

Gunnison County Roads & Bridges Ballot Measure Survey

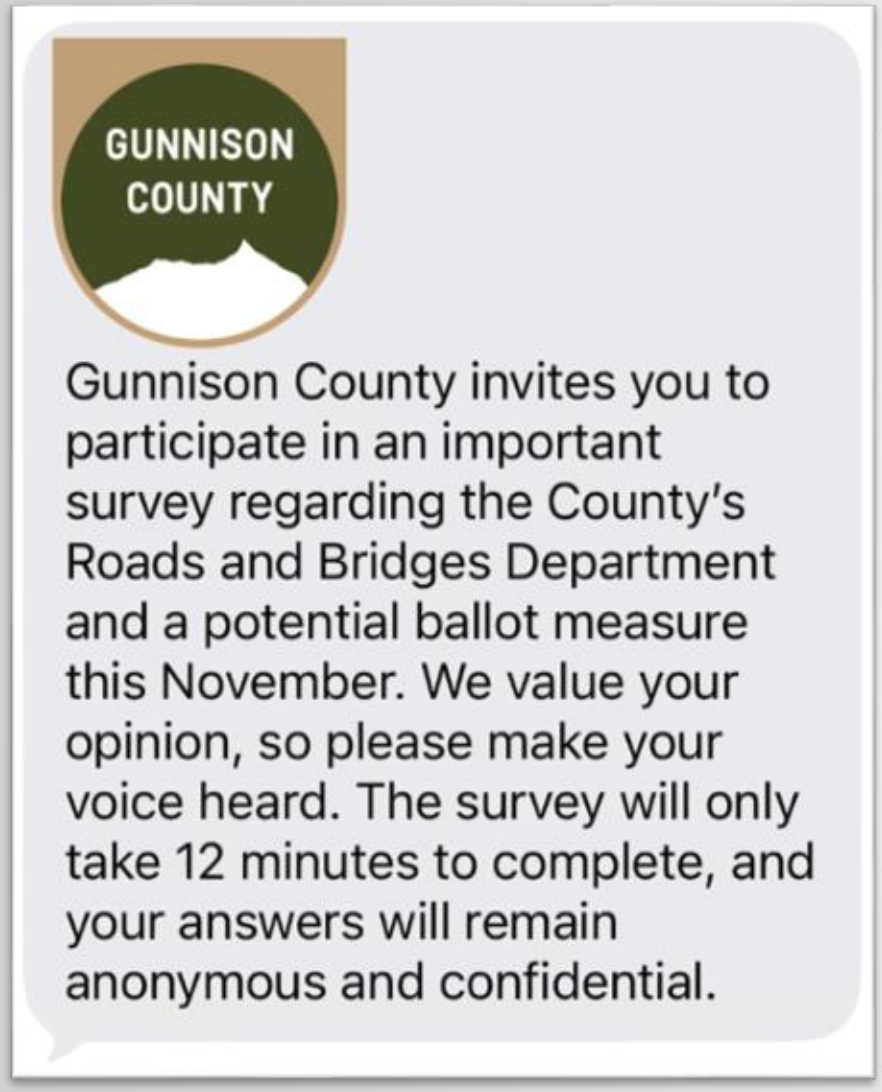
March 2026

GUNNISON COUNTY

Magellan Strategies

Your Trusted Survey Research Partner

Methodology



Magellan Strategies is pleased to present the results of a survey of 533 registered voters in Gunnison County, Colorado

The interviews were conducted from February 24th - March 13th, 2026. This survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.16% at the 95% confidence interval.

The survey data were weighted to represent the voter turnout demographics of a mid-term election in Gunnison County.

Gunnison County
Voter Registration and Turnout Demographics

Gunnison County
Magellan Strategies Voter Registration and Past Election Turnout Report

City or Town	Registration		2024		2023		2022		2021	
City of Gunnison	4,418	31.4%	3,311	29.7%	1,876	27.6%	2,558	27.9%	1,548	25.9%
Town of Crested Butte	1,472	10.5%	1,137	10.2%	727	10.7%	1,038	11.3%	836	14.0%
Town of Mt Crested Butte	944	6.7%	722	6.5%	422	6.2%	617	6.7%	388	6.5%
Other	7,241	51.4%	5,970	53.6%	3,781	55.6%	4,970	54.1%	3,203	53.6%
Total	14,075	100.0%	11,140	100.0%	6,806	100.0%	9,183	100.0%	5,975	100.0%

Sex	Registration		2024		2023		2022		2021	
Female	6,613	47.0%	5,407	48.5%	3,434	50.5%	4,424	48.2%	2,963	49.6%
Male	7,462	53.0%	5,734	51.5%	3,372	49.5%	4,759	51.8%	3,012	50.4%
Total	14,075	100.0%	11,140	100.0%	6,806	100.0%	9,183	100.0%	5,975	100.0%

Age Group	Registration		2024		2023		2022		2021	
18-34	3,994	28.4%	2,719	24.4%	1,012	14.9%	1,847	20.1%	825	13.8%
35-44	2,664	18.9%	2,097	18.8%	1,187	17.4%	1,692	18.4%	927	15.5%
45-54	2,287	16.2%	1,947	17.5%	1,322	19.4%	1,693	18.4%	1,091	18.3%
55-64	2,068	14.7%	1,725	15.5%	1,218	17.9%	1,606	17.5%	1,239	20.7%
65+	3,062	21.8%	2,652	23.8%	2,067	30.4%	2,345	25.5%	1,893	31.7%
Total	14,075	100.0%	11,140	100.0%	6,806	100.0%	9,183	100.0%	5,975	100.0%

Party	Registration		2024		2023		2022		2021	
Unaffiliated	7,715	54.8%	5,736	51.5%	3,245	47.7%	4,332	47.2%	2,410	40.3%
Democrat	3,522	25.0%	3,075	27.6%	2,120	31.1%	2,807	30.6%	2,165	36.2%
Republican	2,506	17.8%	2,126	19.1%	1,360	20.0%	1,903	20.7%	1,340	22.4%
Libertarian	144	1.0%	84	0.8%	44	0.6%	86	0.9%	38	0.6%
Other	188	1.3%	119	1.1%	37	0.5%	55	0.6%	22	0.4%
Total	14,075	100.0%	11,140	100.0%	6,806	100.0%	9,183	100.0%	5,975	100.0%

Key Takeaways & Opportunities

1.) Job Approval & Perception of Adequate Funding: 64% of residents approve of the job the county is doing to maintain or improve roads and bridges. However, just 46% think the county has the resources needed for roads and bridges. This suggests they are open to targeted additional revenue.

2.) Support for Potential Ballot Language, Growth With More Information: The ballot measure starts competitive with 50% voting yes and becomes more viable at 56% voting yes after respondents read additional information. This stresses the importance of educating residents about the current situation and the county's funding needs.

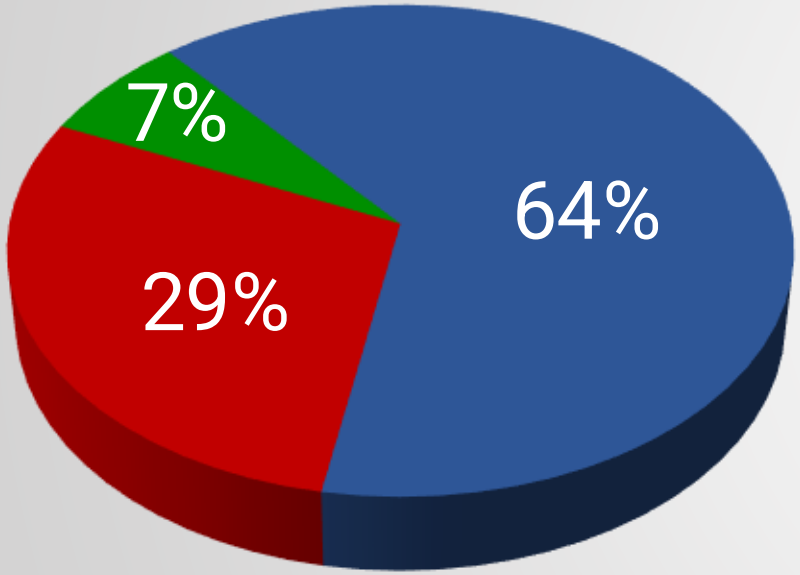
Key Takeaways & Opportunities

•3.) Most Persuasive Arguments are Practical/Fairness-Based:

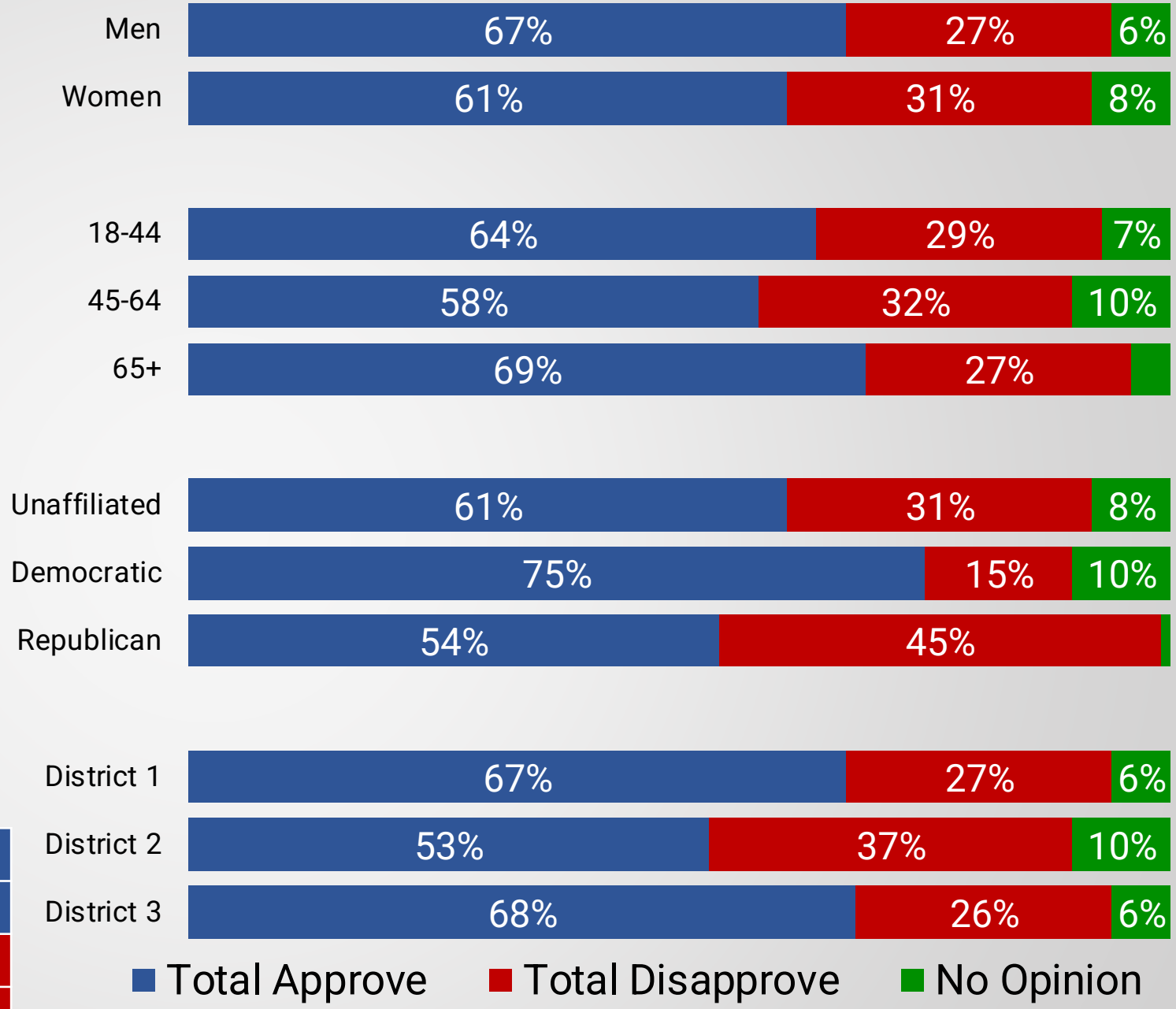
- 🚧 Fixing **$38M in deferred maintenance**
- 🚑 **Safety concerns** (drivers, cyclists, emergency response)
- 🧳 **Tourists help pay** (fairness argument)
- 💰 Ability to **leverage grants + stretch dollars**

4.) Opposition Driven by Cost-of-Living: The dominant concern for those who oppose the ballot measure is that taxes are already too high. They indicate a preference for alternative funding sources (tourism, lodging, etc…) that would less directly impact them. The opposition is not specific to roads and bridges. It's about affordability.

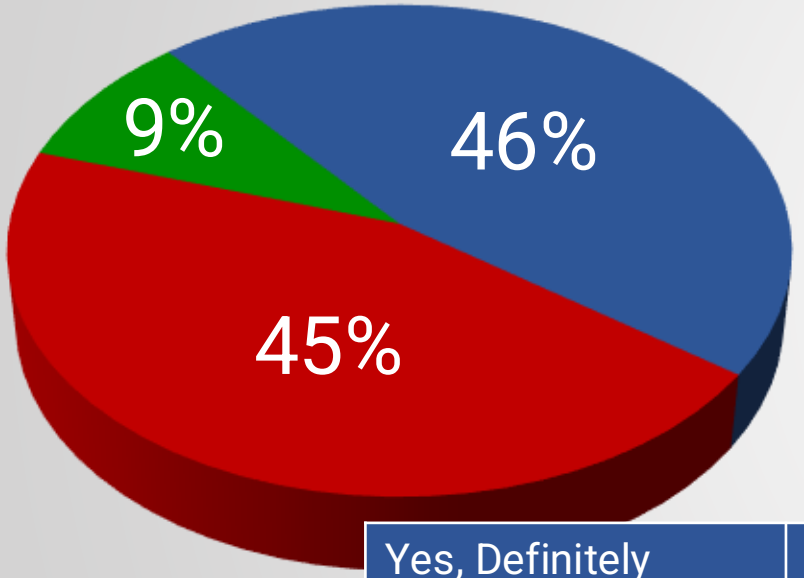
Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Gunnison County Public Works Department is doing to perform road and bridge maintenance and improvements?



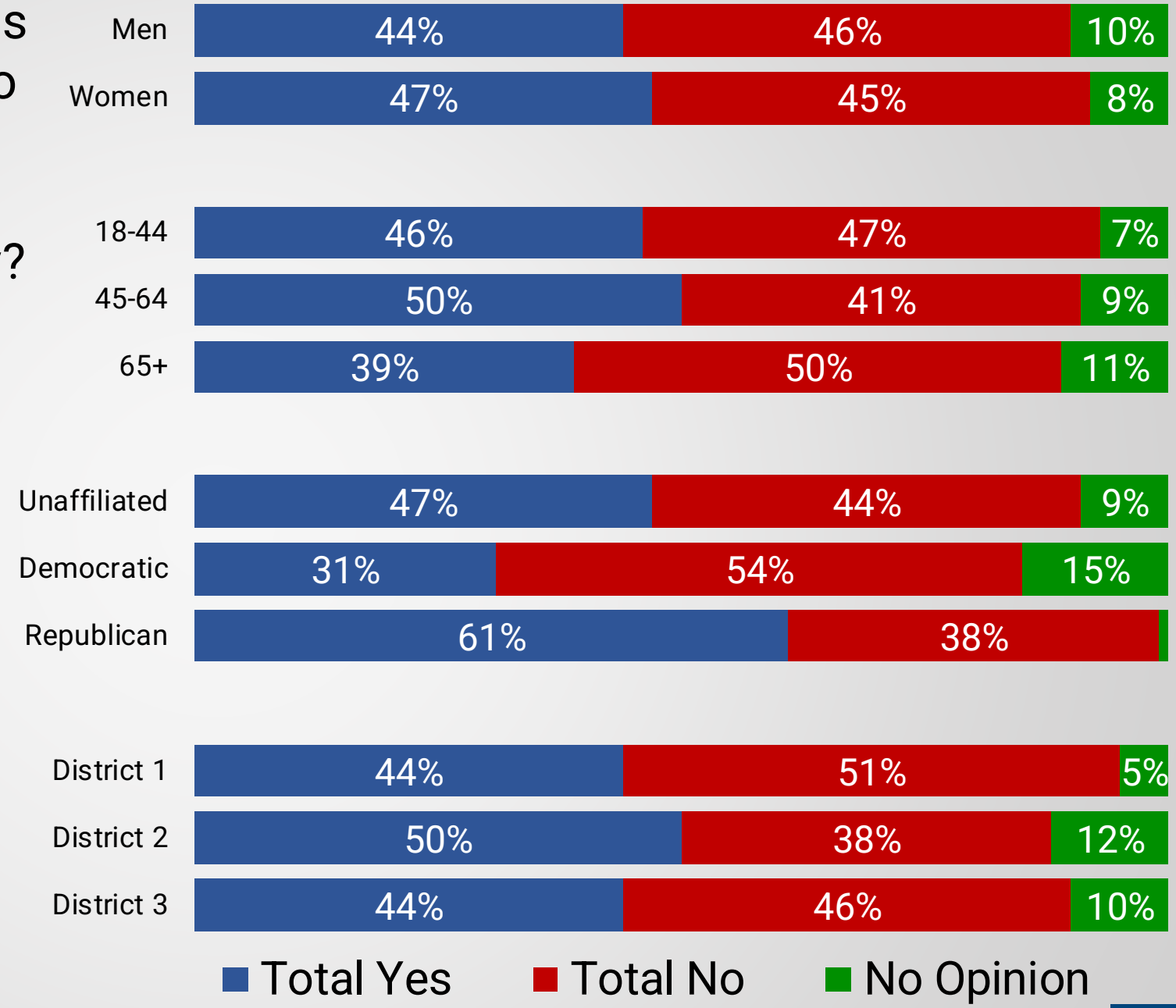
Strongly Approve	16%
Somewhat Approve	48%
Strongly Disapprove	13%
Somewhat Disapprove	16%



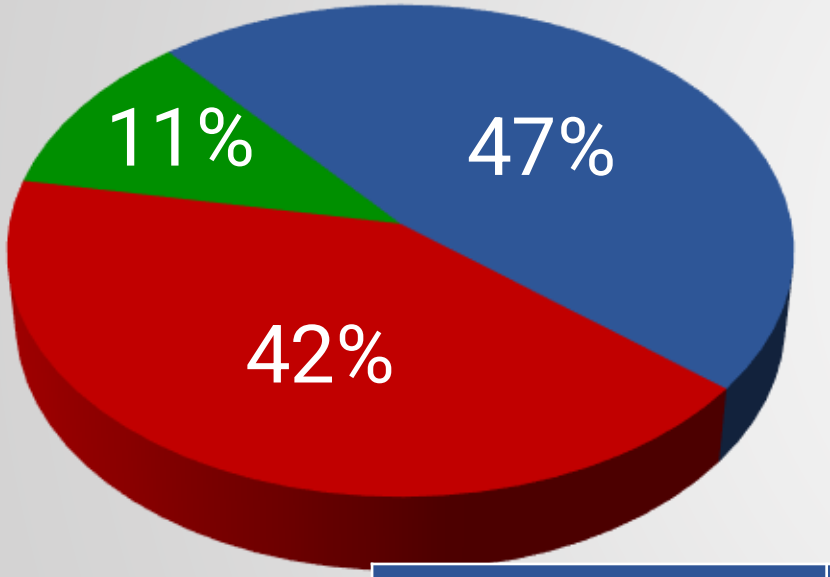
Do you think Gunnison County has the financial resources needed to adequately maintain, repair, and improve roads and bridges in unincorporated Gunnison County?



Yes, Definitely	15%
Yes, Probably	31%
No, Definitely Not	9%
No, Probably Not	36%

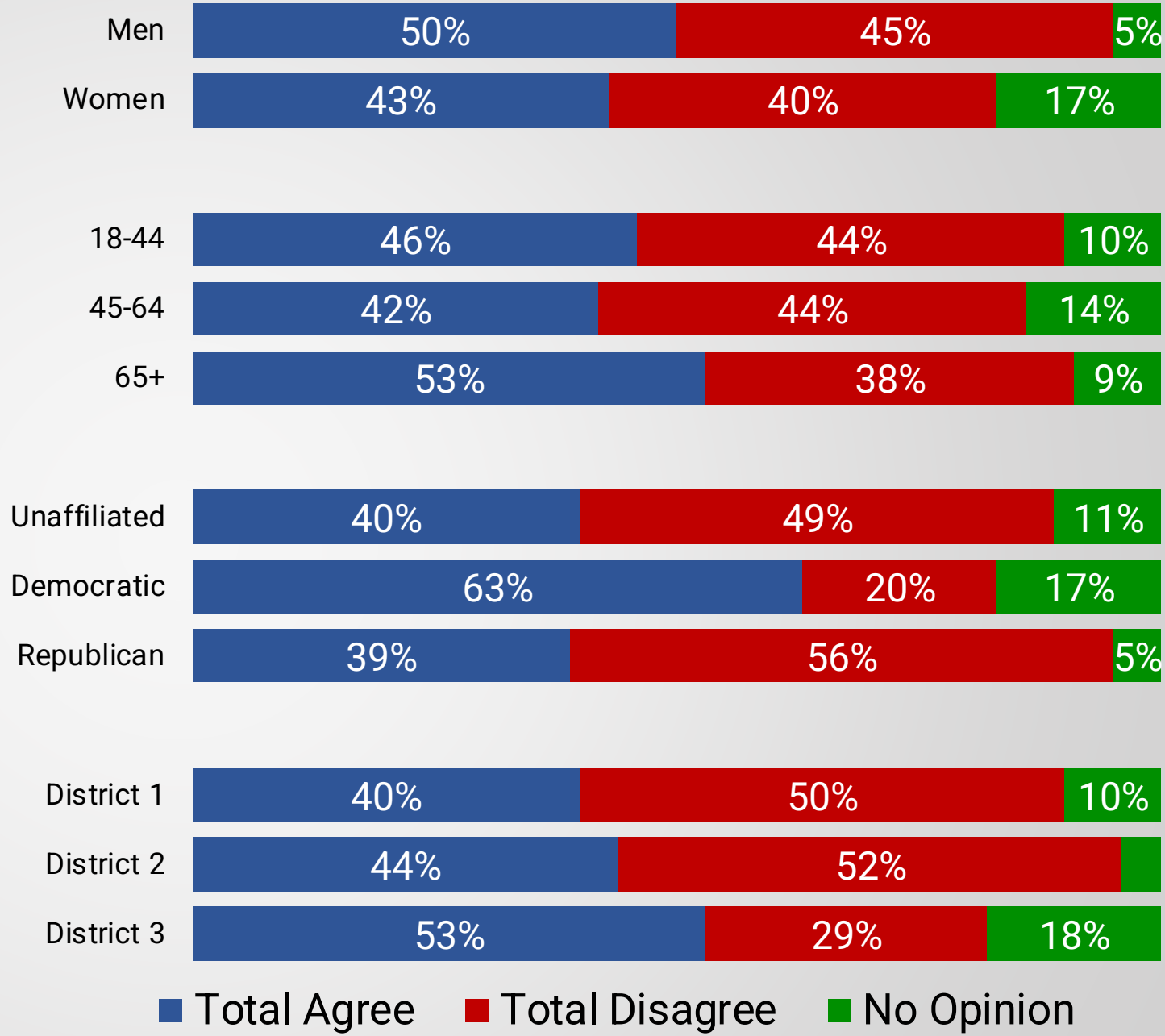


Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? *"Gunnison County is fiscally responsible and spends taxpayer money wisely."*

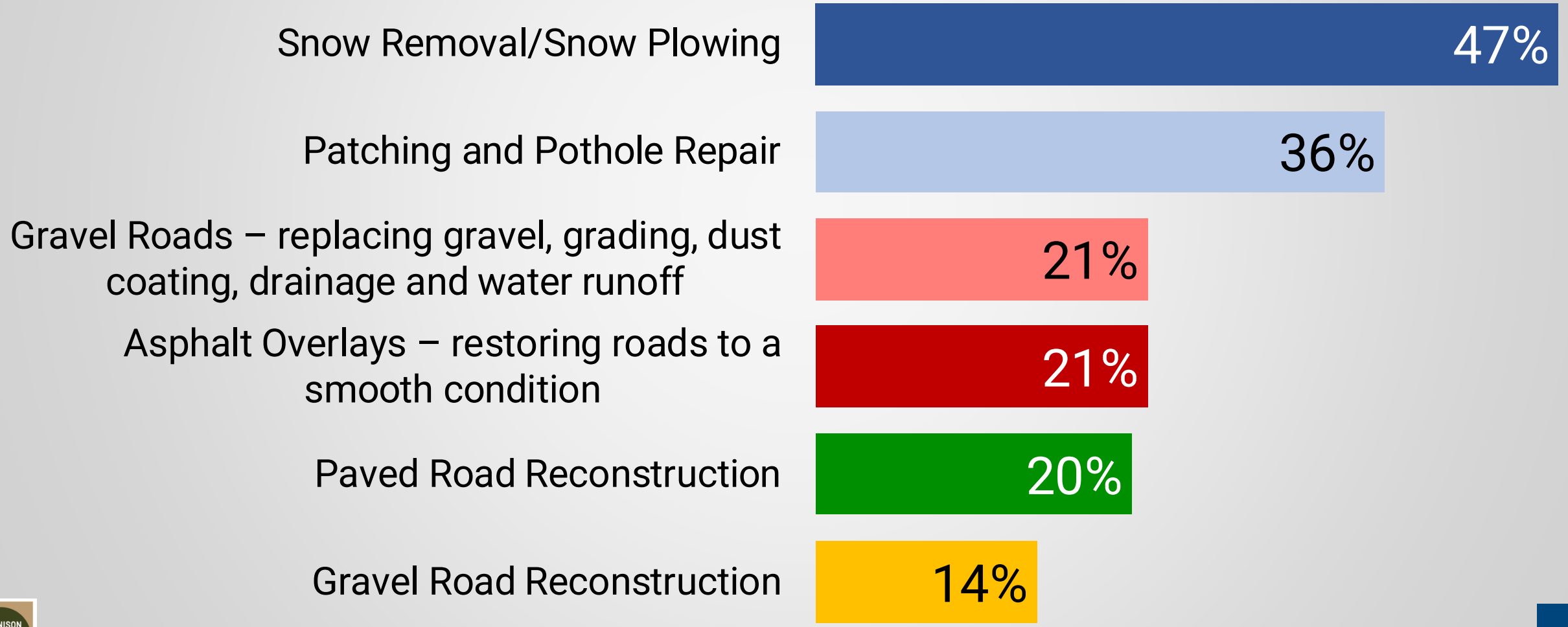


- Total Agree
- Total Disagree
- No Opinion

Strongly Agree	12%
Somewhat Agree	35%
Strongly Disagree	19%
Somewhat Disagree	23%



On a scale from 1-10, with 1 meaning not important at all and 10 meaning very important, please rate the importance of the following areas of road maintenance. *Ranked 10 (Very Important) on the Scale.*



Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Sales Tax Uninformed Ballot Test

Before we continue, it is important to understand that Gunnison County has not decided whether to put a ballot measure before voters to create a dedicated funding source for the Roads and Bridges Department. Your participation in this survey and sharing your honest opinions will help the county make that decision. Let's continue the survey now.



Even with decades of responsible budget management, the county currently has $38 million in deferred road and bridge maintenance costs. This is due to a lack of dedicated funding, rising construction and maintenance costs, and not asking voters to increase taxes since 1978.

One solution would be a minimal sales tax increase that is specifically dedicated to roads and bridges. Below is an example of potential ballot language. After reading the language, please indicate if you would vote yes and approve it, or vote no and reject it.

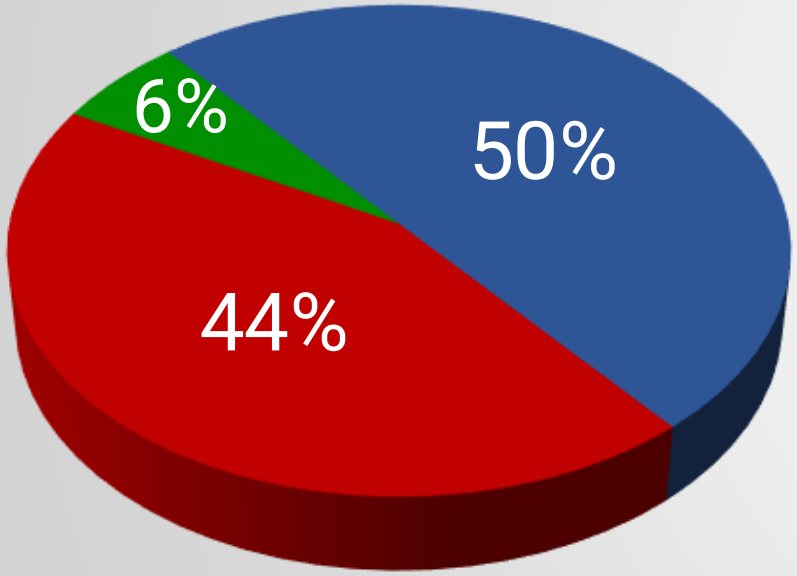
SHALL GUNNISON COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED $3,304,092 ANNUALLY (ESTIMATED FIRST FISCAL YEAR DOLLAR INCREASE STARTING IN 2027), AND BY ANY ADDITIONAL AMOUNT AS MAY BE RAISED EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THROUGH A 0.50% (50 CENTS ON 100 DOLLARS) COUNTYWIDE SALES TAX THAT WOULD EXCLUDE GROCERIES AND UTILITIES, FOR THE PURPOSES OF:

- IMPROVING SAFETY ON COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGES;
- MAINTAINING EXISTING ROADS AND BRIDGES;
- ADDRESSING LONG-DEFERRED MAINTENANCE; AND
- DEVELOPING NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE;

AND SHALL THE COUNTY BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN AND SPEND ALL PROCEEDS OF SUCH TAX WITHOUT LIMITATION BY ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION?

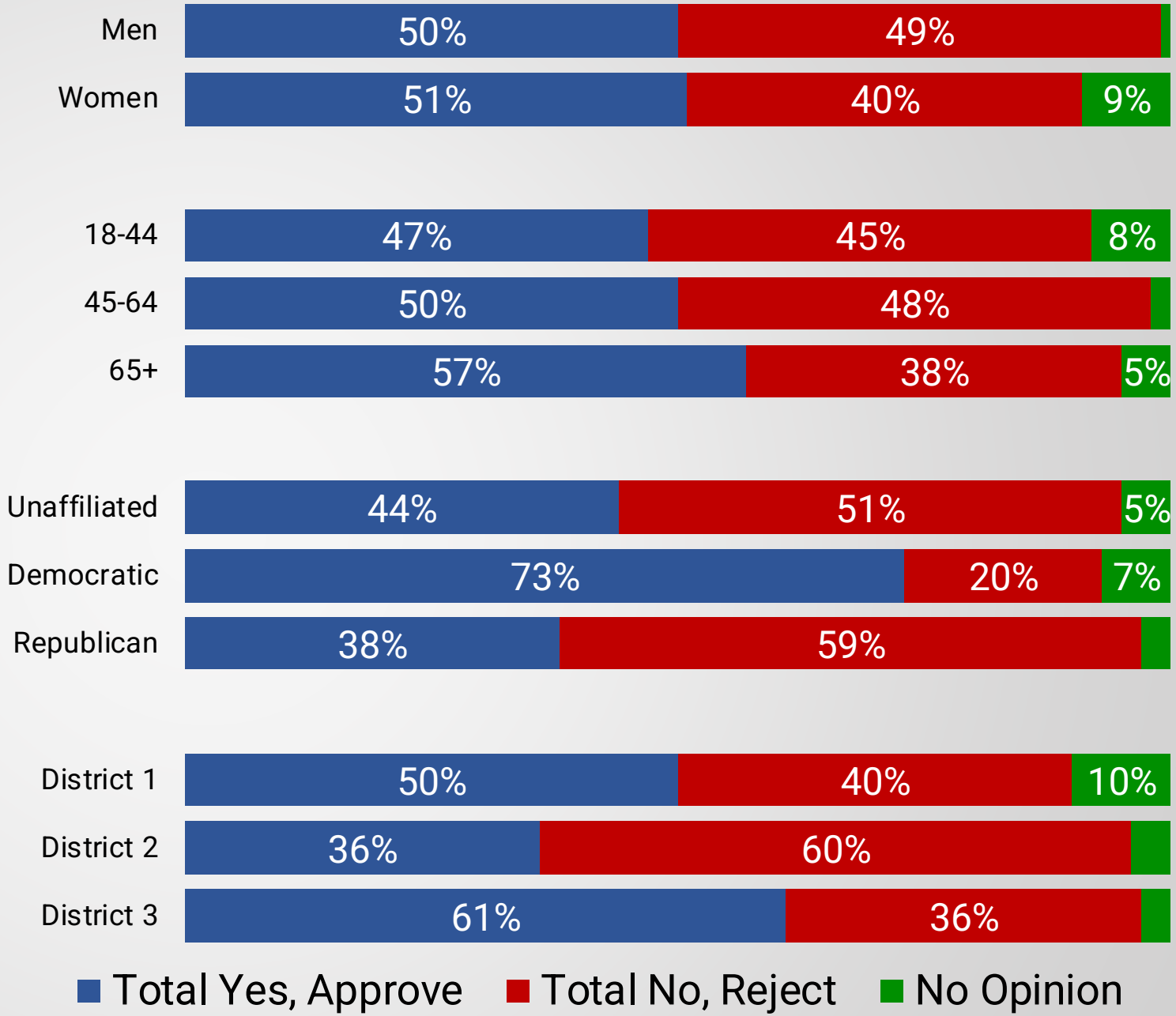
Gunnison Roads & Bridges Uninformed Ballot Test

If this question were on the ballot this November, would you vote yes and approve it, or would you vote no and reject it?



- Approve
- Reject
- No Opinion

Definitely Yes, Approve	18%
Probably Yes, Approve	32%
Definitely No, Reject	23%
Probably No, Reject	21%



Gunnison County Roads & Bridges Ballot Measure Information Questions



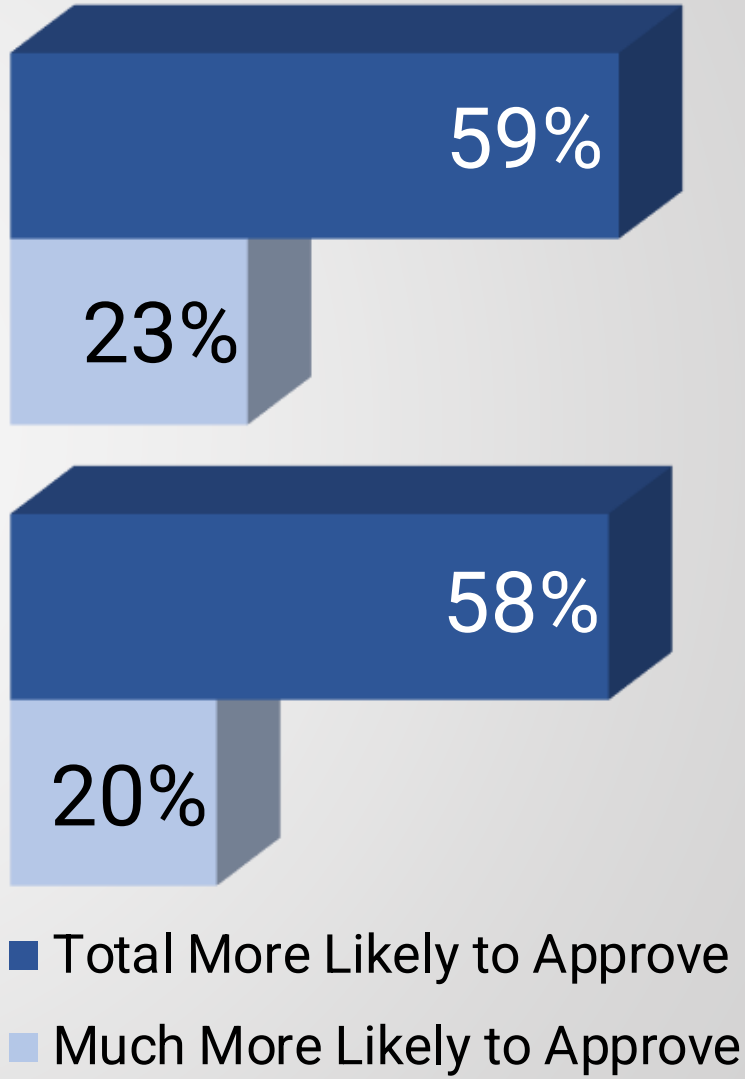
We will now share information about why Gunnison County is considering this ballot measure and why a dedicated funding source for roads and bridges is necessary.

After reading the information, please indicate if you are more likely to vote yes and approve a sales tax increase for the county's transportation system or if you are more likely to vote no and reject it. Let's get started:

Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Ballot Measure Information Questions

The Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Department is not funded by property taxes because in Colorado, county governments are not legally allowed to fund road maintenance through property taxes. Roads and bridges also does not receive a dedicated portion of the County's sales tax revenue. Lack of funding has resulted in $38 million of deferred maintenance for roads and bridges.

Gunnison County government has a strong financial track record, as evidenced by its AA credit rating from S&P. While other government entities in the county have received voter-approved tax increases, the county itself has not asked voters to increase taxes since 1978.

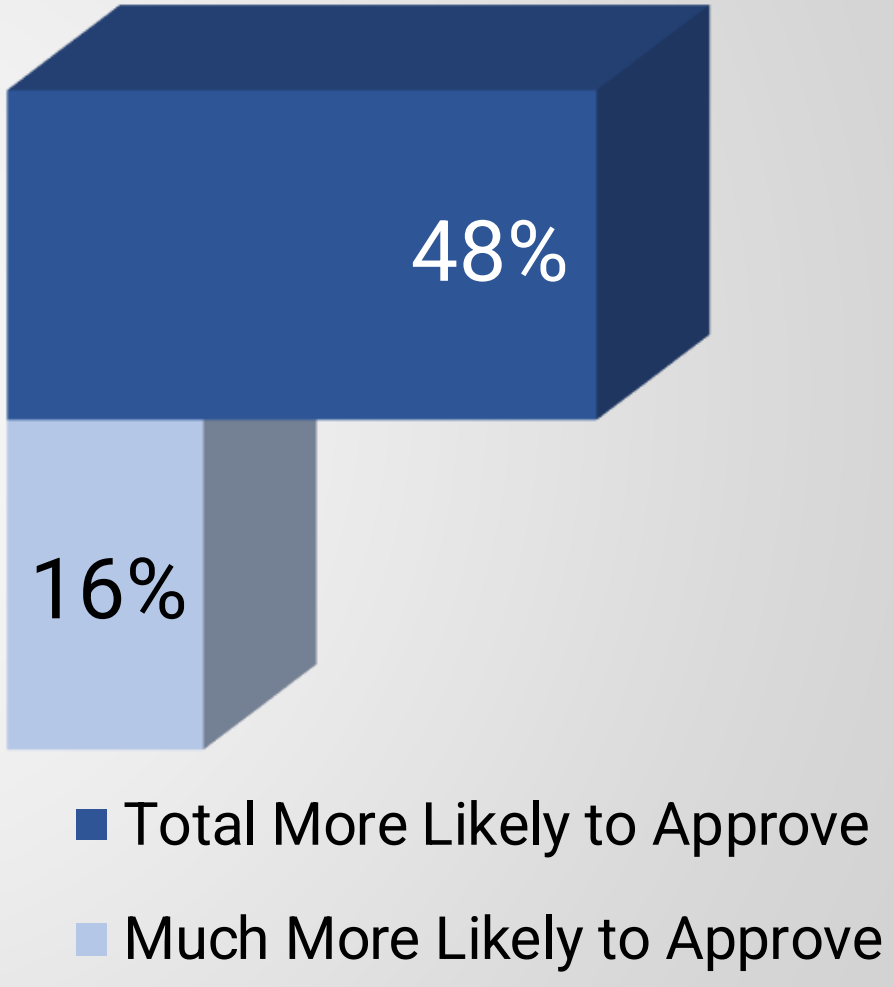


Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Ballot Measure Information Questions

The county has completed the following projects, all without increasing taxes:

- Detention Center
- Public Works Facility
- Courthouse
- Airport Terminal
- Sawtooth Workforce Housing
- Whetstone Village Housing

The following projects were also completed with a combination of county, state, and federal funds: Taylor River Road, Cottonwood Pass, Ohio Creek Intersection, Whitewater Park, Deli Trail Bridge, and North Gunnison Commuter Trail and Bridge.

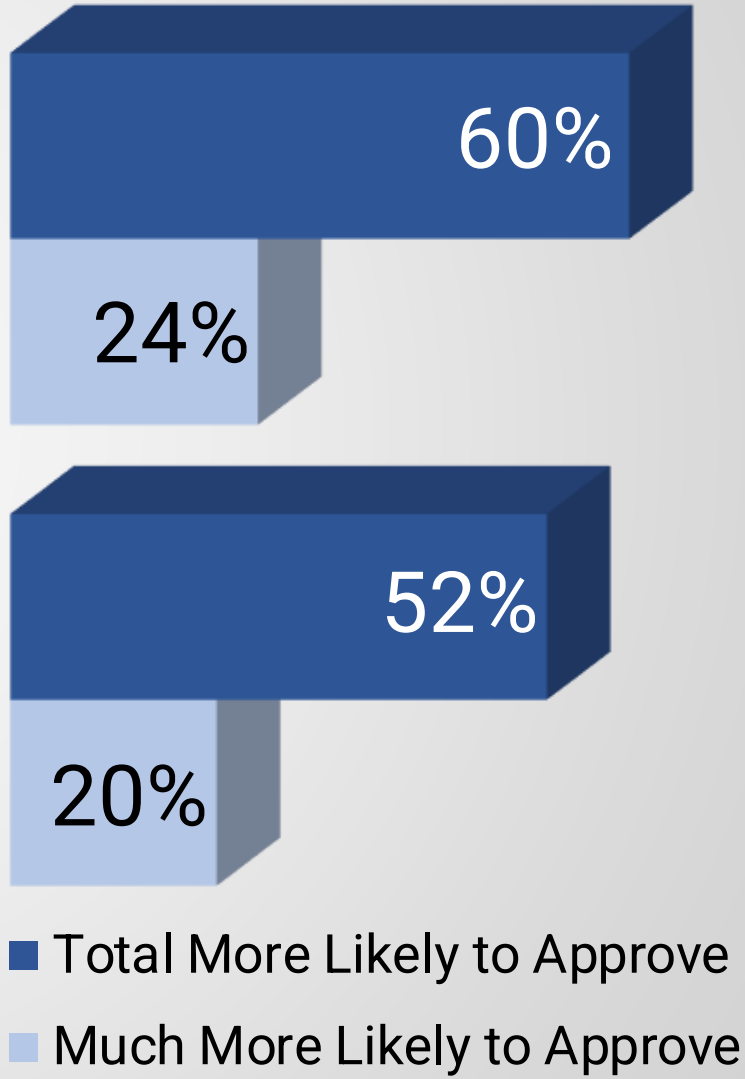


Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Ballot Measure Information Questions

This sales tax increase that excludes groceries and utilities would allow the Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Department to complete the $38 million in deferred maintenance over the next twenty years, while continuing the necessary work to maintain existing County roads and bridges.

Below are some examples of what it costs to maintain existing Gunnison County roads:

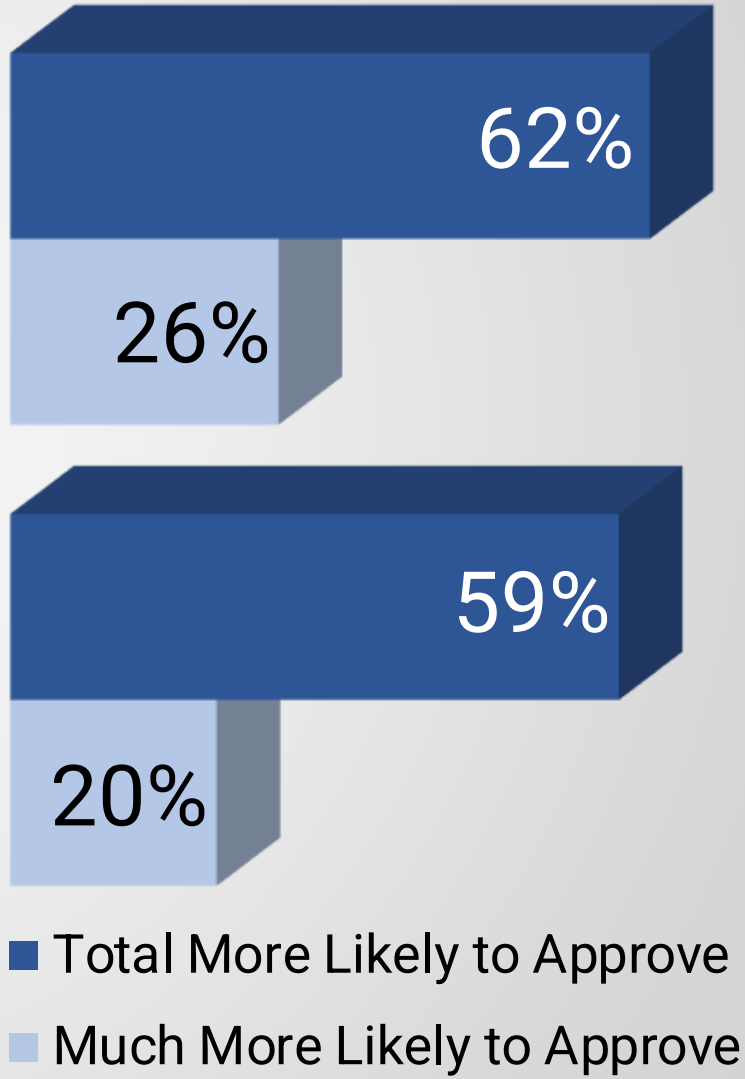
- On average, the County invests $126,568 on pothole repair annually.
- The county spent $520,000 on bridge work in 2025.
- Snow plowing costs between $1–1.5 million per year.
- It costs $3 million to fully reconstruct one mile of roadway.



Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Ballot Measure Information Questions

Gunnison County recently completed a thorough pavement conditions assessment of paved and gravel roads within the jurisdiction to gain an understanding of existing conditions and future needs. This assessment rated 5 bridges in poor condition, and 21 bridges in fair condition. All of these bridges will eventually need to be repaired or replaced.

This same assessment rated 36% of the roads as good, while 23% of the roads rated as fair, poor, or very poor. The condition rating was used to determine the necessary improvements to the road sections and to develop a cost estimate for repairs.

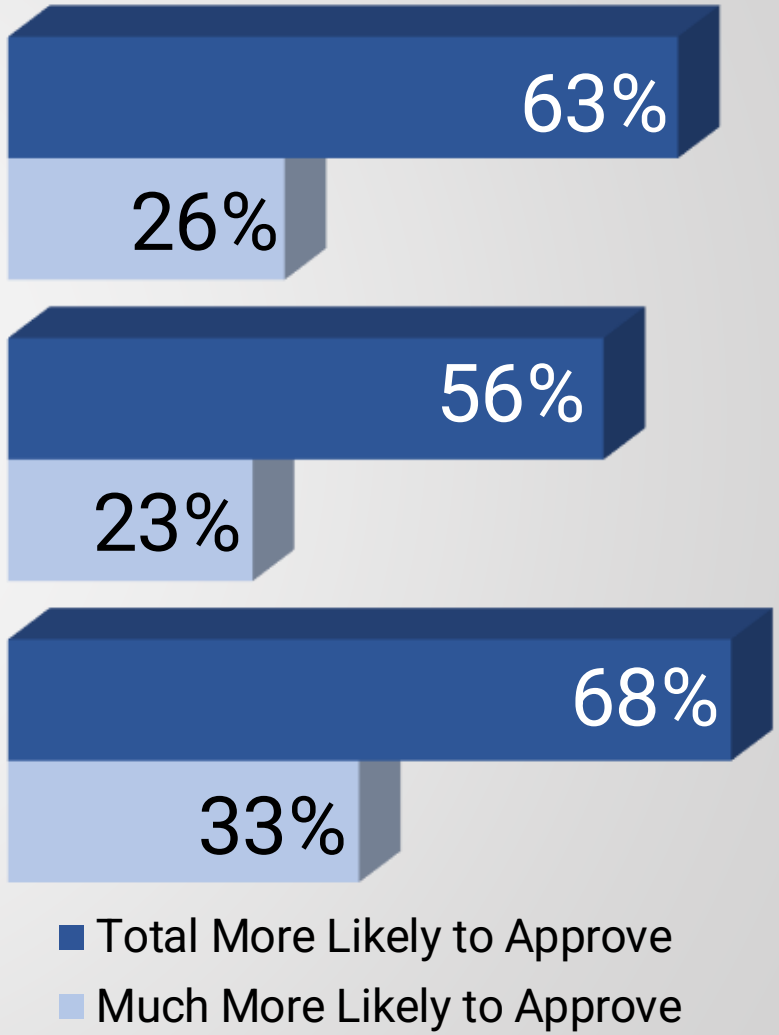


Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Ballot Measure Information Questions

A sales tax as a dedicated funding source for roads and bridges would also strengthen the County's ability to compete for large state and federal grants – helping leverage local dollars into major infrastructure investments to benefit the entire community.

Over the past 20 years, inflation has reduced the county's purchasing power by nearly 50%. Investing now will save on road maintenance and infrastructure costs over time.

Through a sales tax, Gunnison County can generate revenue from all roadway users, including tourists, visitors, and those passing through. This ensures that the burden does not fall solely on county residents.



Gunnison County Roads & Bridges Informed Ballot Test

Thank you for taking the time to read about why Gunnison County is considering a ballot measure to create a dedicated funding source for roads and bridges. We now ask you to reread the ballot language and indicate if you would vote yes and approve it or if you would vote no and reject it.



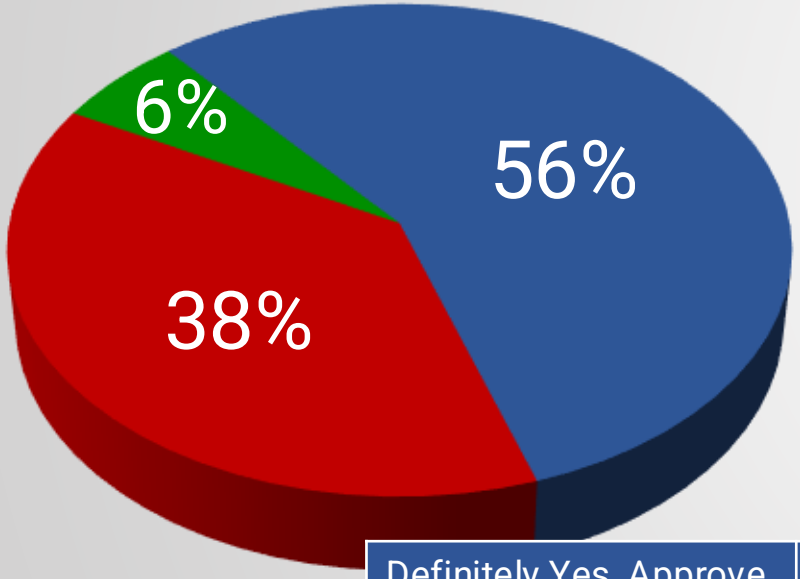
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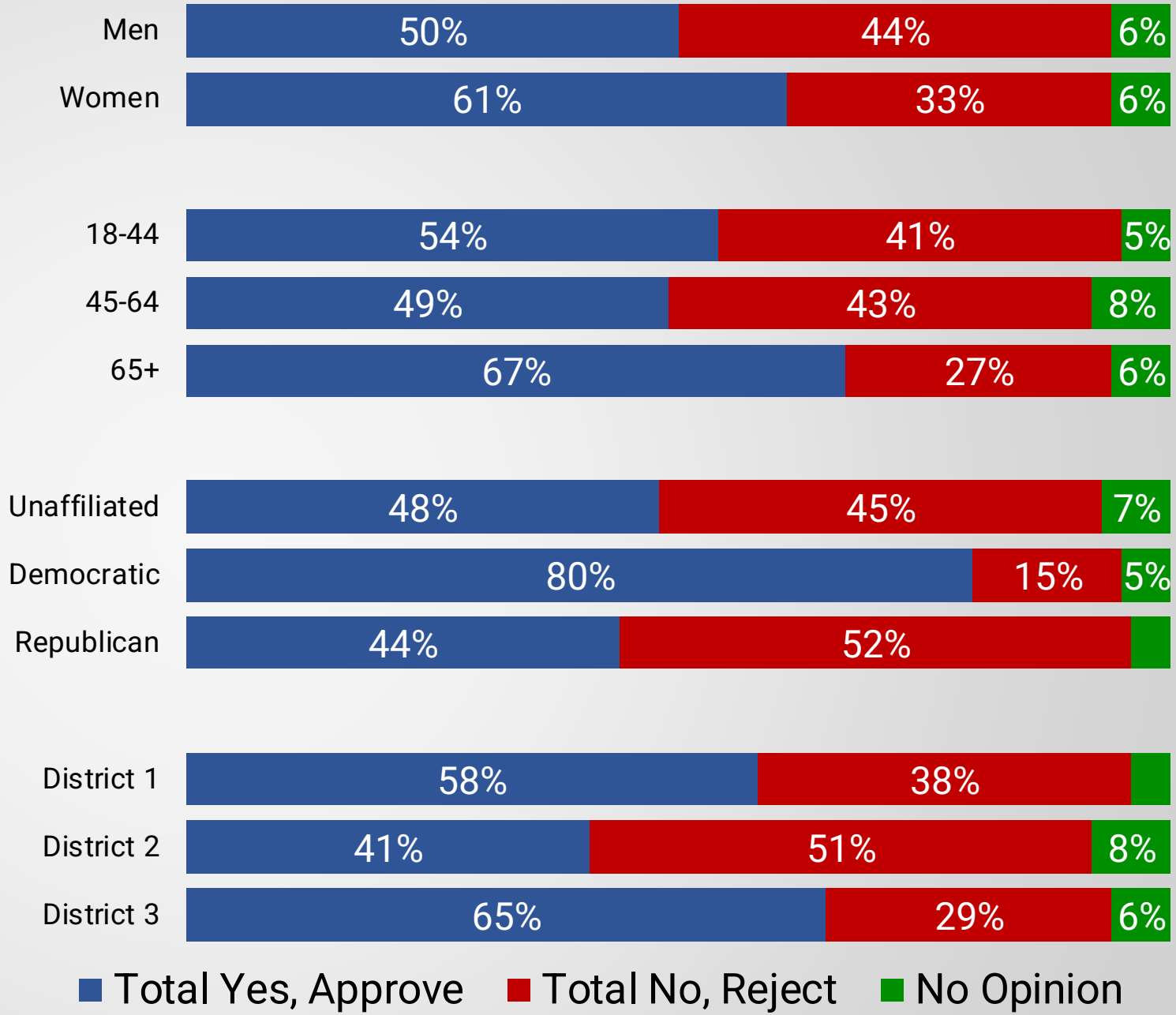
AND SHALL THE COUNTY BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN AND SPEND ALL PROCEEDS OF SUCH TAX WITHOUT LIMITATION BY ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION?

Gunnison Roads & Bridges Informed Ballot Test

If this question were on the ballot this November, would you vote yes and approve it, or would you vote no and reject it?



Definitely Yes, Approve	24%
Probably Yes, Approve	32%
Definitely No, Reject	21%
Probably No, Reject	17%



Please describe the reasons why you would vote *yes* and *approve* a 0.5% sales tax increase.

Roads and Bridges Are in Poor Condition and Need Repair: This was the most common theme. These respondents believe the county's roads and bridges are deteriorating and require immediate maintenance or reconstruction, and that the roads are "terrible," "dangerous," "falling apart," or "in poor condition." Specific roads repeatedly mentioned include CR 76, CR 12, Brush Creek, Ohio Creek, and CB South roads.

Safety for Residents, Cyclists, and Emergency Services: Many respondents emphasize public safety, noting that poor roads increase risks for drivers, cyclists, and emergency responders. They specifically mention potholes and poor pavement causing accidents or vehicle damage, lack of road markings or shoulders, and emergency response concerns when roads are degraded.

Sales Tax Is Viewed as a Fair Way to Pay (Tourists Contribute): A large share of respondents support the measure because sales tax spreads costs beyond local residents, especially in a tourism-driven economy. They mention an appreciation that tourists and visitors who contribute to road wear would help pay for it, that sales tax is preferred over property tax increases, and that excluding groceries and utilities makes the tax more acceptable.

Investing Now Saves Money Later (Preventive Maintenance): Respondents also frequently note that fixing infrastructure early prevents more expensive reconstruction later. They now understand that preventive maintenance is cheaper than replacement, that inflation and construction costs will continue to rise, and that the county has a backlog after decades without a tax increase.

Please describe the reasons why you would vote *no* and *reject* a 0.5% sales tax increase.

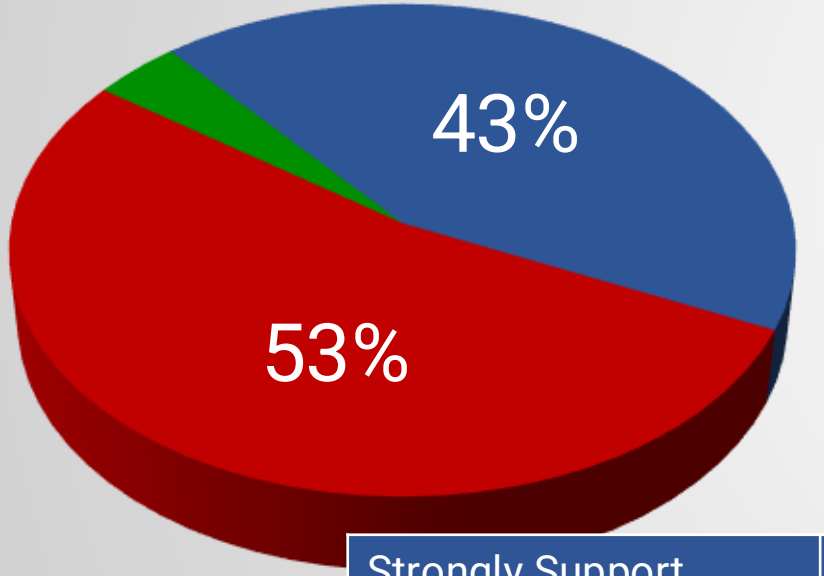
Taxes and Cost of Living Already Too High: Among "No" voters, this is the most dominant theme by far. Many respondents say they simply cannot support any additional tax burden because Gunnison County is already too expensive, especially for working families, seniors, and fixed-income residents.

Distrust: Many "No" voters also say they do not trust the county to spend new money wisely. They believe the county has mismanaged existing funds, overspent on non-core projects, or failed to prioritize roads and bridges in the first place. Common beliefs include the idea that the county should reallocate existing revenue instead of asking for more, and that roads were neglected because of poor priorities rather than lack of money. Specific complaints are related to spending on housing, courthouse/jail/airport projects, facilities, vehicles, trails, and other perceived "non-essential" items.

Different Funding Mechanism: Many "No" voters do acknowledge road needs, but oppose this specific funding approach because they think the burden falls too much on residents rather than on tourists, second homeowners, developers, or other heavy users. They believe that visitors and tourism create much of the wear and tear, and prefer hotel/lodging, VRBO, marijuana, gas, or other targeted taxes/fees instead. Some say developers, second homeowners, or wealthy newcomers should bear more of the cost.

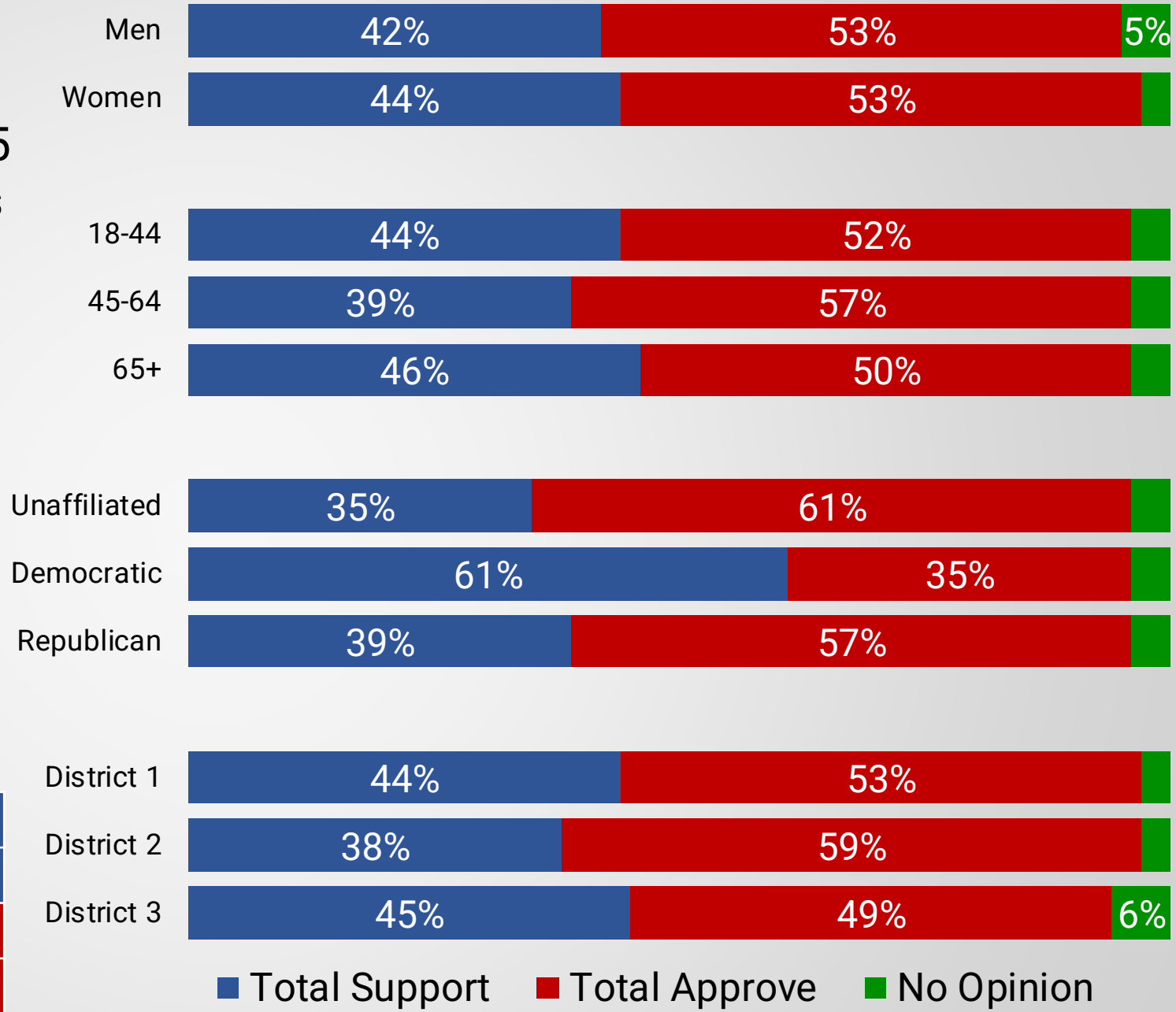
Transparency: Another theme among "No" voters is a desire for more transparency. They want more clarity about where the money would go, whether it would truly stay limited to roads and bridges, and whether the roads in their area would actually improve. There are concerns about vague or open-ended ballot language.

If the county received a 0.75% sales tax increase, the needed improvements could be completed 5 years faster. Would you support this slightly higher tax rate to improve roads and bridges more quickly?



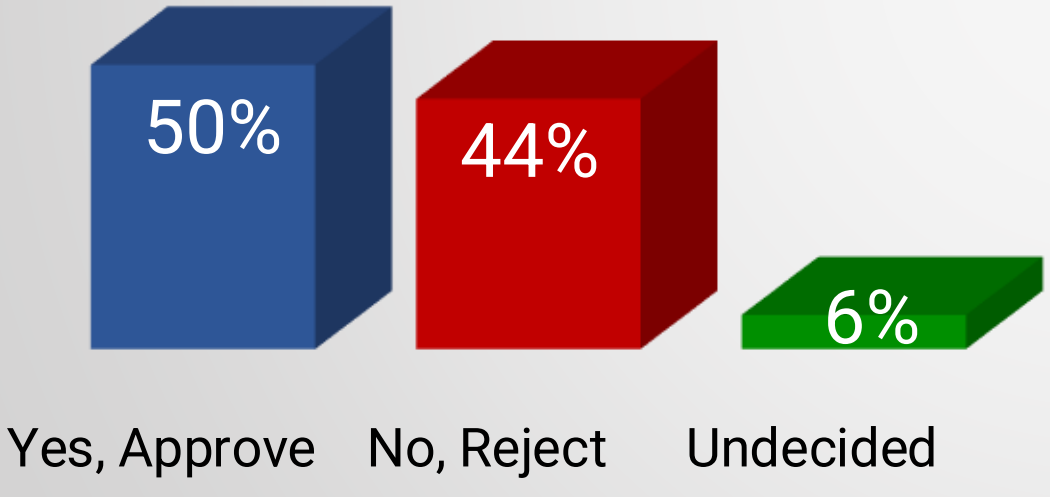
- Support
- Oppose
- No Opinion

Strongly Support	15%
Somewhat Support	28%
Strongly Oppose	33%
Somewhat Oppose	20%

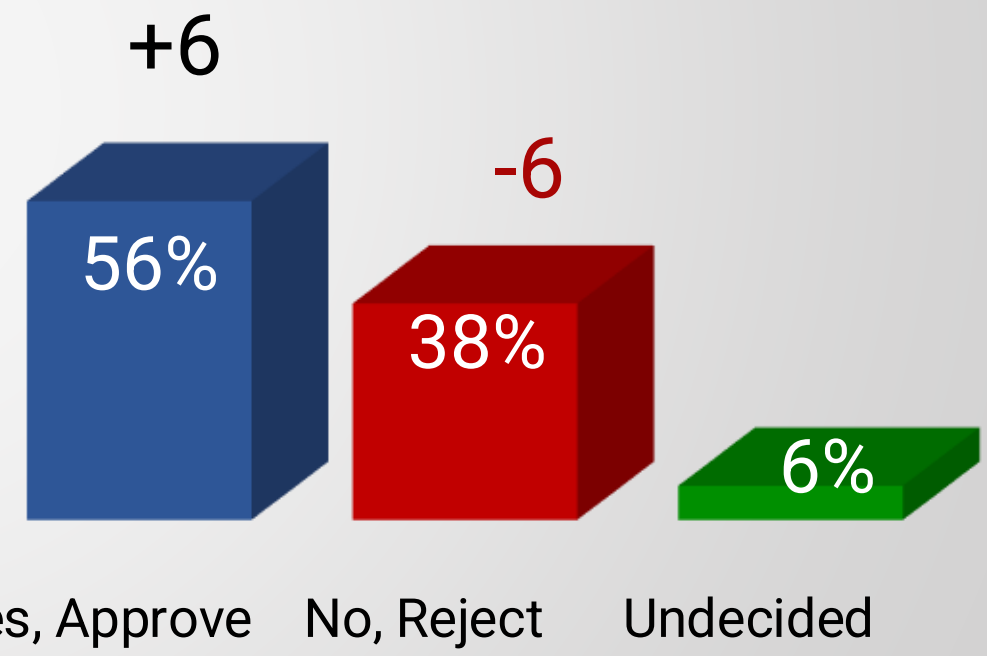


Gunnison County Roads and Bridges Ballot Measure Comparison

Uninformed



Informed

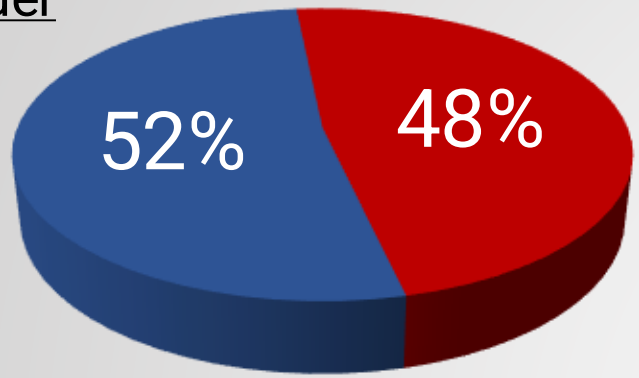




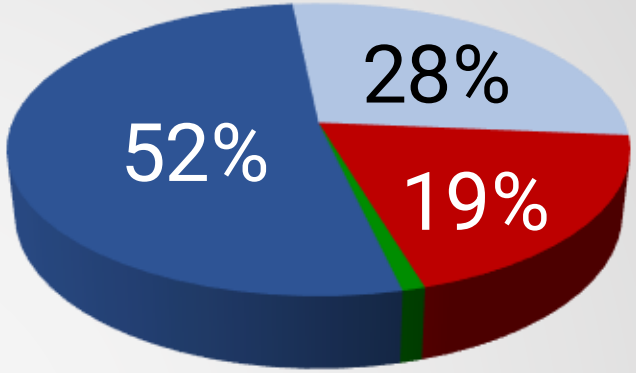
Survey Demographics

Survey Demographics

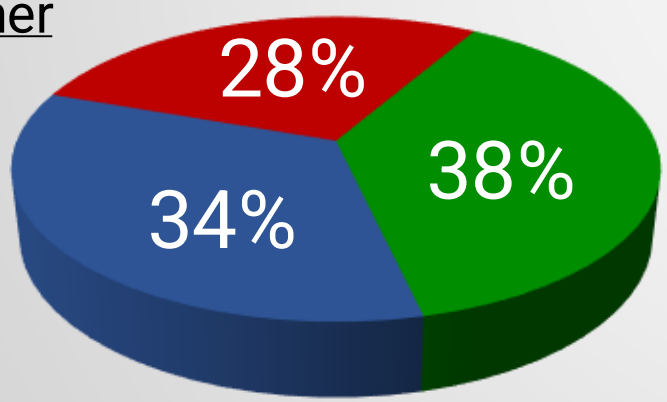
Gender



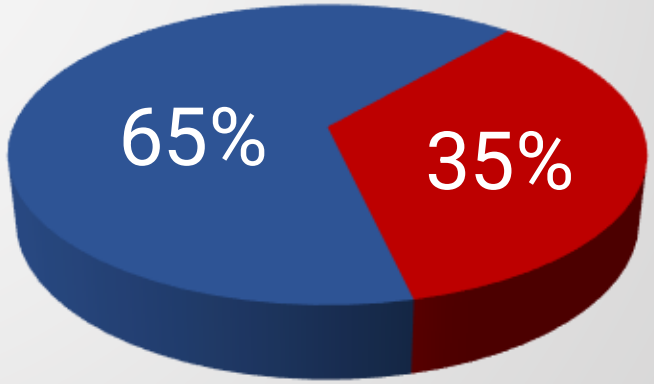
Party



County Commissioner District

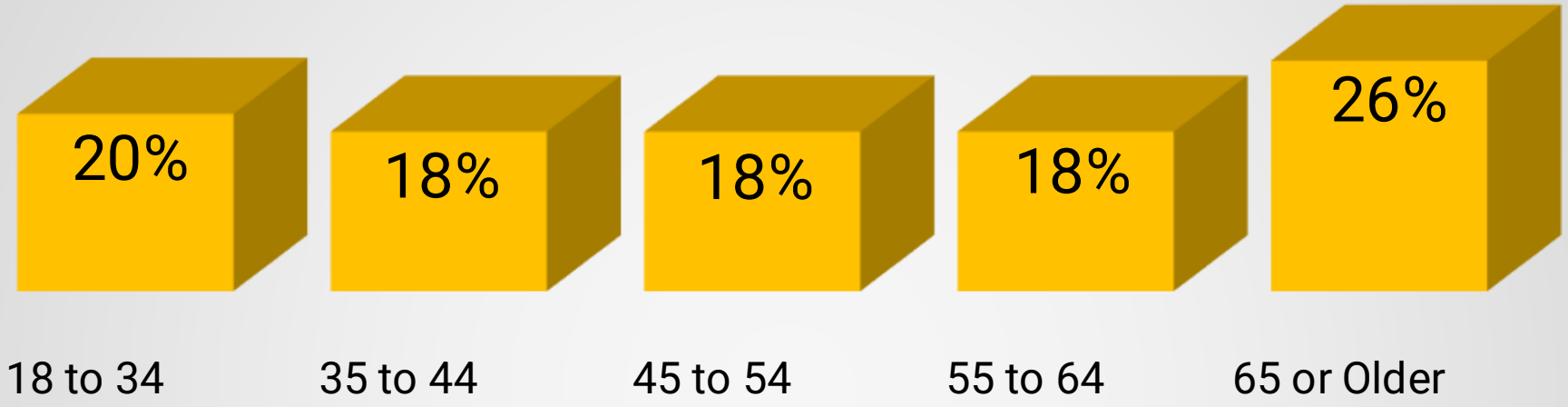


Four-Year College Degree

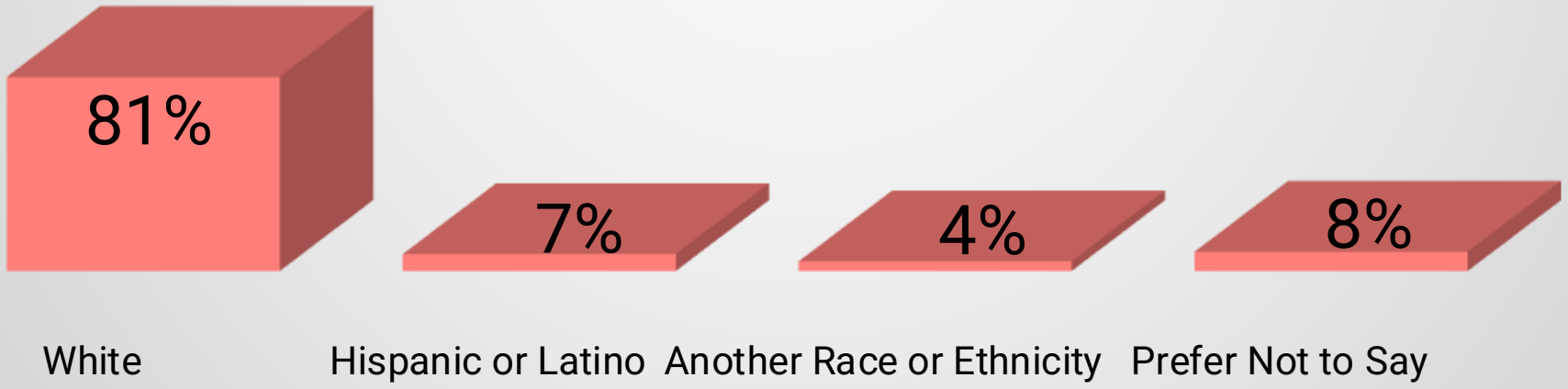


Survey Demographics

Age Range



Race

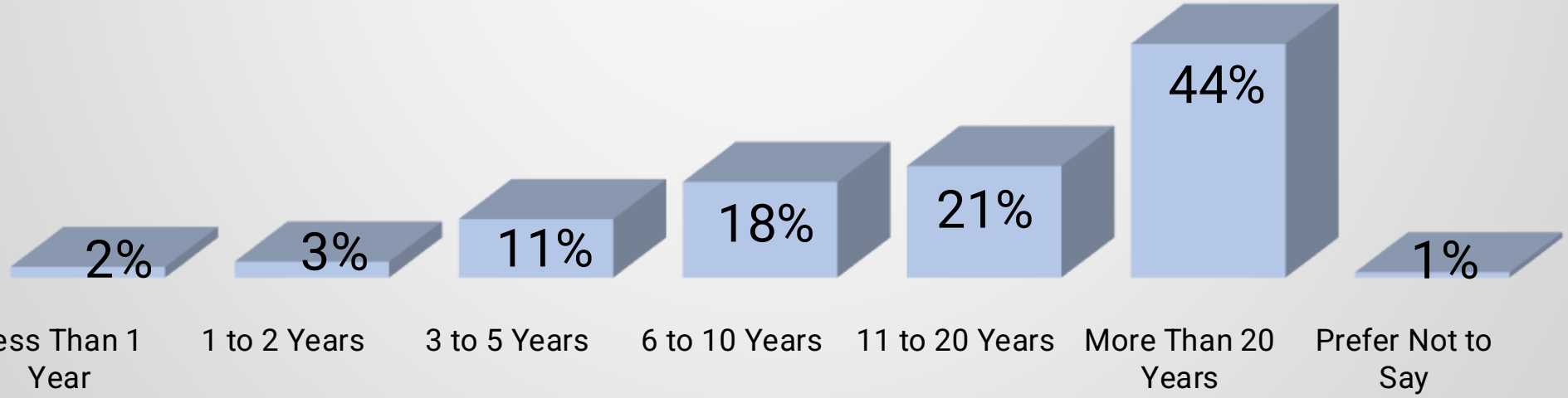


Survey Demographics

Income

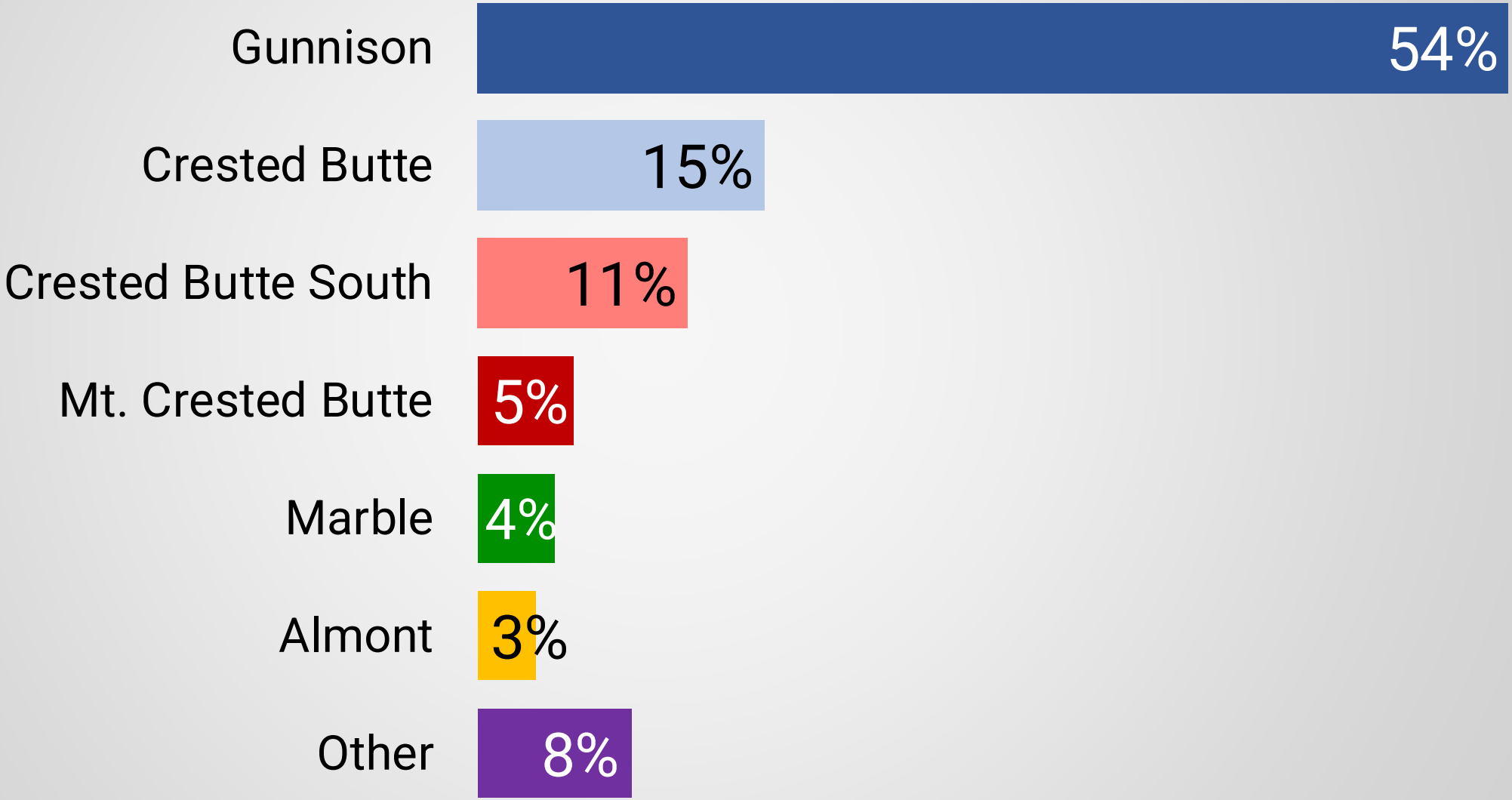


Lived in Gunnison County



Survey Demographics

Where do you Live in Gunnison County?



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