

Questions and Deliberation

- 1) Do the proposed park, ballfield, open space and trail projects adequately address the community's needs while balancing fiscal realities? If not, what adjustments or refinements might be recommended?

- 2) Shall the select school related parks and recreation operational costs be included in this ballot measure?

- 3) Does the financial strategy and duration (permanent levy lid lift for operations/maintenance and 9 year capital levy) meet Council's goals? If not, what other combination of financing strategies might be employed?

- 4) Other questions?

Preliminary project list considered by Stakeholder's Committee

Parks Levy Categories and Project List

Category: PARKS

Park: Luther Burbank Park

Projects:

- o Upper LB- trails, bridge, ropes course, park furniture, interpretation
- o Downtown Entry- path & turf improvements, park furniture and art
- o Luther Burbank Lid and Connector- new overlook, stairs, park furniture, art, signage, vegetation
- o South Entry- pavers, signage, overlook, kayak/canoe launch, pathways, vegetation
- o Source Area- drainage, irrigation, turf and trees, pathways
- o Swim Beach- beach building, repair fishing pier, new floating swim dock, spray park, pathways, sand play areas, park furniture, new access points
- o Great Meadow- pathway improvements, irrigation, turf restoration
- o Main Entry- overlook, irrigation, vegetation
- o Campus Area- park furniture, sport court improvements, new playground, wayfinding signage, maintenance yard upgrades, pathways, picnic shelter
- o Dock/Boiler Building Area- shell house, restroom, Boiler Bldg improvements, pathways, signage, trees/vegetation/plantings, irrigation, small boat improvements*
- o Shoreline- new access beaches, micro beaches, restoration*
- o Amphitheatre- new seatwalls, stage improvements, fire pit, pathways, irrigation, lawn/vegetation
- o Off-Leash Area- underdrainage, signage, covered structures, park furniture, fencing, pathways, irrigation, field restoration, vegetation*
- o Calkins Point- signage, pathways, park furniture, shelter structure, irrigation, lawn/vegetation
- o The Ponds- wetland expansion, boardwalk realignment, signage, vegetation, irrigation
- o West Hill- stairs, water feature, pathways, Pea Patch improvements, park furniture, climbing wall/bouldering rock, irrigation, ornamental planting, trees/vegetation

Park: Pioneer Park

Projects:

- o New/Improved trails and trail connections*
- o Escalated replanting/vegetation program

Park: I-90

Projects:

- o Enhanced landscape improvements & vegetation management
- o Trail and pathway improvements
- o West LID restroom improvements*
- o Boat Launch float/dock replacement, ramp widening and restroom improvements

Park: Island Crest Park

Projects:

- o Implement Master Plan (not yet underway)
 - o Replace suspension bridge
 - o Replace tennis court lighting
 - o Deane's Children's Park shelter improvements

****Partially funded in 2007-08 Council budget***

Addresses an area of high priority for the City Council

Park: Other Parks

Projects:

- New/replace playgrounds
- New/replace sport courts
- New water features
- Street end improvements
- Swim beach improvements
- Additional park furnishings & amenities*
- Enhanced vegetation management (Rotary, Ellis Pond, Wildwood)*

Category: FIELDS

Ballfield: Homestead Field

Projects:

- Pathway/accessibility improvements
- 82nd Ave SE sidewalk improvements
- Picnic area overlook
- Site drainage improvements near Tennis Courts
- Construct batting cage
- Install hooded backstops
- Install portable bleachers

Ballfield: I-90/First Hill LID Area C Play Field Improvements

Projects:

- Youth baseball/softball field development

Ballfield: Elementary School Field Upgrades (drainage; turf; goals)

Projects:

- Lakeridge*
- Island Park
- West Mercer

Ballfield: Island Crest Park Field Improvements

Projects:

- Install artificial turf on infield only of north ballfield (Little League/baseball)

Ballfield: South Mercer Playfields Field Improvements

Projects:

- Install artificial turf on NE portion (soccer/lacrosse/football) creating new Little League/softball field and add new lighting; **and/OR**
- Install artificial turf on infields only on 3 softball/Little League infields

Category: TRAILS

Projects:

- Pioneer Park SE Quad
- Hollerbach trailhead development and new trail construction
- Gallagher Hill trail construction
- SE 20th Street End trail development
- New Hope trail construction
- Island Crest Park connector to 84th Ave
- Future trail connections
- Future water trail improvements*

Category: SMALL OPEN SPACE

**Partially funded in 2007-08 Council budget*

Addresses an area of high priority for the City Council

He noted the Council's dissatisfaction with reviewing and organizing the budget based on priorities of government. He stated the 2008 budget would be broken down by departments and the previous year's comparison would also be by department.

Director Corder also recommended providing the council with a brief budget analysis (1-2 pages) of the general fund and a brief analysis of each department's proposed operating budget. In addition he explained, each department's operating budget would be broken into its "base budget" and a "service package request." Service packages comprise anything being added to the budget for new one-time or ongoing positions, equipment or contracted services.

Councilmember Grausz suggested that when a service package is put forth, that it be accompanied with recommendations of how to reduce service elsewhere to offset the budget addition.

City Manager Rich Conrad told the Council that he will be going to department heads requesting service packages and asking them to show the consequences on current service levels by funding service package items from within their current budget allocations.

Councilmember Jahncke recommended maintaining the existing number of 180 employees and using a P.O.G. analysis across the city if positions have to be cut.

Councilmember Grausz expressed concern about the length of time between the budget presentation and deliberations. Chip explained that Department will provide a summary of how they implemented Council's recommendations.

Agreement:

After more discussion, Councilmember Jahncke closed out this discussion by summarizing Council's satisfaction with the budget process and structure proposed by the Finance Director.

Parks (Levy/Bond)

Next, the Council reviewed and discussed the Parks ballot measure and prioritized projects recommended by the Council's Park Stakeholder Citizen Committee. City Manager Rich Conrad explained that the Council had established a framework to invest up to \$900,000/year over a 15-year period (\$13.13 million). He referenced a list where the top project priorities represented between \$10.23 and \$12.98 million over 15 years in capital improvements. He explained that the staff had also listed an approximate \$165,000 in operations and maintenance costs for these new projects as well as nearly \$370,000 to replace the Luther Burbank levy due in expire in 2009.

City Manager Conrad requested that the Council consider and answer:

- What are your reactions to Stakeholder Committee status report?
- What are your project priorities?
- Method of replacing expiring LB Park O&M and minor capital levy (2009)?
- Method of funding new/incremental O&M associated with new projects?
- Desired coordination w/school district levy/bond issue planning?
- When to place on the ballot?
- Method of funding/financing capital and O&M?

City Manager Conrad informed the council that this was the Citizen Stakeholder Committee's check-in with the Council prior to the list refinement and a planned citizen survey to gauge voter sentiment on this proposed package of projects. He said that once that survey is completed the Committee will conduct further refinement and present their recommendations to the Council for final revisions/approval of a resolution/ordinance to put the measure on the ballot.

Assistant City Manager/Parks & Recreation Director Pete Mayer and City Attorney Bob Sterbank responded to Council questions regarding park and ball field projects as well as individual and combined city and school levy/bonds. The Council also reviewed a list of capital financing projects into the future, including the school's capital and technology levy. There was considerable debate about the investment on the proposed Boiler

Building/dock improvements at Luther Burbank Park relative to other park system-wide improvements.

Agreements:

After more discussion, the Council provided the following direction:

- To hold a ballot measure in November's general election
- To determine the size and composition (City only versus City/school combined) of the ballot measure once the survey results were completed
- To include the Luther Burbank O&M costs in the ballot measure
- To include any new projects' O&M costs in the ballot measure

The Mayor and various Councilmembers requested a tour of the park, ball field and shoreline projects. Others asked for a location list in the event they were unable to attend the Council tour.

The retreat session adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Sunday, January 27, 2008

SUSTAINABILITY

Councilmember Cero provided each councilmember with three books (*An Inconvenient Truth* by Al Gore; *Cool It!* by Bjorn Lomery; and *Unstoppable Global Warming* by S. Fred Singer and Dennis Avery). He commented on the importance of understanding all sides of this issue. City Manager Rich Conrad underscored that sustainability has become critical for all American cities. He explained that the goal is move into the future without leaving future generations with unsustainable outcomes. He said that Deputy City Manager Londi Lindell and Maintenance Director Glenn Boettcher have been staff leads on the City's efforts.

Deputy City Manager Lindell explained existing City programs that promote sustainability, as well 2007 achievements the City has made on the "low-hanging sustainability fruit list". She described other, more significant sustainability initiatives requiring Council funding and noted that the Subcommittee on Sustainability will come to Council 2-3 times and report on their ongoing activities in 2008. She quoted former Deputy City Manager Deb Symmonds' sustainability philosophy: "I hope to always leave my campsite a little cleaner than I found it."

The facilitator asked Councilmembers for feedback on what 2008, 2009, and 2010 initiatives the Council would like staff to focus on. A roundtable discussion ensued as follows:

- Councilmember Jahncke expressed concern about the unintended consequences of the "rush to green" and balancing the costs with the benefits. He questioned if it really matters what Mercer Island does given the dramatic growth of greenhouse emissions from developing countries like India and China.
- Councilmember Grady indicated that what Mercer Island was trying to do would save money, make it a better place to live, and give the City status as a leader in the region.
- Councilmember Cero proposed researching and adopting the best practices of other communities as well as taking advantage of all local, state, federal programs rewarding sustainability efforts. He also recommended educating our community on what they can do to promote sustainability.

Agreements:

Councilmember Grausz recommended adding a discussion of sustainability in building codes to the 2008 workplace. (The Council concurred.)

Mayor Pearman recommended the committee go forward, research, and make recommendations to the Council for next steps on sustainability. (The Council agreed unanimously.)

Councilmember Bassett commented on the importance of learning about and applying best practices from other cities. He recommended starting a campaign on Mercer Island to see how many citizens would sign-up to receive Puget Sound Energy's green power. In addition, he recommended adding the following language to the P.O.G.:

- 2.4 - The City will strive for a sustainable future by balancing environmental stewardship, economic development, social equity and financial and organizational viability. (Four Councilmembers concurred.)

City of Mercer Island

Parks Measure Survey

May 2008



Methodology

- ◆ Trained, professional telephone interviewers called from a central, monitored location conducted the interviews during the evening and weekend hours of April 24-30, 2008.
- ◆ Seven hundred (700) interviews were conducted among registered voters in the City of Mercer Island. Half (350) were split into sample A and half (350) into sample B.
- ◆ 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 samples were also weighted to match each other in this regard.
- ◆ The results of this survey can be projected to reflect the opinions of all registered voters on Mercer Island to within a margin of error of:

n=700	± 3.7 points
n=400	± 4.9 points
n=350	± 5.2 points
n=200	± 6.9 points

These margins of error are at the 95% confidence level. This means if the survey was repeated 100 times, the results shown would be the same to within \pm the margin of error 95 times out of 100.

Call Disposition

Total Records:	11,470 Numbers
Called:	10,394 Numbers
Refused:	1,699 (16%)
Quit:	100 (1%)
Completes:	700
Total citizens contacted:	2,499
Overall Incidence:	89%
Two Completes:	52 Respondents

The information above shows the call disposition for the survey. Due to the higher number of target interviews, we allowed two completes per household if necessary.

52 households (104 Respondents Total) had 2 completes.

This survey had a lower refusal rate (16% vs 18% Budget), and lower quit rate (1% vs. 2% Budget) than the Budget survey.

Key Findings

1. The overwhelming majority of residents feel that Mercer Island is headed in the right direction (70%), which is consistent with recent surveys.
2. Initial support for the concepts — Parks, Rec, & Schools (71% Support) and Parks & Rec Only (78% Support) is strong
 - Support for the Parks & Rec Only concept is a net 15 points higher.
3. When the associated overall price tag per \$1M per Household is introduced, support declines sizably but is still a majority: Parks, Rec, & Schools (62% Support / 21 point net decrease) and Parks & Rec Only (66% Support / 26 point net decrease).
 - Support for the Parks & Rec Only measure is a net 9 points higher (than Parks, Rec, & Schools) when costs are introduced.
4. Open-ended reasons for supporting the measures relate to the importance of maintaining parks and sports fields and maintaining quality of life. Reasons for opposing either measure are directly linked to concerns over taxes.
5. More information about the measure does not increase overall support, but it does increase the intensity of support.
6. Voters are asked if they would prefer a Renewal Only of the Luther Burbank Maintenance and Operations measure as an alternative, and are told this would keep the City's property tax rate unchanged.
 - While Support for the Renewal Only is strong (72%) it is not significantly higher than for the Parks & Rec Only package following the positive information or priorities section.
 - The Renewal Only is a net 11 percentage points higher in support than the Parks & Rec Only at the \$250/yr per \$1M Household question.

Mercer Island Registered Voter Demographics

01/21/08

Cross Tabulated Voter Counts UNV: MERCER ISLAND

Vote Dates: G/06 P/06 G/04 P/04 Pg 1

1: All Registered Voters

Voter-Count	Gender-Count	%	Age	All	%	Men	%	Wmn	%	Times-Voted	%	Cum-Tot	
I: 15,368	M: 7,308	47.6	18 - 24:	1,097	7.1	532	7.3	565	7.0	0/4:	2,023	13.1	15,368
HH: 8,824	F: 8,060	52.4	25 - 34:	1,449	9.4	715	9.8	734	9.1	1/4:	2,195	14.2	13,345
			35 - 44:	2,010	13.1	925	12.7	1,085	13.5	2/4:	3,078	20.0	11,150
			45 - 59:	5,211	33.9	2,501	34.2	2,710	33.6	3/4:	3,088	20.0	8,072
			60+:	5,601	36.4	2,635	36.1	2,966	36.8	4/4:	4,984	32.4	4,984
			** :	15,368	100.0	7,308	100.0	8,060	100.0	** :	15,368	100.0	

Gender	Age	Vote History
Men 48%	18 - 24 5%	0/4 11%
Women 52%	25 - 34 6%	1/4 12%
	35 - 44 13%	2/4 18%
	45 - 59 35%	3/4 21%
	60+ 37%	4/4 39%

The data above is the most recent record of the entire universe of registered voters on the Island obtained from Labels & Lists, followed by the demographics from the survey.

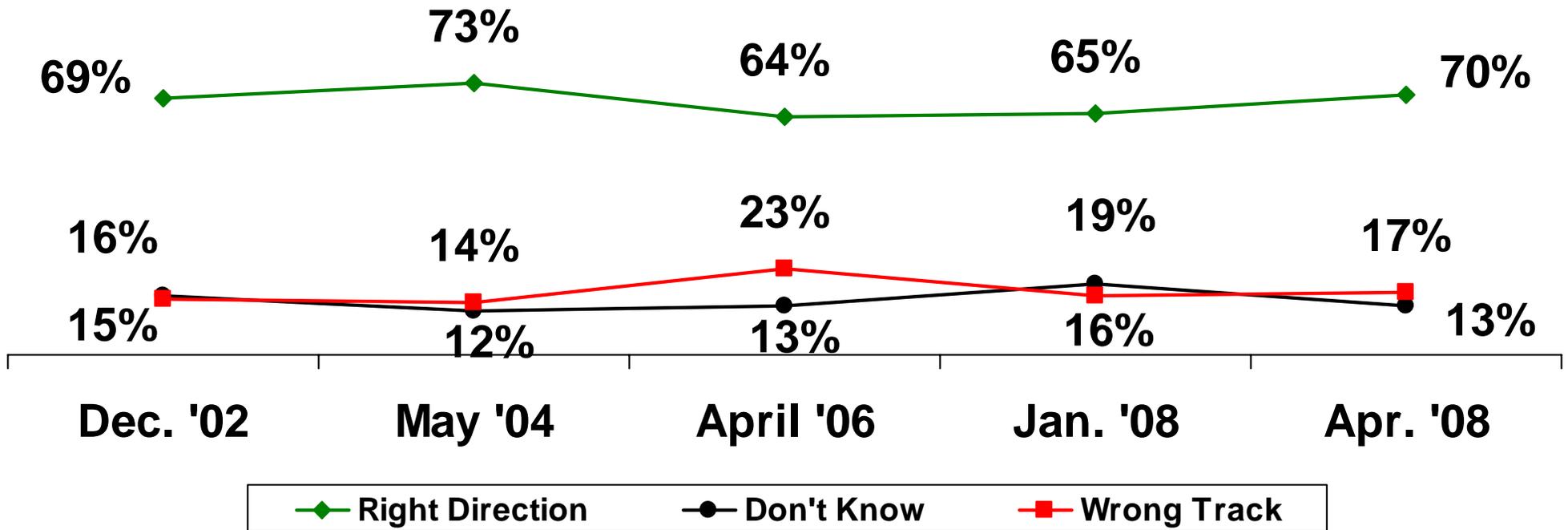
Note that 70% of all registered voters on the Island are over 45 years of age.



General Issue Environment

Right Direction / Wrong Track

Q5 – 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?



The 2008 general issue environment is similar to 2006. The figure is strongly positive in each survey shown. For comparison, a City of Seattle voter survey conducted in late January showed:

Right Direction 54%

Don't Know 13%

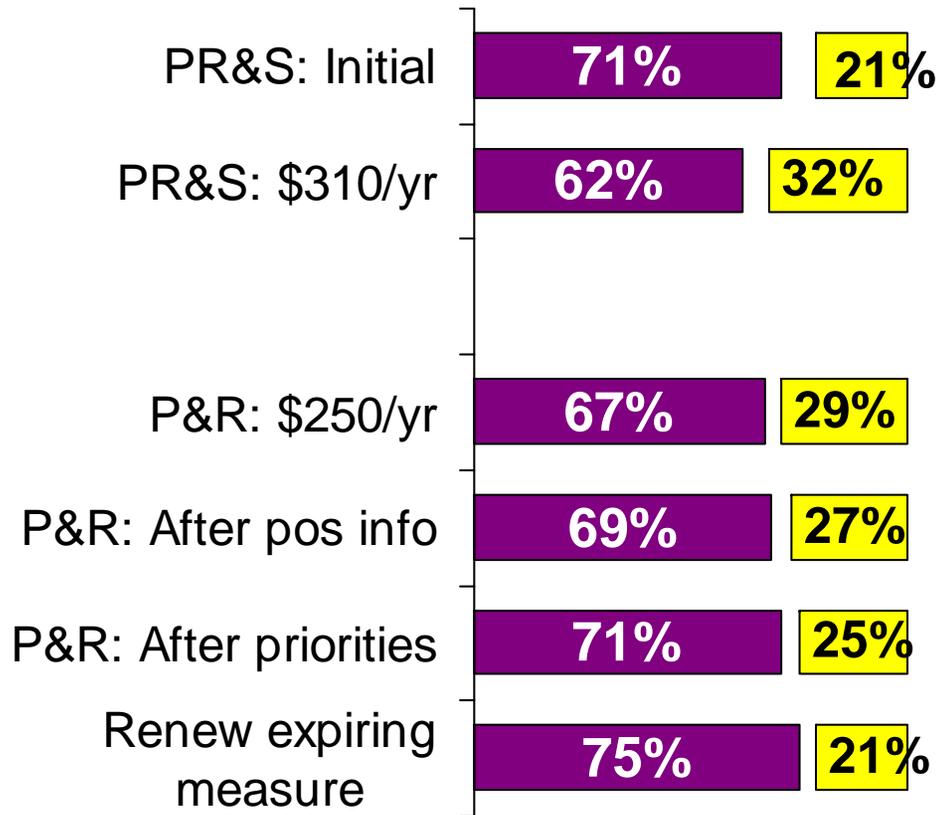
Wrong Track 33%

Split Sample Explained

- ◆ Split Samples divide the total number of interviews ($N = 700$) into two separate and identical samples—sample A ($N = 350$) and sample B ($N = 350$).
- ◆ Certain questions are then asked only of sample A and other questions only of sample B. This is useful of situations where questions in one part of a survey might influence answers later in the survey.
- ◆ In this survey, Sample A was introduced to the parks, recreation, and schools measure first and then received follow-up questions about the smaller parks & recreation measure. Sample B received only questions about the smaller parks & recreation measure. This enabled us to gather independent results for both scenarios, in other words, how does each separate measure fare on its own without voter having knowledge of the other?
- ◆ Results were checked against the entire voting population of the City, and the samples were weighted to accurately reflect those demographics and to match each other.

Summary of Support Progression

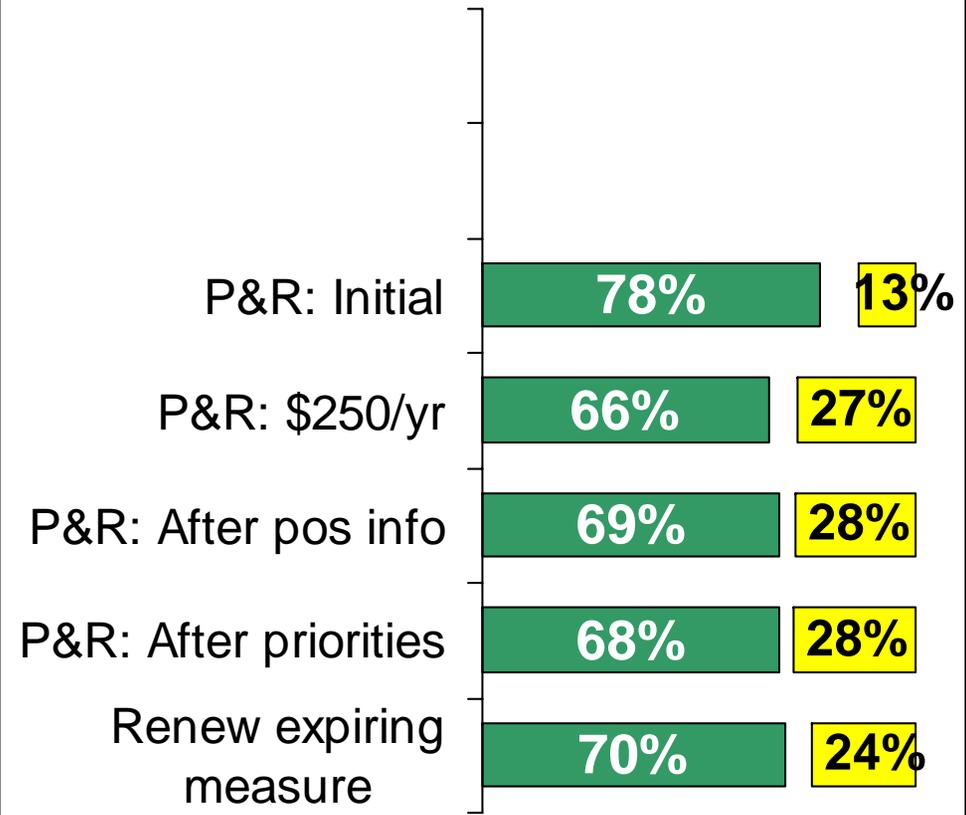
SAMPLE A



Support

Oppose

SAMPLE B



Support

Oppose

Support levels by sample are shown above. Each sample has a ± 5.2 percentage point margin of error.

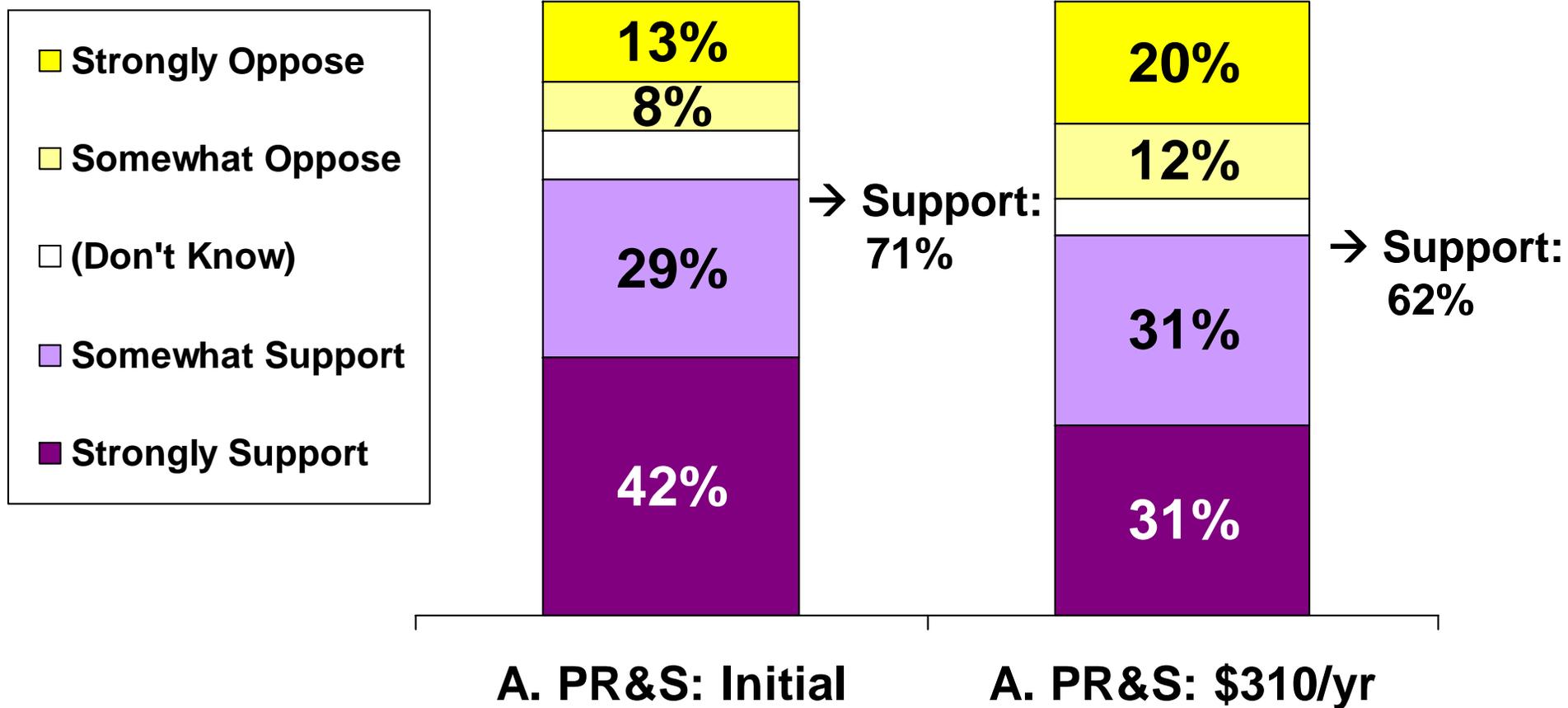
Initial support levels, counter to the committee's expectations, are higher for the Parks & Rec Only measure than for the Parks, Rec, & Schools measure (Net 15 Points).

Support when cost is first introduced is a net 9 points higher for the Parks & Rec Only measure.

Parks, Rec, & Schools Measure

(Sample A)

Parks, Rec, & Schools Measure

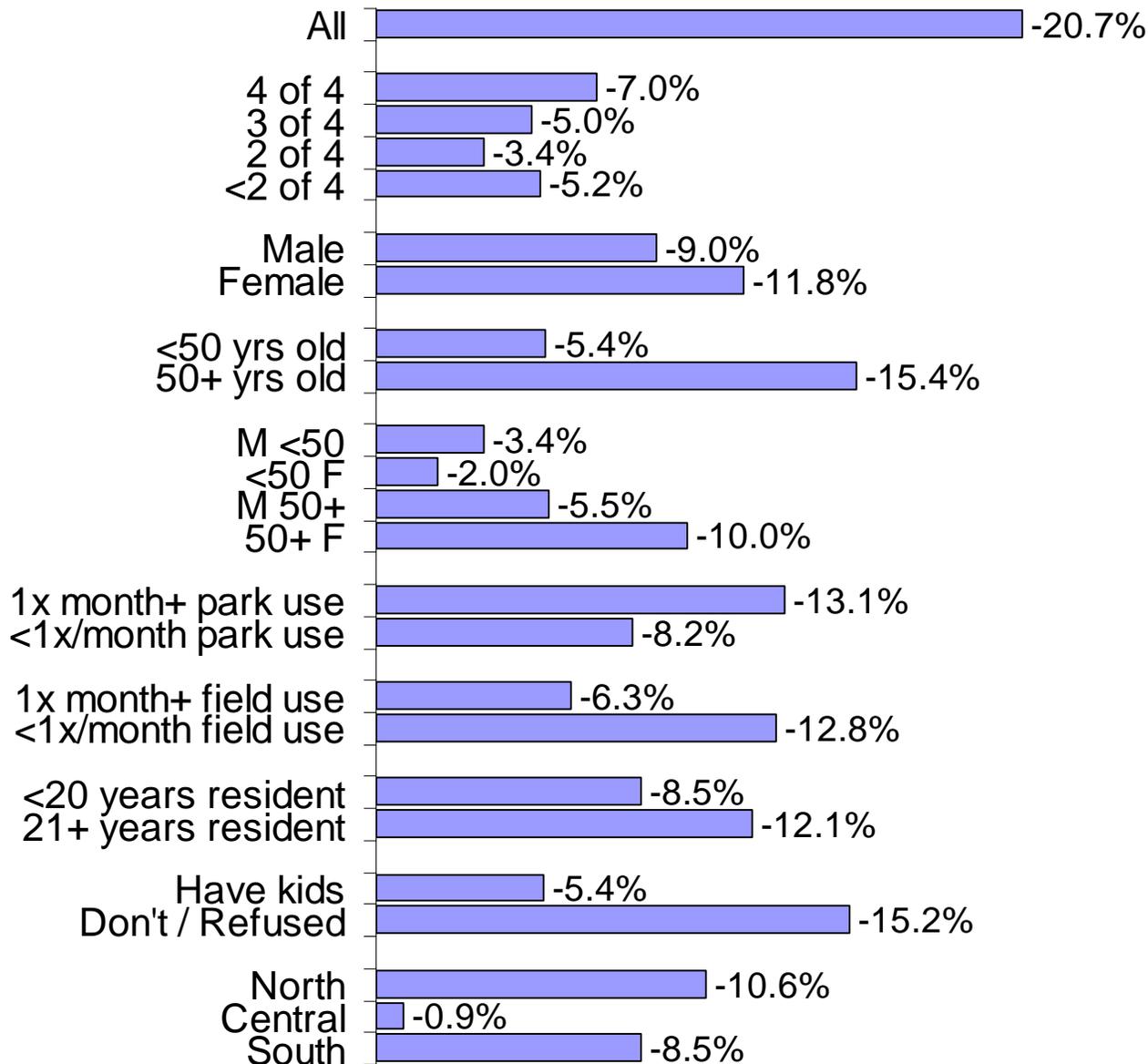


Initial support for a parks, recreation, and schools measure is strong (71% support).

When the price tag of \$310/year per \$1M home is introduced, there is a sizeable 21 point net negative shift (drop in support plus increase in opposition). Nonetheless, support is still a solid majority (62%).

Parks, Rec, & Schools Measure – Weighted Net Shift

Lost Voters from Initial Vote to \$310 Price Tag



From the initial vote to the \$310 price tag, there is a net negative shift of -20.7 points (drop in support plus increase in opposition).

This chart shows the contribution of each subgroup to that -20.7 point net shift.

Parks, Rec, & Schools Measure – Reasons For & Against

A. (If Support) What makes you say that? n=190

Important to maintain/restore the parks	28%
Need to maintain the schools/sports fields	14%
Makes MI nicer/better place to live/raise family	10%
All proposed is needed	8%
I am willing to pay higher taxes	5%
Need more trees/vegetation for the environment	5%

A. (If Oppose) What makes you say that? n=131

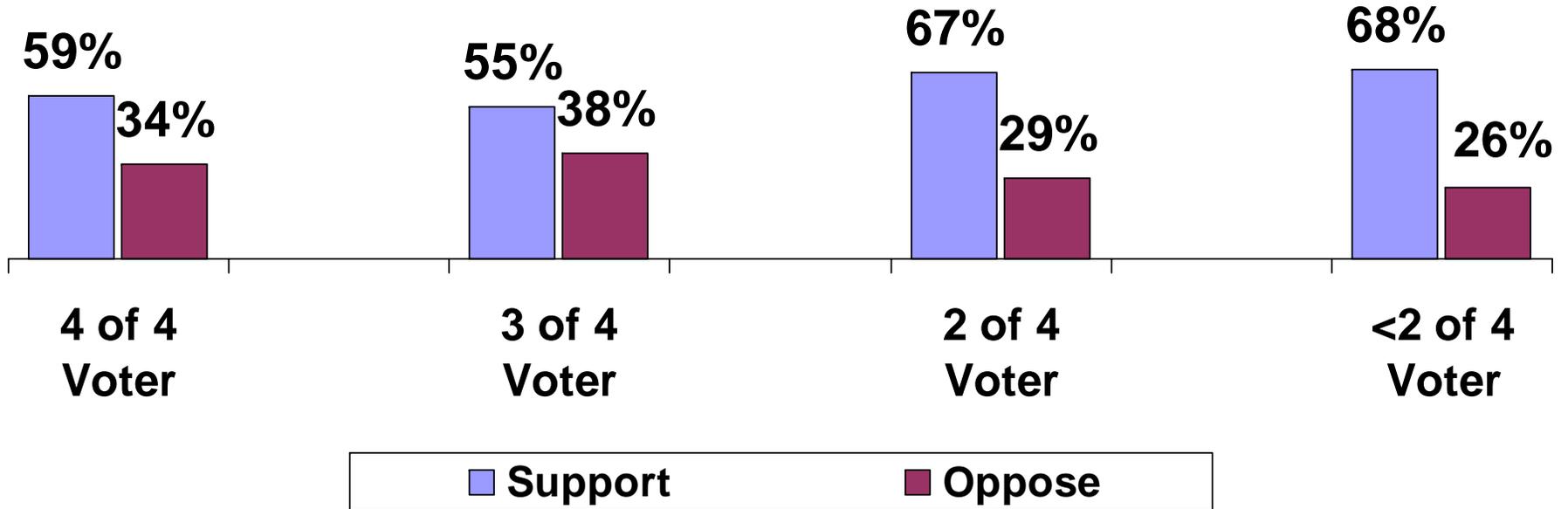
Taxes are too high already	32%
That much of a tax increase is excessive	17%
Too many projects in one measure	9%
Things are fine/no changes needed	7%
Program funds should come from other sources	5%
I am on a fixed income/retired	5%
School and park issues should be separate	5%

Supporters of the schools measure cite the importance of maintaining parks, schools, and fields, in addition to the quality of life that brings to living on Mercer Island as the reasons for their support.

Those opposed are primarily concerned about taxes (54%).

Parks, Rec, & Schools Measure – Support by Vote History

\$310 Price Tag

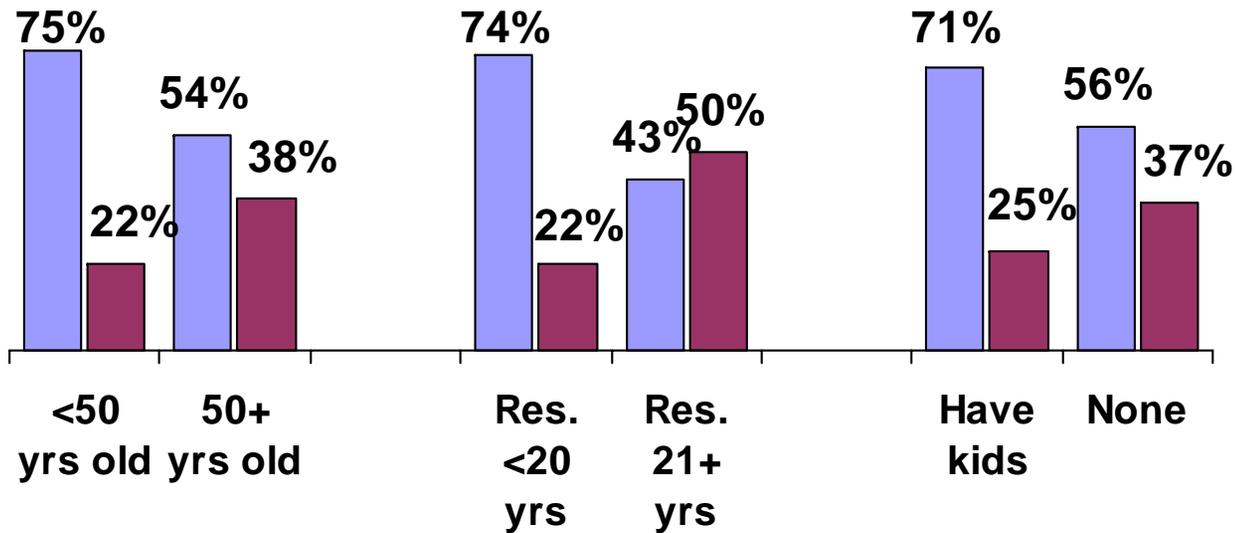


Support for the measure is strongest among less frequent voters. Here is how this survey's voter breakdown compares with all registered voters on the Island:

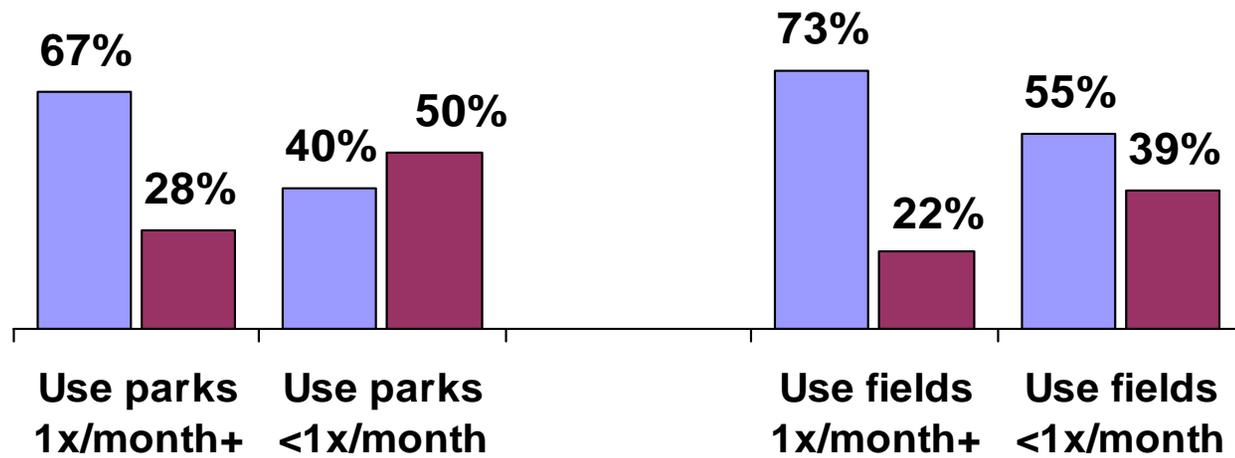
	<u>All Registered Voters</u>	<u>Survey Respondents</u>
4 of 4	32%	39%
3 of 4	20%	21%
2 of 4	20%	18%
<2 of 4	27%	23%

Parks, Rec, & Schools Measure – Subgroups

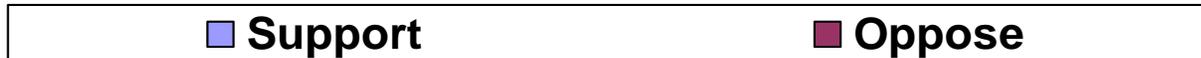
\$310 Price Tag



Voters who are <50 years old, have been residents <20 years, and who have kids are more likely to support the Parks, Rec, and Schools measure.



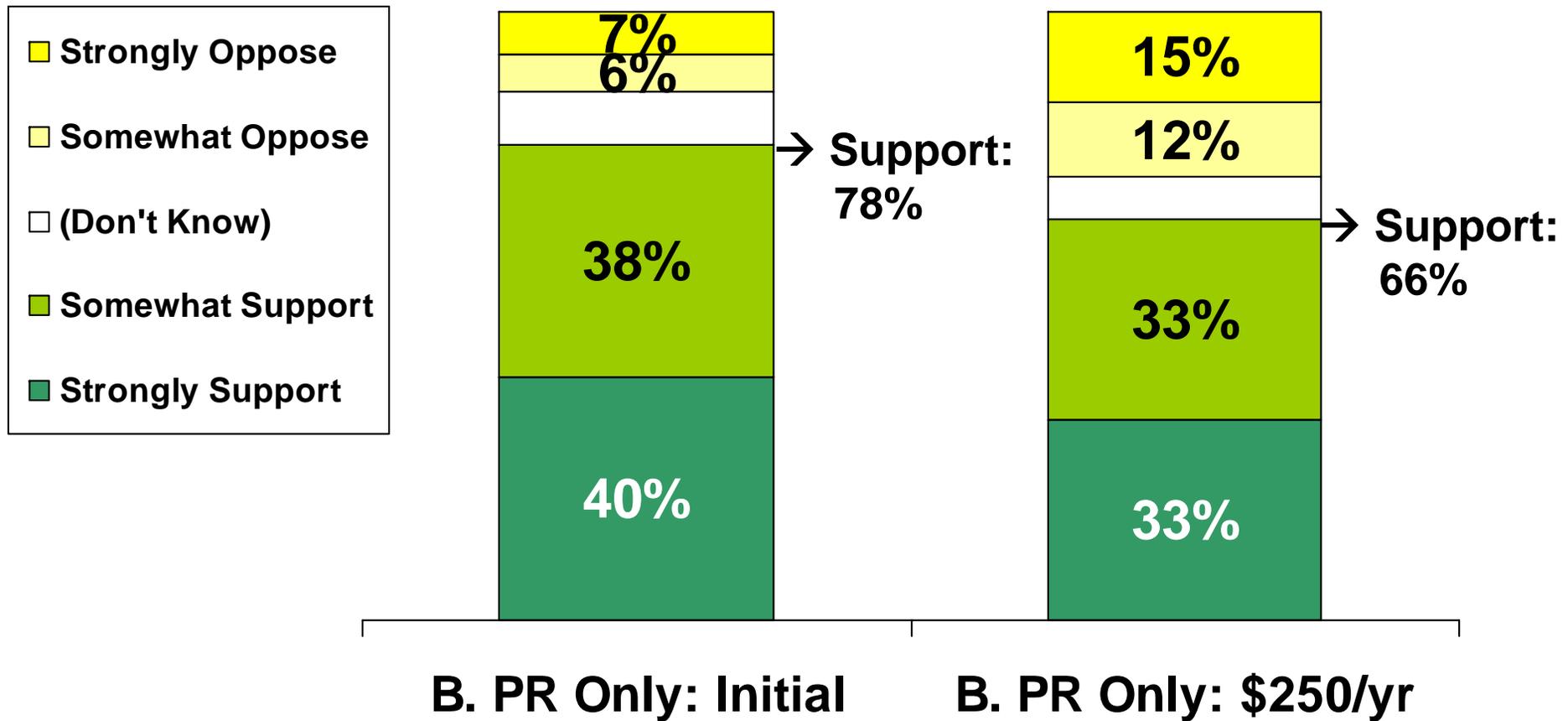
Those who use parks or fields at least once a month are more likely to support the Parks, Rec, and schools measure.



Parks & Rec Only Measure

(Sample B)

Parks & Rec Only Measure

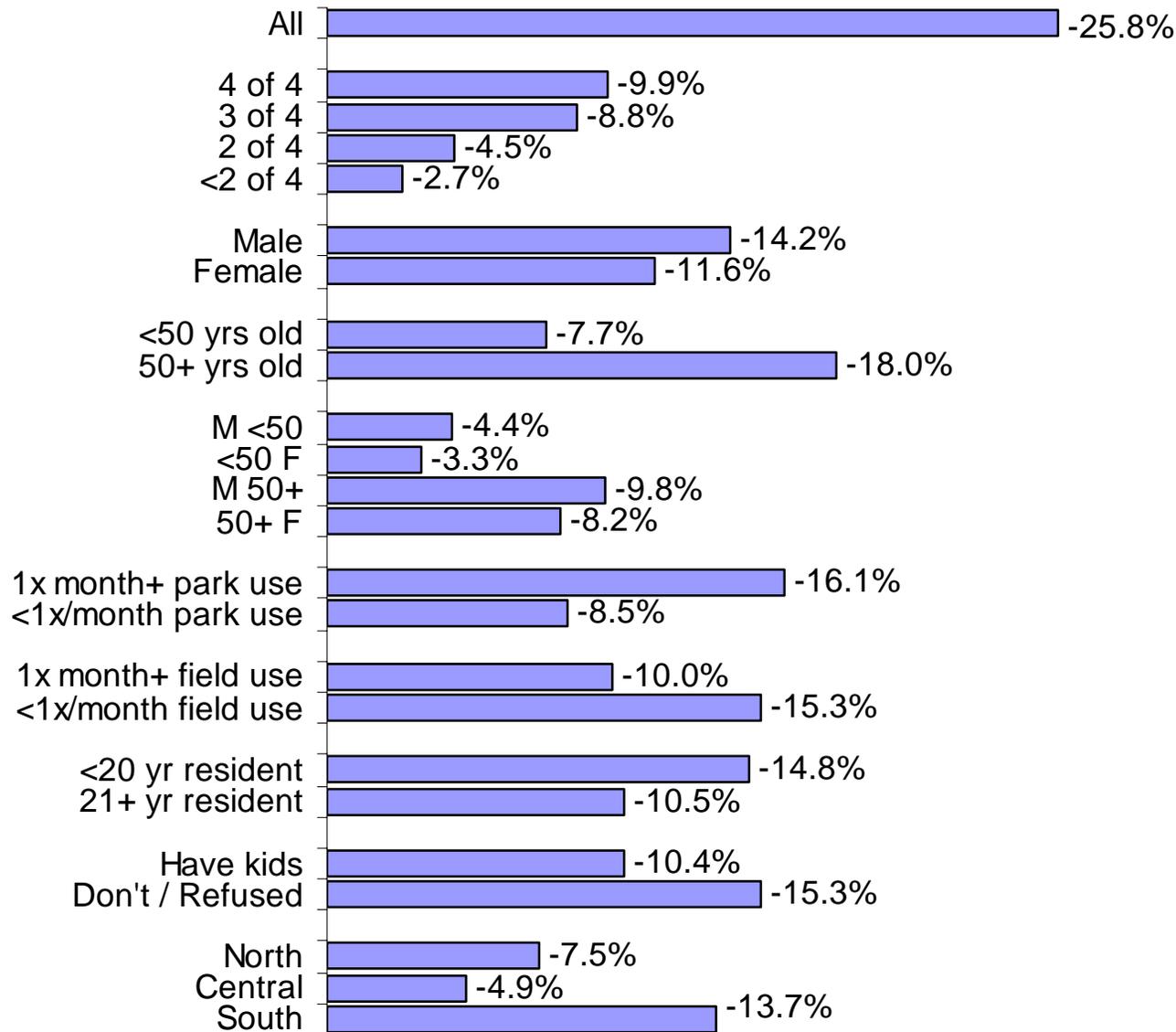


Initial support for a Parks & Rec Only measure is strong (78% support).

When the cost per household of \$250/year per \$1M household is introduced, there is a 26 point net negative shift (drop in support plus increase in opposition). Support is still a solid majority (66%) with this cost, and is a net 9 percentage points higher than for the Parks, Rec, & Schools measure at the same point in the survey (62% Support / 32% Oppose).

Parks & Rec Only Measure – Weighted Net Shift

Lost Voters from Initial Vote to \$250 Price Tag



From the initial vote to the \$250 price tag, there is a net negative shift of -25.8 points (drop in support plus increase in opposition).

This chart shows the contribution of each subgroup to that -25.8 point net shift.

Parks & Rec Only Measure – Reasons For & Against

A. (If Support) What makes you say that? n=216

Important to maintain/restore the parks	41%
Makes MI nicer/better place to live/raise family	11%
I am willing to pay higher taxes	9%
Need more trees/ vegetation for the environment	7%

A. (If Oppose) What makes you say that? n=108

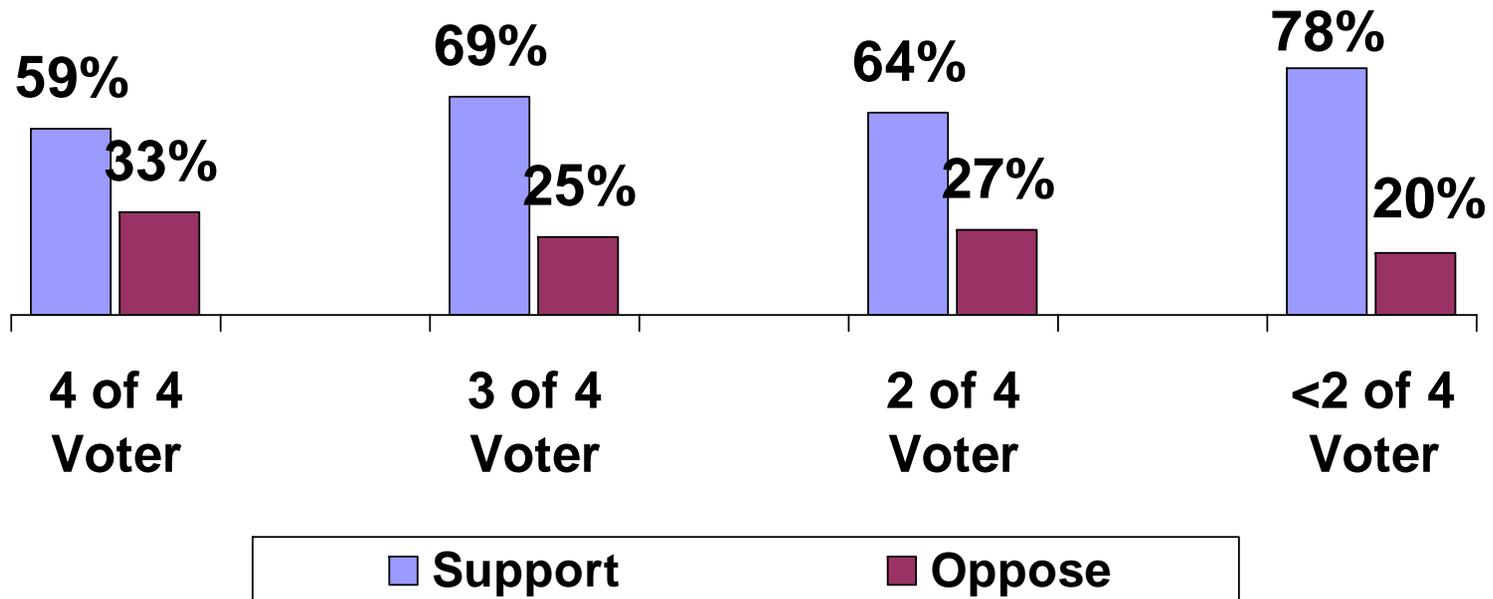
Taxes are too high already	36%
That much of a tax increase is excessive	13%
Not in favor of artificial turf	12%
Program funds should come from other sources	9%
I am on a fixed income/retired	8%

As with sample A, supporters of the Parks & Rec Only measure cite the importance of maintaining parks and fields, in addition to the quality of life that brings to living on Mercer Island as their reasons for supporting the measure

As with sample A, those opposed are primarily concerned with taxes (49%).

Parks & Rec Only – Support by Vote History

\$250 Price Tag

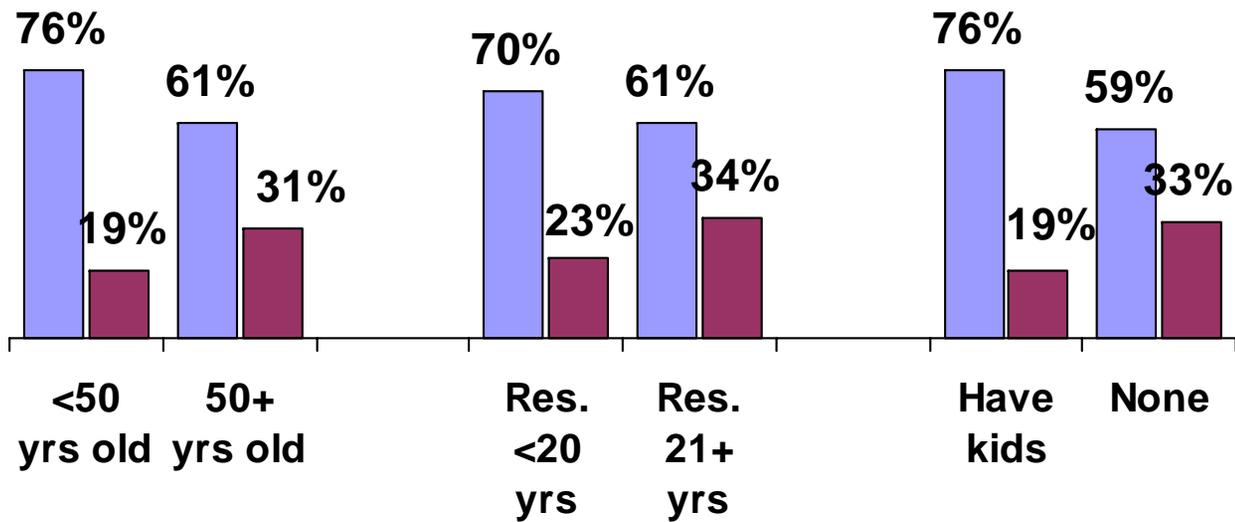


As with sample A, support for the measure is strongest among less frequent voters. Here is the survey breakdown as compared with all registered voters on the Island:

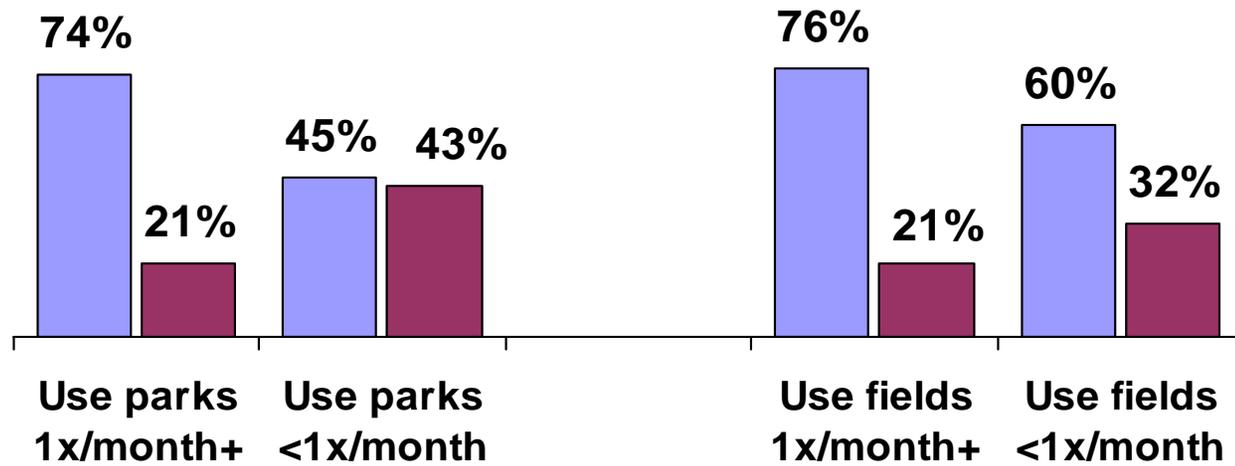
	<u>All Registered Voters</u>	<u>Survey Respondents</u>
4 of 4	32%	39%
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2 of 4	20%	18%
<2 of 4	27%	23%

Parks & Rec Only Measure – Subgroups

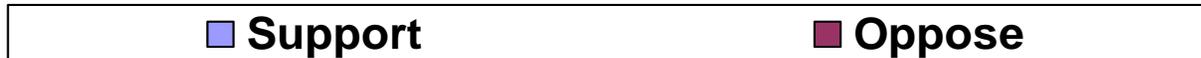
\$250 Price Tag



Similar to sample A, voters who are <50 years old, have been residents <20 years, and have kids are more likely to support the Parks & Rec Only measure

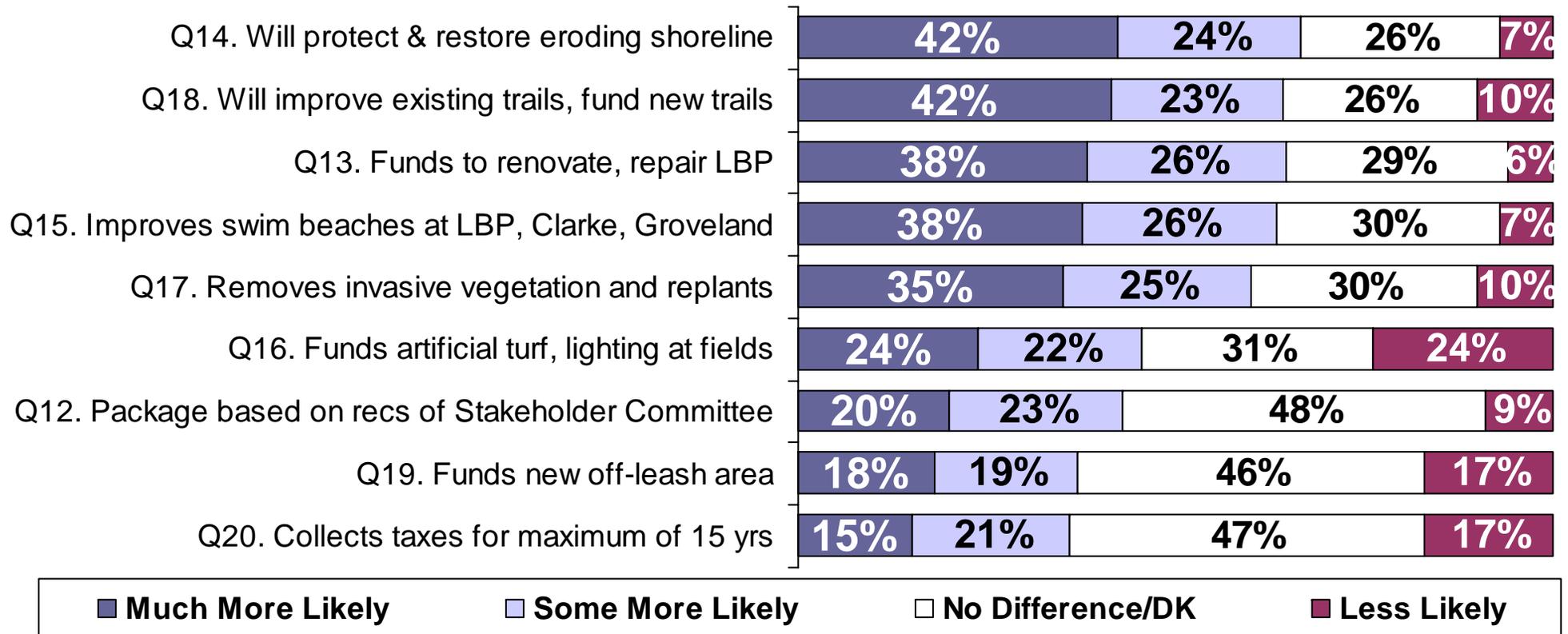


Those who use parks or fields at least once a month are also more likely to support the Parks & Rec Only measure.



Comparisons & Information about the Measure

Reactions to Positive Information about the Measure

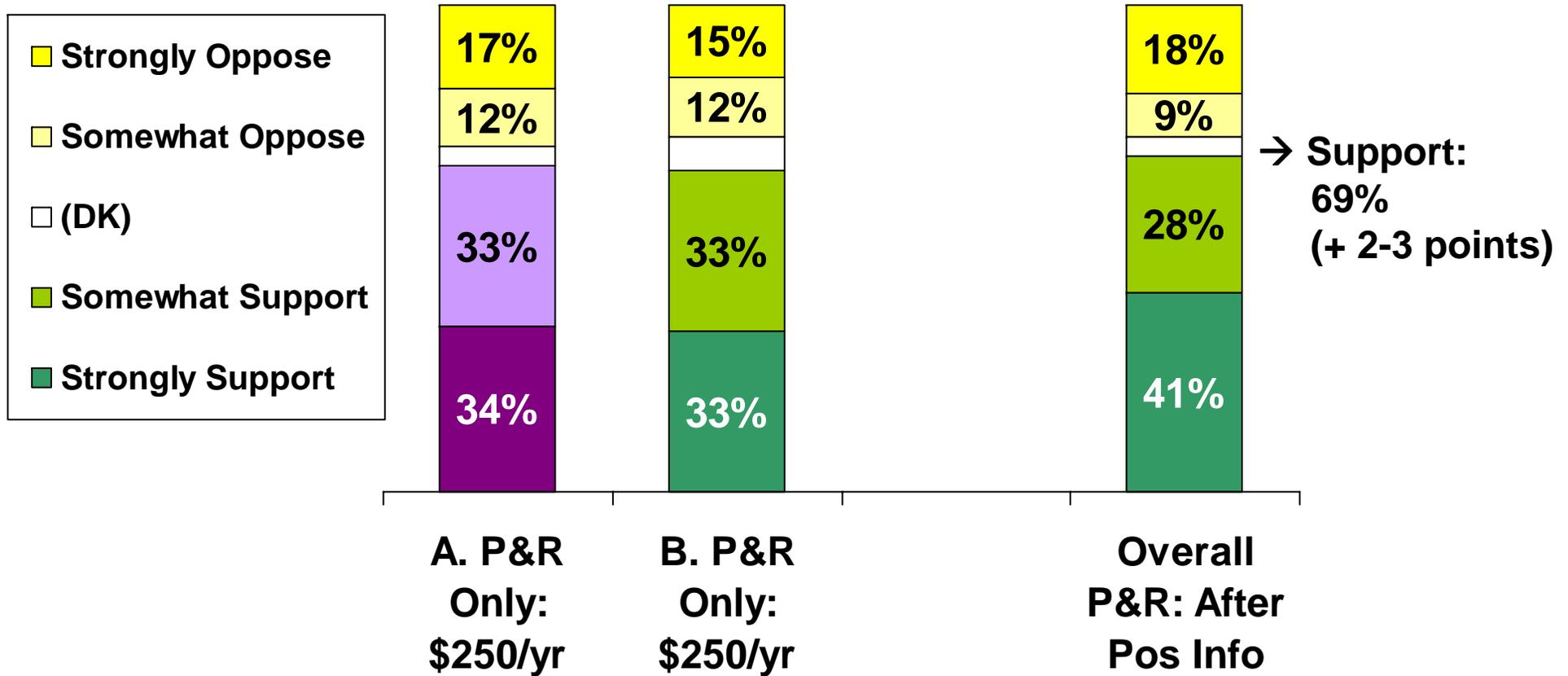


Respondents are read positive pieces of information about the measure. After each, they are asked if that makes them more likely or less likely to support the measure, or if that reason makes no difference to them.

The first five items are the strongest, with 60% or more of voters saying that information would make them more likely to support the measure.

Of note is the highest level of “less likely” response for artificial turf and lighting at fields. The off leash area makes no different to nearly half of voters.

After Positive Messages



Though many of the positive pieces of information result in a strong majority of voters saying they would be more likely to support the measure, overall support is virtually unchanged (+2 or 3 points).

However, the intensity of this support increases, with 41% of voters now saying they strongly support the measure.

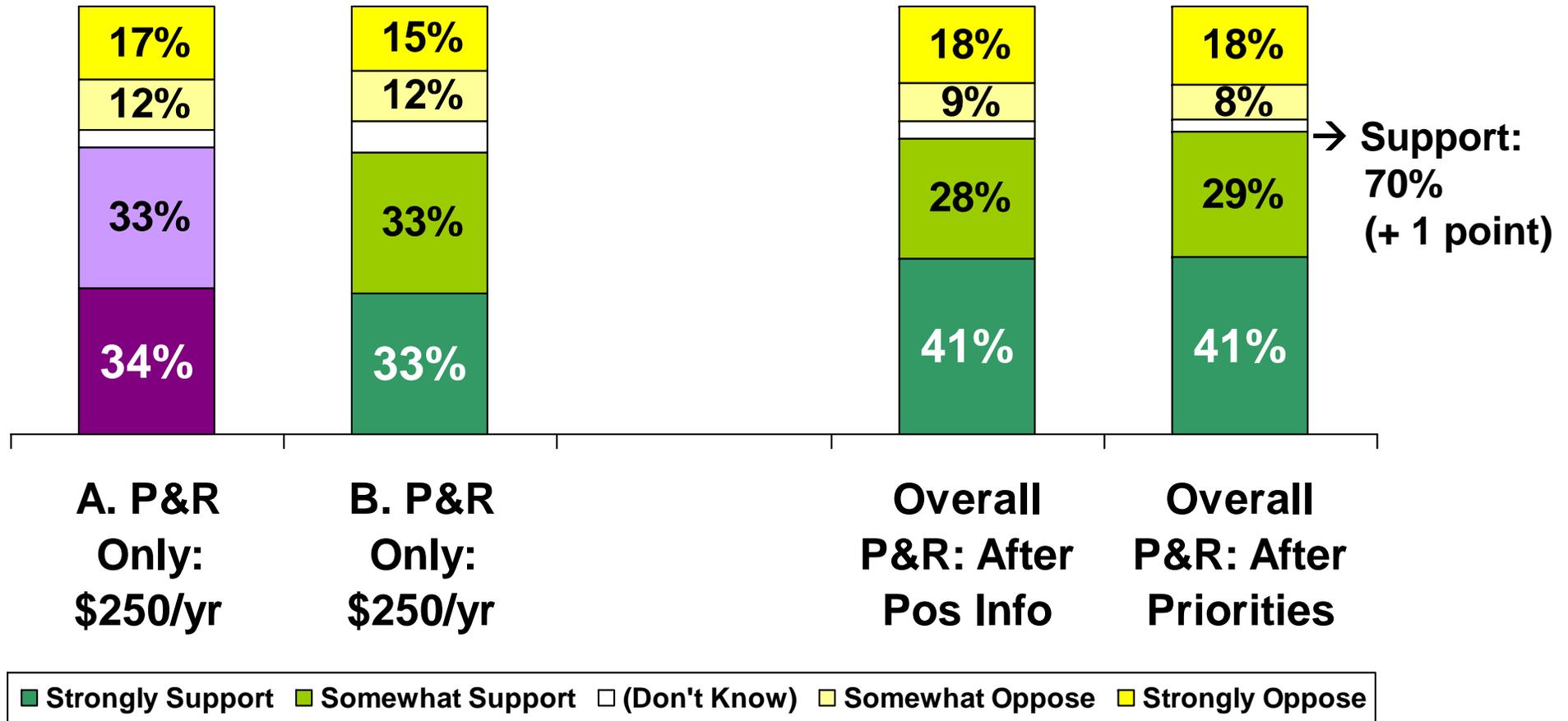
Priorities

	Lowest Priority				Highest Priority			Percent "7"
	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	
Q22. Restore & protect shoreline at LBP					4.9			27%
Q25. Restore the health of Pioneer Park					4.7			24%
Q34. Drainage, irrigation at Elem Schools					4.6			20%
Q31. Improve LBP swim area					4.6			21%
Q28. Replace playground at LBP					4.5			22%
Q32. Complete LBP boardwalk & expand wetland					4.5			22%
Q35. Renovate beaches at Groveland & Clarke					4.3			16%
Q36. Trail connecting upper and lower LBP					4.1			14%
Q27. Improvements to LBP waterfront					4.1			13%
Q23. New shoreline access and habitat at LBP					4.0			14%
Q37. Foster connections btw Town Center & LBP					4.0			17%
Q29. Trail at Engstrom Open Space					3.9			12%
Q26. Repairs & upgrades to Ellis Pond Trail					3.8			9%
Q38. Gallagher Hill connecting to SE 40th St.					3.8			13%
Q33. Connecting S-wood Heights to Gallagher Hill					3.6			11%
Q24. Artificial turf & new lighting at existing fields					3.6			13%
Q30. New small dog off-leash area					3.2			11%

Voters are asked about specific package components. The section serves two purposes, 1) to understand the popularity of individual components, 2) to provide detail about what is in the package. Descriptions are shortened to fit.

The intensity for these items is weak; only a quarter (27%) select 7 (highest) for the top item. Put another way, voters generally support the Parks & Rec measure as a whole, and are not dramatically inspired by any individual item.

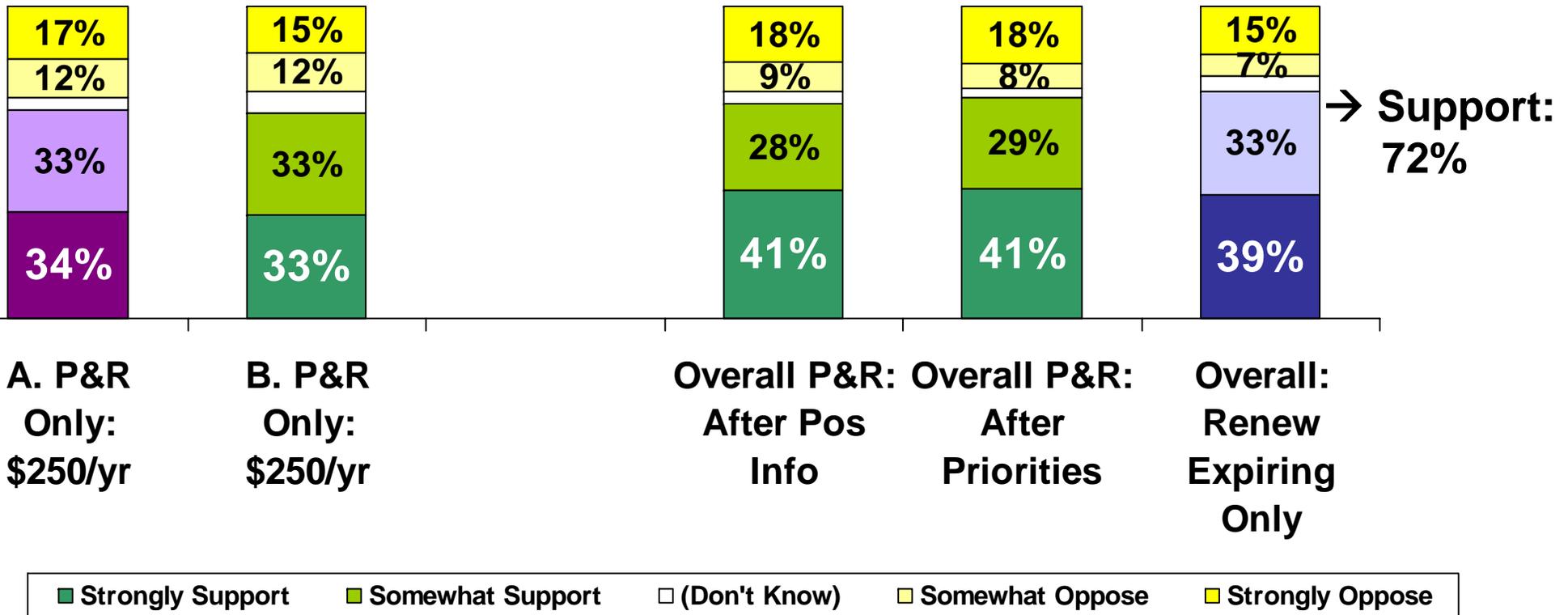
After Priorities



Support is virtually unchanged following the additional details about the package. Ultimately, the additional information about the package components increases overall support between 3 and 4 percentage points.

The intensity of support does increase following the positive information about the measure, and stays at that level with the additional details in the priorities section.

Renewal Only



After all questions on the items in the Parks & Rec Only measure are tested, respondents are asked if they would support a Renewal Only of the Luther Burbank Maintenance and Operations measure. They are informed that this measure would keep the City’s property tax rate unchanged.

While support for a Renewal Only is strong (72%), it is not significantly higher than for the Parks & Rec Only package following the positive information or priorities sections.

However, the Renewal Only is a net 11 percentage points higher in support than the Parks & Rec Only at the \$250/yr per \$1M Household question.

There are no statistically significant differences between the split samples on the “renewal only” vote.



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND, WA**

**AB 4308
May 19, 2008
Regular Business**

**PARKS LEVY STAKEHOLDERS COMMITTEE
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Proposed Council Action:
Briefing only. No action required.

DEPARTMENT OF

Parks and Recreation (Peter M. Mayer) & CORe (Joy Johnston)

COUNCIL LIAISON

Jim Pearman Steve Litzow Dan Grausz

EXHIBITS

1. Parks Levy Citizen Stakeholder's Committee "Charter"
2. Committee Membership
3. Parks Ballot Measure Timeline
4. Council Planning Session Summary re: Parks Ballot Measure
5. Park Project Descriptions, Costing and Maps
6. Stakeholder Committee Summary Recommendation to Council
7. Financing Methods/Strategies

APPROVED BY CITY MANAGER

Rich Conrad 5-15-08

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$	n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$	n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$	n/a

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

As directed by City Council, a Citizen's Stakeholder Committee has been meeting since December 2007 to develop a list of park projects that could be funded through a levy lid lift and/or bond levy. With staff assistance, the Committee developed and revised a ballot measure package with the goal of meeting a broad range of Mercer Island park needs as well as being appealing to Mercer Island voters. The recommendation included in this agenda bill represents a culmination of several months of discussion and analysis.

BACKGROUND

At the City Council's January 2007 annual planning session, staff presented a summary of completed projects in Luther Burbank Park, along with phase-in strategies for subsequent funded and unfunded park improvements. Council was advised that they needed to determine the timeline, process steps and preferred funding strategy should they desire to implement the Luther Burbank Park 20-year master plan.

In addition, the operation and maintenance (O&M) funding levy for Luther Burbank Park is due to expire at the end of 2009 (six year levy approved in November 2003) and must be renewed or replaced if the park is to be maintained in 2010 and beyond. Council advised that a "grand parks plan" be prepared that offered a "holistic approach to capital and operations funding as well as an implementation plan for all Mercer Island parks"- not just Luther Burbank Park. As a result, staff prepared a detailed background on park planning

efforts and investments, potential park improvements and various financing strategies which was presented to the Council at their June 4th Council meeting (AB 4193) and subsequently at their June 16th Mini-Planning Session as part of their briefing packet.

CITIZEN'S STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

As a result of the guidance obtained at the June 16th, 2007, Mini-Planning Session and subsequently at the October 1, 2007, City Council meeting, staff advanced an Agenda Bill 4233 (November 5, 2007) to initiate a Citizen's Stakeholder Committee and process to develop a potential package of park and recreation projects for a future ballot measure. A working consensus was reached on the Parks Capital and Operations and Maintenance Strategy, which was then incorporated into a "charter" for the formation of a Citizen's Stakeholder Committee (Exhibit 1).

Stakeholders represented individual or organizational interests who are regular users of parks and trails, and are identified as those who can help to develop or implement actions and are directly affected by the project outcomes. A full Committee member listing is included as Exhibit 2.

Committee Chair Don Cohen convened the first Committee meeting on December 17th, 2007 at the Community Center at Mercer View, and presided over 7 subsequent meetings and a park tour with City Councilmembers. Committee meetings were open public meetings advertised on the City's website, in MI Weekly, and covered in the Mercer Island Reporter. Time was set aside at the beginning of each meeting for public comment. A complete timeline of the Committee's work is included as Exhibit 3.

The Committee began reviewing staff's preliminary project list (AB 4193) that was developed from the existing Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, park master plans, forest management plans, open space vegetation management plan, ballfield study, staff's knowledge of park system needs and other City planning documents.

Subsequent Committee meetings focused on categorizing these various park improvements, prioritization of projects and reviewing costing information. Initial consensus was achieved on a package of park projects that represented a mix of parks, ballfields and trails/open space. Park related projects (e.g. shoreline restoration, playground improvements, etc.) accounted for 56% to 63% of the total preliminary project package, while ballfields (e.g. infield improvements, artificial turf and lights, etc.) represented between 23% to 27% and trails and open space (e.g. invasives removal, tree planting, etc.) between 14% and 17% of the total package cost.

Subsequent Council Guidance

The City Council was briefed on the Committee's work at the Council's annual planning session on January 25th and provided new direction on the issue of operation and maintenance (O&M) for Luther Burbank Park and the incremental O&M resulting from the new park projects. This total estimated cost of \$525,000 (\$370,000 for Luther Burbank Park and \$155,500 for other park improvements) was directed to be included in the ballot measure. The City Council acknowledged that the total ballot measure dollar amount would be determined at the completion of the public opinion survey which would inform the Council on the willingness of Mercer Island citizens to fund these various park improvements. A summary of Council's response to these and other strategic questions is attached as Exhibit 4. The Stakeholder's Committee was then briefed on these developments via email on January 29th and subsequently at their February 27th, 2008 meeting. A project description and costing packet, since updated, was prepared for Committee members that included photos and maps of the proposed project areas (Exhibit 5).

Education Services Financing

At the City Council's April 7th Study Session, the Education Financing Council Subcommittee provided a report (AB 4293) to the Council regarding the latest perspective on ways the City could aid the Mercer Island School District financially by continuing current services without reimbursement. This update came

as a result of direction at the Council's February 19th, 2008, meeting so that any direction could be incorporated into the proposed Parks Levy survey, if deemed desirable by the Council.

The presentation informed the Council on the preliminary cost estimates of how and where the City could further help the District including some savings occurring in operations cost and others through capital improvement projects. Some cost-sharing measures identified included: Youth and Family Services counseling, School Resource Officer, facilities scheduler, high school parking/security, school fields, and the D.A.R.E. program. It was the consensus of the Council to have staff return with more concrete numbers and the feasibility of tying the education financing in with park financing. As a result, staff included these services and operational costs in the various parks ballot measure financing models that were then tested as part of the public survey conducted by EMC Research.

Public Survey, Project Package and Financing Scenarios

The Committee continued to make adjustments and refinements to the package of projects. On March 15th, 2008, members joined City Councilmembers and staff for a park tour where they visited the project sites to better understand the various issues and their implications. The Committee then received a briefing by Mr. Ian Stewart, EMC Research, regarding public survey methodology. Survey comments and suggestions were then used to develop a draft questionnaire which the Committee reviewed before it was finalized. EMC Research conducted the survey between April 24th and 30th and results presented to the Stakeholder's on April 30th. See Agenda Bill 4307 (included in this packet) for survey results.

Staff then prepared various financing scenarios based on project costs and likely implementation schedules. The scenarios included:

Alternative 1a - All "A" list capital projects only, no associated operations and maintenance costs select education services operational expenses, and replacement of the Luther Burbank Park operations and maintenance levy. (Levy: \$900,000 for 15 years)

Alternative 1b - All "A" list capital projects only, no associated operations and maintenance costs, no education services operational expenses, and replacement of the Luther Burbank park operations and maintenance levy. (Levy: \$900,000 for 15 years)

Alternative 1c - All "A" list capital projects only, no associated operations and maintenance costs, select educational services operational expenses and no replacement of the Luther Burbank Park operations and maintenance levy (Levy: \$900,000 for 15 years)

Alternative 1d - All "A" list capital projects only, no associated operations and maintenance costs, no education services operational expenses, and no replacement of the Luther Burbank Park operations and maintenance levy (Levy: \$900,000 for 15 years)

Alternative 2 - All capital projects ("A", "B" and "C") and their incremental operations & maintenance costs, select education services operational expenses and replacement of the Luther Burbank Park operations and maintenance levy (Levy: \$1.1 million O&M / \$1.2 million capital for 15 years)

Alternative 3 - All capital projects ("A", "B" and "C") and their incremental operations & maintenance costs, select education services operational expenses and replacement of the Luther Burbank Park operations and maintenance levy (\$1.1 million O&M / \$1.1 million capital for 20 years)

The Committee discussed each scenario and quickly reached consensus that a combination operations and maintenance levy together with a capital bond would achieve the intended result of an immediate, yet measured financing and implementation approach. Alternative 3 was preferred because of its ability to generate sufficient revenues each year to accomplish several smaller projects (e.g. trails, beach improvements, playgrounds, etc.) or address a larger or more complex improvement (e.g. shoreline

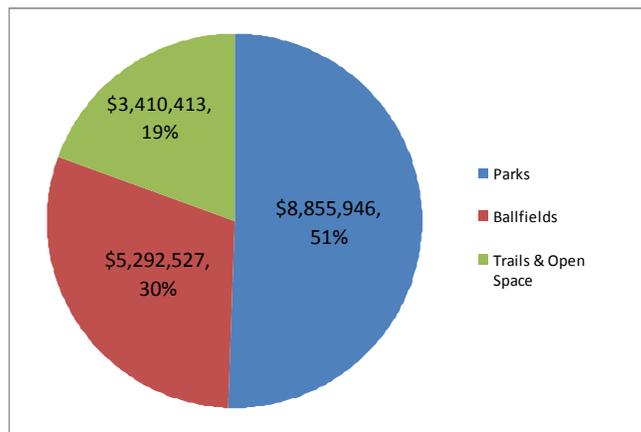
restoration or ballfield improvements) as well as provided for needed operations and maintenance of the improvements as well as Luther Burbank Park. The other approaches either could not finance even any of the most minimal amount of park improvements or so much time would be needed to generate levy proceeds, a particular project could not be implemented within a reasonable timeframe (i.e. within 5-6 years of levy approval). Alternative 3 was then further refined to account for staffing/project management and debt service.

The Committee recommended the removal of elementary school field improvements (\$150,000) after hearing from Associate Superintendent Liz Dodd, that the District would prefer including such improvements in their future levy/bond ballot measure and also likely prioritize them above some other District projects given the favorable public survey responses for such improvements. The Luther Burbank waterfront capital improvements was subsequently reduced in scope and cost (from \$1 million to \$500,000) to reflect a more modest set of improvements to the dock and Boiler Building area with the intentions that a more strategic waterfront planning effort would be implemented to better define the scope and scale of improvements. Minor modifications also occurred regarding the consolidation of two Gallagher Hill related trail projects into a single trail enhancements project.

Over the course of two meetings in late April and early May, the Committee deliberated regarding the education services portion of the proposed ballot measure. The Committee initially supported the inclusion of costs associated with several education services (e.g. School Resource Officer, School/Family Counseling, school facility scheduling, parking and security on the H.S. campus and school athletic field maintenance). However, after further deliberation, the Stakeholder's opted to include only a select set of services that were directly correlated to the delivery of parks and recreation related services (e.g. school facility scheduling- approx. \$43,000/yr and school athletic field maintenance- approx. \$120,000/yr). They also included funding provisions for other yet to be identified school related park and recreation services up to \$300,000/yr.

Final Committee Recommendation

A final recommended package of projects and estimated costs were developed and are presented as Exhibit 6. A permanent levy lid lift in the amount of \$1.16 million annually (\$147 annual property tax increase on a \$1.0 million home) is proposed to support parks operations and maintenance (including replacement of the Luther Burbank Park O&M levy), together with a 20-year bond levy in the amount of \$14.71 million (\$149 annual property tax increase) for a number of capital projects. The total property tax impact on a \$1.0 million dollar Mercer Island home is \$296. While exact timing or sequencing of project implementation has not been determined, the capital projects would be completed over a 9 year period with the more expensive projects (i.e. Luther Burbank Shoreline Restoration and South Mercer Playfields) being the first priority. A graphic depiction of the allocation of proposed projects between parks, ballfields and trails and open space is noted below.



CAPITAL AND OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE FINANCING OPTIONS

Representatives from Seattle Northwest Securities (SNW), Jean Baker and Annette Sommer, will be present at the Council meeting to address more detailed questions from Council on levy and bond financing scenarios. They have provided some briefing information and it is included as Exhibit 7 to this Agenda Bill.

To finance new capital improvements/acquisitions and any corresponding operations and maintenance costs, there are three viable options in light of the Financial Guiding Principles accepted by the Council at their January 2007 Planning Session.

- 1) Voted (i.e. UTGO) debt (20 years)
- 2) "Original flavor" levy lid lift (20 years or permanent)
- 3) "Alternate" levy lid lift (6 years only)

Each of these options is described below:

	Unlimited Tax G.O. Debt	Levy Lid Lift (Original)	Levy Lid Lift (Alternate)
Purpose	Any capital purpose	Any operating or capital purpose; supplanting allowed	Any operating or capital purpose; no supplanting allowed
Length of Time	Typically 20 years	No limit unless proceeds used to pay debt service	6 years
Restrictions	Arbitrage regulations apply for bond issues of \$5.0M or more	1% annual growth limit	No inflationary limit
Authorization	60% voter approval required	Simple majority voter approval required	Simple majority voter approval required

When taking on a major new asset, the City's past practice has been to find new stable ongoing revenue sources to support any additional operations and maintenance costs. Other financing options were identified in the Revenue Tool Kit presented to the Council at their January 2007 Planning Session; however, their use was precluded by the Financial Guiding Principles noted above. For example, conspicuously missing from the above list of options is banked capacity—the use of which is limited to maintaining existing service levels per the Financial Guiding Principles. In addition, streamlined sales tax revenue, which the City will begin receiving in July 2008, wasn't noted as a financing option, because this revenue source is needed to offset the projected decline in development-related fees and sales tax revenues beginning in 2009.

From these three options, two financing strategies have been identified to pay for these new capital improvements, and two financing strategies have been identified to cover the additional operations and maintenance costs:

Capital Financing Strategies:

- 1) **20 year voted debt (annual debt service)** – This is the traditional financing approach for major general government capital improvements/acquisitions. A voted property tax increase (for 20 years) is used to pay the debt service (principal and interest) on the bonds.
- 2) **20 year capital lid lift ("pay as you go")** – Instead of issuing debt, the City could effectively establish a "sinking fund" or "pay as you go" approach to support capital improvements as sufficient funding is accumulated.

Operations & Maintenance Financing Strategies:

- 1) **6 year + CPI operations/maintenance lid lift** – This is what the current Luther Burbank Park operations and maintenance levy is. The primary advantage of this financing strategy is the ability to cover actual annual inflationary increases over the six year levy period. The primary drawback, however, is the requirement to go back to the voters once every six years.
- 2) **Permanent operations/maintenance lid lift** – The appeal of this kind of levy lid lift is the one time requirement to go to the voters. If approved, it's permanent. Keeping pace with annual inflationary increases given the 1% annual growth limitation per state law is the primary disadvantage. In essence, the City would have to rely on the growth of other revenue sources to cover any inflationary increases over and above 1%.

Because of the high level of interest within the stakeholder committee in getting the capital projects done as quickly as possible, the recommended capital financing strategy is 20 year voted debt. As for the operations and maintenance financing strategy, the committee expressed a preference for the permanent levy lid lift. It should be noted that with this dual financing approach two separate ballot questions would go to Mercer Island voters in November 2008—one related to approving a 20 year bond levy and the other related to approving a levy lid lift. Language would be required to link the two ballot questions.

CURRENT TAXING OBLIGATIONS FOR MERCER ISLAND

Property Taxes

Property Taxes play an essential role in financing the operations of the City of Mercer Island, accounting for 45% of the City's revenue that supports the major activities of the City. In 2008, Mercer Island property owners will pay a total of \$10.1 million in property taxes.

There are two types of property tax collected by the City - levied (regular) and voter approved. The levied portion may be used for any purpose that the City deems necessary. On Mercer Island, as in most cities, the property tax levy supports our General Fund—the general operations of the City. Services paid for in the General Fund include the major activities of the City – police and fire services and maintenance of parks and roads. The utilities receive no revenue from property taxes since they must be self-supporting through utility rates.

The second type of property tax collected by the City is dedicated for specific purposes that have been voted on by the residents. Voter approved taxes in the past have included land for parks and open space, new fire trucks, and the remodeling of City Hall. These large capital items are financed by general obligation bonds, typically payable over 20 years. In 2008, voted debt payments supported by taxes amounts to \$425,000, which represents the final year of the MIDA refunding bond issue. **Beginning in 2009, the City will have no outstanding debt funded by property taxes. Accordingly, the net property tax impact of the proposed parks levy on a \$1.0 million home in 2009 is \$242 (\$296 total impact of parks levy - \$54 reduction in MIDA levy lid lift).**

Which agencies get your property tax dollars?

The total property tax bill that a resident pays consists of not only the City levied and voter approved portion but also the property taxes that other jurisdictions assess on the residents. The City portion of the property tax bill has totaled less than 20% for the past five years and in 2008 amounts to 15.9% of the total tax bill. There are 6 other jurisdictions that have taxing authority on Mercer Island. The largest two in 2008, totaling 51.9% of the total tax bill, were the assessments for school funding—the State School Fund at 29.8% and the Mercer Island School District at 22.1%. King County is the next largest taxing jurisdiction receiving 16.9% of the total property tax bill. The Port of Seattle, the King County Library District, the Emergency

Medical Services levy, the King County Flood Zone District, and the Ferry District receive the remainder of the taxes, which amounts to 15.3%. Below is a table of the taxing jurisdictions and the percentage of each tax dollar that they will receive in 2008.

Property Tax Levy Rates

For a homeowner with property valued at \$1.0 million, the City's portion of the property tax bill in 2008 would amount to \$1,137. Following is the 2008 property tax breakdown on a \$1.0 million house on Mercer Island:

Purpose	2008 Levy Rate/\$1,000	% of Total in 2008	2008 Prop Tax Levy
State School Fund	2.13233	29.8%	\$2,132
School District	1.58343	22.1%	\$1,583
King County	1.20770	16.9%	\$1,208
City	1.13689	15.9%	\$1,137
Library	0.41836	5.8%	\$418
Port	0.22359	3.1%	\$224
EMS	0.30000	4.2%	\$300
Flood Zone	0.10000	1.4%	\$100
Ferry District	0.05500	0.8%	\$55
Total	7.15730	100.0%	\$7,157

Limits on Property Taxes

Each year the amount of revenue to be raised from property taxes is determined by the City Council based on forecasted expenditures, other revenue sources, and state law limitations. Previously, Washington State law limited regular property tax levy increases to 6% of the previous year's levy or the rate of inflation, whichever was less. The City Council, however, could levy over the rate of inflation with a super majority vote. Initiative 747, which passed in November 2001, limits regular levy increases to 1% per year (or the rate of inflation if less than 1%). In 2008, the City raised its regular property tax by 1% in accordance with the law.

Voted Debt Capacity

For parks and open space facilities, the legal limit for voted debt is almost \$222.0 million, which equals 2.5% of the City's total assessed valuation. Subtracting out the related net outstanding debt as of 12/31/07 (\$145,051), the City's remaining debt capacity for parks and open space facilities is \$221.8 million. In other words, the City has very little debt and, therefore, has preserved almost all of its debt capacity for future parks and open space facilities. By way of comparison, the City of Kirkland has \$8.3 million in net outstanding debt as of 12/31/06 relative to a legal limit for voted debt of \$219.0 million for parks and open space facilities.

RECOMMENDED PROCESS & NEXT STEPS

The purpose of this presentation is to provide a detailed background on the work of the Citizen's Stakeholder's Committee and their subsequent recommendation for approving the list of park capital improvement projects and related operations and maintenance costs so that a ballot measure may appear before voters on November 4, 2008.

Some questions that Council may wish to consider as it reviews this information includes:

- 1) Has the Citizen's Stakeholder's Committee fulfilled its charter? If not, what additional work is requested to assist Council decision making?
- 2) Do the proposed park projects adequately address the community's needs while balancing fiscal realities? If not, what adjustments or refinements might be recommended?
- 3) Shall the select school related parks and recreation operational costs be included in this ballot measure?
- 4) Does the financial strategy and duration (permanent levy lid lift and 20-year capital bond levy) meet Council's goals? If not, what other combination of financing strategies might be employed?
- 5) Other questions?

Council need not take any action Monday evening, but may want to provide initial feedback and deliberate further on the information presented. The Stakeholder's Committee can convene in June should Council request further refinements. A placeholder remains on the July 7th and August 4th Council schedule should Council desire a further vetting of any outstanding issues, but in any case, Council must adopt a resolution which must be filed no later than August 12th with King County Elections for a November 4, 2008 General Election ballot measure.

RECOMMENDATION

Assistant City Manager/Parks and Recreation Director and Communications Coordinator

MOVE TO: No action required.

CHARTER

Parks Capital and Operations Levy Citizen's Stakeholder Committee

Authority: *"Direct staff to return on November 19th with a preferred process and plan for a Parks and Recreation levy for the May 2008 ballot..."* (From October 1, 2007 City Council Meeting- Motion passed 4-2.)

Purpose and Scope: The Stakeholder Committee will identify, financially estimate (initial capital investments and incremental operations/maintenance requirements) and recommend a list of capital park projects to the full City Council. This work includes survey research, committee meetings and appropriate public involvement and outreach activities. Using staff resources, the Committee will compile and analyze the list in terms of (Compiled from June 16, 2007 Council Mini-Planning Session Minutes):

Operations and Maintenance (O&M)

- O&M for Luther Burbank Park will be integrated into the General Fund.
- O&M will be estimated and funded for new assets.
- Maximum dollar amount is \$900,000 a year (both capital and O&M).

Capital Financing

- Council prefers a "levy lid lift" financing approach for capital and operating costs. Levy requires simple majority to pass. Revenues would come in to the City on an annual basis and would be expended on a "pay-as-you-go" basis.
- Timeframe for implementation – 10-15 (maximum) years
- A ballot measure will be based upon a specific project list set by Council and a public process.
- The targeted timing for a ballot measure will be May 2008.
- The maximum dollar amount will be up to a \$900,000 levy per year (both capital and O&M).

Community Outreach

- Council sets parameters for the capital levy and parks improvements package. (e.g. no more than 15 years, no more than \$13.5 million).
- Council appoints a Citizens Stakeholder Committee which includes representatives from parks system user groups and interested citizens including "taxpayer representatives". Council liaisons will participate with the Stakeholder Committee.
- Package must include these Council prioritized projects: LBP shoreline restoration; projects that foster Town Center to Luther Burbank Park connections; ball field capacities; trail connections (pedestrian/bike) and Luther Burbank Park small boats improvements.
- The list of projects and maximum dollar amounts must be set by the City Council in time for the March 28, 2008 statutory deadline.
- Consider using surveys to determine public attitudes to parks projects and funding.

Committee Membership: Key stakeholder audiences include:

- 3 City Councilmembers
- 3 Citizens at Large- 1 serving as Chair
- 14 user/interest group representatives
 - 1- Friends of Luther Burbank Park
 - 1- Mercer Island Preschool Association
 - 1- MI-DOG
 - 1- MI Youth Soccer Club
 - 1- MI Little League
 - 1- MI Baseball Club
 - 1- Boys and Girls Club
 - 1- Jewish Community Center
 - 1- MI School District
 - 1- MI Youth Lacrosse
 - 1- eTeam/High School Student
 - 1- Ellis Pond Adopt-a-Park Neighbor
 - 1- Wildwood Park Adopt-a-Park Neighbor
 - 1- Rotary Park Adopt-a-Park Neighbor

Decision Making Model: The Committee will be chaired by a Citizen at Large appointed by the Mayor. Stakeholder Committee members will be informed and their comments will be solicited throughout the process. Formal public comment may also be solicited as appropriate. The Chair shall insure that there is issue and idea understanding. Decisions will be made by achieving consensus~ general agreement.

Staff Resources: The Committee will rely upon City staff resources to conduct its review and form its recommendations. The staff resources will be assigned by the City Manager and will primarily be the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, Asst. City Manager/Parks & Recreation Director, Finance Director and Communications Coordinator. Other staff may be consulted as deemed necessary to complete the work.

Timeline: The Committee will be appointed on November 19th. Staff will immediately begin working with the Committee Chair to convene the first meeting. The Committee will determine the timing and frequency of its meetings in consultation with staff. The Committee will provide a first report on the progress of its work to the full City Council no later than January 21, 2008.

Parks Capital and Operations Levy Citizen's Stakeholder Committee

Committee Membership: Key stakeholder audiences include:

- ◆ 3 City Councilmembers
 - Jim Pearman, Mayor
 - Dan Grausz
 - Steve Litzow

- ◆ 2 Citizens at Large- 1 serving as Chair
 - Don Cohen, Chair
 - Bryan Cairns

- ◆ 14 user/interest group representatives
 - 1- Friends of Luther Burbank Park- Sue Stewart (Judy Roan as alternate)
 - 1- Mercer Island Preschool Association- Debbie Bertlin (Susan Mattison as alternate)
 - 1- MI-DOG- Norm Scott (TK Jones as alternate)
 - 1- MI Youth Soccer Club- Julie Crow
 - 1- MI Little League- Brian Emanuels
 - 1- Boys and Girls Club- Blair Rasmussen
 - 1- Jewish Community Center- Matt Grogan
 - 1- MI School District- Tony Kuhn (Liz Dodd as alternate)
 - 1- MI Youth Lacrosse- Dan Taylor
 - 1- eTeam/High School Student- Peter Landsman
 - 1- Ellis Pond Adopt-a-Park Neighbor- John McAlvay (Marsha Mellinger as alternate)
 - 1- Wildwood Park Adopt-a-Park Neighbor- Margaret Amory (Bill Duvall as alternate)
 - 1- Rotary Park Adopt-a-Park Neighbor – Patti Darling (Shirley Silke as alternate)
 - 1- Open Space Conservancy Trust- Fletch Waller

TIMELINE

MERCER ISLAND PARKS BALLOT MEASURE

December 17, 2007: Committee Meeting: Introduction to process and overview of process

January 3, 2008: Committee Meeting: "Big picture" - Percentage allocations of parks categories and top 5-10 projects

January 3-8: Staff uses this information to calculate project costs to the best estimate possible

January 9: Committee Meeting: The Stakeholder Committee presented with project cost information and reshuffled/refined park category allocations and top 5-10 park projects as necessary

January 10-15: Draft presentation for City Council prepared by staff

January 16: Committee Meeting: The Stakeholder Committee will continue reshuffling/refining park category allocations and top 5-10 park projects as necessary;

January 22: Council Meeting: Presentation of Stakeholder Committee progress/status to City Council.

January 25: Council Planning Session: Council addressed several strategic questions including moving the ballot measure to a November 2008 election, inclusion of any associated operations and maintenance costs as well as the operations and maintenance of Luther Burbank Park in such a measure.

February 27: Committee Meeting: Overview of park survey methodology; update on project costs and scope.

March 15: Council/Committee Park Tour of facilities

April 15: Committee Meeting: Survey draft review, finalized

April 21-30: Community surveyed to test package and costs;

April 30: Committee Meeting: Stakeholder Committee and staff adjust/revise project list as necessary;

May 7: Stakeholder Committee finalizes recommended package of projects and estimated costs for City Council consideration

May 19: Council Meeting; Presentation of Survey Results and Stakeholder Committee Recommendation to City Council

June: Possible additional Committee Meetings if Council requests additional refinement by Stakeholder Committee on project list.

July 7: Council Meeting: Council receives first reading of resolution???

August 4: Council Meeting: City Council reviews Committee recommendation and approves/rejects/adjusts as necessary; adopts resolution for November 7 ballot (*August 12th, 2008- last day to file a resolution with King County Elections for November 4, 2008, General Election per RCW 29A.04.330*)

November 4: General Election

Summary of City Council January 25 Planning Session Parks Ballot Measure Discussion

The Council took up the issue of the Parks ballot measure on Saturday, January 25, 2008 at their annual planning session at the Community Center. The following questions were posed to the City Council:

- Reactions to Stakeholder Committee status report?
- What are the Councils' project priorities?
- Method of replacing expiring LB Park O&M and minor capital levy (2009)?
- Method of funding new/incremental O&M associated with new projects?
- Desired coordination w/School District levy/bond issue planning?
- When to place on the ballot?
- Method of funding/financing capital and O&M?

The City Council provided the following direction to staff and the Parks Stakeholder Committee:

- 1) Projects to Include in Ballot Measure. The City Council appreciated the excellent work of the Parks Stakeholder Committee and were comfortable with the project list as it stands now reflecting a preliminary project list from the Committee. They understand a further "vetting" and refinement (i.e. project scoping, prioritization and costing) will occur at the next Stakeholder's Committee meeting (now scheduled for February 27, 2008). Council indicated they are planning to wait the completion of the public opinion survey before making decisions about prioritizing the current project list and determining a final "not to exceed" dollar amount. The framework initially established by Council was to invest up to \$900,000 per year for up to 15 years (\$13.5 million). Currently, the list represents between \$10.23 and \$12.98 million over 15 years (\$682K to \$865K per yr) in capital improvements (not including the estimated \$165,000 annually needed to support these improvements in maintenance and operations and the \$370,000 to replace the Luther Burbank Park O&M levy). Once Council has received a further refined list of projects and costs and the results of the public opinion survey, Council will deliberate and decide upon a final project list, dollar amount, and financing method of a parks ballot measure.
- 2) Luther Burbank Operation and Maintenance. The City Council directed that upon expiration (end of 2009) of the Luther Burbank Park operations/maintenance levy (\$370K per yr), the levy shall be renewed as part of the future parks ballot measure. An additional approximately \$105K per yr in LB Park minor capital improvements is currently being invested. The future of this "minor capital" effort is yet to be determined.
- 3) Operation and Maintenance of New Park Improvements. Council has directed that the incremental operations/maintenance cost associated with each of the new park improvements contained in the final park project list be included in the future ballot measure.
- 4) Timing of Ballot Measure. The parks ballot measure shall be placed on the November 2008 general election ballot (rather than the May 2008 ballot)
- 5) City Council Tour. There was interest by the Council to tour many of the park sites to better understand the proposed improvements and what currently exists now particularly on the matter of proposed Boiler Building/dock improvements at Luther Burbank Park. Significant debate occurred about level of investment on this particular area relative to other park system wide improvements.