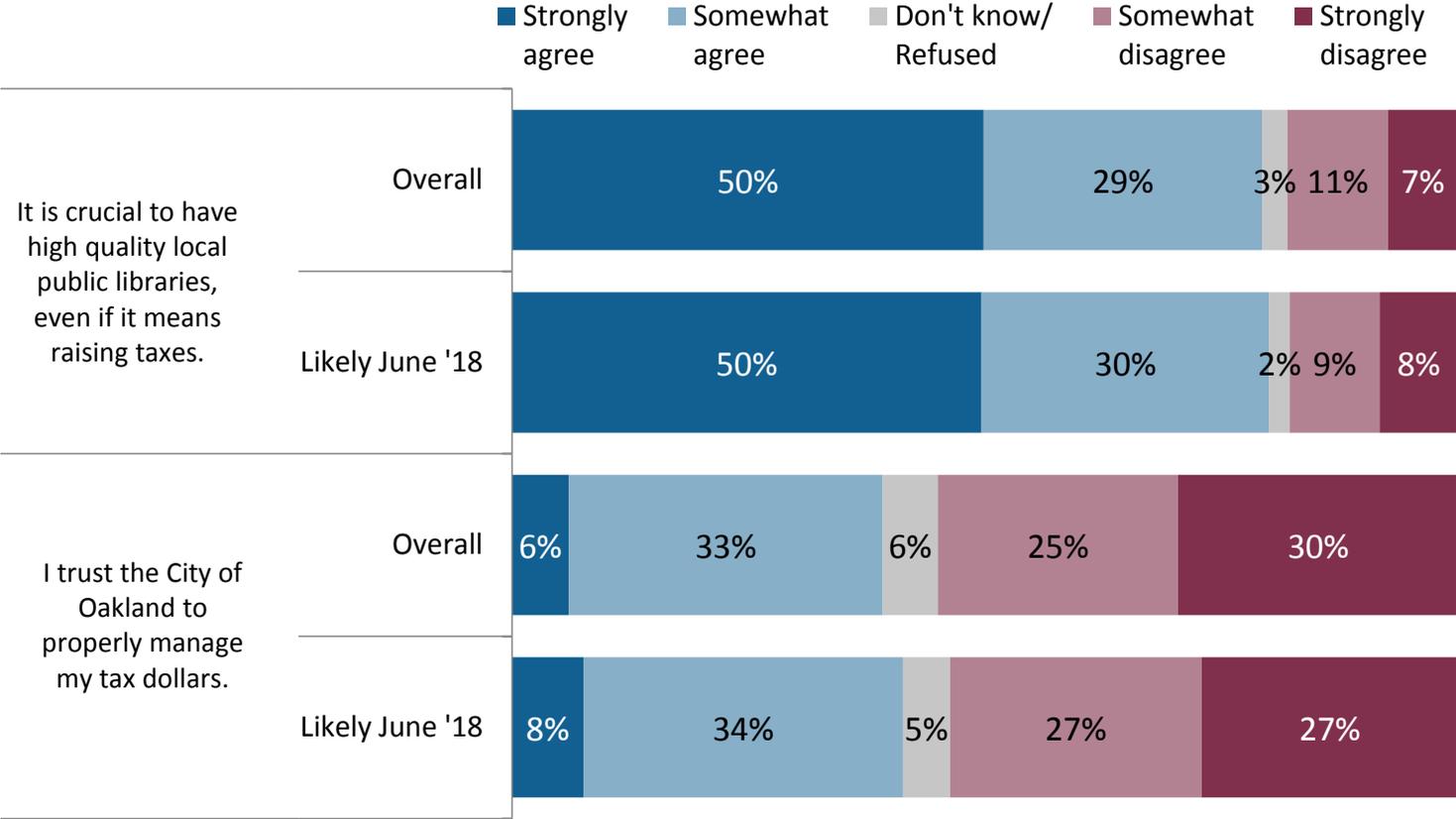
“To maintain and improve library services throughout Oakland, including: Providing safe places for children and teens after school; Providing literacy services for families and adults; Increasing library resources for local schools; Preventing library closures; Maintaining up-to-date books and computers to increase technology access; Keeping libraries safe and clean; shall the City of Oakland establish a \$75 per parcel tax for 20 years, providing about \$10,000,000 annually, subject to independent annual audits and citizens’ oversight?”



Q8. Now I'm going to read you a measure that may be on a future ballot in Oakland. The measure reads:

Attitudes Toward Taxes

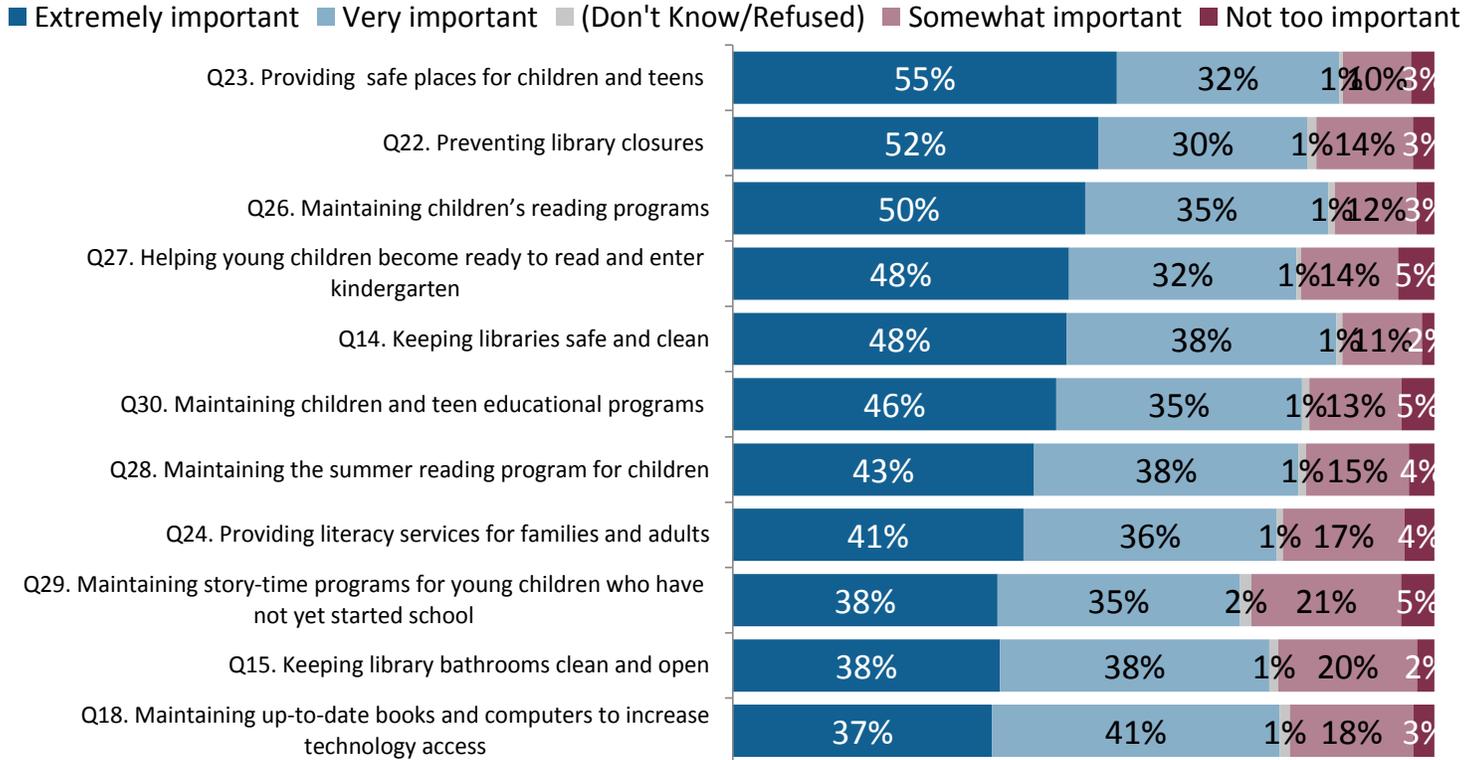
Half of voters strongly agree that it's crucial to have quality local libraries, even if it means raising taxes. However, trust in the City's tax dollar management is somewhat weak.



Q10-Q12. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

Measure Components

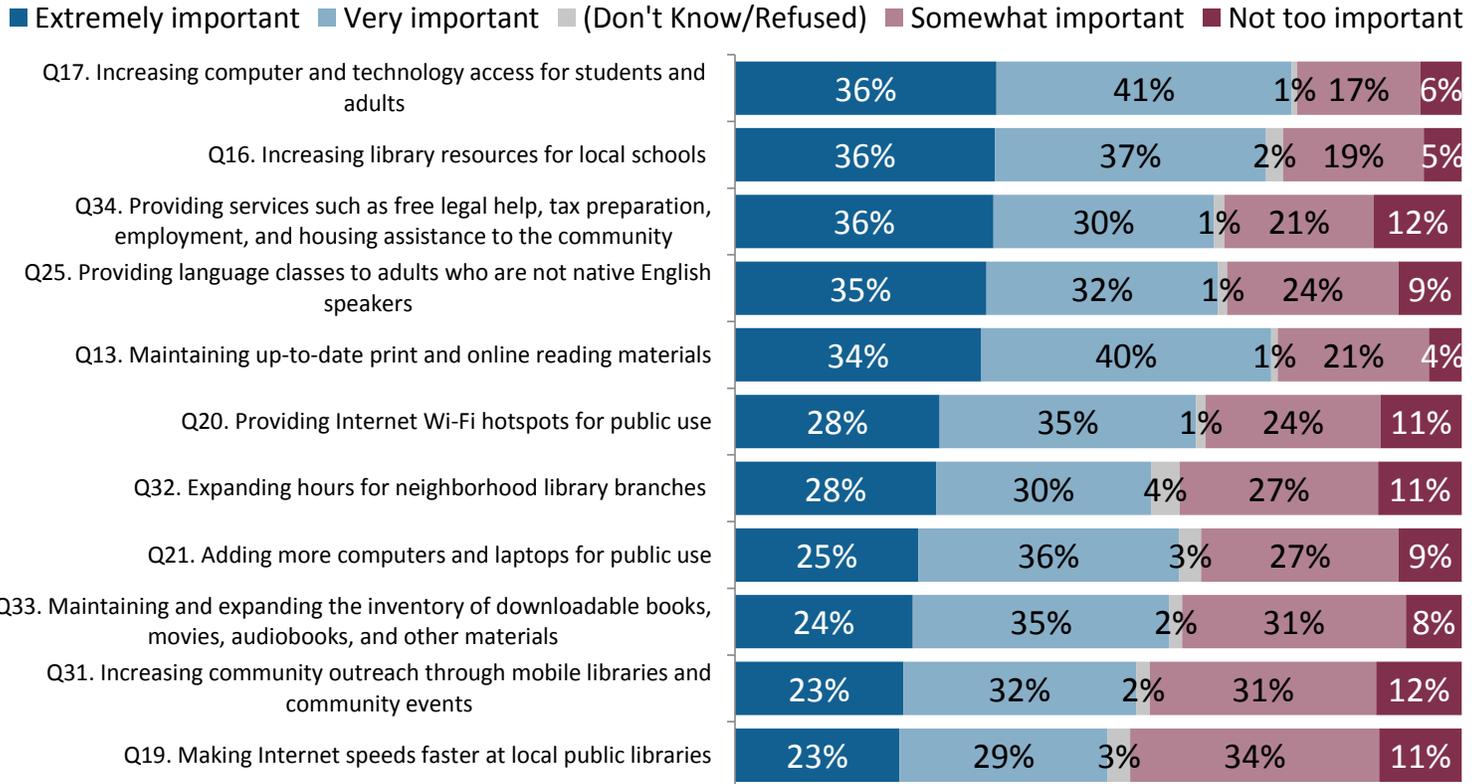
Keeping libraries open, safe and clean, and providing programs for children and youth resonate strongly with voters.



Q13-Q34. I'm going to read you a list of items that could be included in the Oakland Public Library parcel tax measure. After each one, please tell me if that item is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important to you.

Measure Components (Cont'd)

Specific projects and programs are all positive, but do not receive the same intensity as the broader goals.



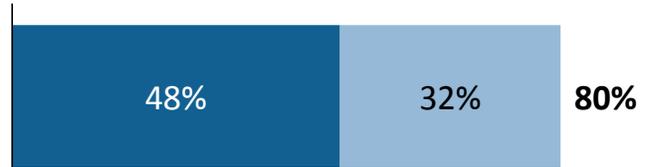
Q13-Q34. I'm going to read you a list of items that could be included in the Oakland Public Library parcel tax measure. After each one, please tell me if that item is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important to you.

Support Messaging

Messaging about expanded hours, improved resources and providing safe places for youth resonate widely.

■ Very convincing ■ Somewhat convincing **Total convincing**

Q35. Oakland’s libraries provide a safe place for children and teens to do their homework and participate in afterschool programs. This measure helps keep kids and teens off the street and protects them from gangs and drugs.



Q38. Oakland’s neighborhood branch libraries are currently closed two days a week and have limited evening hours. This measure would expand library hours to allow students, children, and working families to have access to library services throughout the week.



Q37. Many of Oakland’s public schools lost their libraries and librarians after years of severe budget cuts. This measure will provide additional library resources dedicated to supporting children and teens in our local schools.



Q42. Oakland’s libraries are valuable community resources that help Oakland residents find jobs, learn how to open small businesses, get free legal and tax advice, learn about housing assistance, borrow tools for home improvements and repairs, enroll in health insurance, and learn other important life skills.

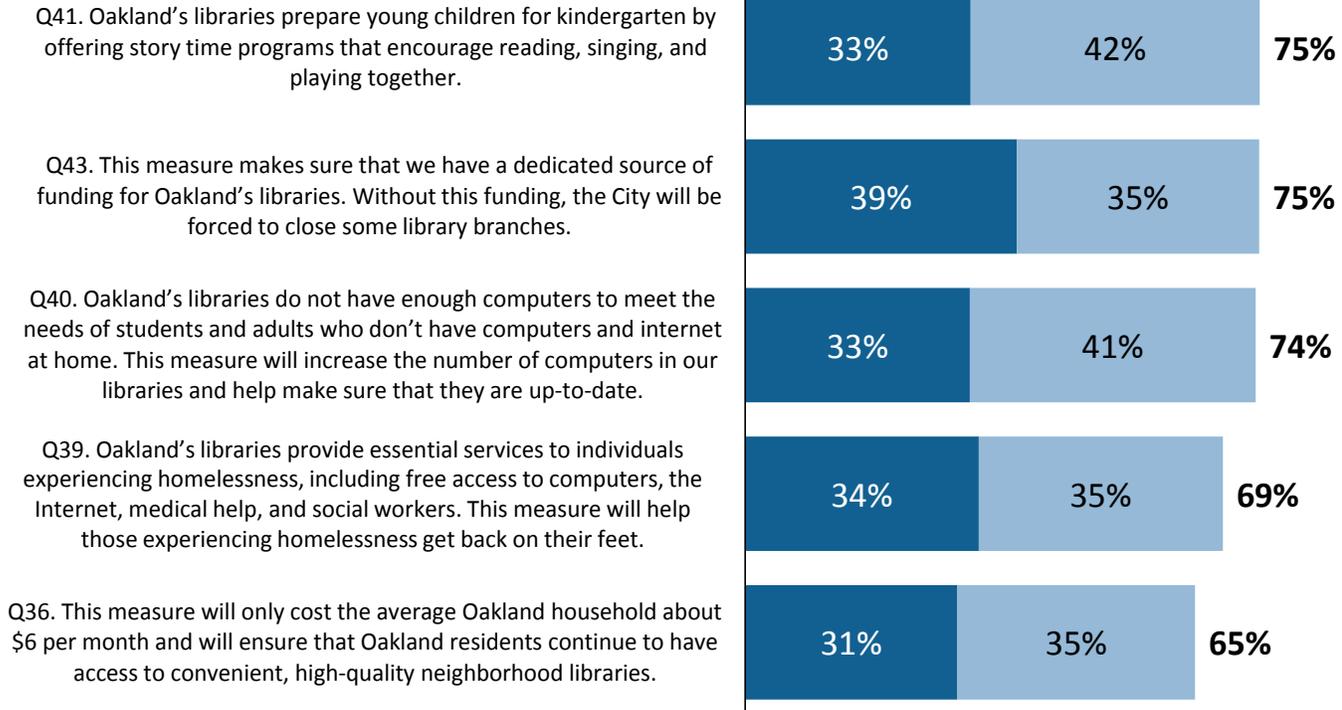


Q35-Q43. Next I’d like to read you statements from people who support an Oakland Public Library parcel tax measure. After each one, please tell me how convincing that statement is as a reason to vote FOR the measure – very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing, or not at all convincing.

Support Messaging (Cont'd)

Even the cost of the tax is a positive for almost 2/3 of voters..

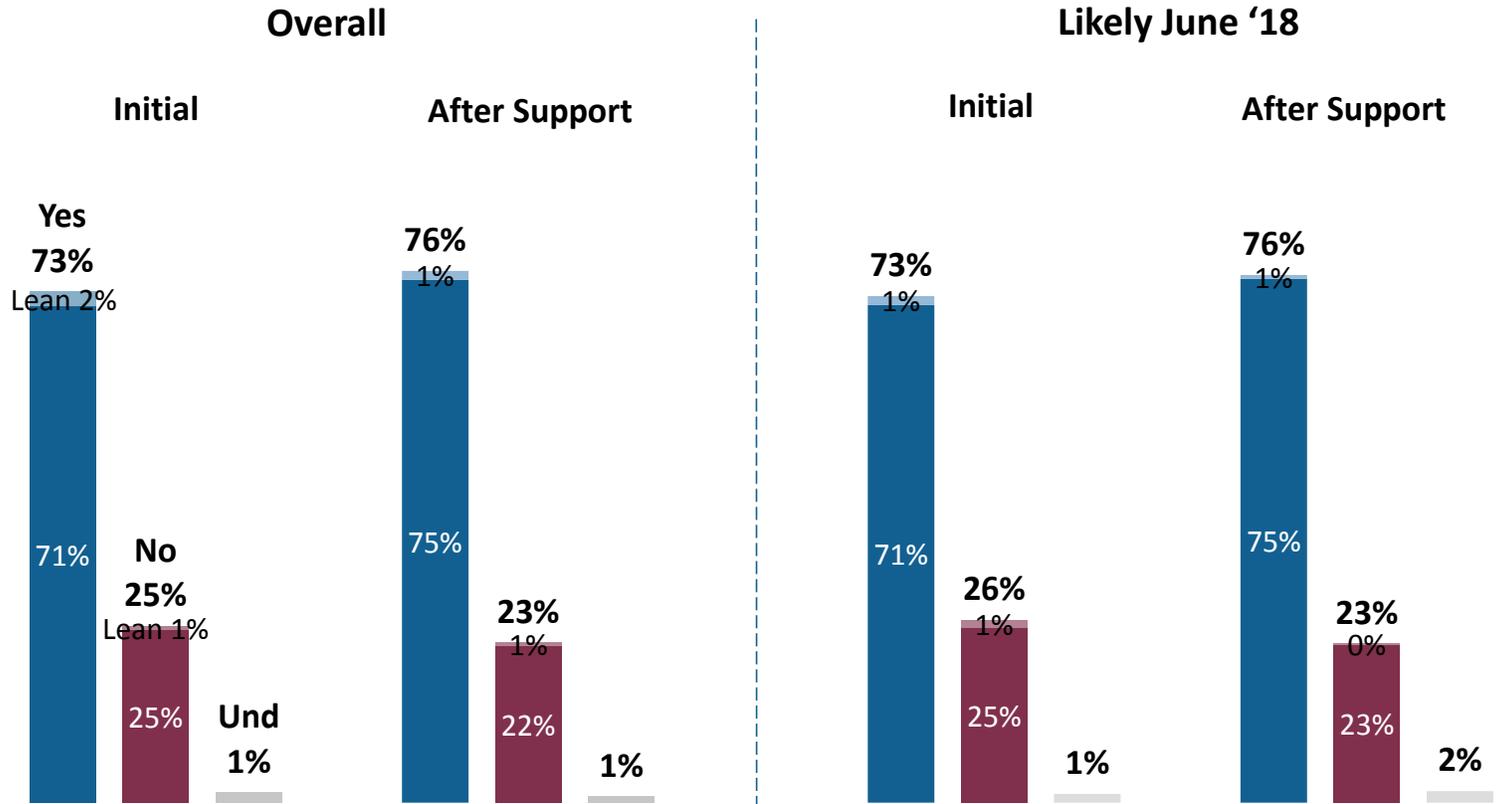
■ Very convincing ■ Somewhat convincing **Total convincing**



Q35-Q43. Next I'd like to read you statements from people who support an Oakland Public Library parcel tax measure. After each one, please tell me how convincing that statement is as a reason to vote FOR the measure – very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing, or not at all convincing.

Measure Support After Support Messaging

There is a slight increase in support after voters learn more about the benefits of the measure.



Opposition Messaging

Potential opposition messages about Measure Q, reducing waste in the City’s budget, and the high cost of living are very convincing to about a third of likely voters.

■ Very convincing ■ Somewhat convincing **Total convincing**

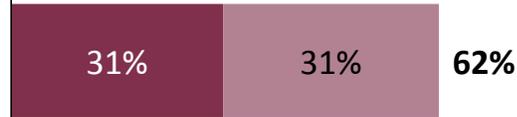
Q48. The Oakland Public Library is already collecting taxpayer money from an existing parcel tax from Measure Q, but they haven’t made all of the improvements that they promised us. We just can’t trust the City of Oakland to properly manage our tax dollars and shouldn’t pass a new parcel tax.



Q47. Instead of asking taxpayers for more money, politicians should find more funding for libraries in the City’s budget by reducing waste and cutting excessive pay and benefits.



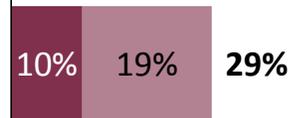
Q46. Many hard-working Oakland families are struggling to make ends meet as housing prices and the cost of living keeps going up. We simply cannot afford any more taxes.



Q45. This measure misses the mark. We are raising taxes for libraries when Oakland children and families are homeless and sleeping in tents across the City. We need to address much more important priorities.



Q49. The simple truth is that people are just not using libraries anymore since everything is available on the internet. We should just close some of Oakland’s 18 library branches instead of raising taxes for something we just don’t need.

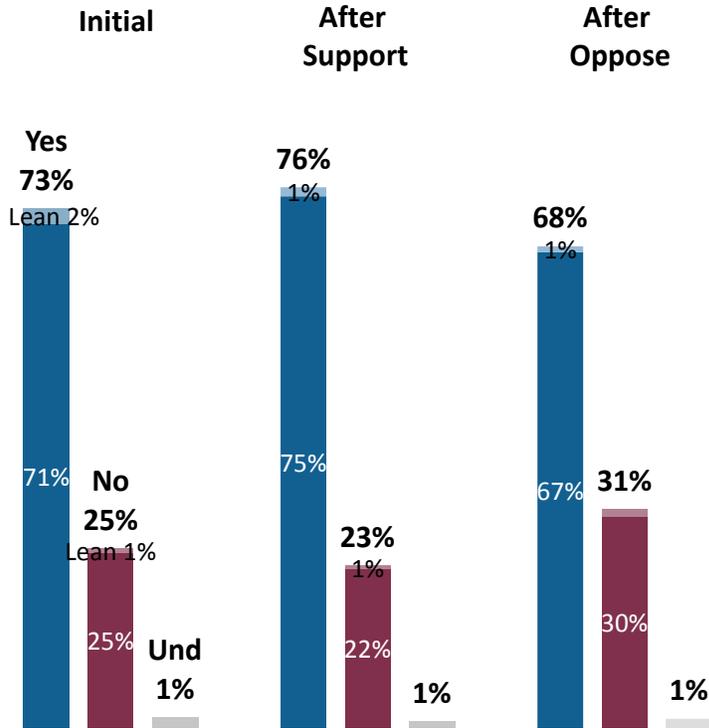


Q45-Q49. Next I’d like to read you statements from people who oppose the Oakland Public Library parcel tax measure. After each one, please tell me how convincing that statement is as a reason to vote AGAINST the measure – very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing, or not at all convincing.

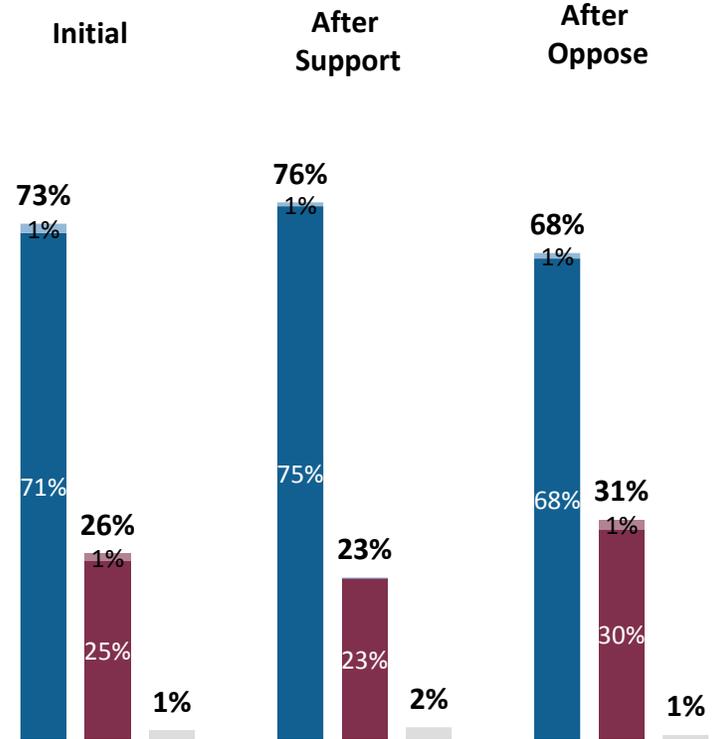
Measure Support After Opposition Messaging

A significant, vocal opposition effort does diminish support, although it stays just above the two-thirds threshold.

Overall



Likely June '18



Q50. Given everything you've heard, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that would establish a \$75 parcel tax to fund Oakland libraries?

Conclusions

- ▶ Oakland voters are very supportive of the libraries, and recognize the need for more funding.
- ▶ Support for a parcel tax is consistently above the two thirds threshold.
- ▶ Without vocal opposition, a measure should be well positioned for success.
- ▶ Data suggests that a potential measure would be feasible in either June 2018 or November 2018, but the challenge of a potentially crowded ballot in November is worth considering.

Contact



Ruth Bernstein

Ruth@EMCresearch.com
510.550.8922

Sara LaBatt

Sara@EMCresearch.com
510.550.8924

Emily Kirby Goodman

Emily@EMCresearch.com
510.550.8932

Katherine Langer

Katherine@EMCresearch.com
510.550.8927



Tom Clifford

tom@cliffordmoss.com
510.907.3195

Peter Myers

peter@cliffordmoss.com
510.907.3195

