



Yampa Valley Survey Key Findings

May 2025

Methodology

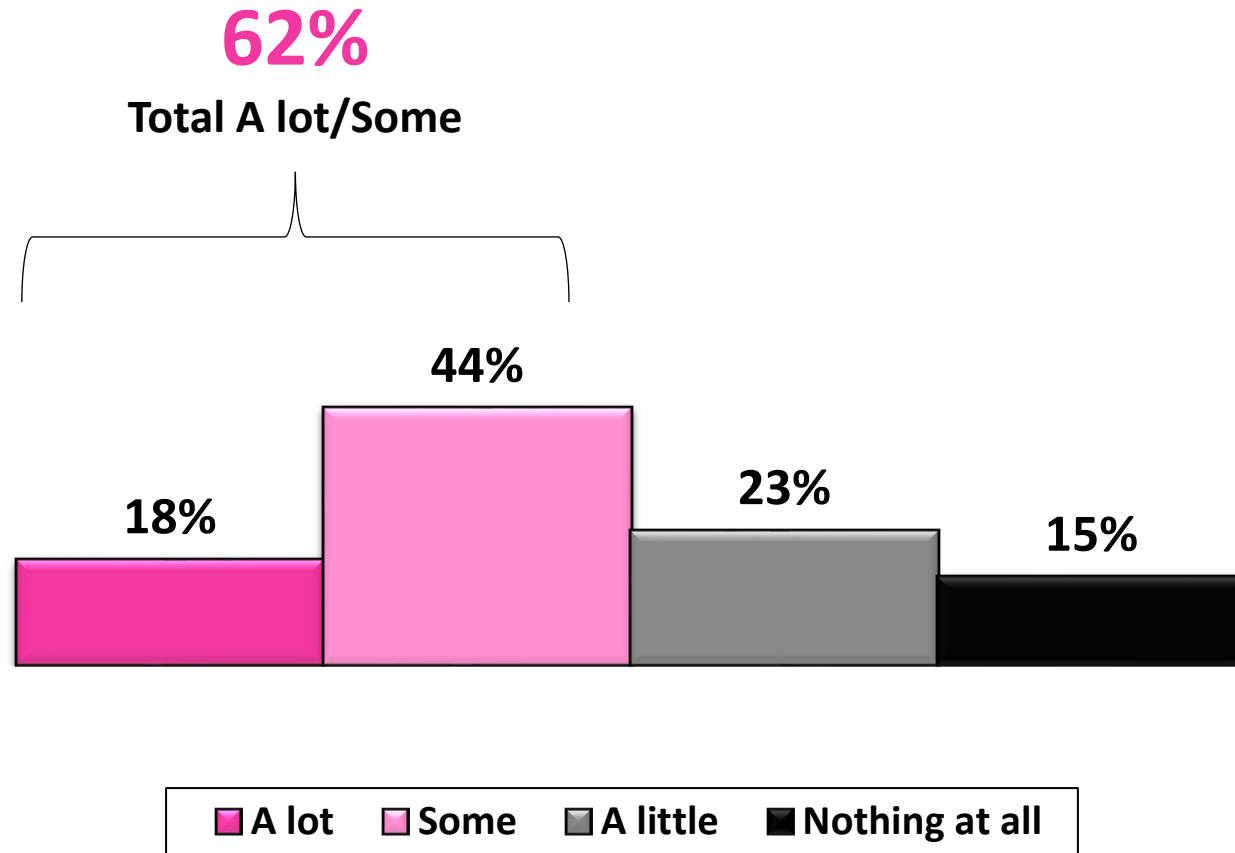
New Bridge Strategy conducted a survey among N=300 registered voters throughout the Yampa Valley that would constitute a potential RTA from April 29-May 5, 2025. Interviews were conducted via live telephone interviews (both cell phones and landlines) and online. Interviews were distributed proportionally throughout the district. Quotas were set for key demographic sub-groups, such as gender and age.

The margin of error is $\pm 5.66\%$ for the overall sample. The margin of error will vary for sub-groups.



Potential Regional Transit Authority Ballot Measures

More than three-in-five voters say they have heard a lot or some about the potential to create an RTA in Yampa Valley.



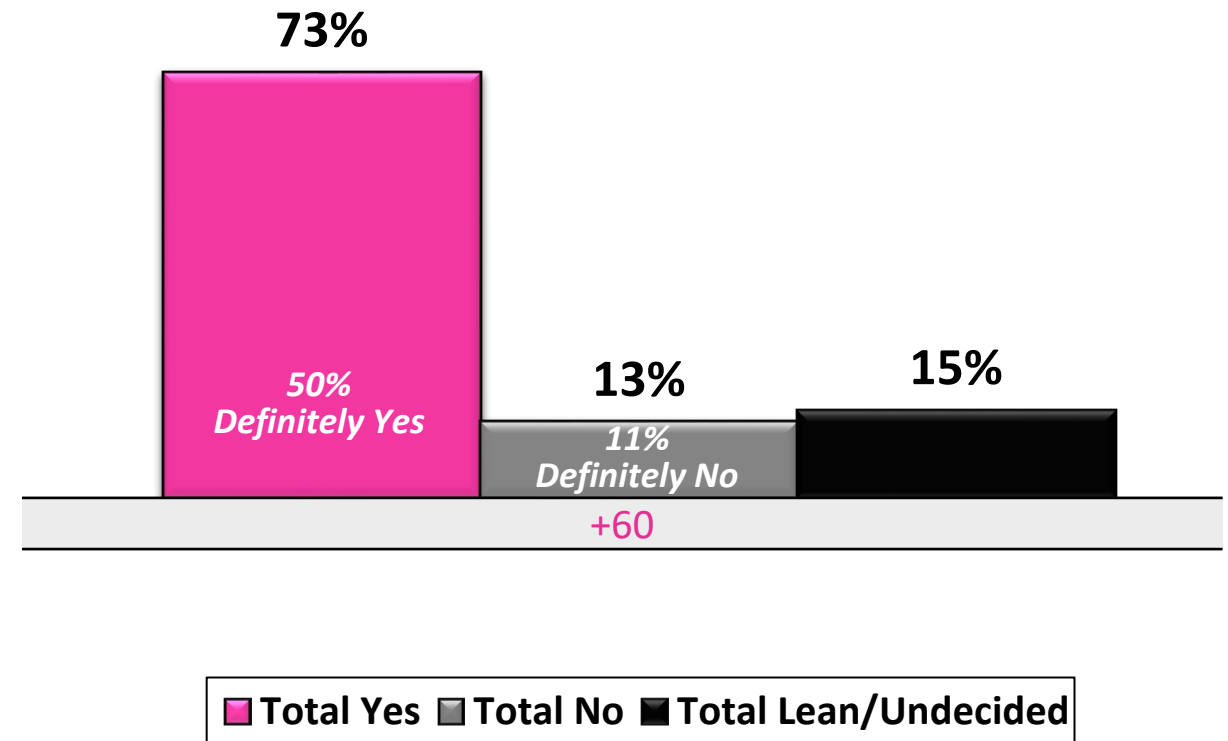
Top subgroups “A lot”	
Post-grad education	28%
Routt County 55+	27%
College+ Women	27%
Routt Women	25%
Women 55+	25%
Age 65+	23%

Thinking about a potential Regional Transportation Authority in the Yampa Valley, how much have you seen, read or heard about this prior to this survey?

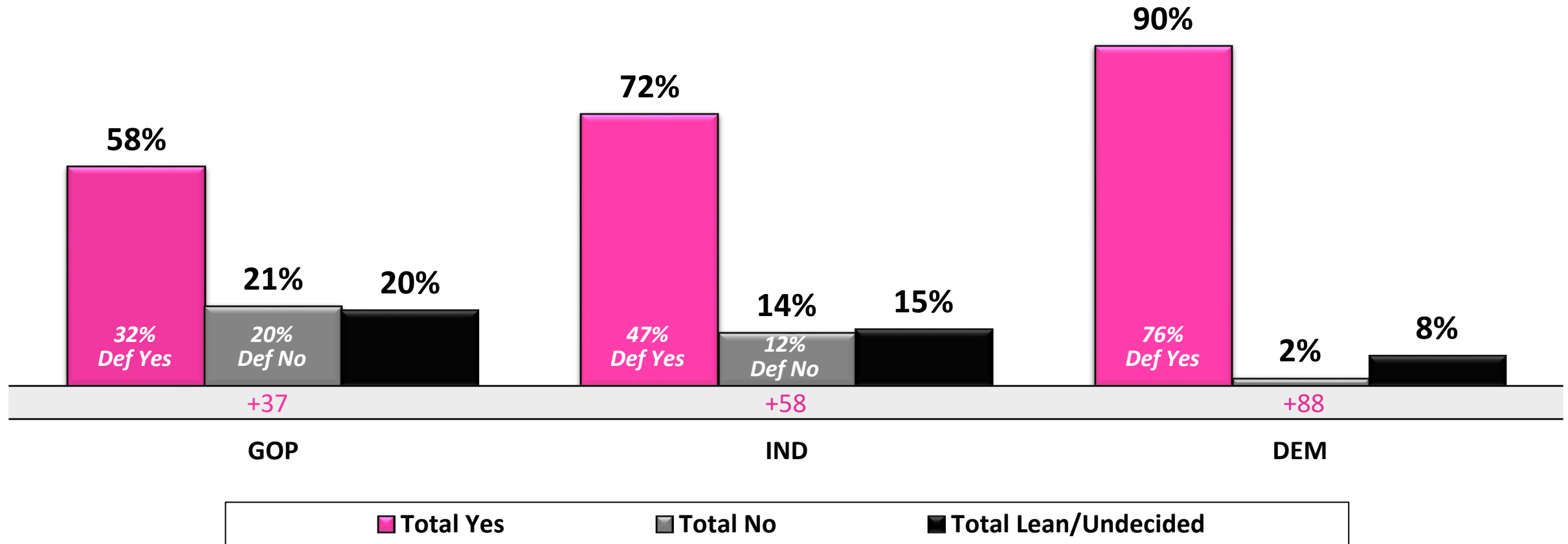
Nearly three-in-four voters support establishing an RTA in Yampa Valley when we ask about the RTA conceptually (not actual ballot language).

There may be a proposal on the ballot here in the Yampa Valley in November regarding regional transportation. Please read through this language carefully as it is somewhat technical, and then indicate if the election were being held today, whether you would vote Yes in favor or No against this proposal.

The proposal would establish Yampa Valley Transportation Authority through an agreement between Routt County, the cities of Craig and Steamboat Springs, and the Towns of Hayden, Oak Creek and Yampa. The new Authority would improve transportation options for local workers, residents, seniors, and visitors across the Yampa Valley; enhance public safety by maintaining and improving pedestrian access, crosswalks and wildlife crossings; enhance regional bus service between Craig, Hayden, and Steamboat Springs; establish new bus routes to serve Craig, Oak Creek, Yampa, Stagecoach, and communities west of Steamboat Springs along Highway 40; and continue efforts to revive passenger rail for Yampa Valley commuters.

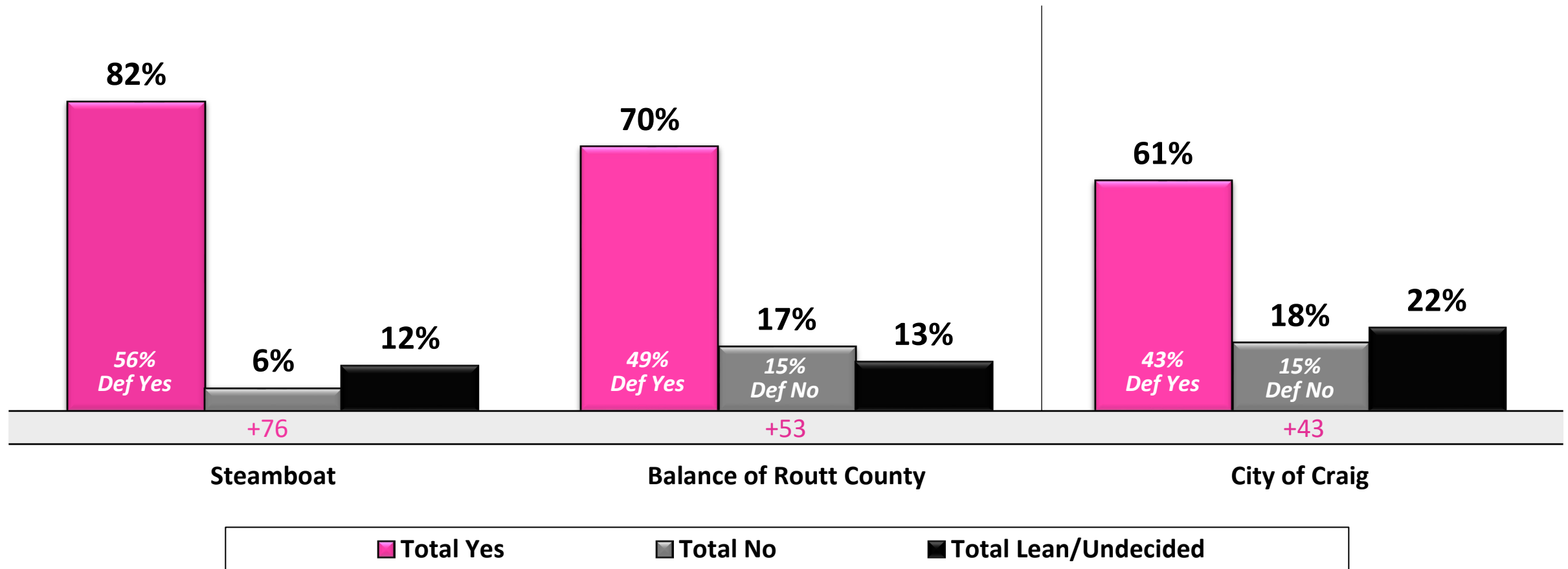


Majorities across party lines support the proposal. Republican voters are more likely than Independents or Democrats to be undecided.



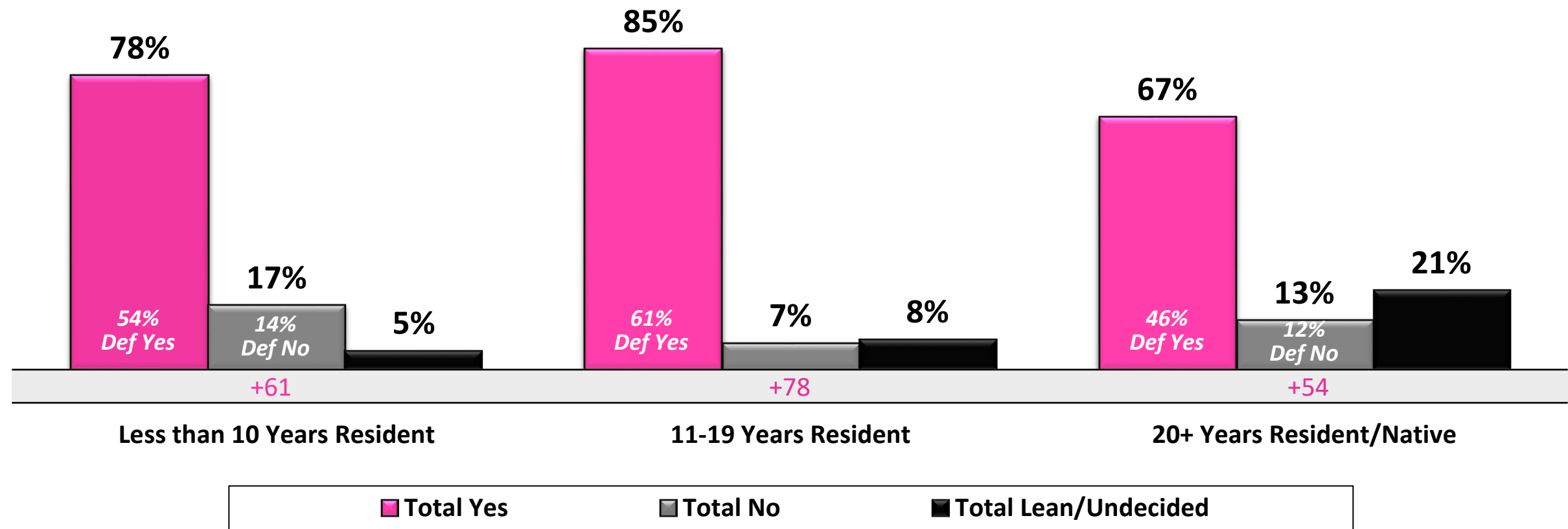
Initial Ballot – Create RTA

Support is strongest in Steamboat, but voters across the region support creating the RTA.



Initial Ballot – Create RTA

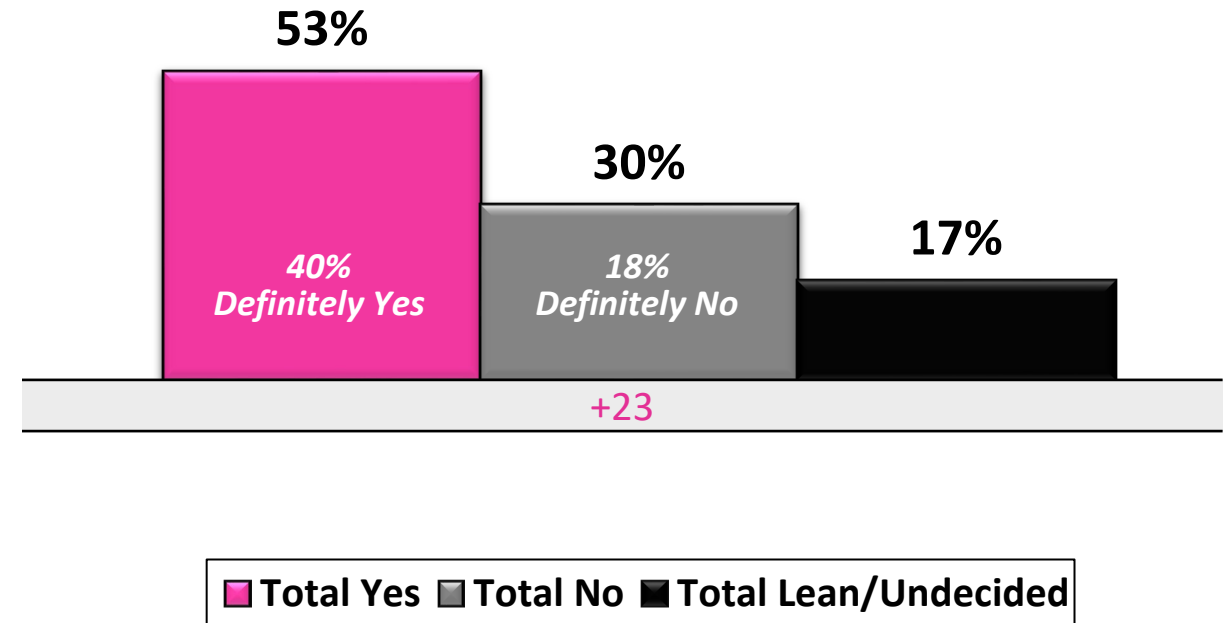
There is solid support for the creation of the RTA regardless of length of residency.



Initial Ballot – Create RTA

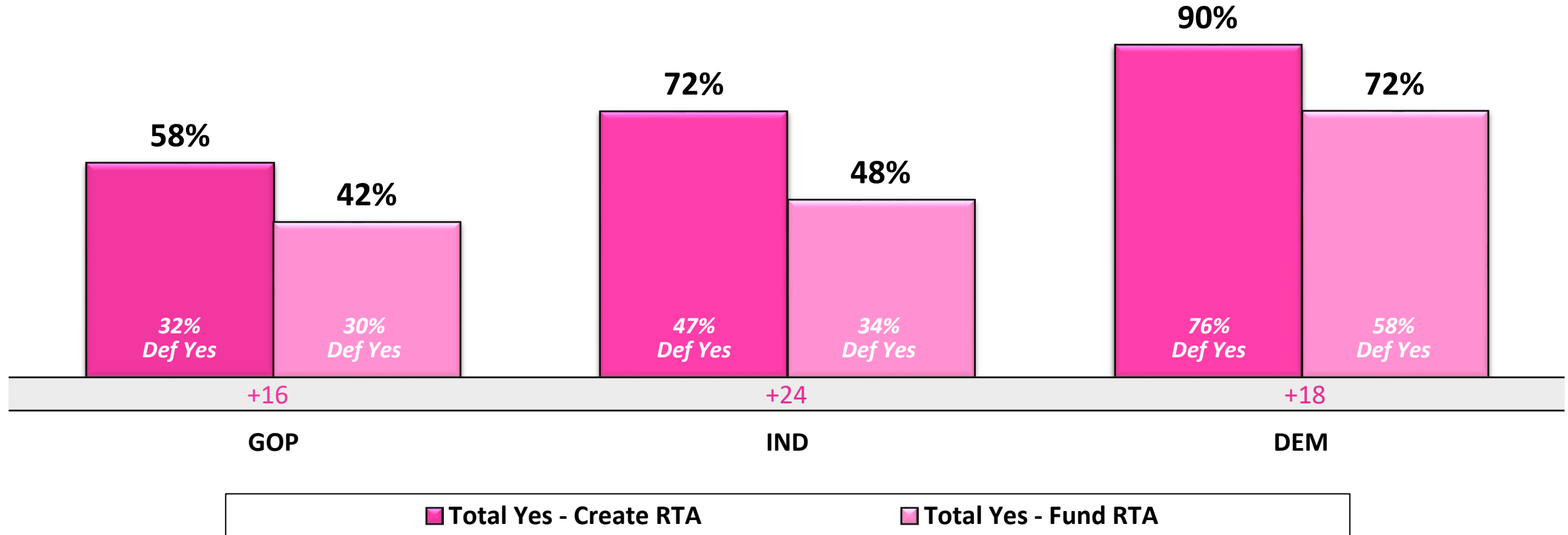
A majority is supportive of the potential proposal to fund the RTA and two-in-five say they would definitely vote yes.

There could be another proposal regarding the Yampa Valley Transportation Authority. It would seek to increase sales taxes by 1 percent, which is 1 dollar on a 100 dollar sale on every retail transaction – excluding groceries and residential utilities – to fund the operations and transportation improvements of the proposed Regional Transportation Authority.



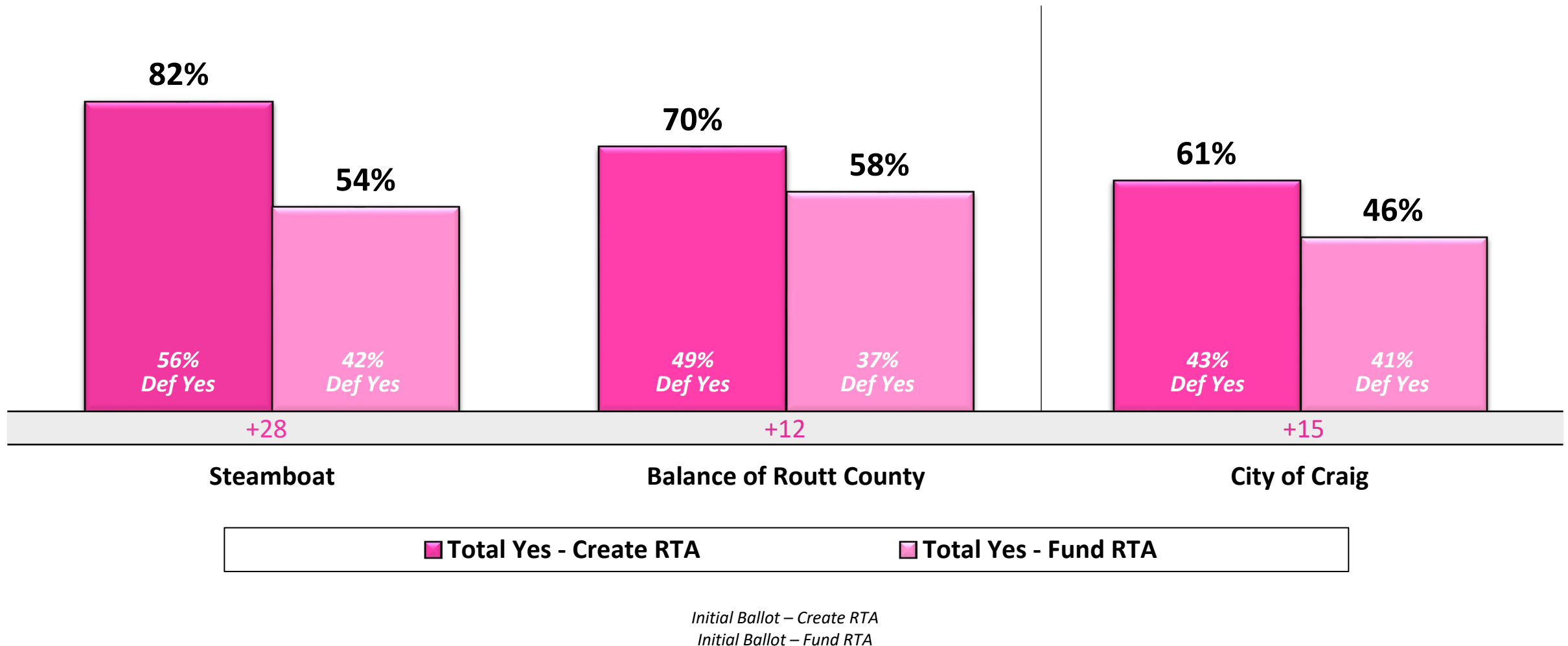
If the election were being held today, whether you would vote Yes in favor or No against this proposal?

Support is lower across party lines for the potential funding measure compared to the proposal to create the RTA, particularly among Republicans and Independents.

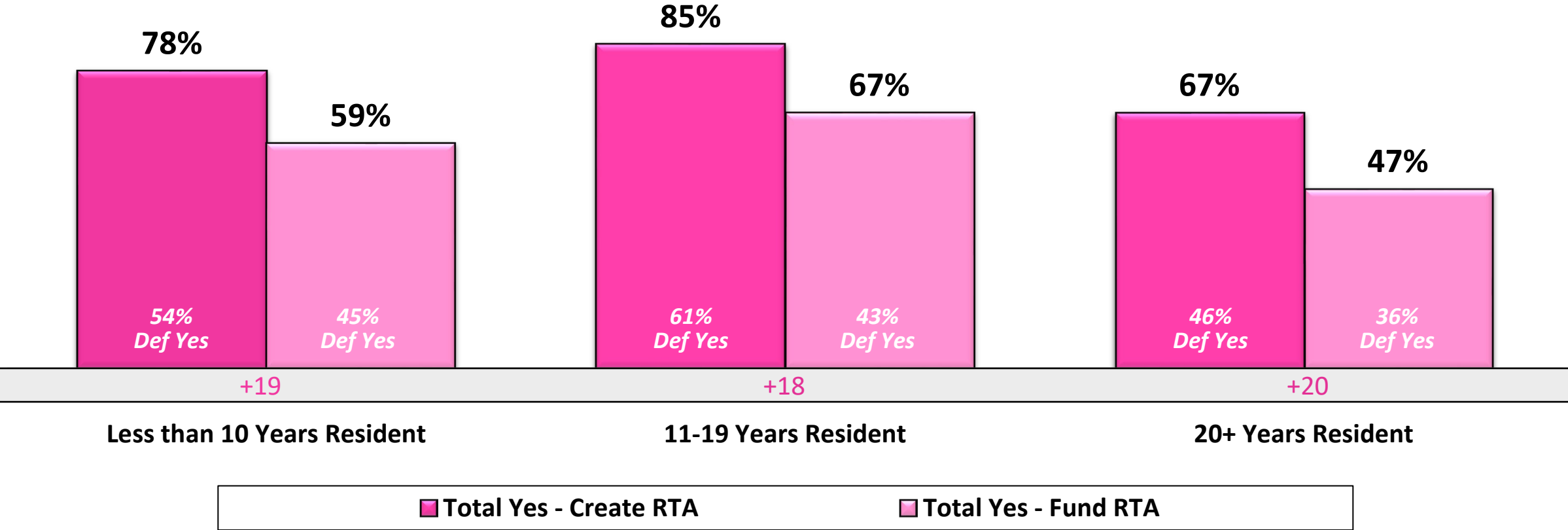


Initial Ballot – Create RTA
Initial Ballot – Fund RTA

Routt County voters are more likely to be supportive of the funding measure than voters in the City of Craig.

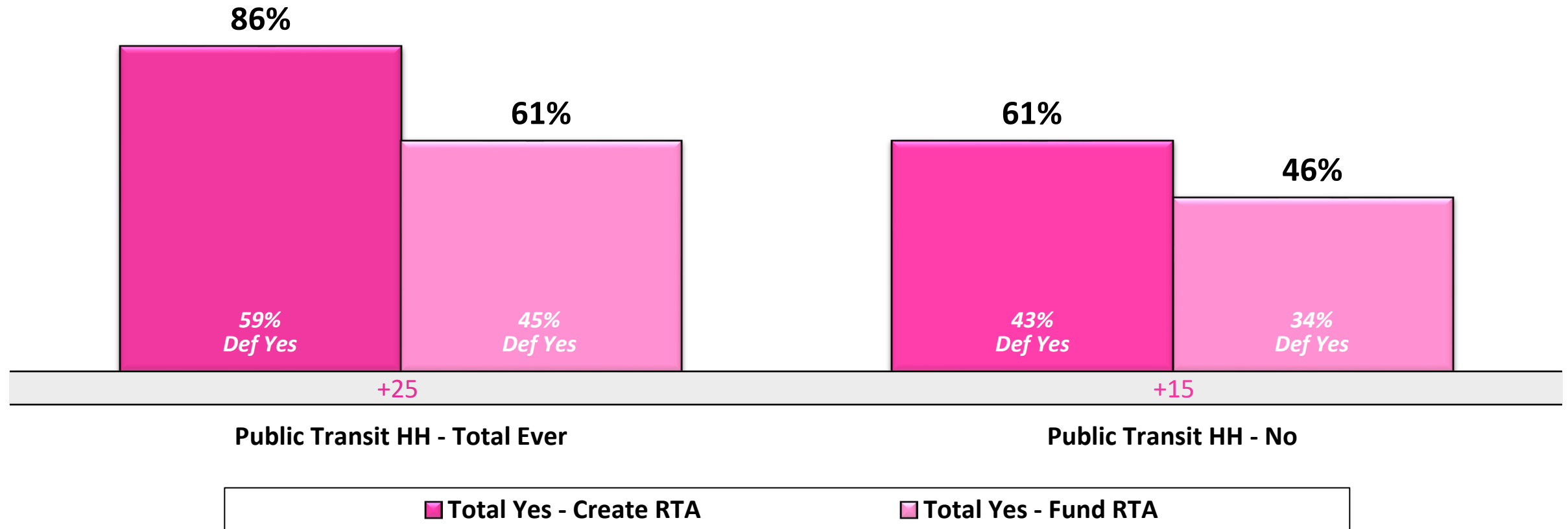


Longer-term residents are opposed to the funding proposal, however, that is more than likely a function of age. Older voters tend to be more averse to raising taxes.



Initial Ballot – Create RTA
Initial Ballot – Fund RTA

Those who have used public transit are more supportive of both proposals than those who have not.



Initial Ballot – Create RTA
Initial Ballot – Fund RTA

Reducing traffic and providing reliable transportation for commuters are the top reasons voters say they would support the proposal.

1. Reduce traffic congestion on roads and highways

2. Provide reliable transportation for workforce commuting to Steamboat

Improve general public transportation services and options
Enhance safety on dangerous roads, especially Highway 40
Decrease number of personal vehicles on roads
Benefit overall community wellbeing and quality of life
Reduce environmental impact and emissions from vehicles
Connect outlying communities to Steamboat Springs
Develop passenger rail service between communities
Support economic growth and workforce development
Create more affordable transportation options

"Too many cars and people are commuting anyway."
Male, Age 55-64, GOP

"Increased transportation opportunities for our bedroom-community workforce are crucial to saving our economy."
Male, Age 18-34, DEM

"We have got to do something to help businesses get workers and then get workers to Steamboat in a safer way than each driving a vehicle!"
Female, Age 65+, GOP

What are the one or two main reasons why you would vote Yes on this proposal?

Concerns about the already high tax burden are top of mind for voters who say they would vote no.

1. Already paying too much in taxes

Lack of information/details about the plan
Would not personally use or benefit from the service
Government waste/mismanagement concerns
Prefer alternative funding sources
Fixed/limited income concerns
Should reallocate existing funds
Need to focus on road improvements instead
Practicality issues
Concerned about creation of new government entity

2. Sales tax disproportionately impacts lower-income residents

“With rampant, out-of-control government spending at all levels, the last thing we need is yet another tax increase.”

Male, Age 55-64, IND

“I would rather see the wealthy get taxed. I would rather see property or income tax go up.”

Female, Age 35-44, DEM

“Because it would be mismanaged by politicians, it would be a bottomless pit for public money.”

Male, Age 55-64, GOP

What are the one or two main reasons why you would vote No on this proposal?

A plurality of voters say they would vote yes on both proposals.

Yes on both

47%

Yes on create/no on fund

26%

No on both

15%

*Initial Ballot – Create RTA
Initial Ballot – Fund RTA*

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

More say that knowing about the Steamboat Ski Area pledge would make them feel more favorably towards the proposal. Over one-in-three say it wouldn't make a difference in their decision.



Total More Likely 51%

Total Less Likely 11%

No Difference 37%

If voters approve a funding measure, the Steamboat Ski Area has pledged a minimum of \$1,000,000 per year for 20 years to help fund transportation services through the Regional Transportation Authority. Knowing that, would you be more likely, or less likely to vote yes for the measure, or would it make any difference to you in your vote?

Just over three-in-four voters support the Mountain Rail Project. Hearing about the state's pledge does not significantly impact how voters feel.

Local governments have been advancing the Mountain Rail Project, which would reestablish passenger rail service for commuters between Craig, Hayden, Steamboat Springs and Oak Creek using the existing railroad tracks.

Would you say you support or oppose this potential Mountain Rail Project?

79%

51%
Strongly Support

20%

13%
Strongly Oppose

+59

The state of Colorado has pledged to upgrade the tracks, purchase the trains, and pay the fees associated with using the tracks.

Knowing that, would you support or oppose local funds being used to offset the cost of operation and thereby reduce fares for local passengers?

76%

40%
Strongly Support

23%

14%
Strongly Oppose

+53

■ **Total Support**

■ **Total Oppose**



Communicating About a Ballot Proposal

Over half say that each of the funding items we tested are extremely or very important to fund. Items about new routes in areas that aren't served by public transportation are deemed most important.

<i>Ranked by % Extremely/Very Important</i>	Extremely Important	Ext/Very Important
Providing new bus routes to areas without any public transportation such as Stagecoach, Oak Creek and Yampa*	61%	77%
Improving transportation options for local workers, families, and seniors across the Yampa Valley	38%	69%
Providing new bus routes to areas without any public transportation such as areas like Steamboat II and Heritage Park^	28%	64%
Enhancing public safety by maintaining and improving pedestrian access, crosswalks, wildlife crossings and other improvements	29%	61%
Participating in regional planning and funding for future commuter rail service between Craig, Hayden, Steamboat Springs, Oak Creek and Yampa	34%	58%
Increasing the number and frequency of regional buses between Craig, Hayden and Steamboat Springs	21%	56%
Providing dedicated bus service to the Yampa Valley Regional Airport for local airport workers and residents.	30%	53%
Establishing a new bus route to serve transportation needs within Craig and as a connecting service to the Highway 40 regional bus route**	37%	53%
Improving existing bus stops and adding new bus stops and park-and-rides for new and expanded bus routes	22%	51%

There are a number of different things that could be funded by the potential proposal to increase taxes for enhanced transportation services. Please indicate for each one of the following, how important it is that this item be funded. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important to you that that particular item be funded?

*Asked in South Routt ZIP CODES ONLY 80467, 80469, 80479, 80483, N=27, ^Asked in Steamboat to Craig areas ONLY - 80477, 80487, 80488, 81639, N=190, **Asked in City of Craig only, N=71

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

There are some distinctions by party in how much importance voters place on these items, but the same three items rise to the top regardless of political affiliation.

GOP
Providing new bus routes – Stagecoach/Oak Creek/Yampa* 34%
Establish new bus route in Craig 31%**
Improving transportation options for locals 24%
Participating in regional planning for mountain rail 23%
Providing buses for airport 20%

IND
Providing new bus routes – Stagecoach/Oak Creek/Yampa* 69%
Improving transportation options for locals 34%
Establish new bus route in Craig 33%**
Participating in regional planning for mountain rail 33%
Providing new bus routes – Steamboat II/Heritage^ 31%

DEM
Providing new bus routes – Stagecoach/Oak Creek/Yampa* 68%
Establish new bus route in Craig 67%**
Improving transportation options for locals 60%
Enhancing public safety 52%
Participating in regional planning for mountain rail 50%

Showing % Extremely Important

There are a number of different things that could be funded by the potential proposal to increase taxes for enhanced transportation services. Please indicate for each one of the following, how important it is that this item be funded. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important to you that that particular item be funded?

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NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

There are some important regional distinctions as well.

Steamboat
Improving transportation options for locals 43%
Participating in regional planning for mountain rail 41%
Providing buses for airport 35%
Enhancing public safety 34%
Providing new bus routes – Steamboat II/Heritage^ 32%

Balance of Routt County
Providing new bus routes – Stagecoach/Oak Creek/Yampa* 61%
Improving transportation options for locals 31%
Participating in regional planning for mountain rail 28%
Enhancing public safety 25%
Providing buses for airport 24%

City of Craig
Improving transportation options for locals 41%
Establish new bus route in Craig** 37%
Participating in regional planning for mountain rail 33%
Providing buses for airport 31%
Improving existing stops 28%

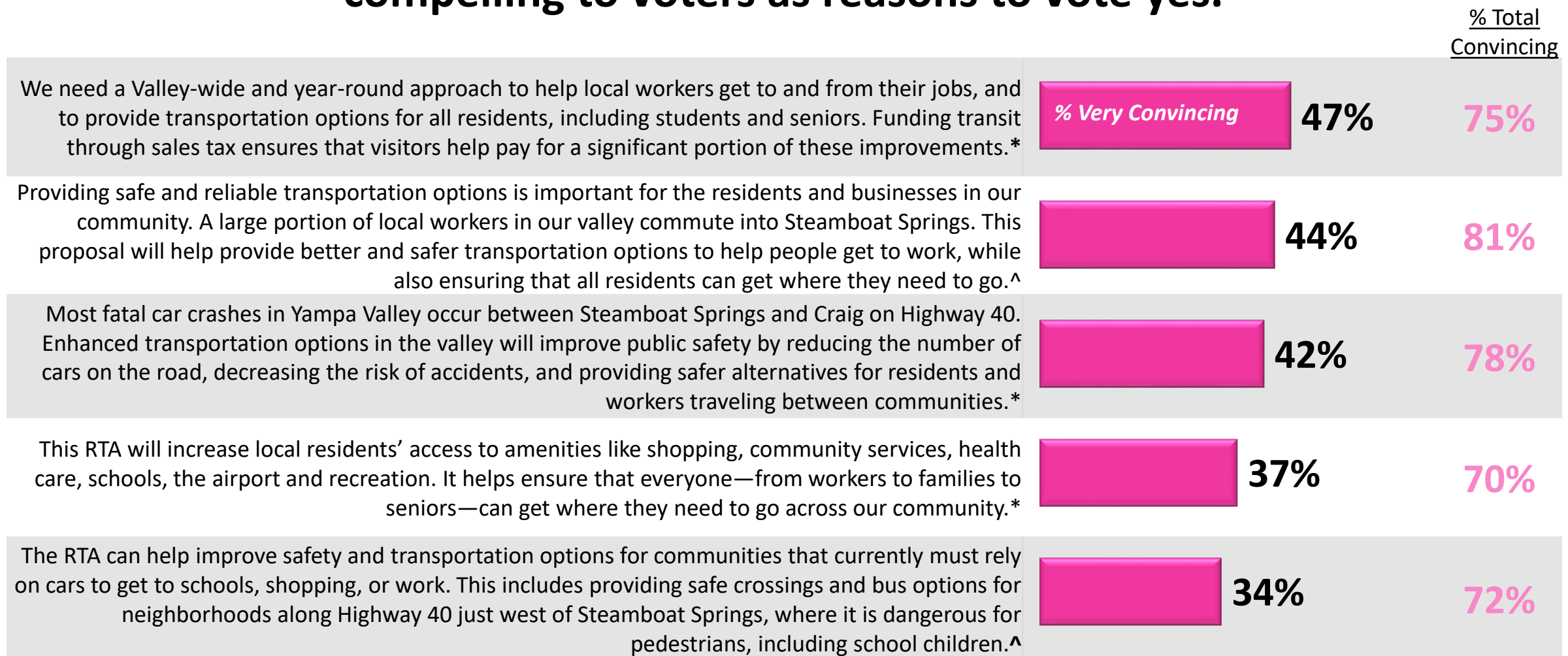
Showing % Extremely Important

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NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Statements emphasizing local transportation that is safe and reliable are most compelling to voters as reasons to vote yes.



Please consider some statements that people have made in support of the potential proposal to increase taxes for enhanced transportation services. For each one, please tell me whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF a possible measure...

*Sample A, N=150 ^Sample B, N=150

These messages are slightly less compelling, but all except one about climate change still resonate with voters.

		<u>% Total Convincing</u>
Residents of Craig will directly benefit from enhanced transportation services because tourists who come to ski and visit Steamboat would bear a large share of the cost. For example, Craig could receive a local circulator bus and expanded regional service to Steamboat Spring and the airport if this measure is passed—and only pay a portion of the costs through a local sales tax.**	% Very Convincing 33%	53%
Establishing a Regional Transportation Authority demonstrates the collaborative spirit among our communities, employers, and other partners. The RTA would allow our region to improve its transportation systems, provide more bus options, expand service to areas without transportation options, and continue to be a partner on the future of rail in our area.*	31%	74%
More than 40% of the sales tax in Routt County is paid by people who do not live in the area, which means people who come here to visit and ski would be bearing a portion of the cost to provide improved transportation options.^^	31%	68%
The Steamboat Ski Area has planned to contribute at least \$1,000,000 per year for the next 20 years to this public transportation effort which will help alleviate the impact of visitors on the local community.^	30%	67%
Increasing the number of public transportation options in our community will reduce the carbon pollution that contributes to climate change.^	22%	57%

Please consider some statements that people have made in support of the potential proposal to increase taxes for enhanced transportation services. For each one, please tell me whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF a possible measure...

*Sample A, N=150 ^Sample B, N=150 **Asked in City of Craig only, N=71 ^^Asked in Routt County only, N=229

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Republicans are significantly less convinced by these messages than voters of other parties.

GOP
Craig will directly benefit** 26%
Valley-wide/year-round approach* 26%
Providing safe/reliable options for residents & businesses^ 24%
Fatal car crashes – Highway 40* 22%
Help alleviate the impact of visitors 19%

IND
Valley-wide/year-round approach* 47%
Providing safe/reliable options for residents & businesses^ 47%
Fatal car crashes – Highway 40* 44%
RTA will increase local residents' access* 39%
Help improve safety^ 34%

DEM
Valley-wide/year-round approach* 70%
Providing safe/reliable options for residents & businesses^ 62%
Fatal car crashes – Highway 40* 61%
RTA will increase local residents' access* 58%
Craig will directly benefit** 54%

Showing % Very Convincing

Please consider some statements that people have made in support of the potential proposal to increase taxes for enhanced transportation services. For each one, please tell me whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF a possible measure...

*Sample A, N=150 ^Sample B, N=150 **Asked in City of Craig only, N=71

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

There are regional differences in which messages resonate the most with voters.

Steamboat
Fatal car crashes – Highway 40* 57%
Valley-wide/year-round approach* 52%
Providing safe/reliable options for residents & businesses^ 47%
RTA will increase local residents' access* 46%
40% of sales tax^^ 42%

Remainder of Routt
Providing safe/reliable options for residents & businesses^ 42%
Steamboat Ski Area to contribute \$1,000,000^ 38%
Valley-wide/year-round approach* 36%
RTA will increase local residents' access* 33%
Fatal car crashes – Highway 40* 32%

City of Craig
Valley-wide/year-round approach* 55%
Providing safe/reliable options for residents & businesses^ 43%
Craig will directly benefit** 33%
Fatal car crashes – Highway 40* 33%
Collaborative spirit* 33%

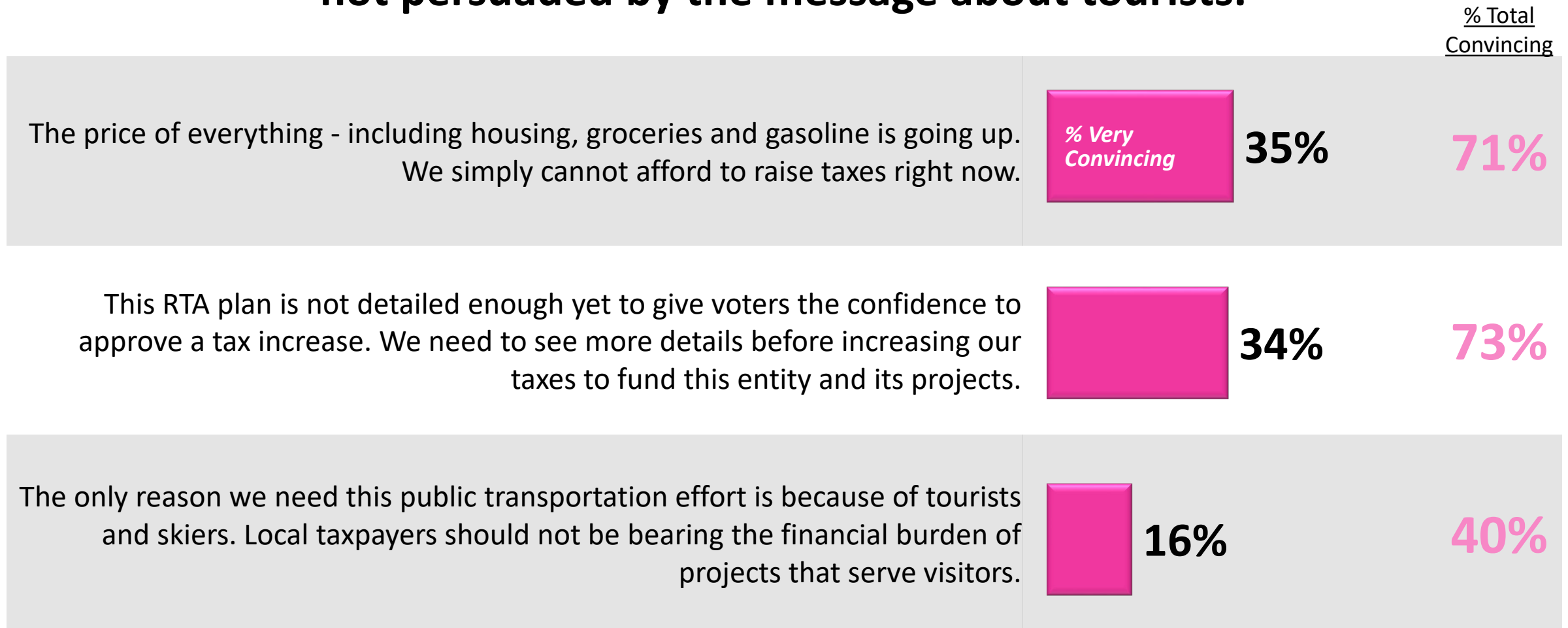
Showing % Very Convincing

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NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

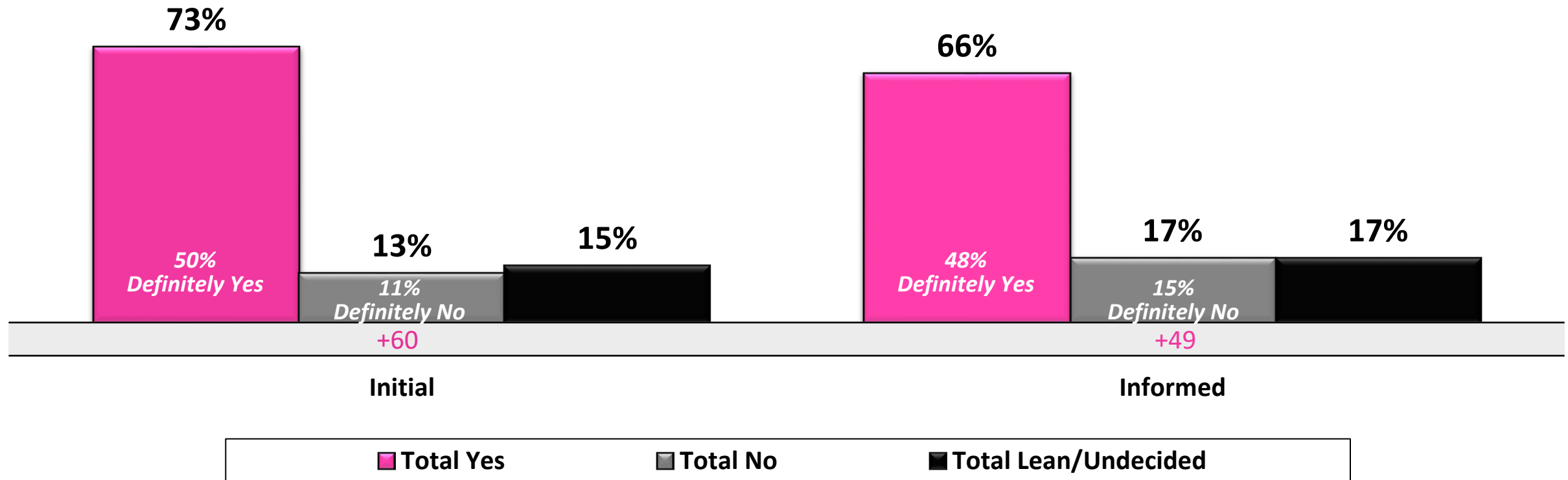
More than one-in-three find the top two messages very convincing. They are not persuaded by the message about tourists.



Please consider some statements that people have made against the potential proposal to increase taxes for enhanced transportation services. For each one, please tell me whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF a possible measure...

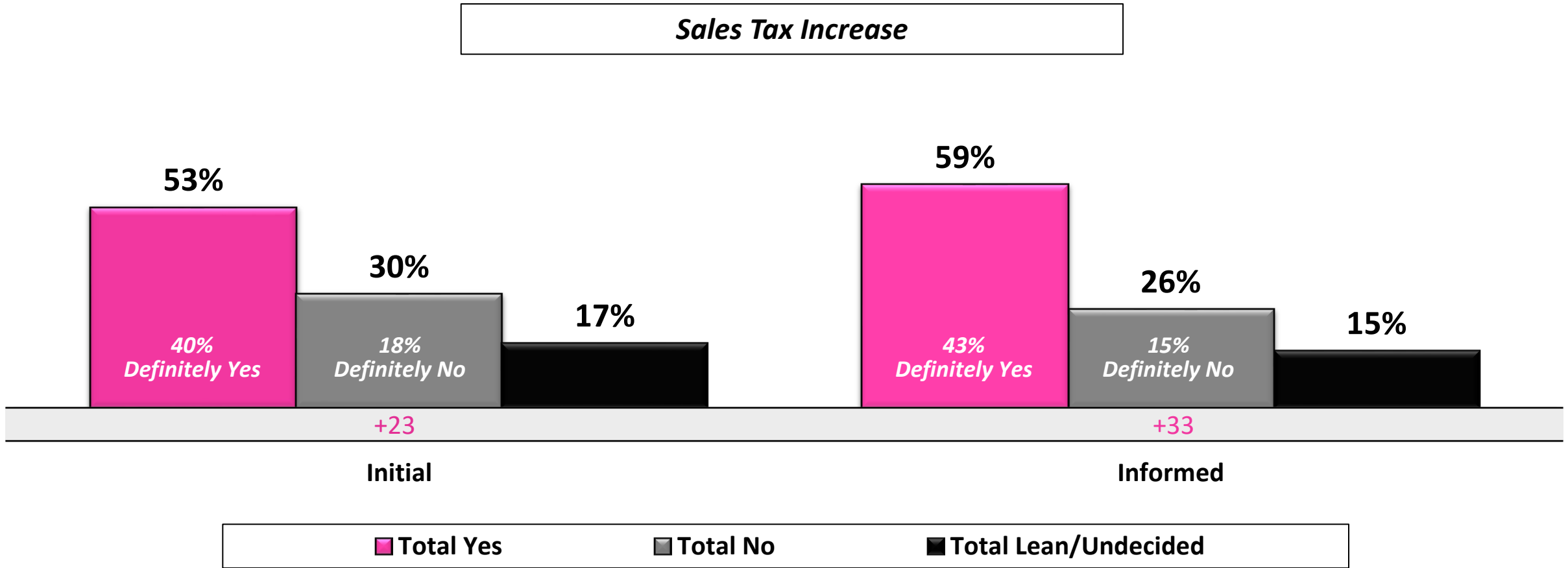
Support drops modestly after voters learn more, but remains strong with two-in-three in support of the proposal establishing the RTA.

Establish Yampa Valley Transportation Authority



Having heard more I would like you to consider these proposals again and indicate if the election were being held today, whether you would vote Yes in favor or No against each of the proposals.

And there is modest increase in support for the proposal to fund the RTA.



Having heard more I would like you to consider these proposals again and indicate if the election were being held today, whether you would vote Yes in favor or No against each of the proposals.



The Bottom Line

The Bottom Line

- When we test the creation of the RTA and the funding of the RTA conceptually (not actual ballot language), both potential proposals receive majority support. Nearly three-in-four say they would vote yes on the creation of the RTA, including voters across major subgroups such as party, region, and length of residence.
- 53 percent of voters say they would vote yes on the proposal to increase sales tax to fund the RTA, and one-in-three say they would vote no. Those in favor of the proposal see the new RTA as a critical service to address traffic and commuting issues in the region. The voters opposed to the proposal say they would vote no because they feel taxes are already too high and the sales tax would disproportionately affect working-class and lower-income families.
- Items that would receive funding from this sales tax proposal are viewed by voters as as extremely or very important to fund. Providing new bus routes in areas without public transportation, improving transportation options for residents, and enhancing public safety rise to the top as most important to fund.
- Statements emphasizing local transportation that is safe and reliable resonate the most. Talking about improving safety on Highway 40 is also compelling.
- After learning more, the final concept tests remain solid, with fully two-in-three voters saying they would vote yes. Support increases slightly on the sales tax proposal, with nearly three-in-five saying they would vote yes.



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