

*Presentation to
TLMFPD Citizen Task Force*

2017 Mail Survey Results Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District

June 13, 2017



Introduction, Purpose & Approach

This report addresses the methodology and findings derived from public opinion research conducted by George K. Baum & Company on behalf of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District.

Approximately 9,650 registered voter households within the Fire District received a public opinion mail survey. The mailing list included all registered voter households within the district, versus a subset of active or likely voter households. **The questionnaire served as an invitation for public reaction to a mill levy proposal.**

The mail survey included a total of 14 questions, including two open-ended questions. Included with the mail survey questions was background information on the mill levy proposal. Households receiving the survey were given the opportunity to participate on-line rather than mailing back the survey.

The mail questionnaire used for this research is not a scientific poll, but a tool for collecting public input and understanding the general tone of the public's receptiveness to the issues presented. The overall summaries and conclusions drawn in this report are therefore not presented as predictors of an issue's likely success or failure at the polls. They are only presented to aid the Fire District with another means for collecting community input and initial reaction to the proposal.

George K. Baum & Company acknowledges that this particular questionnaire functions as an opportunity to disseminate information and as an information-gathering tool, and in no way represents a scientific survey, or one that estimates statistical margin of error. **The chief distinction is that this questionnaire was returned in lieu of people attending a public hearing (a non-representative sample of the registered voter population) as opposed to the returns representing a scientific sub-sample of the registered voter population. The results are subjective and limited in interpretation based on the volume of returns, not the science of returns. Think of this document as a written collection of comments from people who would have stood up and participated in a public hearing, but instead preferred to express their feelings through written form.**

A total of **1,021 surveys were completed** and processed for responses as of June 9, 2017. This represents **a response rate of 10.6 percent**. Previous mail surveys conducted by George K. Baum & Company have typically yielded response rates between 8 and 17 percent. An additional 55 surveys were received on June 12, 2017. The results of the ballot question did not change when the additional 55 surveys were included in the analysis.



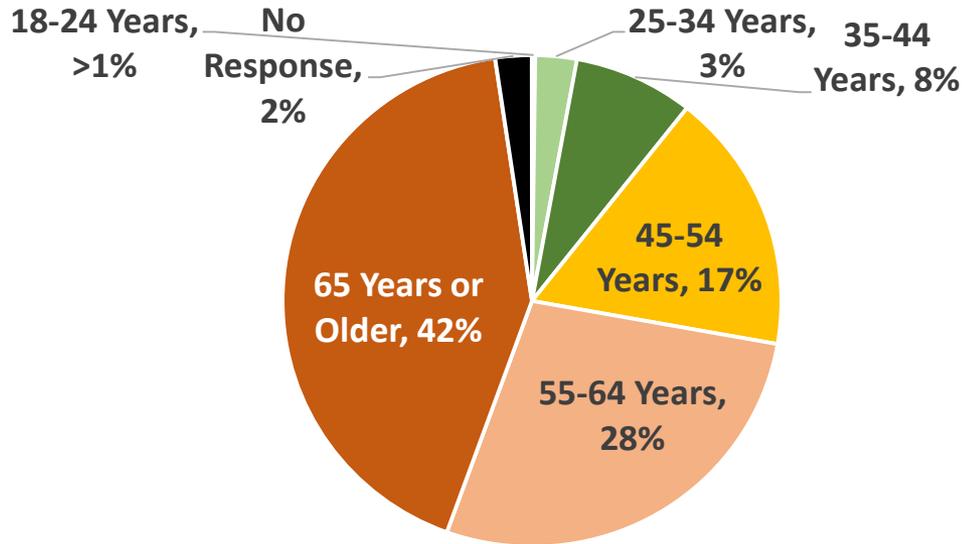
Summary of Approach

- Survey mailed to 9,650 registered voter households within TLMFPD
- Expected 8-17% response rate
- 1,021 replied (10.6%) as of June 9, 2017
- 79% of respondents had at least one person in their household who was identified as a likely voter
- 10% of respondents chose to complete the survey on-line
- Not a scientific poll
- Not a predictor of a ballot measure's likely success or failure
- Provides general undertone of the electorate



Demographics of Survey Respondents

Age of Respondents



	Likely Voter (Nov. 2017)	Survey Respondents
18-24:	3%	>1%
25-34:	6%	3%
35-44:	9%	8%
45-54:	22%	17%
55-64:	30%	28%
65+:	30%	42%



Demographics of Survey Respondents

HOAs/Neighborhoods

Arrowwood Improvement Association	20	2%	Timber HOA	6	1%
Bent Tree HOA	28	3%	Timberview POA	1	0%
Brookmoore HOA	8	1%	Timberview 2 POA	3	0%
Canterbury Improvement Association	25	2%	Trails End HOA	3	0%
Cherry Creek Crossing POA	9	1%	Village Center Estates HOA	6	1%
Copper Ridge HOA	1	0%	Village Center Highlands HOA	1	0%
Country Ridge Estates	2	0%	Village Center HOA	7	1%
Dancing Wolf Estates	1	0%	Vista Clara Villas HOA	0	0%
Forest View Estates	11	1%	Walden Property	30	3%
Fox Pines HOA	12	1%	West Oak Ridge	1	0%
Hawk Ridge HOA	13	1%	West Oak Ridge HOA	5	0%
Hawk Ridge West HOA	2	0%	Wissler Ranch HOA	13	1%
Higby Estates HOA	4	0%	Woodmoor Improvement Association	315	31%
Homestead at Jackson Creek HOA	36	4%	Woodmoor Lakehouse Association	1	0%
Kings Deer HOA	53	5%	Woodmoore Park HOA	10	1%
Kingswood POA	2	0%	Jackson Creek	7	1%
Monument Villas HOA	5	0%	Shiloh Pines	3	0%
Raspberry Mountain Townhomes HOA	1	0%	Other	183	18%
Red Rock Ranch HOA	25	2%	None	94	9%
Red Rock Reserve HOA	2	0%	Don't Know/Unsure	26	3%
Residences at Santa Fe Trails HOA	8	1%	No Response	31	3%

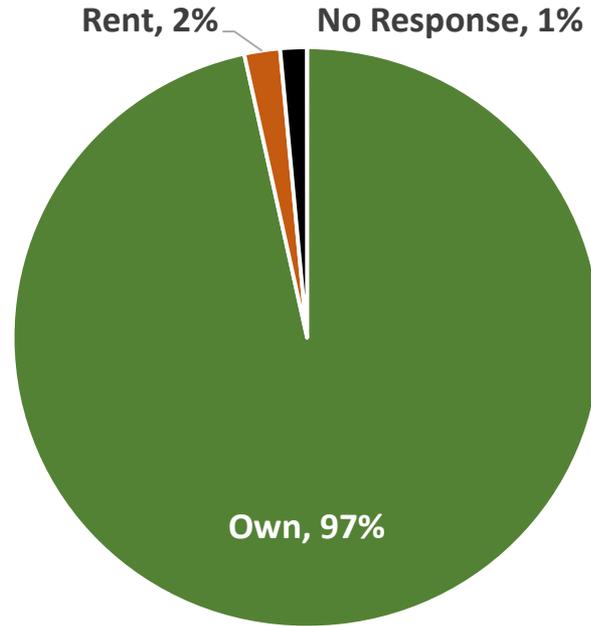


Other: Elk Creek, Forest Hills, Forest View Acre, Jackson Creek, Ridge at Fox Run, Wakonda Hills



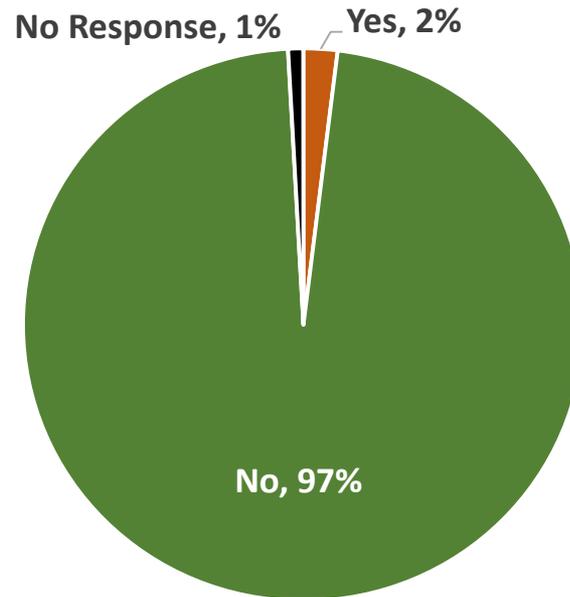
Demographics of Survey Respondents

Own vs. Rent Home

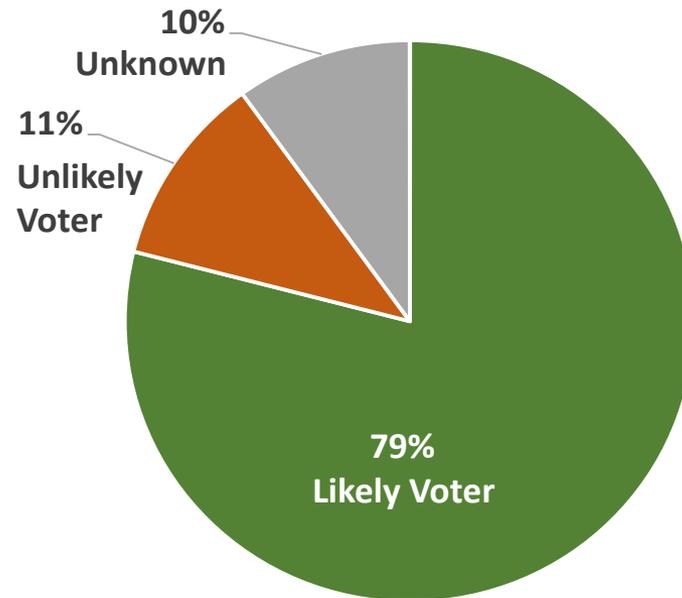


Demographics of Survey Respondents

Fire District Employee Vs. Other

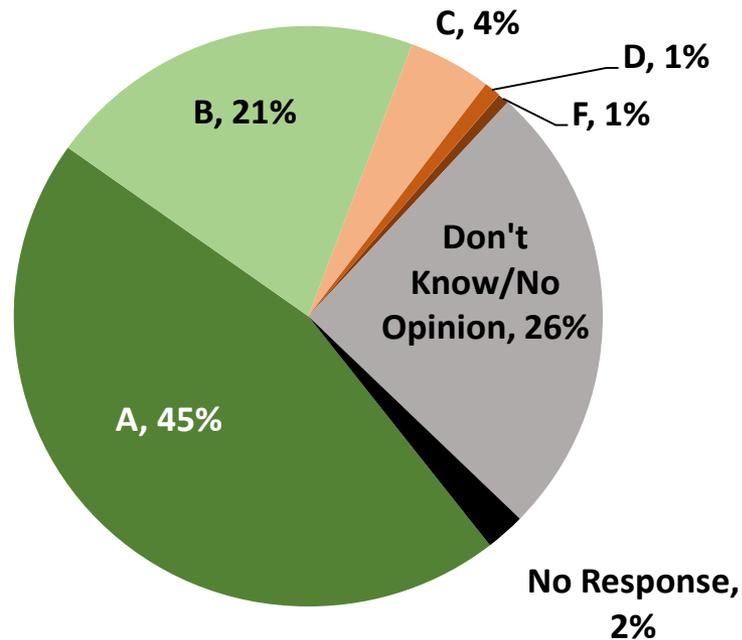


Demographics of Survey Respondents Likely Vs. Unlikely Voter



Grade the District

In thinking about your overall opinion of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, what grade would you give the Fire District?



A + B = 66%

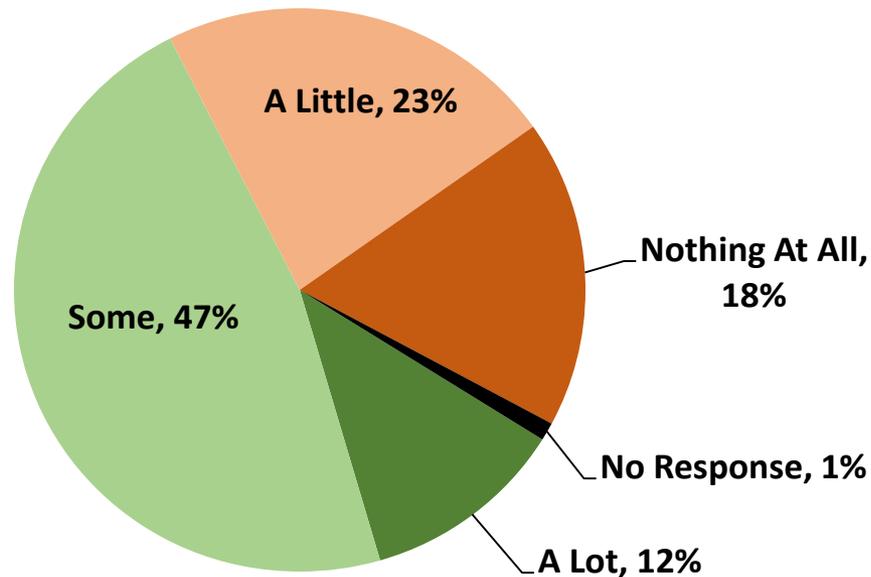
C + D + F = 6%

Don't Know/No Response = 28%



Level of Awareness

Before receiving the enclosed information, how much had you read, seen or heard about Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District's proposed mill levy to address operating, equipment and facility needs?



A Lot + Some = 59%

A Little + Nothing At All = 41%



Priority Placed on Parts of Mill Levy Proposal

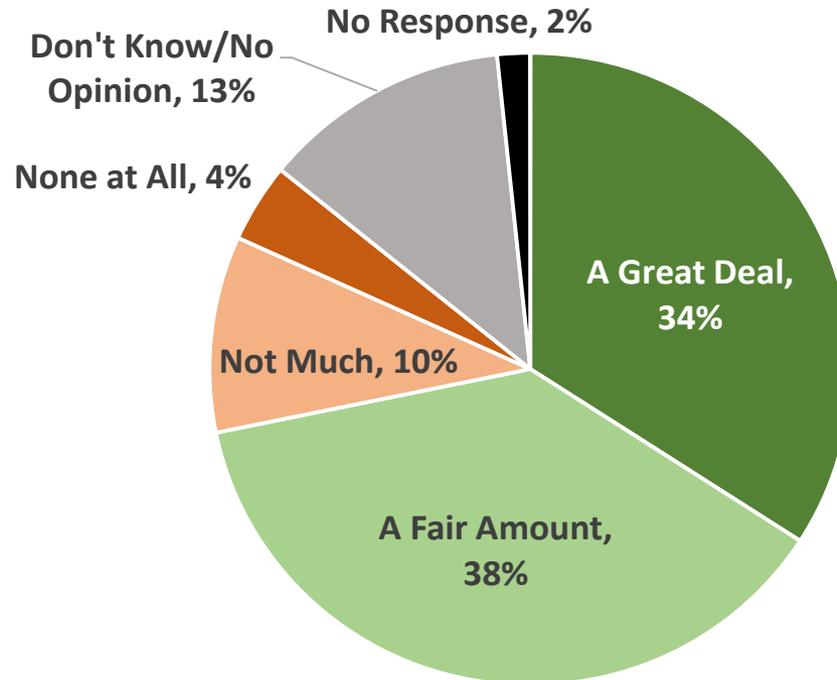
There are a number of operating, equipment and facility needs that the proposed mill levy would fund. On a scale of 1 to 5, what priority, if any, should be placed on funding each of the following items?

Parts of Proposal	Low Priority (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	High Priority (5)	NP/DK/NR
Attracting and retaining experienced emergency responders, and mitigating costly turnover rates	3%	3%	9%	26%	53%	7%
Replacing outdated emergency equipment, including air packs, Jaws of Life, heart monitors and mobile data computers	3%	3%	10%	30%	48%	7%
Replacing obsolete, front-line communications equipment and upgrading 911 notification services	4%	4%	14%	26%	46%	7%
Replacing outdated, unreliable front-line emergency response vehicles	3%	3%	13%	29%	45%	7%
Strategically adding paramedics, training and inspector personnel to maintain emergency services	3%	4%	15%	30%	41%	7%
Addressing health/life safety issues, providing sufficient working space for first responders, and improving energy efficiency at TLMFPD's three existing fire stations	5%	10%	25%	24%	27%	9%



Confidence in TLMFPD

How much confidence do you have in Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District to spend the funds from this mill levy proposal wisely?



A Great Deal + A Fair Amount = 72%

Not Much + None at All = 14%



Initial Reaction

What is your initial reaction to the Fire District's mill levy proposal to address operating, equipment and facility needs?

Statement in Support of Proposal	38%
No Answer	16%
Cost of Proposal	11%
Need More Information / Request Ongoing Updates	10%
Concerns Regarding Oversight	7%
Taxes / Pocketbook Concerns	7%
Growth	4%
No Support	3%
Desire Alternative Funding Options	2%
Priorities	1%
On Fixed Income	1%
Concerned It Will Not Pass	1%
None	1%
Construction Issues / Timeline	>1%



Initial Reaction: Examples of Voter Feedback

Statement in Support of Proposal (38%):

- *“I want the best equipment, personnel and facilities....The area is growing very fast. We need to keep up with demands. I want the best service possible and I realize that means higher taxes – you get what you pay for.”*
- *“As a stroke victim who received excellent support, my initial reaction is very positive to insure others receive the same treatment.”*

Cost of Proposal (11%):

- *“Seems a bit ambitious in the amount. I’ll most likely support it, but would be much more in favor at a lower rate....The high amount [is a concern]. Would prefer half the proposed mill levy. Then I would be a definite yes.”*
- *“You’re asking for too much. Very costly to homeowners....Too expensive all at one time. The mill levy is too much.”*
- *“Additional funds are needed. However, the increase is a significant amount for taxpayers. Perhaps phased in versus all at once?....I definitely support a mill levy increase and support our Fire District – they do a great job! My concern is the amount of the increase all at one time.”*



Initial Reaction: Examples of Voter Feedback

Concerns Regarding Oversight (7%):

- *“Understand the need, but my concerns are accountability, responsibility and actuality of leadership doing the right thing....[My concern] is that the money is used efficiently and is not wasted.”*
- *“Strongly support, but need verifications and accountability for how funds are spent....Accountability and verification. Government waste is rampant in today’s service fields.”*

Taxes/Pocketbook Concerns (7%):

- *“Spend the money you have properly. I make a lot less than I did years ago. I am tapped out. Tired of all taxing authorities increasing taxes. It can’t continue.”*
- *“The District was mismanaged in the past and it’s too expensive now.... $3.41 \times 4(00,000) = 13.64 \times 12 = \$163.68/\text{yr}$. No way! Between the water fees and grid fees it’s becoming too expensive to live here.”*
- *“You got money last time! Spend what you have more wisely!! I’m sick and tired of you people robbing from my wallet. IT’S MINE NOT YOURS!!!....Too much money!!! Request denied!”*
- *“We give more, you spend more and the cycle continues...The money won’t be used appropriately.”*



Initial Reaction: Examples of Voter Feedback

Growth (4%):

- *“The town of Monument is approving FAR too many residential and commercial building permits which is creating the problem of providing sufficient coverage protection in the first place. It strains our already limited water resources. Stop excessive higher density...”*

No Support (3%):

- *“You have destroyed the Shamrock Ranch/Black Forest area with your encouragement to over-develop and DESTROY the forest. Not a fan....Your numerous stations are not needed. You are greedy and not welcomed with your vote for development and destruction of the forest. Go away.”*
- *“Past funds have been mismanaged....Additional funds will be mismanaged. Homeowners insurance is already high because of poor reputation/performance.”*
- *“They already have more funds than they need to operate properly....They operate poorly and money is not the problem.”*



Initial Reaction: Examples of Voter Feedback

Funding Alternatives (2%):

- *“Have other avenues been researched? Seems if builders are so hell-bent on building and taking away trees and land, they should be the first to fund the district...”*
- *“It is justified, but why don’t new developments bear a greater burden?...New developments are not being asked to bear the costs of capital improvements.”*

Construction Issues / Timeline (>1%):

- *“Would like to see timeline of when and which improvements would be implemented.”*
- *“Assuming the mill levy passes, I’d like to see proposed timeline for equipment replacement.”*



Arguments in Favor of Mill Levy Proposal

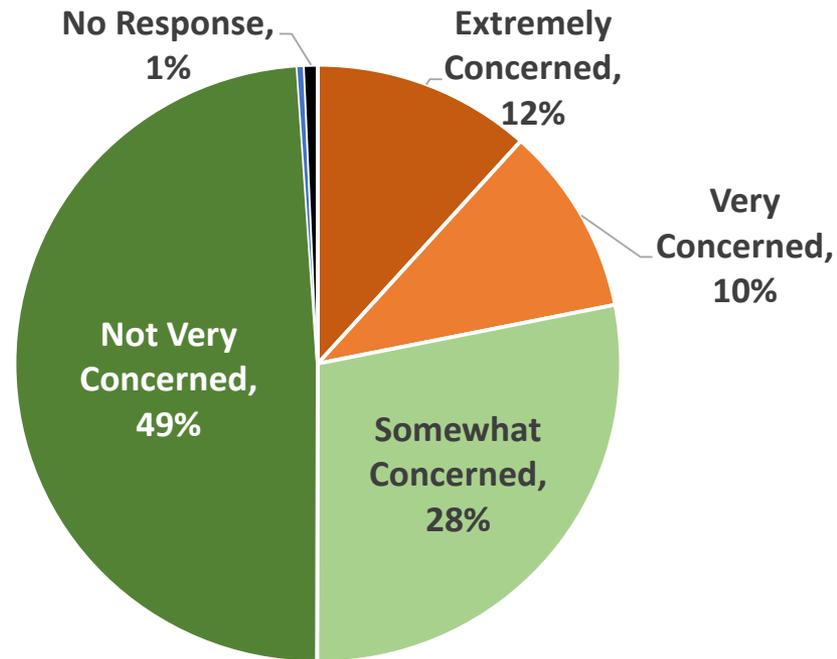
Argument in Favor	Not At All Convincing (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Very Convincing (5)	NR
The vast majority of calls TLMFPD receives are for medical emergencies. It's critical that the District maintain emergency response times, as it can literally be a matter of life and death.	4%	3%	12%	27%	51%	3%
Our growing wildland urban interface, where homes meet nature, is dramatically increasing wildfire risk. It's not a matter of "if" but "when" a wildfire will strike, TLMFPD needs to be prepared.	7%	6%	14%	24%	47%	3%
With our local population growing from 33,000 to 40,000 in just the next five years, it will be important for our fire district to have a sufficient number of paramedics and other first responders to address the increased call volume.	6%	6%	14%	29%	43%	2%
This tax measure is not just about protecting our residents, homes and businesses. It's also about protecting our firefighters. They deserve front-line vehicles and equipment that are reliable and keep them safe.	5%	5%	15%	31%	42%	2%
The Fire District has continued to defer maintenance, keep wages low and draw down reserves to balance its budget. This is not sustainable given that the reserves are now barely above the required minimum.	6%	7%	15%	29%	40%	3%
Since 2013, TLMFPD has lost 25 percent of its firefighters to other fire districts. These were firefighters with a combined 100 years of experience. We need to put an end to this high turnover rate.	7%	9%	16%	28%	37%	3%
Our community's three fire stations are plagued by health/life safety, operational and energy inefficiency issues. The stations were not designed to handle the work requirements of first responders and equipment needed to service 33,000 residents.	9%	10%	24%	26%	28%	3%

Arguments Against Mill Levy Proposal

Argument Against	Not At All Convincing (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Very Convincing (5)	NR
Rather than increasing property taxes, the Fire District should be increasing usage fees and/or some other funding option.	24%	22%	23%	16%	12%	3%
The Fire District asked for a mill levy increase about five years ago. It seems unreasonable that they already need another tax increase.	26%	23%	22%	15%	12%	2%
We're never going to be able to compete with Denver and other big-city fire departments when it comes to pay and benefits. High turnover is unfortunately something the Fire District will just have to manage.	24%	22%	24%	17%	10%	3%
It seems like the fire District is trying to do too much at one time. They should focus on stopping employee turnover and then come back later to deal with outdated equipment and other needs in a few years.	33%	24%	19%	13%	9%	2%
Our property taxes are already too high. The Fire District needs to live within its means, even if it means cutting services and increasing response times.	42%	24%	16%	7%	9%	2%
Rather than trying to recruit more paid paramedics and firefighters, the Fire District should go back to the way it used to be with a greater reliance on part-time or volunteer firefighters. It's not as consistent, but at least it's cheaper.	42%	25%	19%	7%	4%	3%
Instead of implementing a vehicle-replacement program, the Fire District should just wait until the vehicles are near failure. Replacing vehicles anytime sooners does not make economic sense.	49%	23%	15%	7%	4%	3%

Tax Sensitivity

The estimated tax impact of the Fire District's proposed mill levy is \$3.41 per month per \$100,000 of a home's actual value. How concerned are you about this tax impact on your own family's budget?



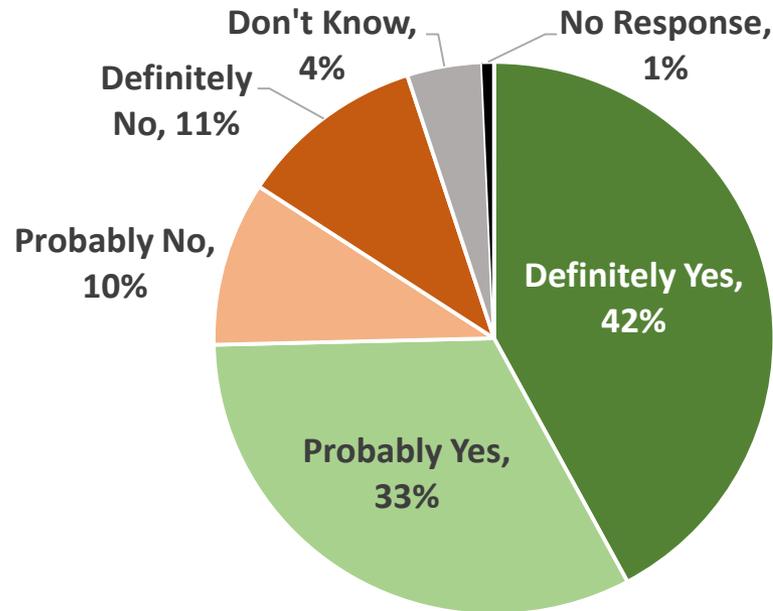
Extremely Concerned + Very Concerned = 22%

Not Very Concerned = 49%



Ballot Question

If a local election were held today, would you vote “yes” in favor of, or “no” to oppose, a mill levy of 6.9 mills to maintain Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District’s emergency services by providing funding for the following operating, equipment and facility needs: Attracting and retaining emergency responders, mitigating costly turnover rates, and strategically adding first responders to protect emergency services and response times; Replacing outdated, unreliable front-line emergency response vehicles, apparatus and equipment, including airpacks, Jaws of Life, heart monitors and mobile data computers; Replacing obsolete front-line communications equipment and upgrading 911 notification services; Addressing health/life safety issues, providing sufficient working space for first responders and improving energy efficiency at the Fire District’s three existing fire stations?

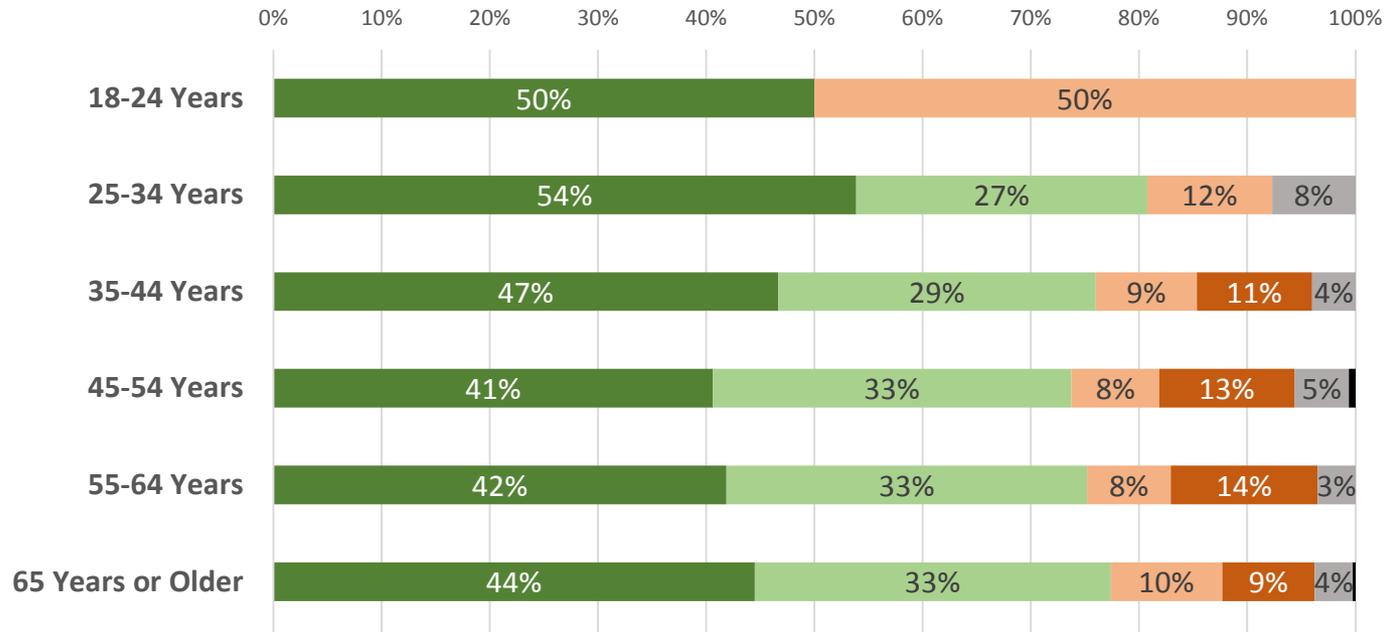


42% Def Yes
11% Def No

75% Yes
21% No



Support for Ballot Question by Age



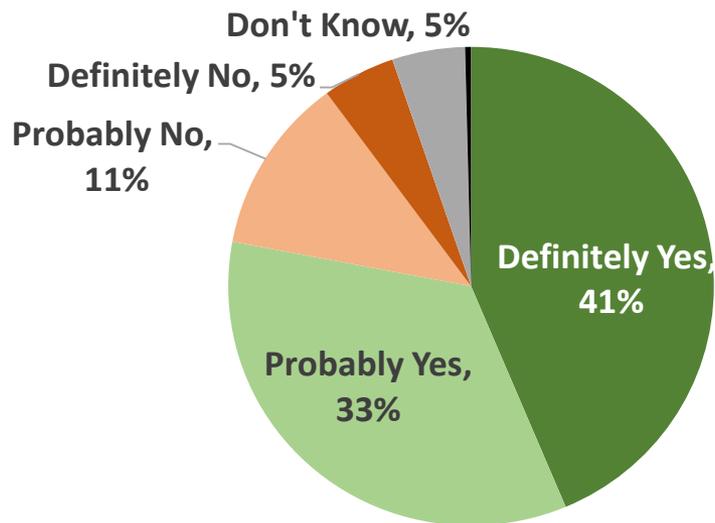
■ Definitely Yes
 ■ Probably Yes
 ■ Probably No
 ■ Definitely No
 ■ Don't Know
 ■ No Response



Support for Ballot Question: Likely Vs. Unlikely Voter

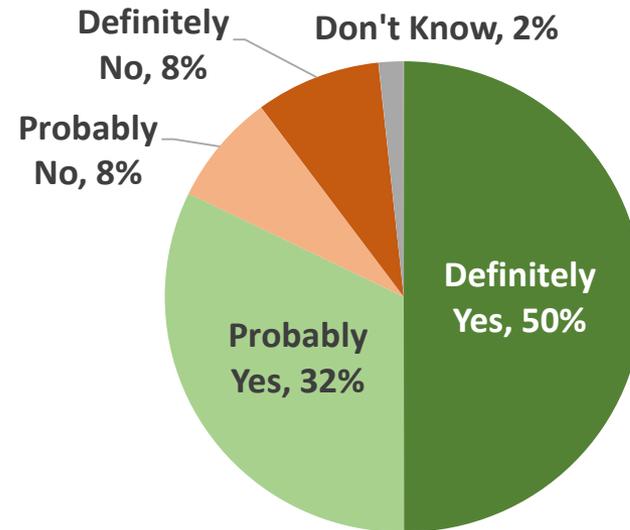
(Online voters not part of analysis on this page.)

Likely Voter



74% Yes
16% No
(n = 806)

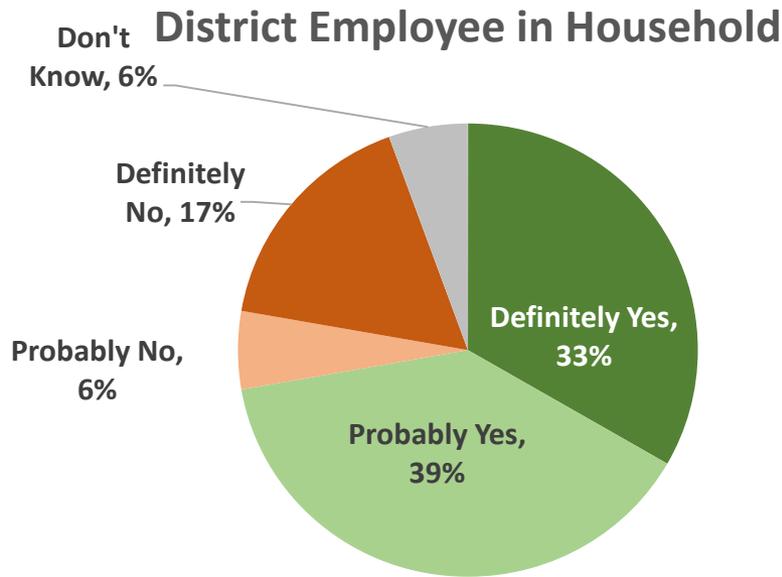
Unlikely Voter



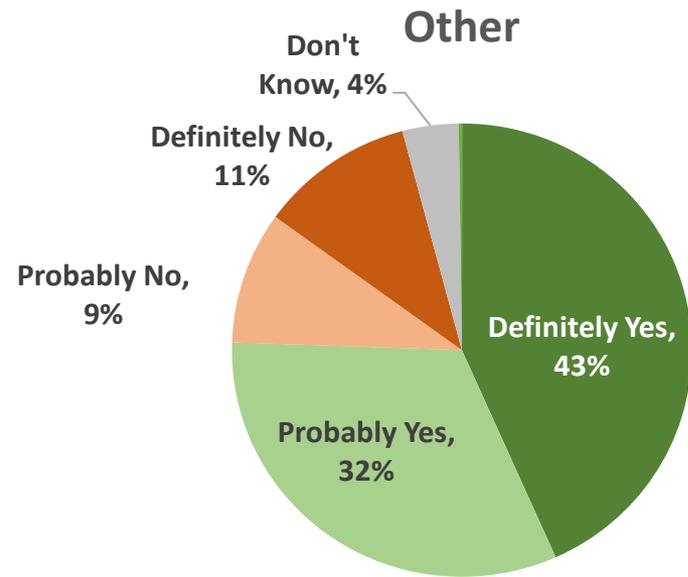
82% Yes
16% No
(n = 118)



Support for Ballot Question: Employee Vs. Other



72% Yes
23% No
(n = 20)



75% Yes
20% No
(n = 1,001)



Main Concerns

What is your main concern, if any, regarding Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District's mill levy proposal?

Statement In Support	38%
No Answer	16%
Total Cost	11%
Need Additional Information / Request Ongoing Updates	10%
Taxes/Pocketbook Concerns/Fixed Income	8%
Concerns Regarding Oversight / Allocate Funds as Promised	7%
Growth Should Pay Its Own Way	4%
No Support	3%
Seek Alternative Funding Options	2%



Conclusions

- Survey respondents give the Fire District strong marks, with 66% grading the District “A” or “B”.
- There is a moderate level of awareness of the proposal, likely a result of the information pieces that were mailed to registered voter households and other community outreach efforts.
- 75% support for the mill levy proposal is a very favorable number
 - Support intensity is strong (42% Definitely Yes vs. 11% Definitely No)
 - Support is strong across all age groups
 - Support is strong across both likely and unlikely voters
 - Support is strong for both district employees and non-district employees
- There is strong support for each part of the proposal. Fire station upgrades is the only part of the proposal that received a high priority percentage less than 35%.
- 72% of respondents have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in TLMFPD to spend the mill levy monies wisely. This is a strong percentage.



Conclusions

- Tax sensitivity is low to moderate, with 22% of respondents extremely or very concerned about the tax impact compared to 49% who are not very concerned.
- The argument in favor of the proposal tested much stronger than the arguments against the proposal.
- Respondents who indicated they had concerns regarding the proposal mentioned:
 - *Total cost / Size of request*
 - *Need for additional information*
 - *Taxes and other pocketbook concerns*
 - *Need for oversight*
 - *Desire to have growth pay its way*
 - *General concerns about new home construction and other growth*
 - *Desire to see alternative funding options pursued*



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