Methodology

Impact Research conducted a survey with N=600 likely 2026 general election voters in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counites in California.

Interviews were collected via text-to-web and were conducted in English and Spanish.
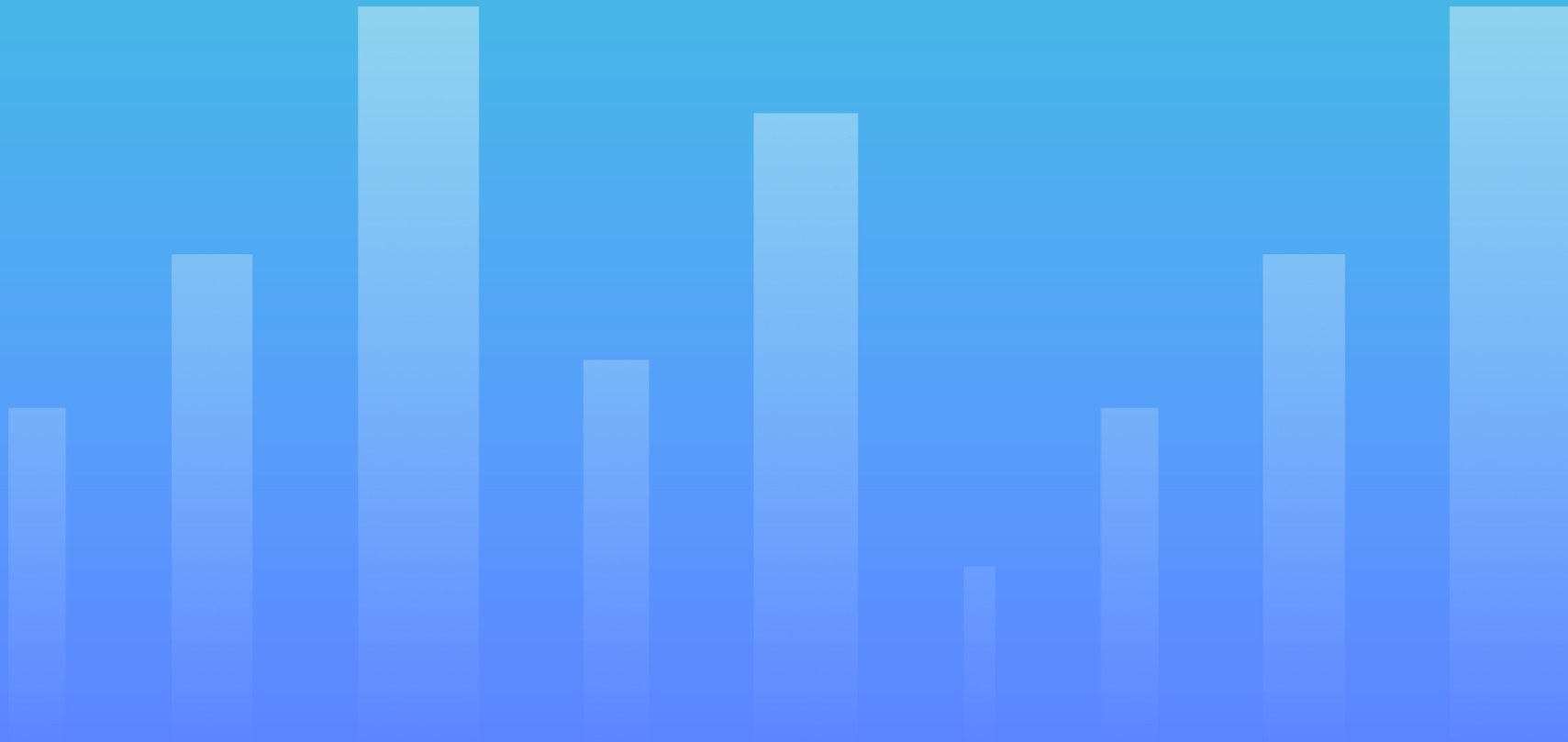
Interviews were conducted between January 4-10, 2024.

The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 4.0 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

IMPACT RESEARCH

Key Findings and Recommendations

Key Findings and Recommendations regarding support for a Bay Area Transportation ballot measure

➢ **The initiative is popular.** 57% support it, meeting the threshold we like to see for ballot measure viability. Encouragingly, intense support also exceeds intense opposition by 10 points.

➢ **Our messaging must address both the desire for transportation improvements and assuage concerns about government waste and bureaucracy.** Dissatisfaction with public transit and roads creates an opening for us, while distrust in government creates an obstacle.

➢ **Our most effective message focuses on how the measure will both improve transportation *and* reduce bureaucracy.** Messages that focused only on improvements or accountability measures were less effective.

➢ **Repairing potholes, coordinating schedules, simplifying pricing, improving safety, and independent spending audits are the most popular components of the initiative.** They are also clearly the most popular with our persuasion targets.

➢ **Public transit experts are the most popular messengers.** 63% of voters are interested in hearing from them about the measure.

Views of Transportation
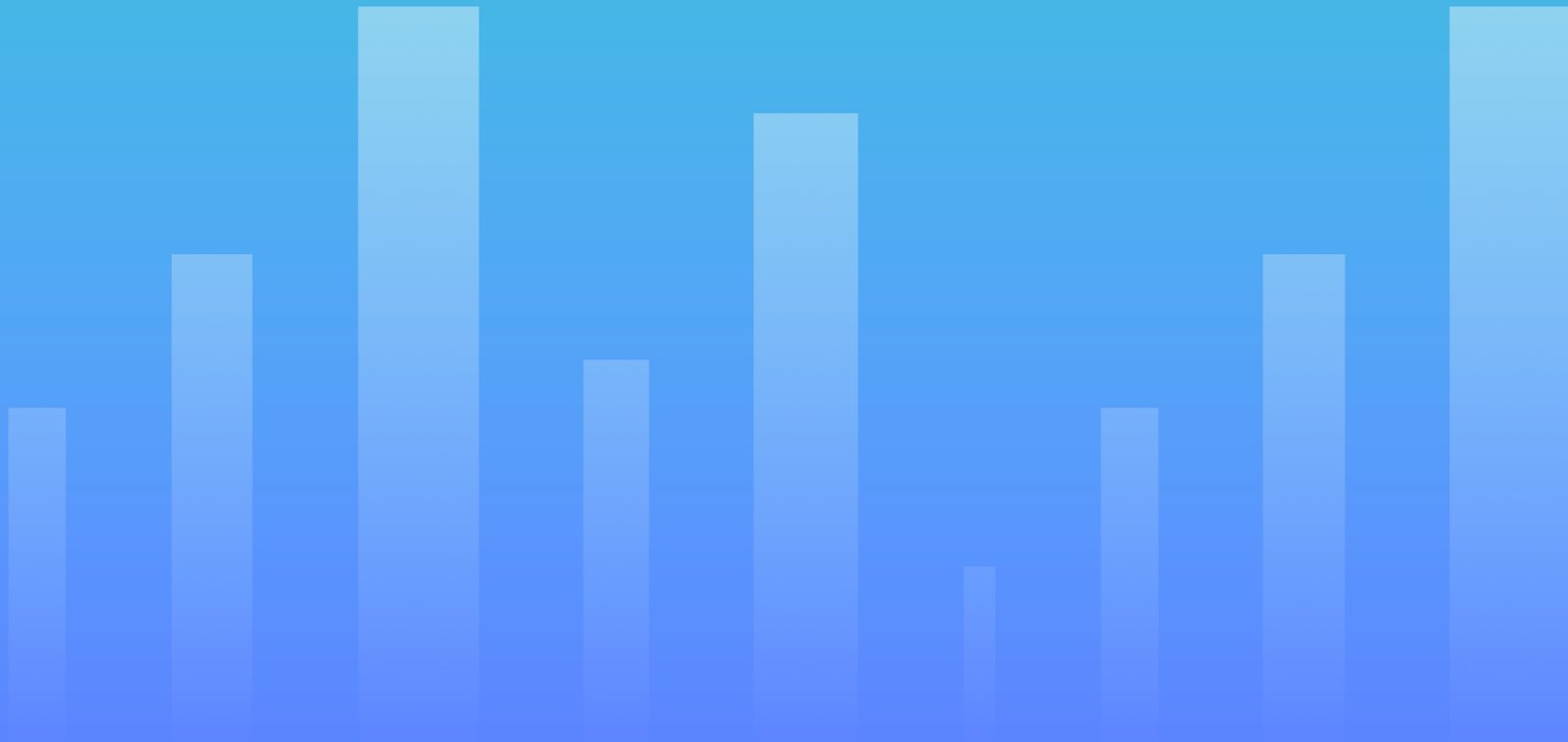
Over 60% of likely voters are Democrats, white, and 50+. Over 40% hardly ever or never use public transit.

Our persuasion targets do not differ significantly demographically or politically from voters overall.

DEMOGRAPHICS % of voters	ALL VOTERS	PERSUASION TARGETS*	NET PERS VS OVERALL
% of Voters	100	22	N/A
Dem (self-ID)	63	65	+2
Rep (self-ID)	18	16	-2
Ind (self-ID)	11	9	-2
White	61	65	+4
Hispanic	12	10	-2
AAPI	15	10	-5
Black	6	4	-2
Other	5	3	-2
Women	52	49	-3
Men	46	50	+4
18–34	16	16	--
35–49	22	21	-1
50–64	28	26	-2
65+	33	38	+5

DEMOGRAPHICS % of voters	ALL VOTERS	PERSUASION TARGETS*	NET PERS VS OVERALL
Non-College	45	45	--
College Grad	55	55	--
Regular Transit Users (A few times a month+)	28	25	-3
Use transit a few times a year	30	37	+7
Non-Transit Users (Hardly ever/never)	43	37	-6
Alameda	20	22	+2
Contra Costa	16	19	+3
San Francisco	12	11	-1
San Mateo	10	9	-1
Santa Clara	22	17	-5
Marin / Sonoma	13	17	+4
Napa / Solano	7	6	-1

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Persuasion targets: Soft supporters of the initiative or those who move to support it post-messaging

Montgomery, AL ● Washington, DC ● Chicago ● Boston ● New York

6

Voters hold widely negative views of both public transit and roads and highways in the Bay Area, demonstrating a need for our measure.

There is more negativity towards roads and highways, but that's largely because public transit has more who don't use it and can't rate it.
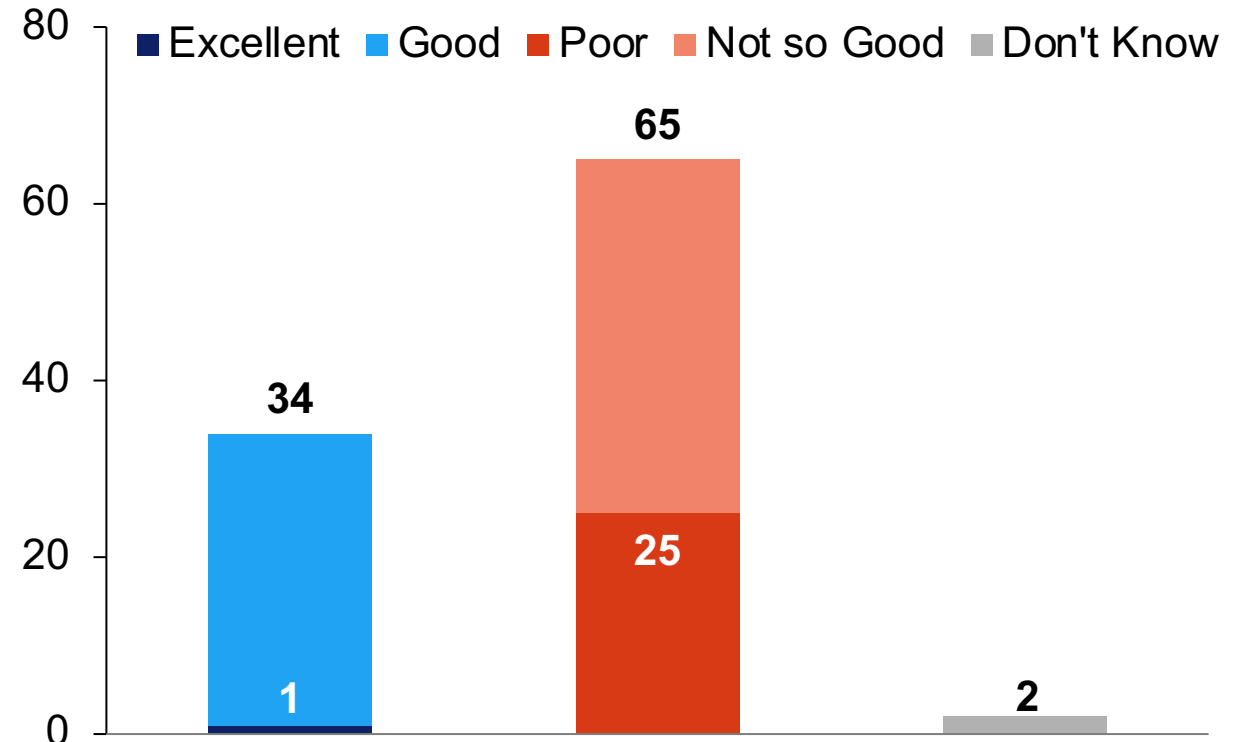
*How would you rate the quality of **[public transit / roads and highways]** in the Bay Area?*
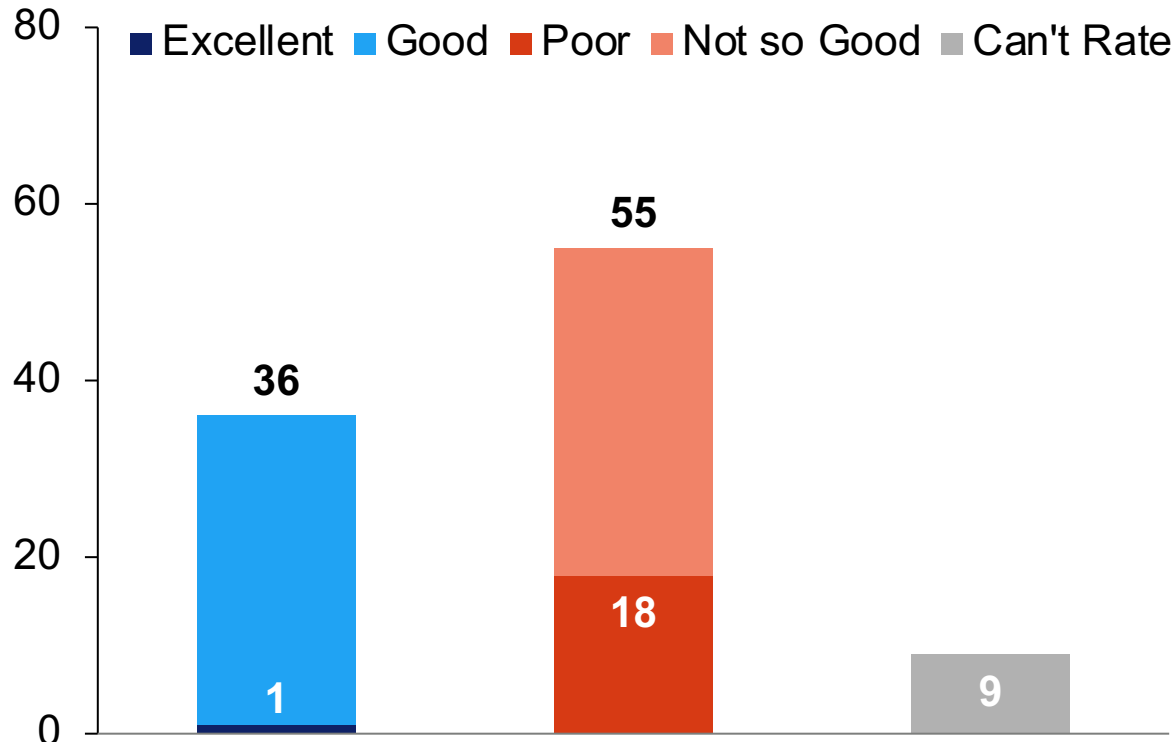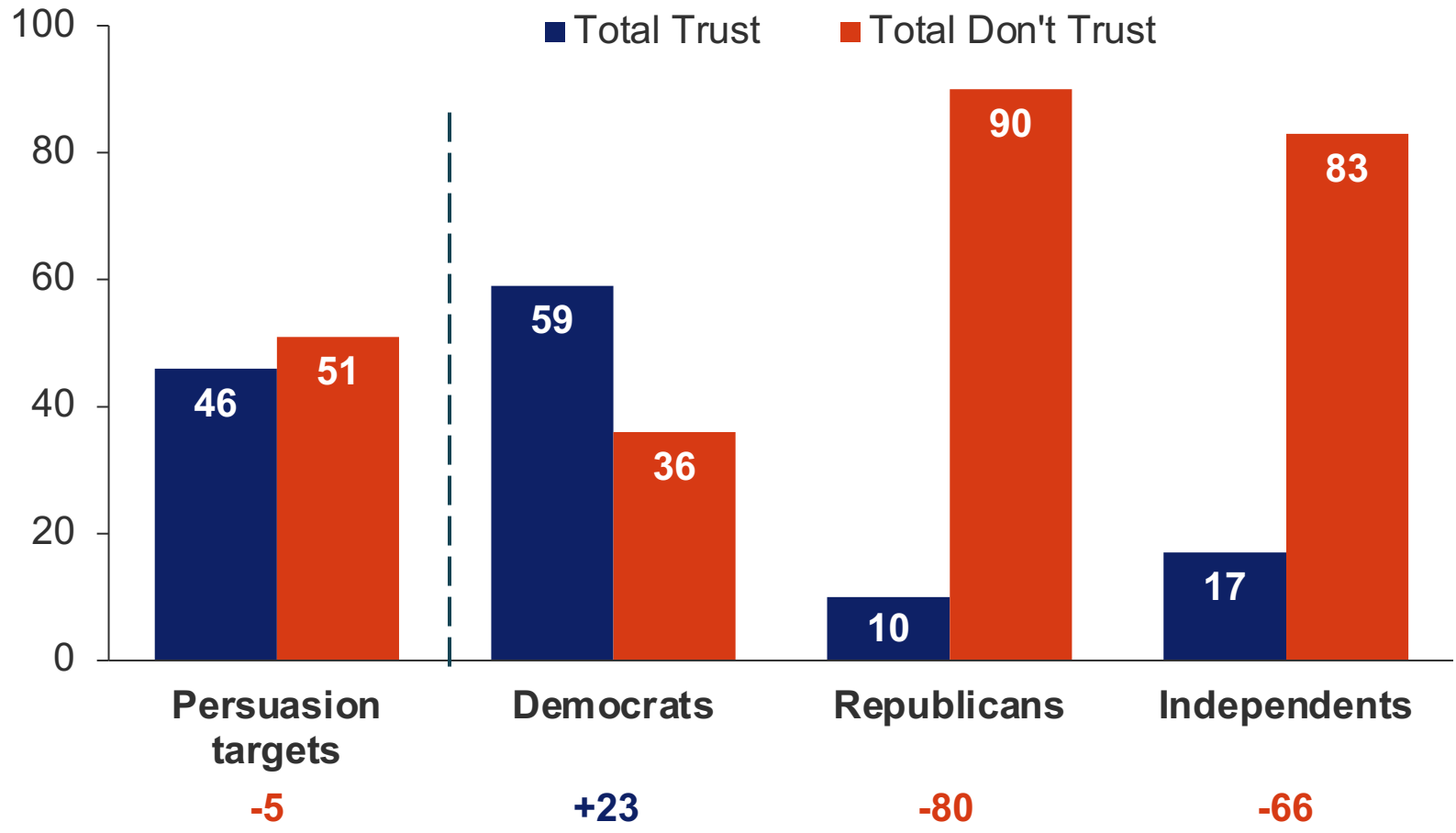

Public Transit

Roads and Highways

NET   **-19**   **-31**

While the perceived need for improvements creates an opening for us, voters' lack of trust in government's ability to handle transportation funding creates a significant obstacle.

A majority of our targets are distrustful, and Republicans and Independents are especially cynical.

How much do you trust local government officials in the Bay Area to spend money for public transit, roads, and highways well?

Legend (left chart):
- ■ Trust them a lot (dark blue)
- ■ Trust them somewhat (light blue)
- ■ Don't trust them at all (red)
- ■ Don't trust them much (light red/salmon)

Left chart (Overall):
- 43 (Trust: 3 + somewhat)
- 3
- 54 (Don't trust: 28 + much)
- 28

Right chart legend:
- ■ Total Trust (dark blue)
- ■ Total Don't Trust (red)

	Persuasion targets	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Total Trust	46	59	10	17
Total Don't Trust	51	36	90	83

NET: Overall **-11**

Persuasion targets	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
-5	+23	-80	-66
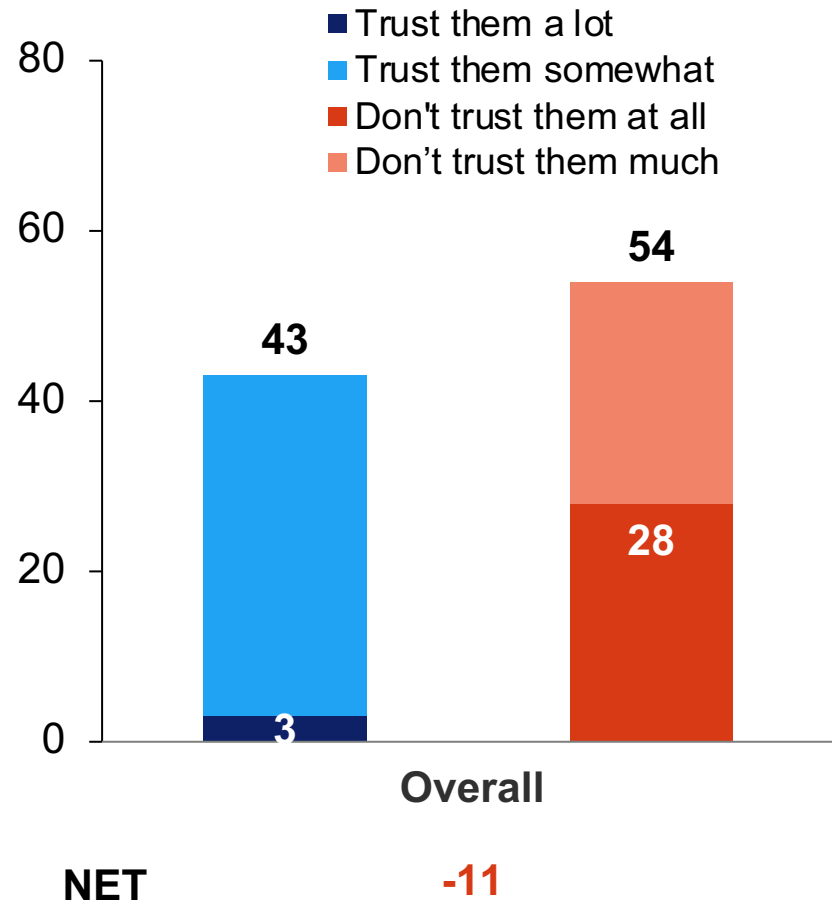
Marin/Sonoma are the only counties where voters trust local government officials in the Bay Area to spend money for public transit, roads, and highways well.

Voters in San Mateo and Alameda are the least trusting.

How much do you trust local government officials in the Bay Area to spend money for public transit, roads, and highways well?

	Overall	Marin / Sonoma	Santa Clara	Contra Costa	San Francisco	San Mateo	Alameda
Total Trust	43	58	43	43	40	36	34
Total Don't Trust	54	40	55	56	59	60	60
NET	-11	+18	-12	-13	-19	-24	-26
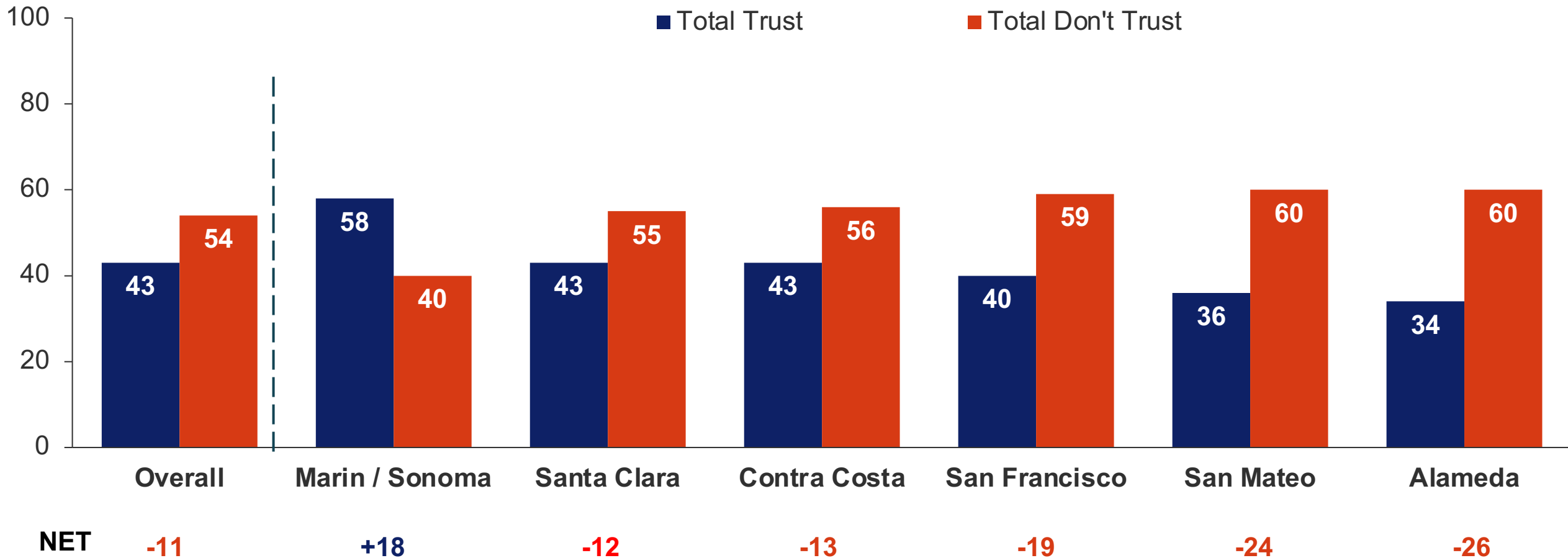
A plurality of voters would rather focus on improving roads and highways than public transit, highlighting the importance of not making our messaging exclusively about transit.

This holds among our persuasion targets. Democrats and younger voters prefer a focus on transit.

Which of the following would you prefer that local government officials in the Bay Area focus on?

Legend: ■ Improving roads and highways ■ Improving public transit ■ Neither

	Overall	Pers. Targets	Dems	Reps	Inds	<55	55+
Improving roads and highways	46	43	35	75	62	35	55
Improving public transit	39	38	50	10	20	49	29
Neither	11	8	9	13	16	12	10
NET ROADS	+7	+5	-15	+65	+42	-14	+26
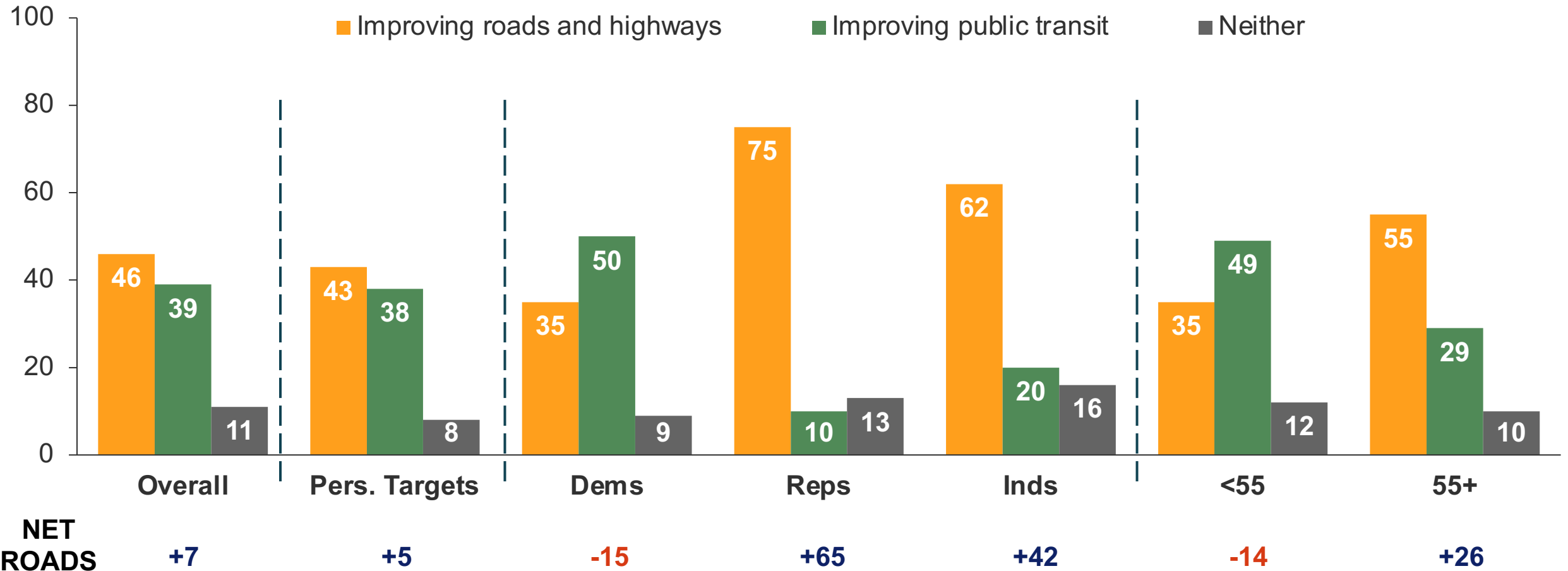
Support for Ballot Initiative
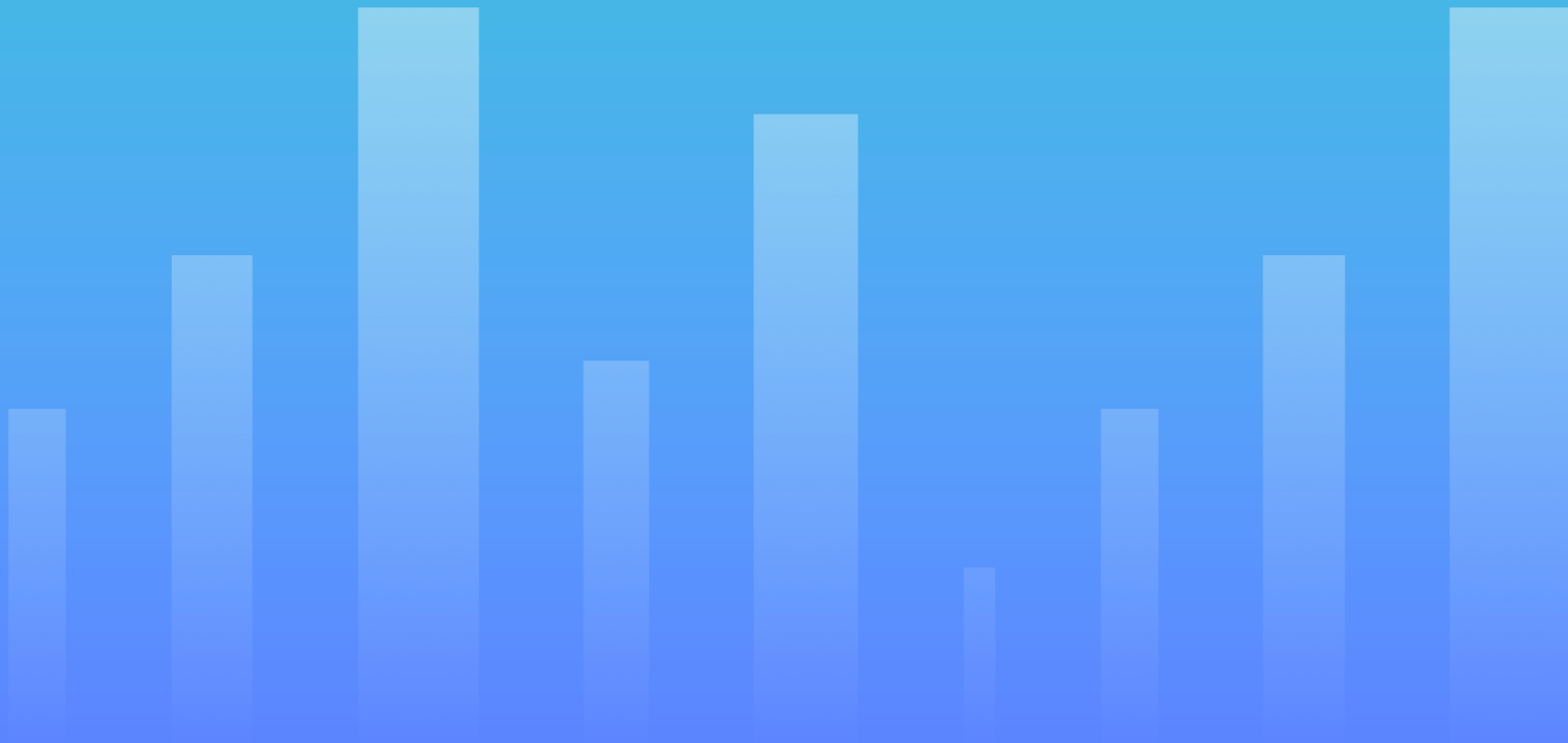
Support for the ballot measure starts out right at the mid-to-high 50s threshold we like to see for ballot measures.

Another encouraging sign: There is more intensity on the "Yes" side than the "No" side.

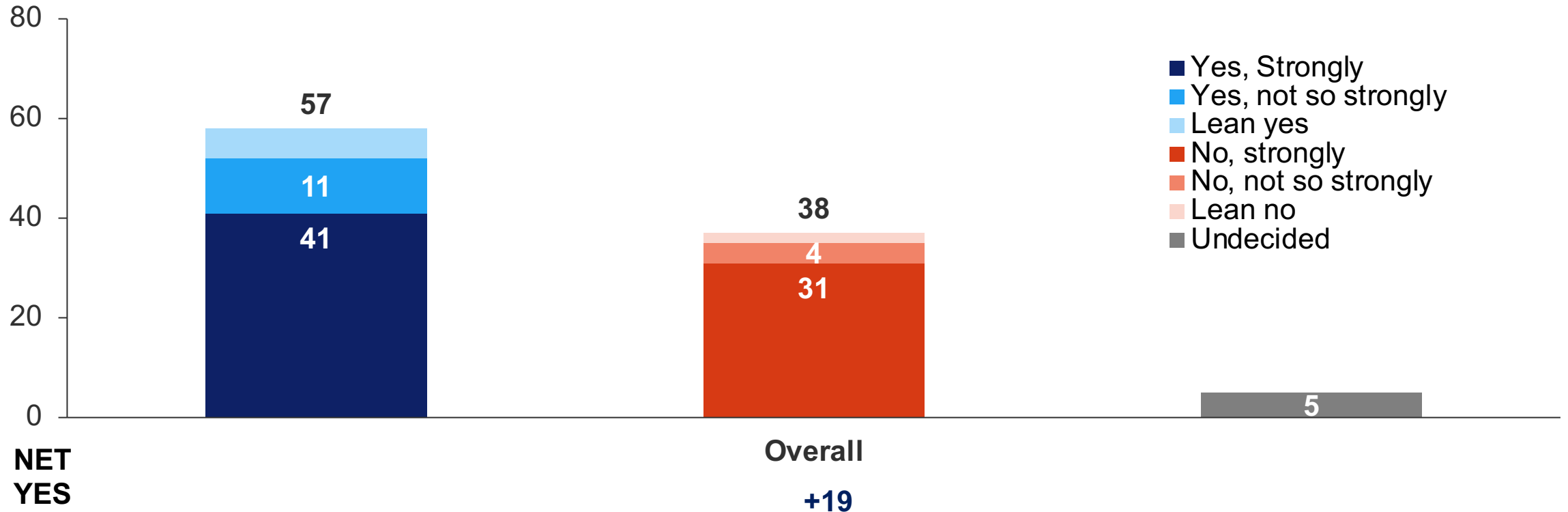*To reduce traffic congestion and make the Bay Area's transportation system more convenient, affordable, efficient, and safe with: a seamless network of rail, bus, and ferry lines with coordinated routes, schedules, and fares; and road state-of-good-repair and safety improvements benefitting pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit; shall the measure to increase personal income taxes by 1% for individuals earning over $300,000 or households earning over $500,000, with spending oversight from experts and annual audits, be adopted?*

Legend:
- Yes, Strongly
- Yes, not so strongly
- Lean yes
- No, strongly
- No, not so strongly
- Lean no
- Undecided

Yes bar: 57 (41 Yes Strongly, 11 Yes not so strongly)
No bar: 38 (31 No strongly, 4 No not so strongly)
Undecided: 5

NET YES

Overall
+19

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Democrats, voters over 65, voters in Alameda county, and those who use public transit regularly are especially likely to support the initiative.

Republicans are very opposed, and the measure is also underwater with Independents.

Ballot Initiative Support	Yes	No	Und	Yes - No
Overall	**57**	**38**	**5**	**+19**
Democrats	70	26	4	+44
Republicans	22	70	8	-48
Independents	39	56	6	-17
Women	59	34	7	+25
Men	57	41	3	+16
18–34	54	41	5	+13
35–49	54	43	4	+11
50–64	55	39	6	+16
65+	64	31	5	+33

Ballot Initiative Support	Yes	No	Und	Yes - No
Non-College	60	33	6	+27
College Grad	55	41	4	+14
Regular Transit Users	69	26	4	+43
Non-Regular Transit Users	53	42	5	+11
Alameda	67	28	5	+39
Contra Costa	58	35	8	+23
San Francisco	63	32	5	+31
San Mateo	47	47	6	0
Santa Clara	47	50	3	-3
Marin / Sonoma	59	36	6	+23

Democrats 55+ and Democratic Women are most likely to support the initiative.

Sonoma and Marin residents, and men who are older, and non-college make up a disproportionate share of our persuasion targets.

Highest % Yes	
Overall	**57%**
55+ Democrat	76%
Democratic Women	75%

Highest % No	
Overall	**38%**
Independent	56%
Santa Clara County	50%

Highest % of Persuasion Targets	
Overall	**22%**
Marin / Sonoma County	30%
Men 55+	29%

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Transportation Outcomes and Transit Reforms

IMPACT
RESEARCH
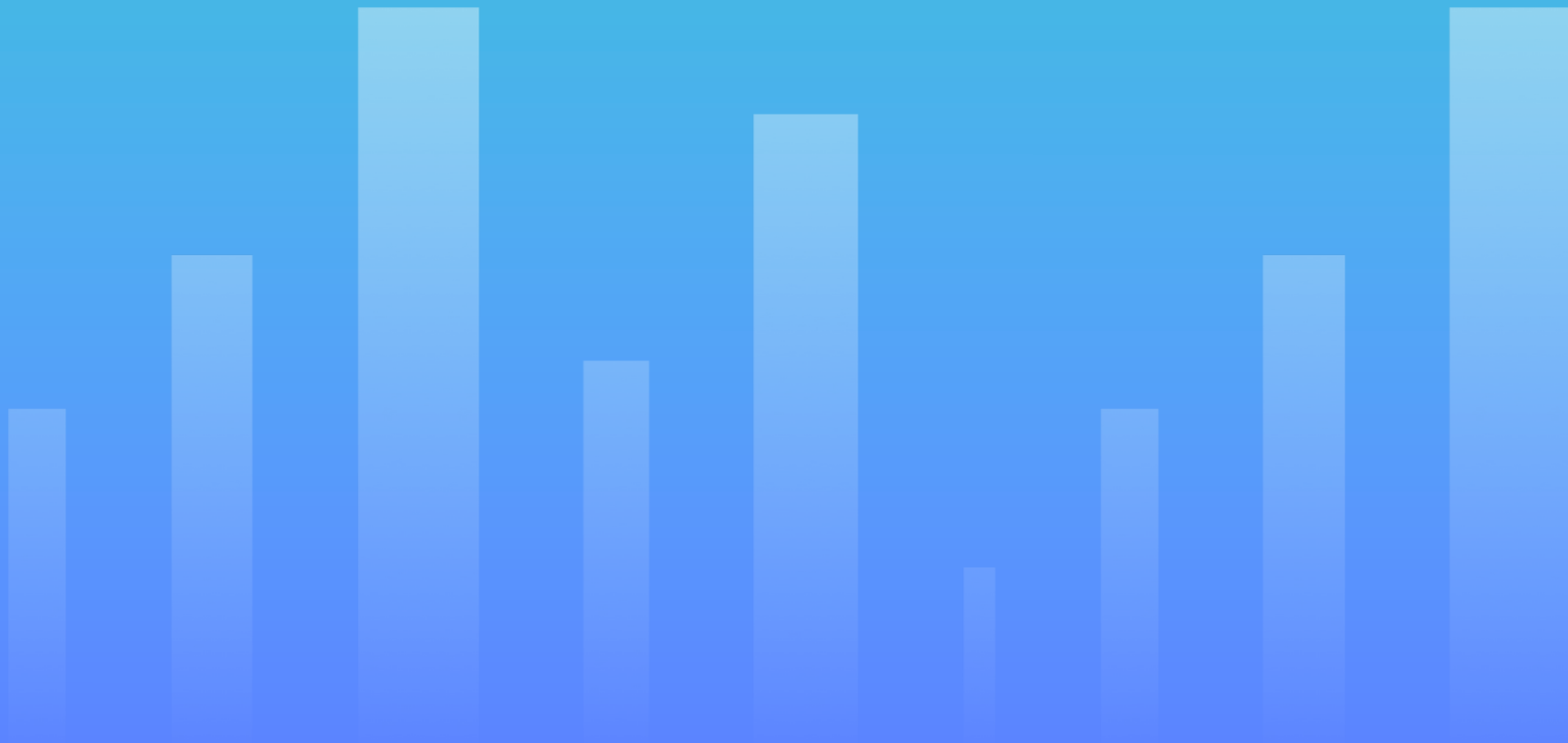
Repairing potholes, coordinating schedules, simplifying pricing, and adding safety measures are the most popular transportation outcomes tested.

Transportation Outcomes – Top Tier

■ Much More Likely   ■ Somewhat More Likely

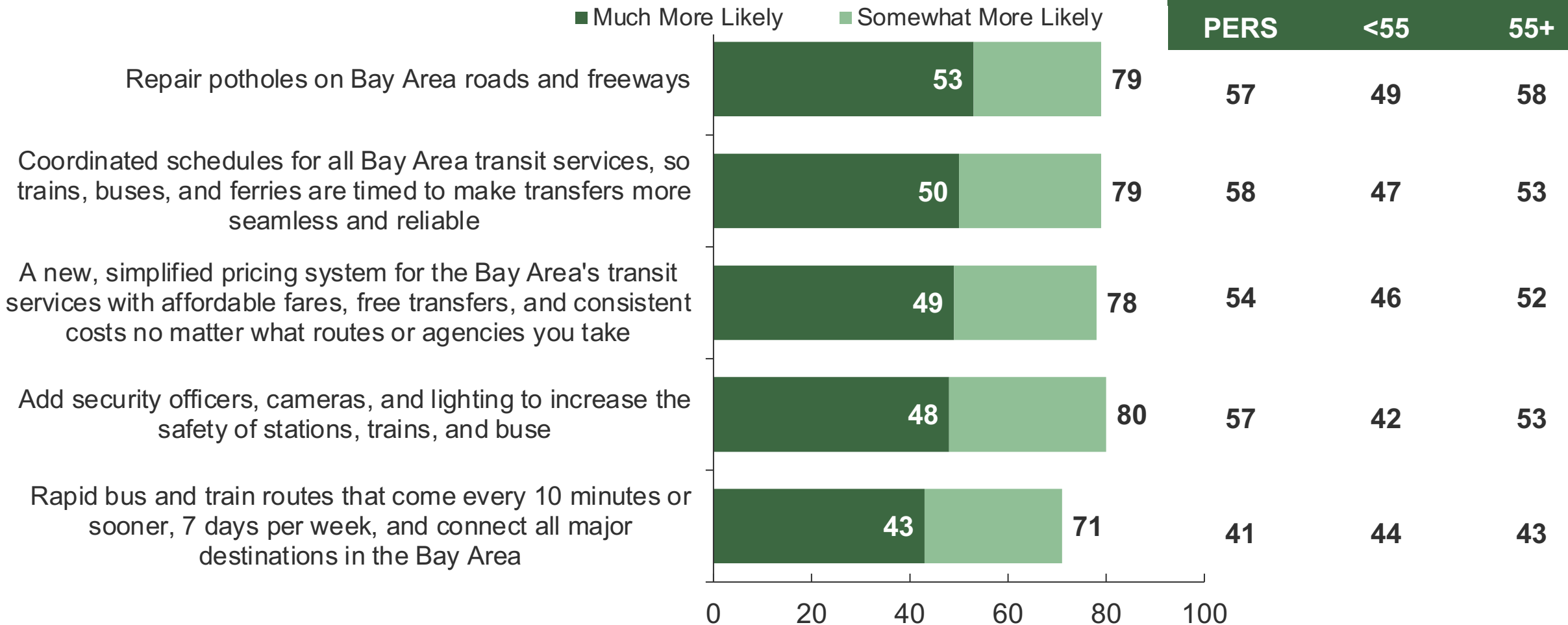| Outcome	Much More Likely	Total	PERS	<55	55+
Repair potholes on Bay Area roads and freeways	53	79	57	49	58
Coordinated schedules for all Bay Area transit services, so trains, buses, and ferries are timed to make transfers more seamless and reliable	50	79	58	47	53
A new, simplified pricing system for the Bay Area's transit services with affordable fares, free transfers, and consistent costs no matter what routes or agencies you take	49	78	54	46	52
Add security officers, cameras, and lighting to increase the safety of stations, trains, and buse	48	80	57	42	53
Rapid bus and train routes that come every 10 minutes or sooner, 7 days per week, and connect all major destinations in the Bay Area	43	71	41	44	43

% *Much* More Likely

HOT lanes and requiring large employers to purchase public transit passes for their employees were not popular with most voters.

Dedicated bus lanes and crisis intervention specialists also didn't generate much enthusiasm.

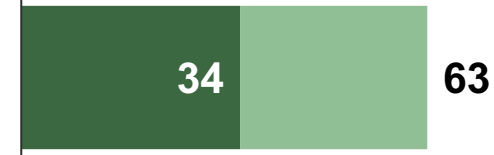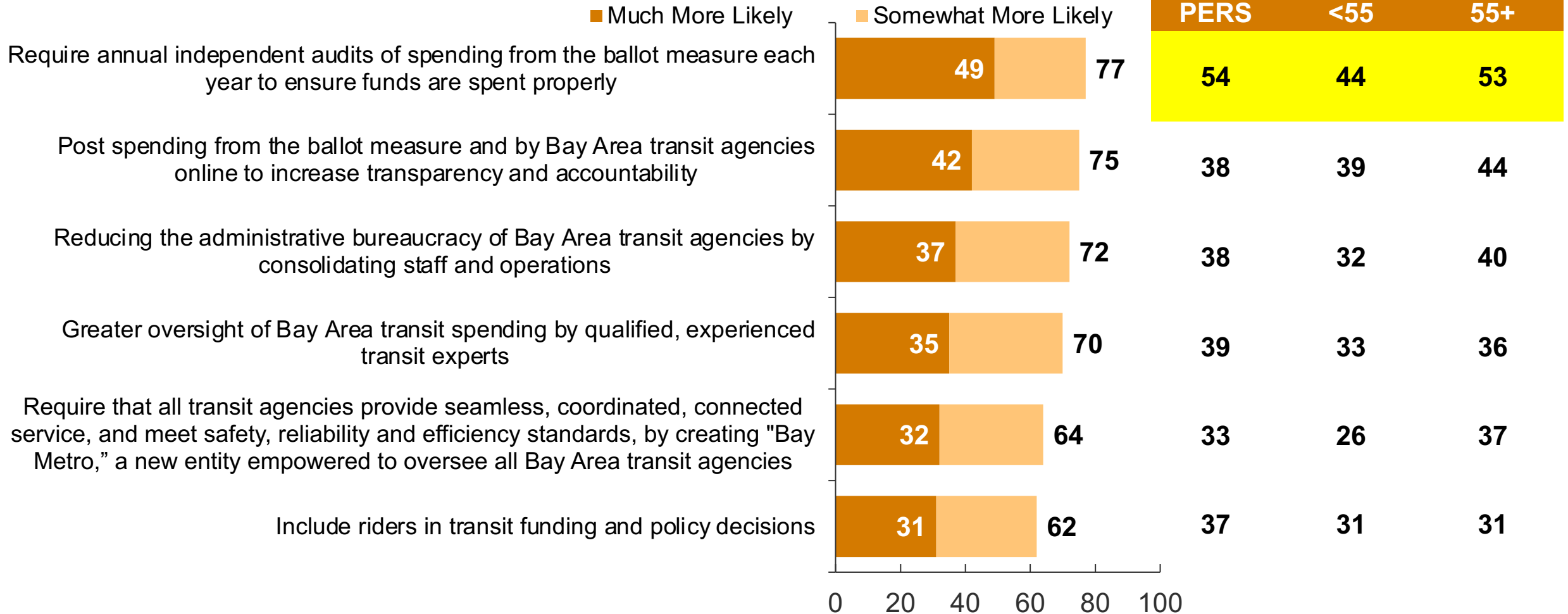| Transportation Outcomes – 2nd Tier	% *Much* More Likely		
■ Much More Likely ■ Somewhat More Likely	PERS	<55	55+
Fully fund transit agency safety teams, including crisis intervention specialists to assist people experiencing mental health issue	37	35	33
Make public transit improvements to major streets, such as dedicated lanes, that ensure buses and light rail trains don't get stuck in traffic	24	27	29
Require employers with more than 50 employees to purchase public transit passes for their employees	17	24	24
Create more high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes on Bay Area freeways. Cars with only one person would have to pay a toll to use these lanes, while cars with two people or more would not pay. Low-income drivers would receive discounts or free access	13	14	15

Chart values (Much More Likely / total):
- Fully fund transit agency safety teams: 34 / 63
- Make public transit improvements: 28 / 60
- Require employers: 24 / 47
- Create more HOT lanes: 15 / 37

An annual independent spending audit and other transit reforms focused on spending oversight are the most popular reforms.

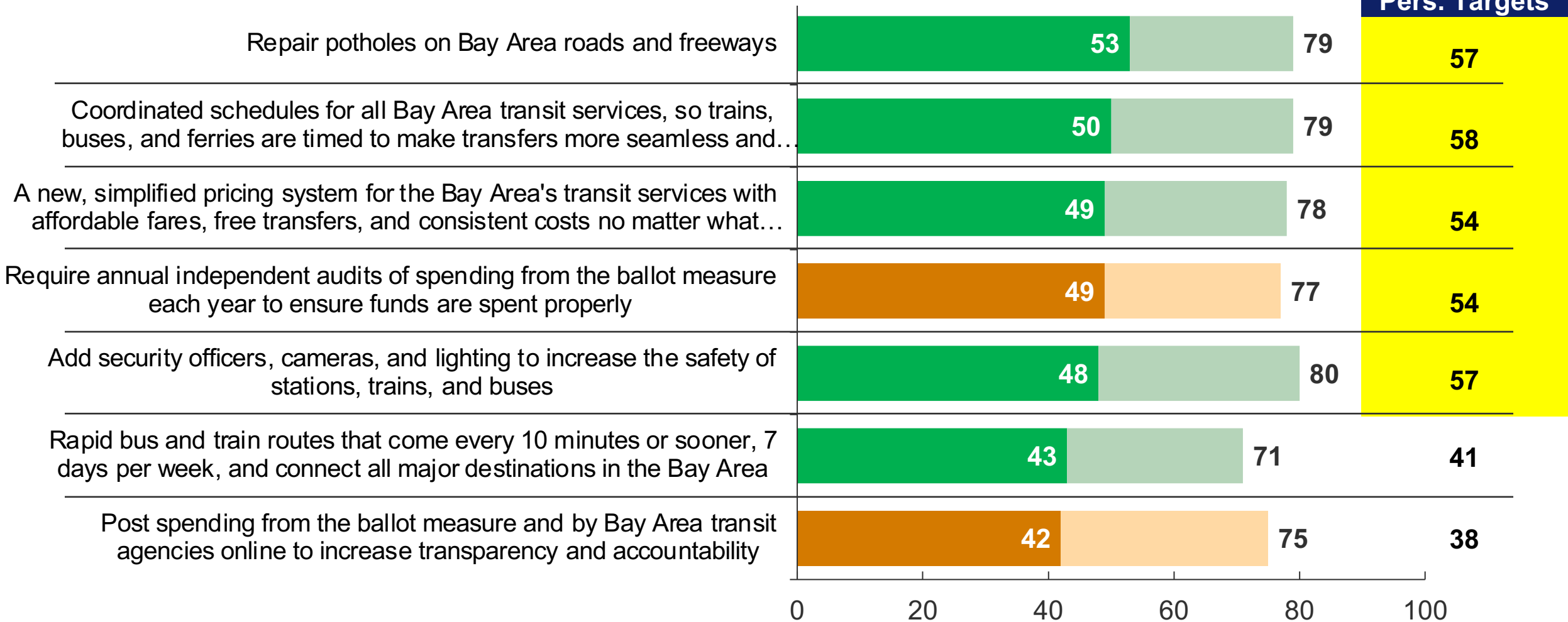Requiring an annual independent spending audit is the clear top reform with our persuasion targets.

Transit Reforms – Top Tier	% Much More Likely		
■ Much More Likely ■ Somewhat More Likely	PERS	<55	55+
Require annual independent audits of spending from the ballot measure each year to ensure funds are spent properly — **49 / 77**	**54**	**44**	**53**
Post spending from the ballot measure and by Bay Area transit agencies online to increase transparency and accountability — **42 / 75**	38	39	44
Reducing the administrative bureaucracy of Bay Area transit agencies by consolidating staff and operations — **37 / 72**	38	32	40
Greater oversight of Bay Area transit spending by qualified, experienced transit experts — **35 / 70**	39	33	36
Require that all transit agencies provide seamless, coordinated, connected service, and meet safety, reliability and efficiency standards, by creating "Bay Metro," a new entity empowered to oversee all Bay Area transit agencies — **32 / 64**	33	26	37
Include riders in transit funding and policy decisions — **31 / 62**	37	31	31

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Messaging

Our top message is focused on how the measure will both improve public transit convenience *and* reduce bureaucracy.

This was the top message overall, with our persuasion targets, and across ages.

Messages: Top Tier % _Much_ More Likely to Support Initiative	All	Pers Targets	<55	55+
[STREAMLINED] There are currently 27 public transit agencies in the Bay Area, which makes public transit unnecessarily confusing and costly to taxpayers. This measure will streamline public transit by coordinating schedules and reducing bureaucracy, making it more convenient and less costly to taxpayers.	47	50	42	52

Messages focused on safety, improved service, greater oversight, equity, and how it would be funded also tested well.

A message focused on safety did particularly well with older voters.

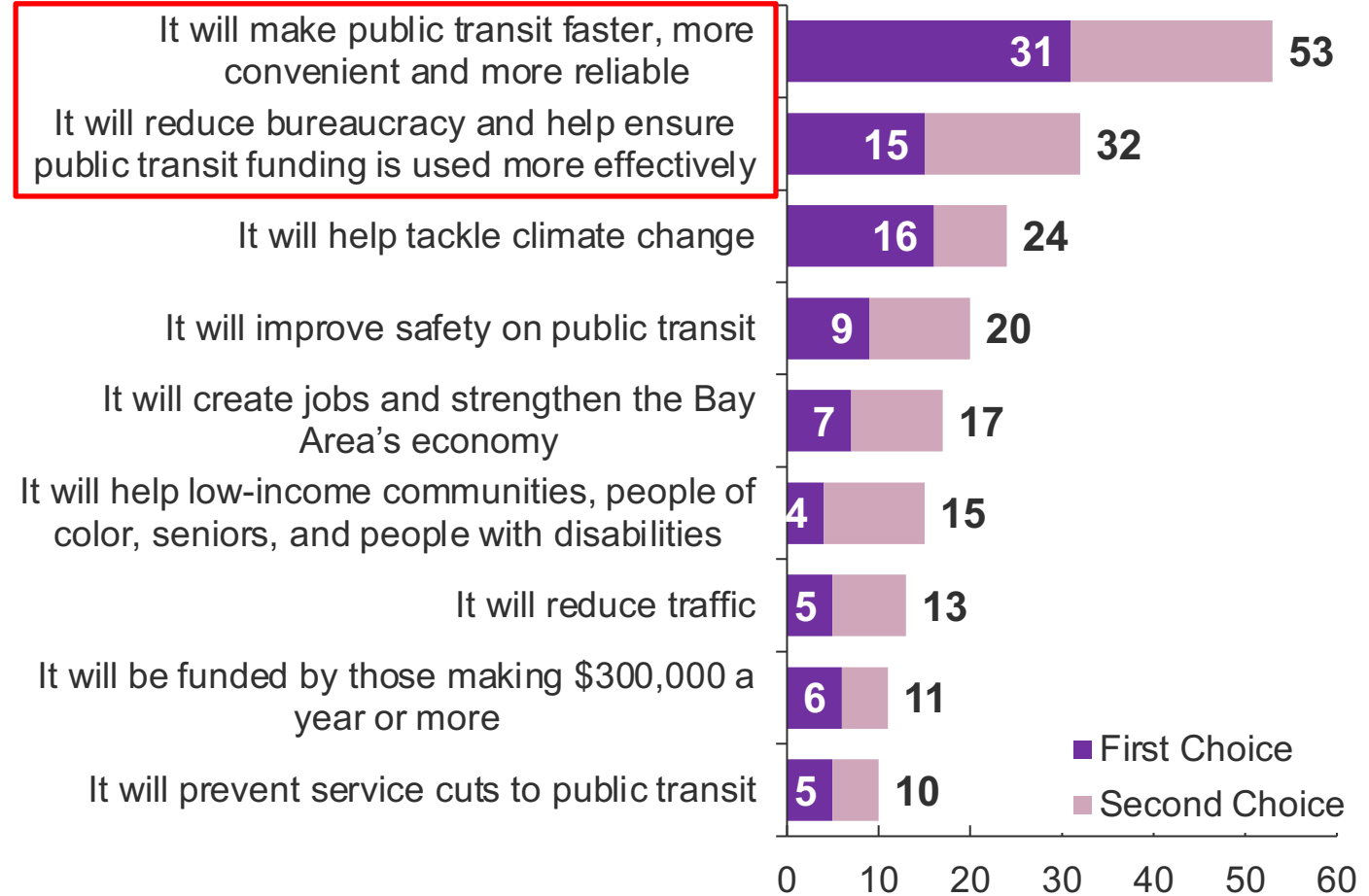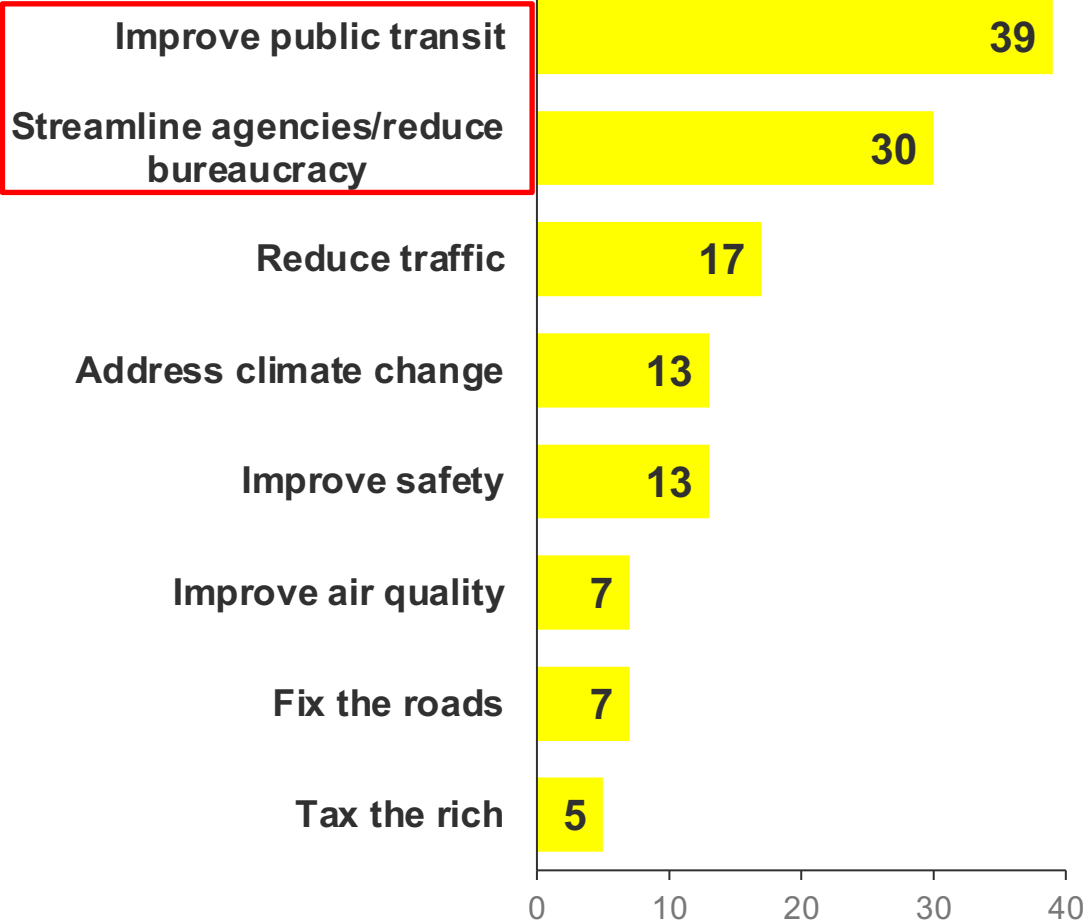| Messages: 2nd Tier *% Much More Likely to Support Initiative*	All	Pers Targets	<55	55+
[TRANSIT SAFETY] Not everyone currently feels safe or comfortable using public transit in the Bay Area. This measure will increase the number of security officers and cameras on public transit to ensure that public transit systems, stations, and stops are clean and safe for everyone.	43	43	34	52
[SERVICE] This measure will significantly expand and improve public transit so that people can go more places faster and make public transit as convenient and reliable as a car. It will make it easier for people to get to their jobs, visit family and friends, and explore the Bay Area.	40	41	35	45
[EQUITY] Low-income communities, people of color, seniors and people with disabilities are the most reliant on public transit. By improving public transit, this measure will help ensure that everyone can get where they need to go and promote upward mobility.	40	42	34	46
[WEALTHY] This measure will be funded only by raising taxes on those earning over $300,000 a year or more. Anyone in the Bay Area making less $300,000 a year will not pay any more in taxes for this ballot measure.	39	39	36	42
[ACCOUNTABILITY] This measure will make sure new Bay Area public transit funding is used effectively by putting in place new accountability and transparency measures, such as spending oversight by transit experts and annual audits. These measures will help make sure the money goes where it is supposed to and reduce the cost to operate and build public transit.	36	40	31	40

Messages focused on preventing funding cuts and on the impact on car pollution, traffic, and the economy were not quite as effective as others, particularly with our persuasion targets.

Messages: 3rd Tier % _Much_ More Likely to Support Initiative	All	Pers Targets	<55	55+
[ECONOMY] Passing this ballot measure would be a major boost for the Bay Area's economy by making it more attractive to employers and help revitalize downtowns and small businesses hurt by the pandemic. As a result, it is estimated to create or maintain hundreds of thousands of jobs to the Bay Area.	34	34	30	38
[TRAFFIC] Public transit reduces traffic by reducing the number of cars on the road. This measure will help reduce traffic so that both public transit riders and drivers can get where they need to go more quickly.	34	31	31	36
[CLIMATE] Car pollution is a major contributor to climate change, which is fueling the drought and wildfires across California, and to air pollution that harms our health. By making it easier for people to take public transit instead of driving, this measure will help tackle climate change and improve our air quality.	33	35	30	35
[PREVENT CUTS] This measure is needed to prevent cuts to current Bay Area public transit services. Budget revenue in the Bay Area has declined significantly since the pandemic. Without the additional funding that this measure would provide, service cuts will be needed that will make Bay Area public transit worse.	31	26	28	34

Improving public transit and reducing bureaucracy also emerge as the best reasons to support the measure among our persuasion targets in both open-end responses and when they are forced to choose.

Best Reason to Support Measure: Open-End
Among Persuasion Targets

Reason	Value
Improve public transit	39
Streamline agencies/reduce bureaucracy	30
Reduce traffic	17
Address climate change	13
Improve safety	13
Improve air quality	7
Fix the roads	7
Tax the rich	5

Best Reason to Support Measure: Forced choice
Among Persuasion Targets

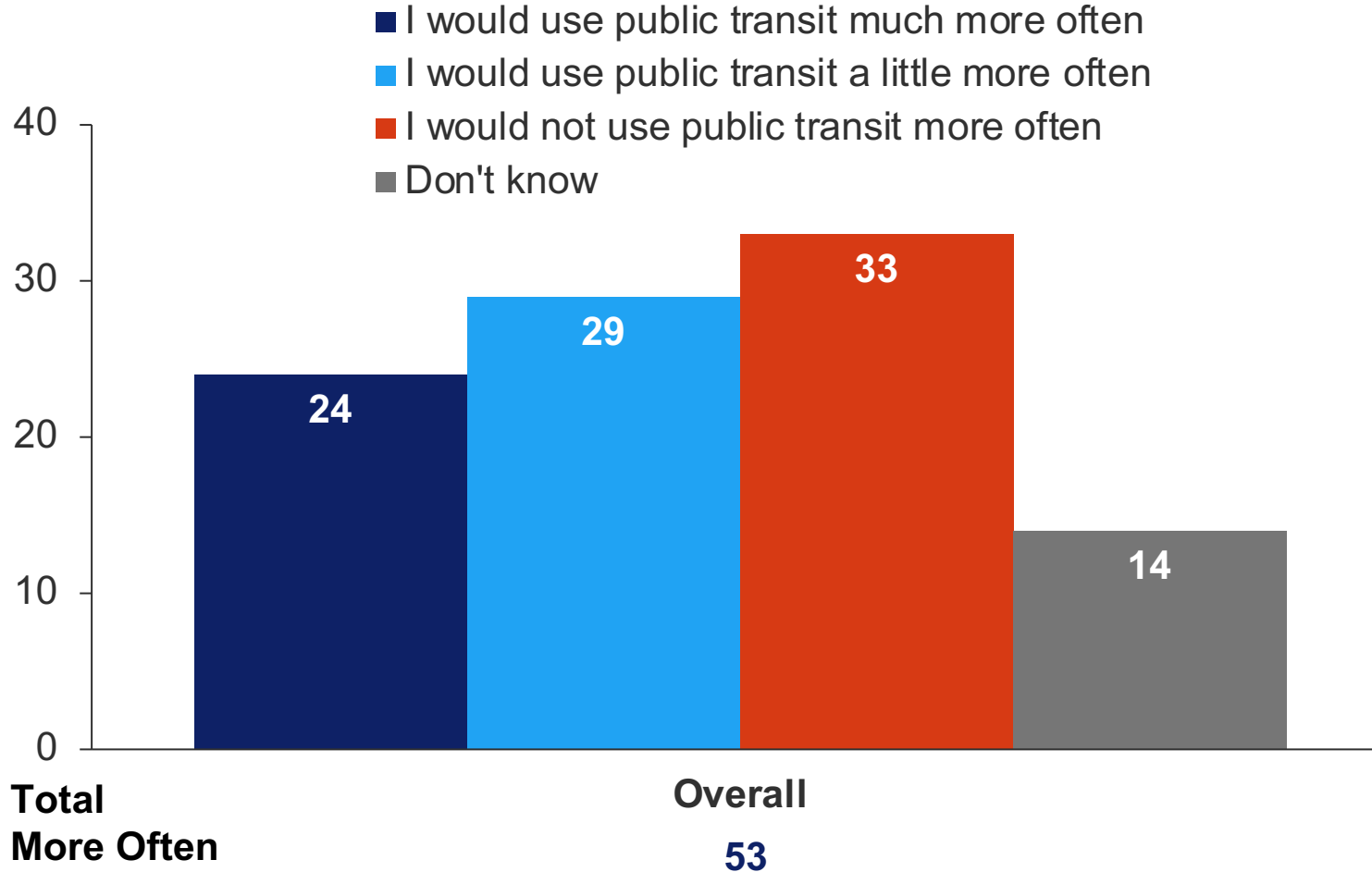| Reason	First Choice	Total
It will make public transit faster, more convenient and more reliable	31	53
It will reduce bureaucracy and help ensure public transit funding is used more effectively	15	32
It will help tackle climate change	16	24
It will improve safety on public transit	9	20
It will create jobs and strengthen the Bay Area's economy	7	17
It will help low-income communities, people of color, seniors, and people with disabilities	4	15
It will reduce traffic	5	13
It will be funded by those making $300,000 a year or more	6	11
It will prevent service cuts to public transit	5	10

■ First Choice
■ Second Choice

A majority of voters say they would use public transit more often if the changes from the ballot measure were enacted and a quarter would use it *much* more.

Regular transit users, voters under 35, and voters in San Francisco and Contra Costa are most likely to use it *much* more.

Impact of Ballot Measure on Transit Use

Legend:
- ■ I would use public transit much more often
- ■ I would use public transit a little more often
- ■ I would not use public transit more often
- ■ Don't know

Chart values (Overall):
- I would use public transit much more often: 24
- I would use public transit a little more often: 29
- I would not use public transit more often: 33
- Don't know: 14

Total More Often
Overall
53

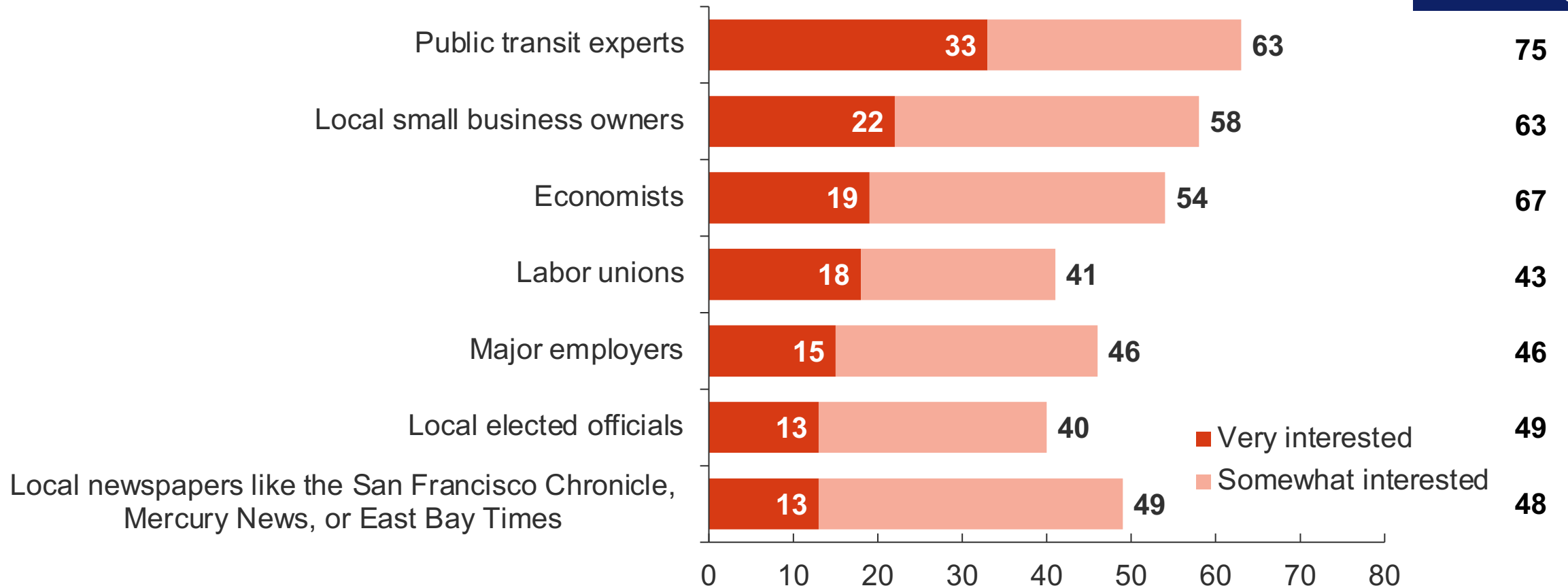| Highest % Much More Often	
Overall	**24**
Regular transit users	45
Contra Costa	34
18-34	33
San Francisco	33

Voters most want to hear about the ballot initiative from public transit experts, followed by local small business owners and economists.

They are least interested in hearing from local elected officials and local newspapers.

Potential Messengers

Please indicate whether you would be very interested in hearing from them about the ballot measure, somewhat interested, not too interested, or not at all interested in hearing from them about the ballot measure.

Total Interested

Pers. Targets

Messenger	Very interested	Somewhat interested total	Pers. Targets
Public transit experts	33	63	75
Local small business owners	22	58	63
Economists	19	54	67
Labor unions	18	41	43
Major employers	15	46	46
Local elected officials	13	40	49
Local newspapers like the San Francisco Chronicle, Mercury News, or East Bay Times	13	49	48

■ Very interested
■ Somewhat interested

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

Suggested Messaging

Highlight Problem
- There are currently 27 public transit agencies in the Bay Area, which makes public transit inefficient, confusing, and costly to taxpayers.

Improve Transit
- This measure will streamline public transit to make it more convenient and reliable by reducing bureaucracy, coordinating schedules, simplifying prices, and providing faster service.

Audit
- It will require an annual independent audit to ensure funding is spent properly.

Potholes
- It will also improve road conditions by fixing potholes and uneven road surfaces.

Safety
- It will improve safety by adding security officers and cameras to stations, trains, and buses.