

West Linn 2010 Aquatic Community Center Study

Research performed by Research 13



CITY OF
West Linn



Research Objectives

This study was designed to help the City of West Linn plan for the future and learn more about citizen's attitudes about a potential Aquatic Community Center .

- **Determine** perceptions and attitudes about the City of West Linn.
- **Uncover** the attitudes of voters about a potential Aquatic Community Center.
- **Examine** how voters feel about the possibility of a tax increase to support the center.
- **Explore** whether voters feel that they would use the center.
- **Gather** information about what features voters would find useful/desirable in a new community center.

Methodology

- Research 13 was hired as a third party to invite residents to participate in a confidential telephone survey.
- Sampling methods included residents on the “do not call” registry, unlisted households and cell phone only households.
- Four hundred interviews (401) were completed which yields a sampling variability of +/-5% at the 95% confidence level.
- Residents from all neighborhood associations were included.

Screening

All respondents were specifically screened to:

- Live in the zip code of 97068, in the City Limits.
- Not work in a paid City position or work for a market research firm.
- 50% Female /50% Male.
- 18 Years of age.
- Voted in at least one of the last five primary and general elections.

Demographics of residents surveyed:

- 33% Have children under the age of 18 that live in the home (only 5% have 3 or more children under 18 at home)
- 94% own their home
- Median age and average age is 58
- 70% Have a college degree, 23% have a master's degree or higher



Executive Summary

Executive Summary

- 8 out of 10 of respondents think West Linn is a great place to live, and 9 out of ten would recommend it. However, less than half (43%) think that the city uses tax dollars effectively.
- While 46% of respondents in the April 2010 attitude survey agreed that the city should build and maintain a pool, 57% of respondents in this study agreed. The difference is likely a result of a different sampling segment focused on voters rather than all West Linn residents.
- 78% feel that an aquatic community center would be a positive place for teens. And 68% agreed that they “would support a center so that families in West Linn have a healthy place to go.”
- 43% did not think that they would use the center for either swimming or exercise. 34% think that no one in their family would use it.
- Most respondents (80%) find the location by City Hall and Safeway convenient, but 29% think that if the center were built there, they would not choose it over their current fitness options (39% currently belong to a fitness center).

Executive Summary

- While 57% of respondents agree with the concept that the city should build and maintain a pool, only 52% think that they would vote for a bond to build an aquatic community Center.
 - The number who think they would vote for it drops to 45% if it raises taxes \$157/year, and only to 36% if taxes increase \$190/year.
- Only 1 in 10 respondents (13%) feels that the center should be funded entirely by taxes. 43% think fees should augment taxes, and 50% think costs should come primarily from fees and then from taxes.
 - Approximately two thirds (66%) support a fitness center to offset costs with memberships. Three quarters (76%) would like energy efficiency investments to be made that will decrease operating costs.
 - The majority of respondents (59%) would not be willing to pay more for a competition lap pool.

Executive Summary

- The feature most desired by respondents (49%) is a “family pool with a variety of features.”
- 57% of respondents say they would not support a tax increase of \$190/year to have all of the pool features. 49% would not support the tax at \$157/year for all but the lap pool. The most frequently given reasons for people to say they do not support it are related to cost.
- Although recommended prices have a wide range, most respondents feel that prices for children should be significantly cheaper than for adults for a daily visit (Average \$6.70 vs. \$3.85).



April 2010 Community Attitudes Study Recap

Desired Businesses or Services

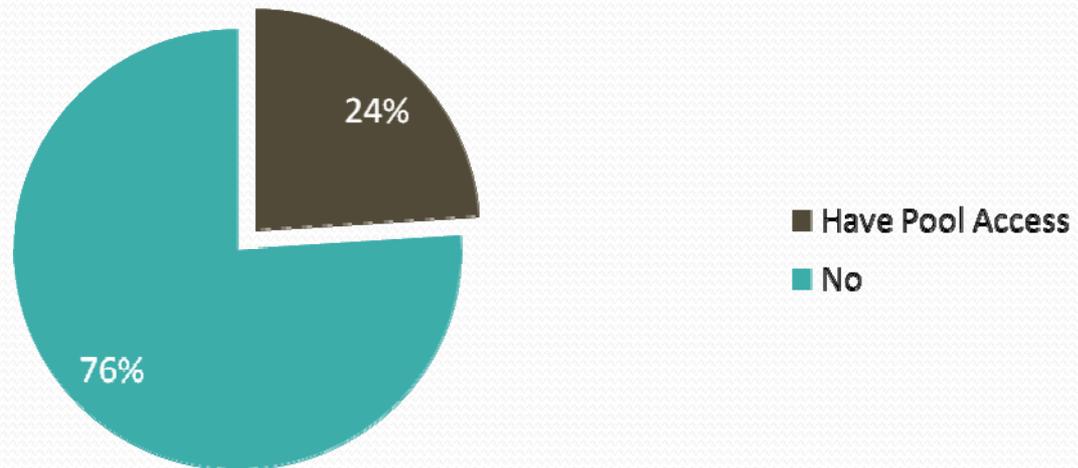
Q: What businesses or services are lacking in West Linn that you wish were available?

| Reasons to Recommend | Percent |
|----------------------|---------|
| Swimming Pool | 14% |
| Restaurants | 11% |
| Community Center | 6% |
| Hardware | 4% |
| Grocery | 3% |
| Trader Joes | 3% |

Other mentions include a hotel, bookstore, drug store, bakery, theatre, fitness center and a bowling alley.

Pool Access

- Overall, nearly half (46%) agree (27%) or strongly agree (19%) the City should build and maintain a City pool.
- Approximately one quarter (24%) of residents report access to a swimming pool in West Linn. Only 15% of those with access to a pool also think the city should build one.



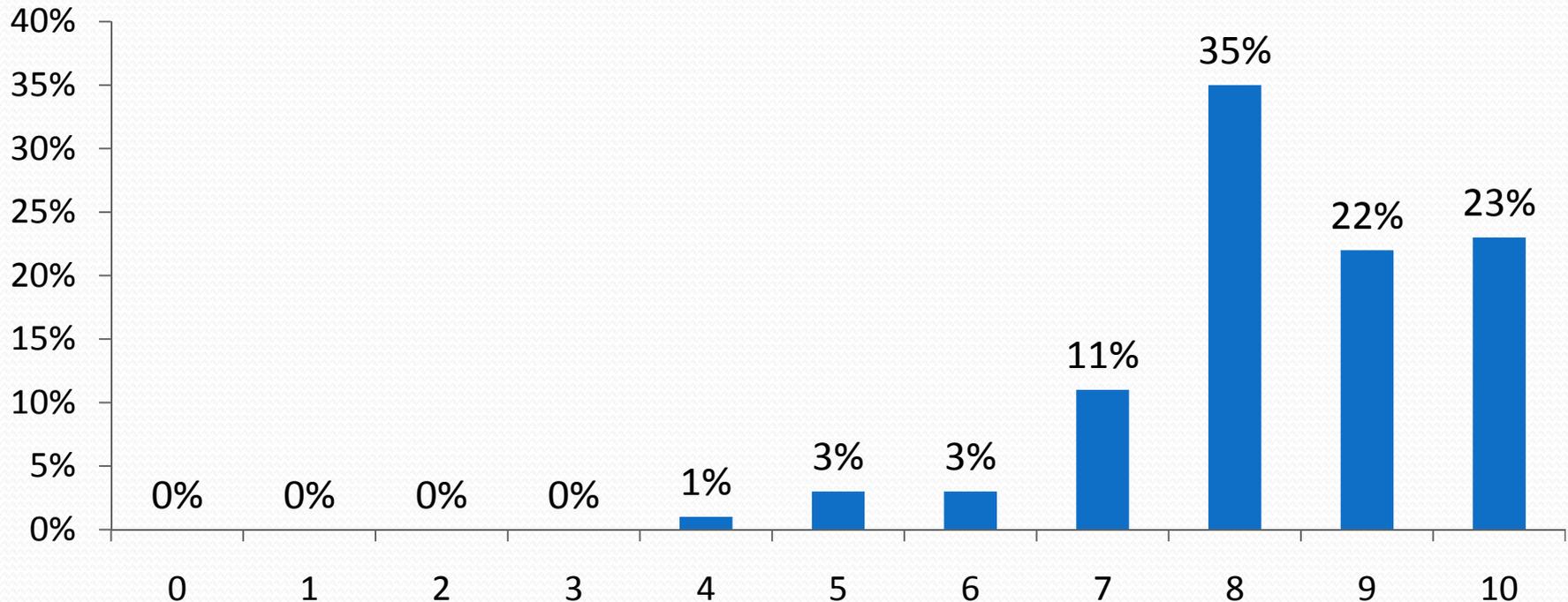
- Those with a high school diploma are among the least likely to have access to a pool (14%).
- Those who rent are slightly more likely to have access to a pool (29%).



West Linn Attitudes Context

West Linn as a Place to Live

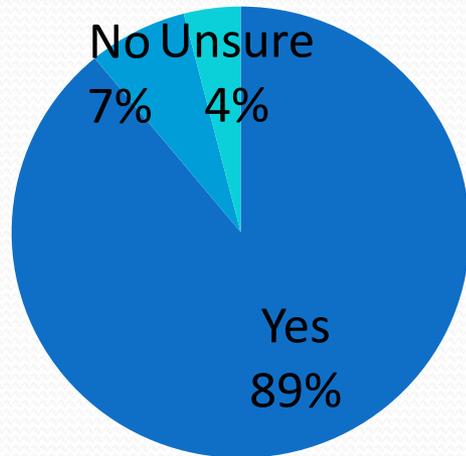
Q. How do you rate West Linn as a place to live? A “0” indicates a very poor place to live, and a “10” indicates an excellent place to live.



- Four fifths (80%) of respondents rated West Linn as a great place to live (8 or higher).

City of West Linn Recommendation

Q. Would you recommend the City of West Linn to friends or relatives as a place to live?



| Reasons to Recommend | Percent |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| Beautiful/Pretty | 36% |
| Crime free neighborhoods | 23% |
| Friendly | 29% |
| Good schools | 28% |
| Parks | 11% |
| Lots of trees/gardens/greenery | 2% |
| Library | 2% |
| Small town feel | 15% |

Nearly nine-in-ten (89%) would recommend the City of West Linn to friends or relatives as a place to live.

Additional Verbatim Reasons for West Linn Recommendations

(Mentioned by Fewer than 15%)

Reasons Residents said they Would Recommend West Linn

“Economically –(WL) is cheaper than to live in Lake Oswego”

“River and shops”

“Taxes are low”

“I Like how the city has improved”

“Good place for families”

“Easy access to get to Portland and other places”

Reasons Residents said they Would NOT Recommend West Linn

“For newcomers it would be too expensive”

“Public transportation is not good”

“Taxes are too high”

“Not convenient for weather”

“Crime”

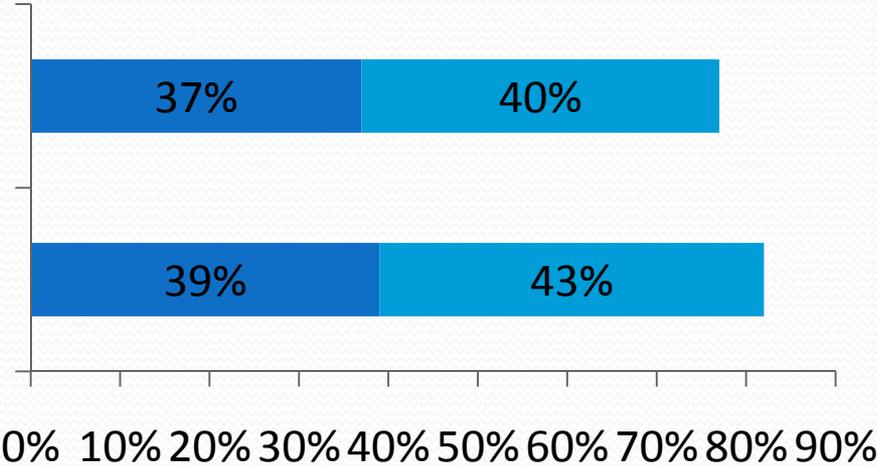
“Police department”

Opinion of City Management

More than a third of respondents (39%) feel that tax dollars are not efficiently used. Only 43% believe that they are used well.

Management of the City of West Linn has improved over the past 5 years

The City of West Linn makes efficient use of tax dollars



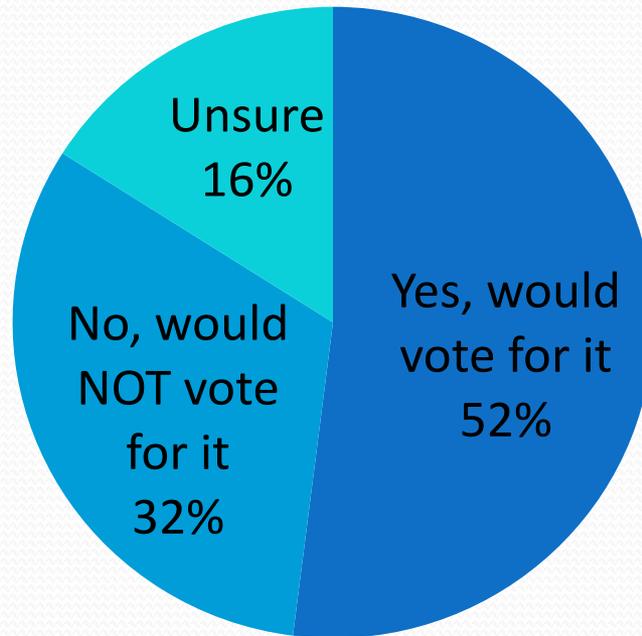
■ Disagree ■ Agree



Aquatic Center

Initial Interest in an Aquatic Center

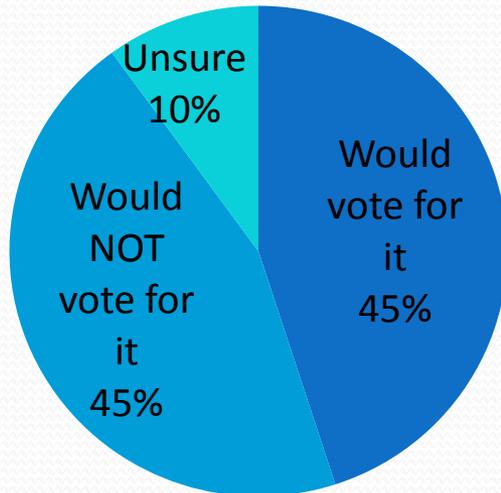
Q. As of right now, assuming an Aquatic Community Center had the features most desired by the community, how likely would you be to vote for a bond measure to finance an Aquatic Community Center?



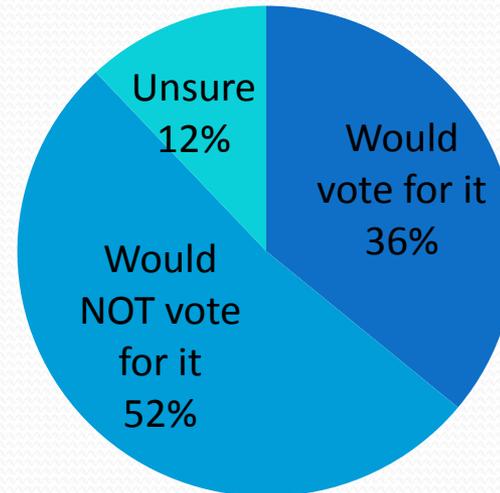
Possible Tax Increase

Q. If the bond measure would increase your taxes by _____, how likely would you be to vote for a bond measure to finance an Aquatic Community Center?

\$157 Per Year



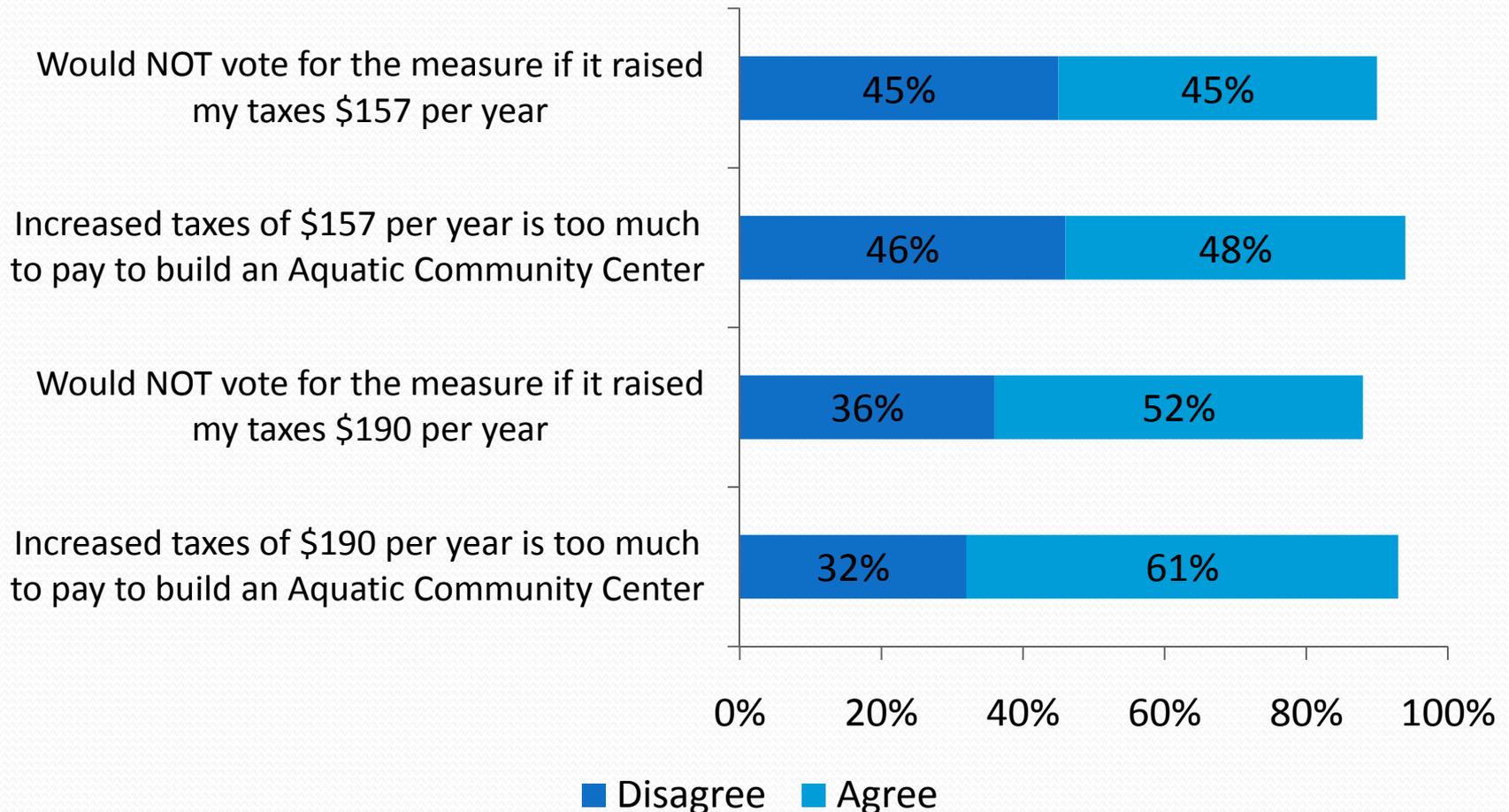
\$190 Per Year



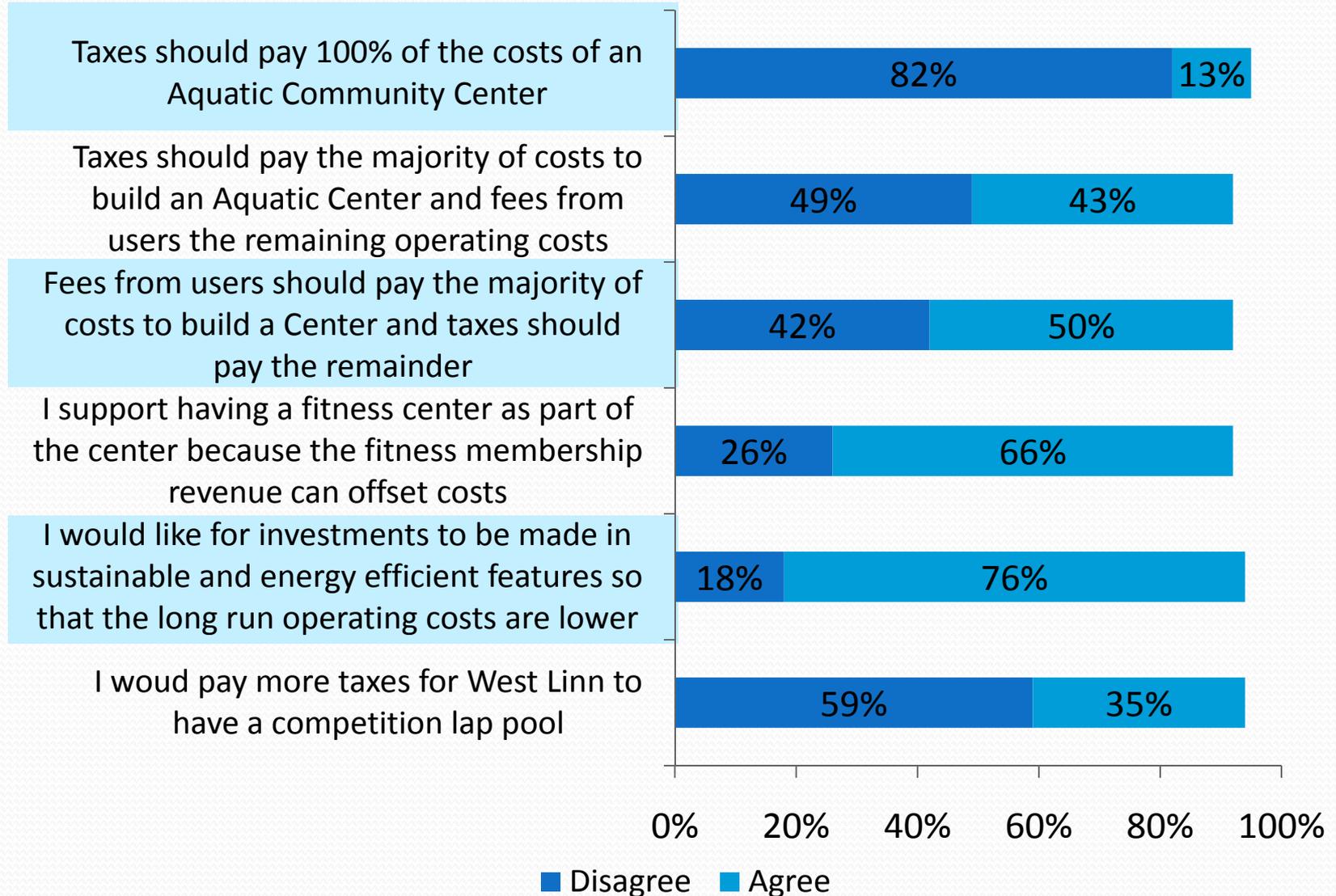
When asked to consider the impact on their taxes, 9% fewer voters think they would vote for the measure if it raised their taxes \$190 a year instead of \$157 a year.

Possible Tax Increase Continued

When asked to consider the possible tax increase, some of those who said they would support the measure if it raised their taxes \$190 per year, still thought it was too much. 61% think that \$190 per year is too much to pay.

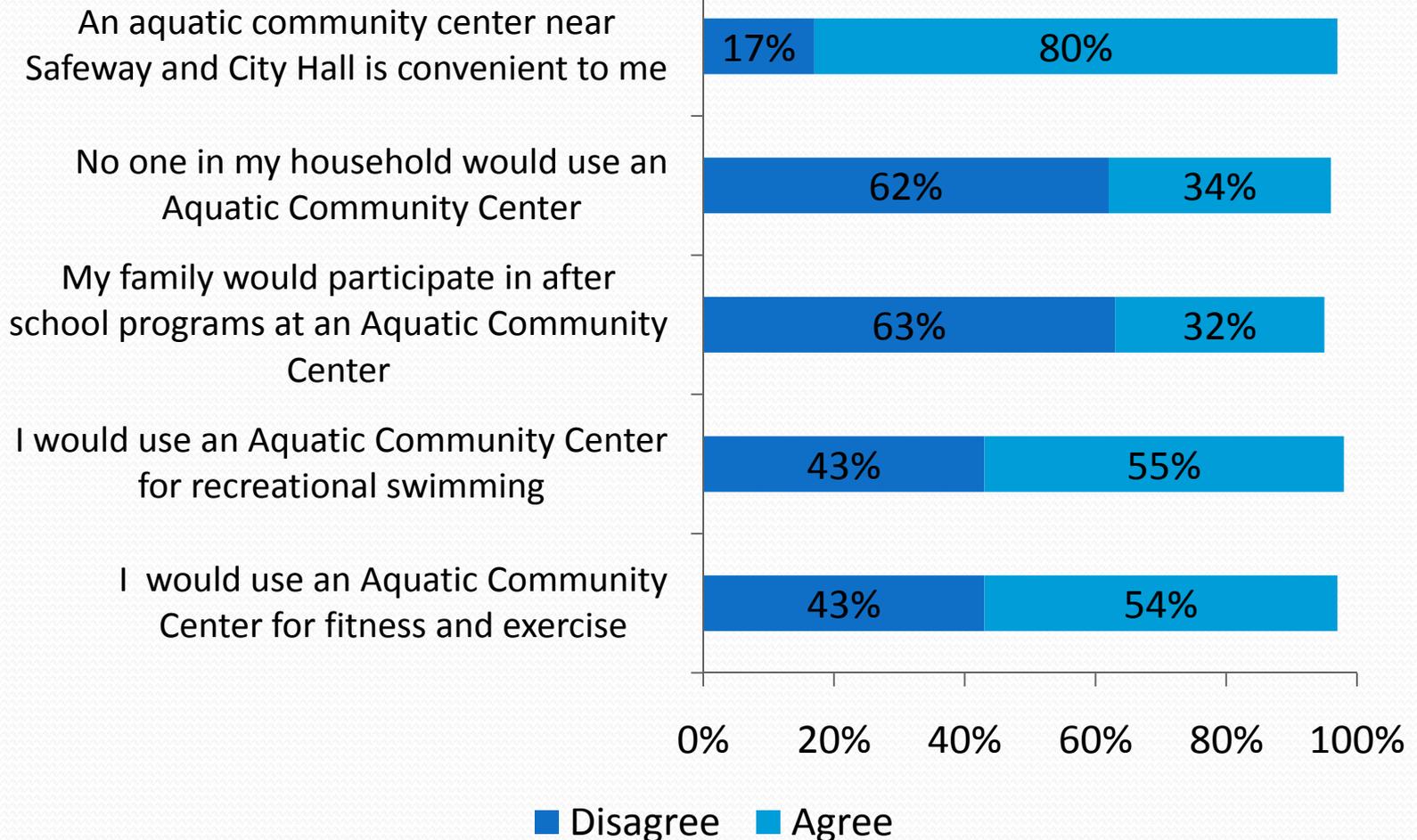


Funding The Aquatic Center



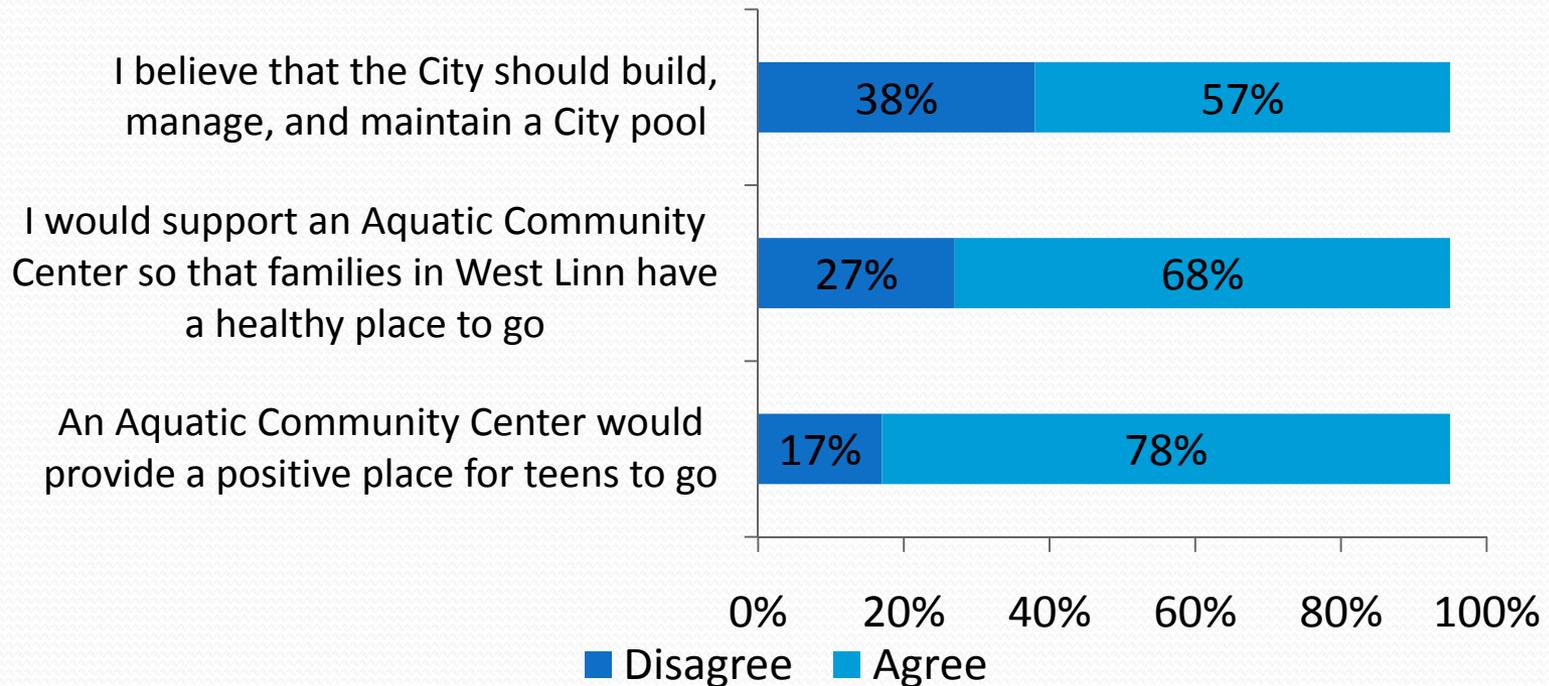
Personal Use of the Aquatic Center

Although 80% of respondents thought that the location was convenient, 34% thought that no one in their household would use the center. Even more (43%) thought that they themselves would not use it for either swimming or exercise.



Perceived Community Benefit

Nearly 8 out of 10 participants (78%) agree that an Aquatic Community Center would provide a positive place for teens, and nearly 7 out of 10 respondents say they would support a center as a healthy place for families. However, 4 out of 10 participants still disagreed that the City should build, manage, and maintain a City pool.

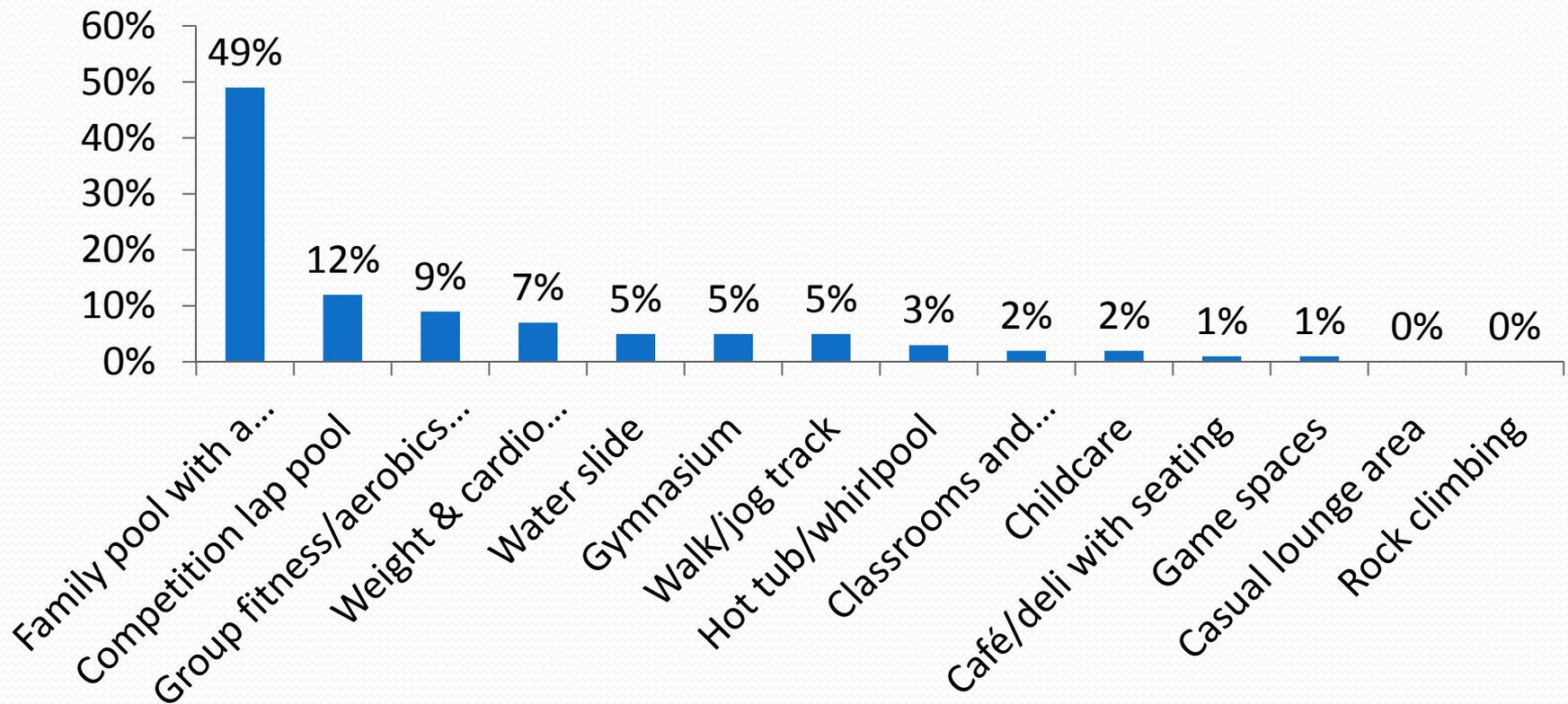




Desired Features

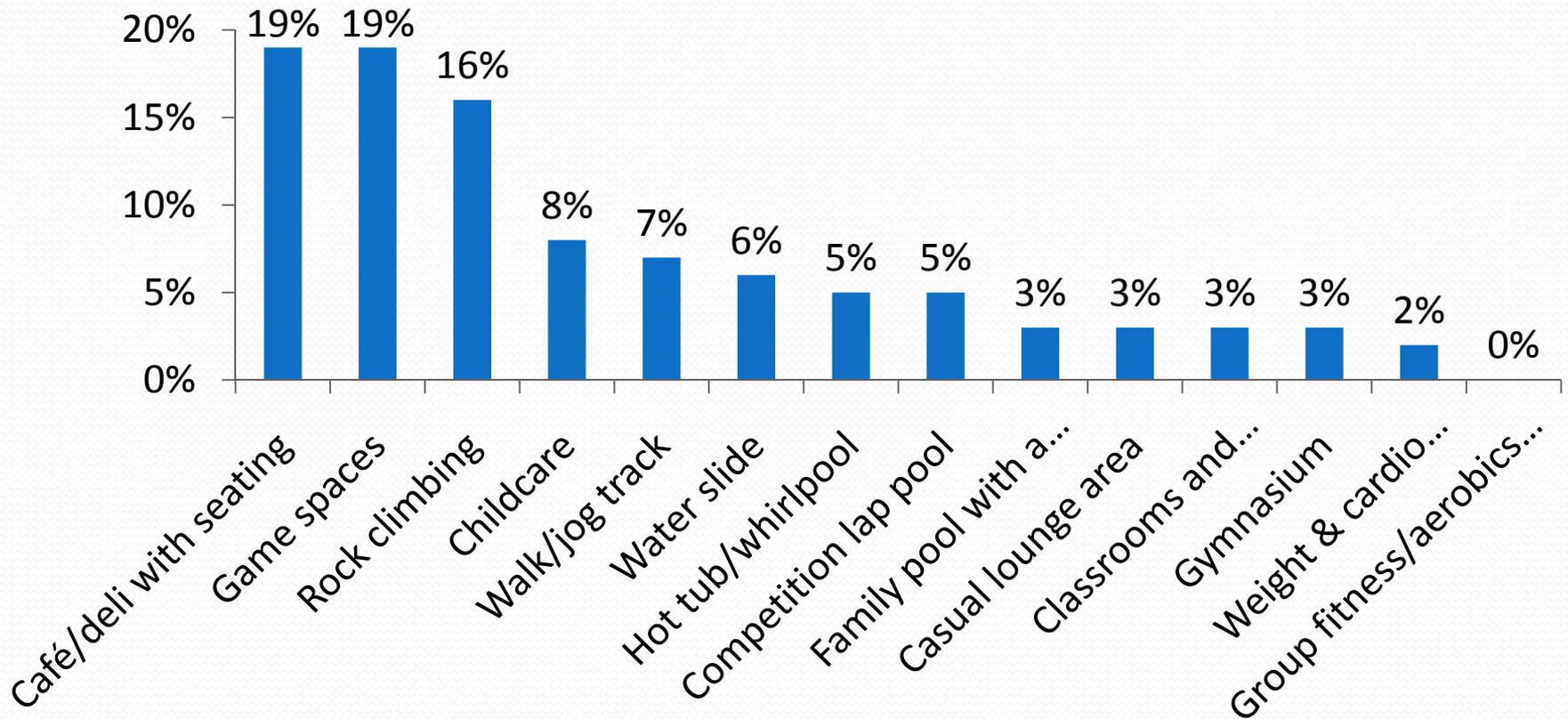
Most Desirable Feature

Nearly half (49%) of the participants stated that the most desirable feature of the options given would be a “Family pool with a variety of features”. The next most desired feature was not so apparent. The “Competition lap pool” came in second at 12%, and “Group fitness/aerobics classes” was the third most desired with 9%.

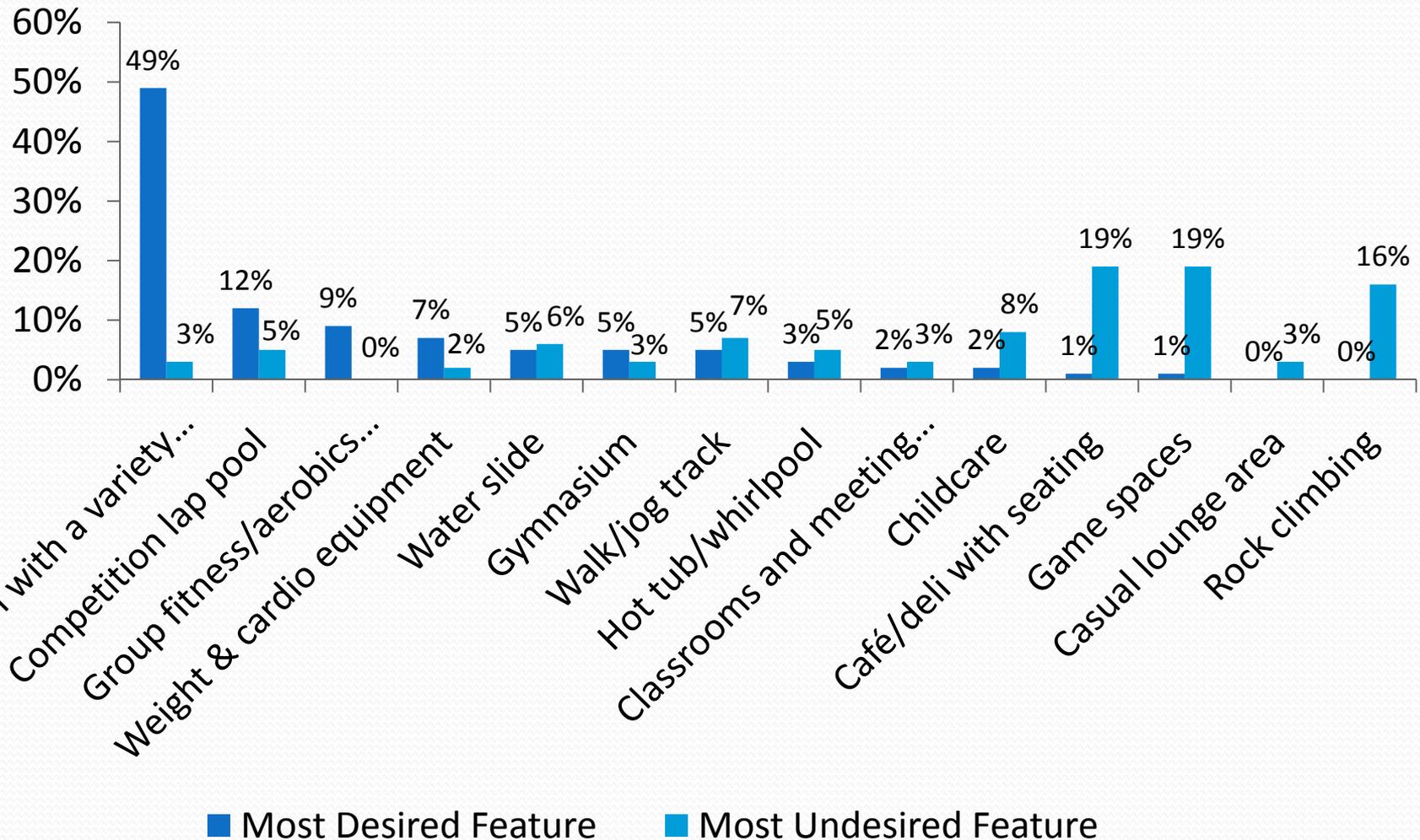


Most Undesirable Features

The top four most undesired features (café, game spaces, rock climbing, and childcare) are in the bottom five of the most desired features. The fifth bottom item on the desired list, lounge area, is among the features that are not undesirable.



Desired Features

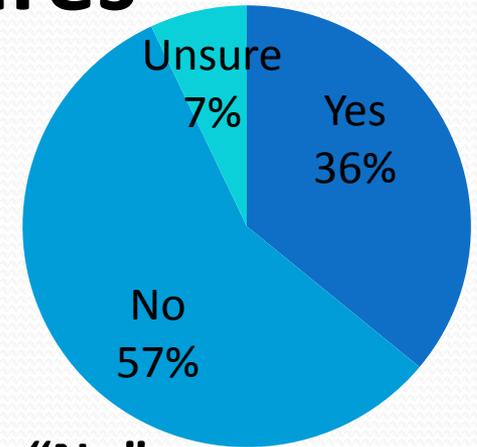




Cost & Ballot Measure/Levy Issues

Support for All Features

Q. If a new Aquatic Community Center were built with all identified features... it would cost about \$29.1 million. Would you support a property tax increase of \$190/year for the average West Linn homeowner to construct this facility?



Responses for “Yes”

- “Because it will increase my home value and community would look better”
- “I think it benefits the community”
- “It would be good for the children to have a place to go”
- “This is something that West Linn is missing the most”

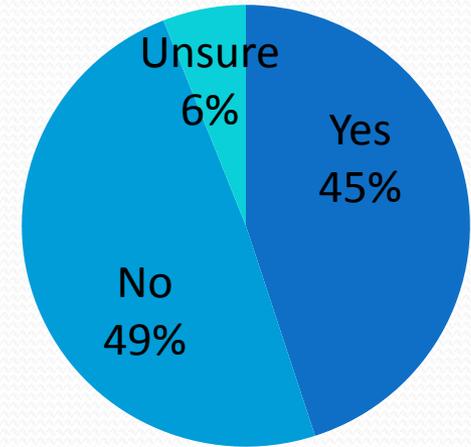
Responses for “No”

- “Too few people will benefit, people should pay for their own activities”
- “A bad use of tax dollars, taxes are high enough”
- “There are plenty of gyms nearby, and there are pools nearby ”
- “We do not need all the features”

Many people who either replied yes, no, or unsure wanted to know more about how long the increase would last, and what the time frame would be.

Support for Some Features

Q. If a new Aquatic Community Center were built with some of the identified features we have talked about today (excluding a competition lap pool), it would cost about \$24.1 million. Would you support a property tax increase of \$157/year for the average West Linn homeowner to construct this facility?



Responses for “Yes”

- “Because each community should have a community center, especially for seniors ”
- “Facilities like this will increase market, more people would come and live here”
- “It is better than \$190”
- “but we need all the features so better to have a higher tax increase”

Responses for “No”

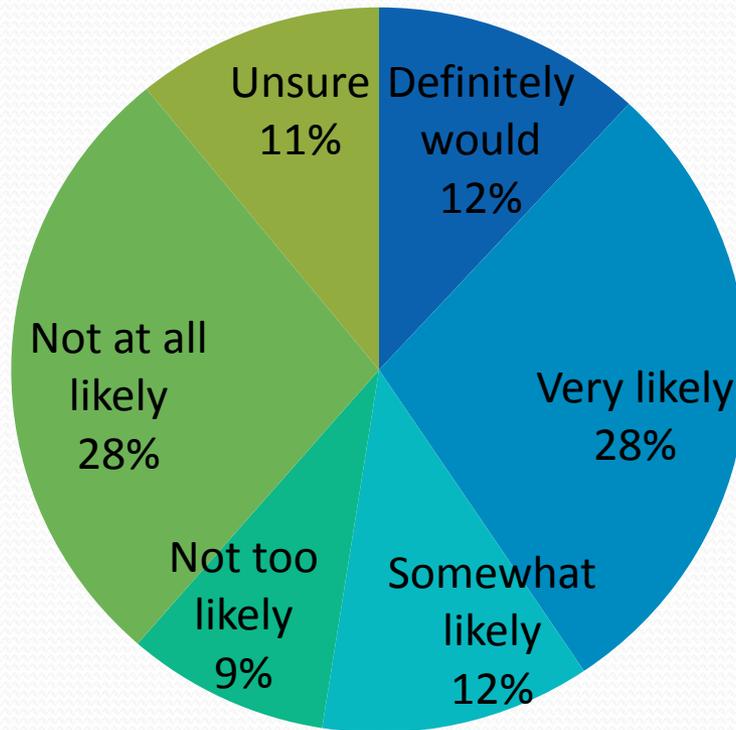
- “Because there are too many people who do not have the money to pay for it”
- “same as \$190, but money is tight and there is a lot of unemployment, people should be able to use West Linn schools”
- “same as \$190, (also) because property values have gone down and the cost of taxes have already gone up.”



Aquatic Center Interest and Utilization

Utilization

Q. Assuming an Aquatic Community Center were built and had the features you most desired, how likely would you be to join the facility?



53% see themselves as definitely, very likely, or somewhat likely to join the facility if it had the features they desired. 37% think that they are not likely to join.

Price Per Use

Q. At what price would the user fees for an Aquatic Community Center just start to be too expensive For an ADULT visit (per day)?

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Mean (Average) | \$6.70 |
| Median (Middle Number) | \$5 |
| Range | \$0-\$40 |

Q. At what price would the user fees for an Aquatic Community Center just start to be too expensive For a CHILD visit (per day)?

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Mean (Average) | \$3.85 |
| Median (Middle Number) | \$3 |
| Range | \$0-\$15 |

Of the 266 people willing to respond with a number, the average price for adults was \$6.70, and for children it was \$3.85. More respondents felt that children should be cheaper or complimentary. Some respondents who would not give a number suggested that pricing should remain competitive with similar centers in the area.

Price Per Month

Q. At what price would the user fees for an Aquatic Community Center just start to be too expensive For a monthly individual membership?

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Mean (Average) | \$38.69 |
| Median (Middle Number) | \$30 |
| Range | \$0-\$200 |

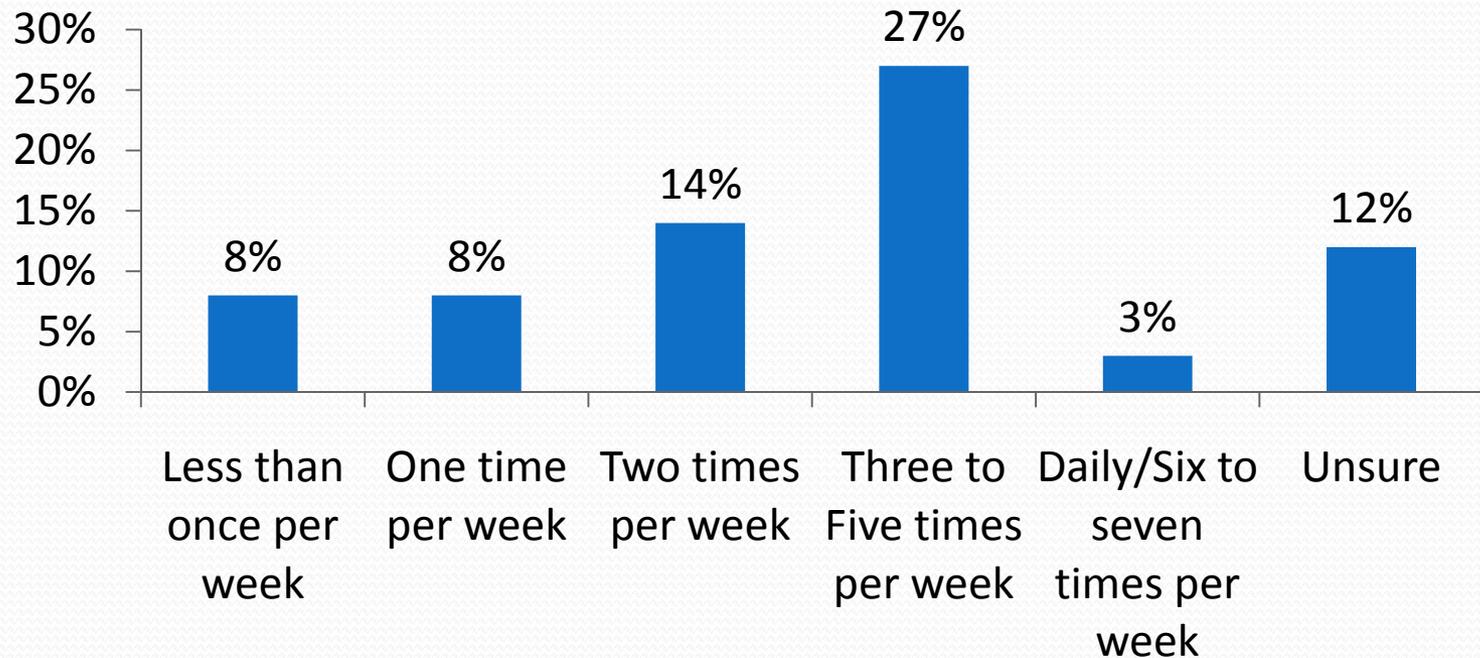
Q. At what price would the user fees for an Aquatic Community Center just start to be too expensive For a monthly family/household membership?

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Mean (Average) | \$73.67 |
| Median (Middle Number) | \$50 |
| Range | \$0-\$500 |

Of the 266 people willing to respond with a number, the average price for adults was \$38.69, and for family it was \$73.67. Some respondents felt that residents should pay less than none residents. Others suggested that there should be a price for use of the whole facility, and a different price for pool only use.

Utilization

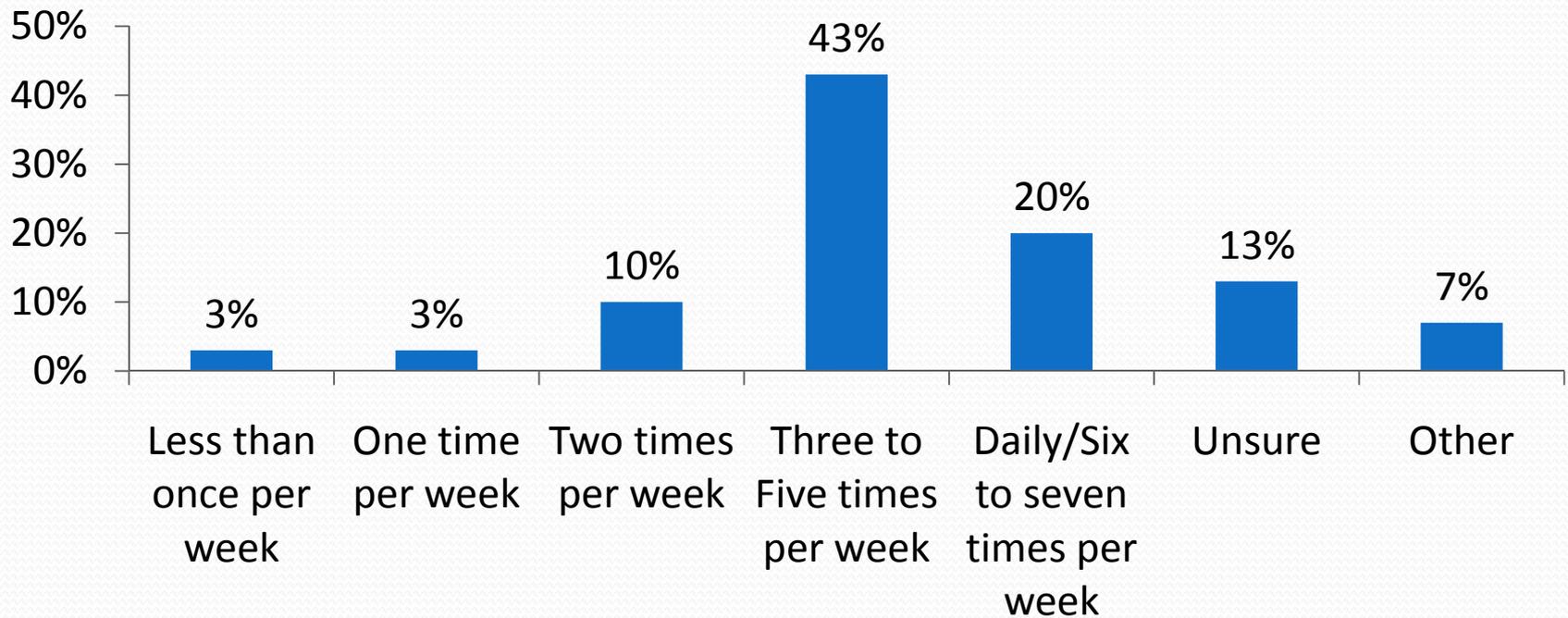
Q. Assuming the price was reasonable, how many times per week would you use the facility?



52% of respondents think that they would use the facility at least once a week if the price was reasonable.

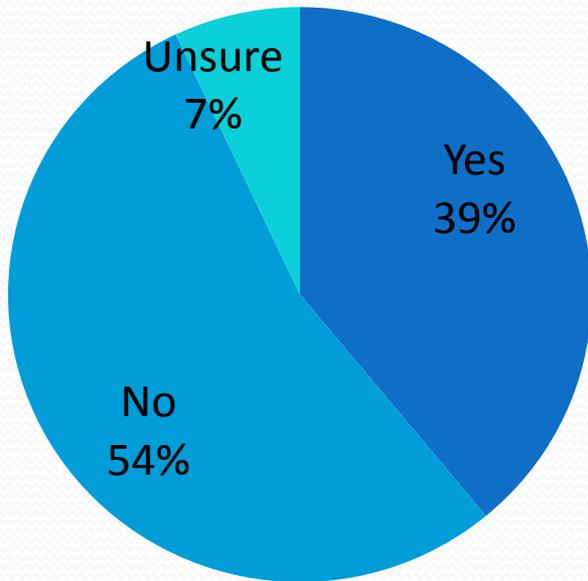
Exercise

Q. How many times per week do you exercise for 20 minutes or more?

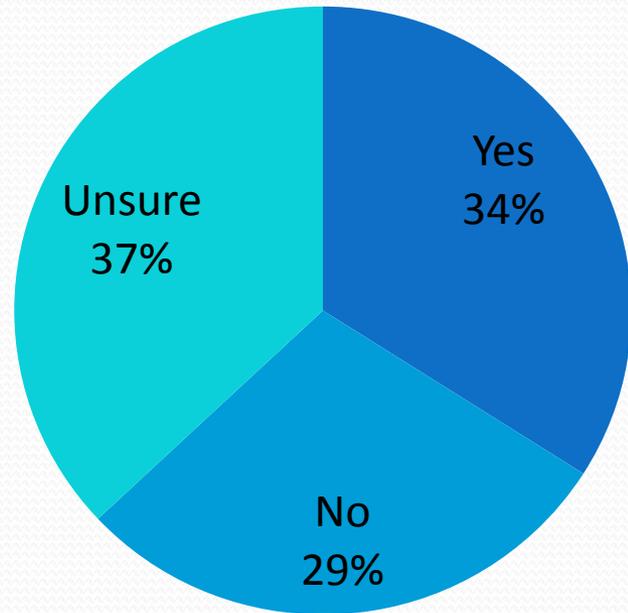


Utilization

Q. Do you currently belong to a fitness center which offers classes and exercise equipment?

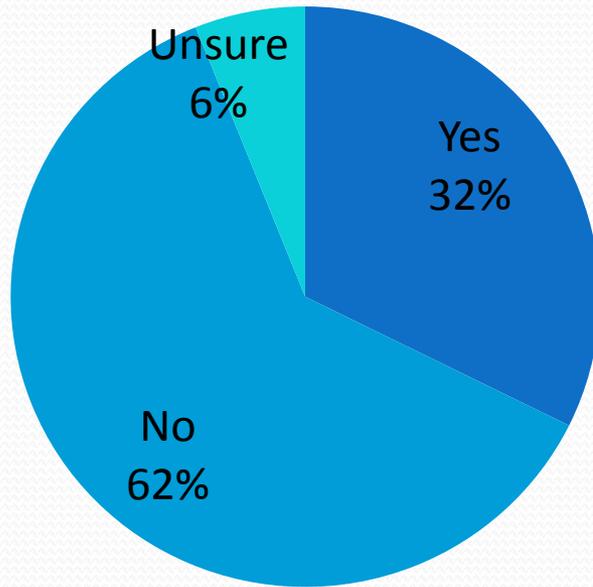


Q. If an Aquatic Community Center were available near Safeway, City Hall and Parker Road, would you use it instead of your current fitness option?

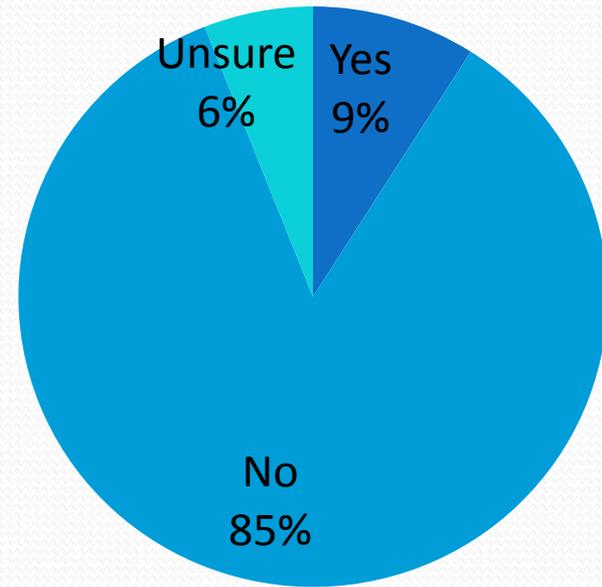


Swimming Pool Access

Q. Do you currently have access to or the ability to access a swimming pool in the SUMMER in West Linn?

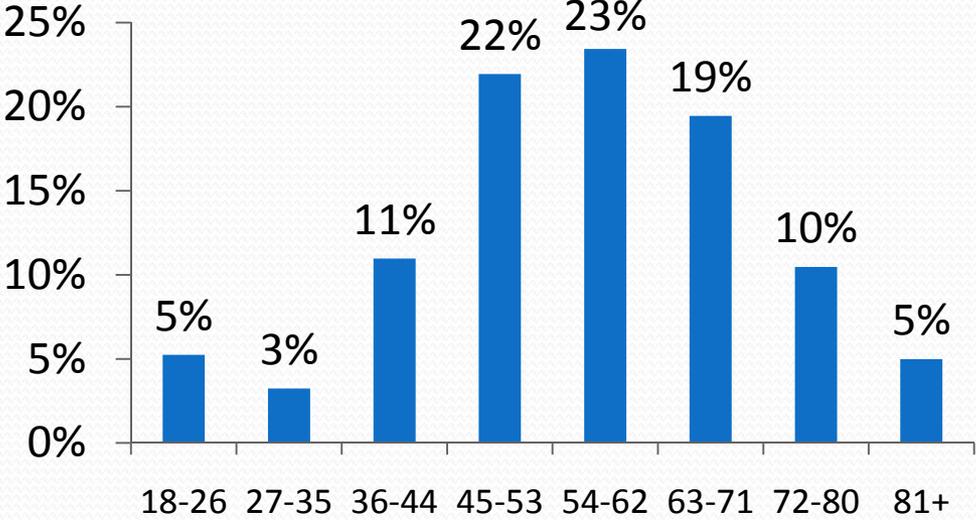


Q. Do you currently have access to or the ability to access a swimming pool in the WINTER in West Linn?

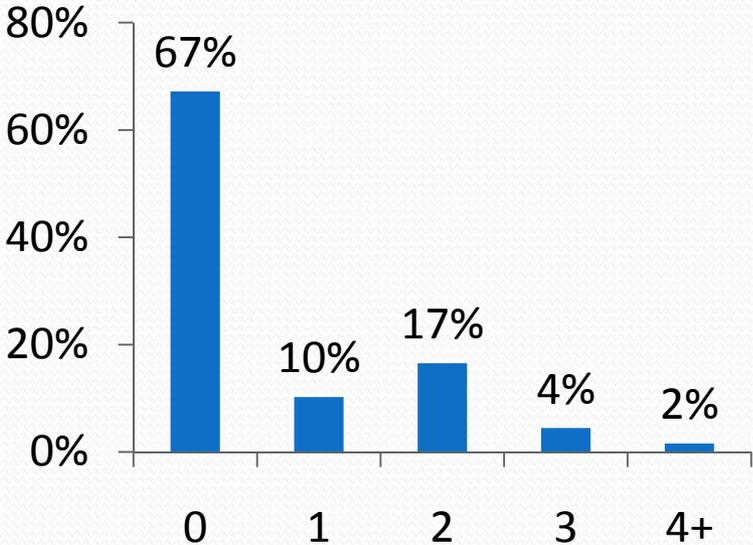


Demographics

Respondent Age

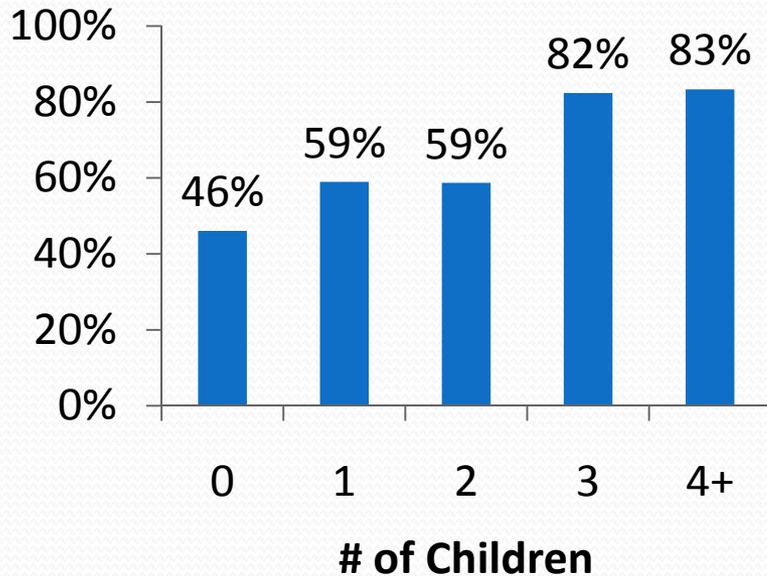


Number of Children under 18 that live at home

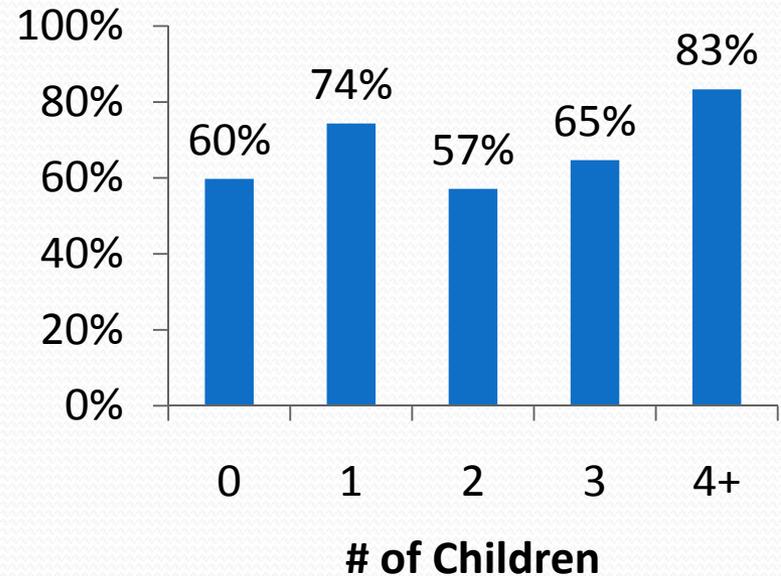


Effect of Children on Support

Q. How likely would you be to vote for a bond measure to finance an Aquatic Community Center?



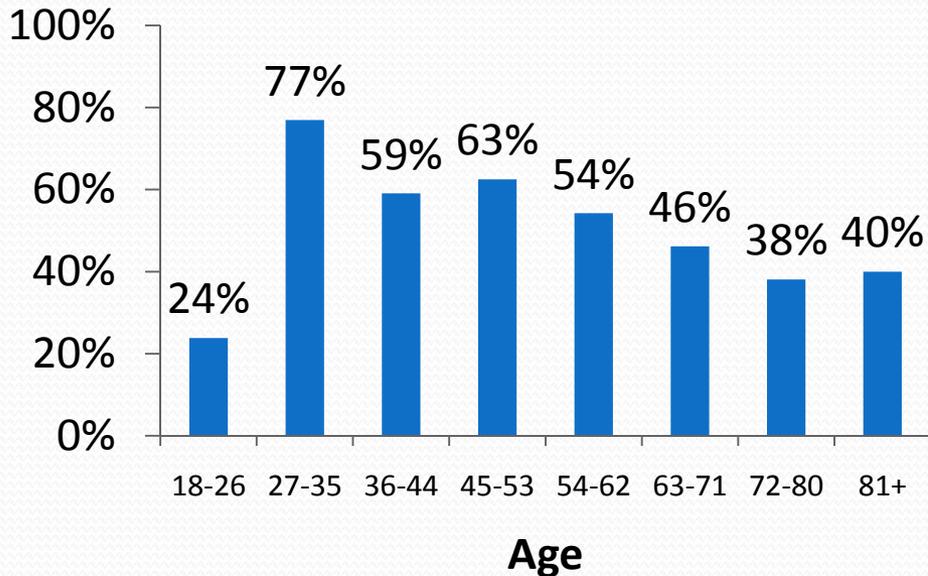
Q. I would support an Aquatic Community Center so that families in West Linn have a healthy place to go.



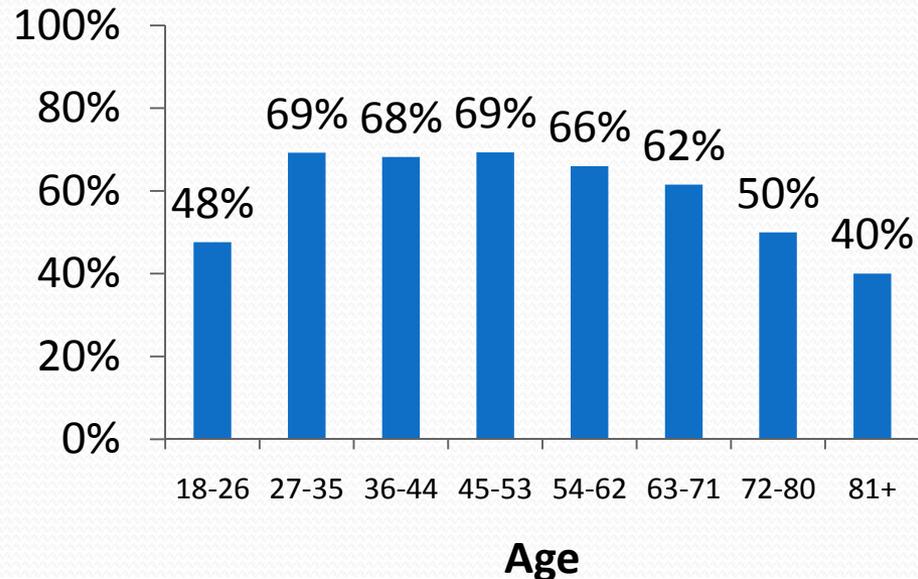
While 46% of those without children initially supported the measure, 63% of those with children supported it. Those with 3 or more children were almost twice as likely to support the bond as those with no children.

Effect of Age on Support

Q. How likely would you be to vote for a bond measure to finance an Aquatic Community Center?



Q. I would support an Aquatic Community Center so that families in West Linn have a healthy place to go.



With the exception of the 18-26 (youngest) age group, support for the center was generally higher in the young age groups, and decreases with age.