



# Telephone Survey of Santa Clara County Voters

Conducted for: Santa Clara Valley Water District

*July 2018*

# Methodology

- ▶ Telephone survey of registered voters in Santa Clara County
- ▶ Conducted by trained, professional interviewers from June 30 – July 2, 2018
- ▶ 400 completed interviews
- ▶ Margin of error:  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points
- ▶ Interviews conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese
- ▶ Where applicable, results compared with:

Date	Sample Size	Universe	Margin of Error	EMC #
December 2017	400	Voters	$\pm 4.9$ percentage points	17-6614
June 2017	400	Voters	$\pm 4.9$ percentage points	17-6427
January 2017	800	Voters	$\pm 3.5$ percentage points	16-6214
March 2013	401	Residents	$\pm 4.9$ percentage points	13-4826
October 2010	400	Residents	$\pm 4.9$ percentage points	10-4353
October 2009	604	Voters	$\pm 4.0$ percentage points	09-4102

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

# Key Findings

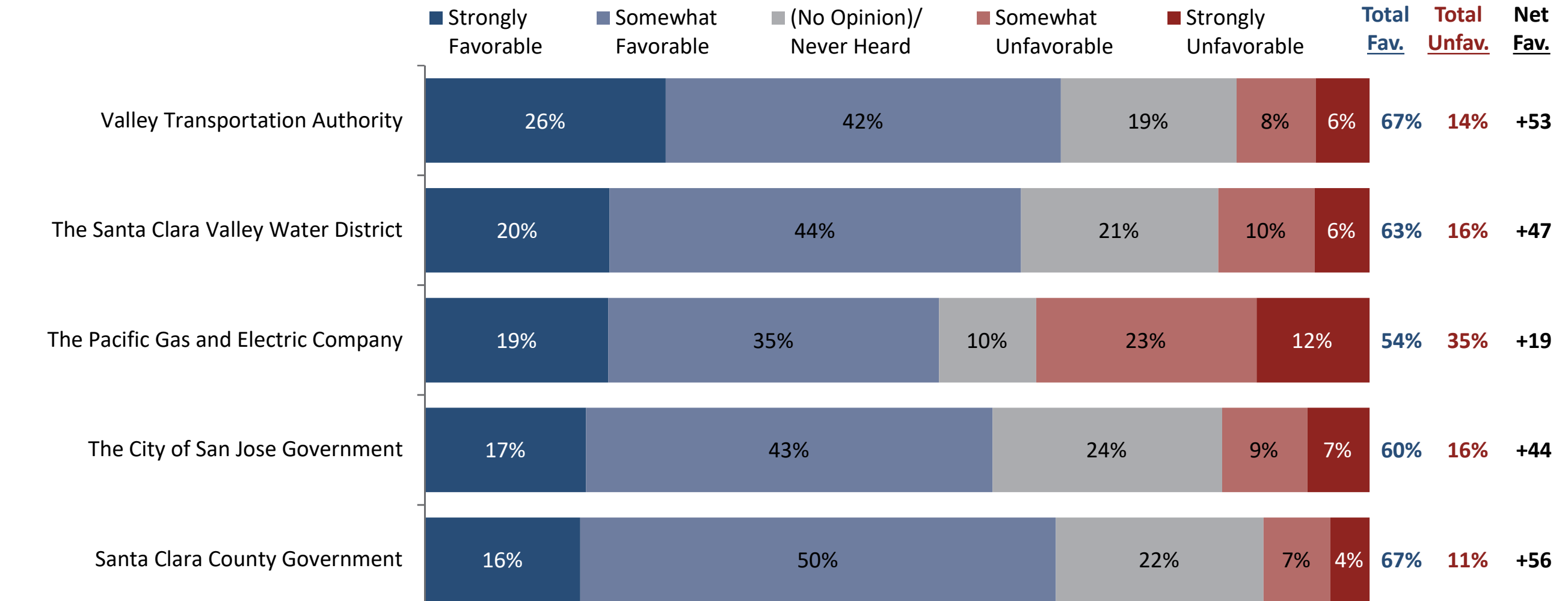
- ▶ Perceptions of the Santa Clara Valley Water District remain largely positive.
- ▶ Although we do not see dramatic shifts in positive attributes or job ratings, the District's favorable rating has improved this year, indicating the communications campaign may be starting to gain traction.
- ▶ Voters' priorities continue to be closely aligned with the District's mission and values.
  - The attributes most strongly associated with the District—keeping water free of toxins and concern for the environment—are top issues to voters.
- ▶ Ratings of tap water and a substantial increase in home usage of bottled water indicate there may be some concerns about drinking water, particularly among the Latino and Asian communities.



# Overall Attitudes

# Organization Ratings

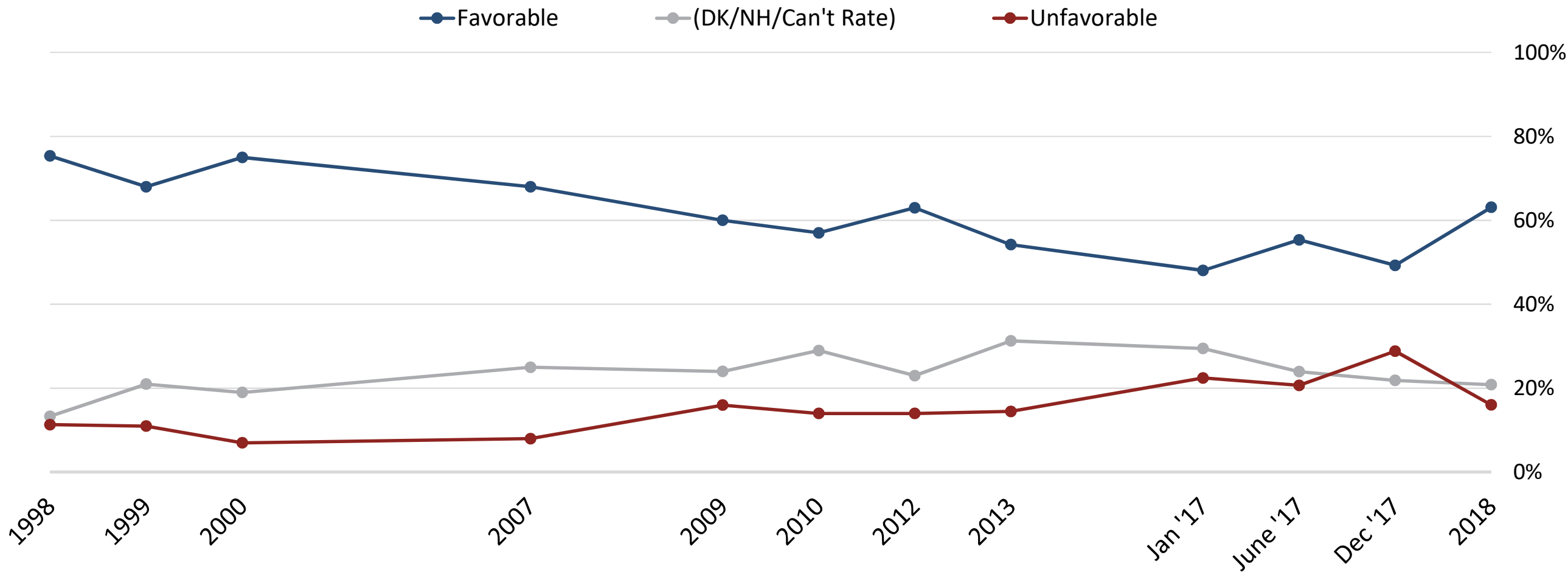
Nearly two-thirds view SCVWD favorably. Other local government agencies garner similar ratings.



Q3-7. I'm going to read you a list of organizations and agencies. Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of each one. If you have never heard of one, please just say so.

# SCVWD Favorability Over Time

*The District's favorability is above sixty percent for the first time in several years.*

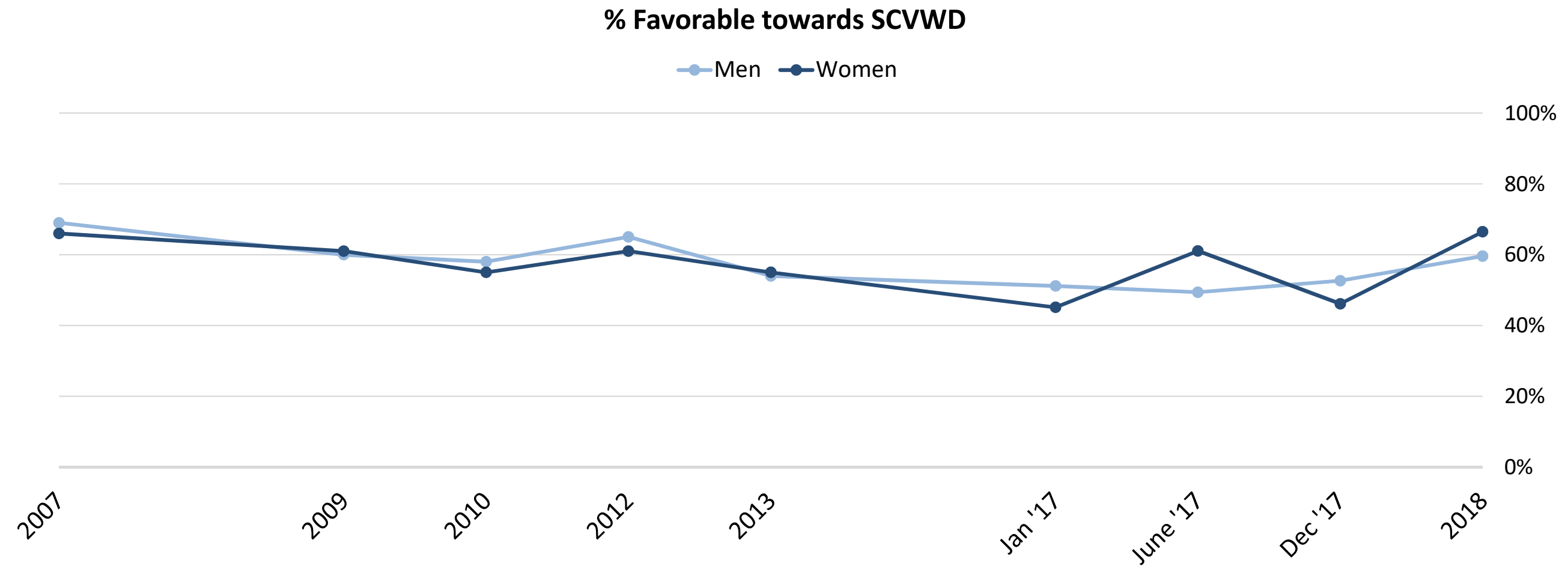


Q3. Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of The Santa Clara Valley Water District.

# SCVWD Favorability Over Time, Gender



*The District’s favorability has improved among both men and women, with a greater increase among women.*

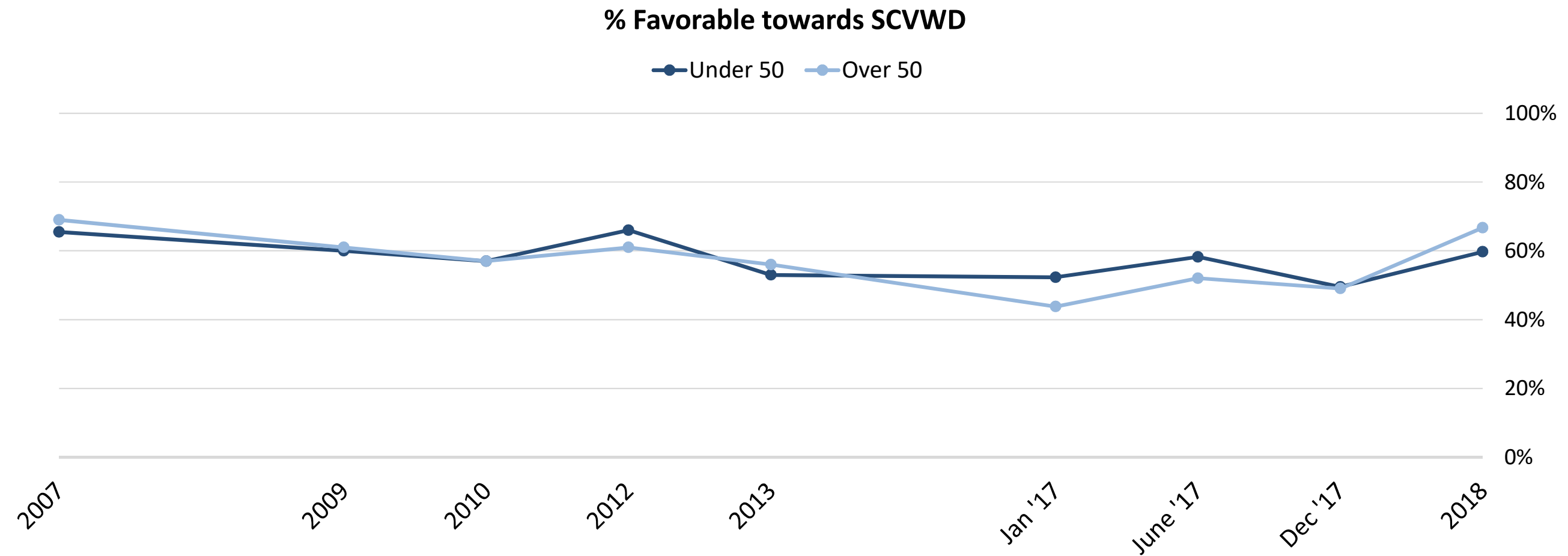


Q3. Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of The Santa Clara Valley Water District.



# SCVWD Favorability Over Time, Age

*Ratings of the District improved both among those under fifty and over fifty.*



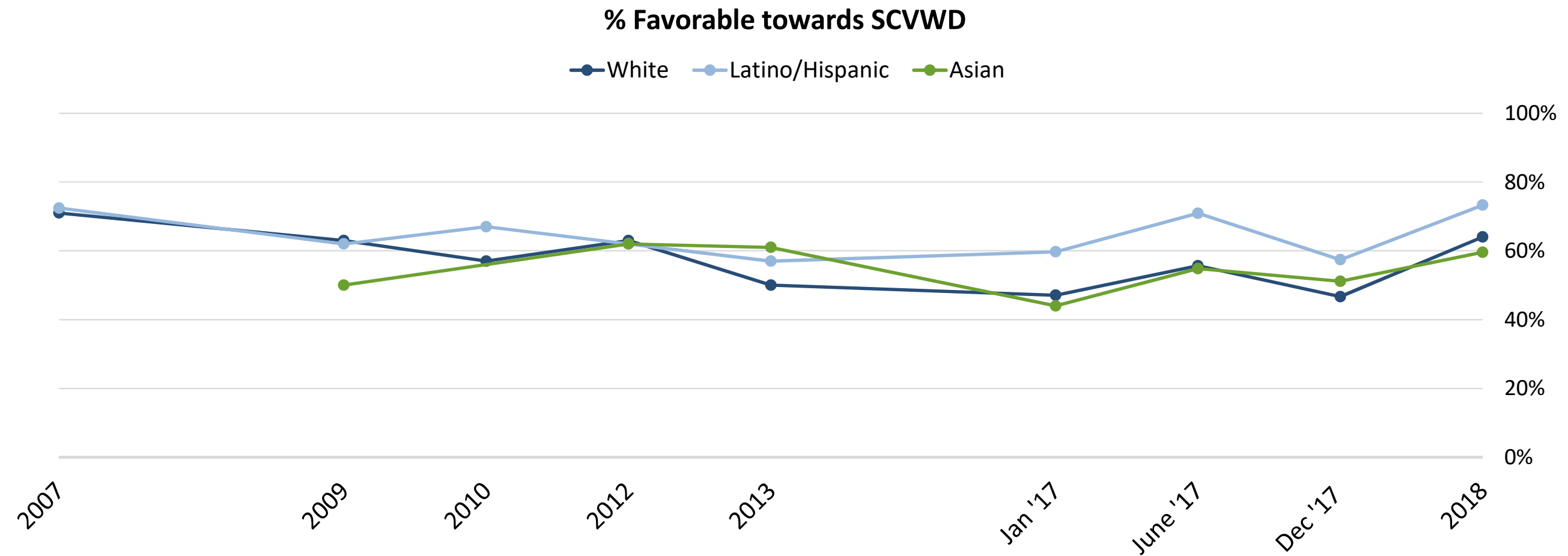
Q3. Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of The Santa Clara Valley Water District.



# SCVWD Favorability Over Time, Ethnicity



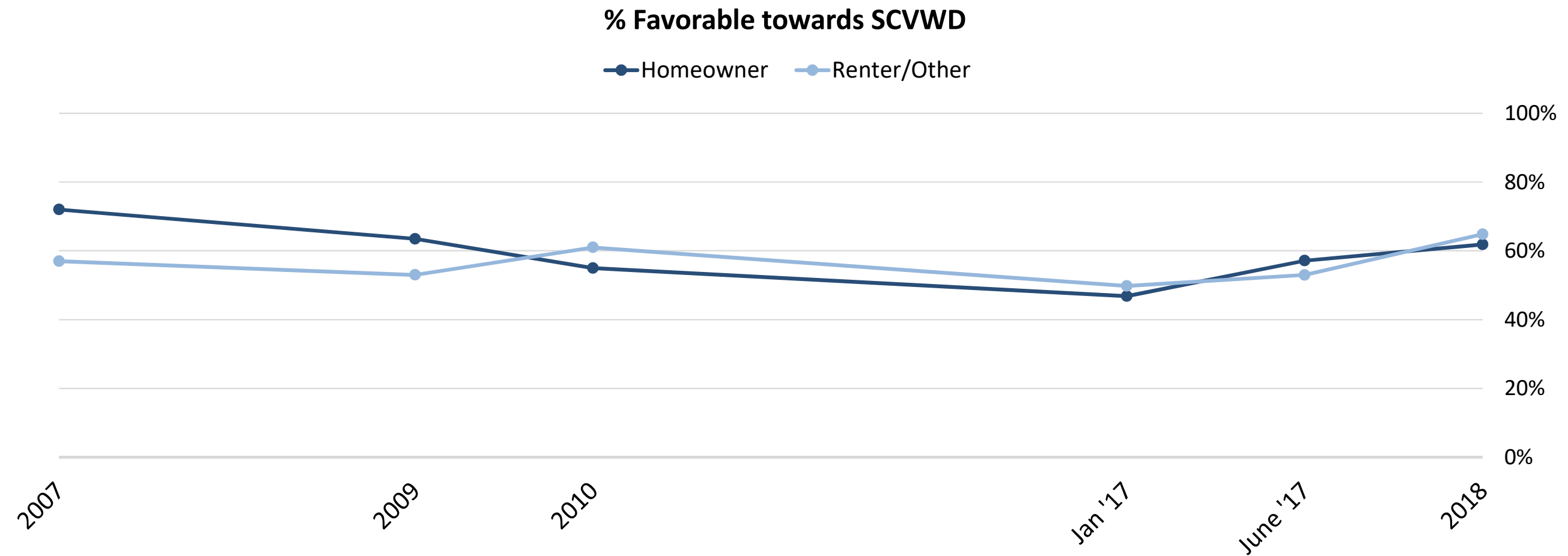
*Favorable ratings have improved among Latinos as well as Whites and Asians.*



Q3. Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of The Santa Clara Valley Water District.

# SCVWD Favorability Over Time, Home Ownership

*Ratings have improved among both renters and homeowners.*

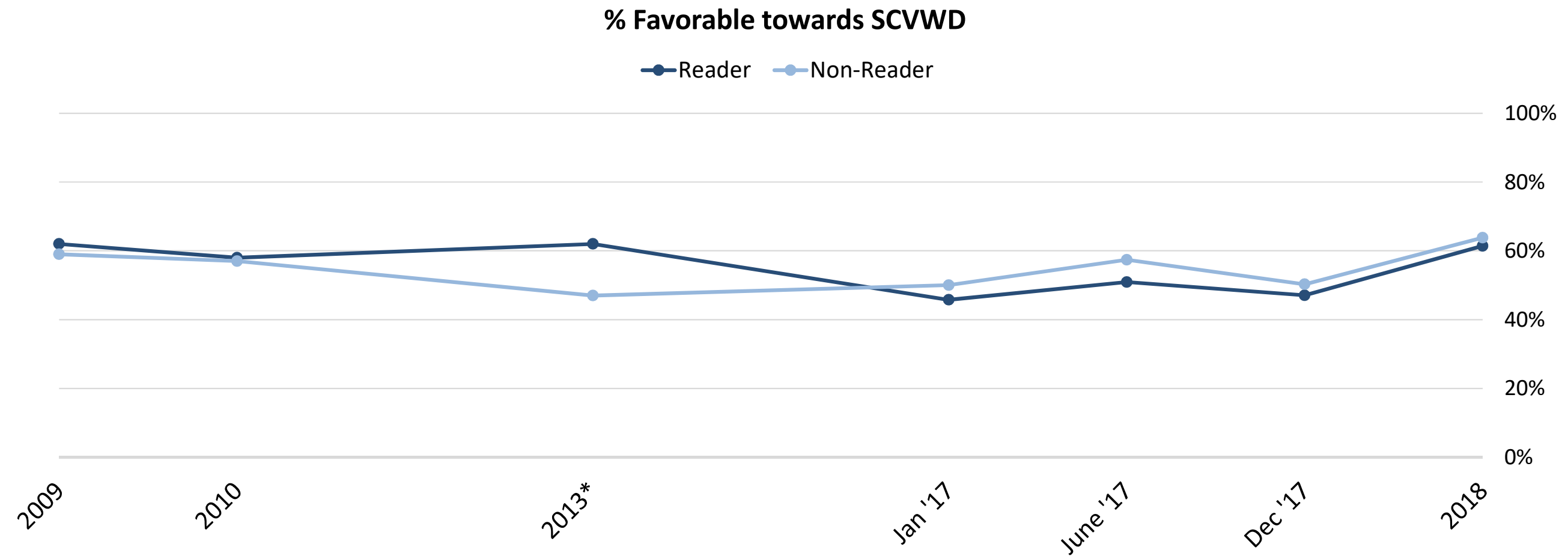


Q3. Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of The Santa Clara Valley Water District.

# SCVWD Favorability Over Time, Mercury News Readership



*The gap between Mercury News readers and non-readers has narrowed over the last five years.*



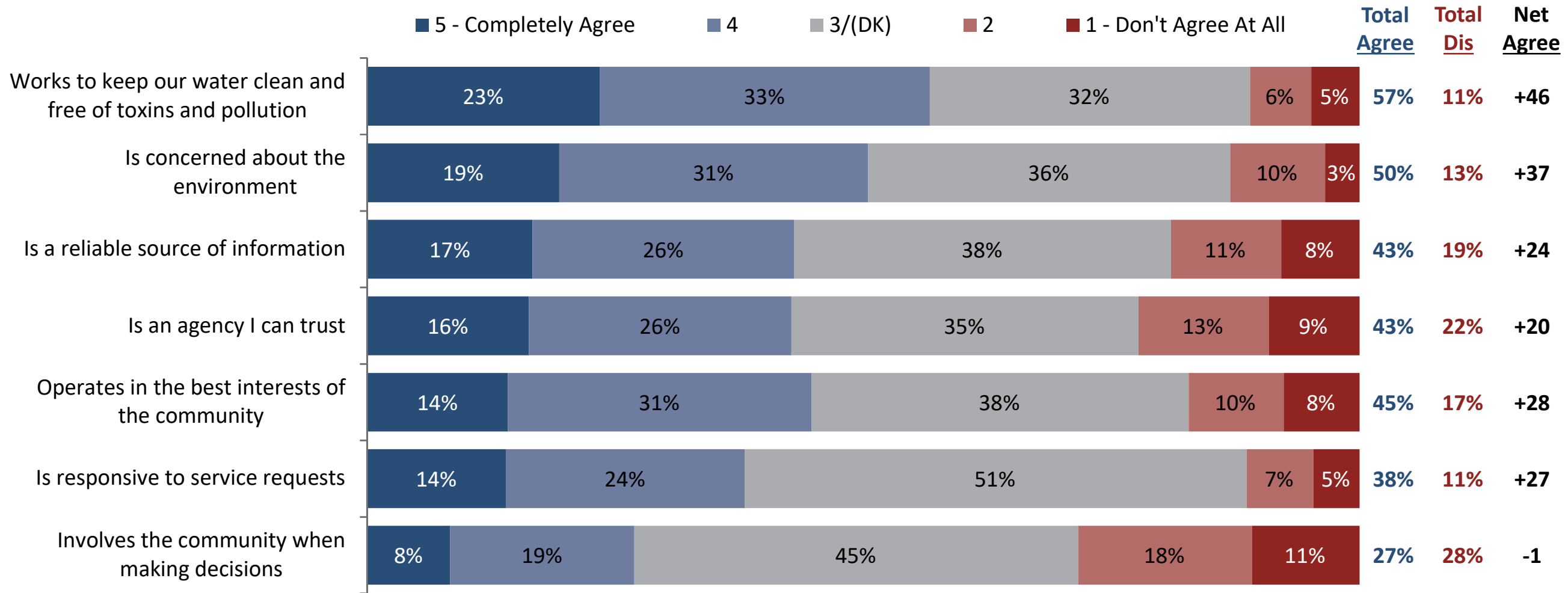
*\*Readership assessed based on reliance on San Jose Mercury News for news and information*  
Q3. Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of The Santa Clara Valley Water District.



# Water District Attributes

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*The attributes most strongly associated with the District are working to keep toxins out of the water supply and concern for the environment.*

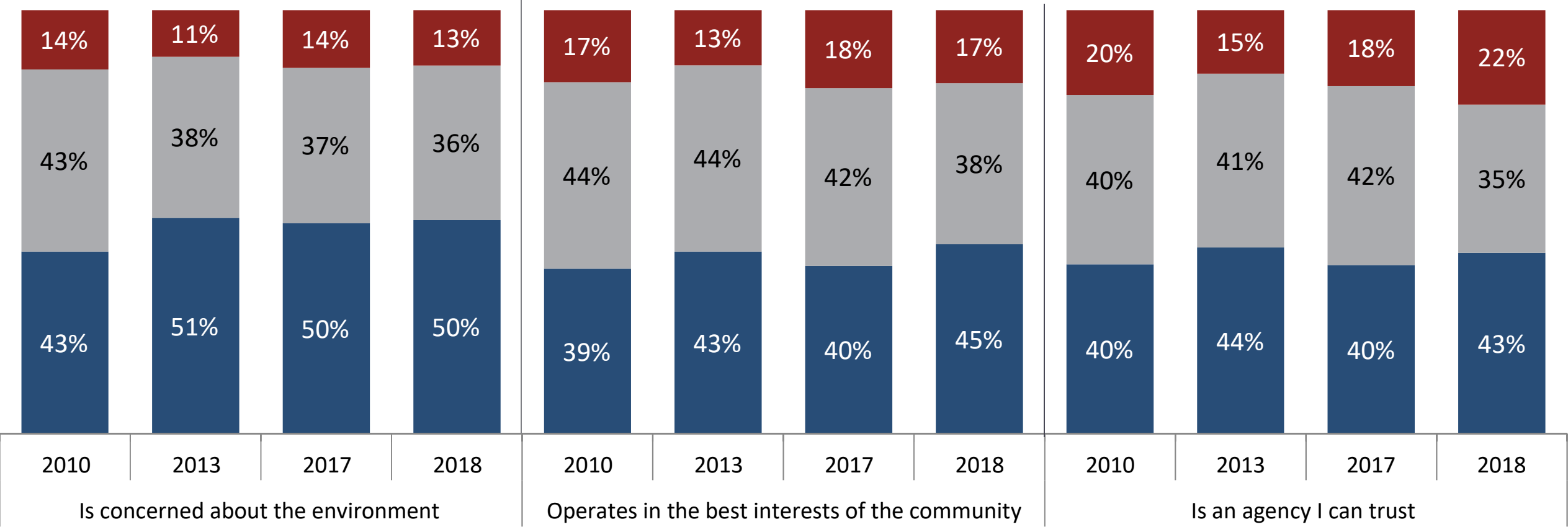


Q15-21. Now I'm going to read you a series of statements. Please respond to each statement using a five-point scale, where one means you DON'T AGREE AT ALL that the statement describes the Santa Clara Valley Water District and five means you COMPLETELY AGREE that the statement describes the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Feel free to use any number from one to five.

# Water District Attributes Over Time

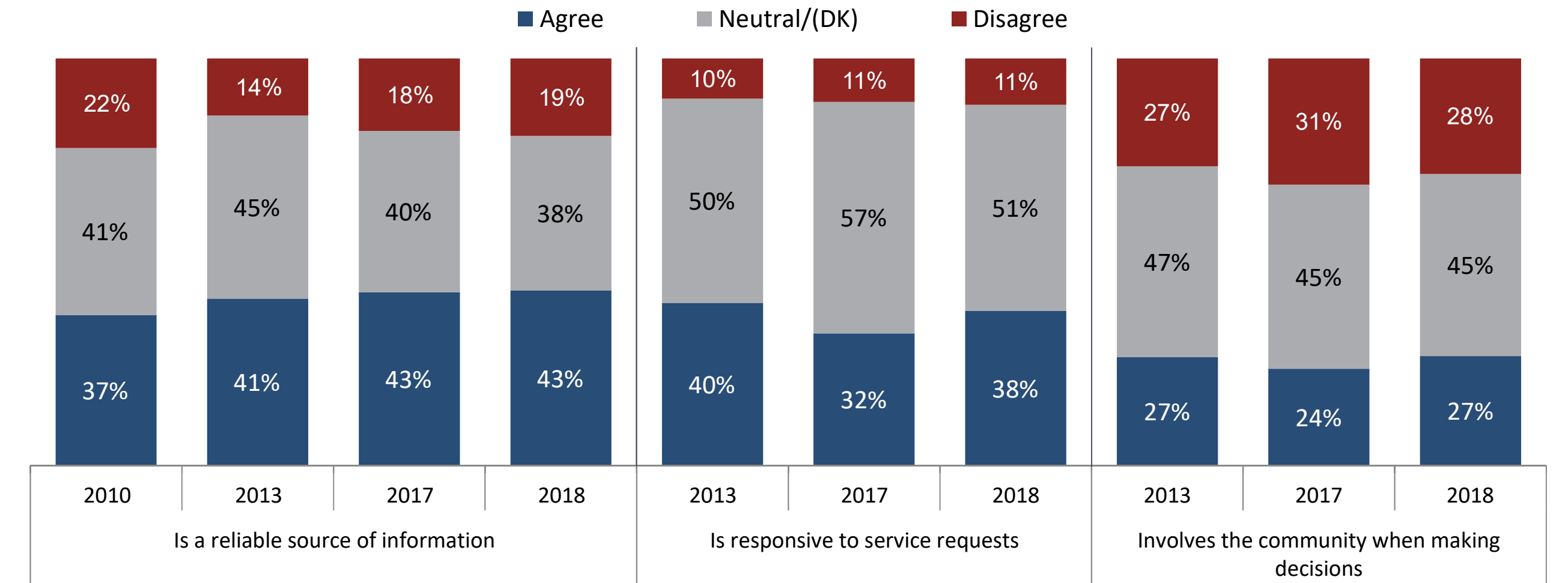
*A majority continues to see the District as concerned about the environment, and more now agree it operates in the best interests of the community.*

■ Agree      ■ Neutral/(DK)      ■ Disagree



# Water District Attributes Over Time

Ratings have improved slightly on community involvement and service requests, reversing last year's downward movement.



Q15-21. Now I'm going to read you a series of statements. Please respond to each statement using a five-point scale, where one means you DON'T AGREE AT ALL that the statement describes the Santa Clara Valley Water District and five means you COMPLETELY AGREE that the statement describes the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Feel free to use any number from one to five.

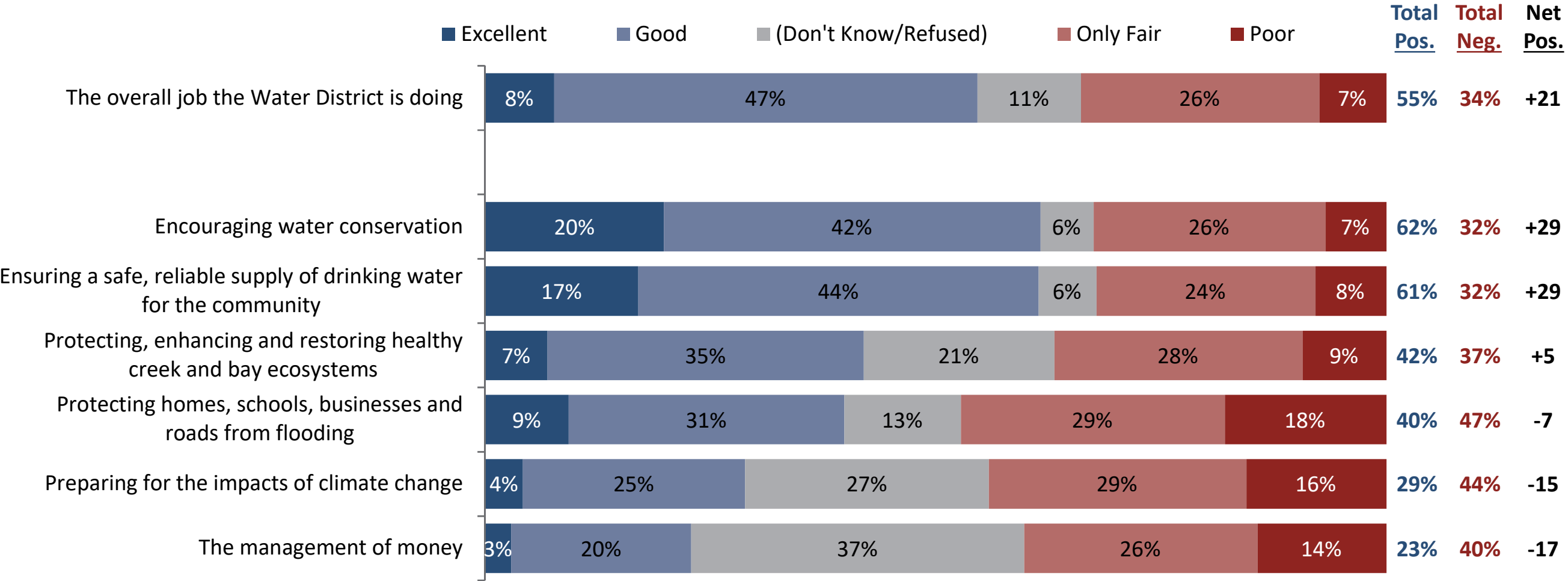




# Job Ratings

# SCVWD Job Ratings

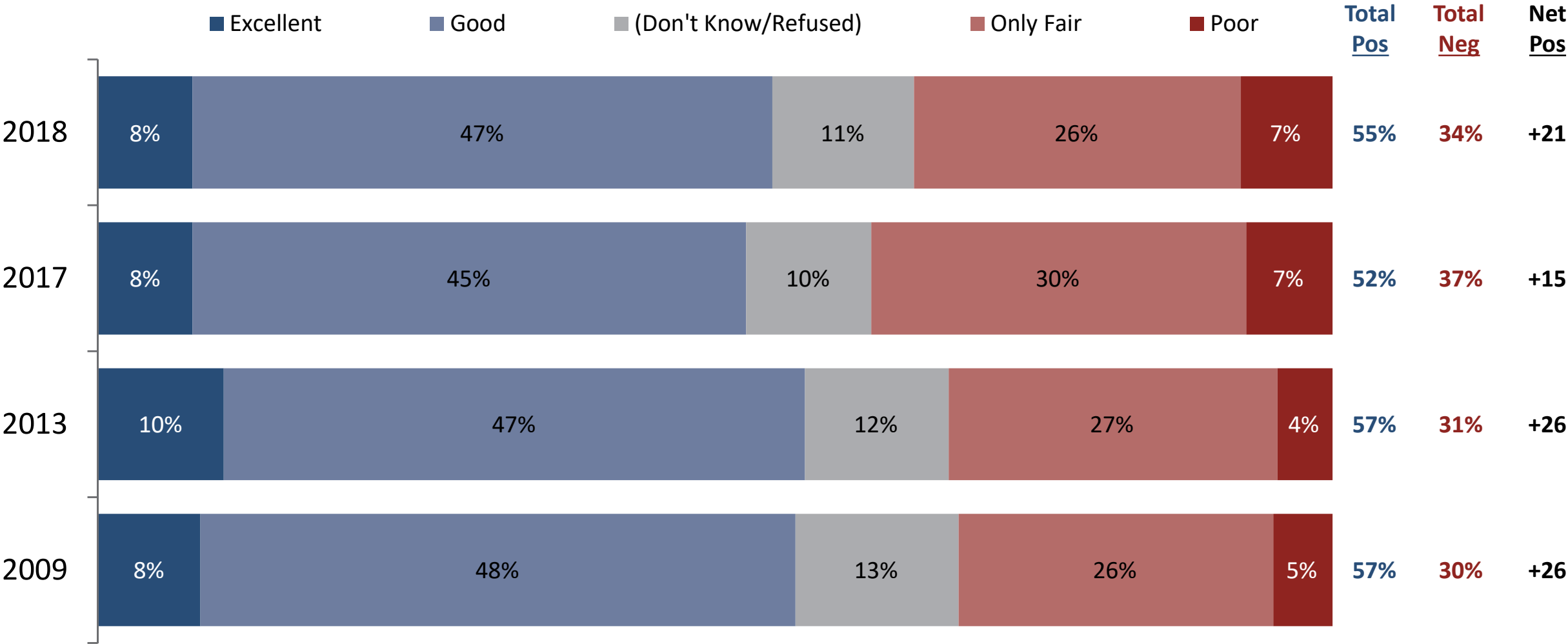
*Majorities rate the District positively on its overall job performance as well as on the job it’s doing encouraging water conservation and ensuring a safe, reliable drinking water supply. Many are uncertain about the District’s money management and efforts on climate change preparation.*



Q8-14. Thinking specifically about the Santa Clara Valley Water District, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the job it is doing on each of the following responsibilities.

# Overall Job Rating Over Time

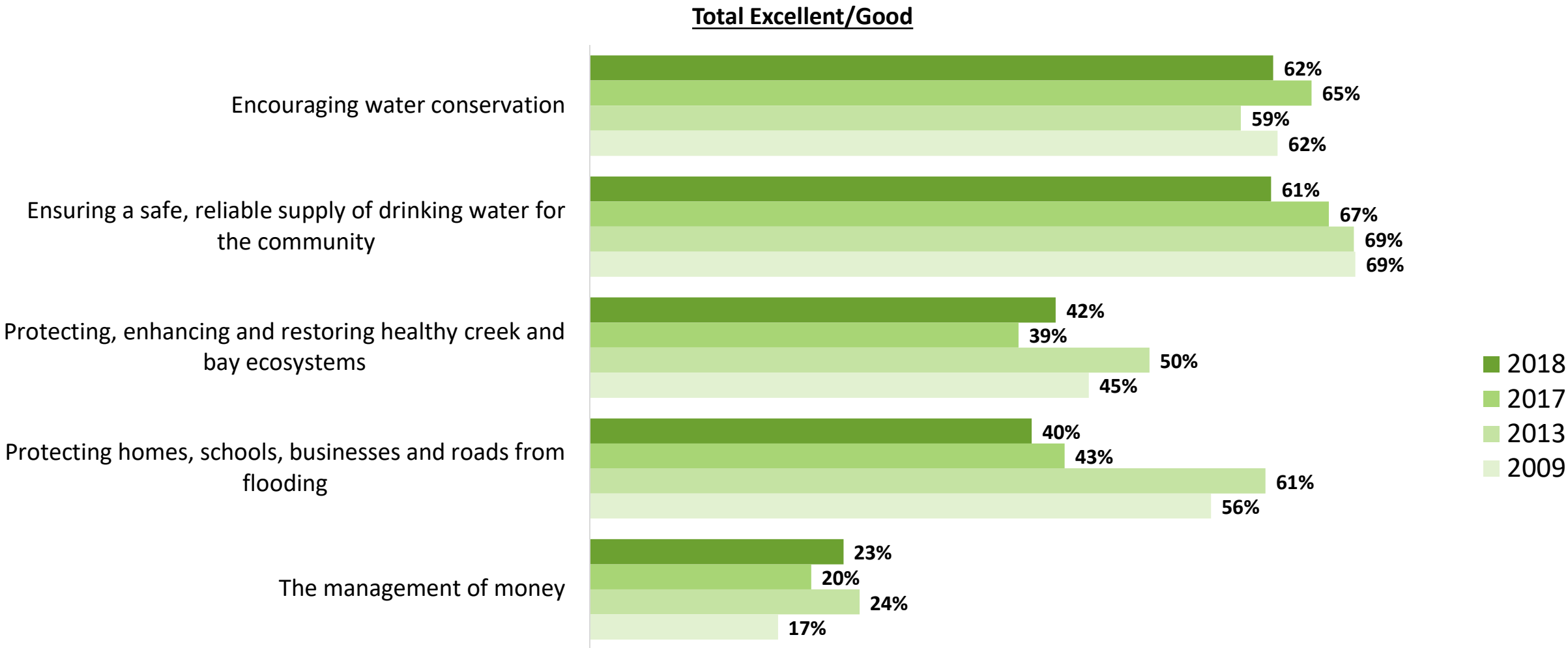
While there has been no change in intensity, the District’s overall job rating is more net-positive this year.



Q8. Thinking specifically about the Santa Clara Valley Water District, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the job it is doing on each of the following responsibilities.

# Other Job Ratings Over Time

*The District’s rating on ensuring a reliable drinking water supply has decreased slightly, but is still strong. Other elements show fluctuation within the margin of error.*



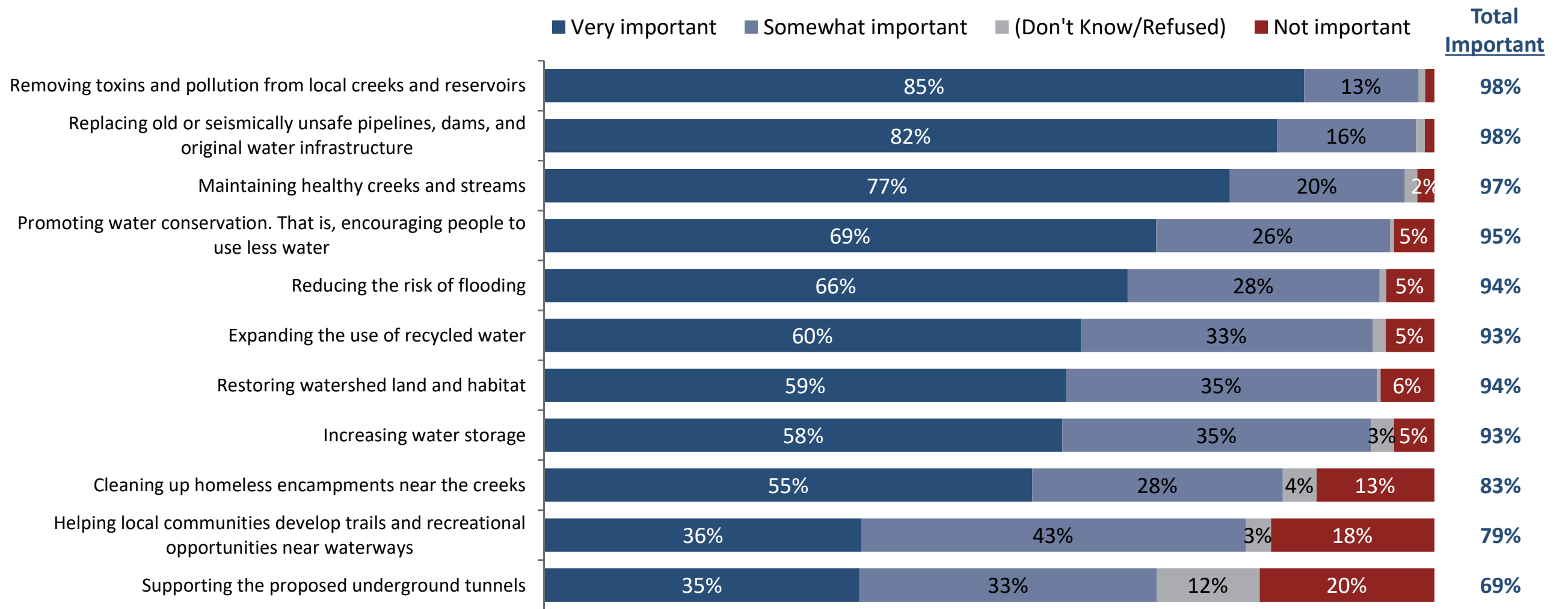
Q8-14. Thinking specifically about the Santa Clara Valley Water District, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the job it is doing on each of the following responsibilities.



# District Priorities

# Importance of District Priorities

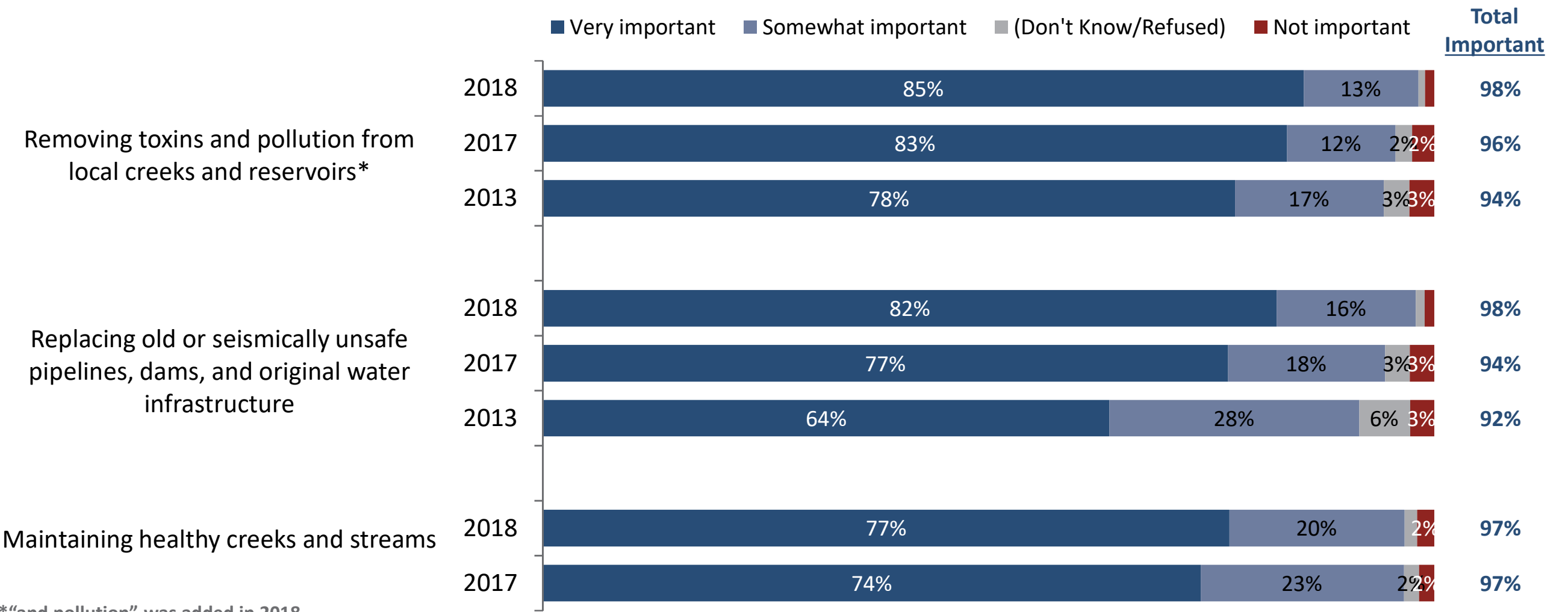
*Removing pollution from local creeks and reservoirs and replacing old, unsafe infrastructure are most important. Cleaning up homeless encampments, developing trails, and supporting the Delta tunnels are lowest on the priority list.*



Q22-32. Now I'm going to read you a list of some of the projects and priorities for the Santa Clara Valley Water District. For each one, please tell me if the project or priority is very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important to you.

# Priorities Over Time

*Intensity continues to increase on removing toxins from local water sources and replacing aging infrastructure.*



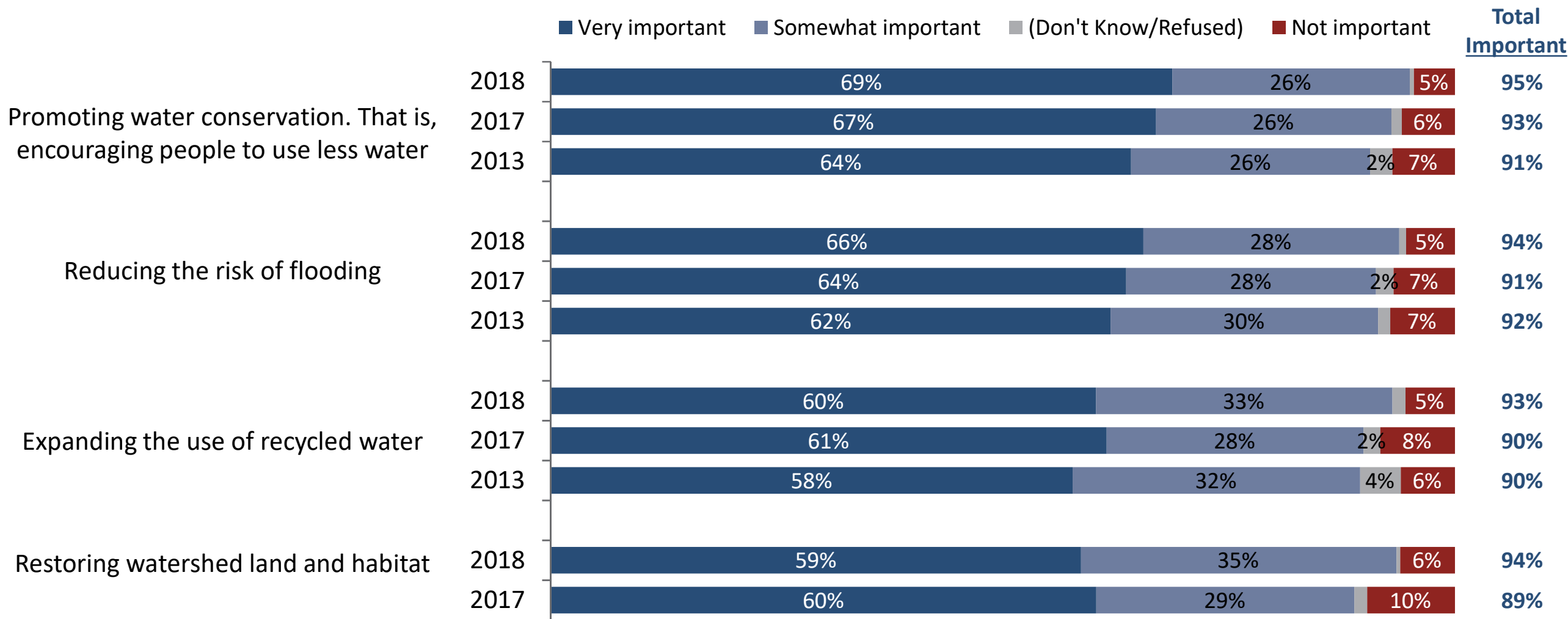
\*“and pollution” was added in 2018

Q22-32. Now I'm going to read you a list of some of the projects and priorities for the Santa Clara Valley Water District. For each one, please tell me if the project or priority is very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important to you.



# Priorities Over Time (Cont'd)

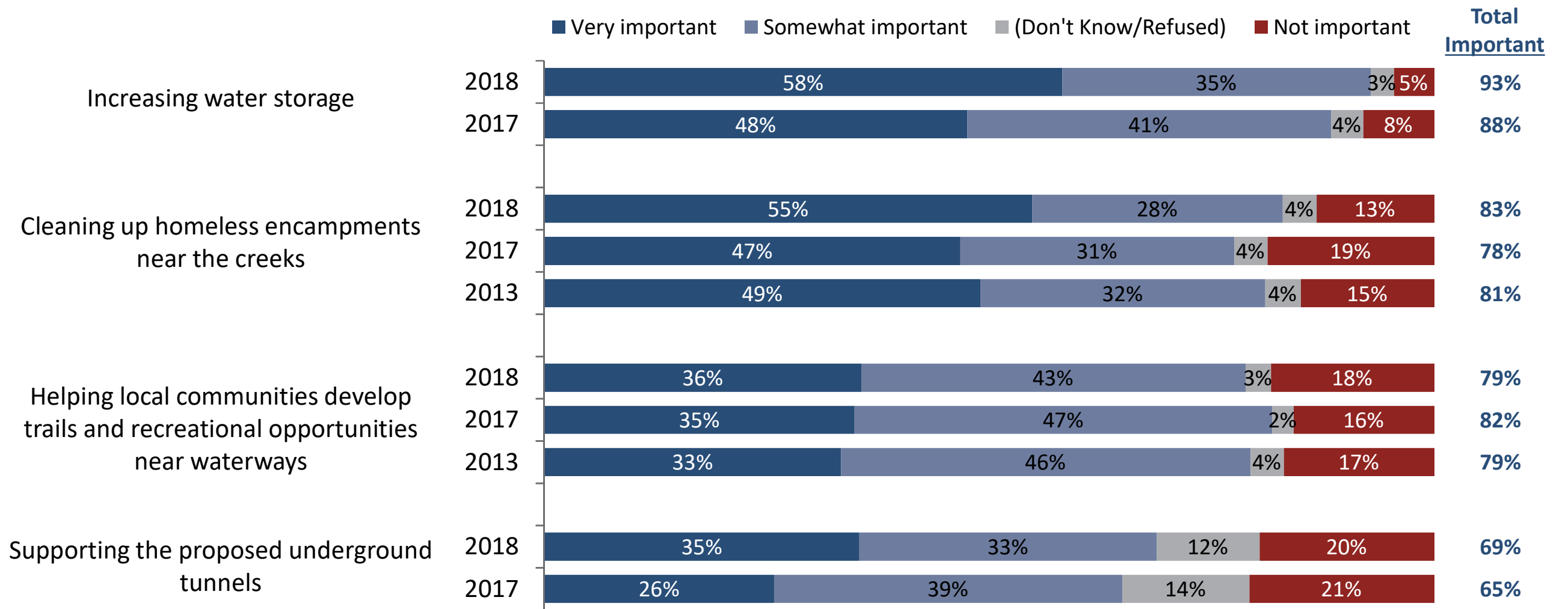
Promoting water conservation and reducing flood risk also show a trend towards greater intensity.



Q22-32. Now I'm going to read you a list of some of the projects and priorities for the Santa Clara Valley Water District. For each one, please tell me if the project or priority is very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important to you.

# Priorities Over Time (Cont'd)

*Increasing water storage, cleaning up homeless encampments near creeks, and supporting the Delta tunnels have all seen substantial increases in intensity since last summer.*

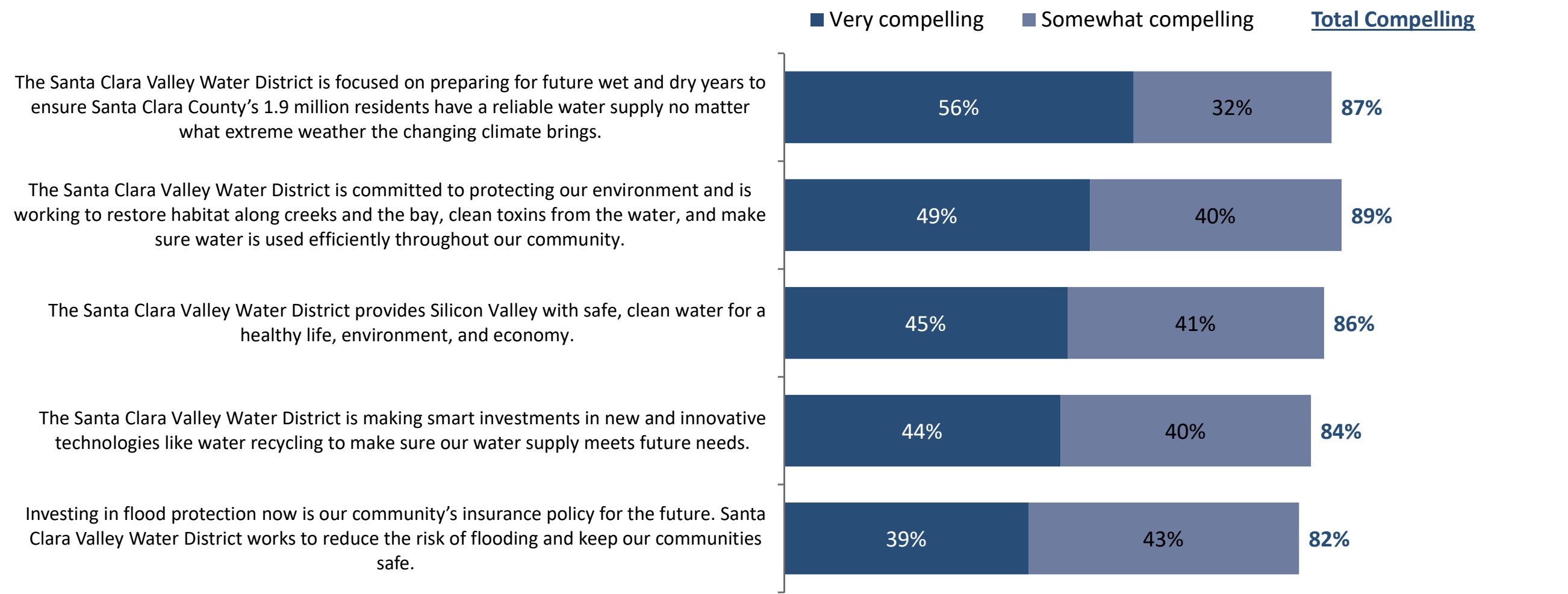




# Messaging

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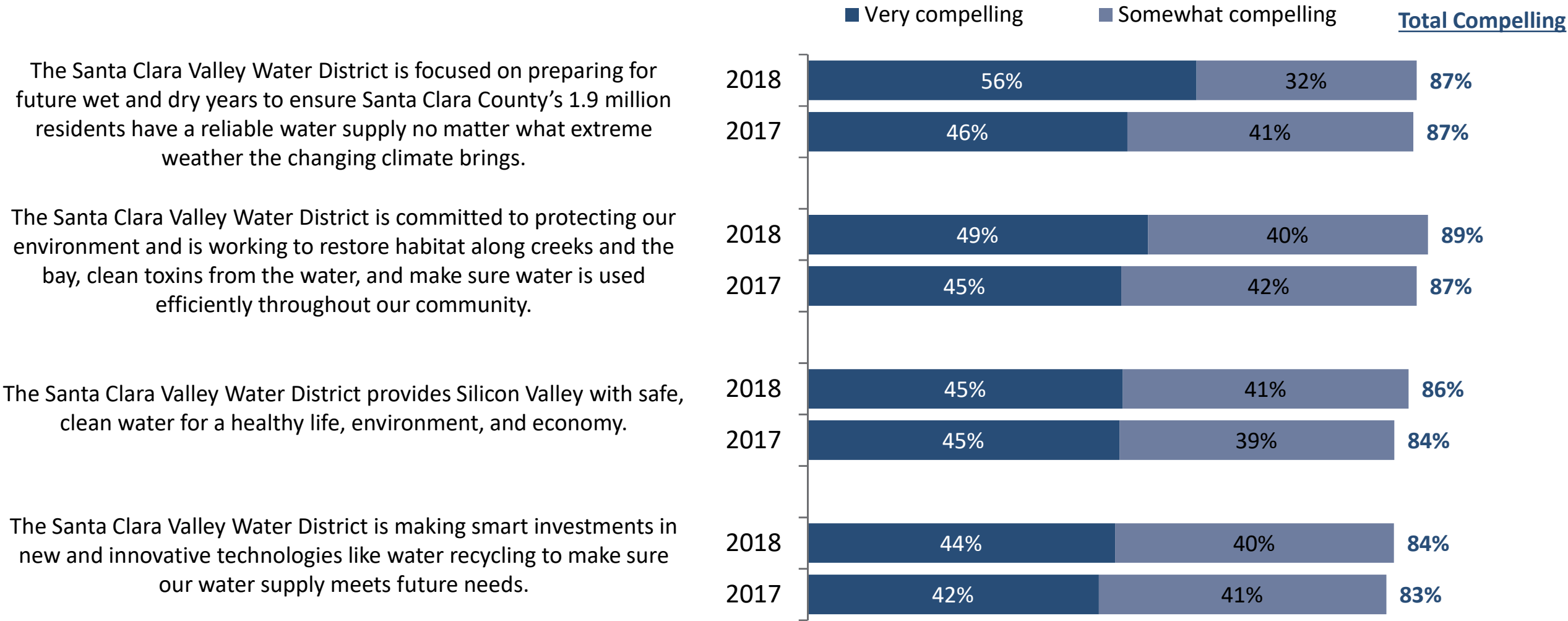
*While all messages tested receive high ratings, preparing for future climate fluctuations garners the most intensity, with over half rating it as very compelling.*



Q33-37. Next I’d like to read you some statements about the Santa Clara Valley Water District. After each one, please tell me how compelling that statement was to you – very compelling, somewhat compelling, not too compelling, or not at all compelling.

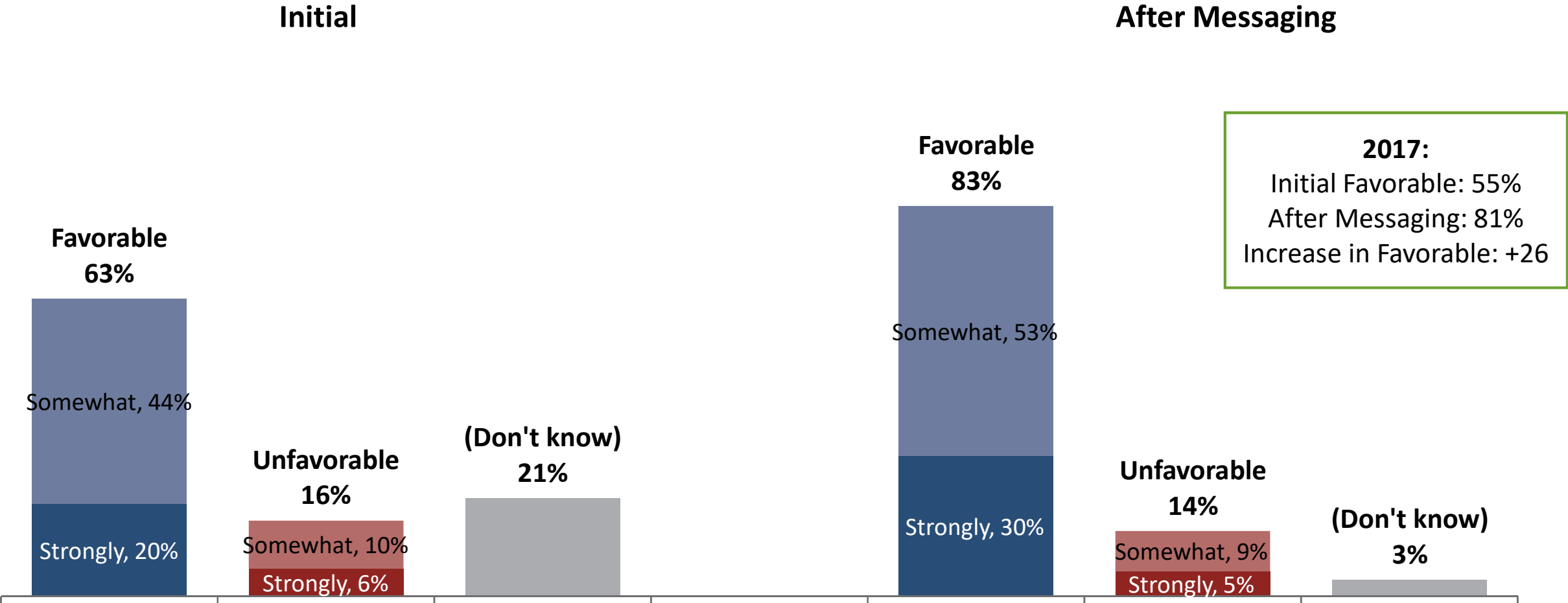
# Messaging - Tracking

*While preparing for future climate fluctuations has seen the most substantial increase in intensity since last summer, protecting the environment shows a trend towards greater intensity as well.*



# Favorability After Messaging

*After messaging, the District’s favorable increases twenty points.*



Q38. Now that you’ve heard more, do you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or strongly unfavorable opinion of the Santa Clara Valley Water District?



# Favorability Segmentation



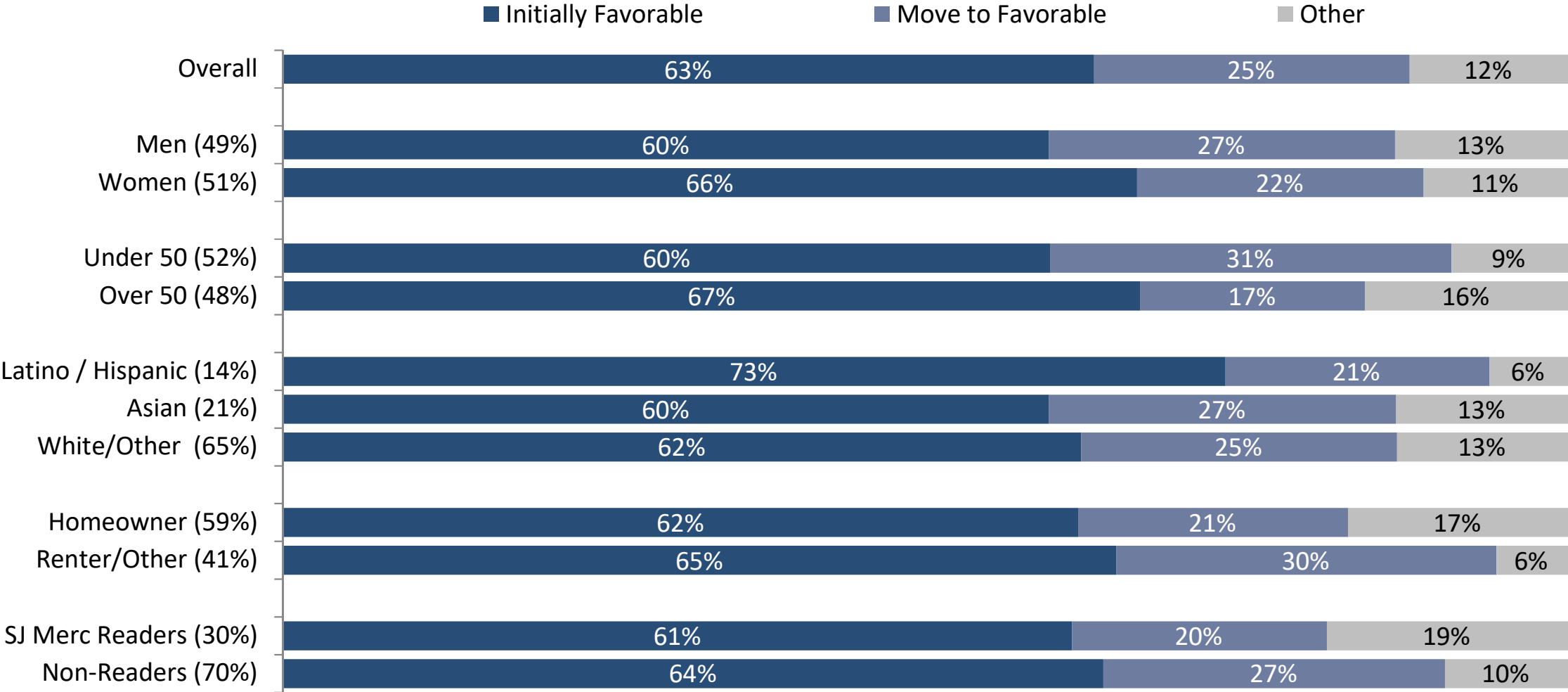
# Favorability Segmentation

**Initially Favorable:** Rate SCVWD favorably initially  
**Move to Favorable:** Do not rate SCVWD favorably initially, but move to rate it favorably after messaging  
**Other:** Never rate SCVWD favorably



# Favorability Segmentation by Subgroup

*Men, younger voters, Asians, renters, and those who do not read the Mercury News are most likely to shift to rating the District favorably after positive messaging.*

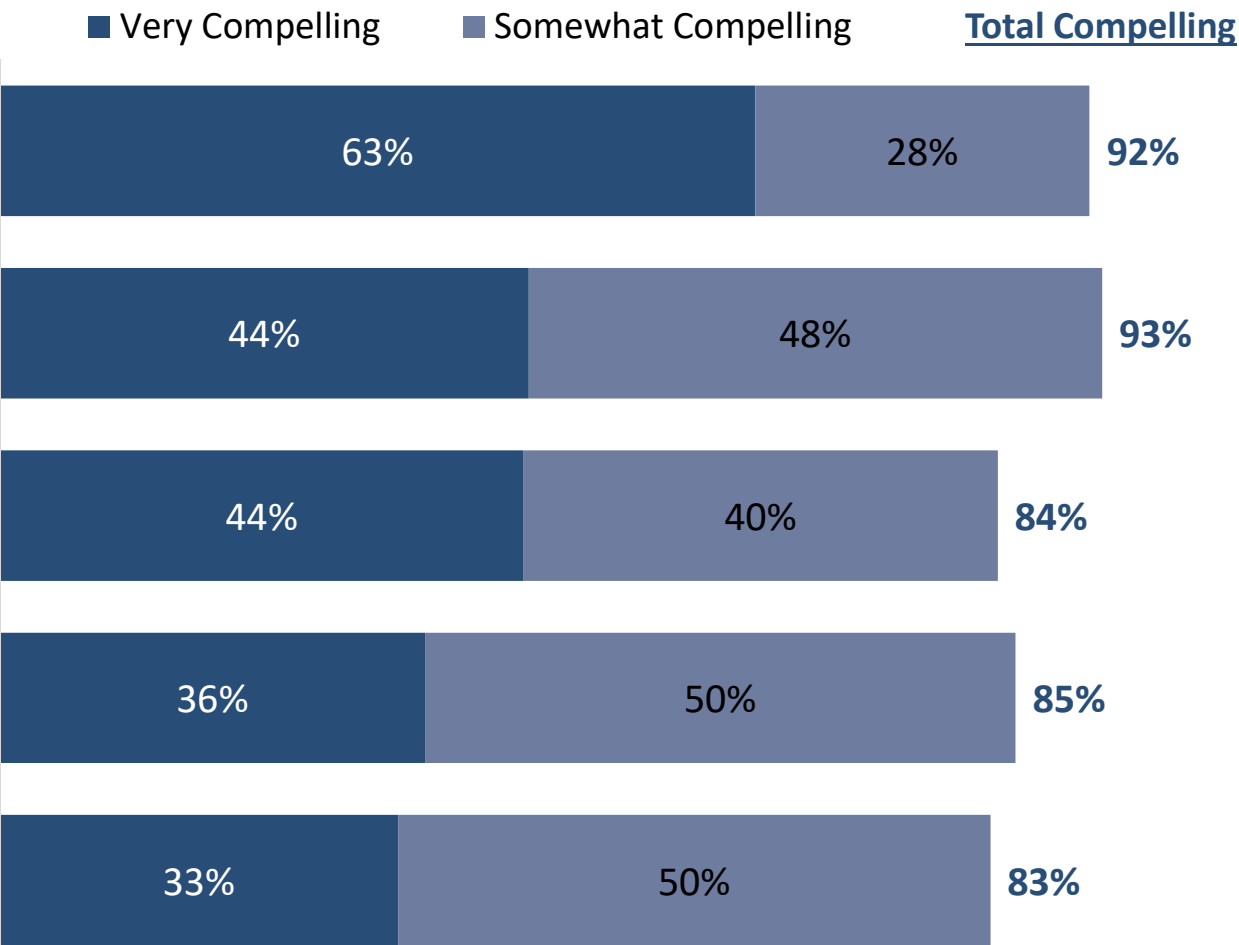


# Messaging Among Favorable Movers

*Preparing for climate change is by far the most effective message among movers, with nearly two-thirds rating that a very compelling message.*

**n=98**

- The Santa Clara Valley Water District is focused on preparing for future wet and dry years to ensure Santa Clara County’s 1.9 million residents have a reliable water supply no matter what extreme weather the changing climate brings.
- The Santa Clara Valley Water District is committed to protecting our environment and is working to restore habitat along creeks and the bay, clean toxins from the water, and make sure water is used efficiently throughout our community.
- The Santa Clara Valley Water District is making smart investments in new and innovative technologies like water recycling to make sure our water supply meets future needs.
- The Santa Clara Valley Water District provides Silicon Valley with safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.
- Investing in flood protection now is our community’s insurance policy for the future. Santa Clara Valley Water District works to reduce the risk of flooding and keep our communities safe.



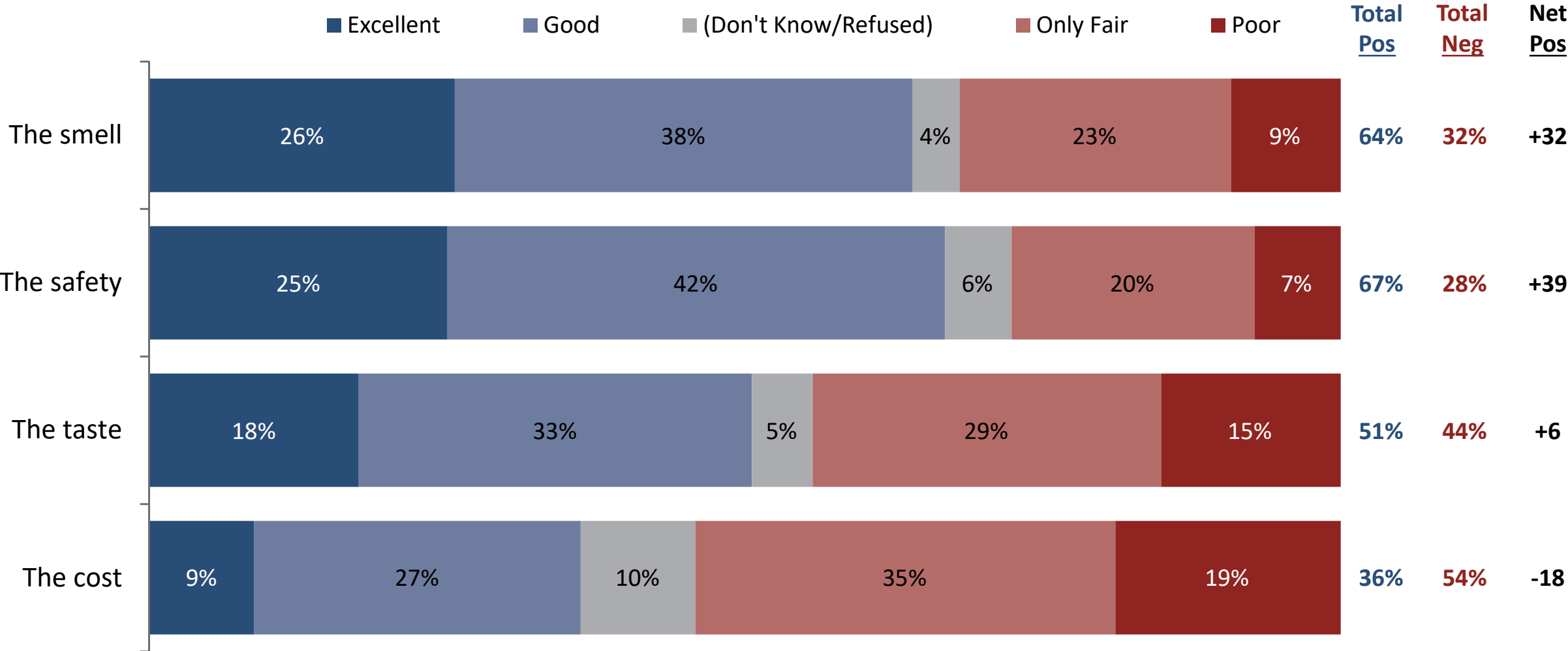
Q33-37. Next I’d like to read you some statements about the Santa Clara Valley Water District. After each one, please tell me how compelling that statement was to you – very compelling, somewhat compelling, not too compelling, or not at all compelling.



# Perceptions of Water Quality

# Water Quality Ratings

Tap water receives high marks for smell and safety, but taste is more divisive and a majority rate the cost negatively.



Q39-42. And, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair or poor, please rate each of the following aspects of the tap water in your home or apartment:

# Water Quality Ratings Over Time

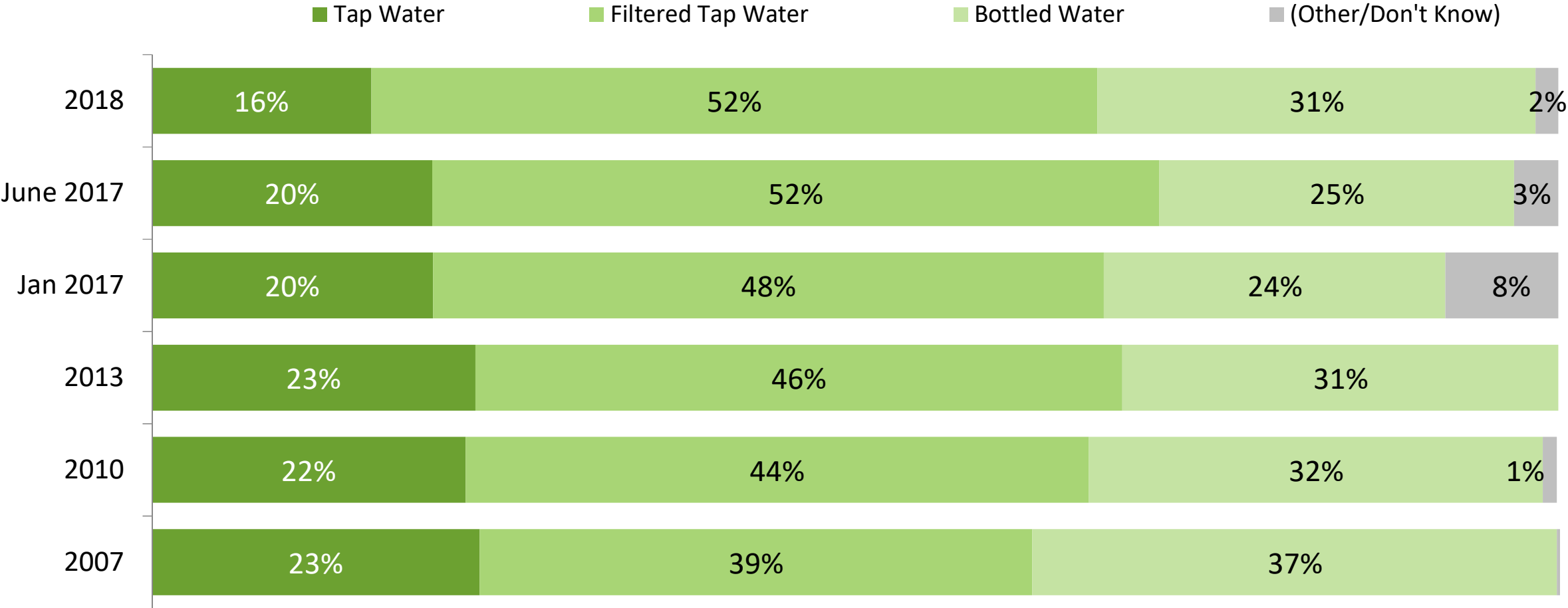
While “excellent” ratings of the taste and smell of water remain fairly stable, fewer rate them as good than in previous years.



Q39-42. And, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair or poor, please rate each of the following aspects of the tap water in your home or apartment:

# Drinking Water Preferences Over Time

*The number who drink bottled water at home has grown in the last year.*

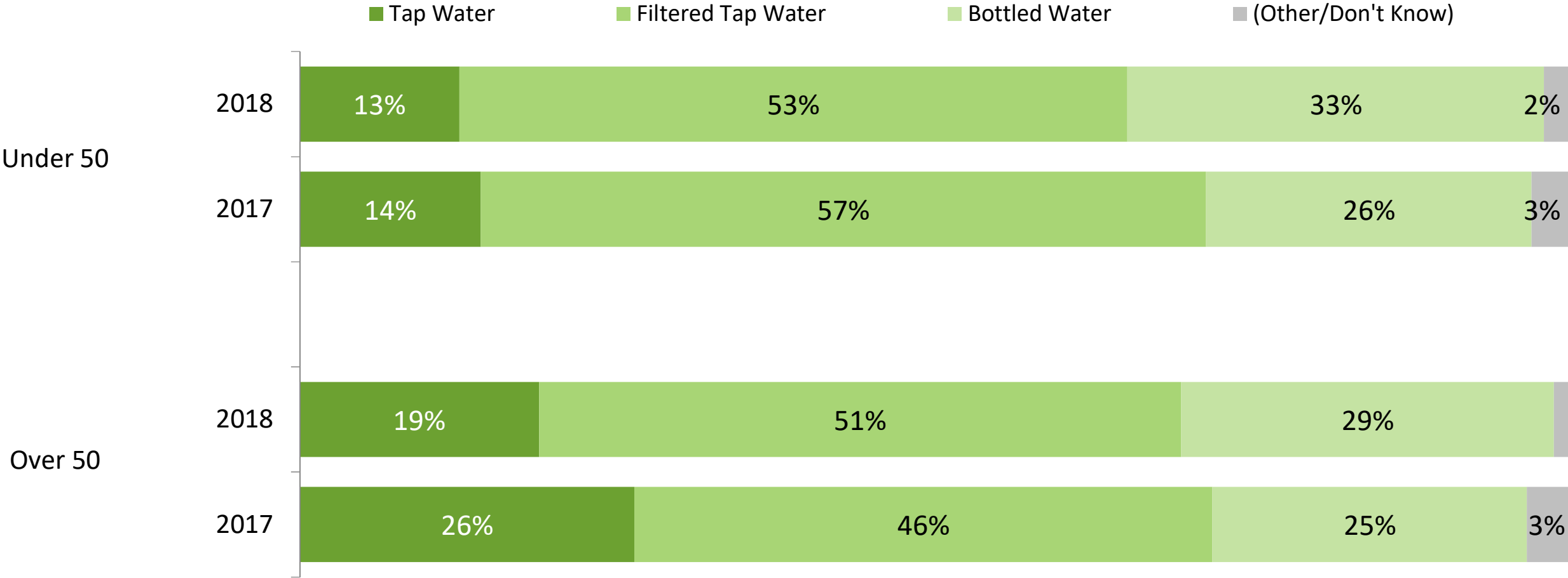




# Drinking Water Preferences by Age - Track

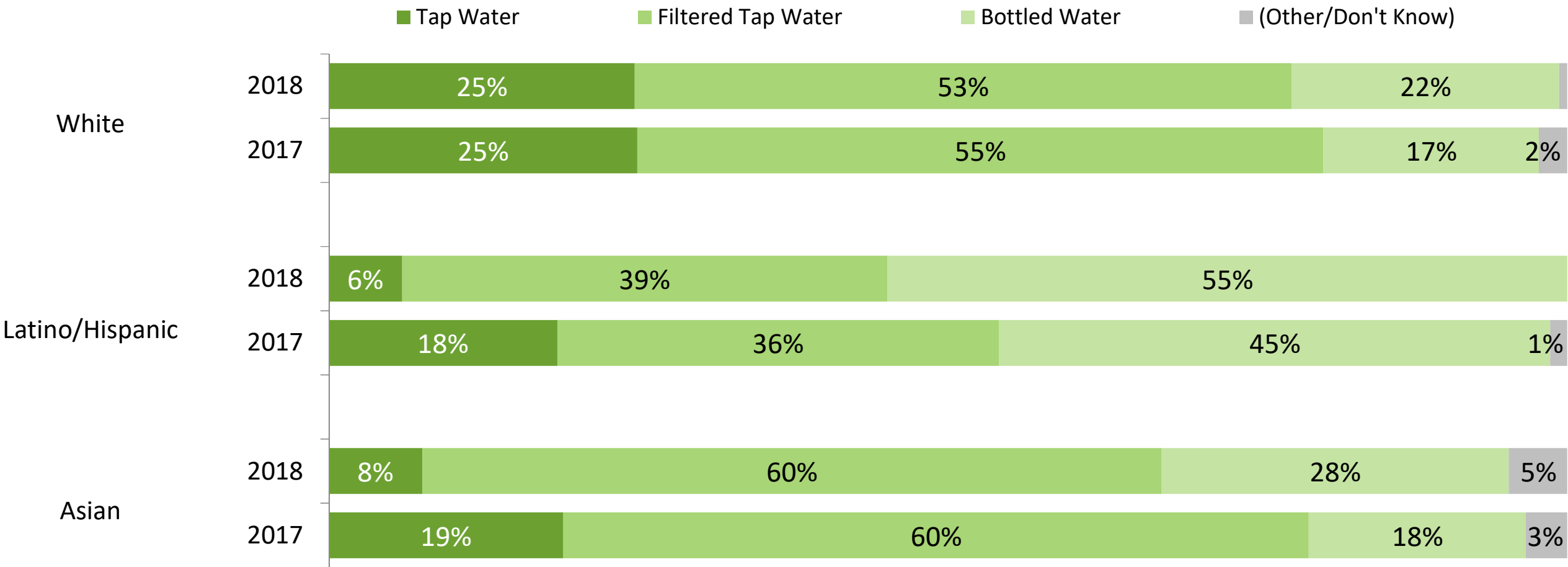


*The number of those who say they primarily drink bottled water at home has grown in the last year among both older and younger voters, and fewer over fifty now report drinking unfiltered tap water.*



# Drinking Water Preferences by Ethnicity - Track

*Bottled water use increased by ten points among both Latinos and Asians.*



# Conclusions

- ▶ There are some preliminary signs the communications effort is reaching people. Most notably, SCVWD's favorability rating has improved, with gains across demographic groups, suggesting awareness of its positive efforts in the community are on the rise.
- ▶ Messaging about the District's mission and values continues to resonate, including with those who do not initially rate the District favorably, and voters' priorities are in close alignment with the Districts.'
- ▶ Stay the course. Changing opinions takes time, but continuing to communicate about the District's efforts—particularly when it comes to preparing for future climate uncertainty and protecting the environment—is likely to have a positive impact on attitudes of the District.
- ▶ There may also be an opportunity for education around tap vs. bottled water, especially among the Latino and Asian communities.



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