



The Pulse of Oakland 2025

*Key Findings of a Citywide Survey
Conducted October 18-23, 2025*



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

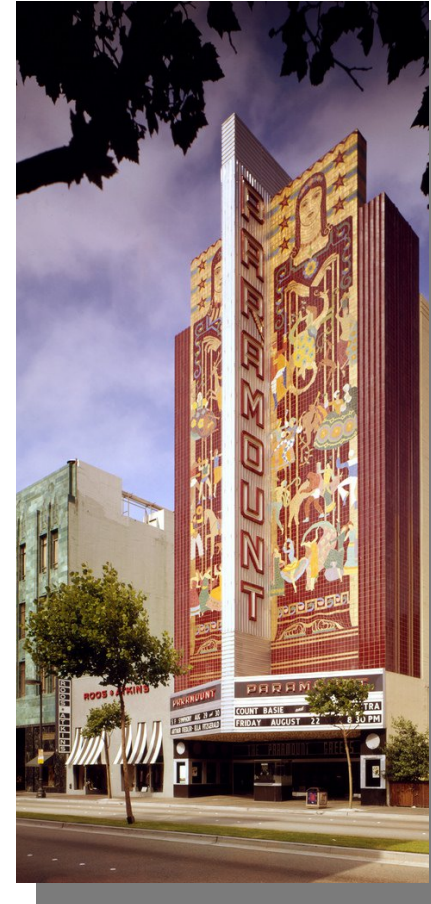
Survey Methodology

Dates	October 18-23, 2025
Survey Type	Dual-mode Voter Survey
Research Population	Likely November 2026 Voters in the City of Oakland
Total Interviews	605 interviews citywide
Margin of Sampling Error	(Full Sample) $\pm 4.0\%$ at the 95% Confidence Level (Half Sample) $\pm 5.7\%$ at the 95% Confidence Level
Contact Methods	 Telephone Calls  Email Invitations  Text Invitations
Data Collection Modes	 Telephone Interviews  Online Interviews
Survey Tracking	2016-2024

(Note: Not All Results Will Sum to 100% Due to Rounding)

Key Findings

1. Voters are noticeably **less pessimistic than in recent years** about the direction of the City.
2. The issues of **homelessness** and **gun violence** continue to be the top problems facing the city; **illegal dumping** and the **city's financial stability** are among the top concerns as well.
3. While voters continue to be **dissatisfied with city government**; **three in five view Mayor Lee favorably**.
4. Voters express a clear preference for transitioning to a **Strong Mayor form of governance**.
5. **Concern about crime has decreased**, Oaklanders **feel safer** in the city and in their neighborhoods, and a plurality feel like **public safety and crime are getting better**.
6. However, a majority continue to favor **increasing police officers** and are **supportive of adopting a range of public safety technologies**, with civilian oversight.
7. Evaluations of **Oakland's economy remain negative**, and voters do not view it as a good place to start a business.
8. There is strong **support for policies to attract a wide range of businesses**; voters strongly favor **reducing tax rates for small Oakland businesses**.
9. Voters support **updating the city's encampment management plan** and **reducing encampments in public spaces**.

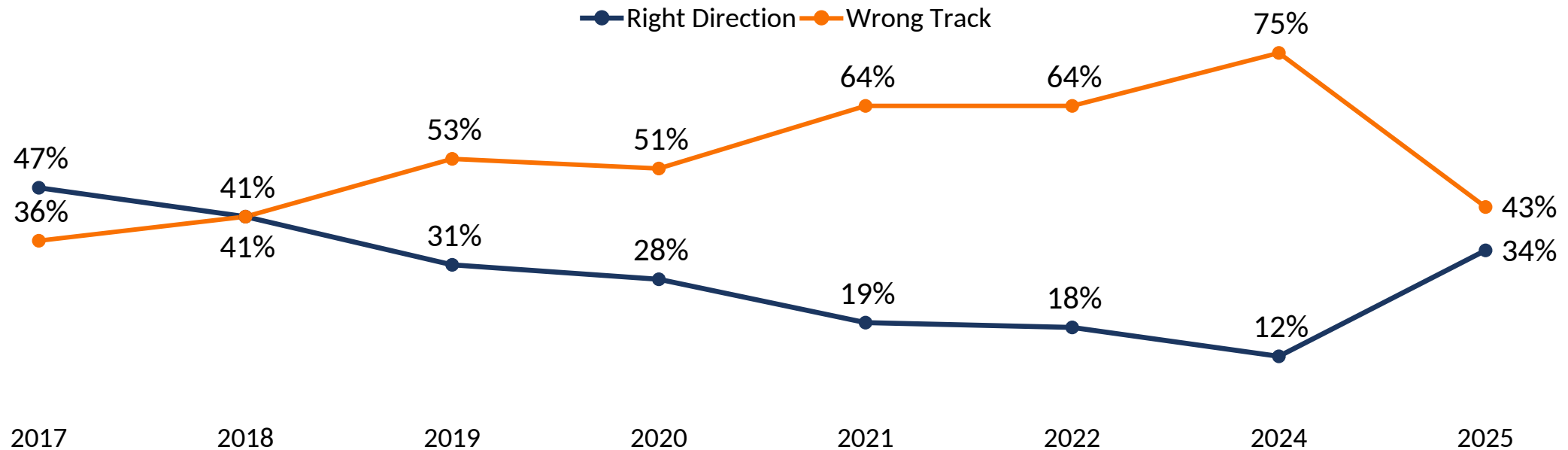




Views of Life in Oakland

Oakland voters are much less pessimistic about the direction of the city.

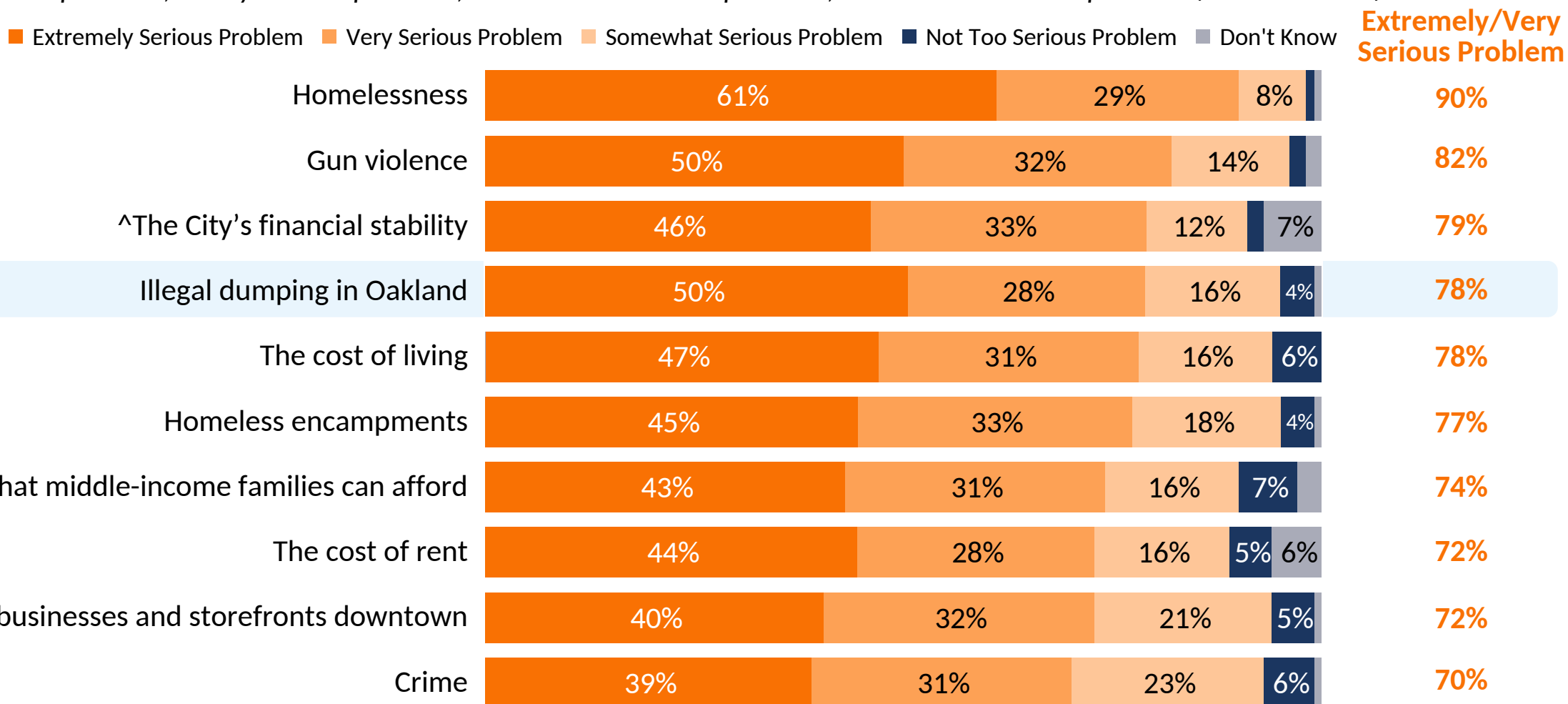
Would you say things in Oakland are headed in the right direction, or do you feel they are off on the wrong track?



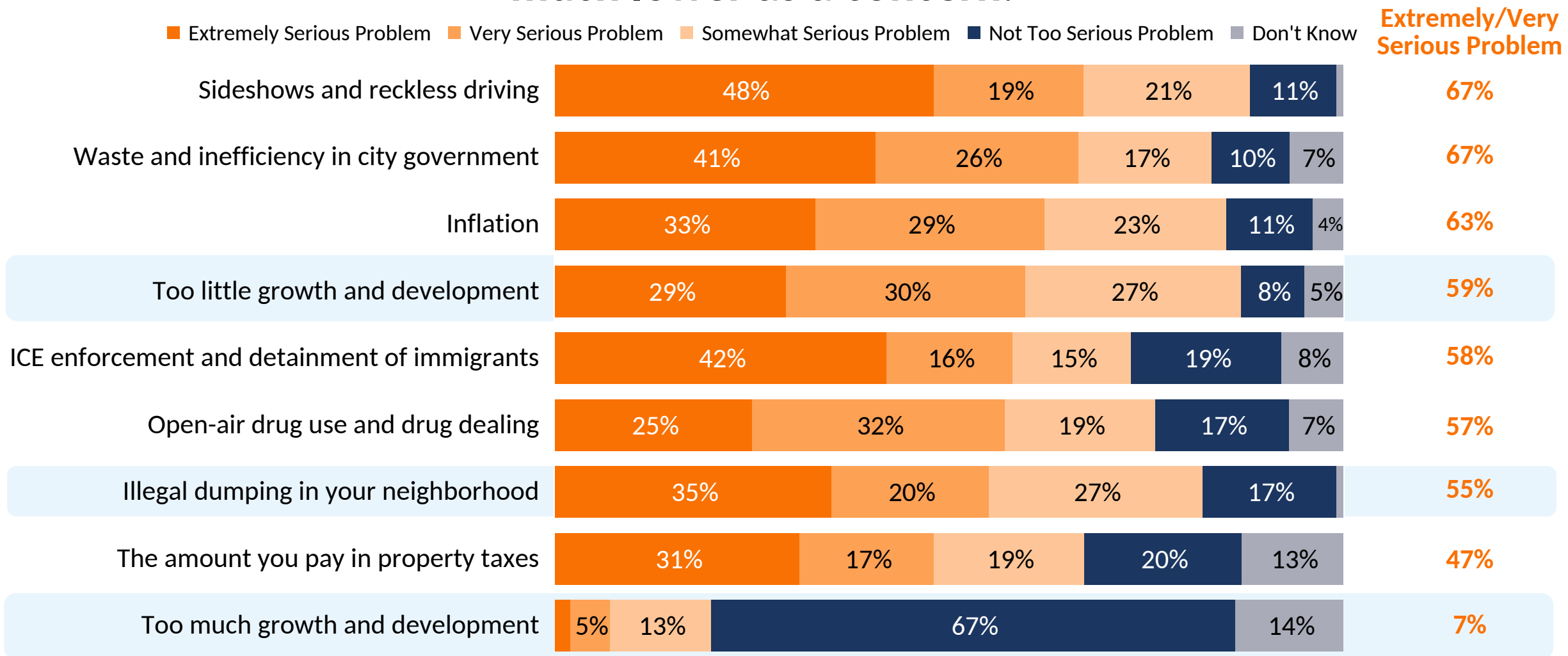
Direction	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7
Right Direction	37%	47%	35%	35%	25%	25%	21%
Wrong Track	28%	37%	42%	43%	54%	51%	67%

Homelessness, gun violence, the city's financial stability and illegal dumping are among the top problems facing the city.

Here is a list of things that some people say may be problems facing Oakland. Please indicate whether you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or not too serious a problem for residents of Oakland.



However, illegal dumping in their neighborhood ranks much lower as a concern.



Relative to 2024, inflation and cost of living have increased the most as a concern, while concern about crime has declined the most.

Problem	Extremely/Very Serious Problem								Difference (2024-2025)
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2024	2025	
Inflation	--	--	--	--	--	63%	49%	63%	+14%
The cost of living	65%	75%	80%	78%	66%	77%	70%	78%	+8%
Vacant businesses and storefronts downtown	--	--	--	--	--	--	69%	72%	+3%
The cost of rent	76%	79%	82%	75%	78%	76%	70%	72%	+2%
Too little growth and development	--	16%	32%	30%	34%	49%	57%	59%	+2%
The amount you pay in property taxes	33%	36%	49%	48%	43%	49%	47%	47%	0%
A lack of housing that middle-income families can afford	77%	84%	80%	83%	75%	81%	75%	74%	-1%
Gun violence	--	--	--	--	--	97%	86%	82%	-4%
Homelessness	92%	91%	96%	97%	94%	97%	95%	90%	-5%
Open-air drug use and drug dealing	--	--	--	--	--	--	62%	57%	-5%
Waste and inefficiency in city government	--	--	--	--	--	--	74%	67%	-7%
Homeless encampments	--	82%	90%	86%	88%	89%	85%	77%	-8%
Too much growth and development	18%	28%	29%	30%	19%	22%	15%	7%	-8%
Crime	45%	45%	54%	58%	77%	88%	84%	70%	-14%

The intensity of concern about city issues varies by racial and ethnic groups.

Problem	All Voters	Extremely/Very Serious Problem				
		White	Latinos	African/ Americans	Asian/ Pacific Islanders	All Voters of Color
Homelessness	90%	91%	78%	94%	85%	89%
Gun violence	82%	81%	89%	80%	85%	84%
The City's financial stability	79%	80%	68%	77%	84%	78%
Illegal dumping in Oakland	78%	74%	84%	84%	73%	82%
The cost of living	78%	77%	80%	83%	73%	81%
Homeless encampments	77%	77%	81%	84%	66%	77%
A lack of housing that middle-income families can afford	74%	77%	82%	65%	72%	73%
The cost of rent	72%	68%	72%	86%	48%	75%
Vacant businesses and storefronts downtown	72%	68%	72%	81%	70%	75%
Crime	70%	63%	79%	75%	79%	74%
Sideways and reckless driving	67%	68%	74%	67%	60%	66%
Waste and inefficiency in city government	67%	57%	75%	77%	68%	74%
Inflation	63%	50%	71%	83%	55%	73%
Too little growth and development	59%	50%	56%	67%	78%	66%
ICE enforcement and detainment of immigrants	58%	63%	69%	51%	47%	55%
Open-air drug use and drug dealing	57%	49%	64%	65%	57%	63%
Illegal dumping in your neighborhood	55%	47%	65%	66%	51%	60%
The amount you pay in property taxes	47%	38%	46%	62%	43%	54%
Too much growth and development	7%	4%	28%	4%	5%	10%

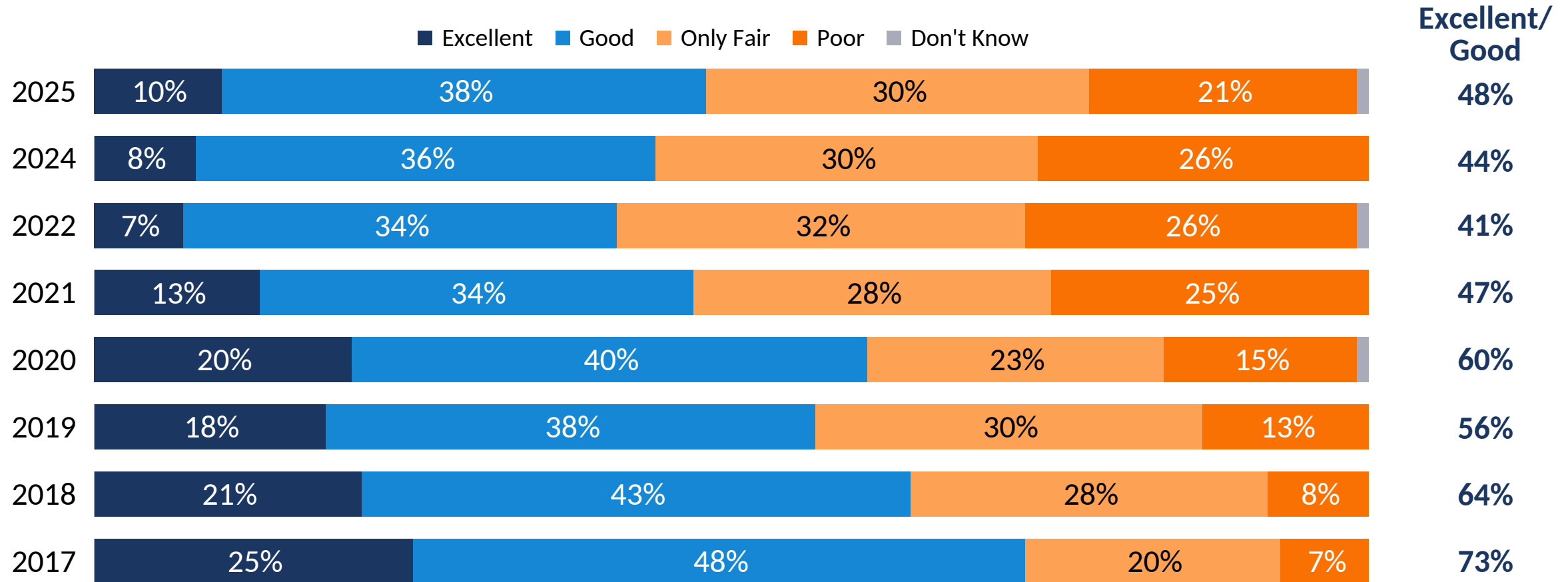
Voters say they have seen a net improvement in public safety and crime in the past few months.

Here are some issues that Oakland city government has been working to address. Please indicate if you think this issue is getting much better, somewhat better, somewhat worse, or much worse in the last few months.



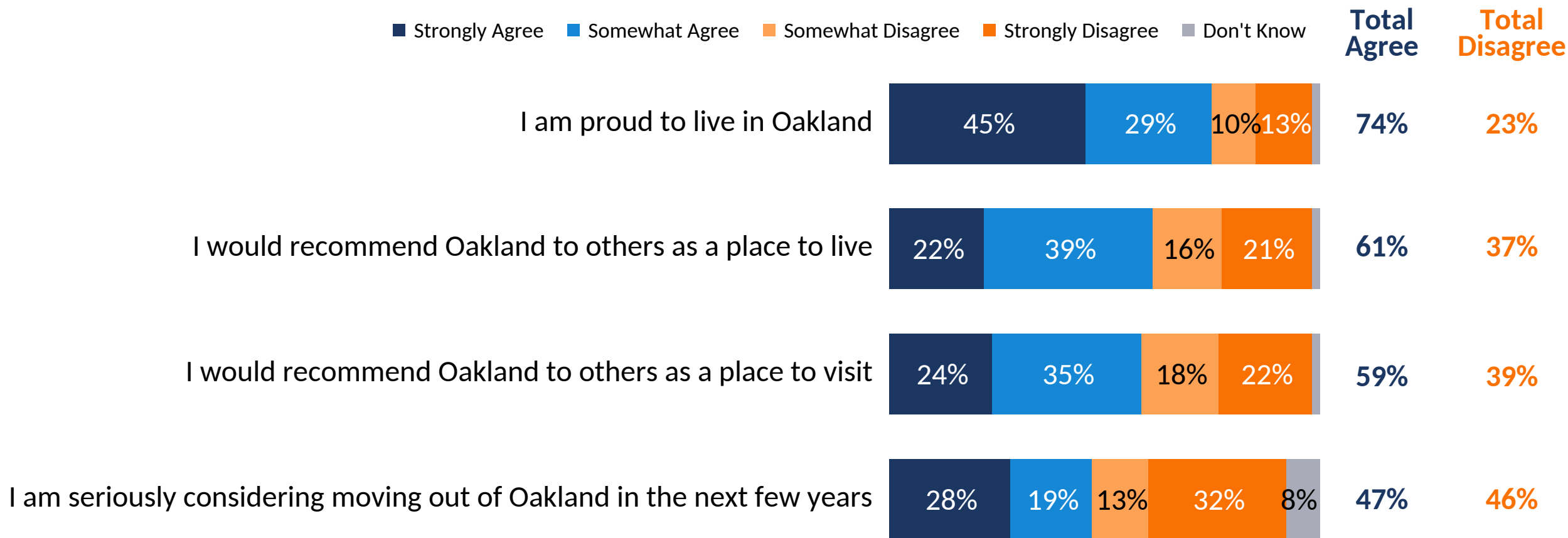
Approximately half of voters say Oakland is an excellent or good place to live.

Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate Oakland as a place to live?



More than three in five are proud to live in Oakland; at the same time, voters are split on whether they plan to stay.

Here are some more statements about Oakland. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

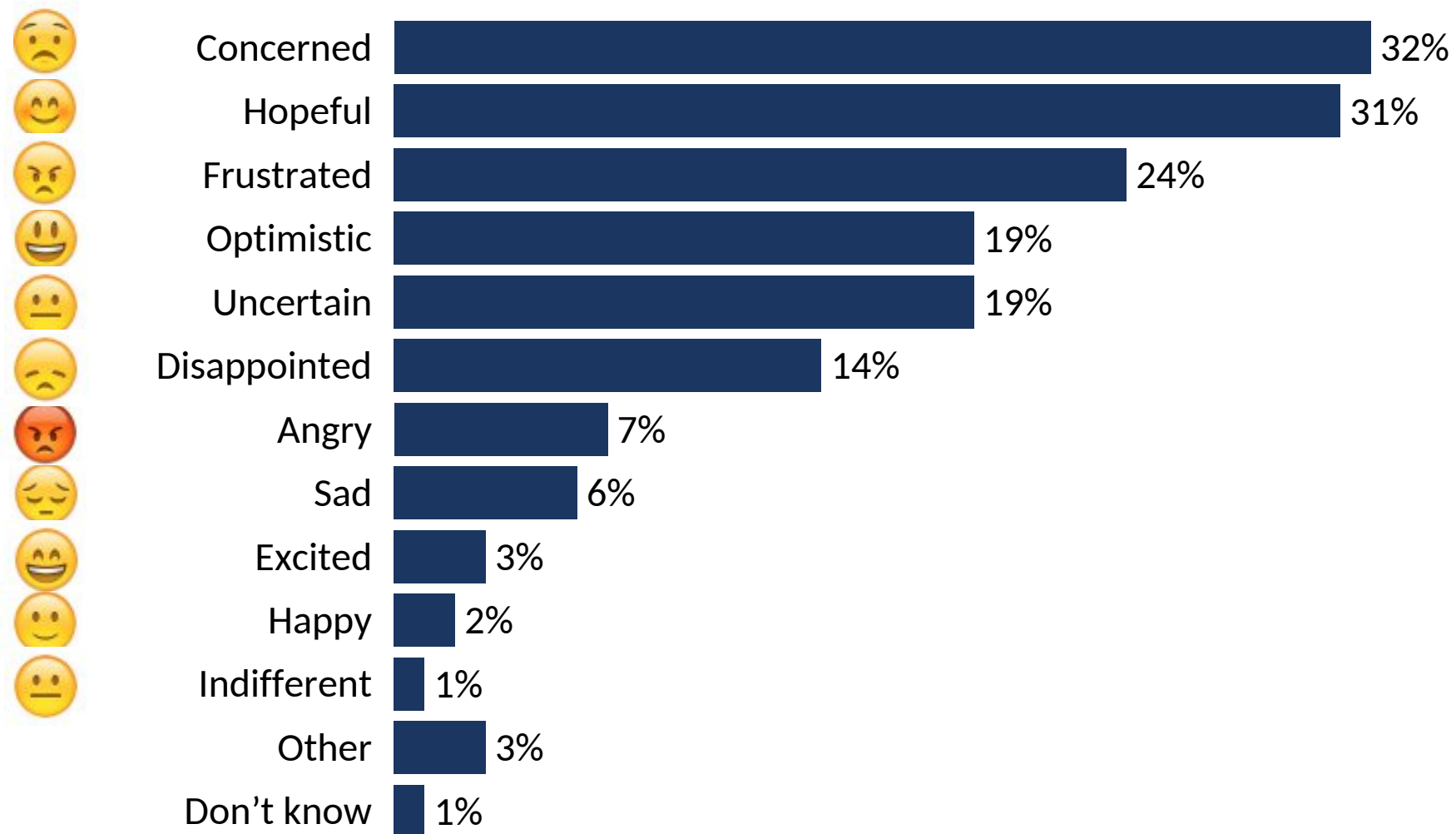


Relative to 2024, the likelihood of recommending Oakland as a place to live and visit has improved slightly.

Statement	Total Agree								Difference (2024-2025)
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2024	2025	
I would recommend Oakland to others as a place to live	77%	77%	65%	64%	59%	56%	53%	61%	+8%
I would recommend Oakland to others as a place to visit	85%	84%	77%	70%	69%	60%	52%	59%	+7%
I am proud to live in Oakland	90%	92%	82%	79%	73%	77%	73%	74%	+1%
I am seriously considering moving out of Oakland in the next few years	--	--	--	--	--	52%	49%	47%	-2%

Voters feel equally concerned and hopeful about Oakland's future.

Here is a list of feelings and emotions. Please select the one or two that best describe how you feel when you think about the future of Oakland.





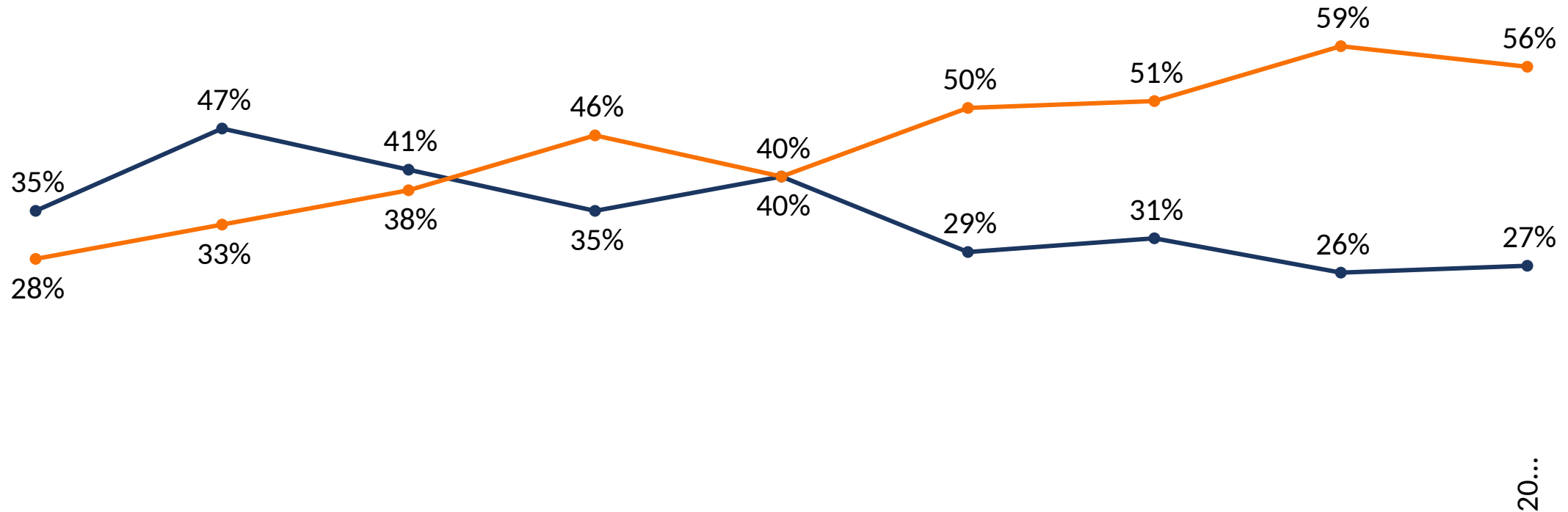
Attitudes Toward City Government

A majority continues to view the City Council unfavorably.



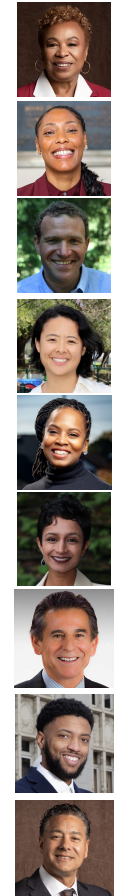
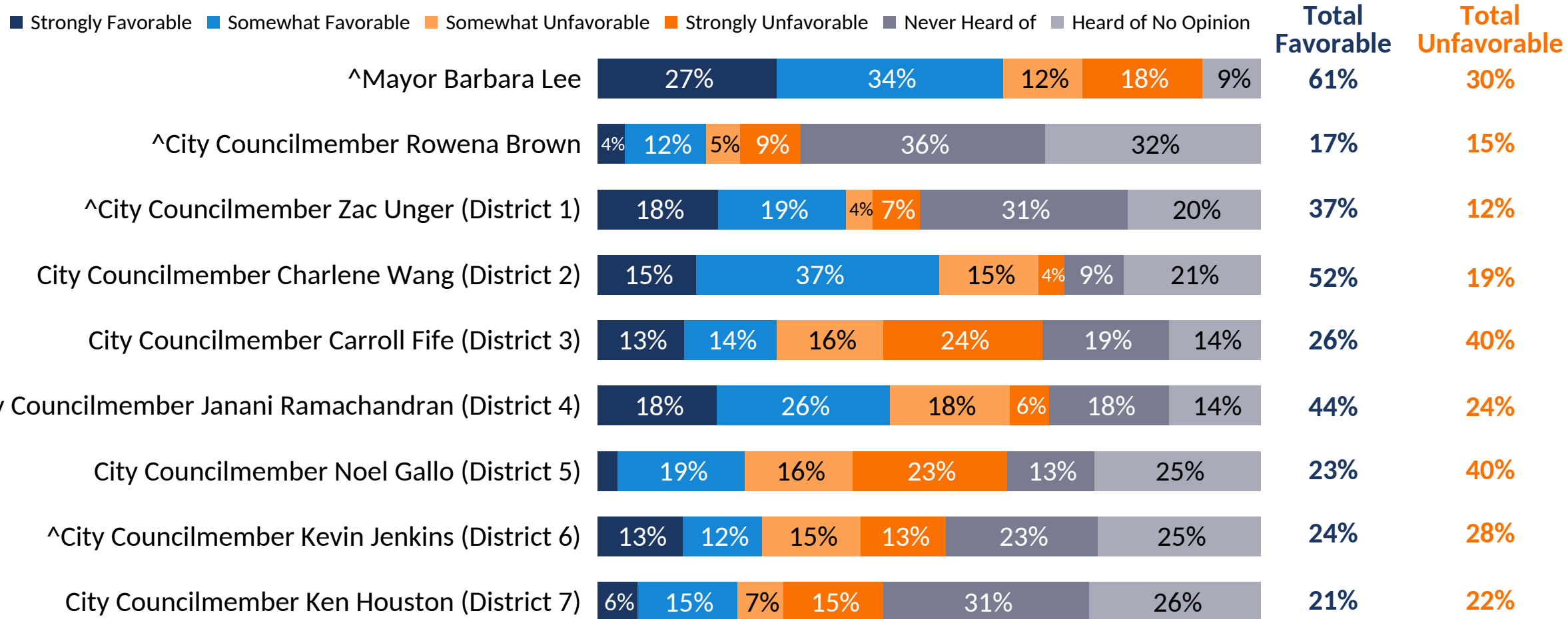
The Oakland City Council

—●— Total Favorable —●— Total Unfavorable



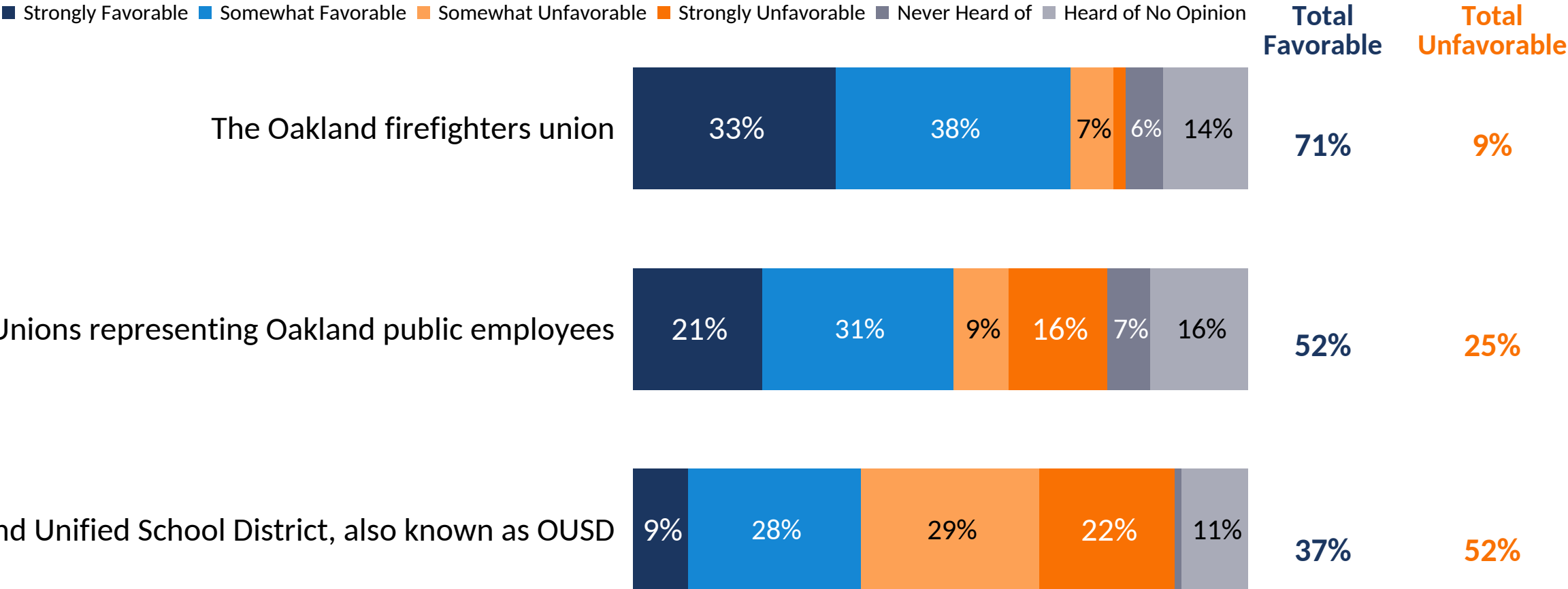
Three in five view Mayor Lee favorably.

Here is a list of people and organizations active in public life. Please indicate if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable opinion of that person or organization.



The firefighters union is viewed very favorably.

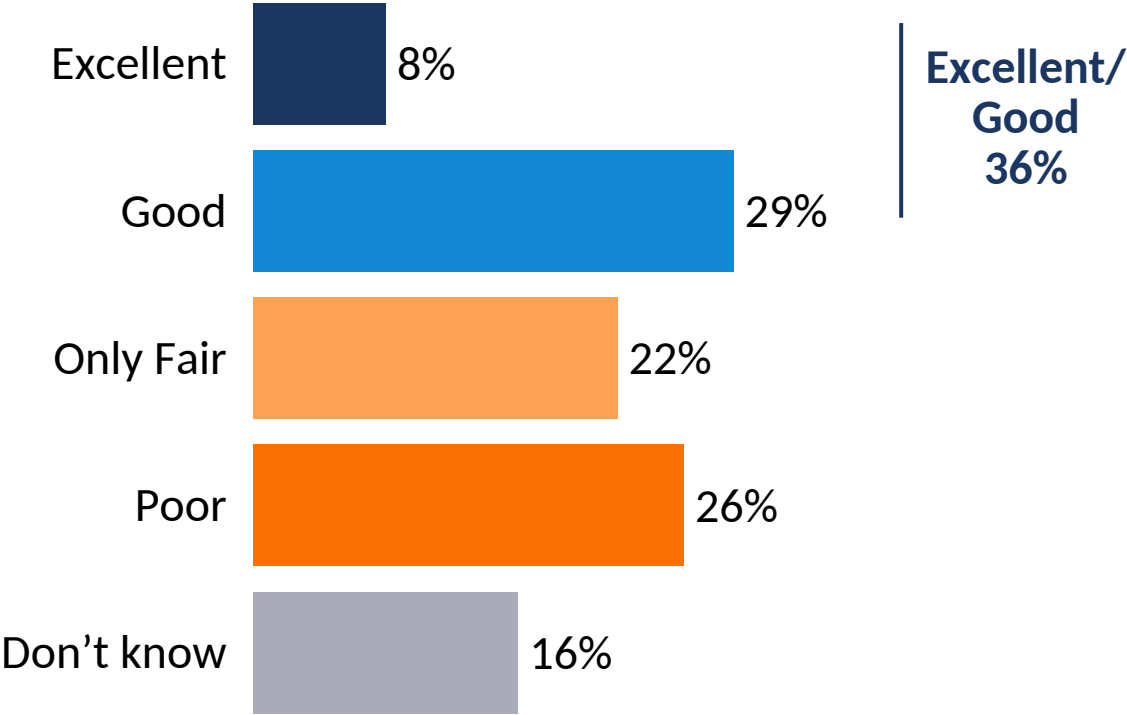
Here is a list of people and organizations active in public life. Please indicate if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable opinion of that person or organization.



One-third say that Mayor Lee is doing an excellent or good job.



Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the overall job Oakland Mayor Barbara Lee is doing?

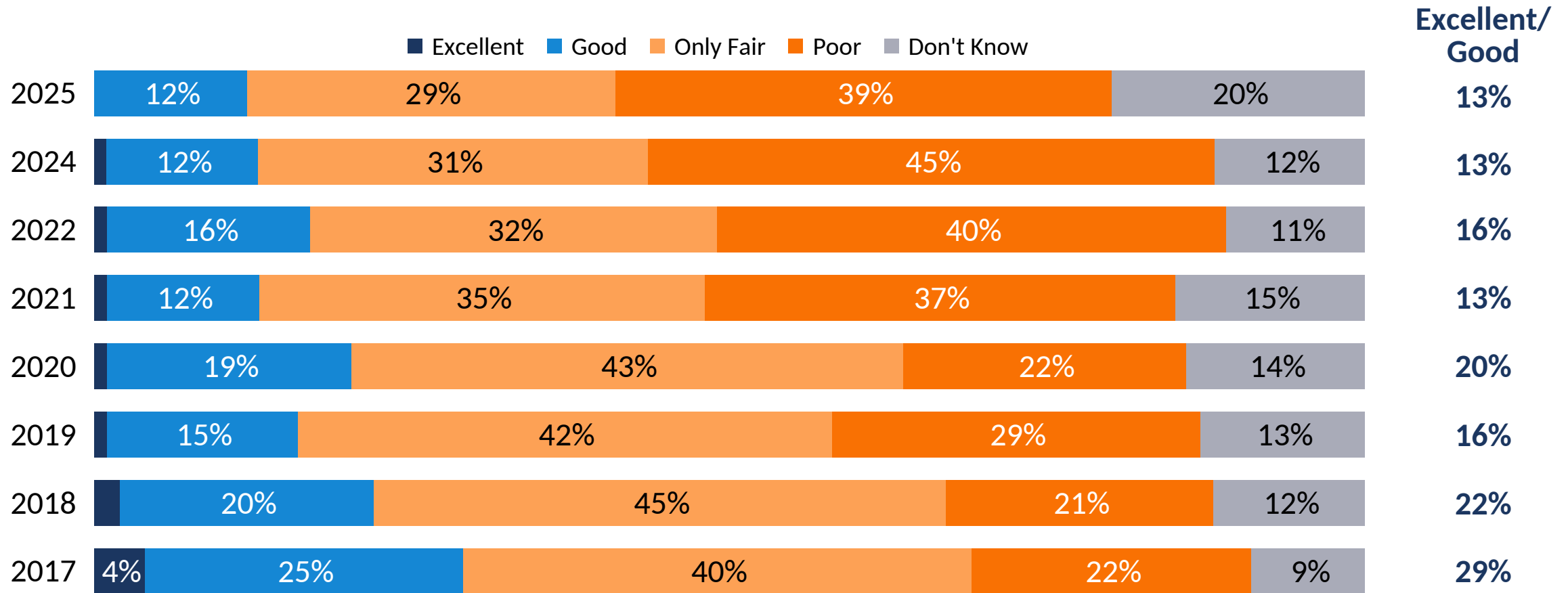


Mayor	Year	Favorability	Job Rating		
			Exc./ Good	Only Fair	Poor
Barbara Lee	2025	61%	36%	22%	26%
Sheng Thao	2024	16%	9%	22%	63%
Libby Schaaf	2022	35%	28%	24%	42%
	2021	35%	23%	25%	47%
	2020	44%	32%	30%	29%
	2019	45%	32%	29%	34%
	2018	53%	36%	35%	25%
	2017	61%	45%	33%	30%
	2016	53%	42%	32%	15%

One in ten say Oakland's City Council is doing a good job.



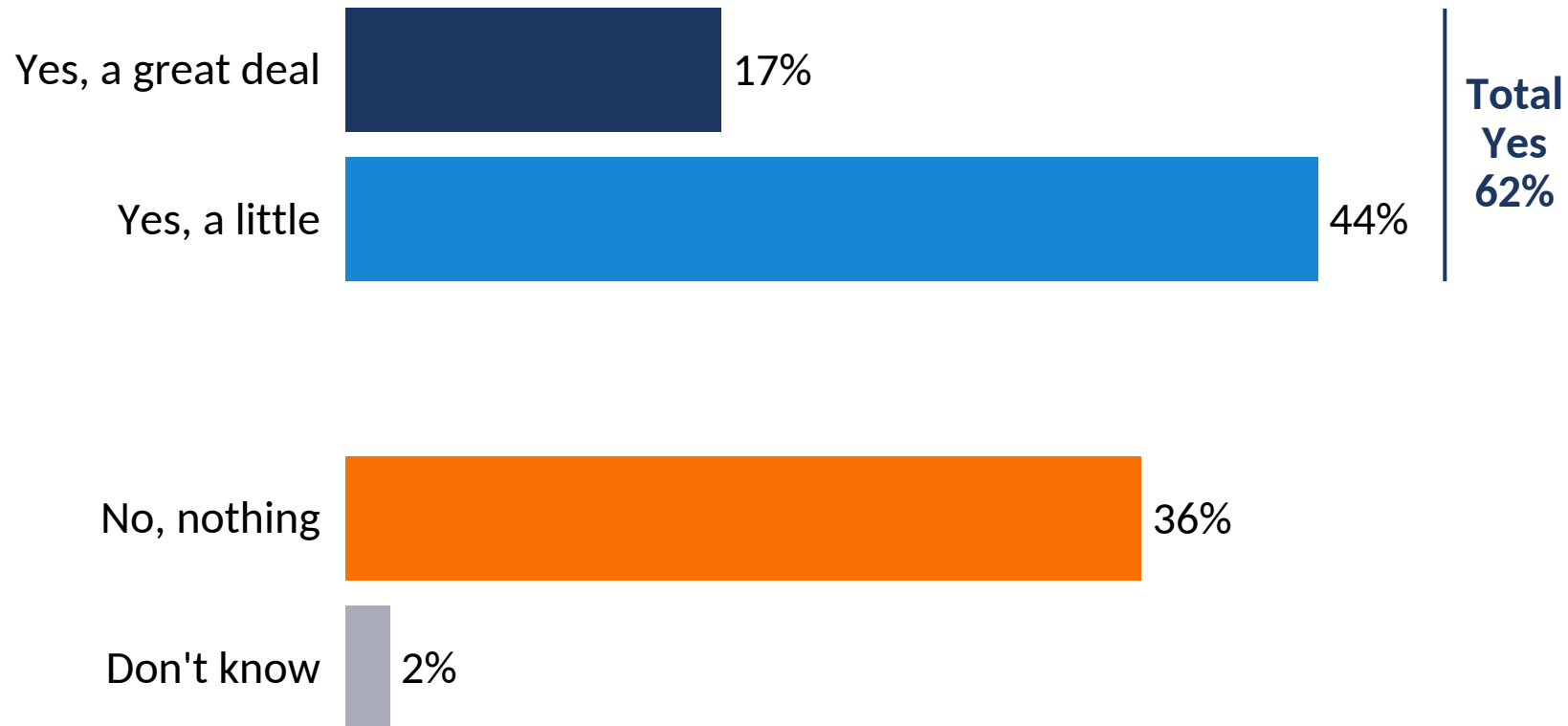
Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor,
how would you rate the overall job the Oakland City Council is doing?



Three in five say they have heard about changes Mayor Lee has implemented since taking office.



Mayor Barbara Lee took office in May 2025. Have you heard, seen, or read anything recently about the changes she has made in Oakland since becoming Mayor?

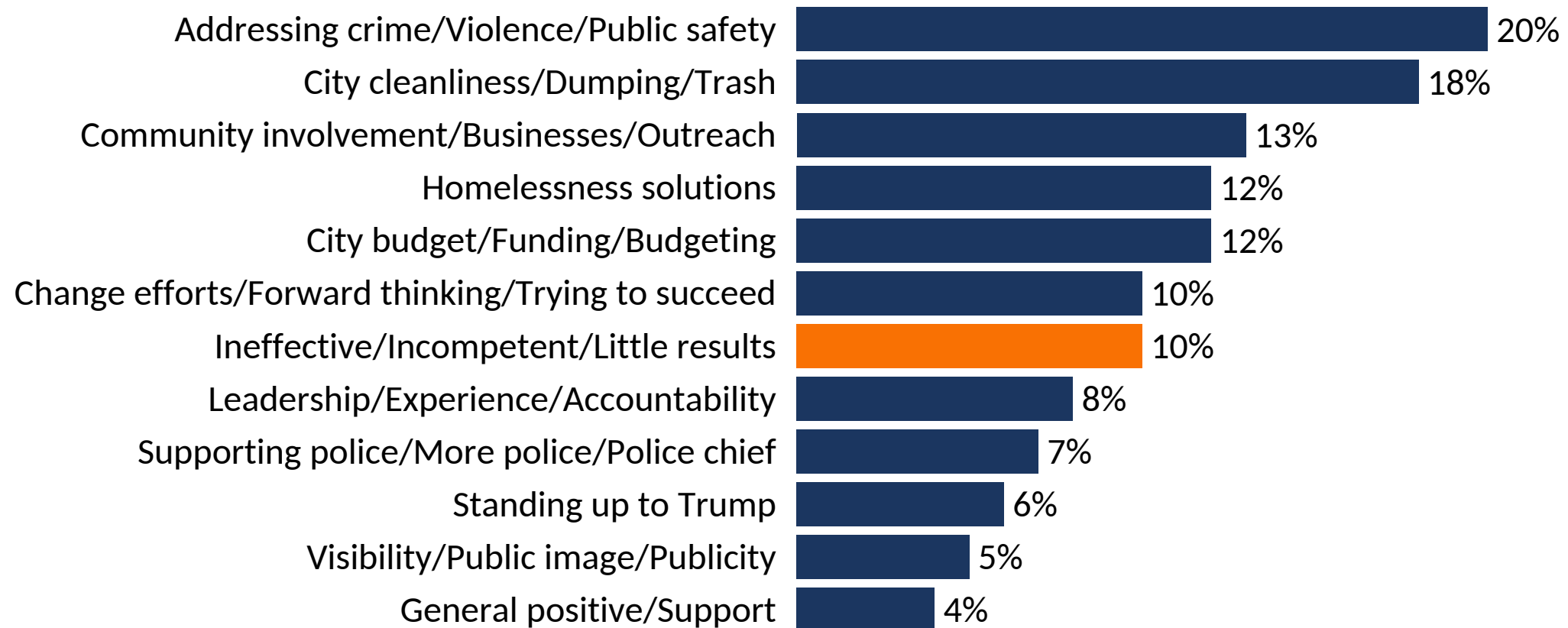


Voters have most commonly heard of Mayor Lee's efforts to address crime and illegal dumping.



In a few words of your own, what have you heard about the changes Mayor Lee has made in Oakland?

(Open-ended; Asked of Yes Voters Only, n=419)



Verbatim Comments

Barbara Lee inherited an economic crisis with little room to grow the city and with a police department that can never seemingly reform their internal affairs issues. Oakland has incredible potential. It just needs time and money to make it work.

I read a lot about her making statements or posts about cafes she's going to. Not much in terms of policy.

Boosting police and fire staffing, plans for addressing homelessness.

Putting finances on right track, hiring good people.

I guess I don't know of any specific changes. I see her on the news around major events, anti-gun initiatives, Trump wanting to send the national guard, etc.

Reducing red tape for small businesses, addressing gun violence and homelessness.

I see lots of city construction and clean up happening on daily basis in downtown area.

She made a speech at the No Kings demonstration

I heard she partnered with San Jose and San Francisco.

Made a committee to deal with city clean up. Worked with the highway patrol for safety.

She seems to understand the major problems of Oakland.

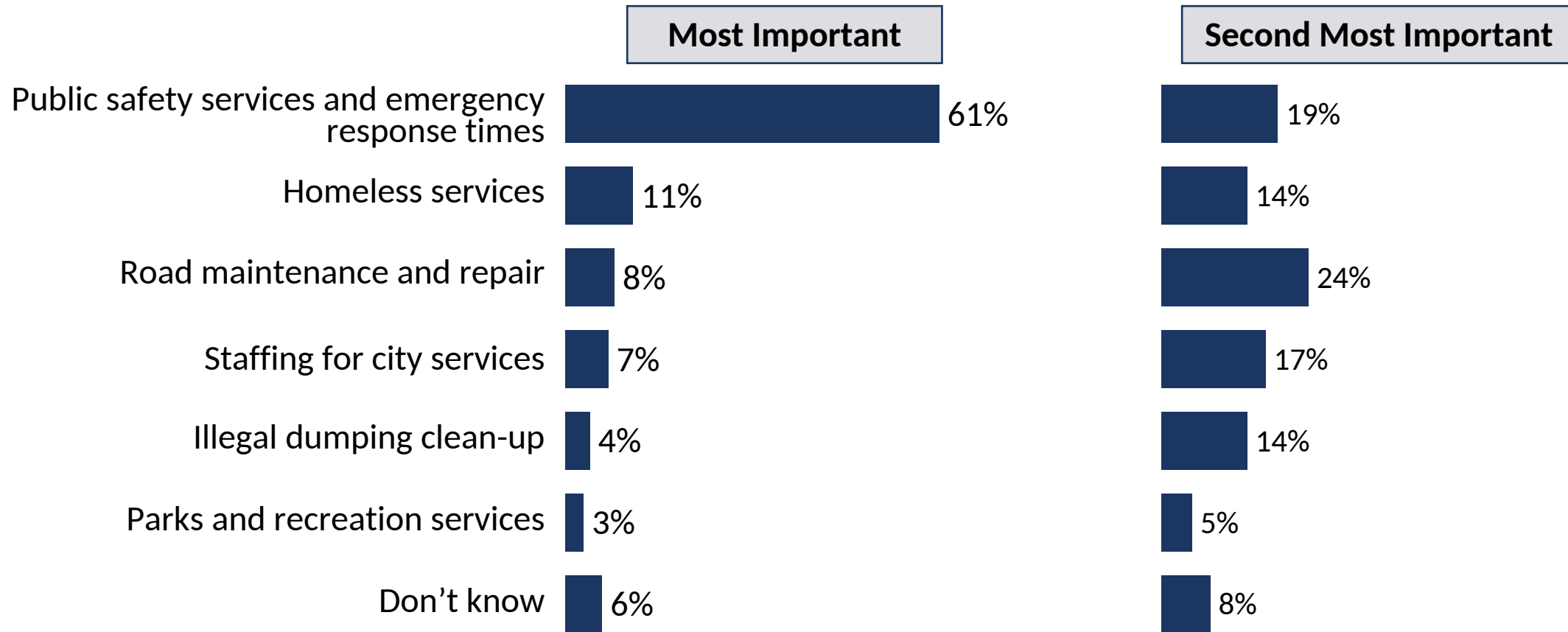
She is trying to create unity and hope for the future

Voters prioritize maintaining public safety spending.

Like many major cities Oakland is facing a budget shortfall and may need to consider making cuts to city services.

Which of the following city services is most important to maintain?

Which of the following city services is second-most important to maintain?



Governance Models Tested

Description

A **Strong Mayor system of governance** where the Mayor can veto the city budget or ordinances. The Council would still have the power to override the Mayor's veto with a supermajority.

A **hybrid form of governance** where the Mayor has the power to appoint the City Administrator and the Police Chief, to propose the city budget, and to serve as the tiebreaker on Council votes. The Oakland Mayor, however, cannot veto the city budget or ordinances; these are decided by the City Council.

A **Council/Manager system of governance** where the Council sets policy, passes ordinances, approves budgets, and provides oversight. The mayor has more limited powers and the City Administrator manages the day-to-day of city government.

Voters offer the strongest support for a Strong Mayor form of governance.

Here are some different systems of city government. Please indicate if you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose Oakland using this form of city government.

■ Strongly Support
■ Somewhat Support
■ Somewhat Oppose
■ Strongly Oppose
■ Don't Know
Total Support
Total Oppose

A Strong Mayor system of governance where the Mayor can veto the city budget or ordinances. The Council would still have a supermajority.

15% 61% 24%

A hybrid form of governance where the Mayor has the power to appoint the City Administrator and the Police Chief, to propose the city budget, and to serve as the tiebreaker on Council votes. The Oakland Mayor, however, cannot veto the city budget or ordinances; these are decided by the City Council.

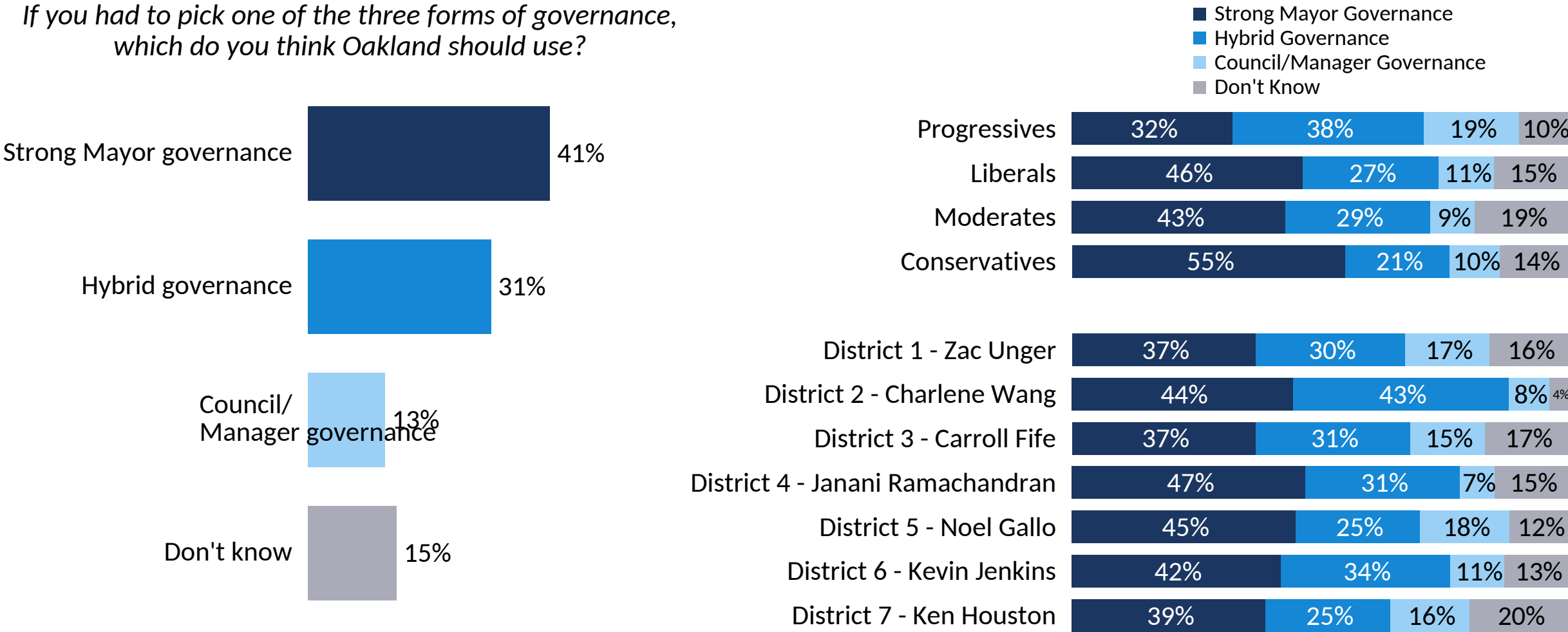
28% 48% 34%

Council/Manager system of governance where the Council sets policy, passes ordinances, approves budgets, and provides oversight. The City Administrator manages the day-to-day of city government.

19% 33% 50%

When asked to choose between systems, a plurality favor Strong Mayor.

If you had to pick one of the three forms of governance, which do you think Oakland should use?



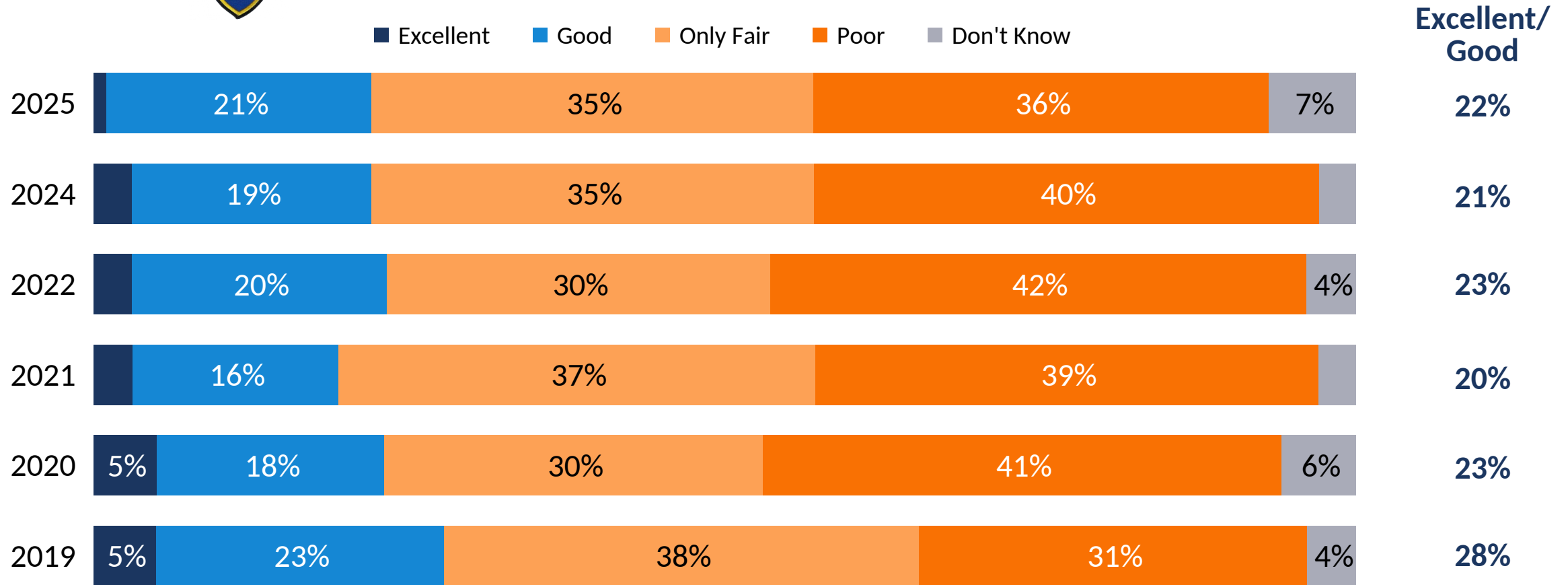


Views on Public Safety

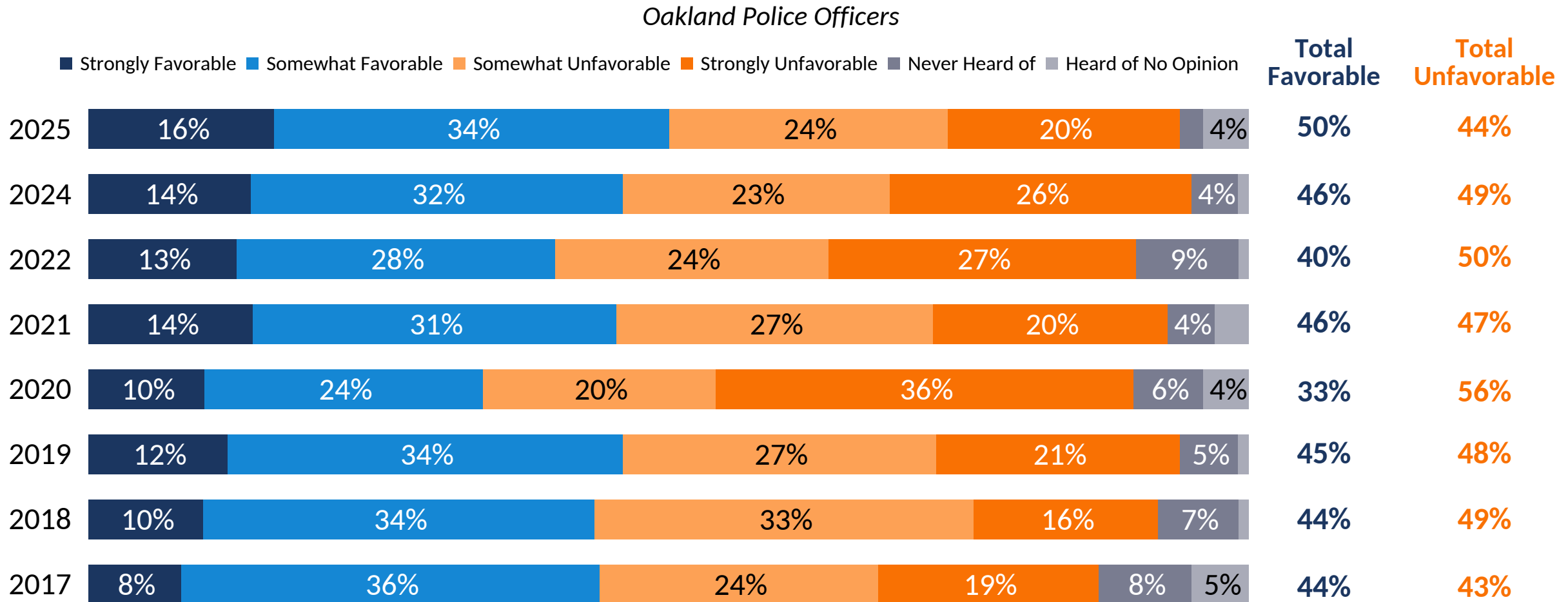
One in five say the Oakland Police Department is doing an excellent or good job.



Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the overall job the Oakland Police Department is doing?

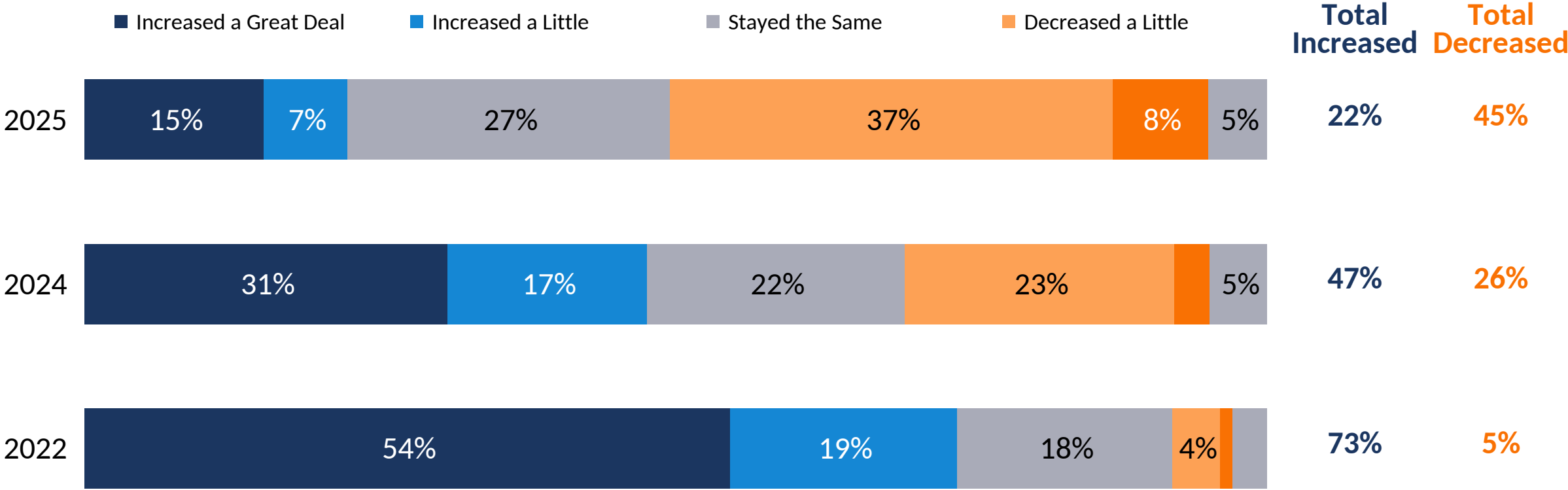


Voters continue to be divided in their view of Oakland police officers, but their views are improving.



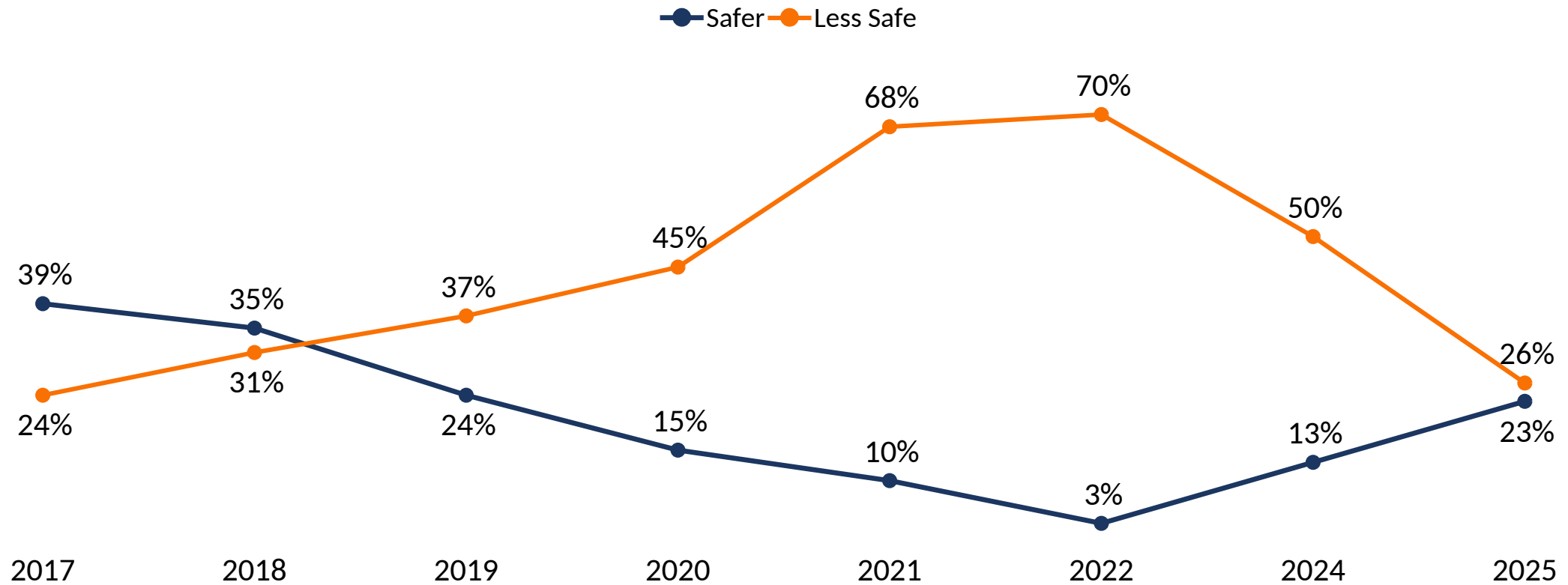
Notably, a plurality say crime and violence have decreased in the past year.

In the past year, do you think crime and violence in Oakland have increased, decreased or stayed the same?



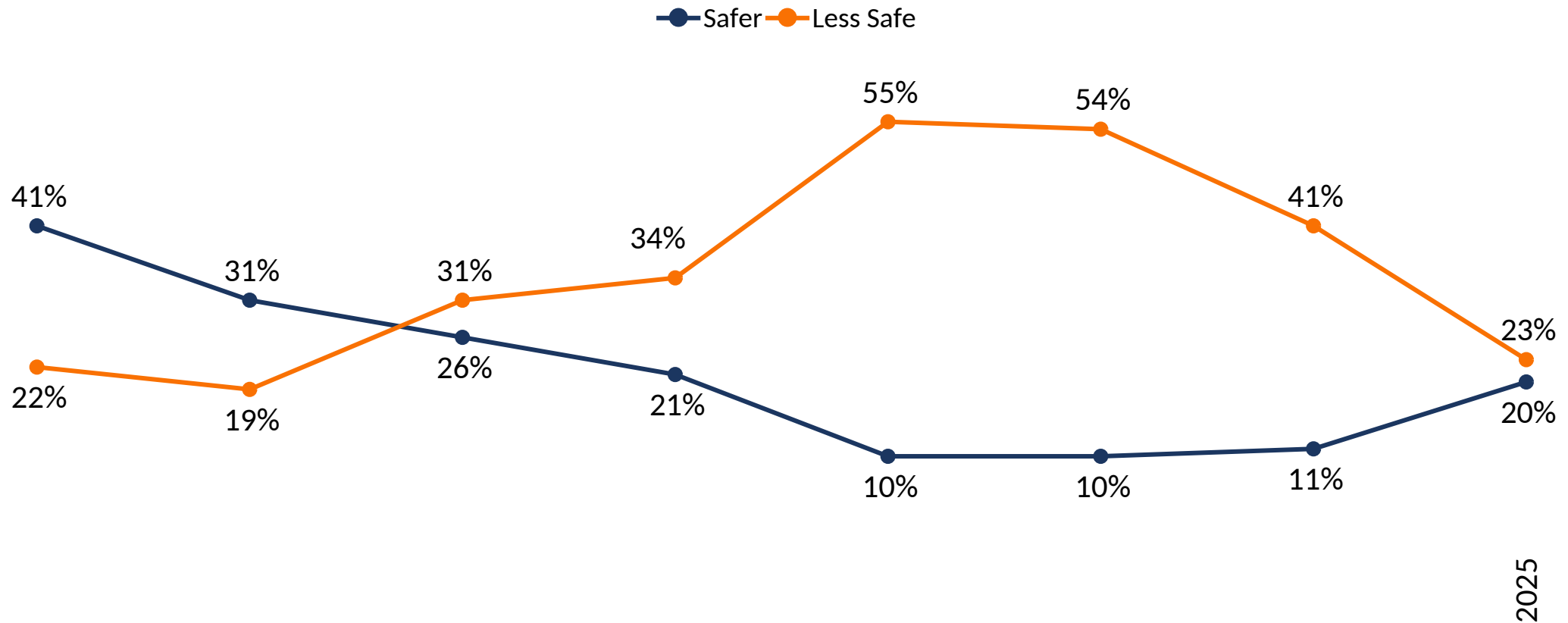
The proportion who say Oakland is less safe than it was a year or two ago has declined since last year.

Would you say you feel safer today in Oakland than you did a year or two ago, or would you say you feel less safe?



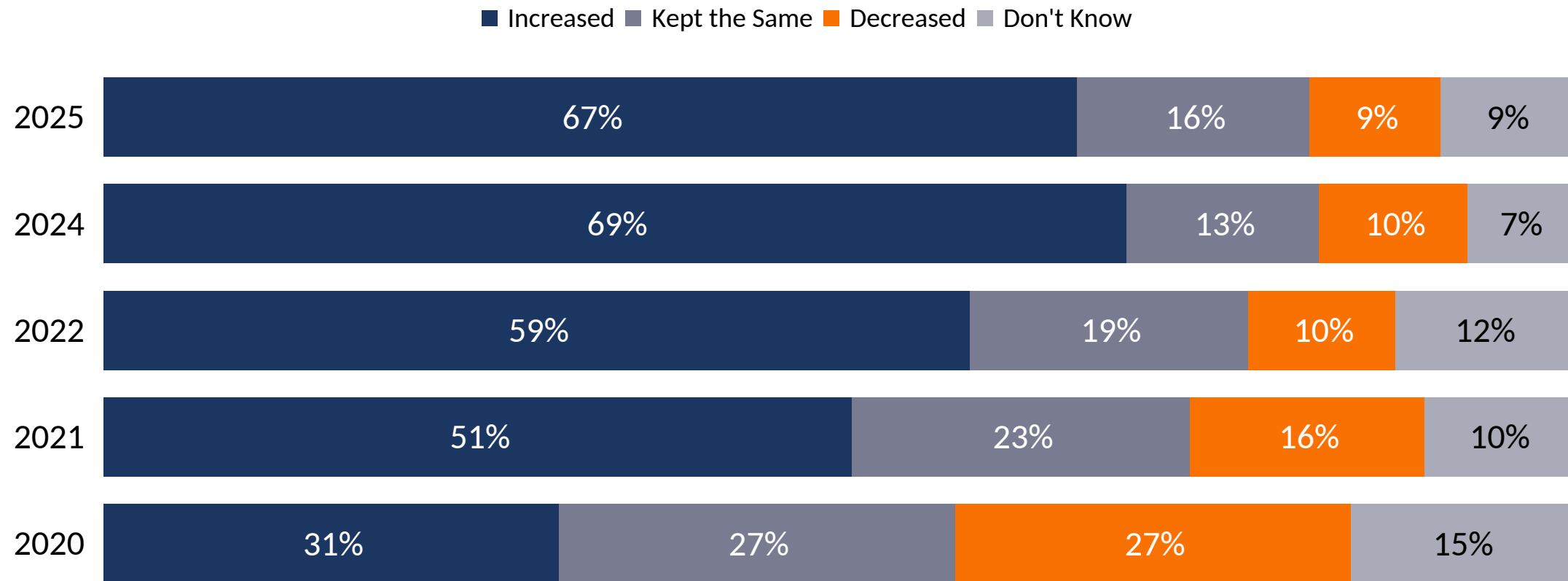
Similarly, perceptions of neighborhood safety have also improved.

Would you say you feel safer today in your neighborhood than you did a year or two ago, or would you say you feel less safe?



Despite improvements to safety, two-thirds say the number of police officers in Oakland should be increased.

Do you think the number of police officers in the Oakland Police Department should be increased, kept the same, or decreased?

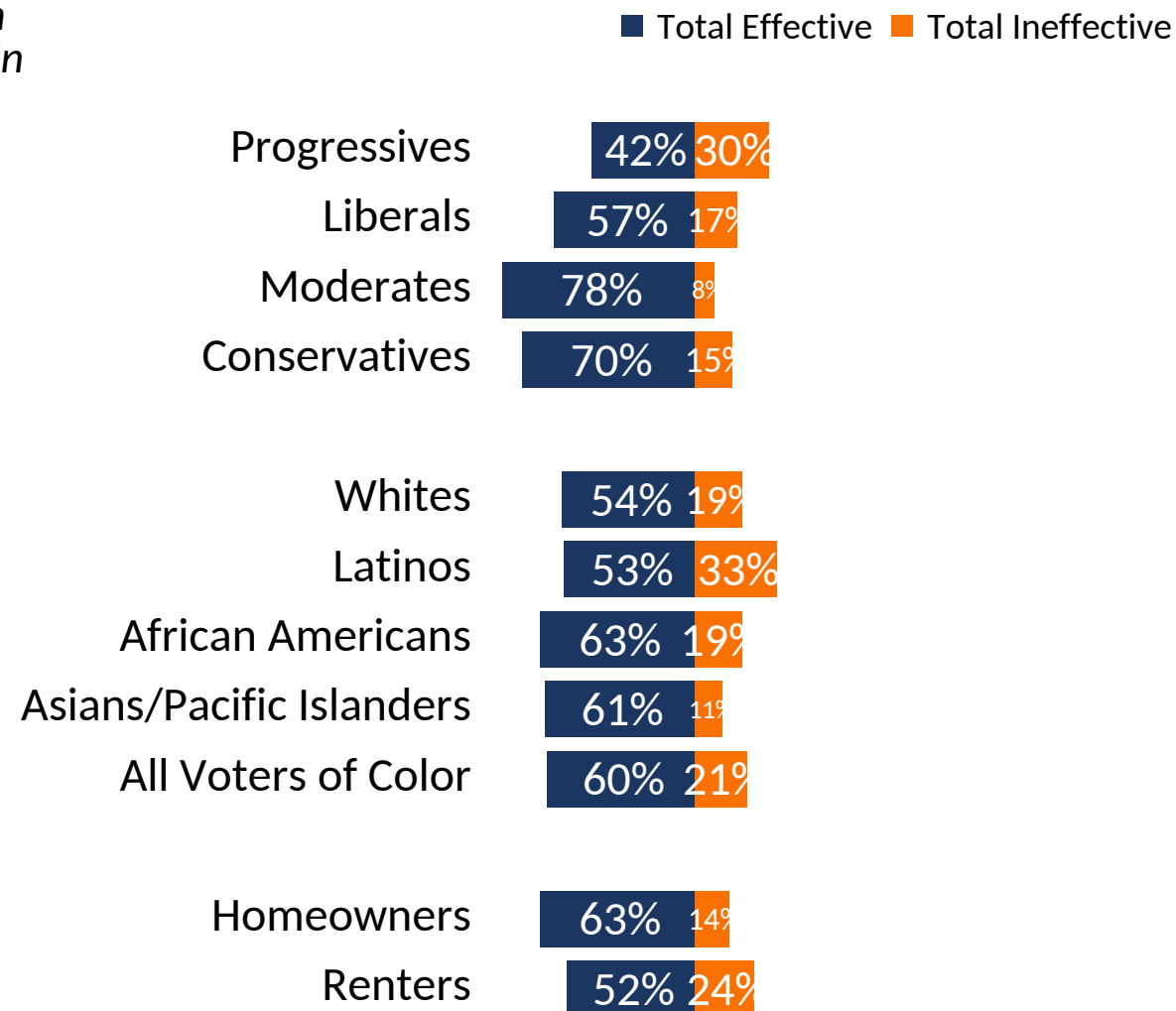
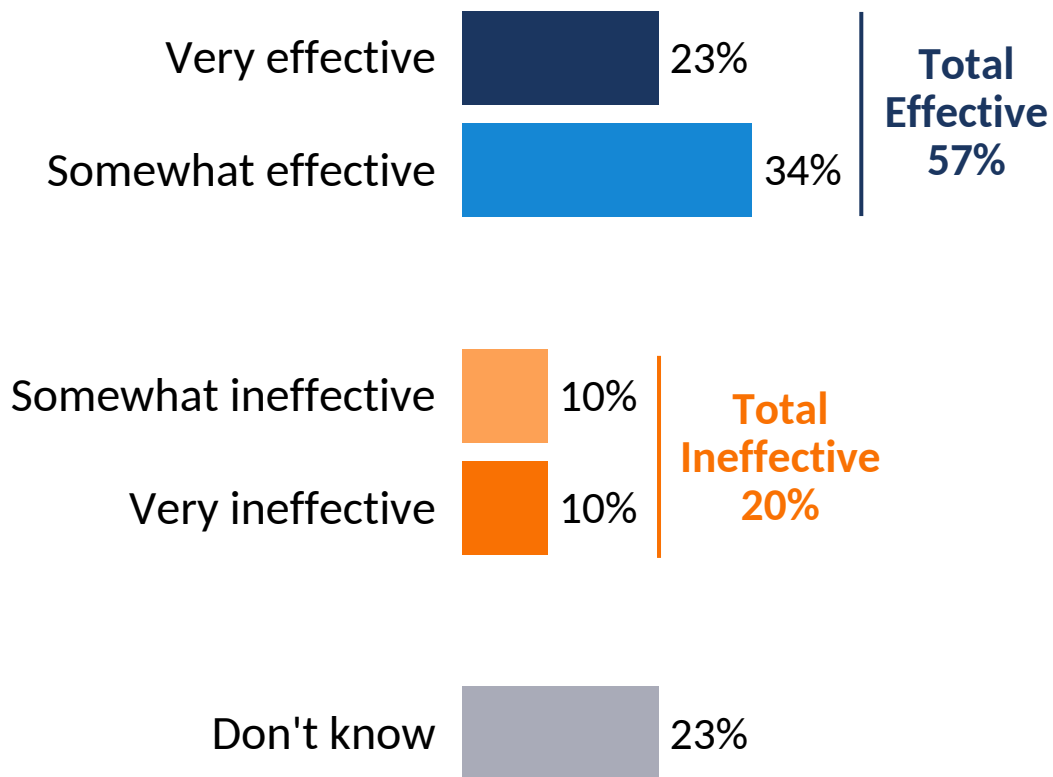


Majorities across many major demographic groups favor increasing police.

Demographic Group	Increased	Kept the Same	Decreased
All Voters	67%	16%	9%
Age			
18-49	52%	22%	15%
50-64	82%	9%	3%
65+	84%	8%	2%
Residence			
Own	73%	12%	7%
Rent	60%	21%	8%
Race/Ethnicity			
Whites	60%	17%	9%
Latinos	58%	18%	19%
African Americans	78%	11%	5%
Asians/Pacific Islanders	66%	21%	5%
<i>All Voters of Color</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>8%</i>
Ideology			
Progressives	35%	29%	19%
Liberals	76%	15%	2%
Moderates	89%	5%	2%
Conservatives	95%	0%	3%

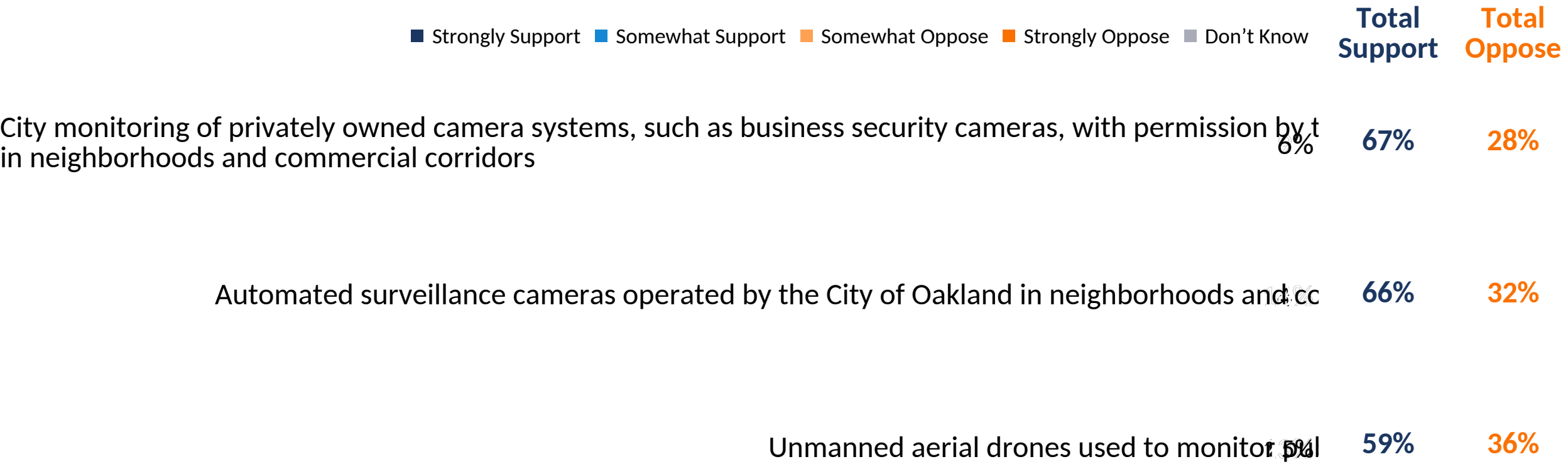
Nearly three in five agree that the CHP's presence in Oakland has been effective at improving safety.

As you may have heard, the California Highway Patrol has been deployed in Oakland since February 2024 to help address crime in the city. In your opinion, has this effort been effective or ineffective in making Oakland safer?



Two-thirds favor using security and surveillance cameras to improve public safety, with civilian oversight.

Here is a list of public safety technologies that other communities have adopted to enhance public safety and support investigations. Please indicate whether you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose Oakland police using these technologies with civilian oversight.



Majority support for city monitoring of privately-owned camera systems cuts across ideological lines.

Public Safety Technology	Total Support							
	All Voters	Age			Ideology			
		18-49	50-64	65+	Progs	Libs	Mods	Cons
City monitoring of privately owned camera systems, such as business security cameras, with permission by the camera owners, in neighborhoods and commercial corridors	67%	55%	77%	81%	51%	72%	82%	85%
Automated surveillance cameras operated by the City of Oakland in neighborhoods and commercial corridors	66%	57%	73%	77%	44%	75%	87%	76%
Unmanned aerial drones used to monitor public safety incidents	59%	50%	67%	69%	33%	70%	78%	82%

Support for adoption of these technologies cuts across racial and ethnic lines as well.

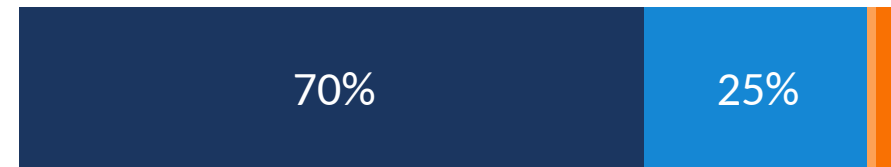
Public Safety Technology	Total Support							
	All Voters	Residence		Race/Ethnicity				
		Homeowners	Renters	Whites	Latinos	African Americans	Asians/ Pacific Islanders	All Voters of Color
City monitoring of privately owned camera systems, such as business security cameras, with permission by the camera owners, in neighborhoods and commercial corridors	67%	73%	59%	64%	58%	70%	77%	68%
Automated surveillance cameras operated by the City of Oakland in neighborhoods and commercial corridors	66%	74%	55%	61%	69%	65%	81%	69%
Unmanned aerial drones used to monitor public safety incidents	59%	68%	46%	58%	51%	58%	72%	59%

Voters widely agree that Oakland needs to do more to address illegal dumping and issue harsher penalties.

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Don't Know

Total Agree **Total Disagree**

Oakland needs to do more to crack down on illegal dumping



94%

3%

Oakland should issue harsher penalties for illegal dumping



86%

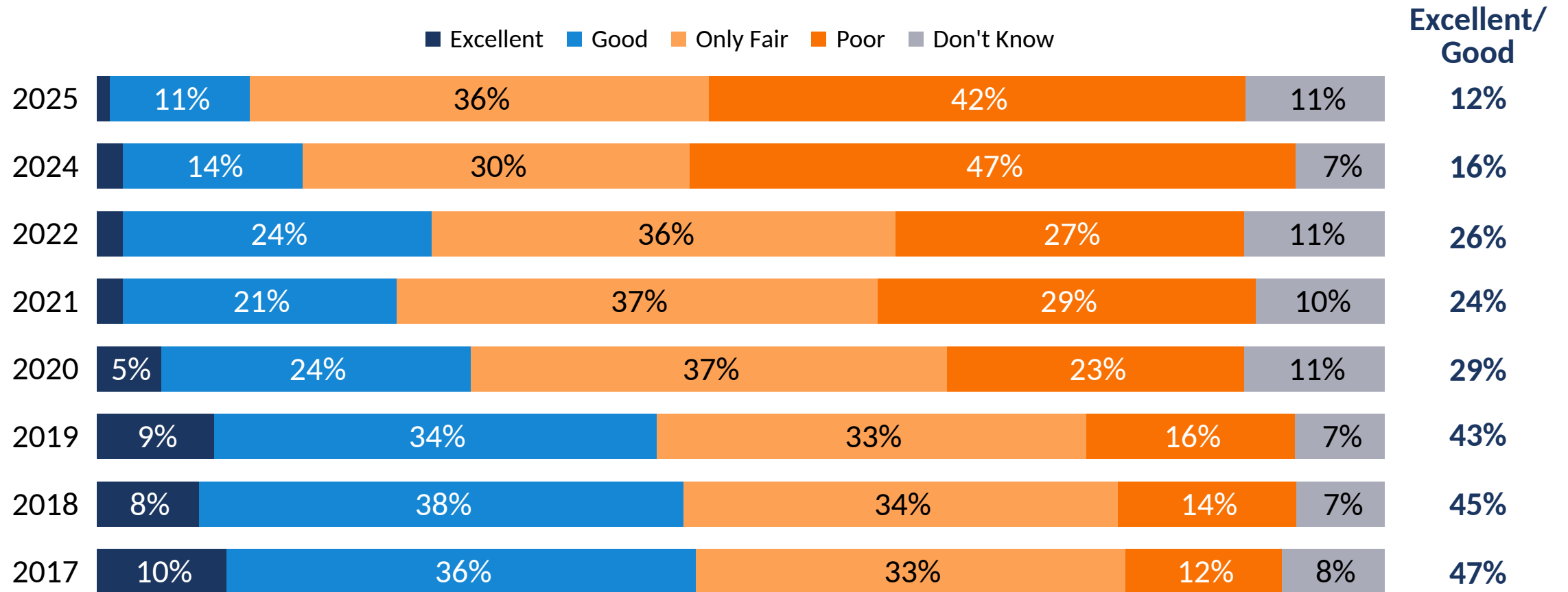
9%



Views on the Oakland Economy

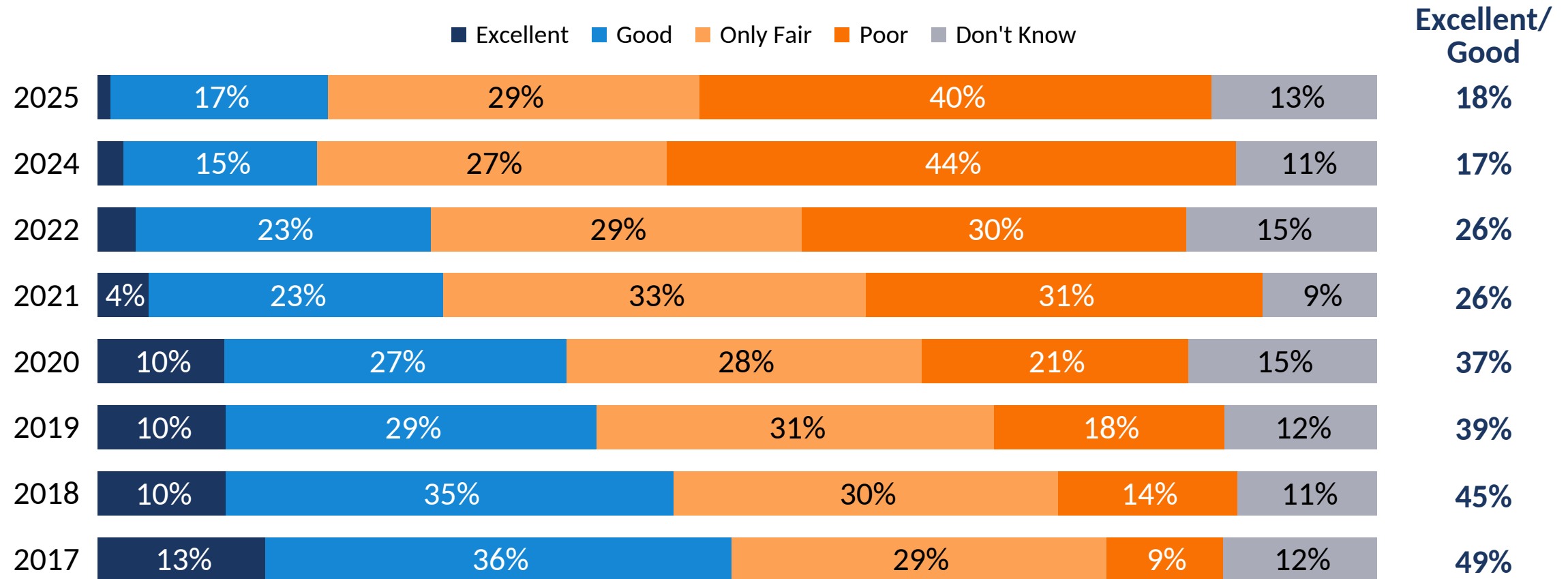
Views of the City's economic growth continue to trend downwards.

Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the City's current economic growth?



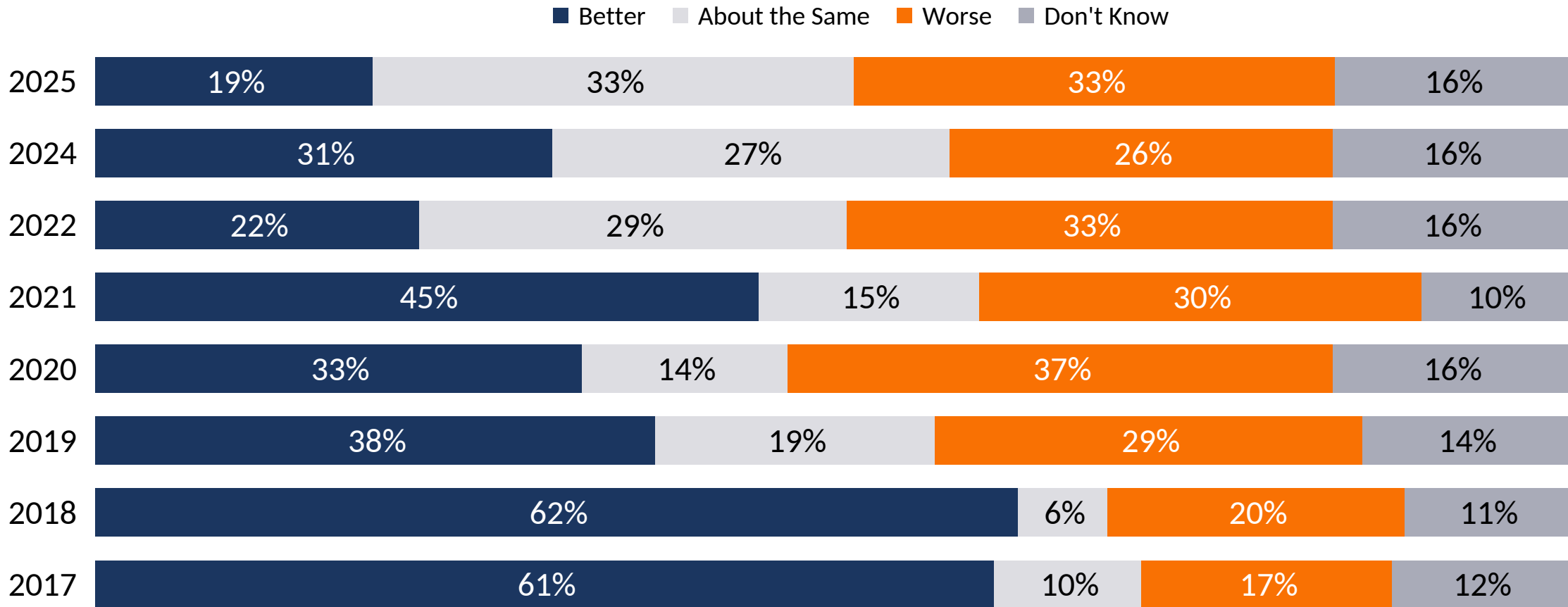
Fewer than one in five voters think Oakland is a good place to start and grow a business.

Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate Oakland as a place to start or grow a business?



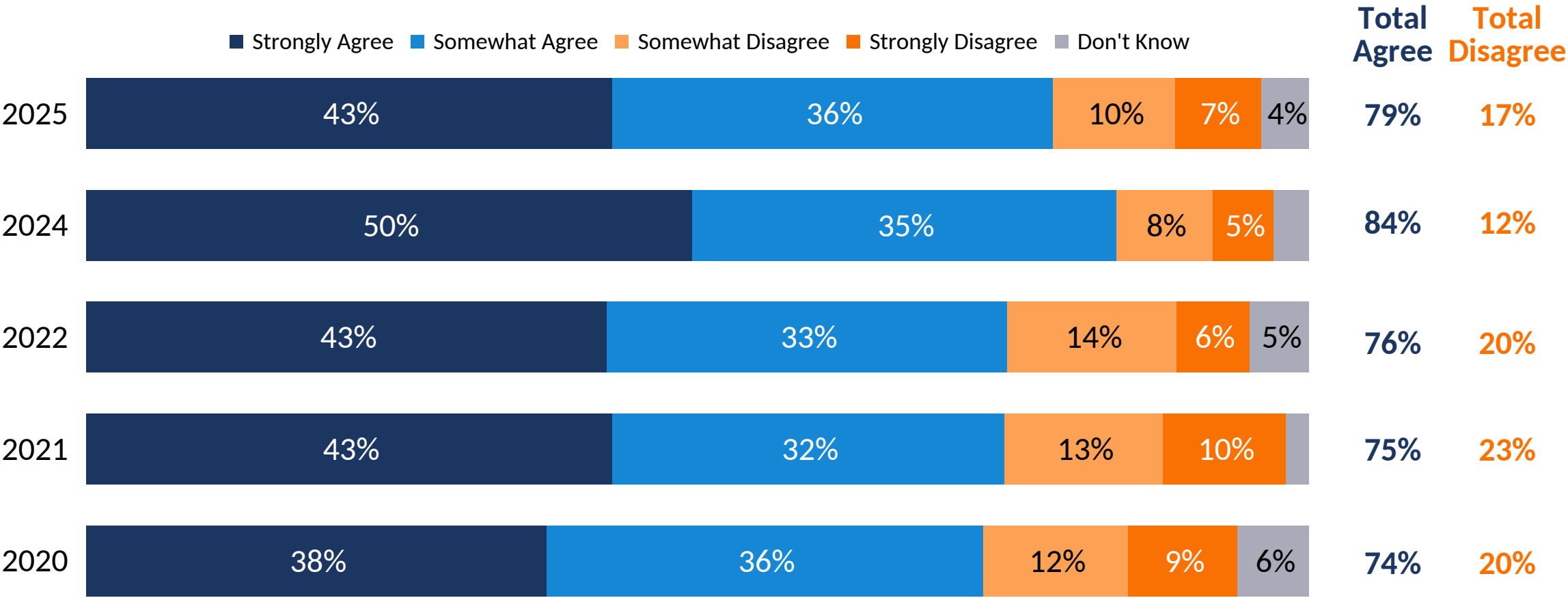
Voters are less optimistic about the economy in the coming year than they previously were.

Do you think Oakland's economy will be better or worse one year from now?



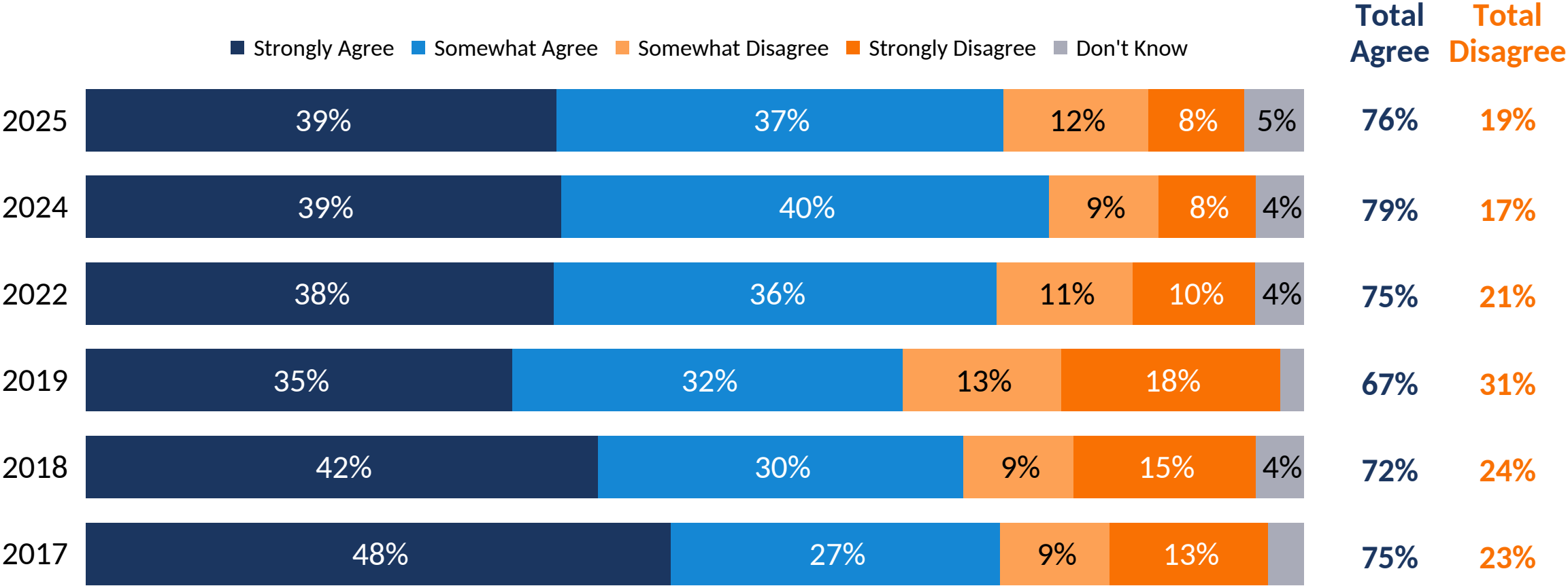
There is continued agreement that having large companies locate in Oakland is good for the local economy, although voter opinion has softened slightly.

Having more large companies locate in Oakland is good for our economy because it creates jobs and tax revenue



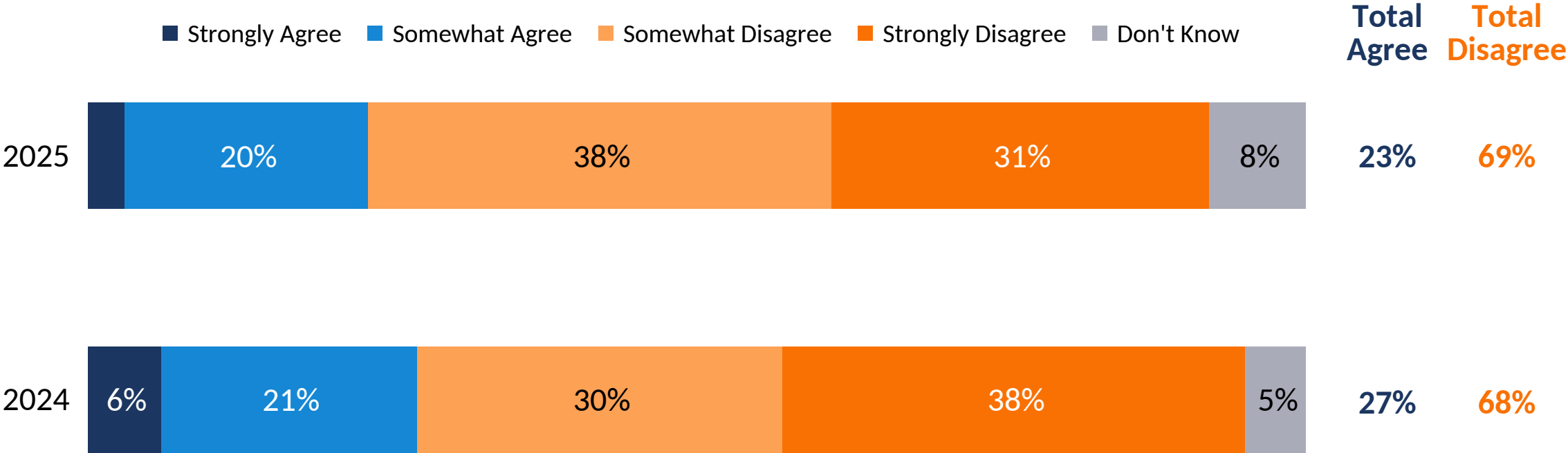
Similarly, more than three in five say it is good to have technology companies locate in Oakland.

Having more technology companies locate in Oakland is good for our economy because it creates jobs and tax revenue



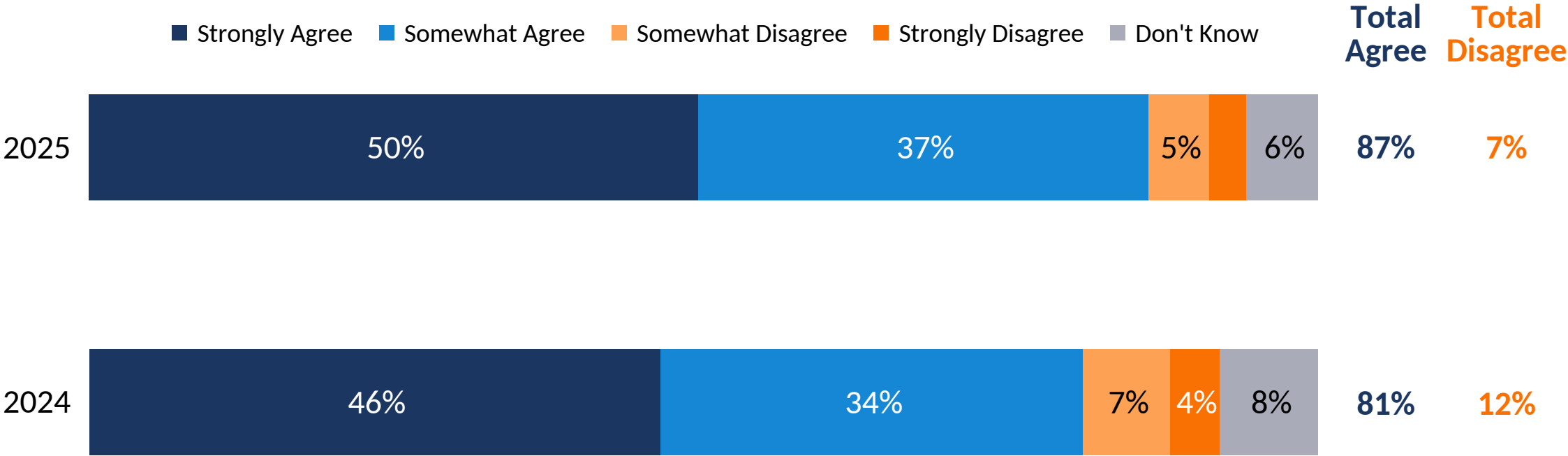
Fewer than one-quarter say downtown's economy is vibrant.

Downtown Oakland's economy is vibrant



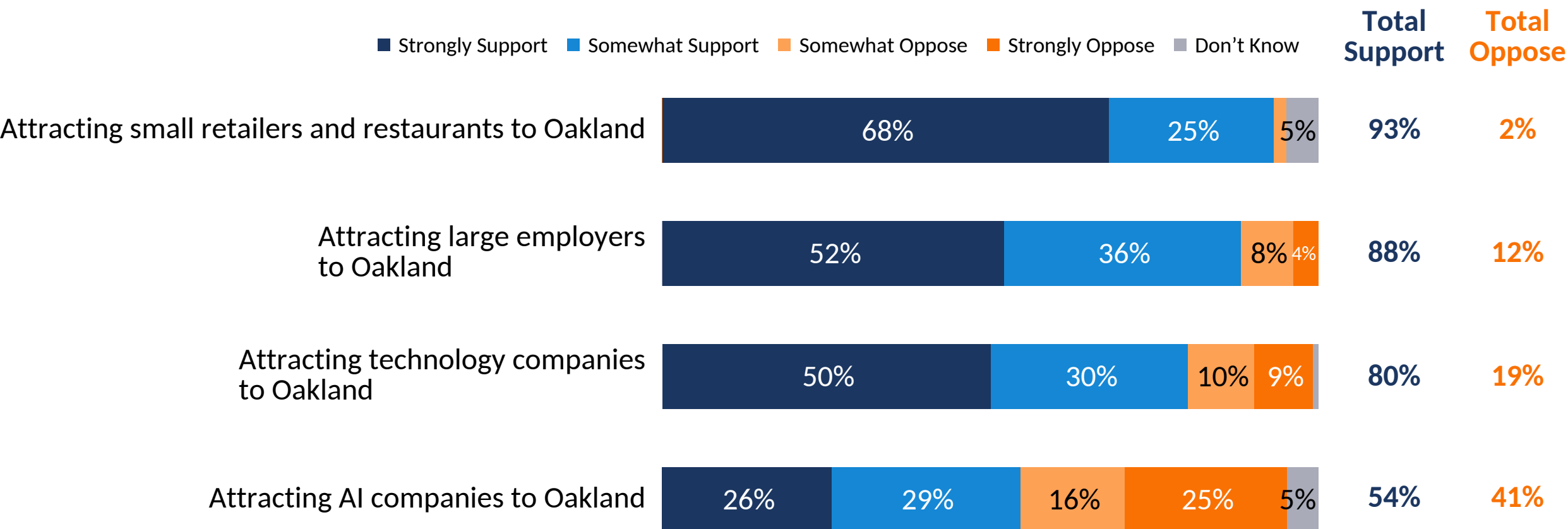
Nearly nine in ten say that making it easier to open businesses will help revitalize downtown.

Making it easier to open businesses will help revitalize downtown



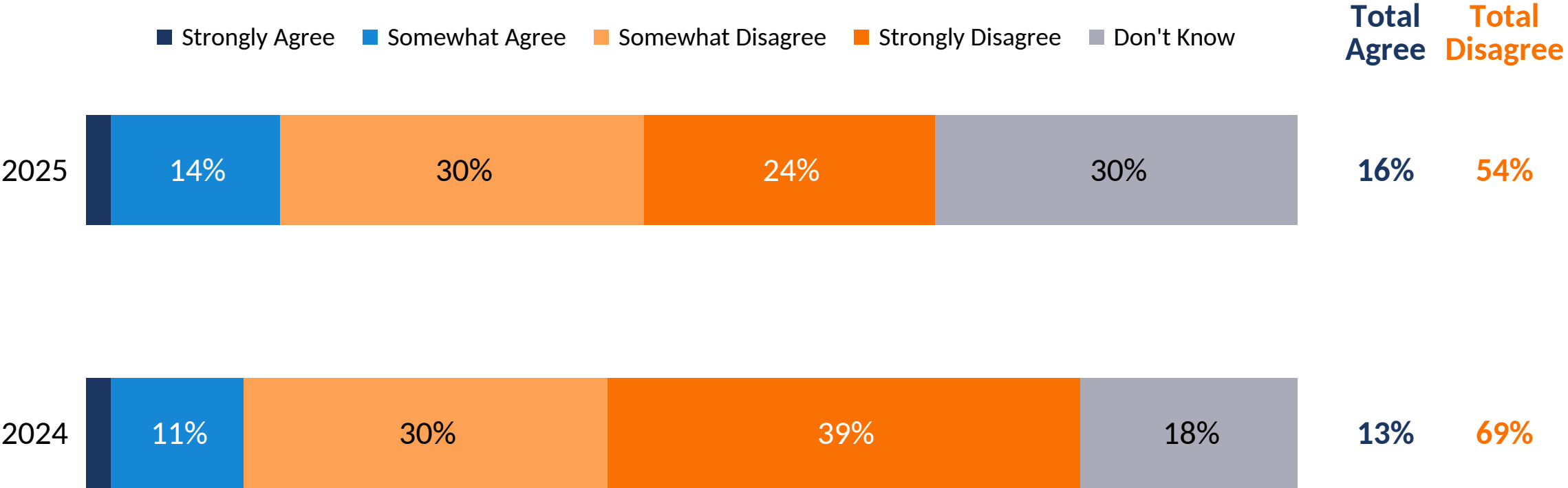
Voters offer strong support for attracting a wide array of businesses to Oakland.

Here are some proposals being considered in Oakland. Please indicate whether you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose each of the following proposals.



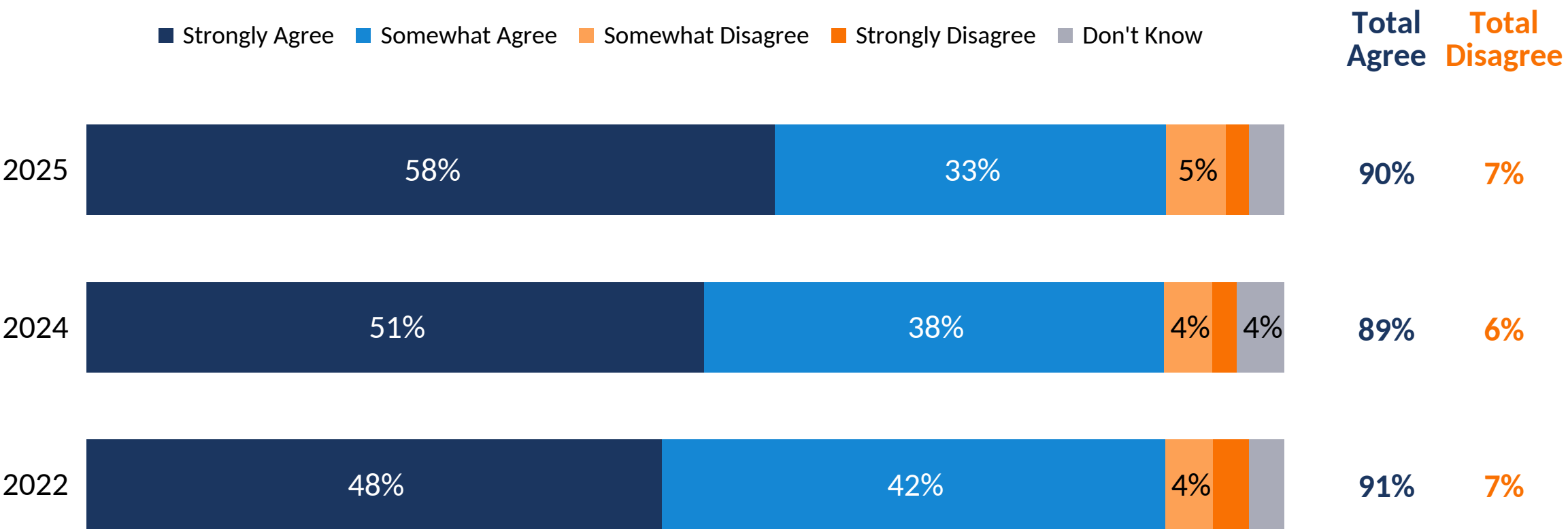
A majority disagree that Oakland city government is doing a good job helping local businesses succeed.

Oakland city government is doing a good job helping local businesses succeed



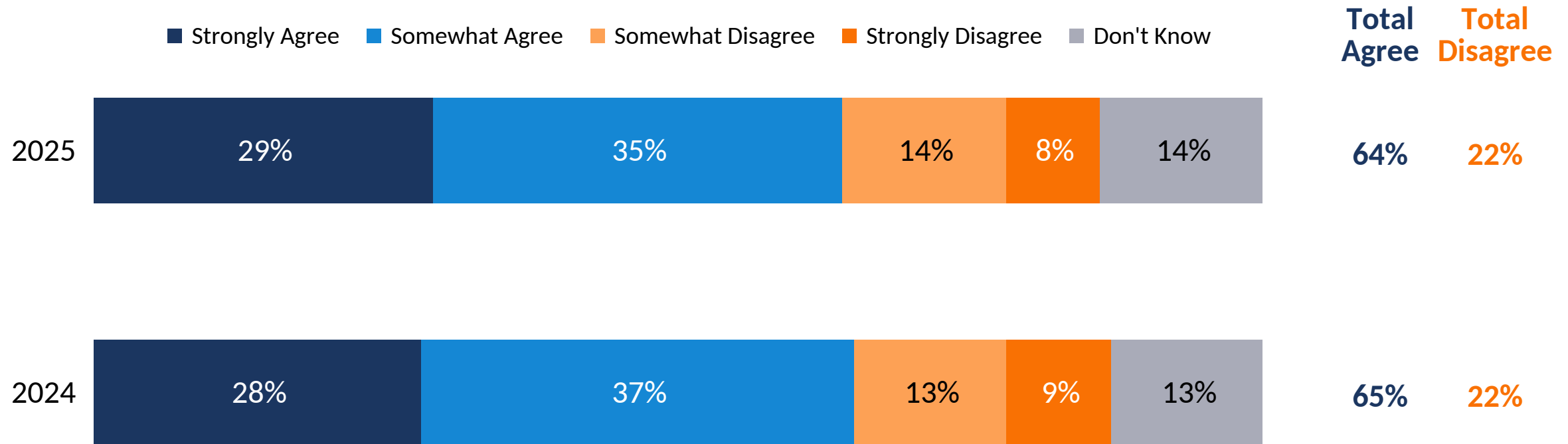
Nine in ten say city government has a responsibility to help local business succeed.

Oakland city government has a responsibility to help local business succeed



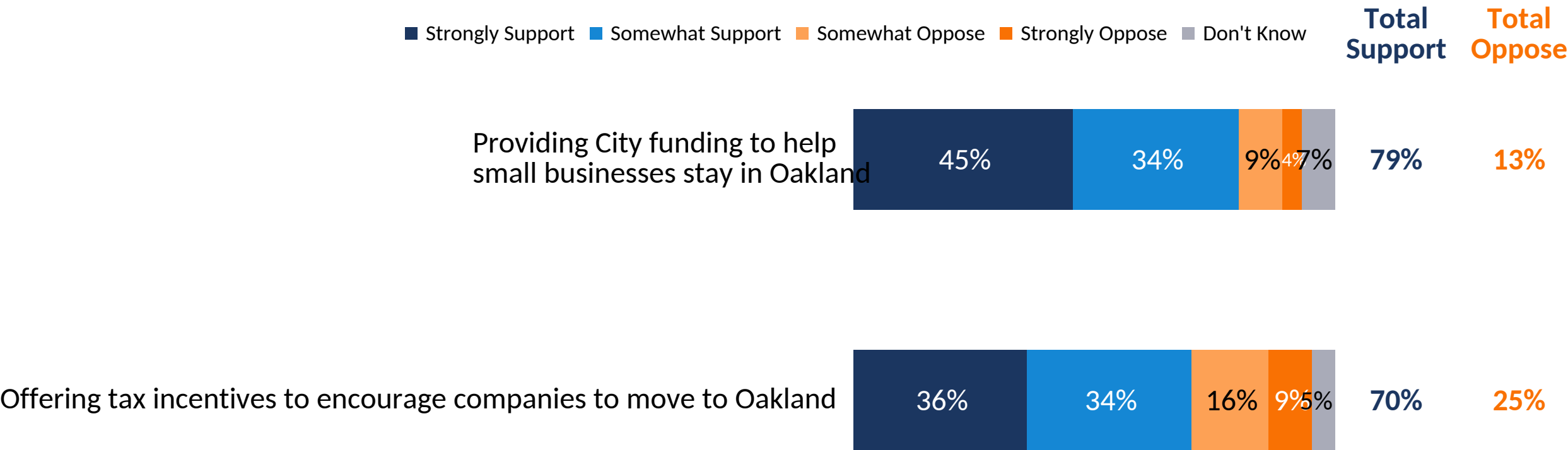
Nearly two-thirds agree that employers need tax incentives to grow their businesses here.

Oakland employers need tax incentives to grow their businesses here



More than four in five support providing funding to help businesses stay in Oakland and seven in ten support tax incentives.

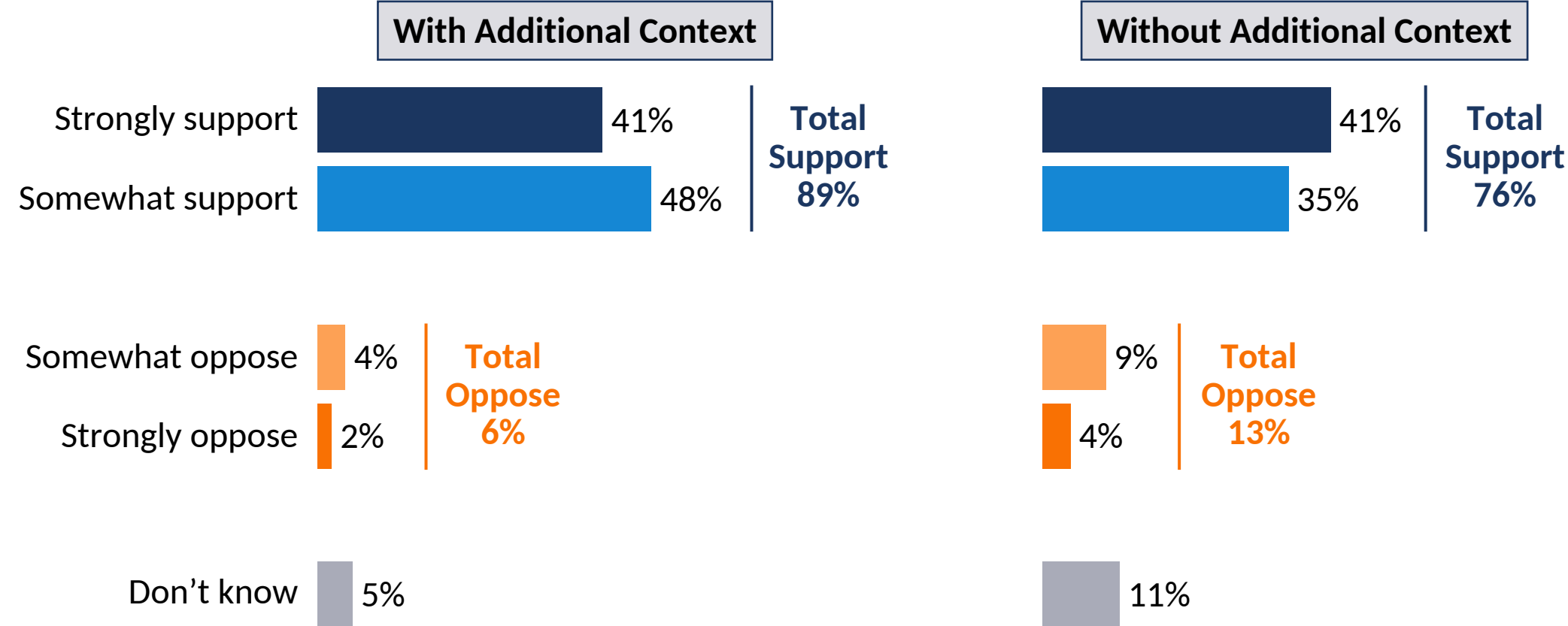
Here are some proposals being considered in Oakland. Please indicate whether you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose each of the following proposals.



Voters offer widespread support for reducing business tax rates for small Oakland businesses.

Some people have proposed reducing local business tax rates for small businesses in Oakland with less than \$1 million in annual revenue (**Half Sample:** that have struggled to recover since the COVID-19 pandemic.)

Does this proposal sound like something you would support or oppose?



Support for this proposal cuts across the electorate's major demographic groups.

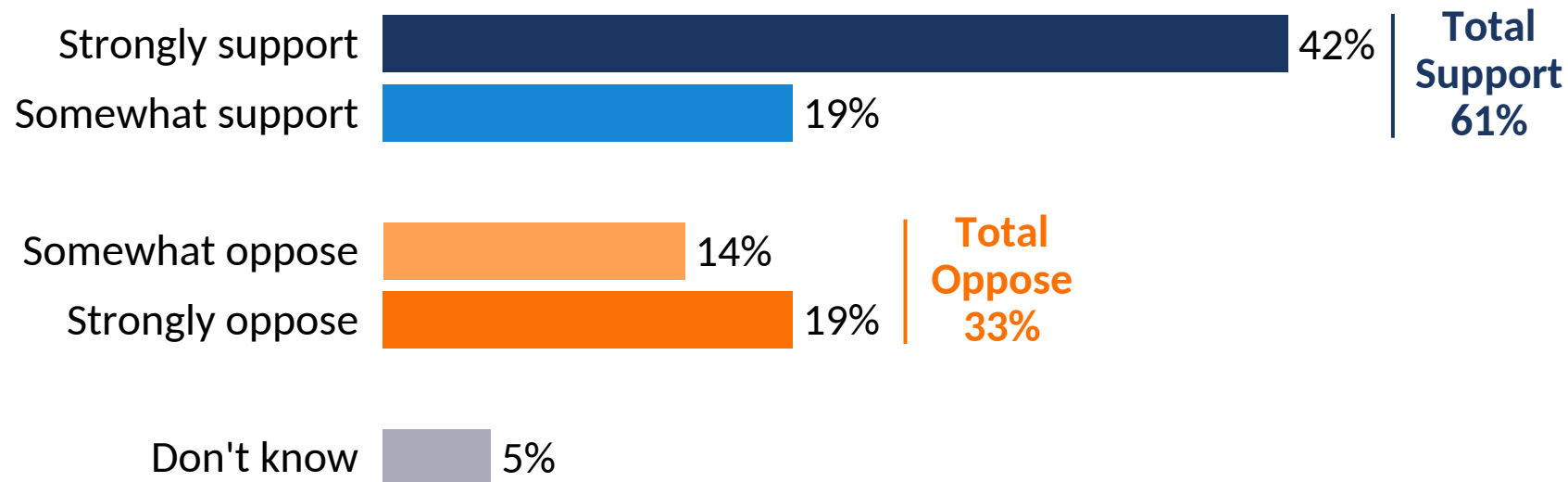
Demographic Group	Total Support	Total Oppose	Don't Know
All Voters	82%	9%	8%
Age			
18-49	81%	9%	10%
50-64	84%	12%	4%
65+	84%	9%	7%
Residence			
Own	84%	9%	7%
Rent	80%	10%	10%
Race/Ethnicity			
Whites	80%	11%	10%
Latinos	82%	10%	8%
African Americans	87%	5%	8%
Asians/Pacific Islanders	81%	14%	5%
<i>All Voters of Color</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>7%</i>
Ideology			
Progressives	78%	15%	7%
Liberals	84%	6%	10%
Moderates	81%	11%	8%
Conservatives	94%	6%	0%



Views on Housing and Homelessness

Three in five support updating the encampment management plan.

The City of Oakland has an existing encampment management plan which requires the city to offer shelter and advance notice before closing an encampment. Some people have proposed updating the encampment management plan, like other cities in the Bay Area have done, to allow immediate closure without advance notice of encampments when they are located on sidewalks. The updated policy would also make it easier for the city to remove vehicle encampments, where people live in cars or RVs.



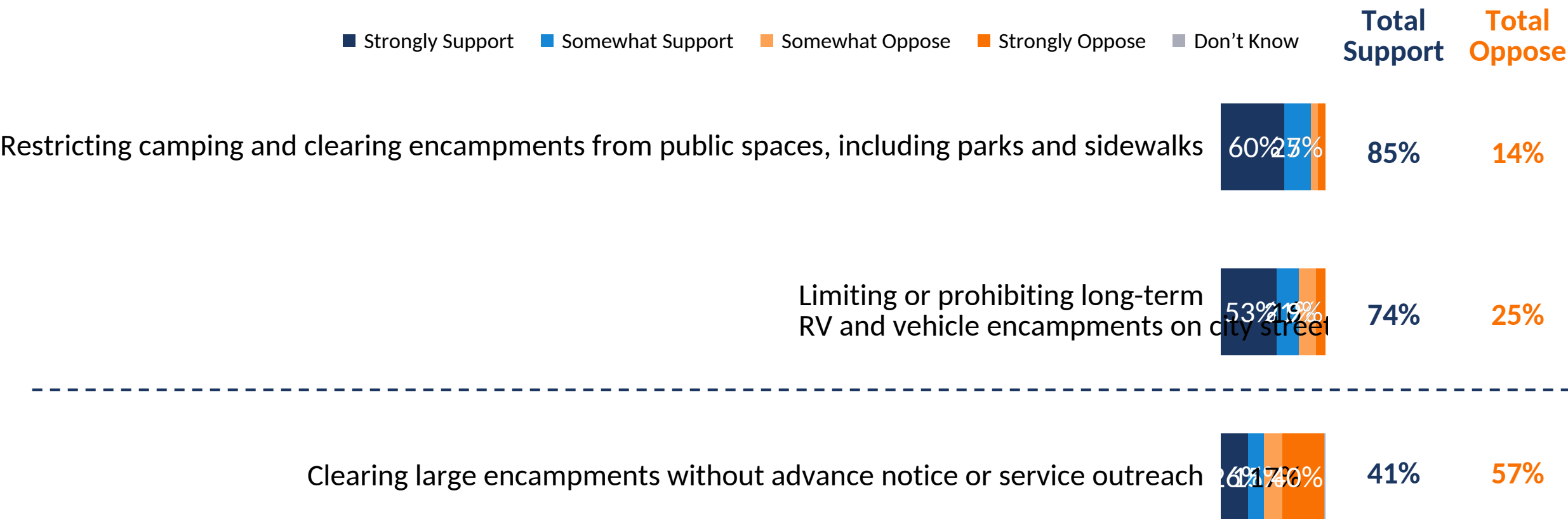
Support cuts across many of the city's major demographic groups.

Demographic Group	Total Support	Total Oppose	Don't Know
All Voters	61%	33%	5%
Age			
18-49	56%	37%	7%
50-64	68%	24%	8%
65+	66%	33%	1%
Residence			
Own	68%	28%	4%
Rent	52%	41%	7%
Race/Ethnicity			
Whites	56%	39%	6%
Latinos	72%	22%	6%
African Americans	60%	35%	5%
Asians/Pacific Islanders	63%	35%	2%
<i>All Voters of Color</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>5%</i>

Demographic Group	Total Support	Total Oppose	Don't Know
Ideology			
Progressives	40%	54%	6%
Liberals	60%	33%	6%
Moderates	84%	13%	3%
Conservatives	94%	6%	0%
City Council District			
District 1 - Zac Unger	54%	41%	5%
District 2 - Charlene Wang	66%	33%	1%
District 3 - Carroll Fife	54%	38%	8%
District 4 - Janani Ramachandran	67%	24%	9%
District 5 - Noel Gallo	66%	31%	3%
District 6 - Kevin Jenkins	66%	31%	3%
District 7 - Ken Houston	63%	32%	5%

Voters offer widespread support for restricting camping in public spaces and limiting long-term vehicle encampments.

Here are some policies to address homelessness that have been adopted in other cities. Please indicate whether you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose each of the following proposals.





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