

City of Mercer Island

February 2010 Telephone Survey



EMC Research, Inc.

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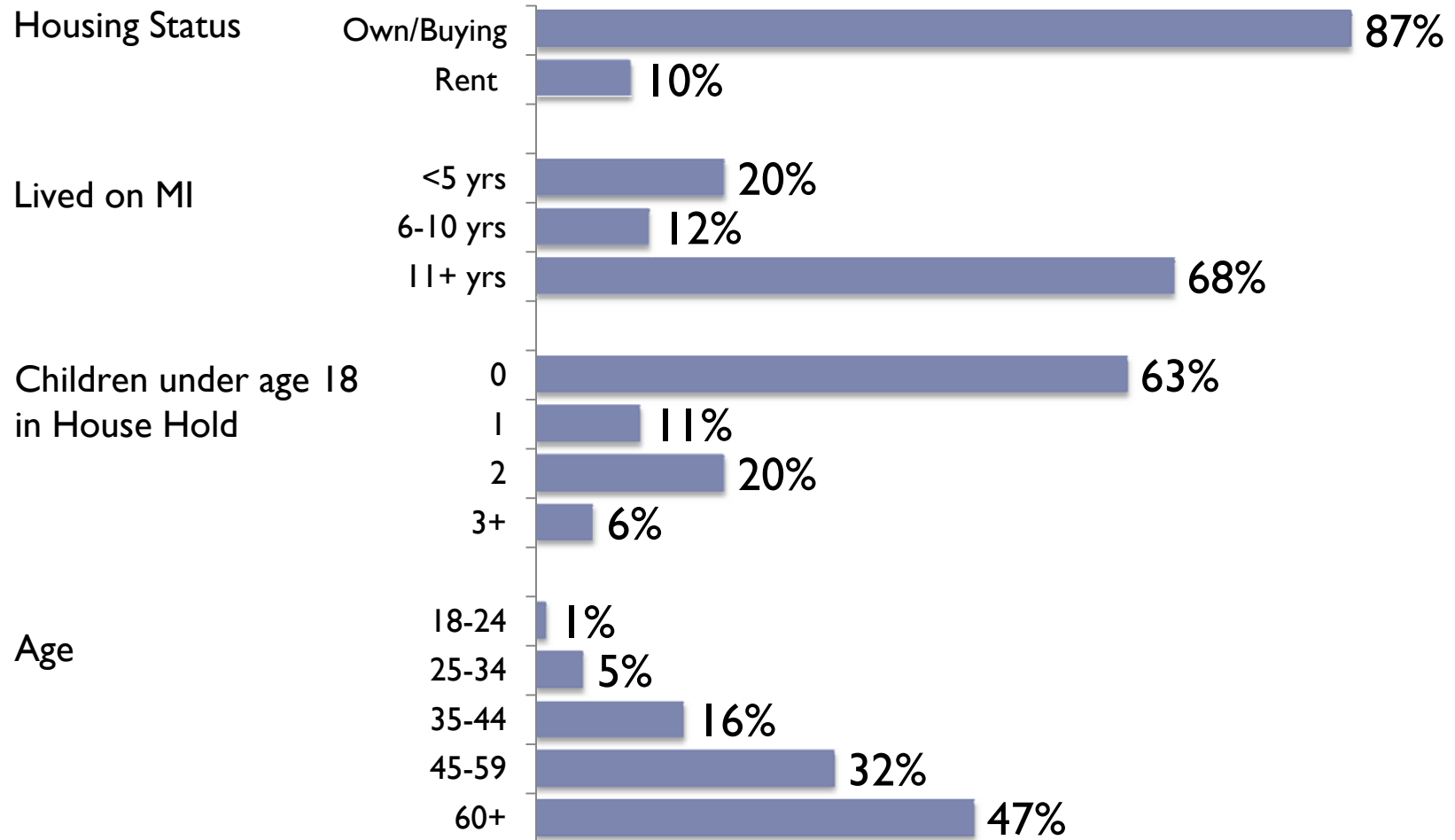
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Methodology

- ▶ This is the fourth survey, conducted every two years, to help the City evaluate the City's performance in a variety of service areas, and to track changes in these figures over time. When possible, figures have been compared with results from the 2008, 2006 and 2004 budget surveys.
- ▶ Trained, professional telephone interviewers calling from a central, monitored location conducted the interviews during the evening and weekend hours of February 23–26, 2010.
- ▶ Four hundred (400) interviews were conducted among registered voters in the City of Mercer Island for the 2010 survey.
- ▶ Results were checked against the entire voting population of the City, and were weighted when necessary to accurately reflect the demographics of voters on Mercer Island.
- ▶ The results of the 2010 survey can be projected to reflect the opinions of all registered voters on Mercer Island to within a margin of error of ± 4.9 points at the 95% confidence interval. This confidence interval means if the survey was repeated 100 times, the results shown would be the same to within ± 4.9 points 95 times out of 100.
- ▶ The margin of error for the 2008, 2006, and 2004 overall results is also ± 4.9 points.

Demographics



Key Findings

Outlook: Despite economic conditions, optimism about the direction on the Island has improved, though it is not as strong among South End residents.

Most Important Problems: Traffic and parking continue to be the top mentioned (26%) concerns in open ended questions. At the same time, concerns over overcrowding and overbuilding have dropped by half since 2008 (24% 2008 / 11% 2010).

Favorables: Favorable rating for the King County Council is unchanged since 2008 but have declined a net 10 points in the same period for the City Council, even though the use of tax dollars rating is unchanged from 2008 (55% Positive / 37% Negative).

Job Ratings: Job ratings for a series of items tested over past surveys are unchanged with the notable exception of water quality which has improved a net 15 points.

Taxes & Services: In 2008, half (49%) favored increasing taxes to maintain services. This has reversed with half (48%) saying taxes should stay the same and services cut as needed.

Town Center: While satisfaction with the choices for shopping and dining in the Town Center continues to be a majority (57% Satisfied) it is unchanged from 2008. Satisfaction with the appearance and condition of the Town Center has improved (Net +12).

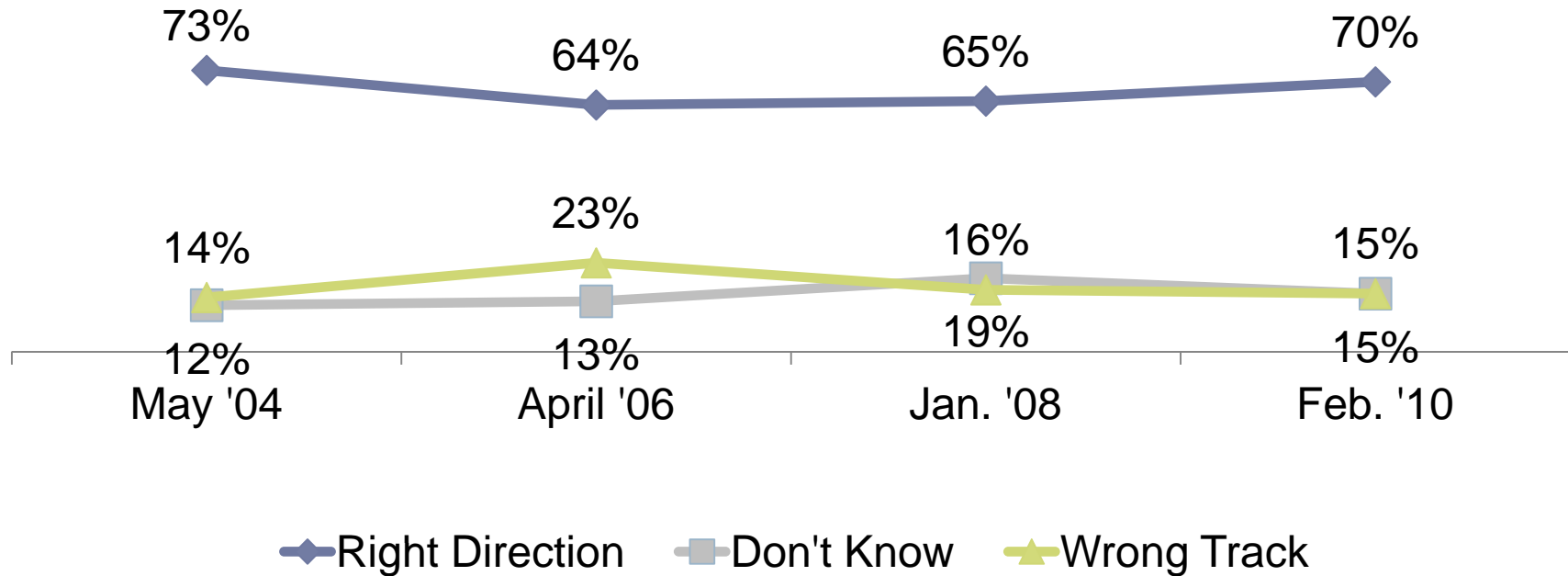
Safety & Earthquake Preparedness: Perceptions of safety are unchanged since 2006, as are people's perceived preparedness for an earthquake.

Commuter Parking Garage: Roughly 10% say they would be more likely to use public transit if a Mercer Island only residents garage were built.

General Environment

Right Direction/Wrong Track - Overall

Do you feel things on Mercer Island are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

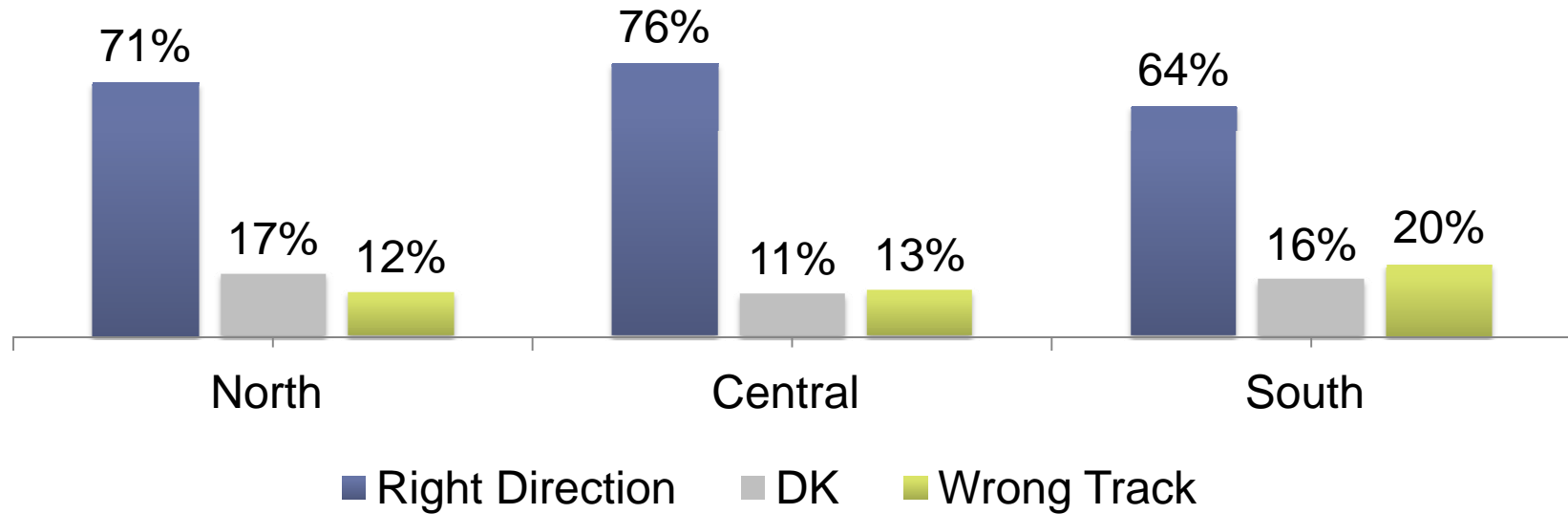


Voters outlook on how things are going on Mercer Island is largely unaffected by general economic conditions; it has improved over the last two years.

General Environment

Right Direction/Wrong Track – by Area

Do you feel things on Mercer Island are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?



Outlook among voters on the South End is lower than others, but still strongly positive.

Most Important Problem

What do you think is the most important problem facing Mercer Island today?				
	2004	2006	2008	2010
Transportation/Traffic/Roads/Parking	14%	26%	26%	26%
Education	15%	7%	9%	13%
Overcrowding/Overbuilding	23%	28%	24%	11%
High Taxes/High Cost of Living	10%	6%	3%	6%
Economy/Unemployment	1%	-	-	6%
City Gov't/Council/Mayor/Spending	3%	3%	3%	2%
Lack of Affordable Housing	3%	3%	3%	1%
Environment/Preserving Parks, Open Space	4%	4%	3%	-
Other	11%	11%	11%	8%
Nothing	7%	6%	10%	10%
Don't Know/Refused	10%	6%	9%	11%

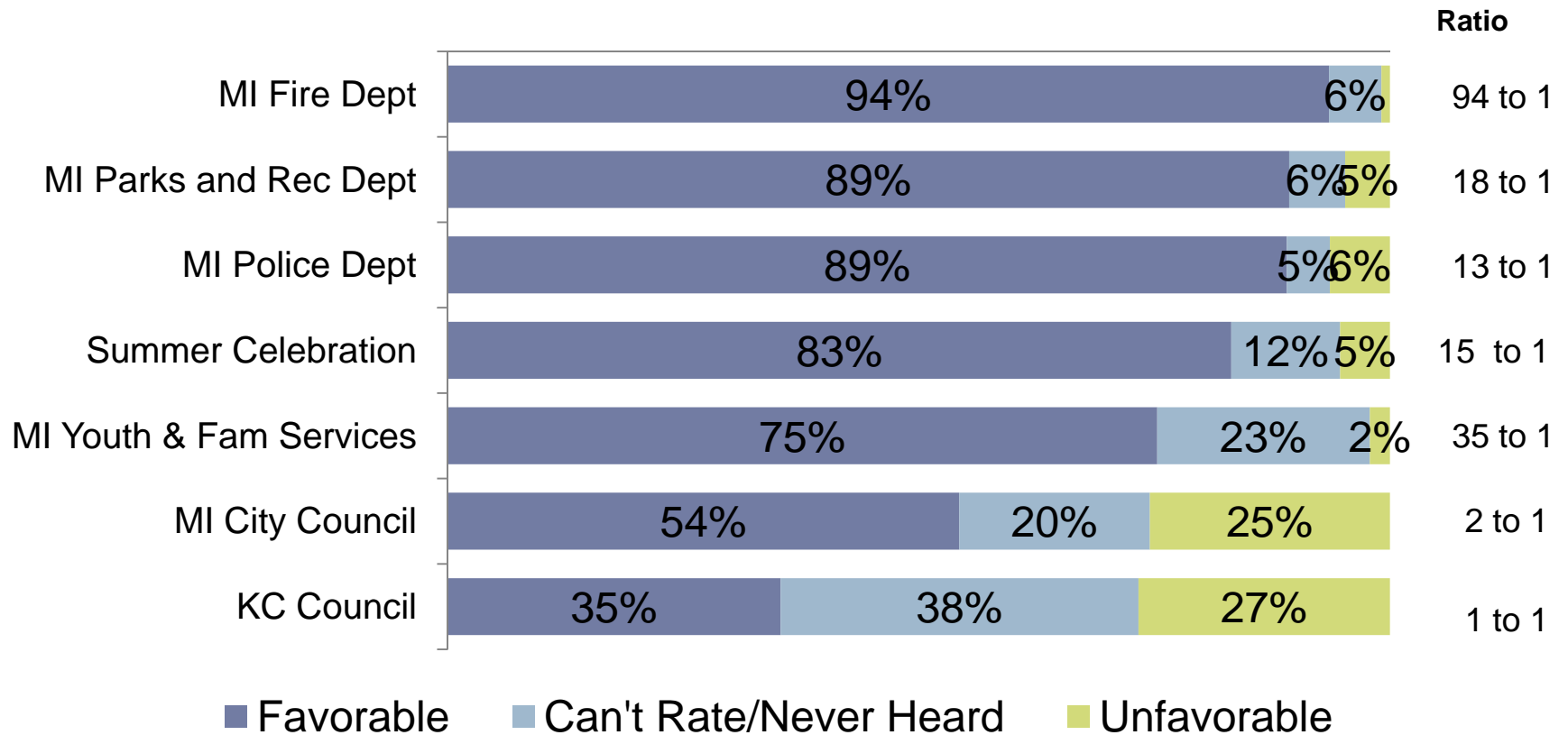
Answers to this question have been consistent except two this year; overcrowding/overbuilding has dropped by half, and economy/unemployment has increased from nonexistent to 6%.



Most Important Problem-Follow Up

What makes you say that?	
	<u>2010</u>
Construction adding to traffic/Parking problems	16%
Schools need more funding/Teachers/Crowded Classrooms	11%
Too much building/Growth	10%
Roads need repair/Too Many Potholes	8%
Everything costs more here/Taxes are too high	7%
Economy/Decreased home value	4%
Politicians	4%

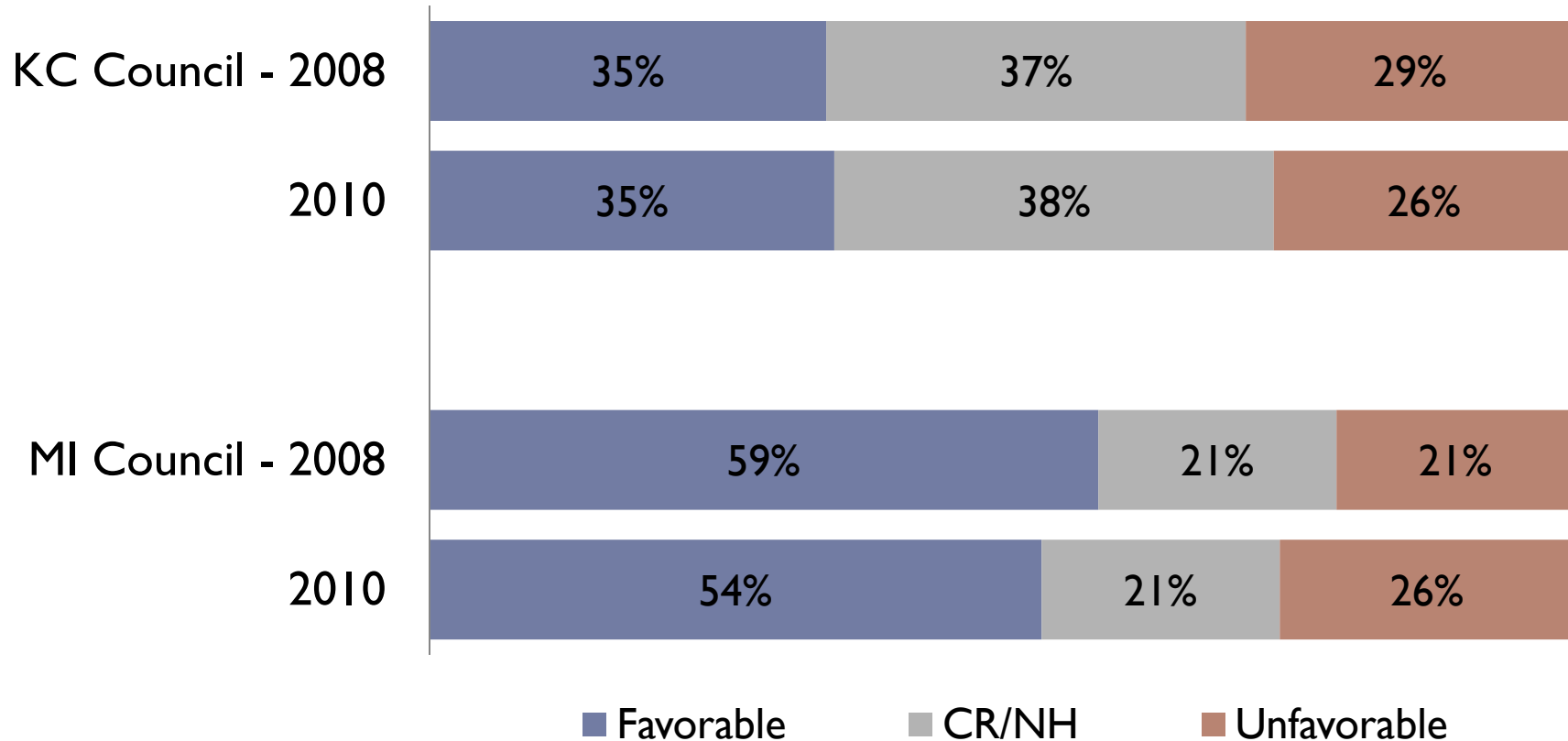
Favorable Ratings



Favorable ratings have remained steady for the majority of items, except for the Mercer Island City Council.

Favorable Rating

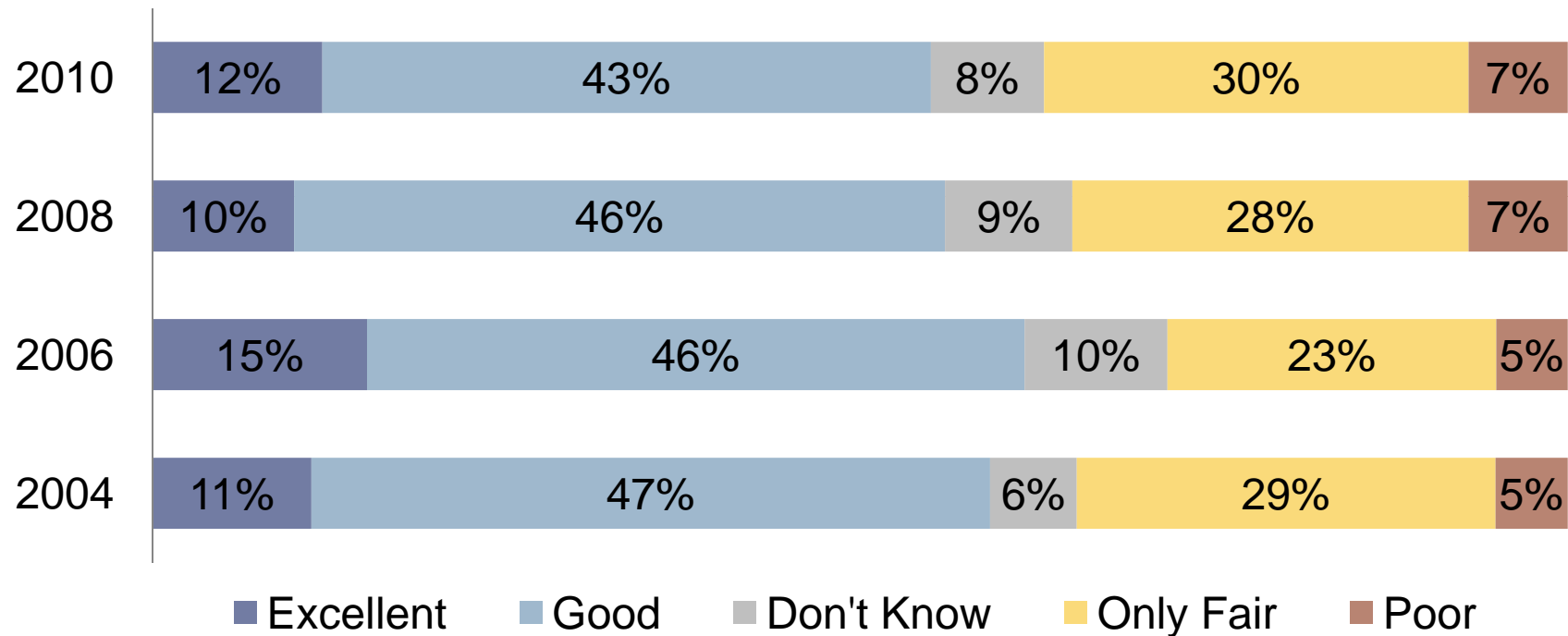
County Vs. City Council



The favorable rating for the Mercer Island City Council has declined a net 10 points since 2008.

City Use of Tax Dollars

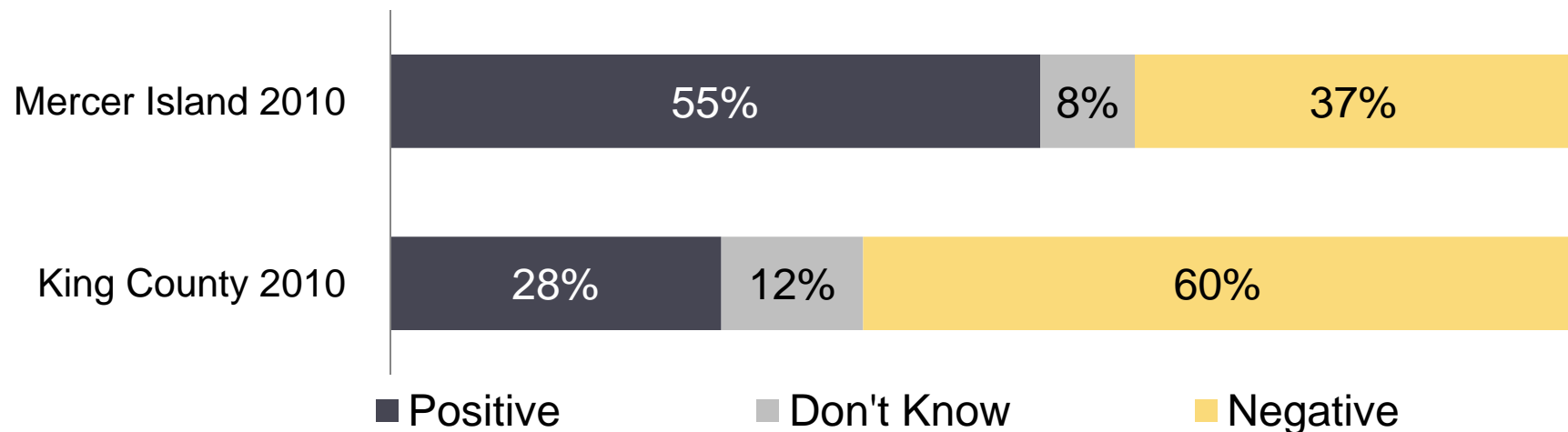
Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Mercer Island is doing using tax dollars responsibly?



This rating has remained fairly constant since 2004.

City vs. County Use of Tax Dollars

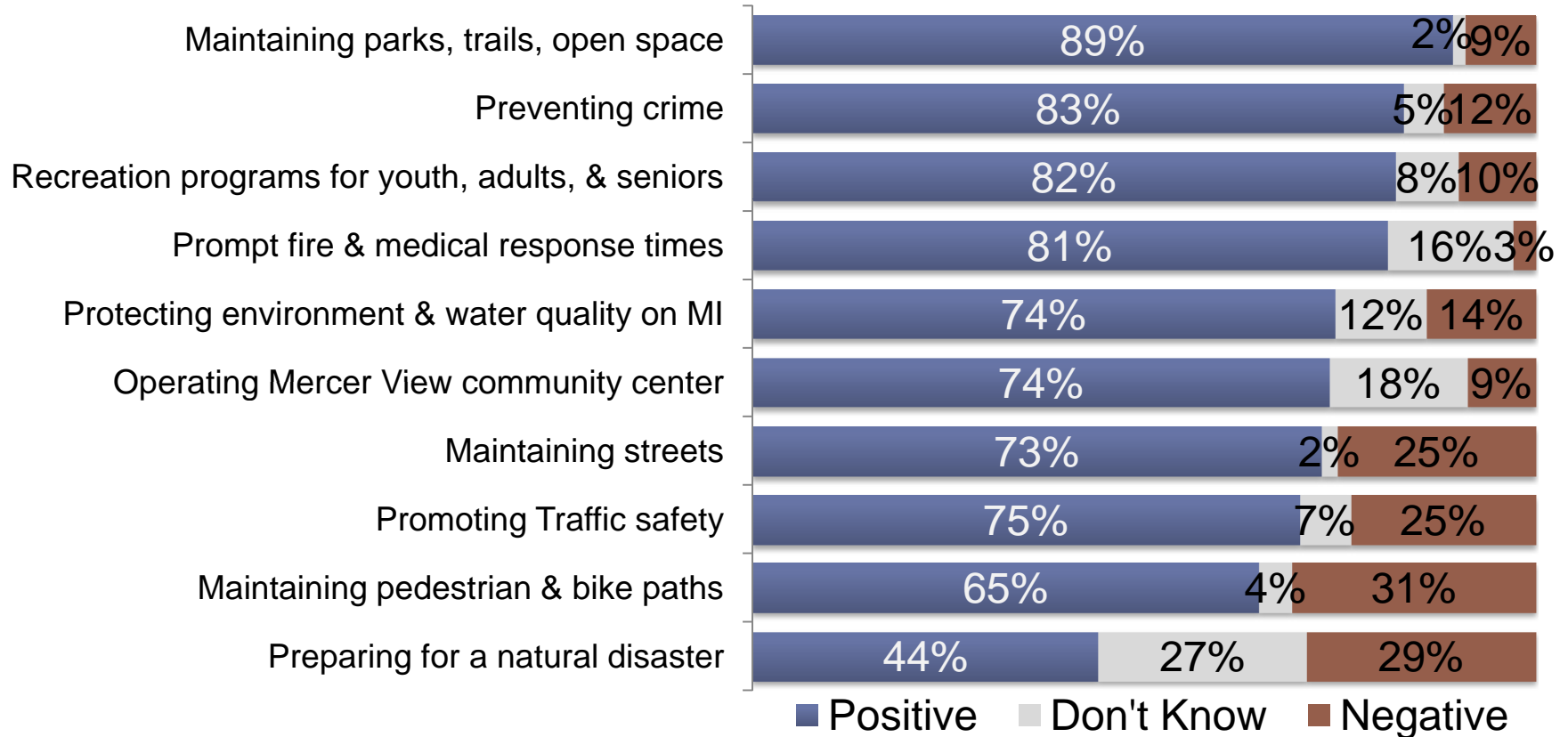
Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the King County is doing using tax dollars responsibly?



The City continues to hold a significantly stronger position than the County on this measurement.

City Job Ratings

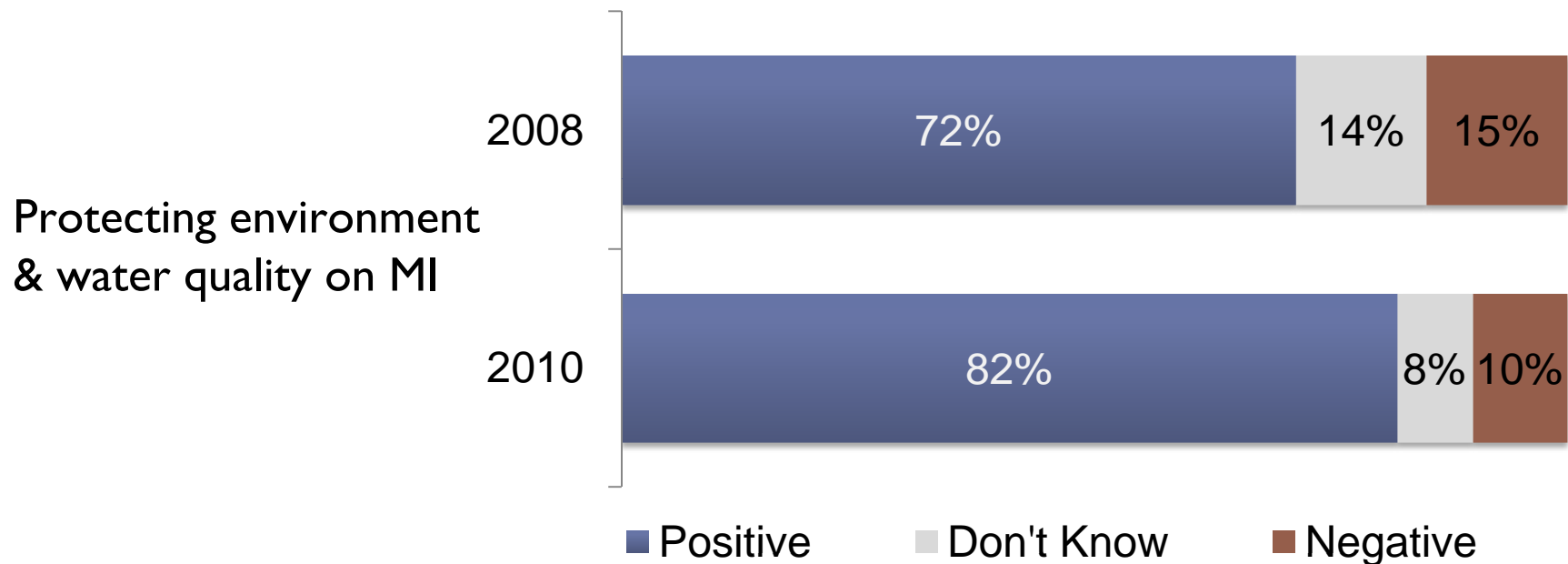
Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the job the city of Mercer Island is doing...



Job Rating

Protecting the Environment/Water Quality

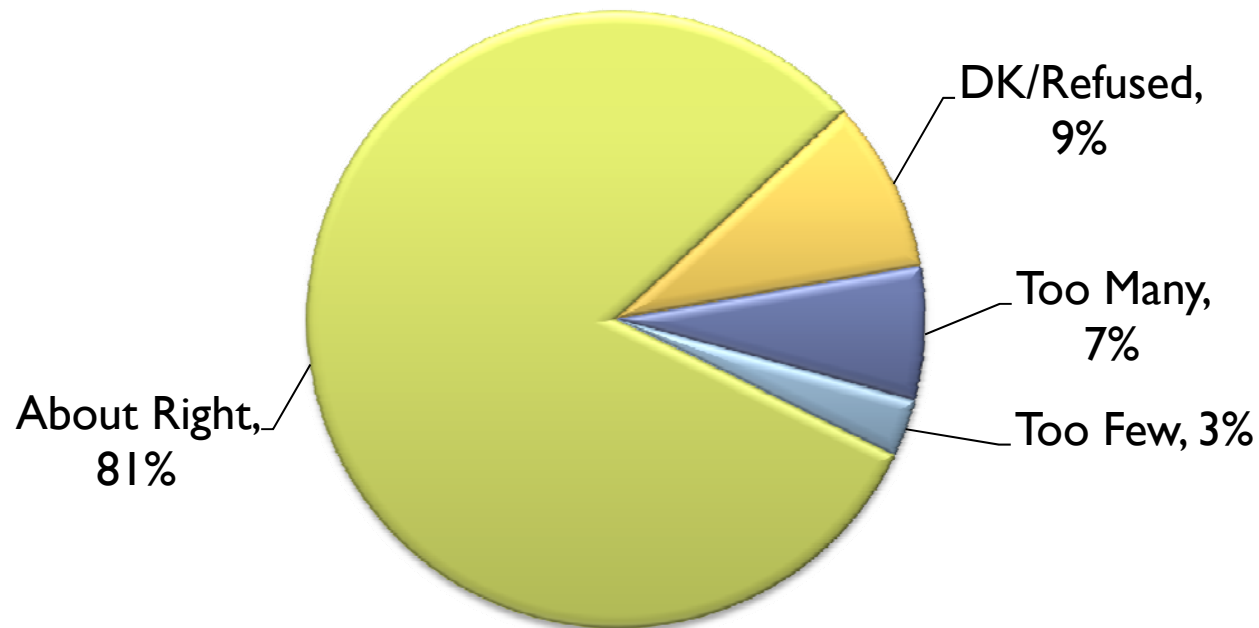
Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the job the city of Mercer Island is doing...



This job rating improved significantly between 2008 and 2010 (+15 Points), with the majority of this improvement in the “excellent” category (+11).

Amount of Services

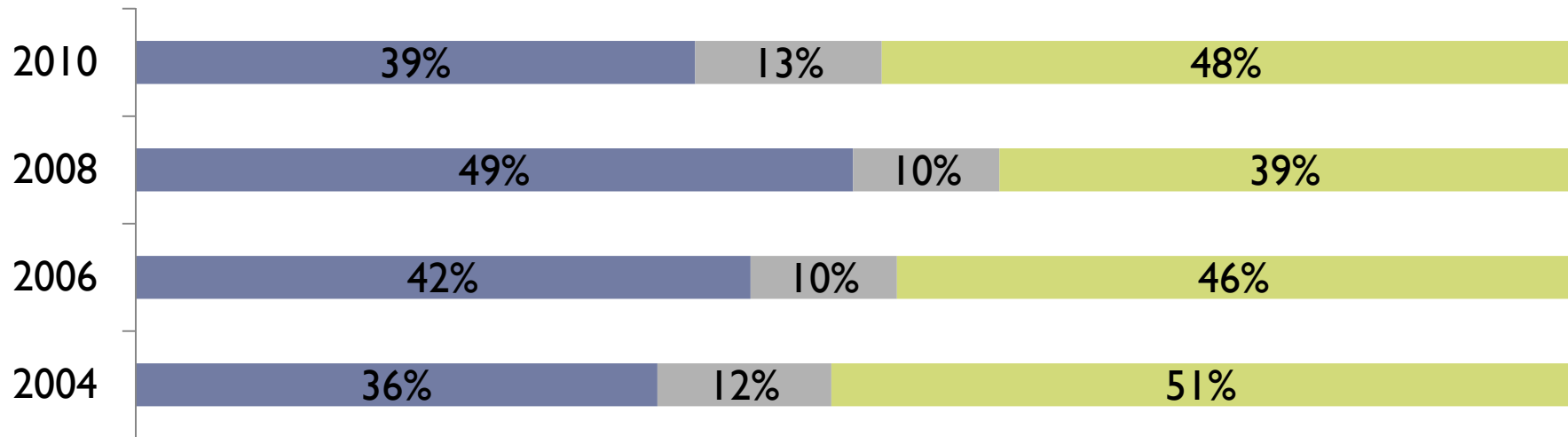
In terms of services provided by the City of Mercer Island, do you think that overall the city provides too many services, too few services, or about the right amount of services?



This rating has remained consistent since 2004.

Taxes & Services

If you had to choose only one, which of the following would you choose for the City of MI?

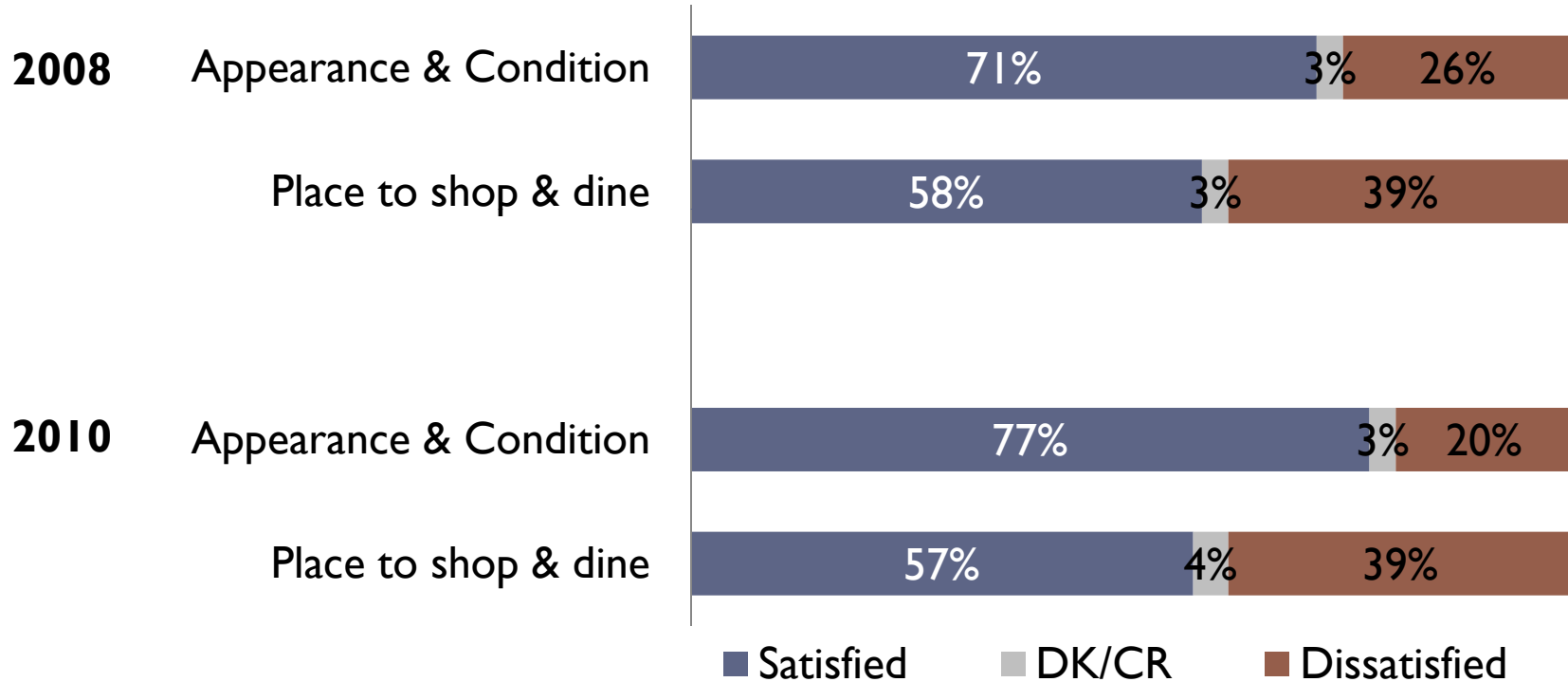


- Increase taxes to maintain city services at current levels
- Neither/DK
- Keep taxes the same, and cut services as needed

The pendulum of increasing taxes versus cutting services has swung back in the other direction, as it was in 2004.

City's Town Center

Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the City's Town Center?



Satisfaction with the Town Center's options to shop and dine have not changed, but ratings for the Town Center's appearance have significantly improved (+12).

Safety

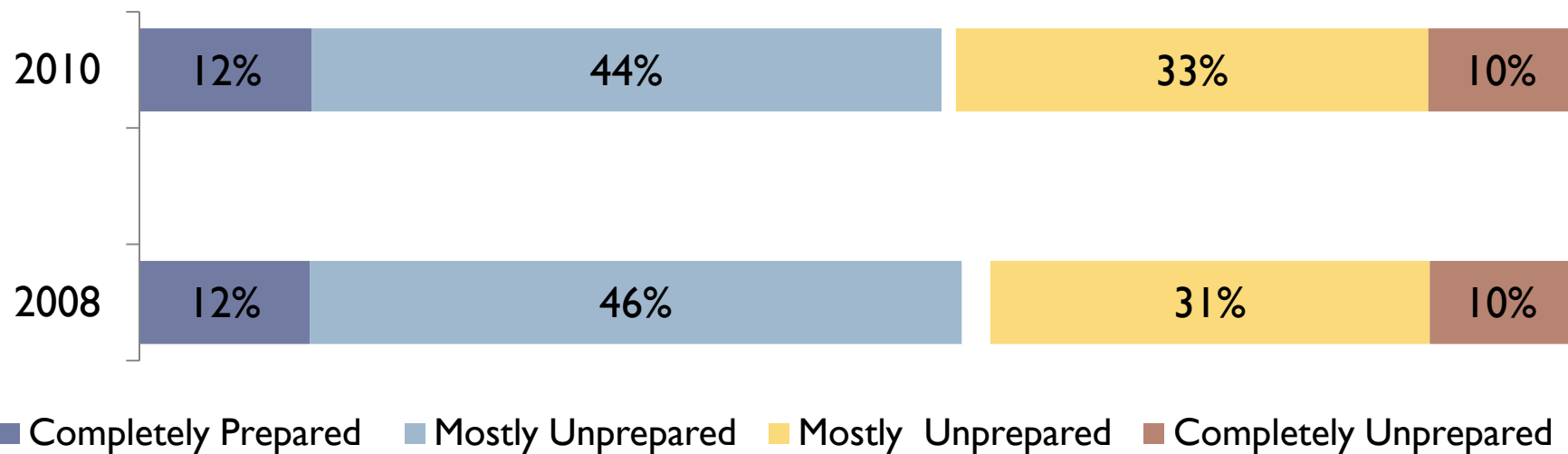
Using a scale of one to seven, where 1 is completely unsafe and 7 is completely safe, how would you rate your feeling walking alone ...

		Overall (Mean)		North (Mean)	Central (Mean)	South (Mean)
2008	In Your Neighborhood	6.4		6.4	6.4	6.5
	In the City's Town Center	6.5		6.5	6.5	6.5
2010	In Your Neighborhood	6.5		6.5	6.4	6.5
	In the City's Town Center	6.5		6.4	6.6	6.5

Safety ratings are unchanged whether looking by neighborhood or the Town Center, regardless of which neighborhood the respondent lives in.

Earthquake Preparedness

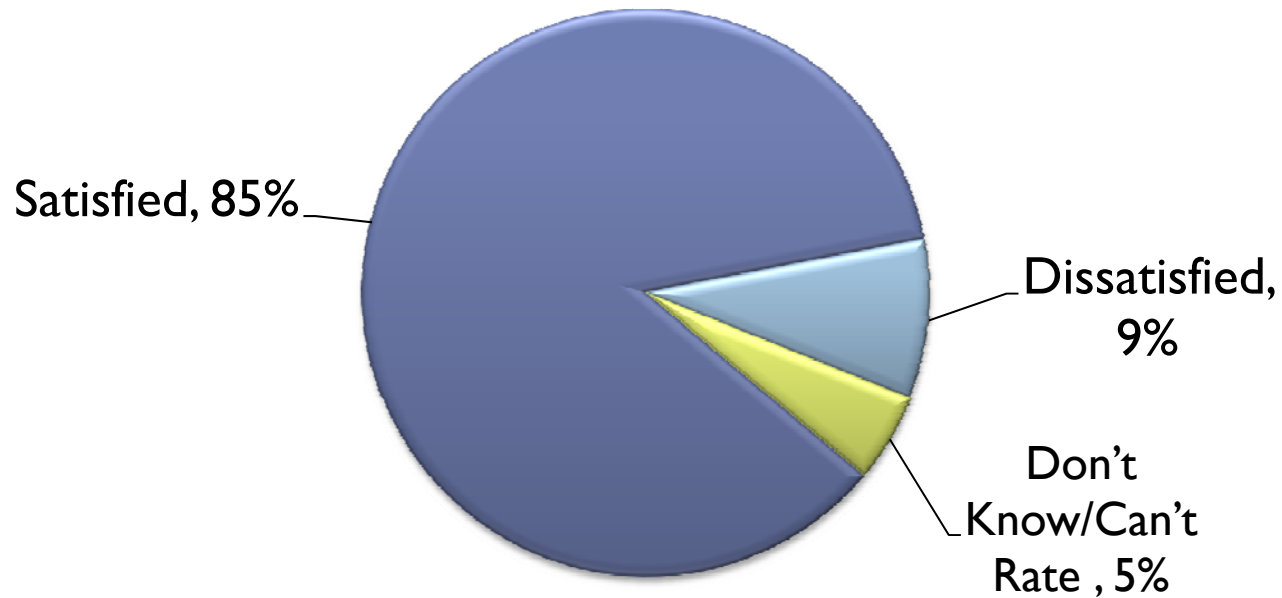
Shifting gears, if there were an earthquake, and your household lost power and access to the City's water system for seven days, how prepared would you say your household is to be completely self sustaining for this time period?



Perceptions of people's own preparedness has not changed since 2008.

Keeping Voters Informed

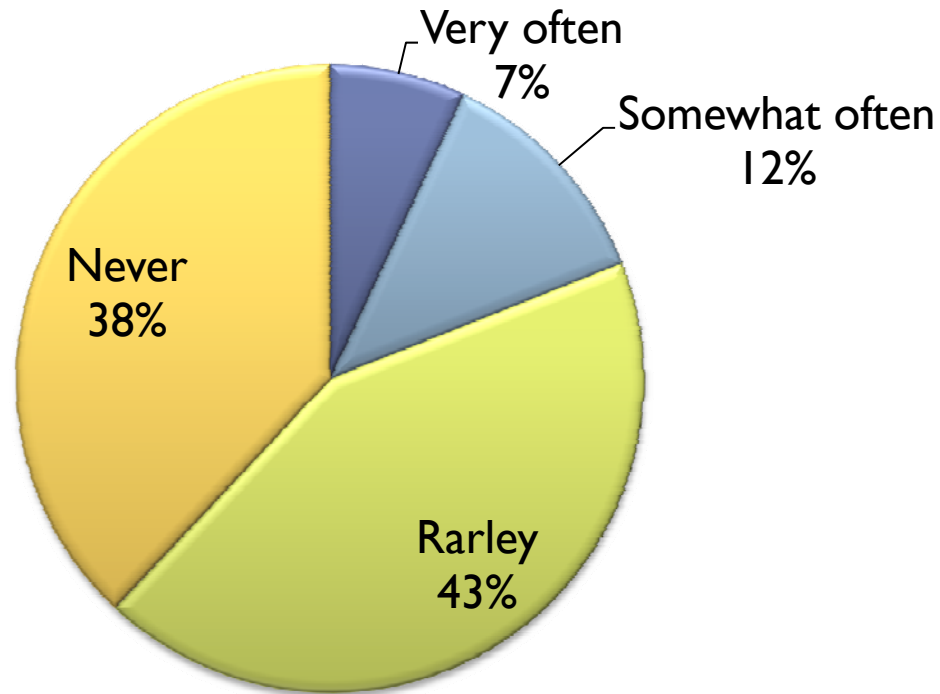
How satisfied are you with the City's efforts to keep you informed through newsletters, the City's website, and the Mercer Island Reporter?



Respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the City's efforts to keep them informed.

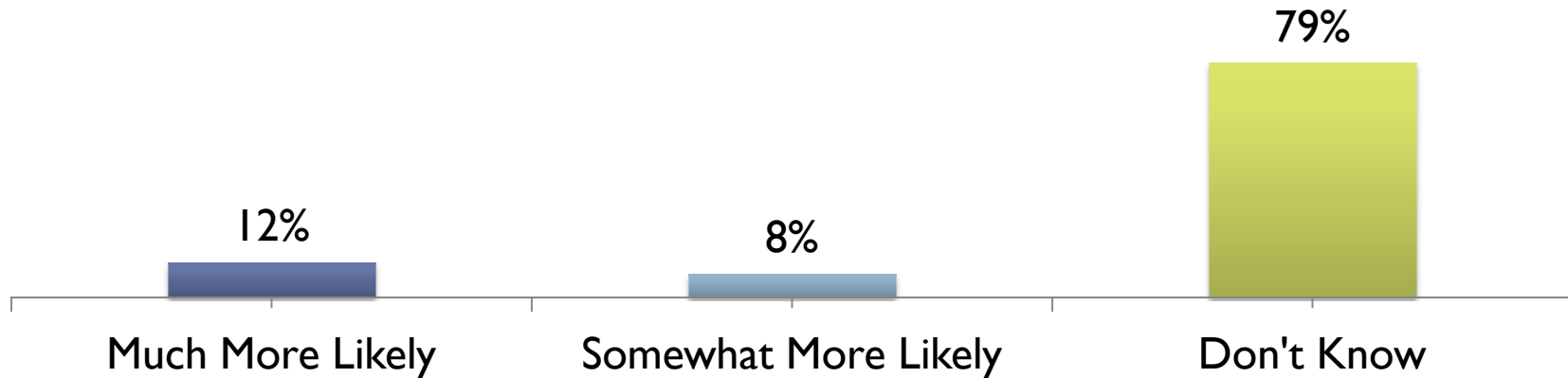
Public Transit Park & Ride Areas

How often do you use public transit park and ride areas on Mercer Island? Would you say...?



Additional Commuter Parking

The Metro park and ride lot at the north end of the island is consistently full on weekdays. Some suggest the city should partner with a developer to build a commuter parking garage for MI residents only. Would additional commuter parking make you more likely to use public transit, or would it make no difference?



This question is a subset of the previous, and was answered by 325 respondents. That means roughly 10% of voters would be much more likely to use transit if an additional commuter parking garage were built.