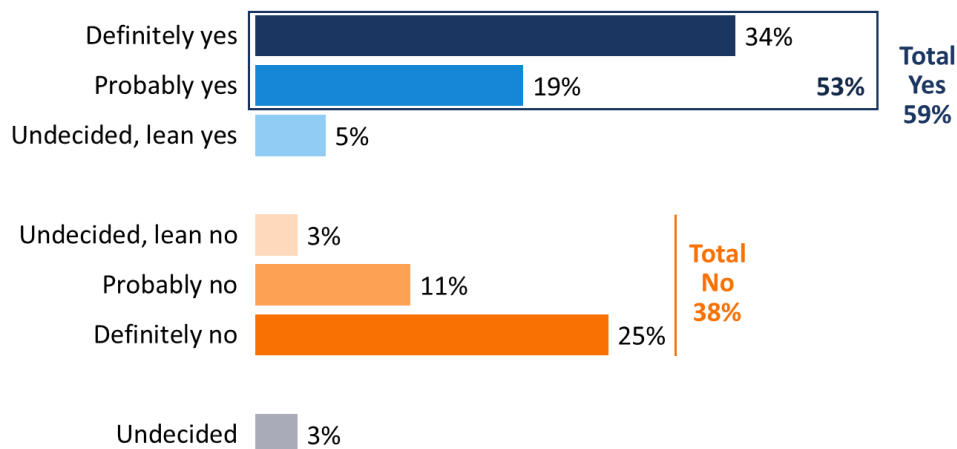


TO Santa Barbara County
FROM FM3 Research
RE: Santa Barbara County Transient Occupancy Survey Findings
DATE June 28, 2024

A recently completed surveyⁱ of Santa Barbara County voters likely to cast a ballot in the November 2024 election finds voters support a ballot measure to increase the County’s transient occupancy tax (TOT) two percent to raise additional funding for vital County services. **As Figure 1 below shows, after being presented with a simulated 75-word ballot measure survey, six in ten (59%) vote yes in favor, four in ten (38%) oppose and three percent are undecided.** Notably, a third (34%) of Santa Barbara County voters say they would vote “definitely yes” to approve this measure if the election were held today whereas only one in four (25%) voted “definitely no.”

Figure 1: Vote on Santa Barbara County Transient Occupancy Tax Measure



The survey results also find that voters prioritize 911 emergency response services, improving local roads and infrastructure, protecting groundwater supplies and addressing homelessness. Figure 2 on the next page identifies voters’ top funding priorities for Santa Barbara County as three-quarters or more rates these to be "extremely" or "very important" uses should additional funding be made available.

Figure 2: County Service Priorities
 % Rating "Extremely" or "Very Important"

Priority	% Extremely/ Very Important
<i>Maintaining 911 response services</i>	82%
<i>Repairing deteriorating bridges, roads and other transportation infrastructure</i>	80%
<i>Protecting groundwater supplies</i>	79%
<i>Repairing potholes and roads</i>	75%
<i>Addressing homelessness</i>	75%

Voters also identify accountability and oversight provisions as highly important components of the County TOT ballot measure. In particular, the requirement that funds be used locally resonates very strongly with voters as 86% rate it as an extremely or very important element of the proposed ballot measure. Voters also express a high degree of support for requiring audits and disclosing how funds are spent to ensure the public can determine how the County utilizes TOT revenues.

Figure 3: Accountability Requirements
 % Rating "Extremely" or "Very Important"

Accountability Requirements	% Extremely/ Very Important
<i>Requiring all funds be used locally</i>	86%
<i>Requiring annual audits</i>	65%
<i>Requiring public disclosure reports</i>	62%

In sum, these survey results suggest that Santa Barbara County voters would support a ballot measure to increase the County’s TOT by two percent to provide additional funding for essential local services such as public safety, roads and infrastructure repairs and addressing homelessness.

ⁱ **Methodology:** From June 17-23, 2024, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) conducted a survey among 653 likely November 2024 Santa Barbara County voters. The survey was conducted using a dual-mode methodology where voters were surveyed by telephone (cellular and landlines) or online in both English and Spanish. Voters were invited to take the survey online from email and text invitations. The margin of error for the full sample is +/-4.0% at the 95% confidence level. Not all results will sum to 100% due to rounding.