

Transit Polling

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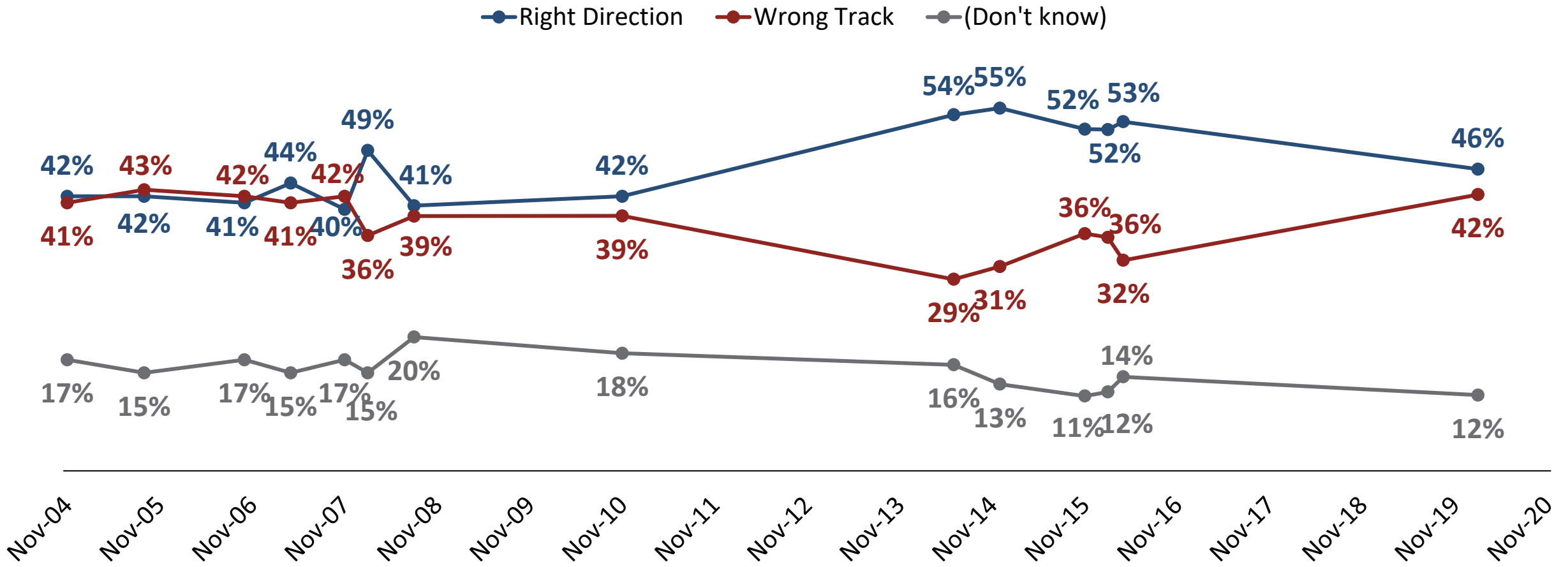
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Direction of Puget Sound Tracked

Overall voter attitude can have a significant impact on their willingness to support new measures or to increase their own taxes. For a long period (the “teens”), the mood of voters in the greater Puget Sound was net or a majority positive.

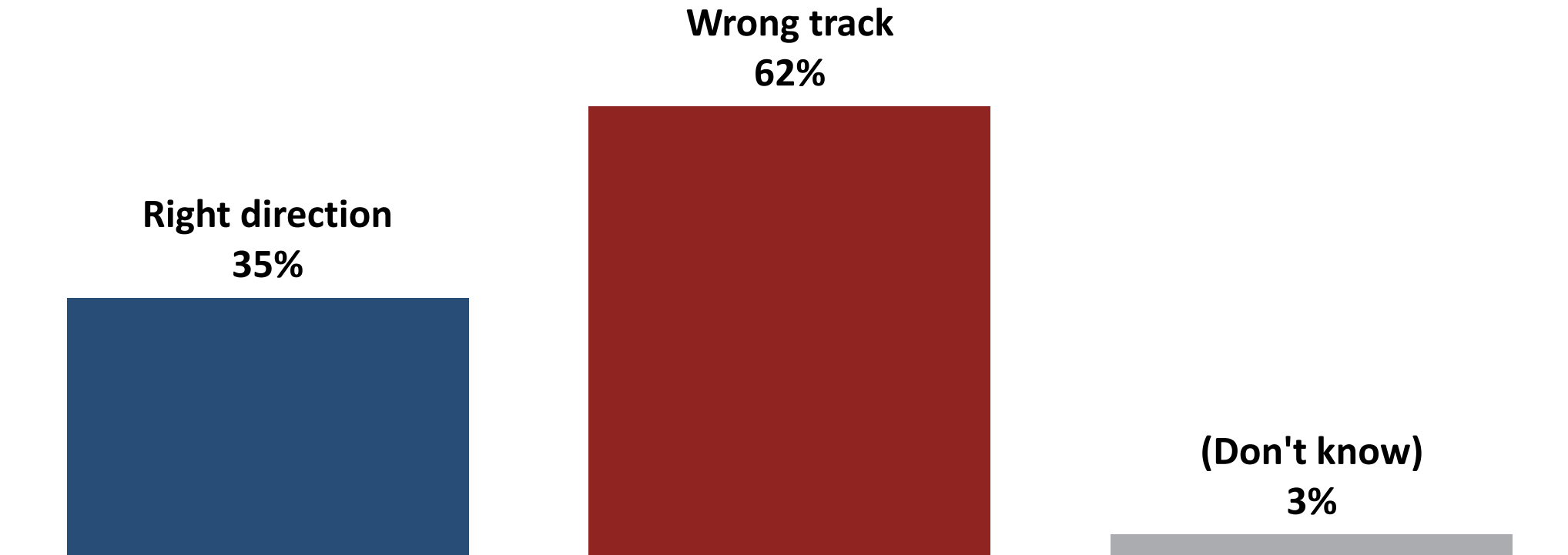


Q3. Do you feel things in the Puget Sound region are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

Direction of King County (2022)

Voter mood has now swung more negative in King County, and it has done so in many but not all communities across the nation. This negative swing has created a split on voter support for measures; some are advancing (parks, public safety, some climate initiatives) while others have been shelved (transit, government services).

Voter attitude is highly variable across the country, which is why it is so important for your organization to understand what voter and public opinion looks like.





Roads & Transit Failure Poll to Reset the Narrative

Ballot Language Comparison

There are many factors that contribute to ballot measure success; the ballot language itself can have a huge impact on support. This 2007 ballot measure in Puget Sound was handily defeated while the 2008 version was approved comfortably.

(2007) PROPOSITION NO. 1 REGIONAL ROADS AND TRANSIT SYSTEM

To reduce transportation congestion, increase road and transit capacity, promote safety, facilitate mobility, provide for an integrated regional transportation system, and improve the health, welfare, and safety of the citizens of Washington, shall Sound Transit (a regional transit authority) implement a regional rail and transit system linking Lynnwood, Shoreline, Northgate, Seattle, Bellevue, Redmond, SeaTac airport, Kent, Federal Way and Tacoma as described in the Sound Transit 2 plan, financed by the existing taxes approved by the voters in 1996 and an additional sales and use tax of up to five-tenths of one percent imposed by Sound Transit, all as provided in Resolution No. R2007-15; and shall a regional transportation investment district (RTID) be formed and authorized to implement and invest in improving the regional transportation system by replacing vulnerable bridges, improving safety, and increasing capacity on state & local roads to further link major education, employment, & retail centers as described in Moving Forward Together: A Blueprint for Progress – King Pierce Snohomish Counties, financed by a sales and use tax of one-tenth of one percent and a local motor vehicle excise tax of eight-tenths of one percent imposed by RTID, all as provided in Resolution No. PC-2007-02; further provided that the Sound Transit taxes shall be imposed only within the boundaries of Sound Transit, and the RTID taxes shall be imposed only within the boundaries of the RTID?

(2008) PROPOSITION No. 1 MASS TRANSIT EXPANSION

The Sound Transit Board passed Resolution No. R2008-11 concerning an expansion of mass transit. This measure would expand and coordinate light-rail, commuter-rail, and (beginning 2009) express bus service, and improve access to transit facilities in King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties, and authorize Sound Transit to impose an additional five-tenths of one percent sales and use tax, and to use existing taxes to fund the local share of the \$17.9 billion estimated cost (includes construction, operations, maintenance, interest and inflation), with independent audits, as described in Resolution R2008-11 and the Mass Transit Guide.

Prop 1 Measure Failure (2007): All About \$\$\$

The 2007 measure was very susceptible to a negative cost message especially since the No side used division between previous transit supporters. Their advertising gave voters the sense that the package was very expensive...without ever really knowing how much exactly, just that it was “too much”.

November 7, 2007

Election 2007

Huge roads-transit plan gets trounced

Voters rejected a multibillion-dollar regional roads-and-transit package on Tuesday, likely leaving state lawmakers with a transportation...

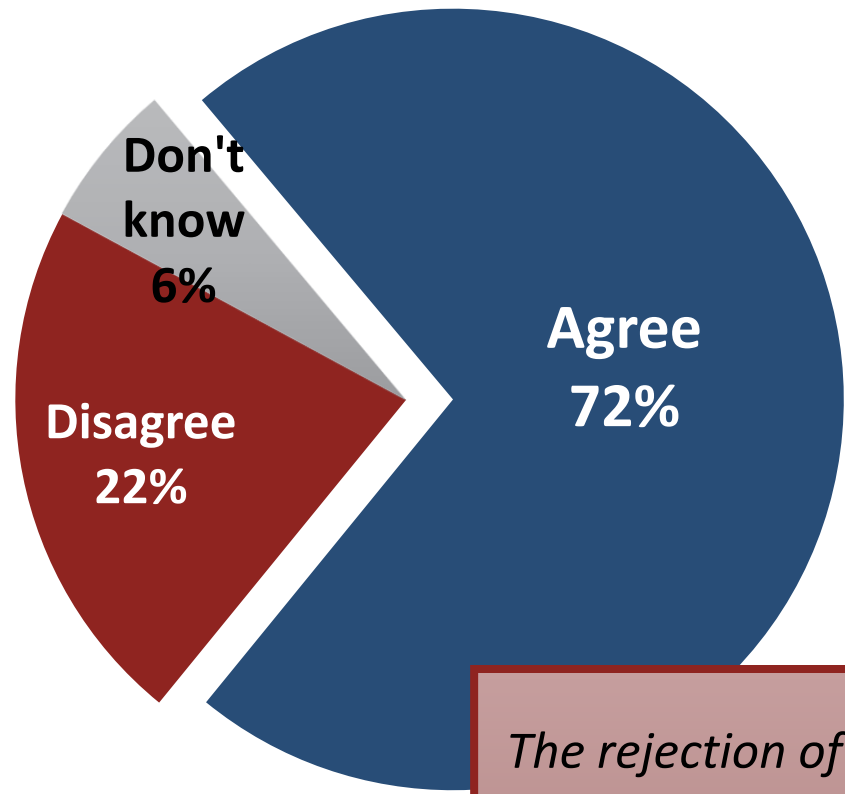
The 2007 Measure Failure Was NOT Light Rail

Post 2007, opponents of the measure tried to paint Light Rail as the reason the measure lost; but in fact voters said it was all about the “expense” and “taxes”....even though voters gave a wide range of figures for what they thought it cost.

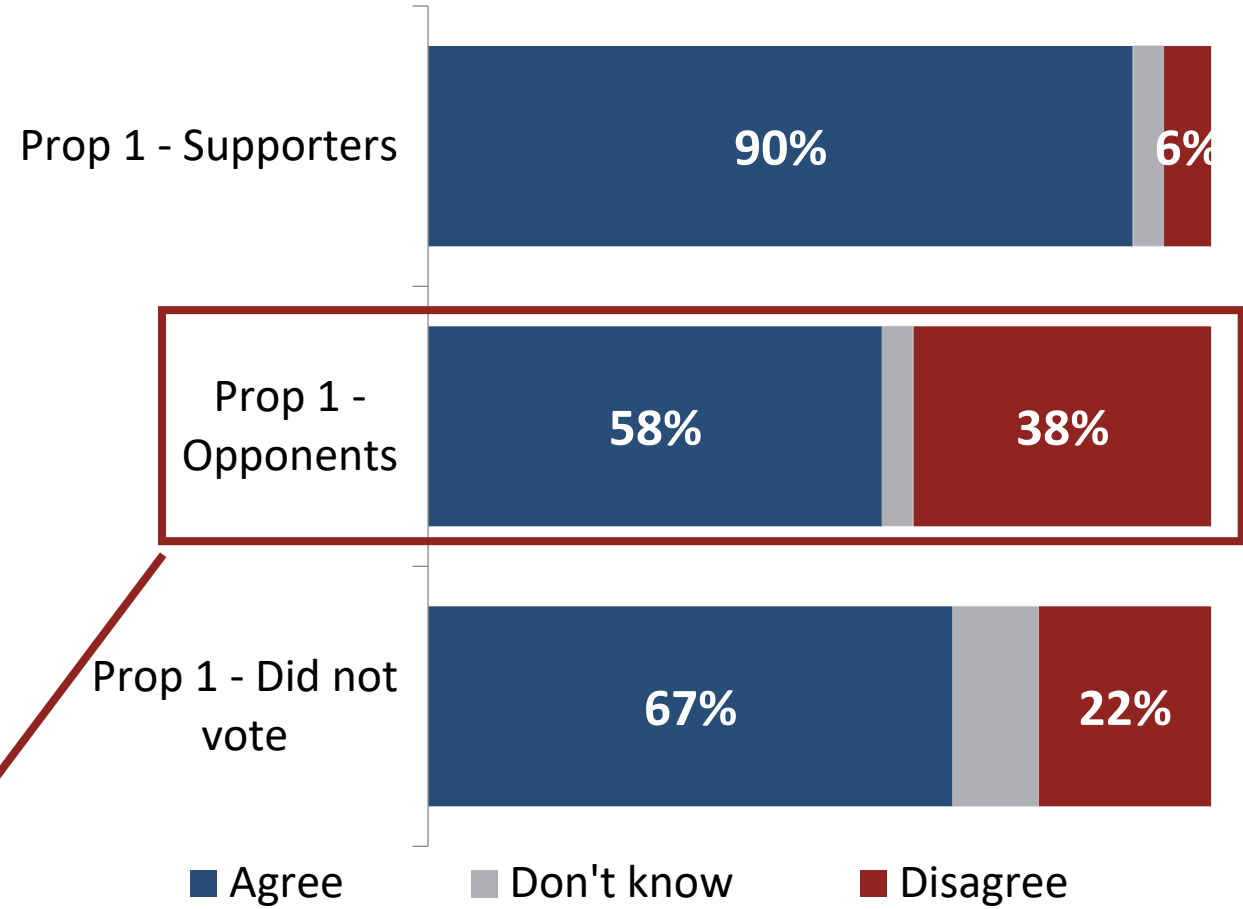
Best reason to vote <u>against</u> Prop One	All Voters	No Voters
Too expensive	21%	25%
Tax increase	13%	16%
Mismanagement of funds	7%	13%
Transportation issues not well covered	6%	8%
Too broad	5%	8%
Not all areas covered	5%	5%
No trust in proposition	5%	6%
Poorly designed	4%	5%
Inefficient services	4%	5%
Light rail	1%	2%
Environment	1%	1%

The 2007 Measure Failure Was NOT Light Rail

Even a majority of the 2007 measure opponents agreed that expanding light rail is a good investment for the Puget Sound region.



The rejection of Prop 1 was not a rejection of light rail.



Low Cost (\$70), Repeated Often, Helped Positively Define ST2

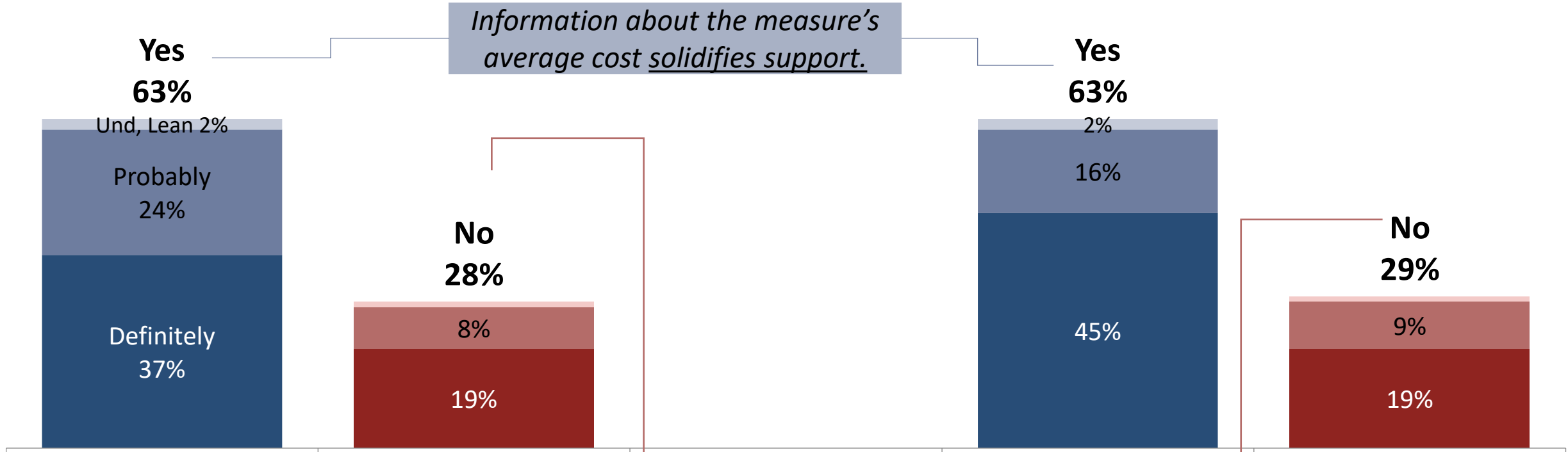
In the 2008 ST campaign, constantly repeating the average cost of \$70 per household for the package was actually a positive; no matter what the opposition said, the comeback was "it's only \$70". This flipped the previous campaign's script on its head.

Initial Vote

Vote after Cost

Information about the measure's average cost solidifies support.

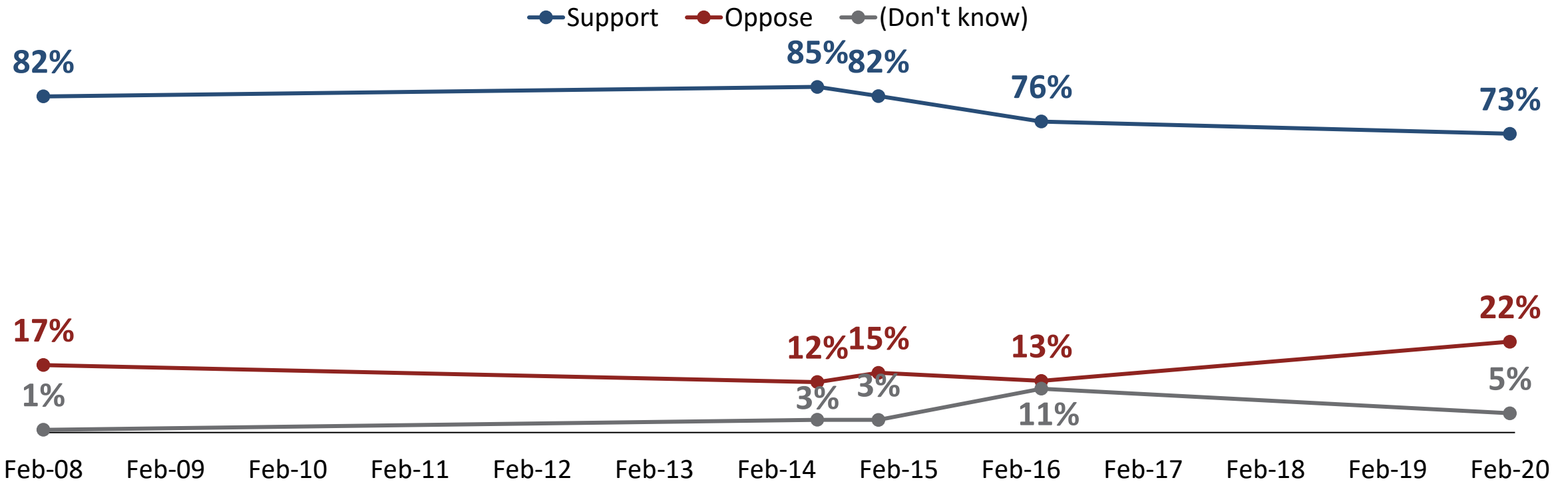
Without increasing opposition.



Support for Mass Transit Expansion Tracked

Support for expanding ST's system has remained strong, even after the approval of ST2 (2008) and ST3 (2016) – which included significant tax increases. In other words, polling showed that the appetite for more transit never let up even after major expansions and tax increases were approved, which led to both the ST2 and ST3 measures appearing on the ballot and being approved by comfortable margins.

The appetite for expanding mass transit is influenced by a wide range of factors including perceptions of traffic congestion, perceptions of the “system” proposed, trust levels for who is building it, and whether the cost is worth the value produced.



Q9. In general, do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose continued expansion of Sound Transit's mass transit system of light rail, commuter rail and express buses?