



TO: Valley Water
FROM: EMC Research, Inc.
RE: Safe, Clean Water & Natural Flood Protection Program – Tracking Survey Key Findings
DATE: 7/7/2020

The following summarizes key takeaways from recent research among likely November 2020 voters in the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

Conclusion

Although it is impossible to predict future voter mood in these volatile times, recent tracking results combined with previous qualitative and quantitative research indicate cautious optimism for renewing the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program in November.

Voter optimism continues to be high but may be declining.

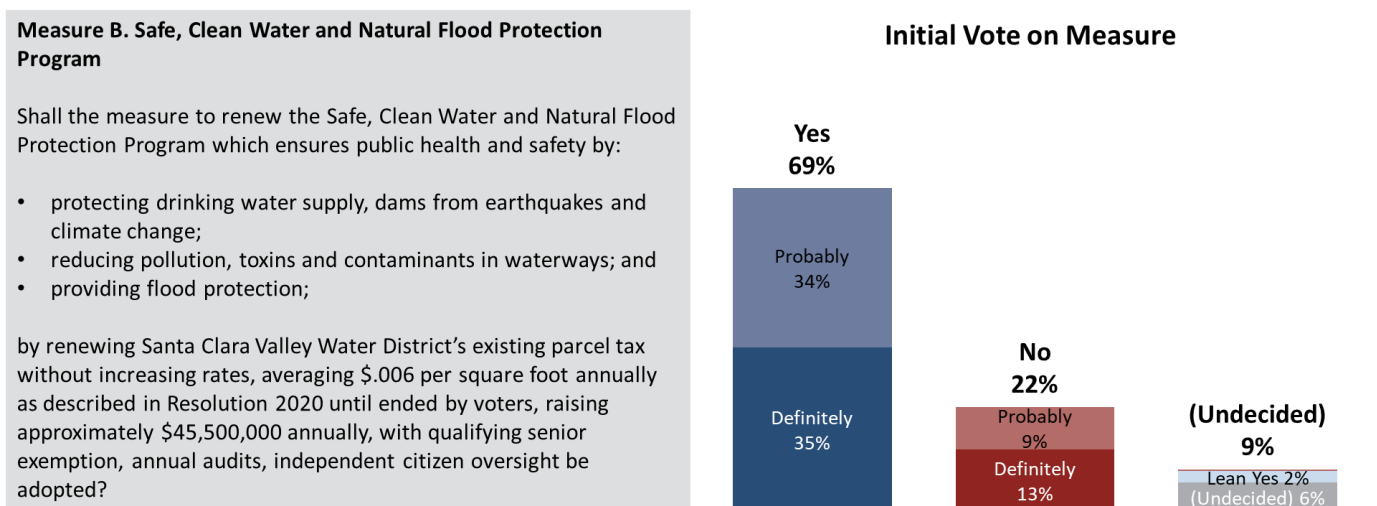
Polling in April had identified a significant increase in optimism, likely due to the community coming together to fight the spread of COVID. In February, 40% of County voters said things were heading in the right direction, while 32% said things were off on the wrong track. Fast forward two months and April’s research found 61% right direction/20% wrong track. Today, 62% say things are heading in the right direction while wrong track has increased a bit to 26%, hinting that positive feelings may have peaked and are on the downturn.

Voters are feeling a bit less pessimistic about the economy.

- In April, 2-in-5 voters (40%) expected their finances to get worse over the next few months; now only 18% think their finances will get worse.
- Today, 17% think their finances will get better over the next few months compared with 7% in April. Over half (59%) think things will stay the same for a while.

The proposed Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection measure is above the two-thirds threshold today.

When voters are given the proposed question that may appear on the November ballot, nearly 7 in 10 (69%) indicate they will vote Yes on the measure. Support has increased from 64% (definitely yes + probably yes) in April.



Additional information about benefits of the measure helps to solidify support.

After voters hear additional information about the outcomes and benefits of renewal, support increases to 73%.

Key information includes:

- An adequate supply of safe, reliable water is crucial to sustain our economy and quality of life. As we've seen, a serious public health crisis can devastate our community. This measure will make sure we have safe, clean water for years into the future. (80% convincing)
- This measure helps preserve our local water supply by reducing toxins, hazards, and contaminants in our rivers, lakes, and streams. (80% convincing)
- This measure improves the reliability of our water supply and helps prepare for natural disasters with upgrades to outdated, seismically unsafe pipelines and dams that deliver water throughout the county. (79% convincing)

Voters are vulnerable to opposition arguments.

It's important to note that support for the measure is somewhat soft and many voters are vulnerable to arguments against the measure, indicating that two-thirds support is not guaranteed.

Methodology

The findings in this memo come from a mixed mode telephone and email-to-web survey conducted June 28-July 2, 2020 by EMC Research among 808 likely November 2020 voters in the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Telephone interviews were conducted by trained, professional interviewers; landlines and mobile phones included. Email invitations were sent with link to web survey. The results have a margin of error of ± 3.45 percentage points. The survey was offered in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.