



Community Mail Survey

PRESENTED BY BILL RAY, WR COMMUNICATIONS INC.

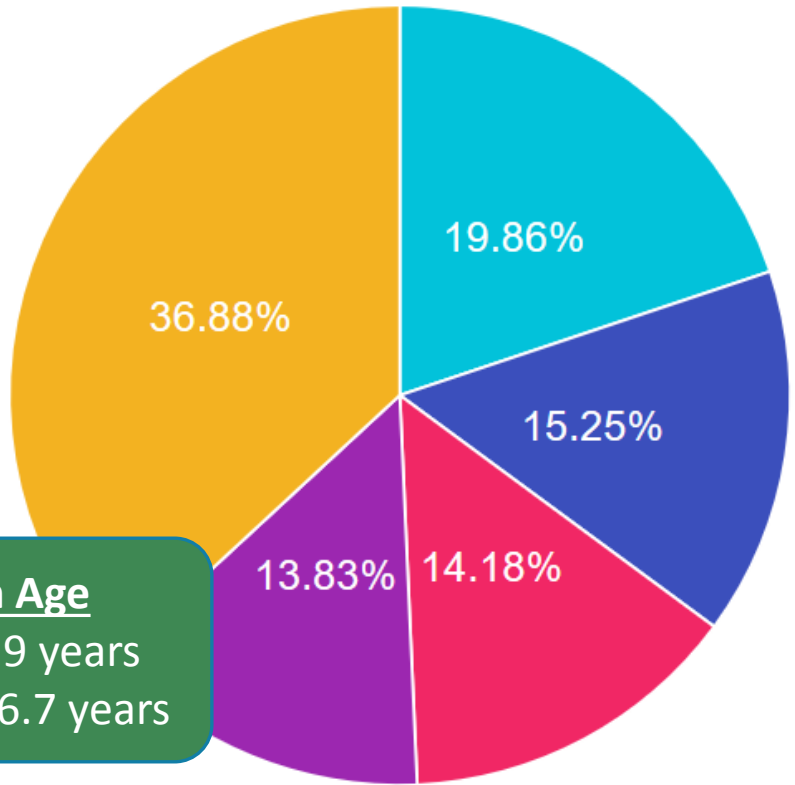
APRIL 23, 2019

Methodology

- Unable to conduct a “scientific” survey
 - Town so small that it would have been cost-prohibitive to complete a statistical survey
- Survey mailed in early March to 1,529 households
 - List pulled from SoS database, was “householded” and then run against NCOA database
- Respondents could complete survey online or return by mail
 - Mail surveys were entered by third-party, any identifiers were removed
- 282 completed surveys were submitted
 - 233 completed online, 49 returned via mail
 - Notable difference between online and mail surveys: 65% of mail respondents noted residency of 16 or more years
- 18.4% completion rate
 - Typically pleased with a 4 to 6 percent return rate

Demographics

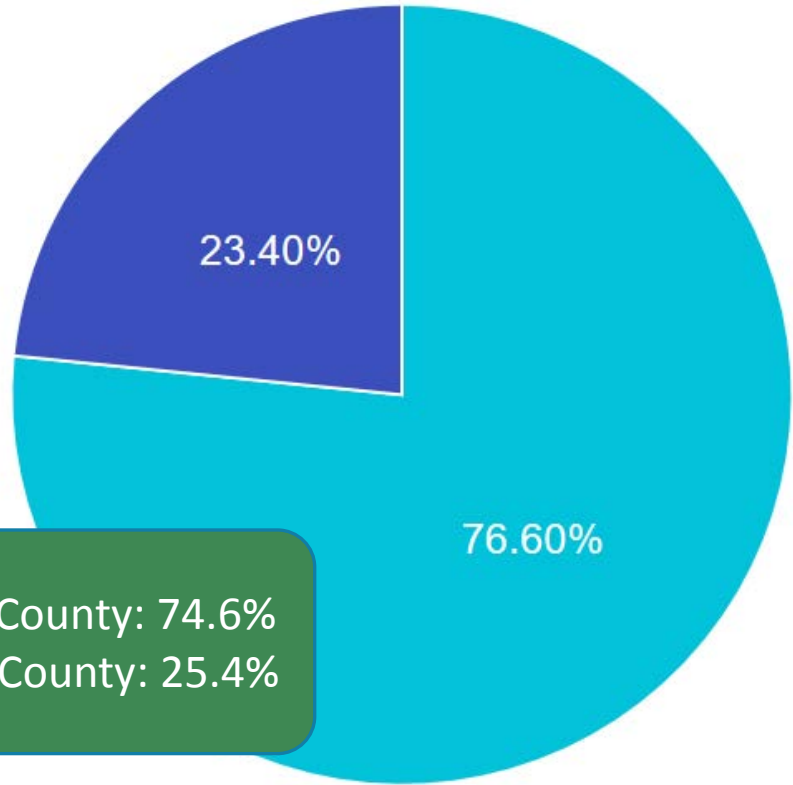
Length of Residency



Median Age
Basalt: 43.9 years
Colorado: 36.7 years

- 0 to 5
- 6 to 10
- 11 to 15
- 16 to 20
- 20 or longer

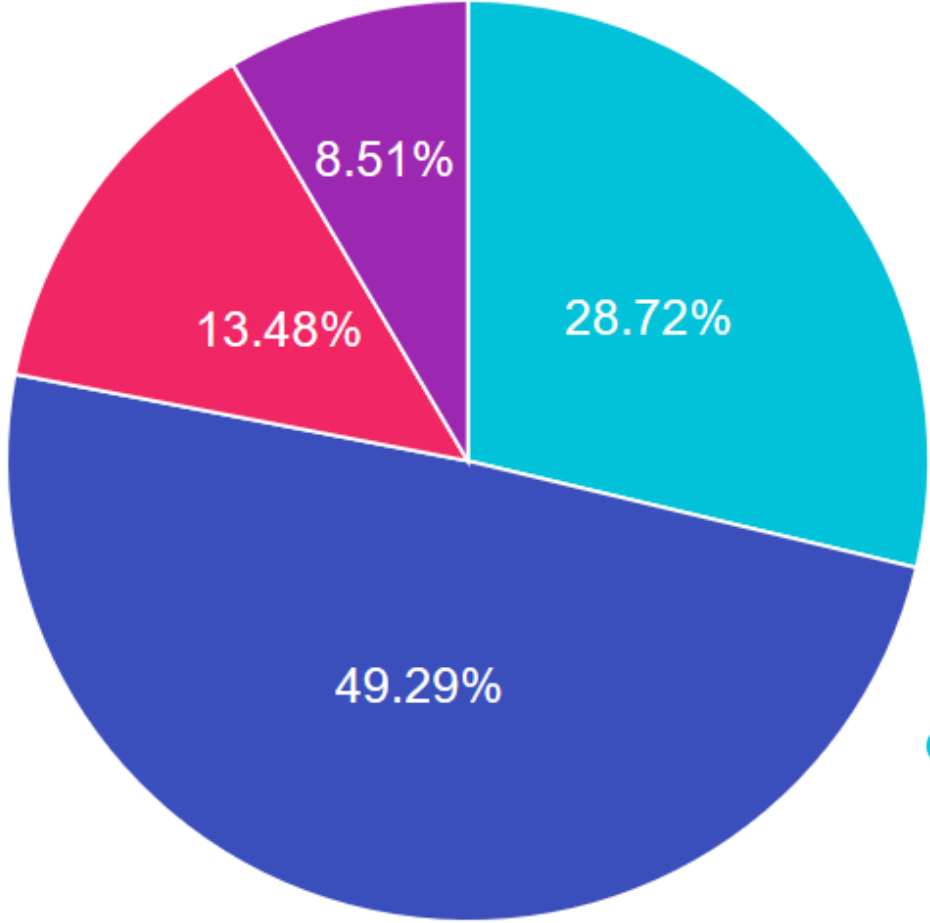
County of Residency



Eagle County: 74.6%
Pitkin County: 25.4%

- Eagle County
- Pitkin County

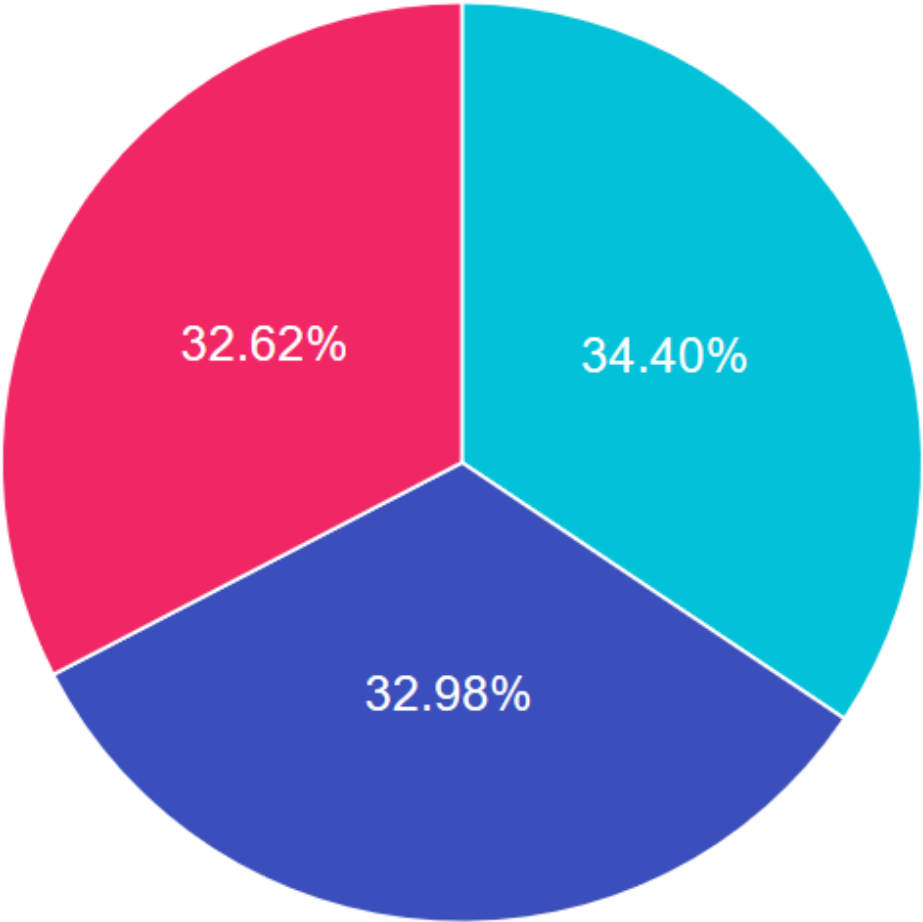
High Awareness of Mill Levy Issue



Before receiving this information, how much would you say you have read or heard about the Town’s mill levy issue?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Nothing at all

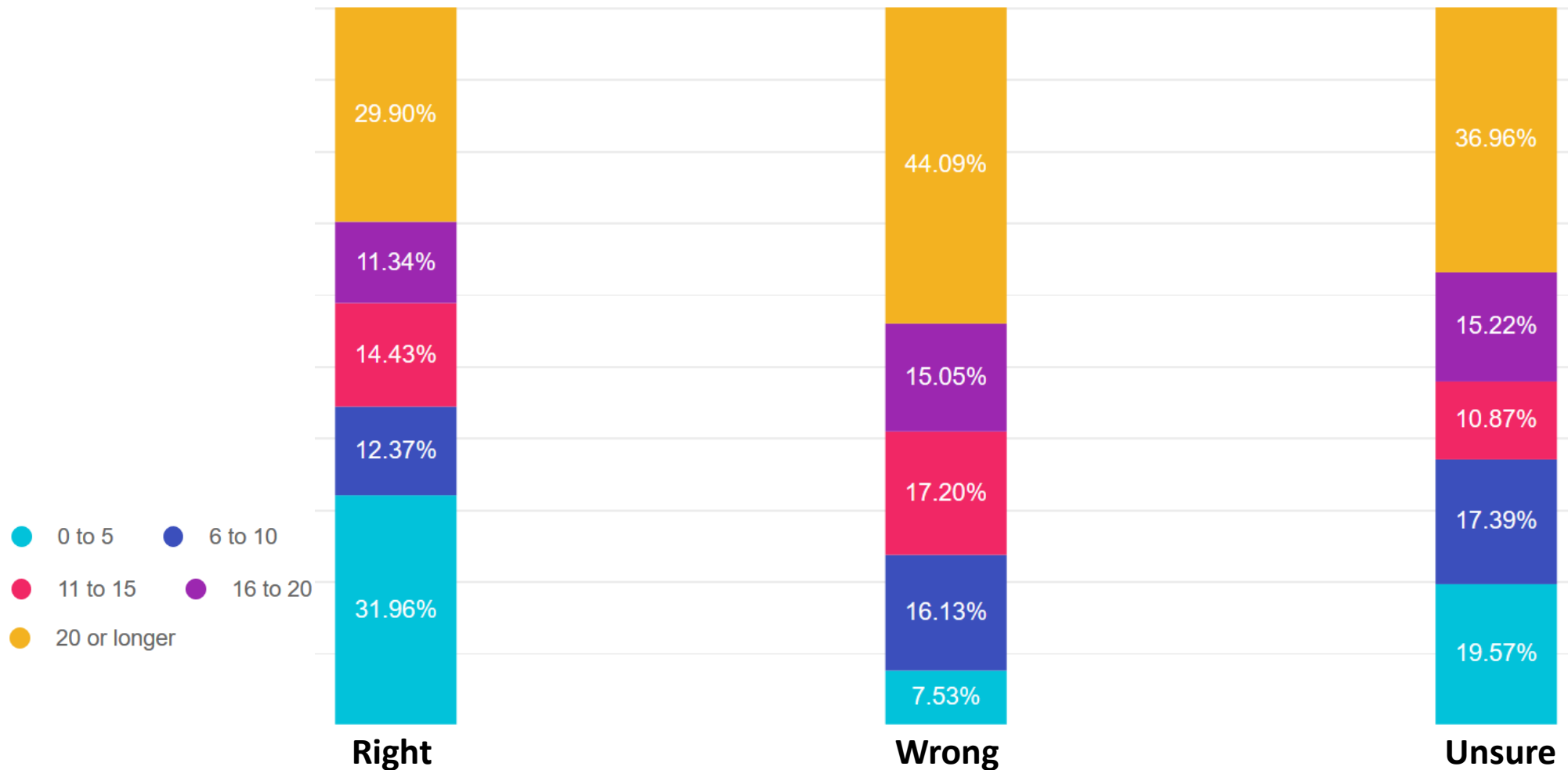
Near Even Split on Right-Wrong Track



In general, would you say that the Town of Basalt is on the right track or heading in the wrong direction?

- Right track
- Wrong track
- Unsure

Opinion of Town Impacted by Residency Length



“A mistake was made, money spent, make sure we comply in the future.”

–Eagle County resident for more than 20 years

“The Town recognized the administrative issue that ran afoul of TABOR rules and disclosed the potential issue to citizens. The Town has researched the issue and engaged available experts. The Town is seeking citizen input as it considers potential remedies.”

–Eagle County resident of 6 to 10 years

Comments from respondents who noted Right Track

“I believe that we have a great little Town with great services. The staff and Council try hard to make a difference and it shows.”

–Pitkin County resident of 0 to 5 years

“The current leadership did not create this problem, but is taking the right approach in bringing it forward publicly. Emphasis should continue on the past reductions in the levy and the inevitable damage if refunds are made.”

–Eagle County resident of 16 to 20 years

“For a mistake like this to happen and to not have anyone catch this TABOR issue is unacceptable. Our town government is awful.”

–Pitkin County resident for 6 to 20 years

“The Town seems to speak differently about the same issue, depending on their goals and how they might be perceived as being affected by these issues. If the Town has the funds to address the River Park without raising taxes they should have the funds to do the right thing and refund their overcharges on property tax.”

–Pitkin County resident of 16 to 20 years

Comments from respondents who noted Wrong Track

“I feel these funds need to be returned to the taxpayers who put the money in this fund. How can you say you’re going to have to cut out other areas when you collected too much in taxes? Does not make sense.”

–Eagle County resident of more than 20 years

“There is an awful lot of discussion about what services we have to give up. Over the past few years it appears that the town council continues to spend a lot of our money on non-essential business. Things that were clearly stated by the taxpayers and community that we do not agree with.”

–Eagle County resident of 6 to 10 years

“Pan and Fork project process is a disaster.”

–Eagle County for more than 20 years

“Basalt produces/shares very little about various master-planning processes. It is difficult to judge a course of action without a benchmark to compare against. Basalt should consider a public meeting/forum that visits neighborhoods instead of always asking citizens to come to town hall. This is particularly important for landuse/land planning/capital projects ”

–Pitkin County resident of 11 to 15 years

Comments from respondents who were Unsure

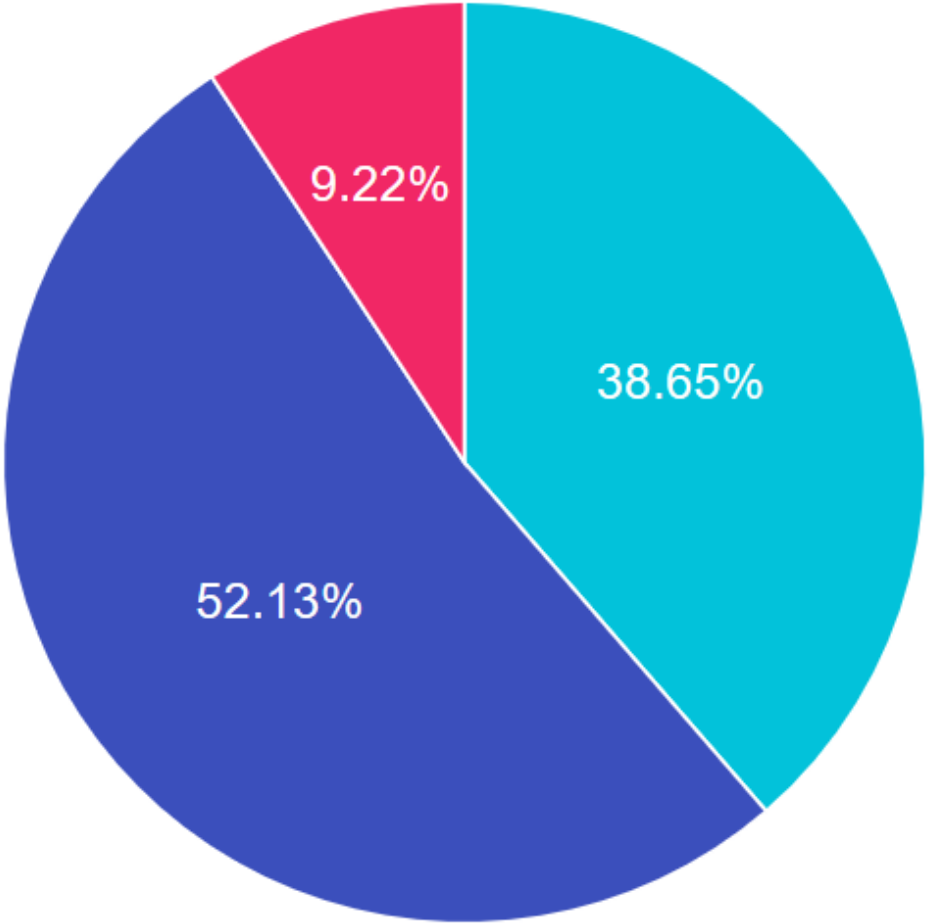
“Town seems divided and lacks some identity. I love the people in this town, it’s a great community—but we seem to be lacking some direction and leadership.”

–Pitkin County resident of 6 to 10 years

“Between the fiasco of the Roaring Fork property and lack of financial oversight related to the Property Tax issue, I have no confidence in the Town's ability to effectively govern. ”

–Eagle County resident of 11 to 15 years

Lower Mill Levy Favored

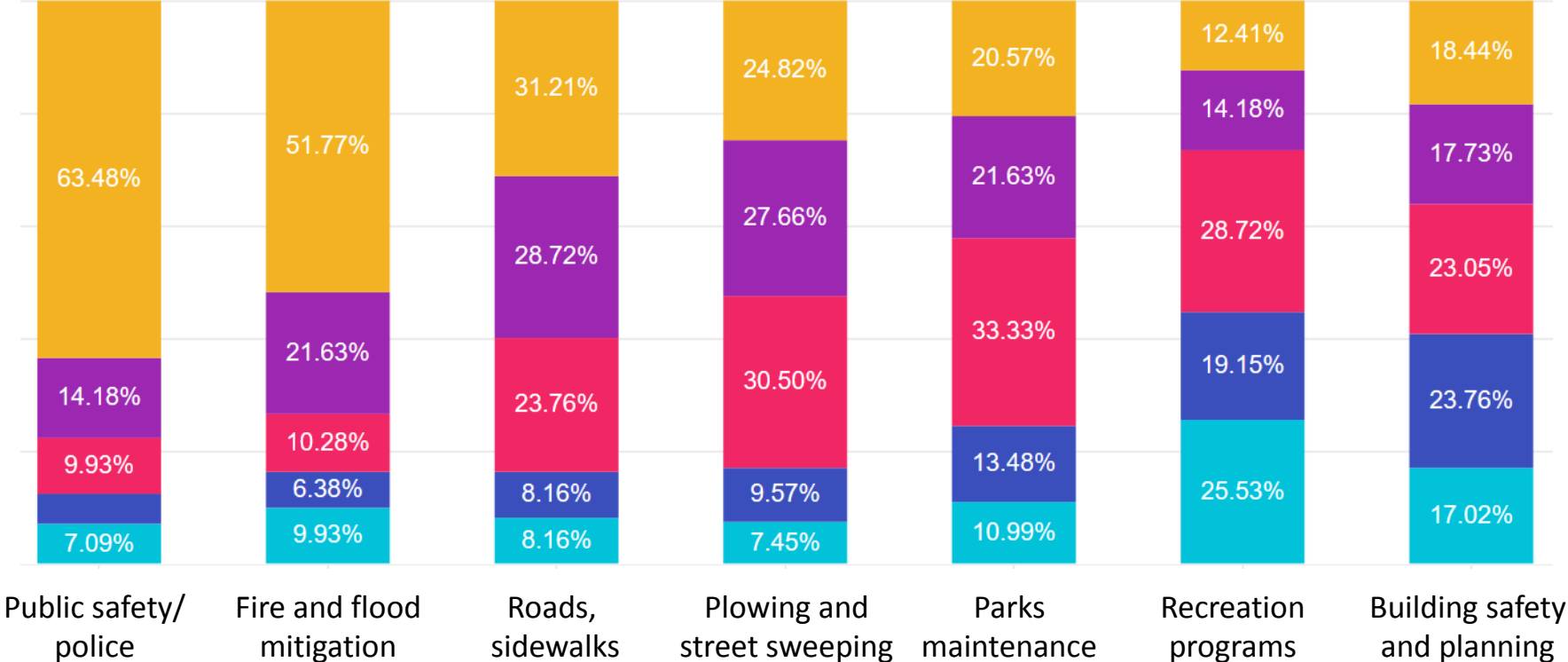


Please share your opinion about how you believe the Town of Basalt should view its priority for addressing this mill levy issue.

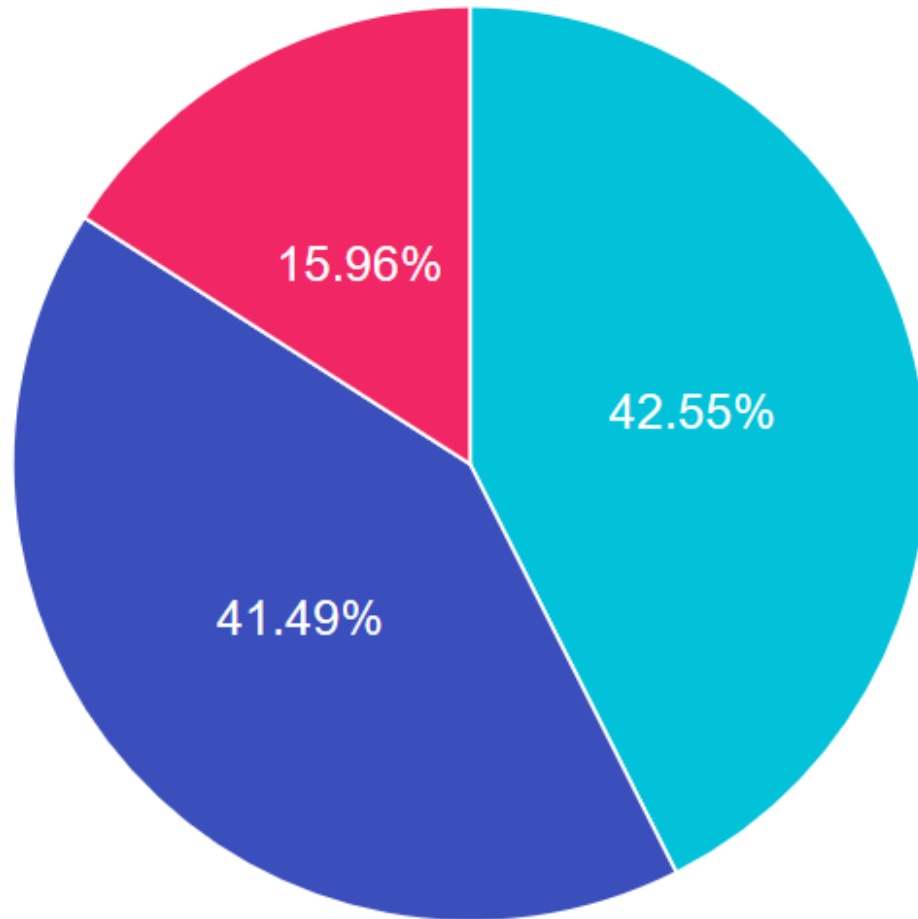
- Set the general mill levy at the current rate to continue services like public safety, parks and recreation, road maintenance, and fire and flood mitigation.
- Lower the mill levy rate and/or provide refunds to taxpayers, even if that means the Town will reduce some services.
- Unsure

Public Safety and Fire/Flood Top Priorities

If the Town of Basalt has to provide refunds and reduce its mill levy, it will have to reduce services in order to cut the Town’s budget. Please denote which Town services are most important to you, with 5 being highest and 1 being lowest.



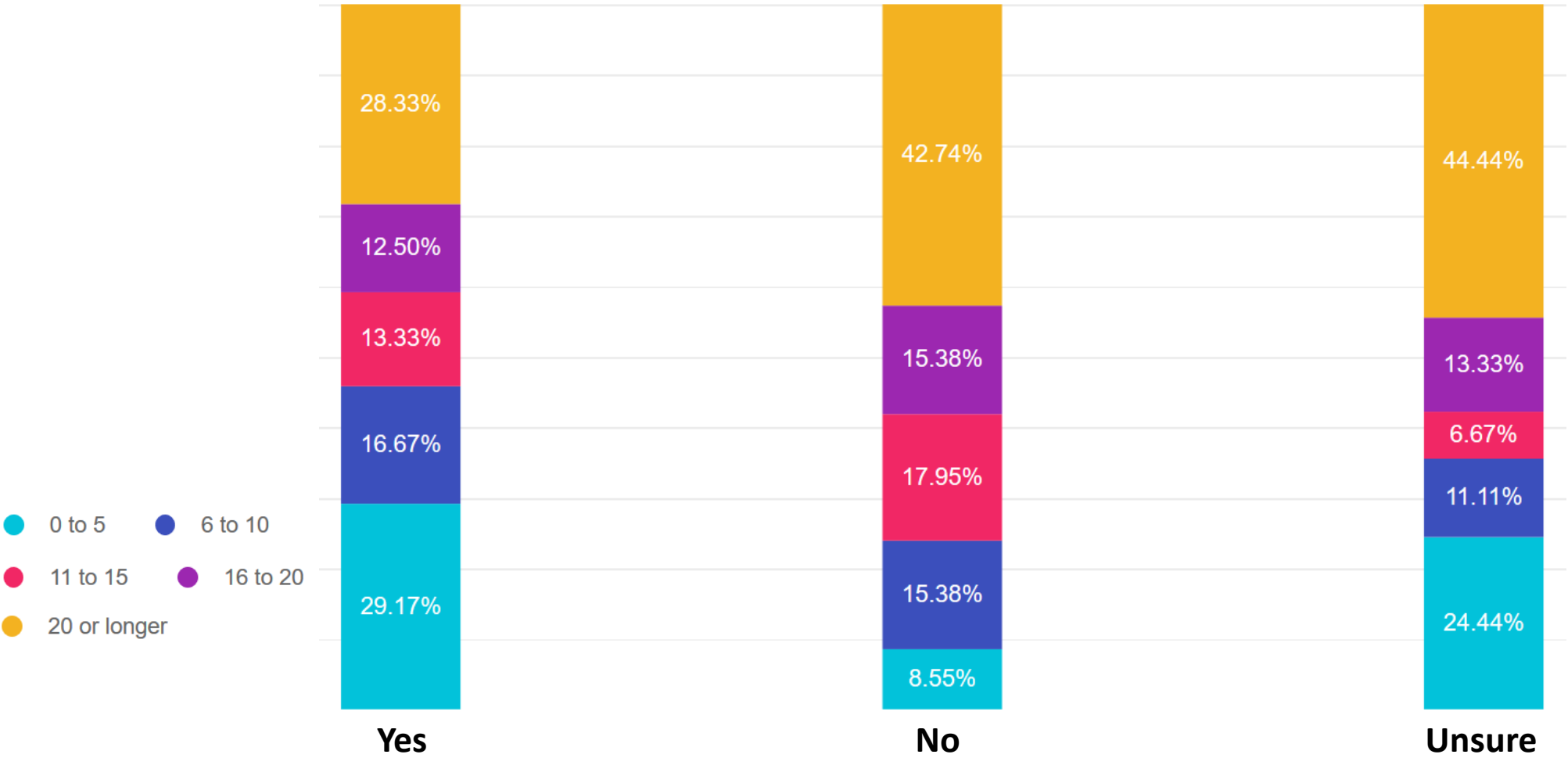
Setting Mill Levy Has Slight Edge



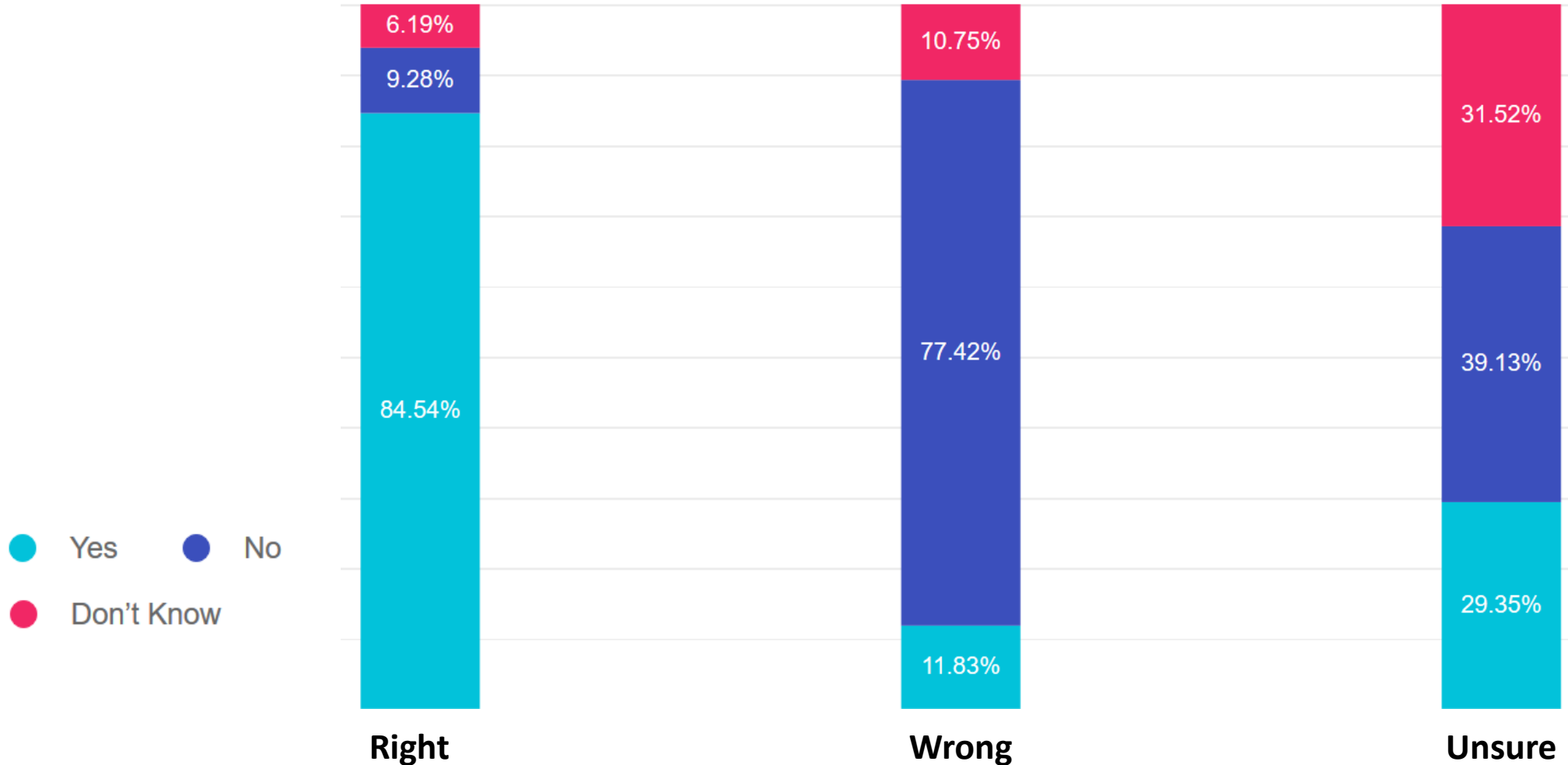
If an election were held today, would you vote “yes” in favor, or “no” to oppose, to allow the Town of Basalt to maintain its property tax at the current rate of 5.957? The 5.957 rate would become the Town’s permanent rate to fund operations and services moving ahead.

● Yes ● No ● Don't Know

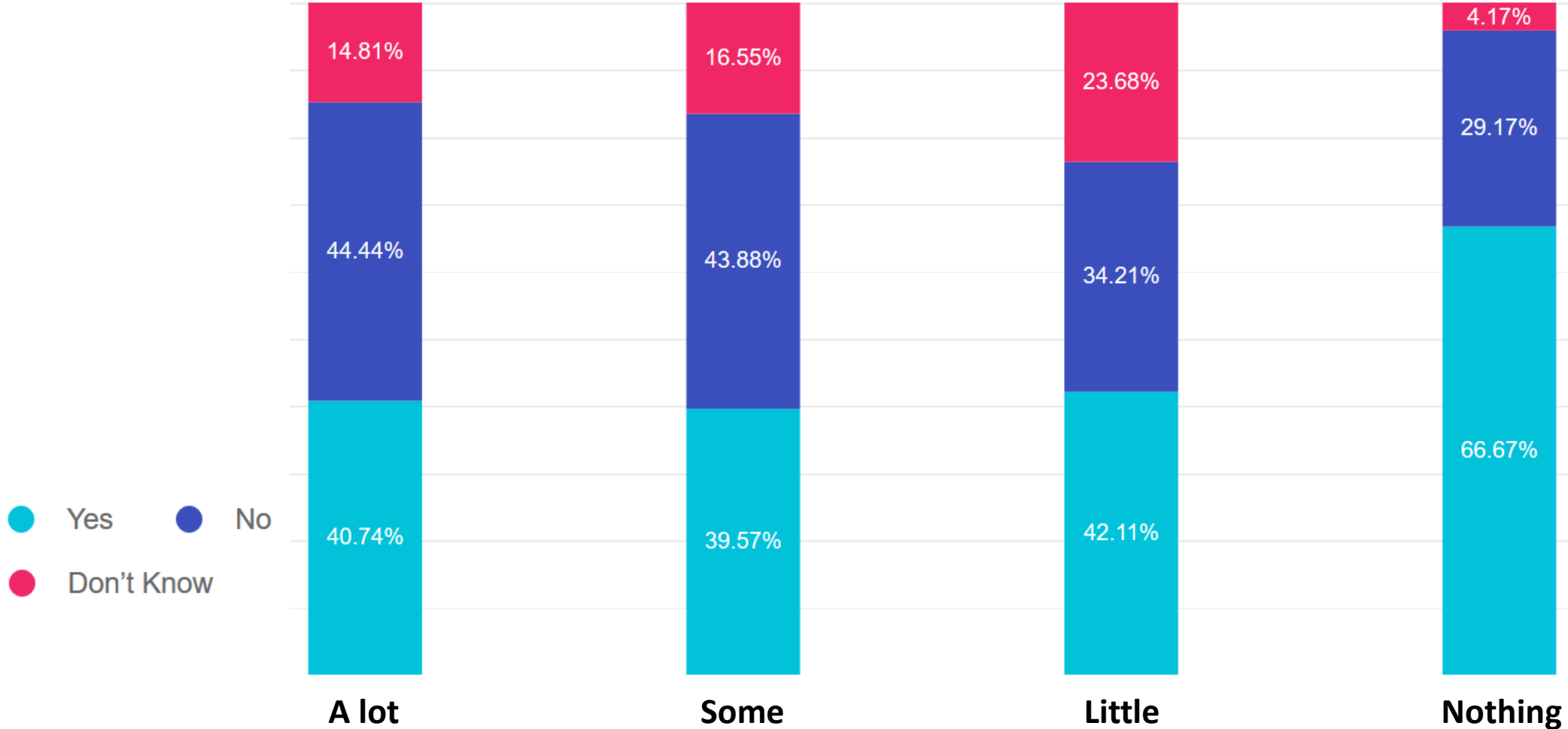
Mill Levy Impacted by Residency Length



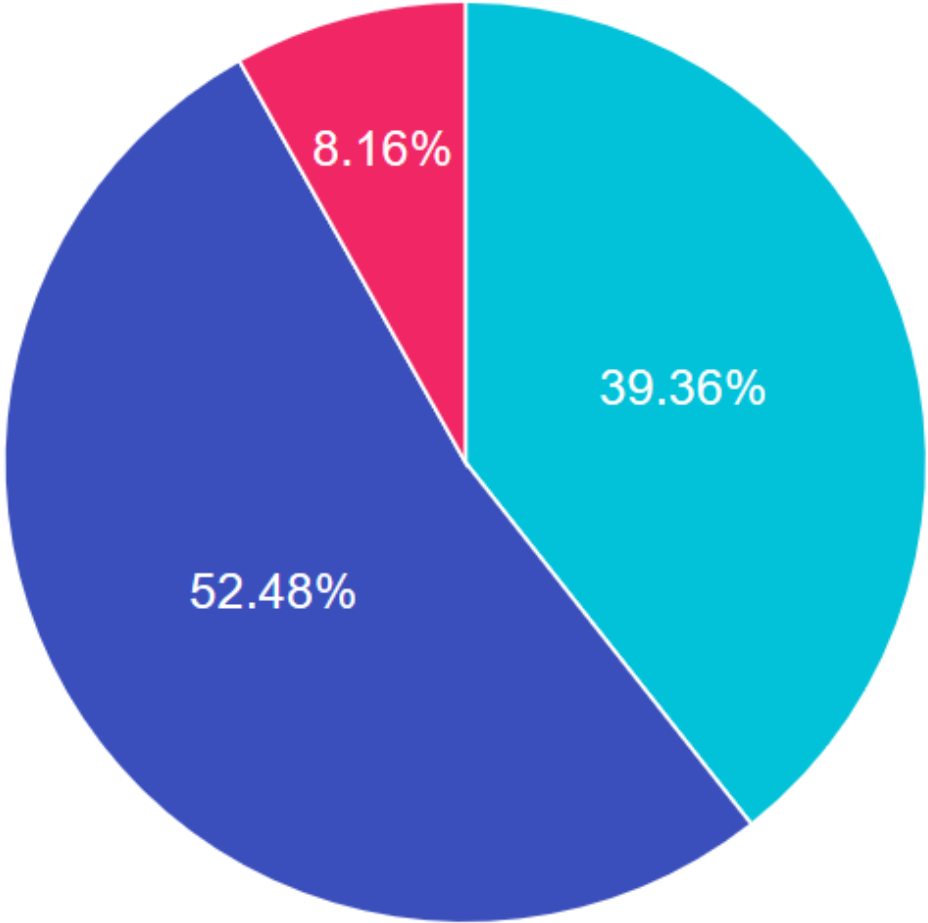
Mill Levy Support Follows Right-Wrong Track



Mill Levy Changes With Awareness



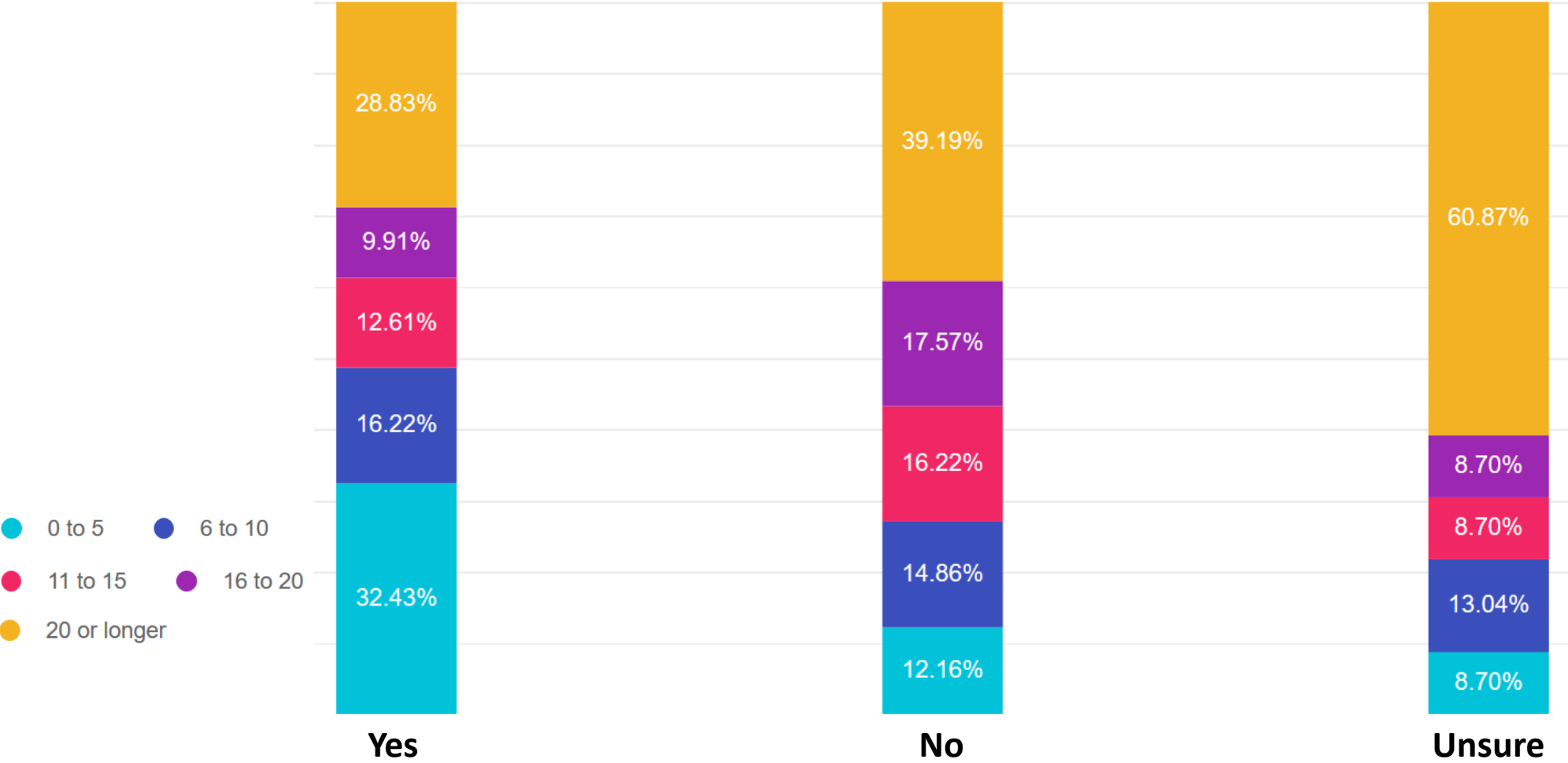
Majority Favors Refund



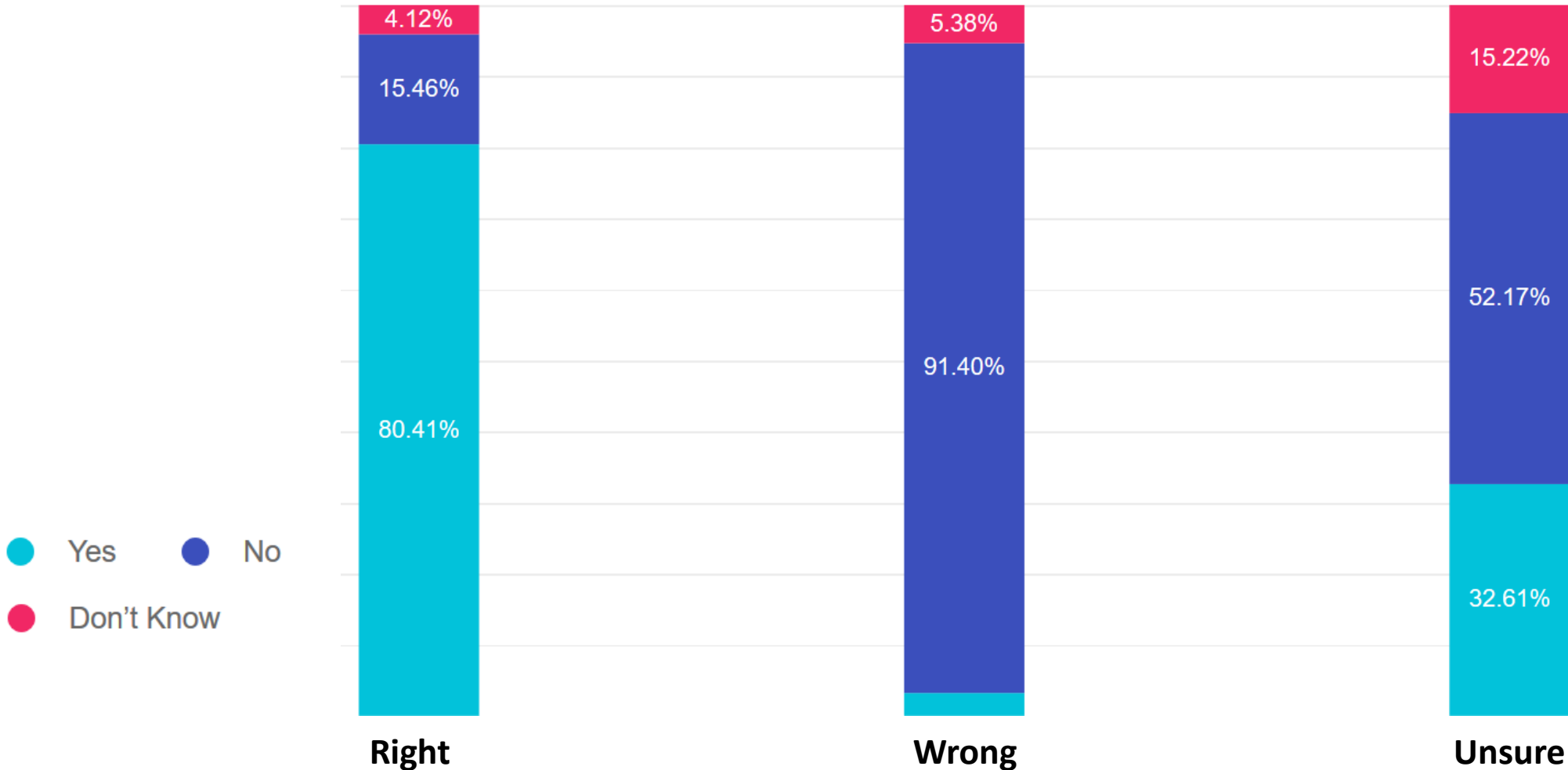
Would you vote “yes” in favor, or “no” to oppose, to allow the Town of Basalt to retain property tax revenue from previous years, instead of reducing Town services in order to provide a refund?

● Yes ● No ● Don't Know

Refund also Impacted by Residency Length



Refund Issue Follows Right-Wrong Track



“No one likes paying taxes, but I think it would be a shame if people support a refund and we have to cut services. It would be nice to be free of the TABOR rule and let the town carry on as they have been doing, adjusting the mill levy as needed without requiring a vote with every increase. ... I would like to know why this was not caught by one of our auditors over the past 20 years. I thought that was their job. Seems strange it could go on for so long.”

–Eagle County resident for more than 20 years

“Refund the taxes that were overcharged for the last 4 years and let the city keep the prior years. This is a compromise that should teach the city a bit of a lesson without having to decrease services much. Going forward, perhaps keep the levy the same for the next 5+ years and demand that the city live within its budget. With the increased tax base from all the new developments, there should be no need for service reductions.”

–Eagle County resident of 6 to 10 years

Comments from respondents who support Mill Levy

“It would be silly/stupid to issue a refund and reduce Town services. Our taxes are already extremely low relative to other states and communities.”

–Eagle County resident of 0 to 5 years

“I understand that there could have been a higher amount collected over time. Basalt does a great job with services and I would like to see that continue. Wiping out the reserves and lowering the revenue is not smart.”

–Pitkin County resident of 0 to 5 years

“The TABOR amendment was put in place to make governments accountable to its citizens and force these entities to prioritize expenditures. The amendment has served Colorado well. Basalt should not be allowed to have a “get out of jail free card!”

–Pitkin County resident for 11 to 16 years

“I do not have a problem with paying taxes to support town services. Unfortunately, I do not trust the current leadership to manage these funds. The Pan and Fork and the personal agendas to block it's development are perfect examples. The belief that building a massive park is right for increasing the vitality of the downtown business core does not align with that of the voters. Yet our money continues to flow into supporting that agenda.”

–Eagle County resident of 6 to 10 years

Comments from respondents who do not support Mill Levy

“Develop a budget with a healthy reserve to offset peaks and valleys of our economy. If you need to raise the budget, ask the voters to approve and show specifically where those increases are going.”

–Eagle County resident for more than 20 years

“You owned the money then, you owe the money now. Give it back, it is not yours.”

–Eagle County resident of 16 to 20 years

“I feel like you can't set a property tax and say that it is always going to be that amount always. 5.957% sounds good but what is the other option? Also, I'd have to hear more about why services would be reduced, isn't the budget an annual event? If annually you were supposed have returned the money before this, why is it an issue to return it now.”

–Pitkin County resident for more than 20 years

“My property valuation has increased each year, so why has the mill levy had to increase to maintain the same services?”

–Eagle County resident for more than 20 years

Comments from respondents who are unsure on Mill Levy

“There should be a way to set the mill levy going forward and refund some of the extra taxes collected.”

–Eagle County resident of 16 to 20 years

“Why is this survey so one sided? I thought we would be given options that the experts came up with? This is basically just letting Town get away with the mistake made for the past 10 years. Where's the apology?”

–Eagle County resident of 16 to 20 years

Observations

- Both measures may struggle at ballot, but refund faces a far tougher road
 - Typically want a measure to have above 50% Yes to move ahead
 - Not statistical sample, so not sure which demographics are over/under represented
 - Odd numbered elections, however, are more difficult to pass tax questions
- Trust and concerns about direction/leadership are key issues throughout open-ended responses and appears to be impacted by length of residency
- Recognition that Town is trying to be transparent and to take responsibility—but respondents do not separate current Town Council/staff from past years
 - Town should consider engaging a broader coalition of community members to communicate
- Many respondents do not separate mill-levy issue from Pan and Fork and utilized this survey to also register their concerns about the Riverfront
- Respondents clearly took issue with concept of reducing services
 - Depending on direction of Council, more education will be needed on how Town's budget works and why reducing services may be necessary

Questions?
