

PARCEL TAX FEASIBILITY SURVEY

CONDUCTED FOR THE
PIEDMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL
DISTRICT
PRESENTED BY
TIMOTHY McLARNEY PH.D.

4/19/2019





PURPOSE OF STUDY

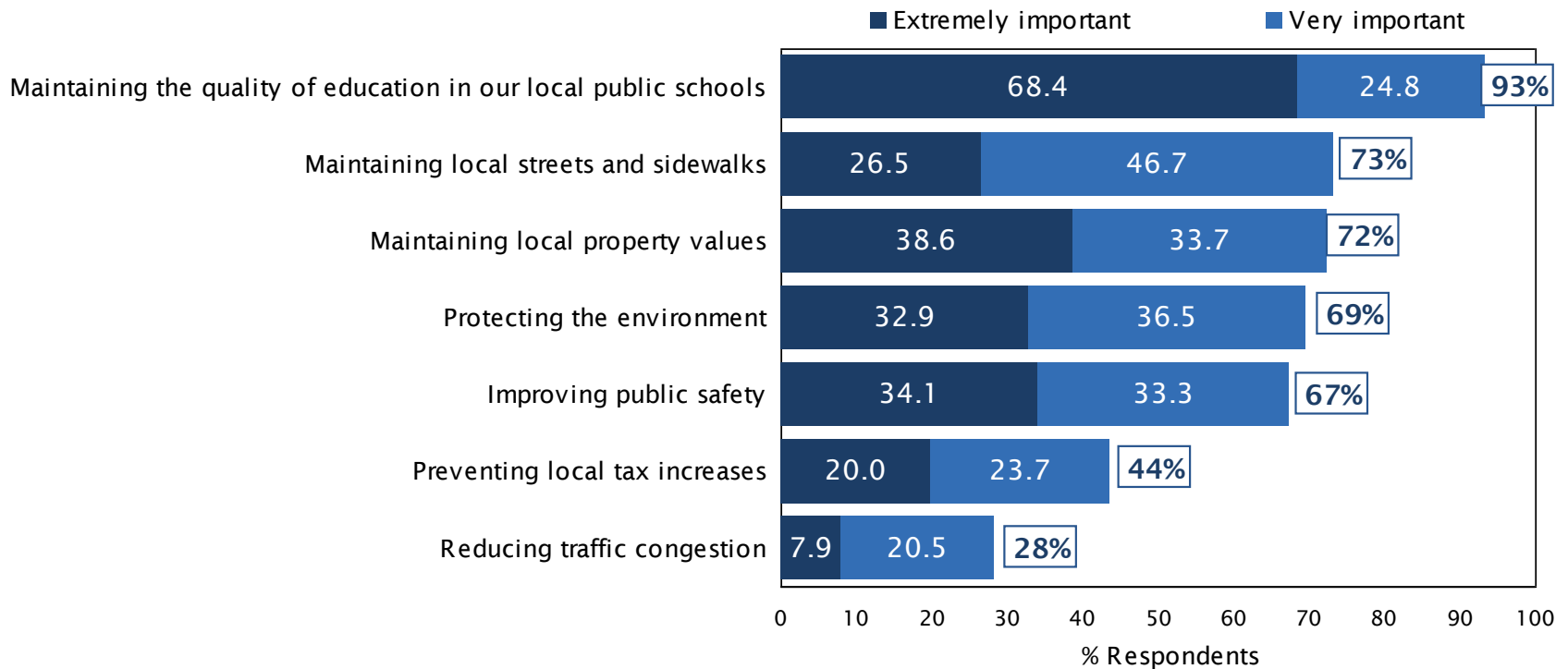
- Identify whether a parcel tax to provide additional funding for local schools is feasible
- Identify how to create a measure consistent with community priorities
- Gather information needed for communications & outreach



METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

- Conducted March 6th to March 13th, 2019
- Random Sample: 305 District voters likely to participate in November 2020 election
- Mixed-Method approach
 - Recruited via phone and email
 - Data collection via phone and online
 - 18-minute average interview length
- Split sample to test flat-rate vs. square footage
- Overall margin of error is $\pm 5.5\%$

IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES





INITIAL BALLOT TEST: FLAT RATE

In order to:

- Protect the quality of education in Piedmont schools
- Continue funding comprehensive programs in math, science, technology, engineering, English, music and arts
- Maintain smaller class sizes
- And attract and retain highly qualified teachers

Shall the Piedmont Unified School District measure to renew its expiring parcel tax at an annual rate of \$3,056 be approved for 7 years, providing 12 million dollars annually in dedicated funding for our schools, with independent citizen oversight and all money staying local?



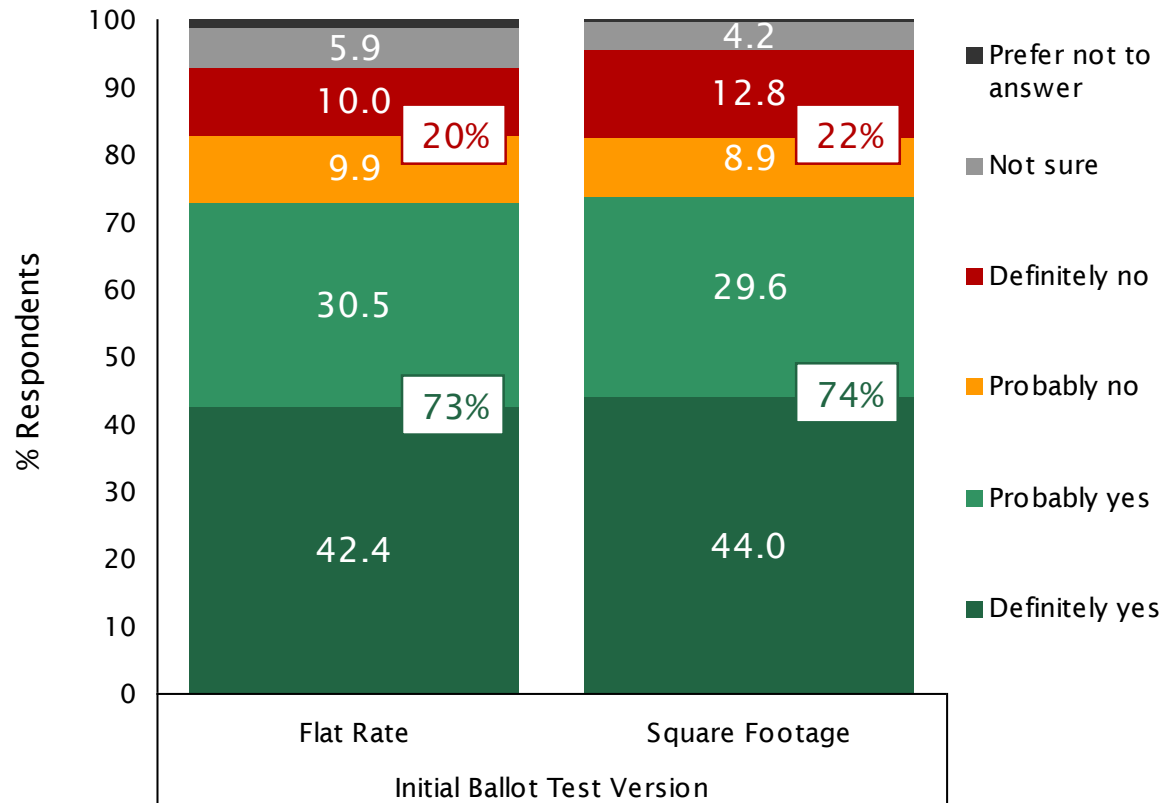
INITIAL BALLOT TEST: SQUARE FOOTAGE

In order to:

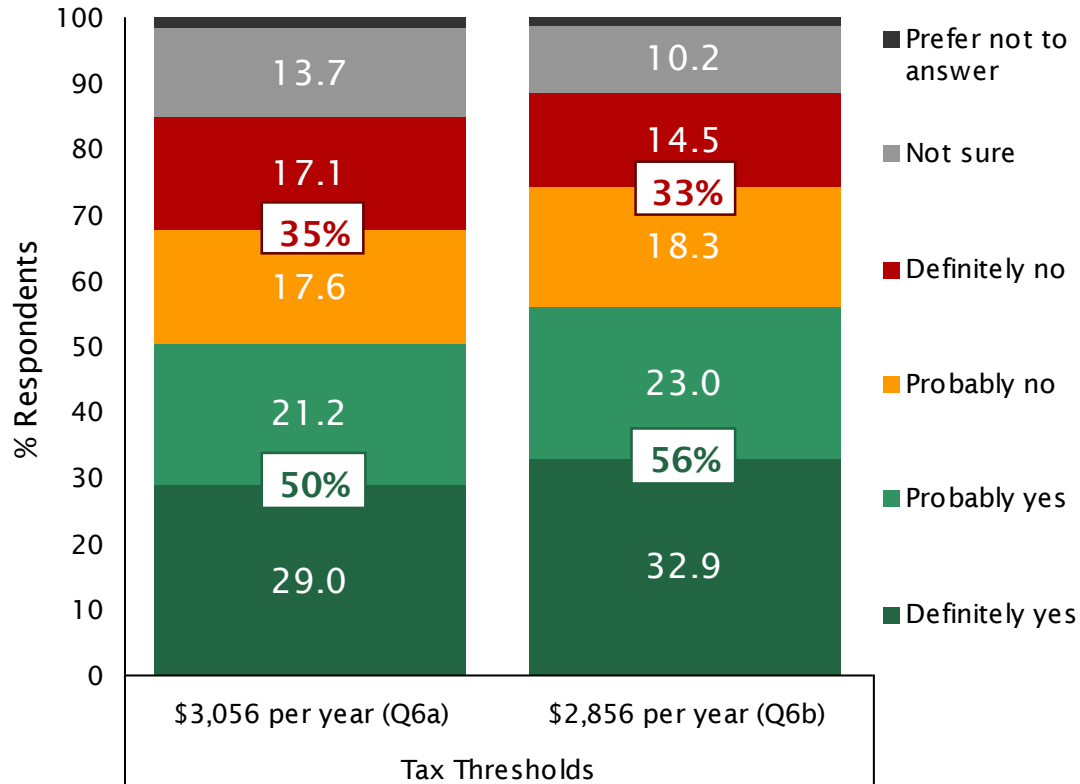
- Protect the quality of education in Piedmont schools
- Continue funding comprehensive programs in math, science, technology, engineering, English, music and arts
- Maintain smaller class sizes
- And attract and retain highly qualified teachers

Shall the Piedmont Unified School District measure to renew its expiring parcel tax at an annual rate of \$1.25 per square foot for taxable buildings be approved for 7 years, providing 12 million dollars annually in dedicated funding for our schools, with independent citizen oversight and all money staying local?

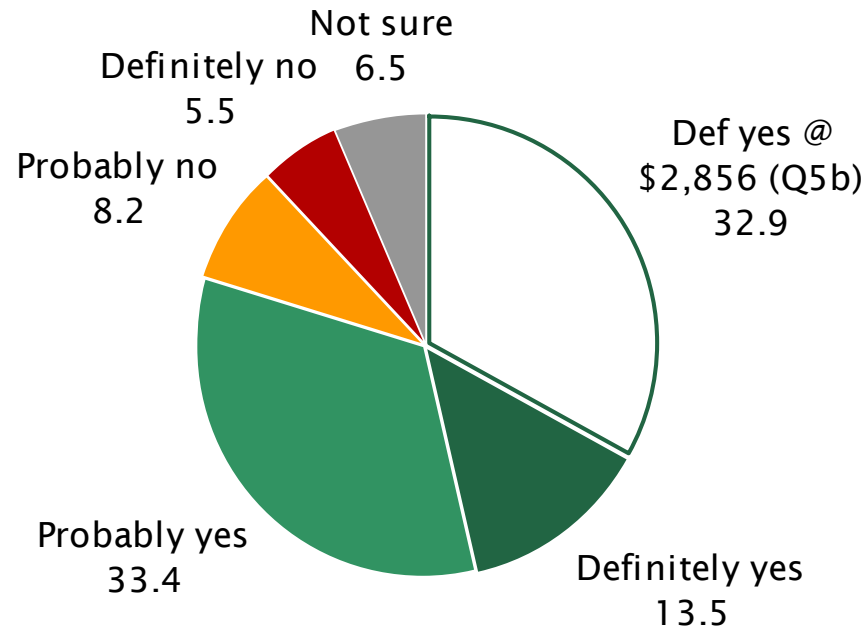
INITIAL BALLOT TESTS



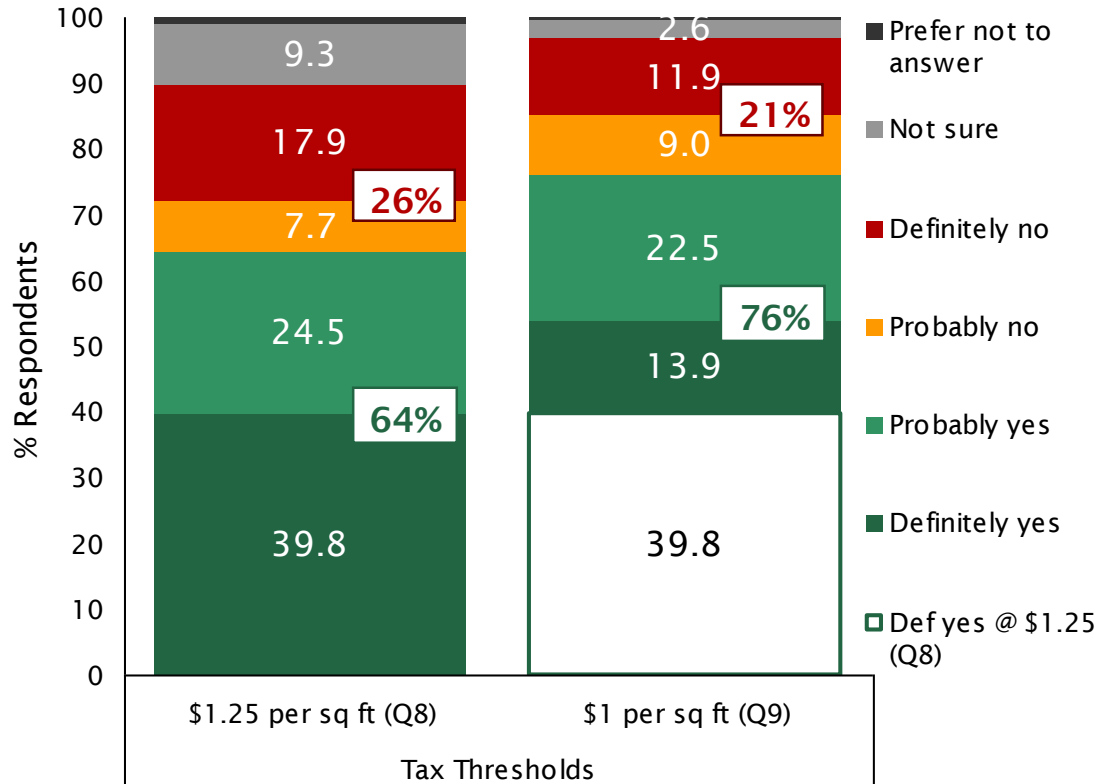
TAX THRESHOLD: FLAT RATE VERSION



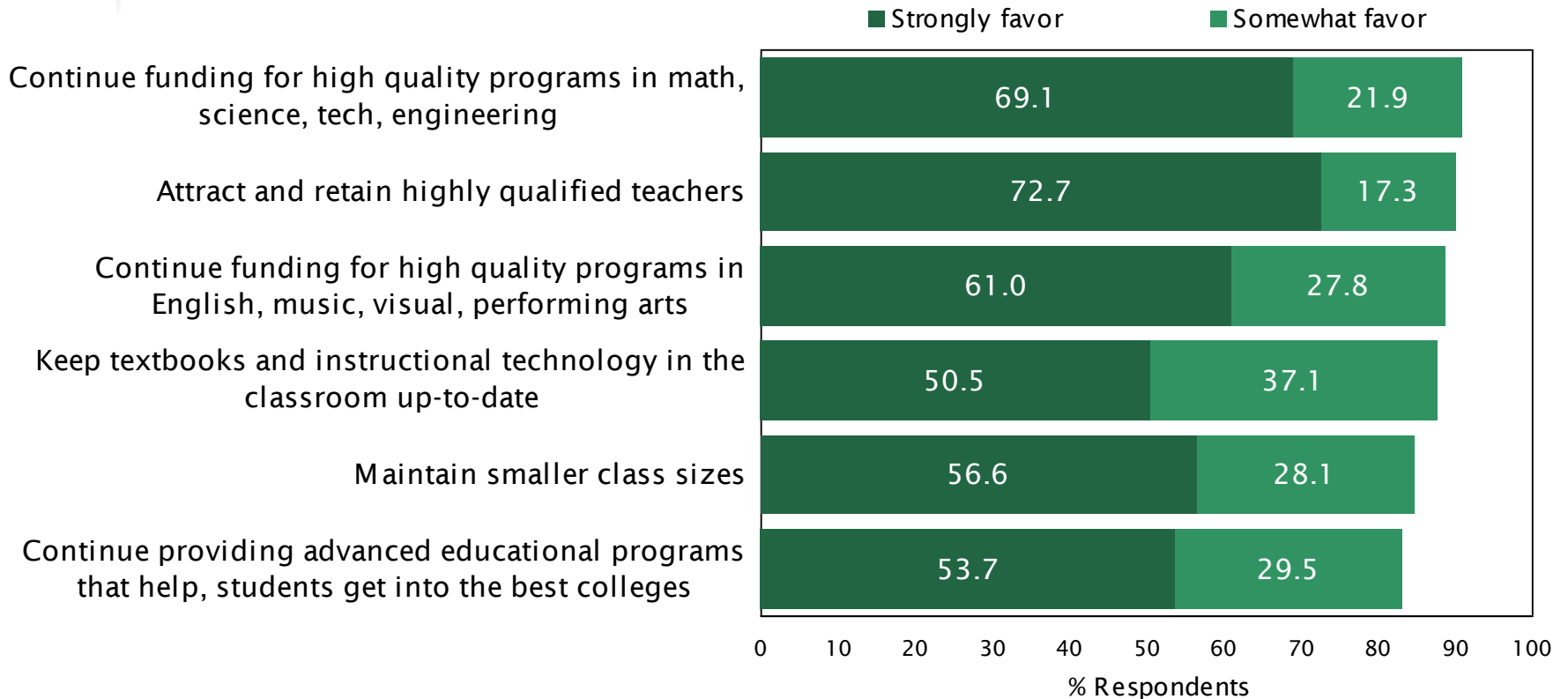
SUPPORT FOR EXTENSION – FLAT RATE \$2,656 PER YEAR FOR 7 YEARS



TAX THRESHOLD: SQUARE FOOTAGE



PROGRAMS & SERVICES



POSITIVE ARGUMENTS

Measure will protect quality of education in schools by renewing funding to attract, retain high quality teachers, keep class sizes small, provide high quality academic programs

For 30+ yrs, Piedmont schools have depended on this parcel tax; provides over 25% of budget; passing measure essential to maintaining quality of Piedmont schools

Local schools are among best in CA, but inadequate State funding is a growing problem; measure is essential to maintaining quality of outstanding local schools

If we want students to be prepared for success in college, careers, they need to have high quality courses in math, science, tech, arts; can't afford to lose these programs

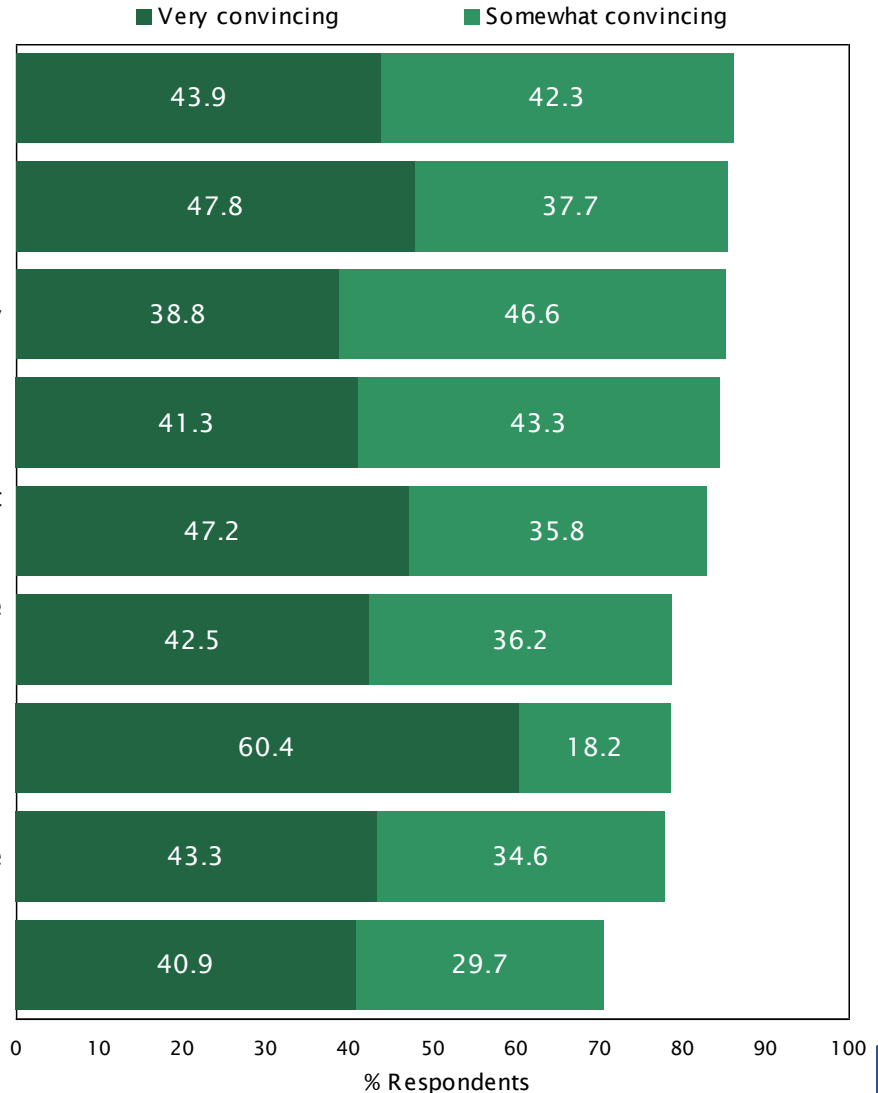
All money raised by measure will stay in Piedmont to support students; it cannot be taken away by State or used for other purposes

Even if you do not have school-age children, supporting measure is a wise investment; high quality of Piedmont schools helps to protect, improve local property values

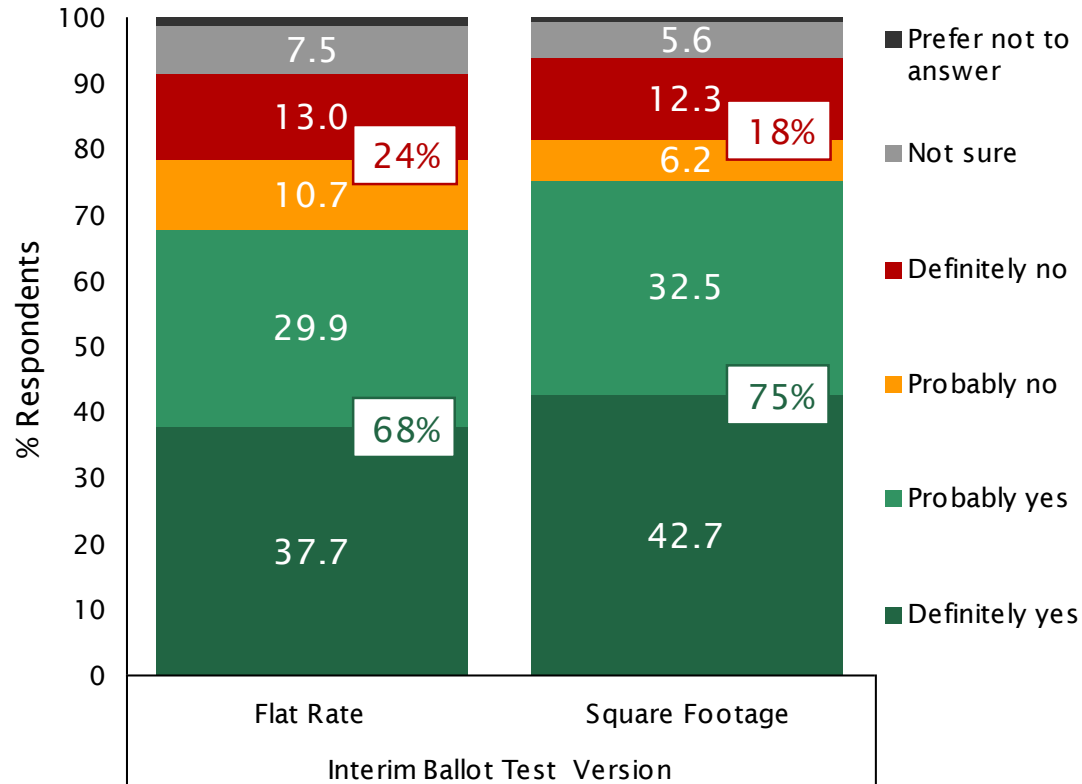
If parcel tax measure expires, schools would have to cut at least 90 teacher positions, eliminate academic programs, close school libraries, increase class sizes by 40%

CA provides less money per student for education than most states; Piedmont schools get less than other CA schools, have remained exceptional because of parcel tax

No money from measure will be used to pay for administrators' salaries; every penny will go into supporting classroom instruction



INTERIM BALLOT TESTS



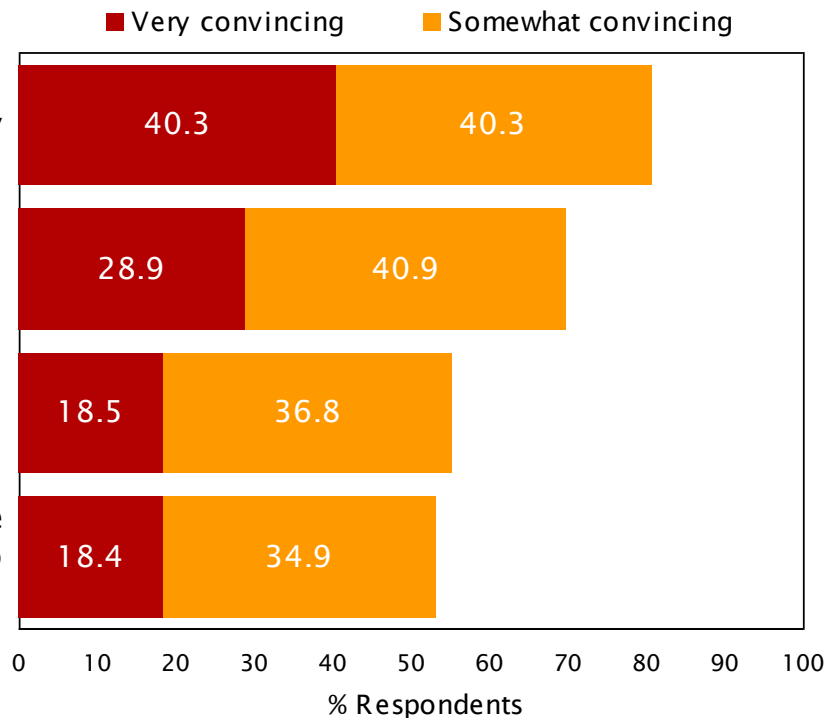
NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

Property owners already pay more than \$2,500 to District for existing parcel tax, amount goes up every yr; voters approved 30-year, \$66M bond in 2016

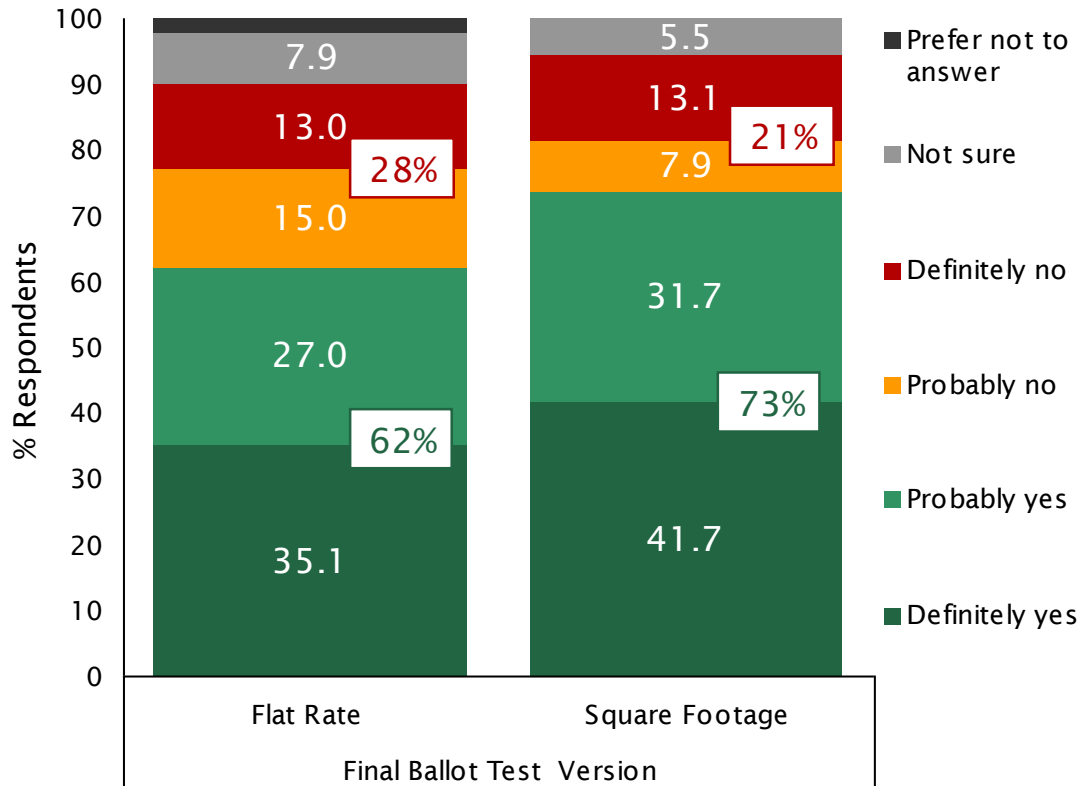
We already have highest school parcel tax in entire State of CA; now District wants more money? That's not fair to taxpayers

People are having a hard time making ends meet with high cost of living, especially seniors, those on fixed-incomes; now is NOT the time to be raising taxes

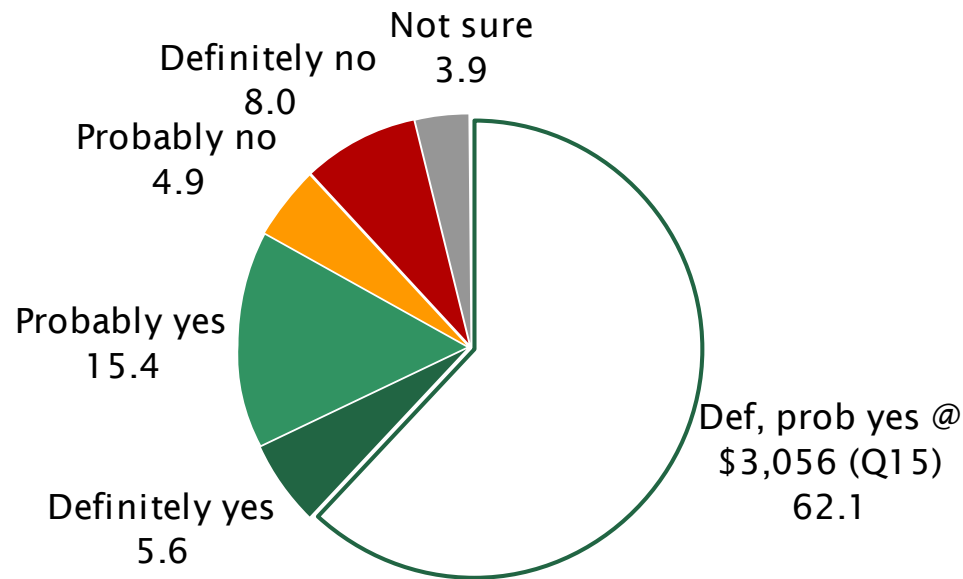
District needs to live within its means, just like everyone else; if they cut waste, did a better job budgeting, they would not have to raise taxes



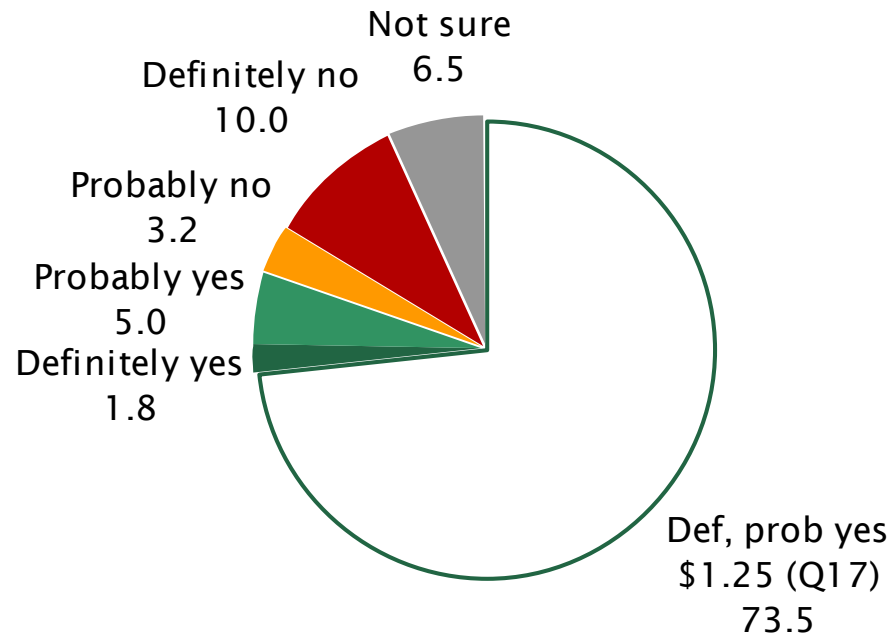
FINAL BALLOT TESTS



FINAL BALLOT TEST: SUPPORT FOR FLAT RATE VERSION AT \$2,656 EXTENSION



FINAL BALLOT TEST: SUPPORT FOR SQUARE FOOTAGE VERSION AT \$1.00





KEY CONCLUSIONS

Is a parcel tax measure in feasible? **Yes.**

- Voters perceive that maintaining the quality of education in Piedmont schools is the most important issues facing the community by a large margin
- Solid natural support for a measure (73%/74%)
- Popular programs and services
- Strong positive arguments

Additional observations:

- Support is similar across November '19, March '20, and November '20 electorates
- More tax rate sensitivity for flat rate / less tax rate sensitivity for square footage version

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