2016 Mail Survey Results

City of Cody - City of Powell - Town of Meeteetse - Park County

May 2016

George K. Baum & Company
INVESTMENT BANKERS SINCE 1928
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Introduction, Purpose & Approach

This report addresses the methodology and findings derived from public opinion research conducted by George K. Baum & Company on behalf of the City of Cody, City of Powell, Town of Meeteetse and Park County, Wyoming.

A public opinion questionnaire was mailed to **7,656 households within Park County on May 23, 2016**. The mailing list included all registered voter households within the county, versus a subset of active or likely voter households. **The questionnaire served as an invitation for public reaction to a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax proposal--as well as other funding options--to address infrastructure improvements.**

The mail survey included a total of 16 questions, including three open-ended questions. Included with the mail survey was an informational piece that provided background on the 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax.

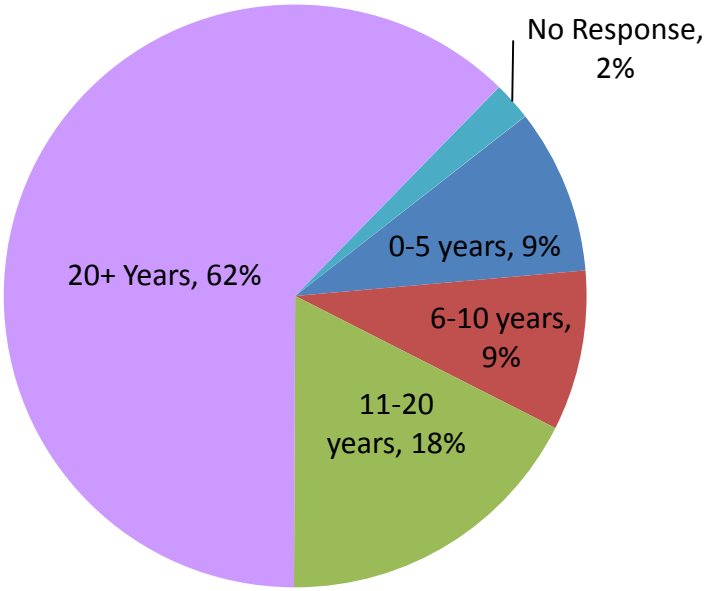
The mail questionnaire used for this research is not a scientific poll, but a tool for collecting public input and understanding the general tone of the public's receptiveness to the issues presented. The overall summaries and conclusions drawn in this report are therefore not presented as predictors of an issue's likely success or failure at the polls. They are only presented to aid the municipalities and county 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 *general* population) as opposed to the returns representing a *scientific sub-sample* of the general 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.**

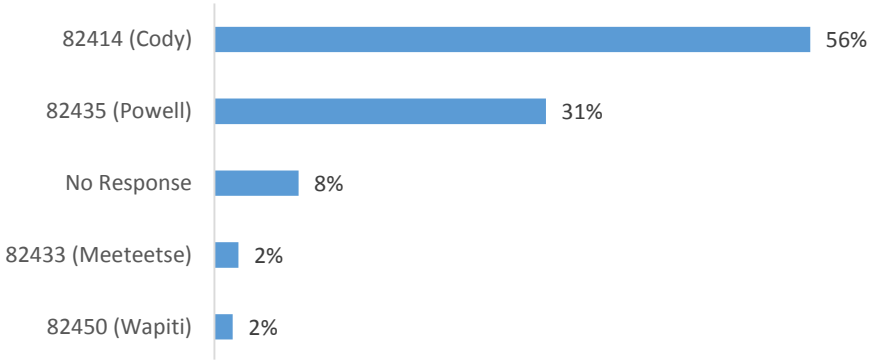
A total of **2,153 surveys were returned** and processed for responses as of April 29, 2016. This represents a **response rate of 28 percent**. Previous mail surveys conducted by George K. Baum & Company have typically yielded response rates between 8 and 17 percent.

Demographics of Respondents

Length of Residency

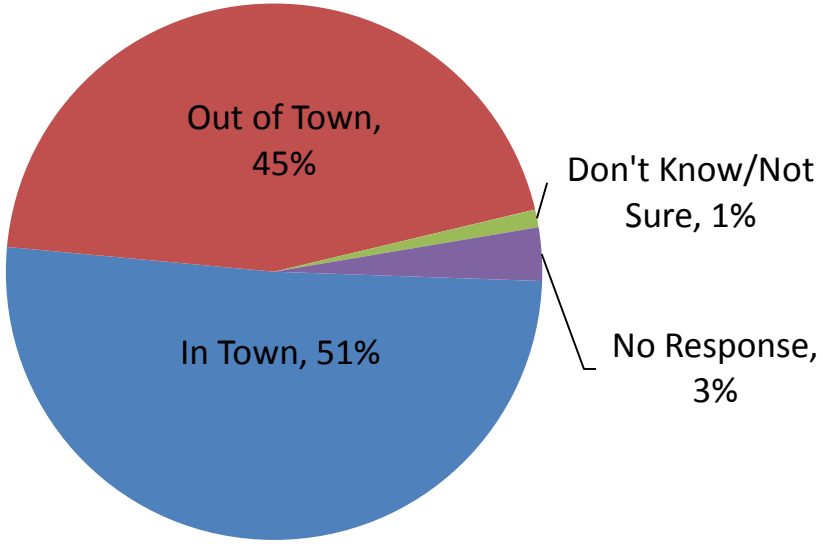


Zip Code

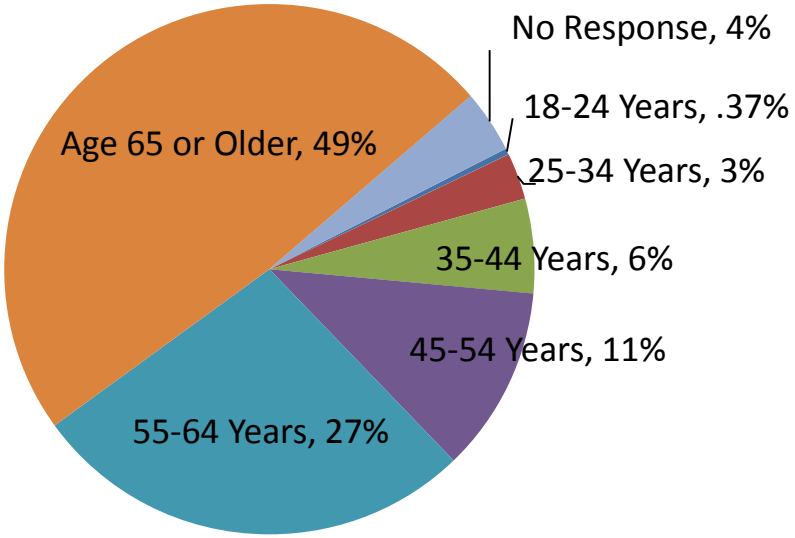


Demographics of Respondents

In Town vs. Out of Town



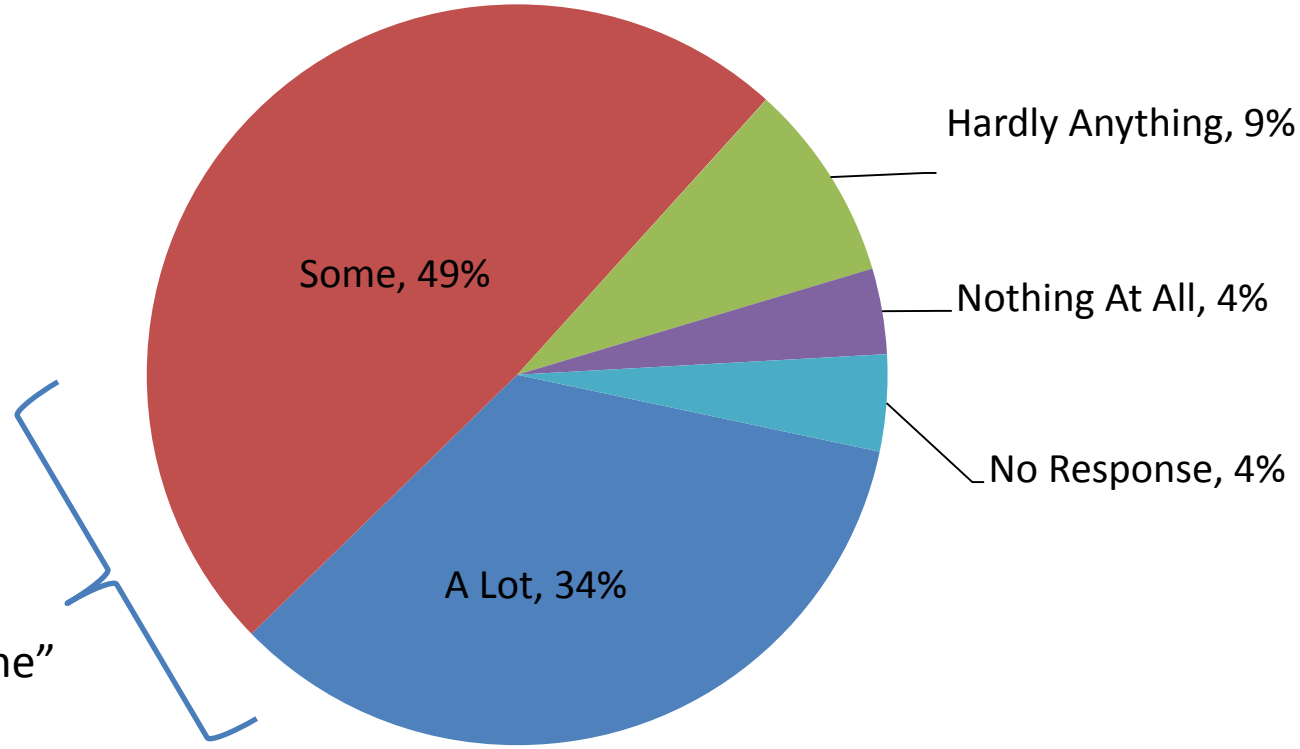
Age



Age	Mail Survey	Actual
18-24	< 1%	4%
25-34	3%	7%
35-44	6%	10%
45-54	11%	15%
55-64	27%	26%
65>	49%	40%

Level of Awareness

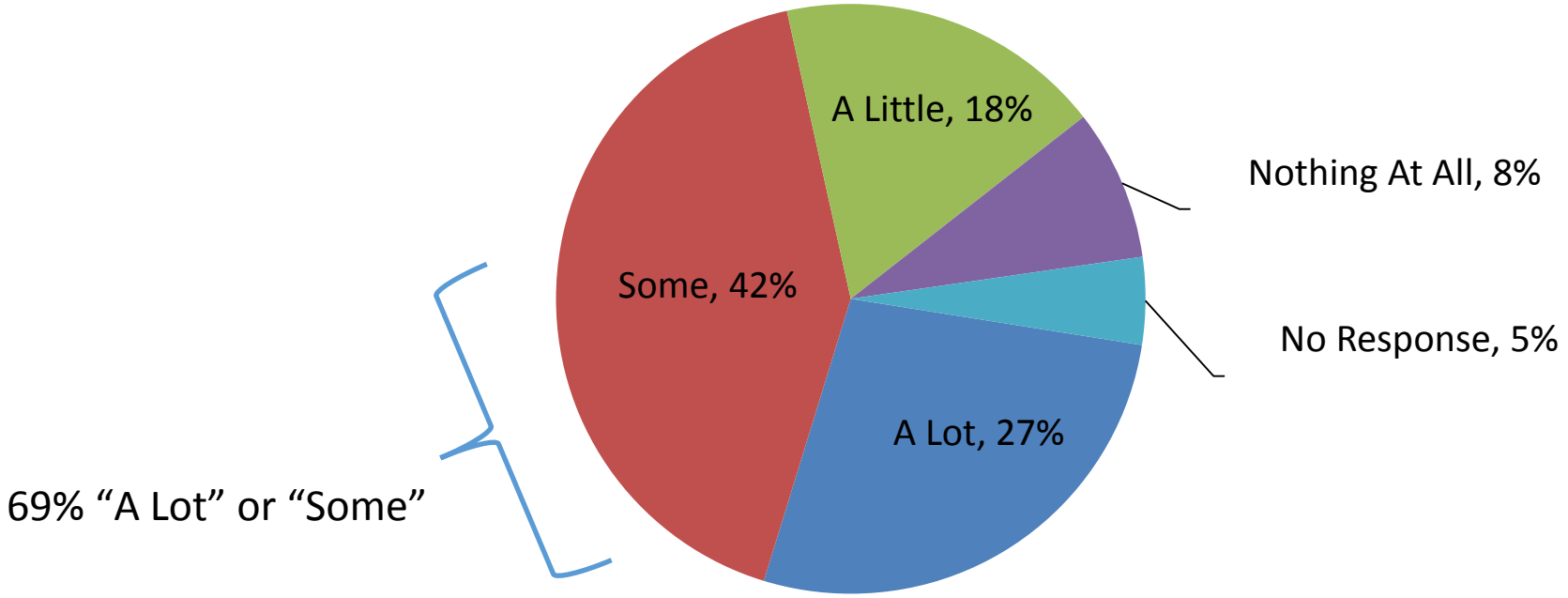
Before receiving the enclosed information, how much had you read, seen or heard about Park County considering placing a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax on the November 2016 ballot?



83% “A Lot” or “Some”

Familiarity with 1% General Purpose Tax

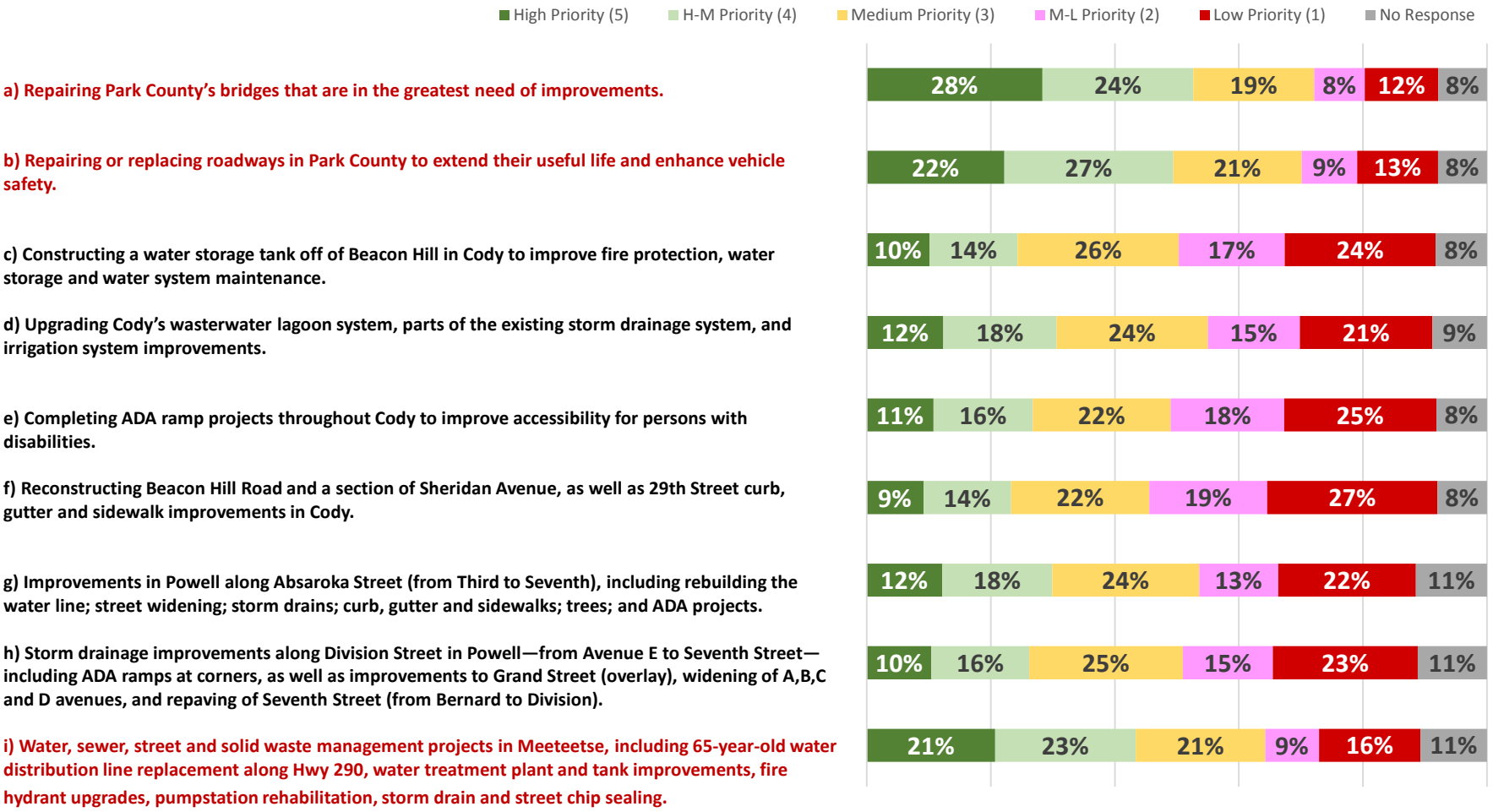
Many residents are not familiar with the ins and outs of the 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax, including how the tax is calculated, the types of purchases that are exempt and the percentage of revenues that go back to local governments. Before receiving the enclosed information, how familiar were you with the details of this tax?



Funding Priorities

(Infrastructure Projects)

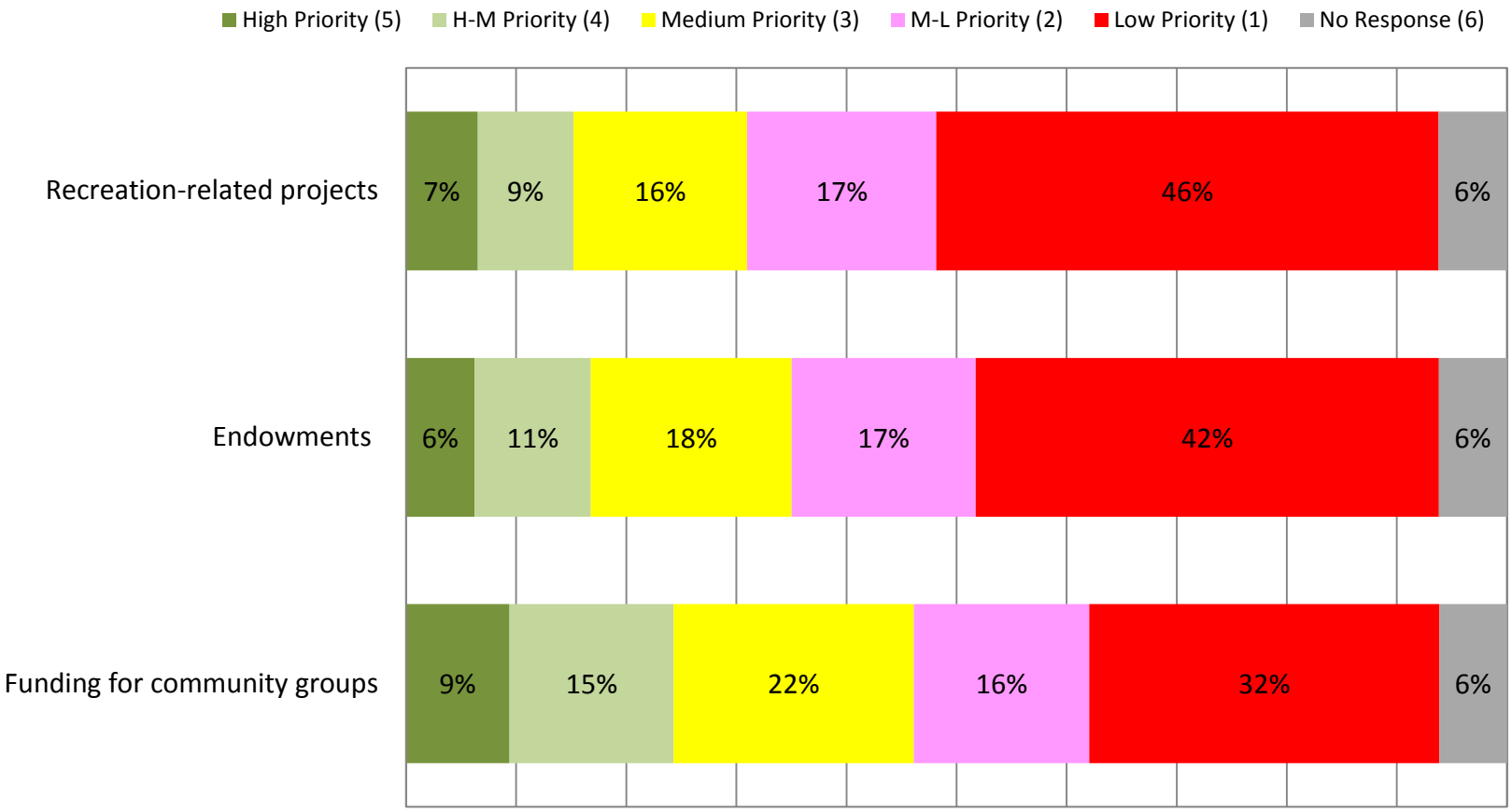
There are a number of projects that the proposed 1% General Purpose Tax would address (as further detailed in the enclosed Fact Sheet). On a scale of 1 to 5, what priority should be placed on funding each of the following projects with a 1% General Purpose Tax?



Funding Priorities

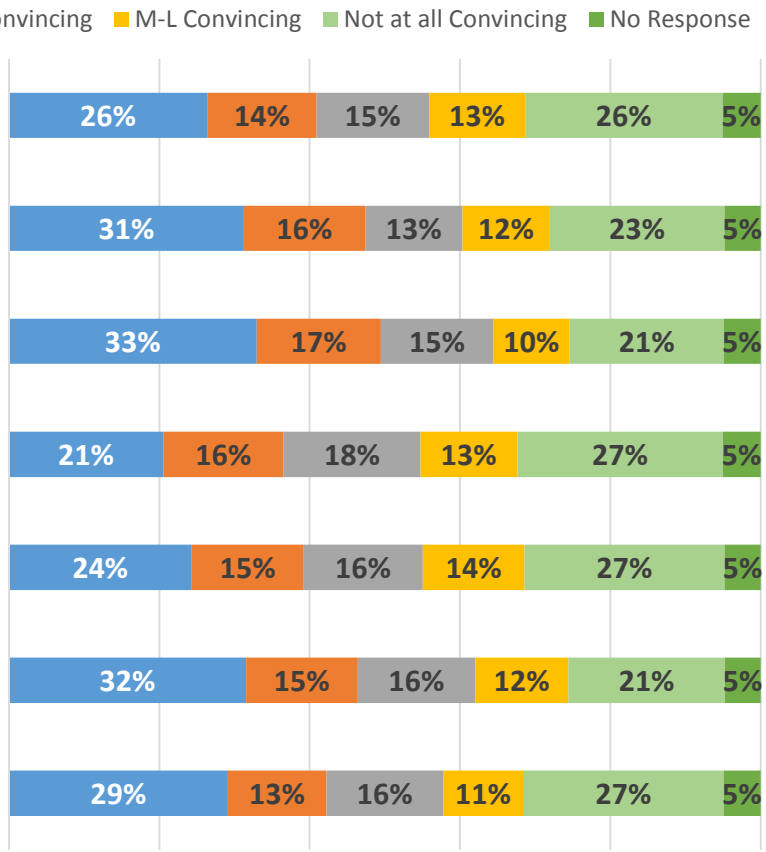
(Non-Infrastructure Projects)

Some residents would like to see a 1% General Purpose Tax fund non-infrastructure projects. On a scale of 1 to 5, what priority should be placed on funding each of the following projects with a 1% General Purpose Tax?



Arguments in Favor

Following are some arguments people have made in favor of Park County's 1% General Purpose Tax proposal. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not At All Convincing" and 5 being "Very Convincing", how would you rate each of the following arguments as a reason to vote IN FAVOR of Park County's proposed 1% General Purpose Tax?



a) With the State of Wyoming cutting funding to Park County, Cody, Powell and Meeteetse, revenues from a 1% General Purpose Tax are more important than ever to address high priority street, bridge, water, sewer and other infrastructure projects.

b) Unlike the existing 4% Sales & Use Tax, in which local governments get to keep only 30% of the tax revenues, local governments get to keep 99% of the 1% General Purpose Tax revenues. This is an important reason why 21 of 23 counties in Wyoming have approved the 1% General Purpose Tax.

c) The 1% General Purpose Tax would have a four-year renewal election in Park County. The tax would have to be approved by voters every four years for it to continue.

d) Revenues from a voter-approved 1% General Purpose Tax would be distributed based on size of population. For example, 43% of the tax revenues would go to Park County, 34% to Cody, 22% to Powell and 1% to Meeteetse.

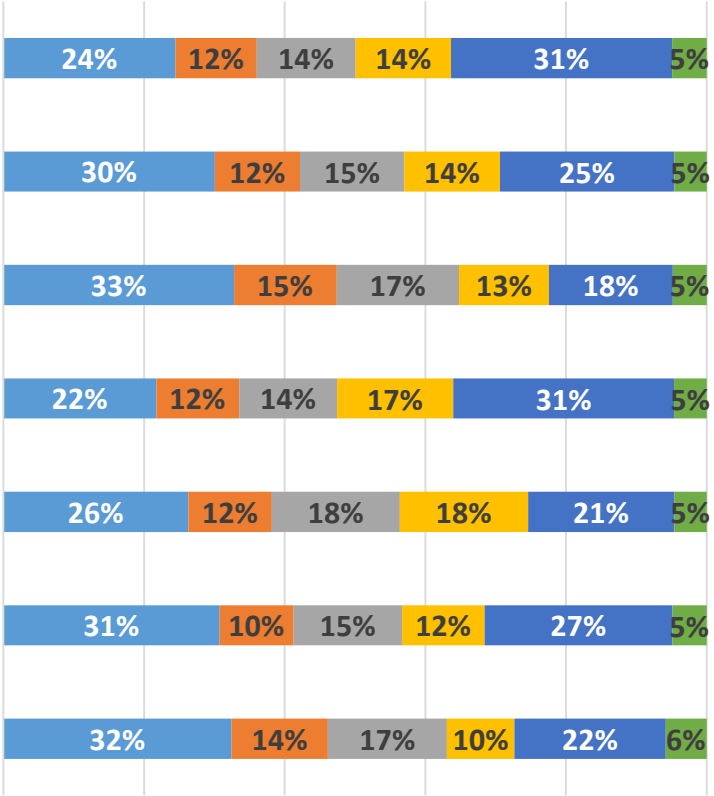
e) There are 49 exemptions from the 1% General Purpose Tax, according to State Statute 39-15-105, including real estate purchases, food, fuel, fertilizer, livestock, feed and farm equipment.

f) Revenue from a voter-approved 1% General Purpose Tax would include sales tax generated inside Yellowstone National Park. In fact, the Wyoming Department of Revenue estimates that about 30% of the 1% General Purpose Tax in Park County would be paid by travelers from outside Park County.

g) For a $10 purchase, the tax is an additional 10 cents. For a $100 purchase, the tax is an additional $1.00. Many residents consider this a reasonable amount to pay to protect critical infrastructure, property values and our ability to attract and retain local businesses in Park County.

Arguments Against

Following are some arguments people have made against Park County's 1% General purpose Tax proposal. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not At All convincing" and 5 being "Very Convincing", how would you rate each of the following arguments as a reason to vote AGAINST Park County's proposed 1% General Purpose Tax?



a) The State already has in place a 4% sales tax. Adding another 1% sales and use tax is a 25% increase. That's too much of a tax burden.

b) With the oil and gas industry struggling statewide, now is not the time to be increasing taxes.

c) Park County, Cody, Powell and Meeteetse should be setting aside existing tax dollars to tackle large infrastructure projects, rather than raising taxes.

d) Local retailers could be negatively impacted from a 1% sales and use tax increase as a result of fewer purchases being made within Park County.

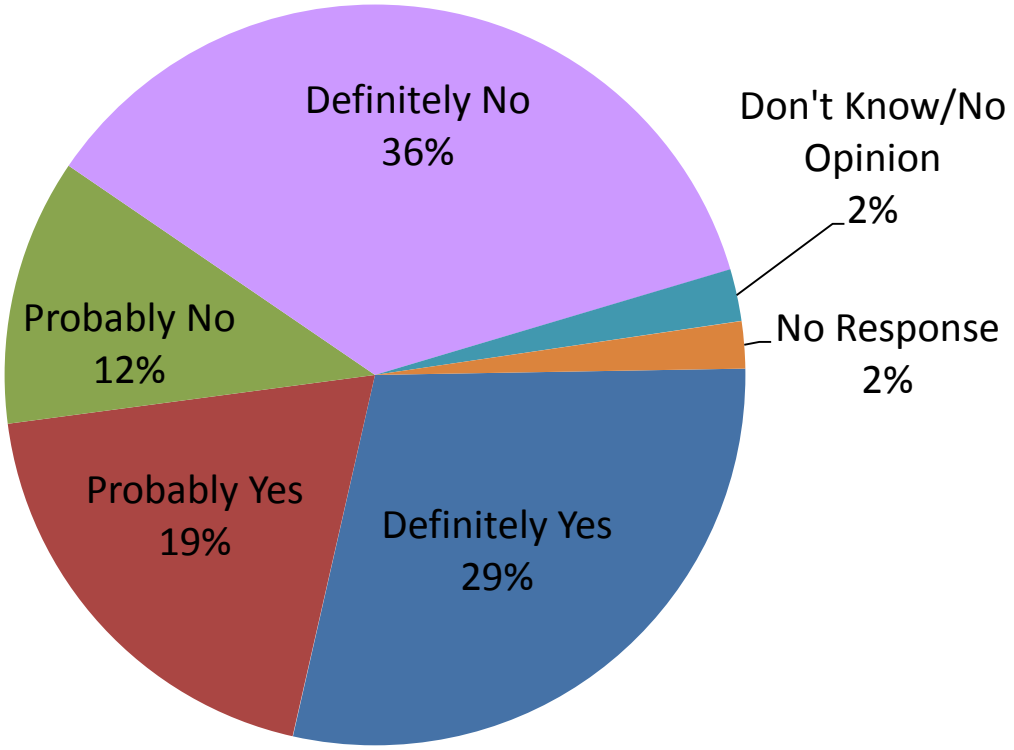
e) The 1% General Purpose Tax will cost the average household in Park County an additional $80 per year. That amount of a tax increase will likely be a hardship for many low-income families and seniors on a fixed income.

f) While voters in Park County would have the opportunity to vote on the 1% General Purpose Tax after it has been in place for four years, it's unlikely that it will be voted down once it's in place. Voters in other counties keep voting the tax in every four years.

g) It makes more sense for Park County to pursue a 1% Specific Purpose Tax rather than a 1% General Purpose Tax. The 1% Specific Purpose Tax goes away once the specific projects are fully funded.

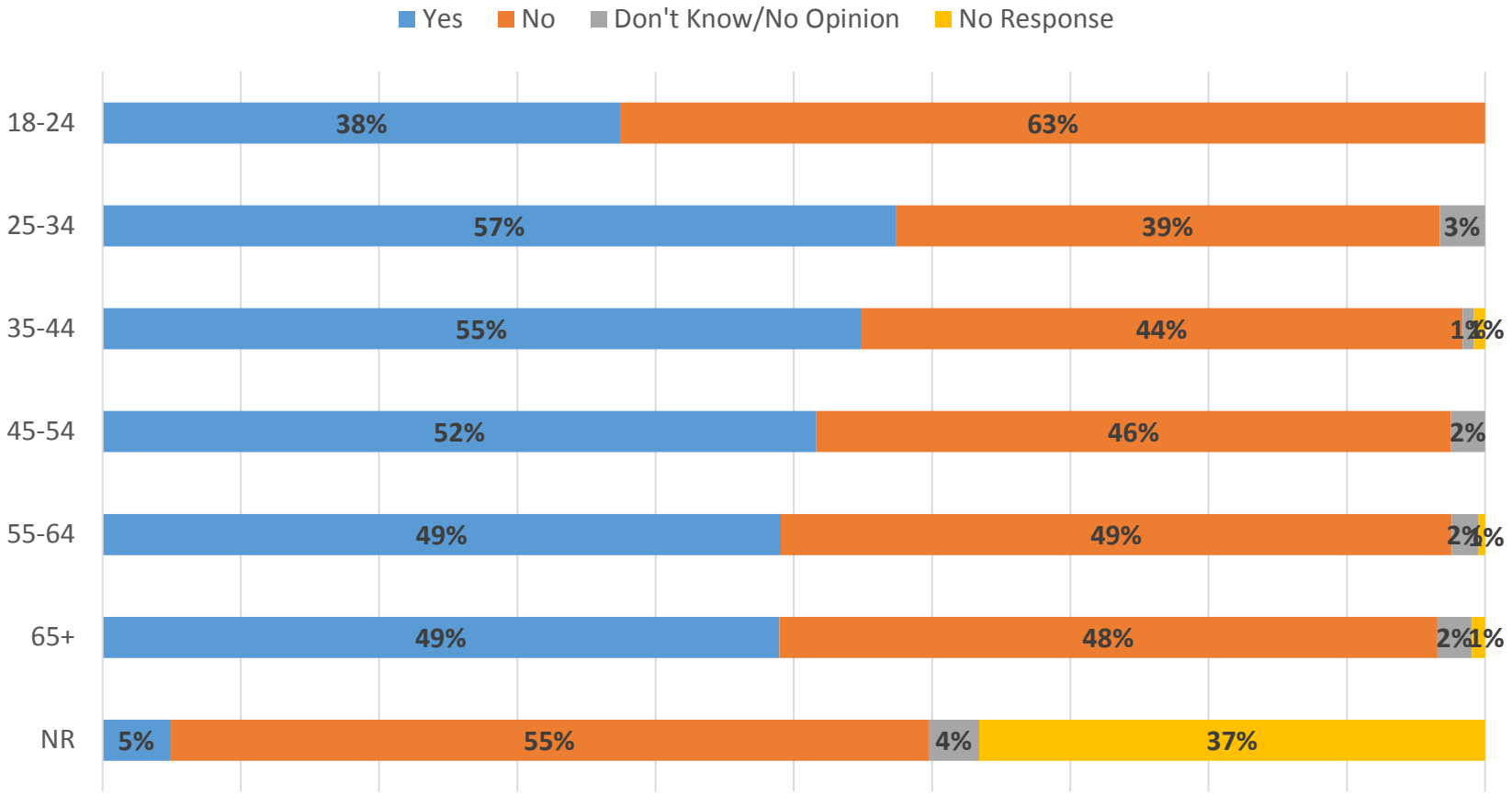
Support for a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax

If an election were held today, would you vote "Yes" (in favor) or "No" (to oppose) a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax within Park County for infrastructure and infrastructure maintenance including, but not limited to roads, streets, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm sewers, bridges, water, sewer and electrical projects.

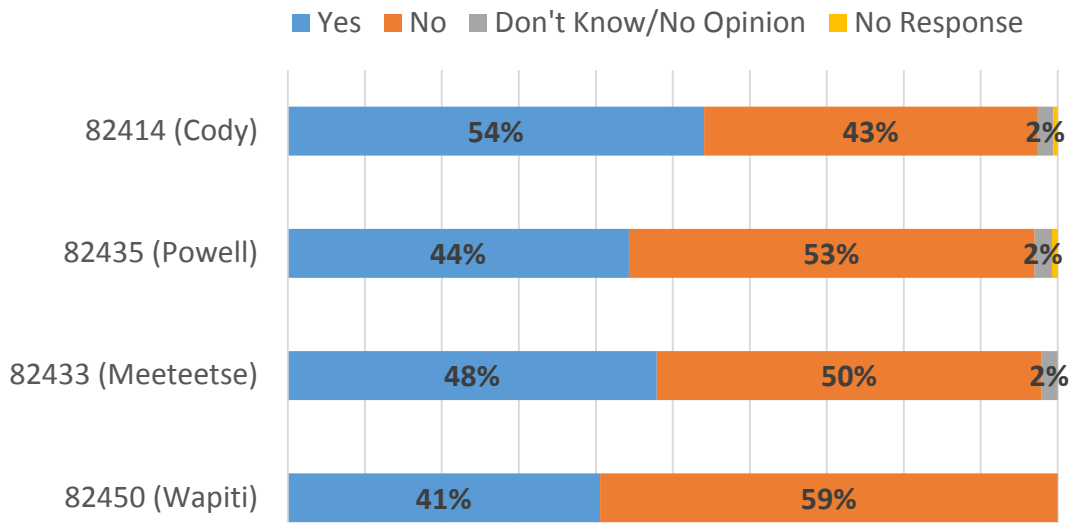


Total Yes	48%
Total No	48%

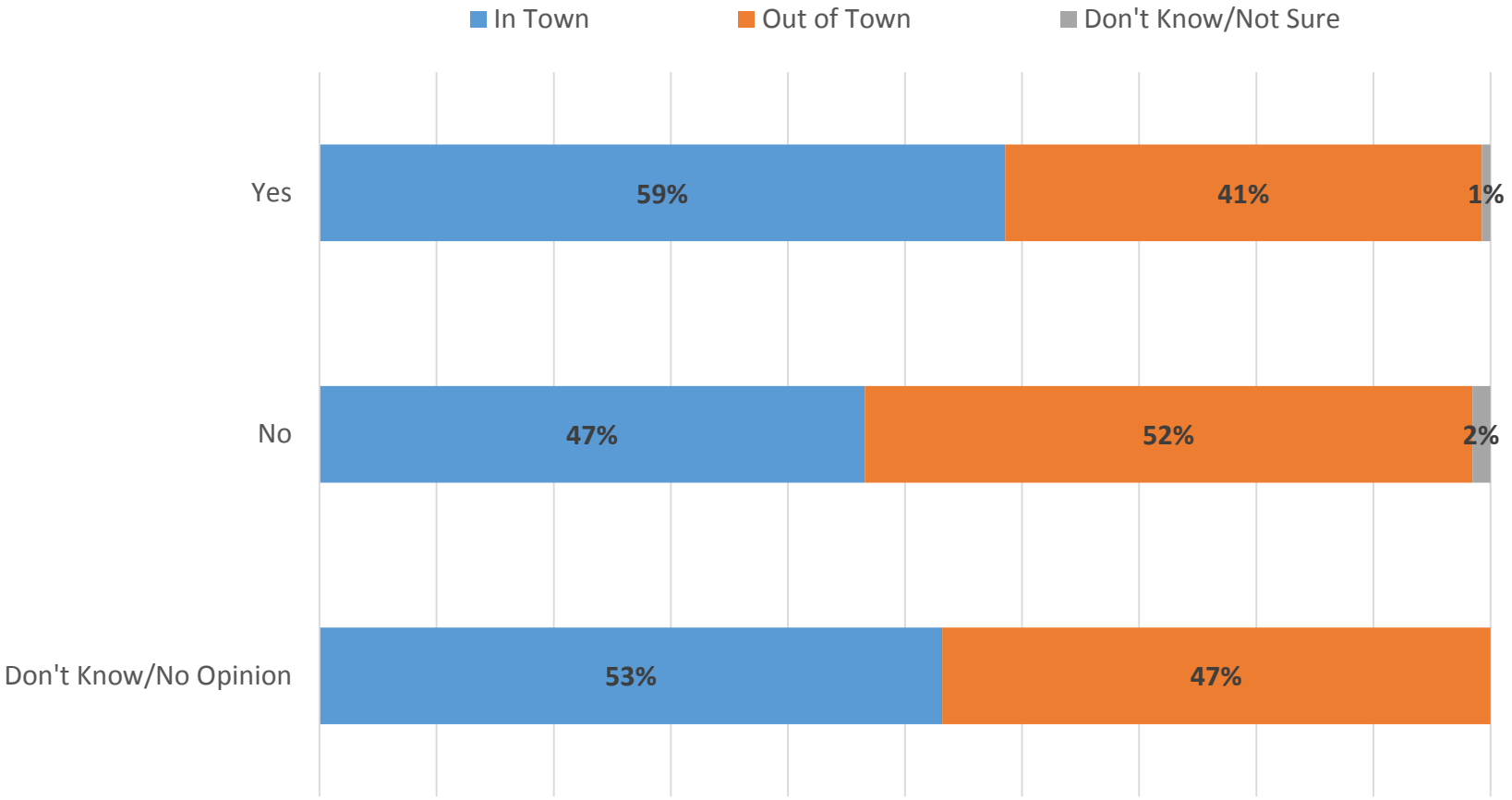
Support for a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax by Age



Support for 1% General Purpose Tax by Zip Code

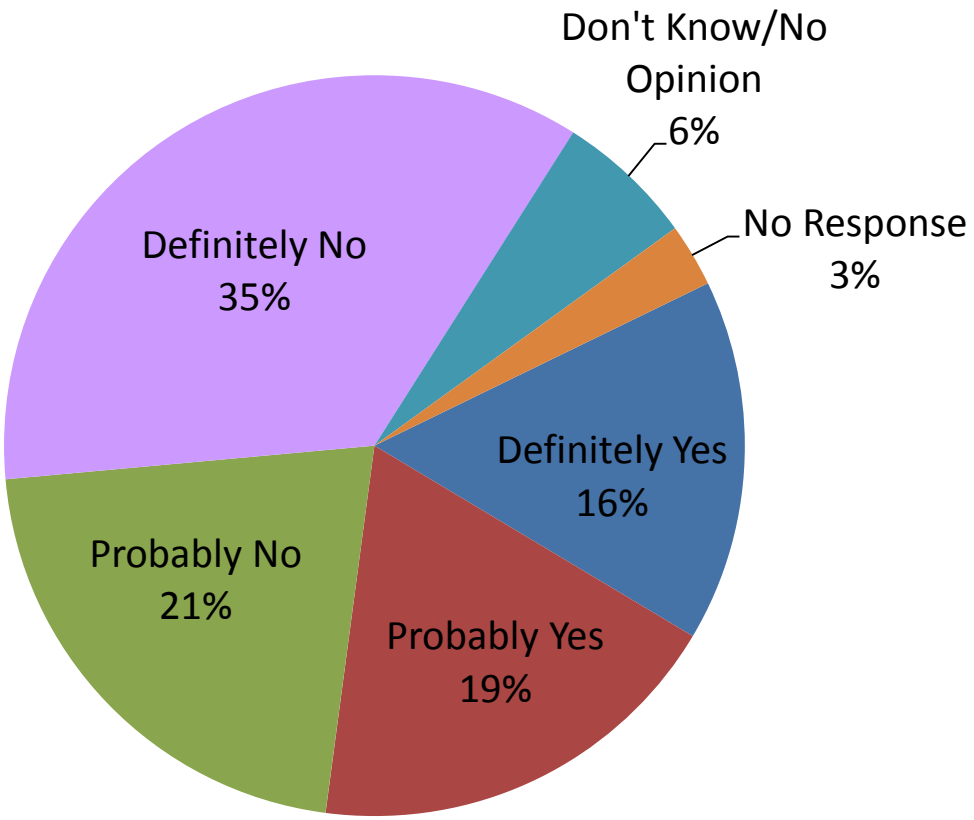


Support for 1% General Purpose Tax by In vs. Out of Town



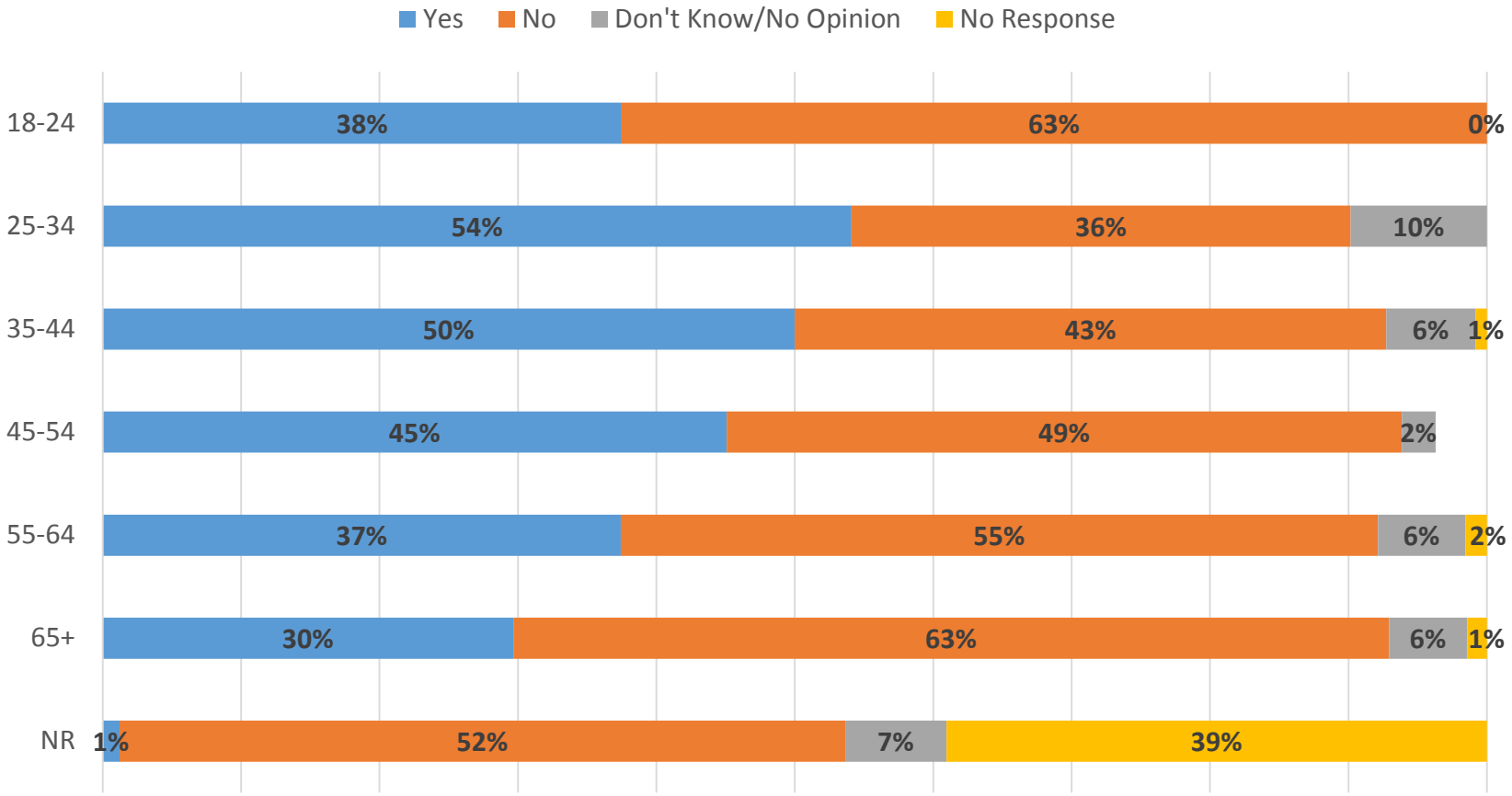
Support for a ½ of 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax

Rather than a full one (1) percent sales and use tax, if Park County pursued a ½ of 1 percent General Purpose Sales & Use Tax and consequently reduced the number of infrastructure projects that it addressed, would you vote "Yes" (in favor) or "No" (to oppose) this proposal?

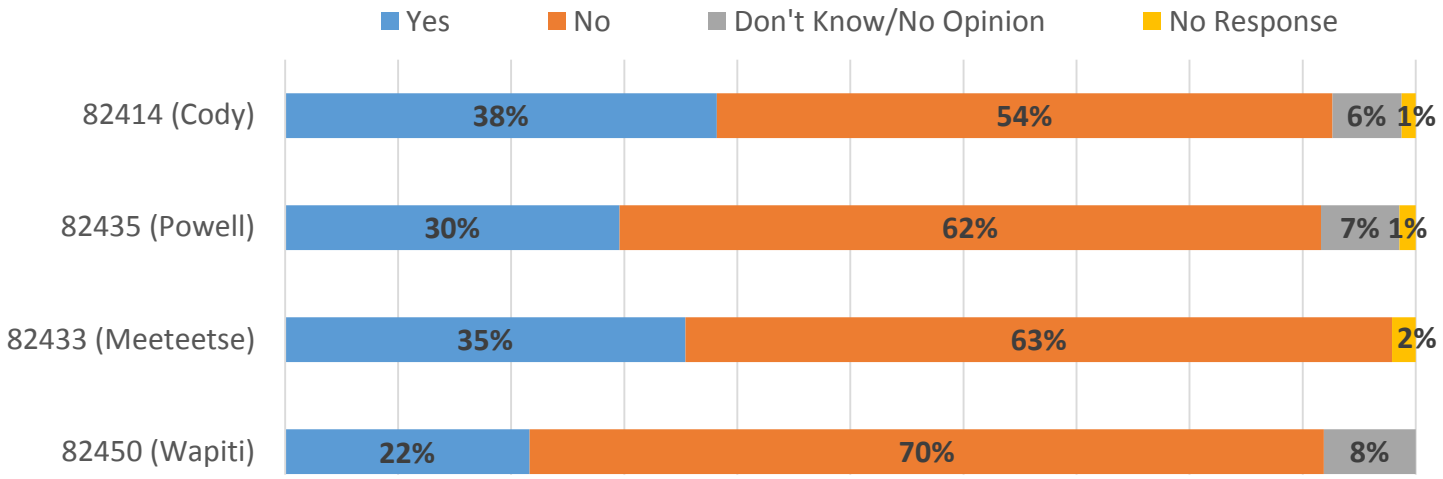


Total Yes	35%
Total No	56%

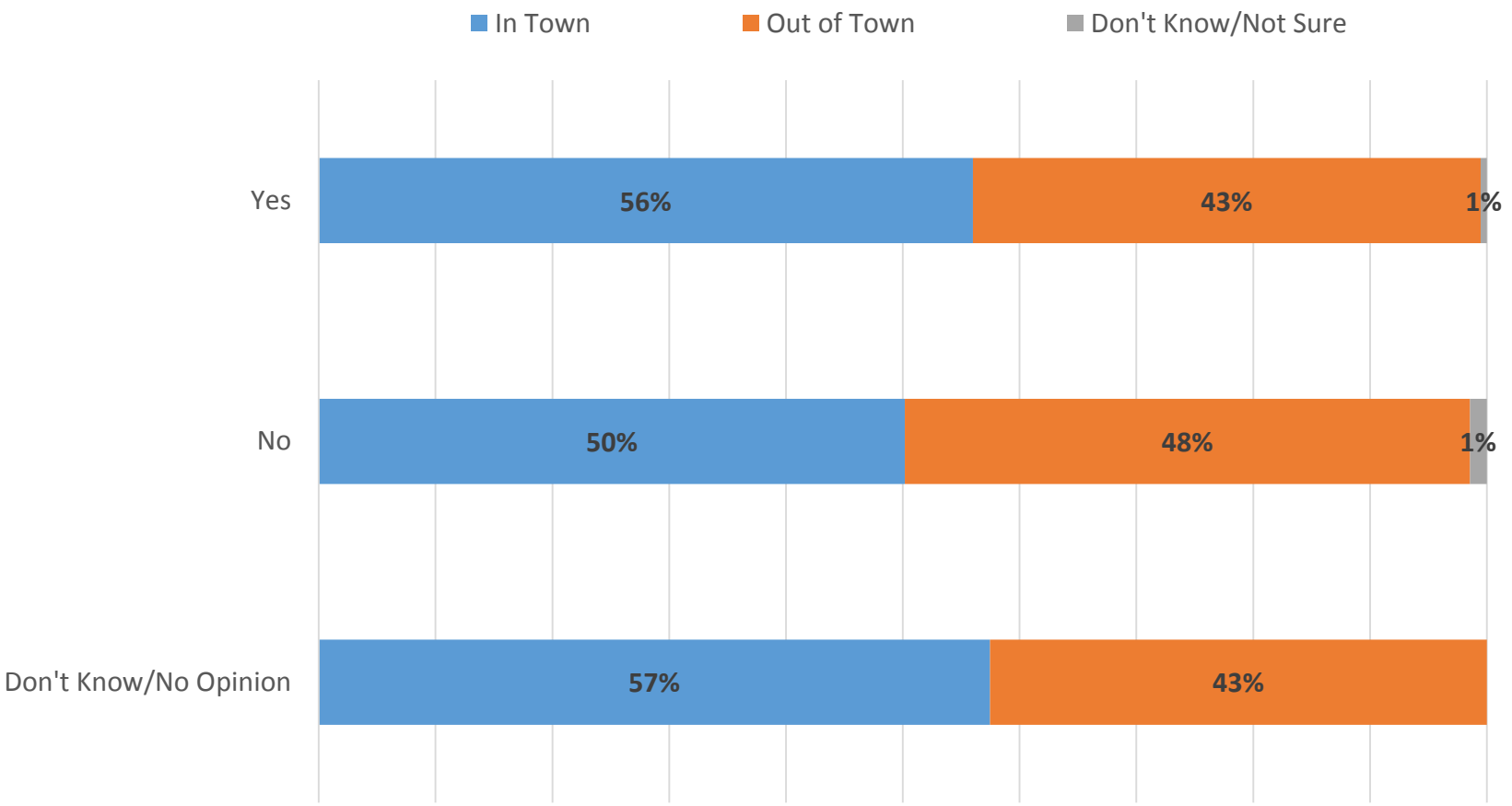
Support for a ½ of 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax by Age



Support for ½ of 1% General Purpose Tax by Zip Code

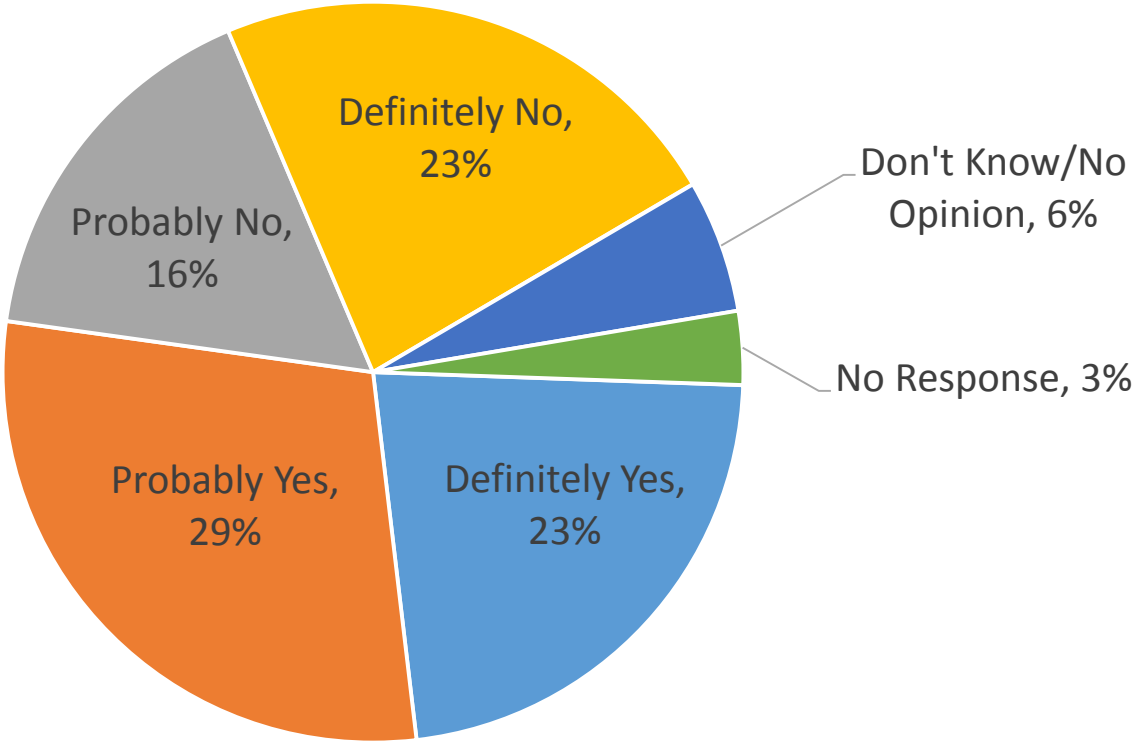


Support for ½ of 1% General Purpose Tax by In vs. Out of Town



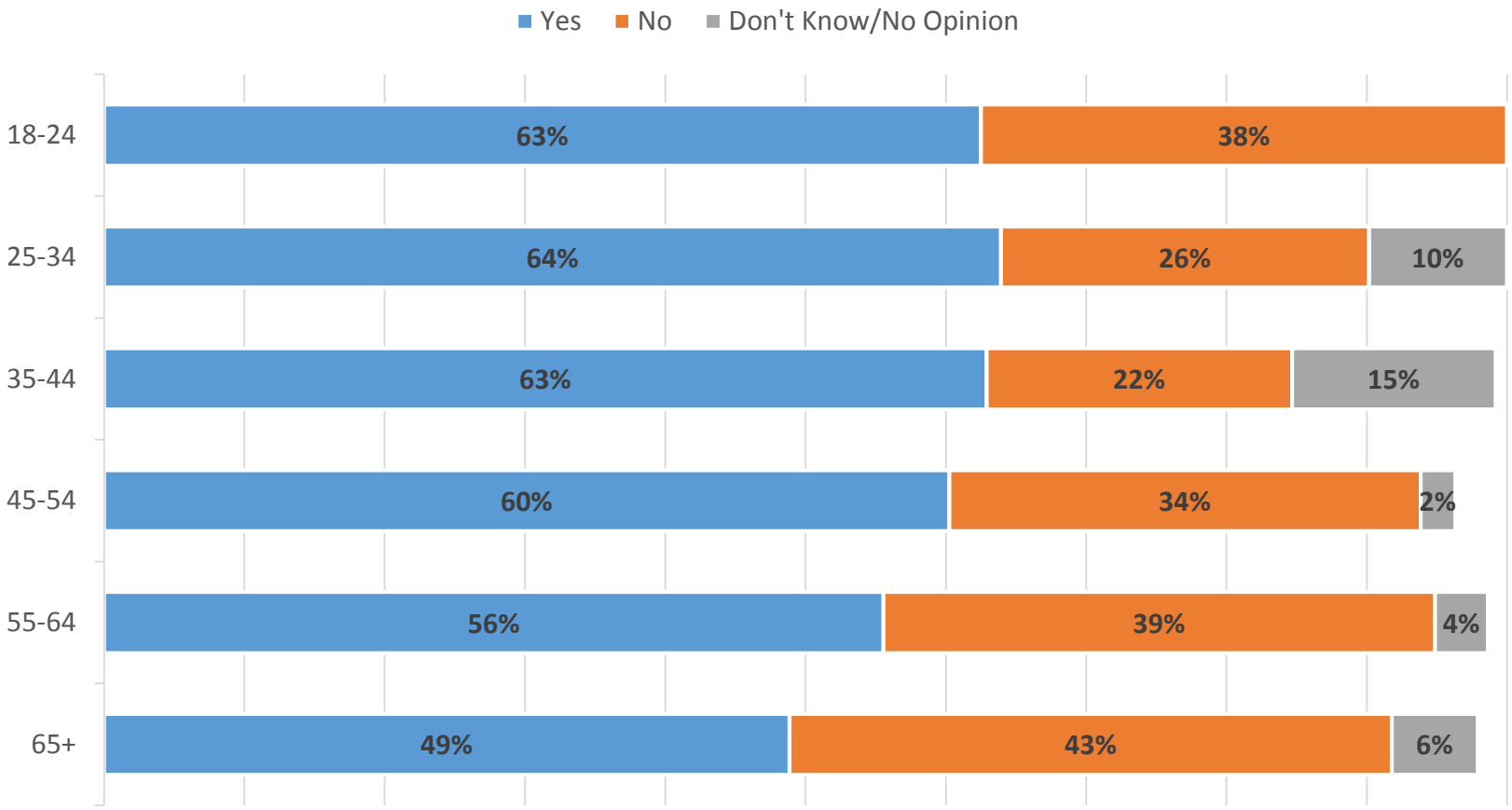
Support for 1% "Specific Purpose" Sales & Use Tax

If Park County pursued a 1% "Specific Purpose" Sales & Use Tax –rather than a 1% "General Purpose" Sales & Use Tax—to fund infrastructure and infrastructure maintenance including, but not limited to, roads, streets, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm sewers, bridges, water, sewer and electrical projects, would you vote "Yes" (in favor) or"No" (to oppose) this proposal?

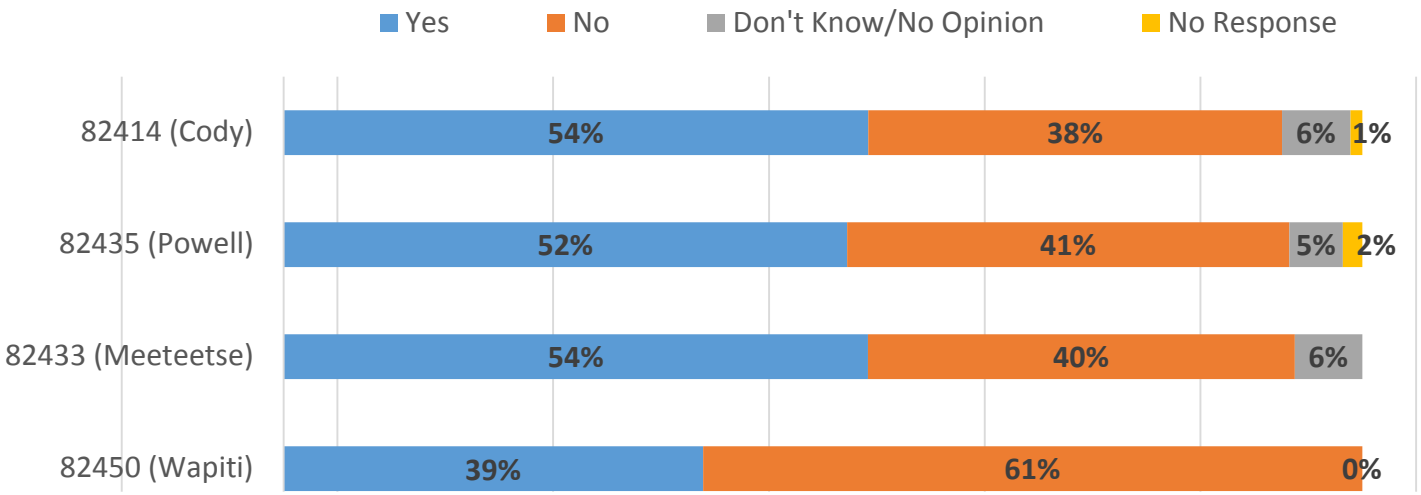


Total Yes	52%
Total No	39%

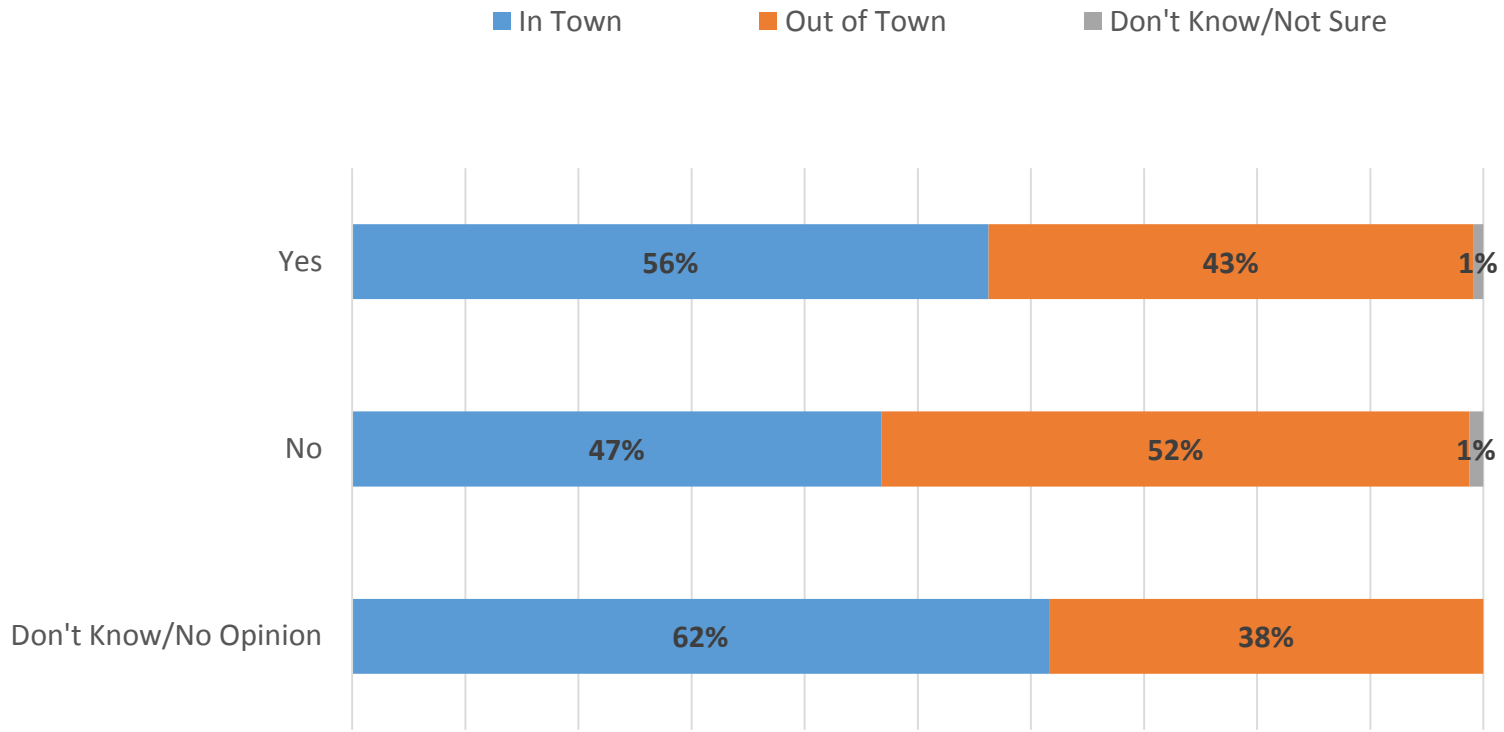
Support for 1% "Specific Purpose" Sales & Use Tax by Age



Support for 1% "Specific Purpose" Tax by Zip Code



Support for 1% "Specific Purpose" Tax by In vs. Out of Town



Main Concerns

What is your main concern, if any, regarding the 1% General Purpose Tax proposal?

- 33%: No Response/None
- 24%: Mistrust of Government
    - I think the government of Park City and cities and towns would find a way to continue the tax without a vote!
    - It will be abused and wasted on non-critical projects.
    - That it will not go to infrastructure but go to General Fund for wages.
    - Waste needs to be stopped first. Too much government. Too many bureaucrats.
- 13%: Project Use – Not Specific Enough
    - Excess funds to be used on frivolous projects.
    - The tax will be used for things other than infrastructure (Convention Center, etc.).
    - Will only support specific use.
    - Who decides what is a priority project?
- 6%: Live Within Your Means
    - More taxes do not balance the budget and curb unnecessary government spending.
    - Learn to budget the money you get. Quit feeding off of us.
    - Wyoming as a government needs to balance its budgets as the prudent household does, not by borrowing more money and by additional taxation.

Questions About 1% General Purpose Tax

What more would you like to know, or what question(s) would you like answered, about the proposed 1% General Purpose Tax?

- 67%: No Response/None
- 9%: Specifically Define Projects
    - I want to know what project-not just a list of possible ones. Until I know a specific goal, I will not vote for it.
    - Would like to see and make sure it would go to the promised projects.
    - Give us more detailed information--not generalities.
    - What are the infrastructure projects that are needed? How much will they cost? Which ones are a priority?
    - This tax should be very specific. Use tax for its purpose, and when the projects are done the tax would be rescinded.
- 8%: Tax Questions
    - Are exemptions the same for Specific Purpose Sales & Use Tax?
    - Are you sure we would get funding from inside Yellowstone National Park? That would be good, but leery of government.
    - Who funds the cost of road and bridges initially. Is it a sales tax? If not, why use a sales tax to upgrade them?
    - Why can't they just cut back on spending 1%?
- 6%: Transparency/Accountability
    - We need information on how to track the accounting of the dollars generated by the 1% tax and how the dollars are spent.

Additional Community Improvements

What other community improvement projects, if any, should be included as part of the 1% General Purpose Tax proposal if pursued this fall?

- 78%: No Response/None
- 14%: Specific Recommendations
    - County maintenance on subdivision roads.
    - Potholes, blind spots, stop signs instead of yield signs
    - Alley cleanup on routine schedule.
    - Just infrastructure, good roads, storm drain, etc.
    - A way to reduce City of Cody bills and a way to raise the minimum wage to keep our residents employed.
    - Projects that benefit the whole county.
    - Bike lane, hiking/pedestrian/jogging paths
    - Water/sewer/storm drainage/raw water
    - Youth recreation/motorized recreation
    - Recreation/event-community center
    - City parks
    - Sidewalks
    - Landscaping improvements
    - Support non-profit organizations/those in need

Summary & Conclusions

While the mail questionnaire used for this research is not a scientific poll, it does provide useful information on the general undertone of the public's receptiveness to a sales tax to address infrastructure needs or other projects. Following is a summary of key mail survey results and a number of conclusions drawn from these results.

- The awareness level of voters responding to the mail survey with regard to both the sales tax proposal and the ins and outs of the 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax appears to be high. It is consequently unlikely that additional public information efforts would dramatically shift their current attitudes and opinions.
- There appears to be greater support for county-wide projects, like bridge and roadway improvements, compared to specific municipal projects. Keeping county-wide infrastructure projects in a future sales tax proposal would likely benefit passage of the proposal.
- There is very little support for funding non-infrastructure projects like recreation-related projects, funding for community groups and organizations, and endowments to go toward costs of swimming pools, recreation centers and similar facilities with a 1% General Purposed Sales & Use Tax. Adding these types of non-infrastructure projects to a future sales tax proposal would not likely strengthen voter support.
- Arguments in favor of the 1% General Purpose Tax that resonated most with voters responding to the mail survey were focused on:
  - local governments getting 99% of the 1% General Purpose Tax revenues
  - a four-year renewal of the tax
  - the ability to capture sales tax revenues in Yellowstone National Park paid by travelers outside Park County
- Arguments against the 1% General Purpose Tax that resonated most with voters responding to the mail survey were focused on:
  - concerns about increasing taxes when the oil and gas industry is struggling
  - the question as to why local municipalities and the county are not setting aside monies for infrastructure projects
  - the belief that the tax will never end
  - the concept that a "specific purpose" tax makes more sense than a "general purpose" tax

- Compared to previous mail surveys conducted by George K. Baum & Company over the past 20 years, the results of ballot questions presented in the mail survey have a negative undertone to them. We have found that when tax referenda have been successful, the minimum support level has been in the high 50's and the "definitely yes" percentage was stronger than the "definitely no" percentage. None of the three ballot questions tested reached the high 50's benchmark.

  1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax:
  Definitely Yes: 29%
  Probably Yes: 19%
  TOTAL YES: 48%
  Probably No: 12%
  Definitely No: 36%
  TOTAL NO: 48%

  ½ *of* 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax:
  Definitely Yes: 16%
  Probably Yes: 19%
  TOTAL YES: 35%
  Probably No: 21%
  Definitely No: 35%
  TOTAL NO: 56%

  1% Specific Purpose Sales & Use Tax:
  Definitely Yes: 23%
  Probably Yes: 29%
  TOTAL YES: 52%
  Probably No: 16%
  Definitely No: 23%
  TOTAL NO: 39%

- When asked about their main concern with the 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax, one-third of mail survey respondents indicated “none” or did not respond. Many of those that did respond were focused on mistrust of government, the lack of specificity of the projects, and the desire for public entities to live within their means

- When asked if they had additional questions, 67 percent of the mail survey respondents indicated “none” or did not respond. Many of the questions that were asked sought additional details on the use of proceeds and the mechanics of a sales and use tax. There were also statements about the need for transparency and accountability.

- When asked what other community projects, if any, should be included as part of the 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax, 78 percent indicated “none” or did not respond. The types of projects that were mentioned were a mixed bag, ranging from hiking/jogging/pedestrian paths to a desire to raise the minimum wage.

- For the City of Cody, City of Powell, Town of Meeteetse and Park County to have the greatest chance of success at the polls when it comes to the passage of a sales and use tax—based on the findings of this mail survey—it would likely require:

  - Pursuing a 1% “Specific Purpose” Sales & Use Tax
  - Focusing strictly on infrastructure projects
  - Including county-wide projects in the proposal
  - Precisely defining the proposed projects to be funded in public information materials and in the ballot question
  - Focusing additional public information efforts on the “Specific Purpose” tax and not the “General Purpose” tax
  - Creating an oversight committee of respected business and civic leaders
  - Having elected officials of the municipalities and county unified in terms of support for proceeding with placing the tax proposal on the ballot

Public Opinion Survey *continued from inside*

Q7. If an election were held today, would you vote "Yes" (in favor) or "No" (to oppose) a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax within Park County for infrastructure and infrastructure maintenance including, but not limited to, roads, streets, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm sewers, bridges, water, sewer and electrical projects. **(Please check one)**

- ☐ Definitely Yes
- ☐ Probably Yes
- ☐ Probably No
- ☐ Definitely No
- ☐ Don't Know/No Opinion

Q8. What is your main concern, if any, regarding the 1% General Purpose Tax proposal?

_____

_____

_____

Q9. Rather than a full one (1) percent sales and use tax, if Park County pursued a ½ of 1 percent General Purpose Sales & Use Tax and consequently reduced the number of infrastructure projects that it addressed, would you vote "Yes" (in favor) or "No" (to oppose) this proposal? **(Please check one)**

- ☐ Definitely Yes
- ☐ Probably Yes
- ☐ Probably No
- ☐ Definitely No
- ☐ Don't Know/No Opinion

Q10. If Park County pursued a 1% "Specific Purpose" Sales & Use Tax—rather than a 1% "General Purpose" Sales & Use Tax—to fund infrastructure and infrastructure maintenance including, but not limited to, roads, streets, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm sewers, bridges, water, sewer and electrical projects, would you vote "Yes" (in favor) or "No" (to oppose) this proposal? (Refer to Fact Sheet for additional details regarding the difference between these two taxes.) **(Please check one)**

- ☐ Definitely Yes
- ☐ Probably Yes
- ☐ Probably No
- ☐ Definitely No
- ☐ Don't Know/No Opinion

Q11. What more would you like to know, or what question(s) would you like answered, about the proposed 1% General Purpose Tax?

_____

_____

_____

Q12. What other community improvement projects, if any, should be included as part of the 1% General Purpose Tax proposal if pursued this fall?

_____

_____

_____

Q13. How long have you been a resident in the area? **(Please check one)**

- ☐ 0-5 Years
- ☐ 6-10 Years
- ☐ 11-20 Years
- ☐ More Than 20 Years

Q14. What is your zip code? _____

Q15. Do you live in town or out of town? **(Please check one)**

- ☐ In Town *(Inside the Incorporate Municipality)*
- ☐ Out of Town *(Outside the Incorporated Municipality)*
- ☐ Don't Know / Not Sure

Q16. What is your age? **(Please check one)**

- ☐ 18-24 Years
- ☐ 25-34 Years
- ☐ 35-44 Years
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ Age 65 or Older

Thank you for participating!

If you have questions about this survey, please contact:

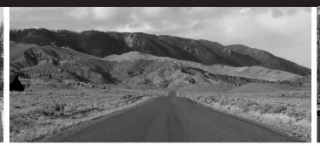
City of Cody
Mayor & Council
1338 Rumsey, PO Box 2200
Cody, WY 82414-3713
Phone: (307) 527-7511
Fax: (307) 527-6532
mayor@cityofcody.com
www.cityofcody-wy.gov

City of Powell
Mayor & Council
270 N Clark St.
Powell, Wyoming 82435
Phone: (307) 754-5106
admin@cityofpowell.com
www.cityofpowell.com

Town of Meeteetse
Mayor & Council
2044 State Street, PO Box 38
Meeteetse, Wyoming 82433
Phone: 307-868-2278
Fax: 307-868-2608
meeteetse@tctwest.net
www.townofmeeteetse.org

Park County Commissioners
Park County Courthouse
1002 Sheridan Ave.
Cody, WY 82414
Toll Free: 1(800)786-2844 ext 8510
Fax: (307) 527-8515
sromero@parkcounty.us
www.parkcounty.us

BRIDGE IN PARK COUNTY


ROADWAY IN PARK COUNTY

CENTRAL AVENUE IN CODY

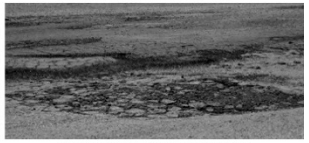
BEACON HILL ROAD IN CODY

STAMPEDE AVENUE IN CODY

ABSAROKA STREET IN POWELL

AVENUE B IN POWELL

WASTEWATER LAGOON IN MEETEETSE


WARREN STREET IN MEETEETSE

Public Opinion Survey

Park County • City of Cody • City of Powell • Town of Meeteetse

March 2016

Where do we go from here?

In November 2012, almost four years ago, Park County voters turned down a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax (often referred to at the 1% *General Purpose Tax, 1% Optional Tax* or *5th Cent Tax*). Proceeds of the 1% General Purpose Tax would have gone toward road and street improvements, water and sewer projects, bridge improvements and other infrastructure projects throughout Park County.

The infrastructure projects that would have been funded by the 1% General Purpose Tax have not gone away. In fact, the cost of many of these projects has increased. And to make things more challenging, the State of Wyoming has reduced funding to Wyoming counties and municipalities.

Given the need to address high priority infrastructure projects and ongoing infrastructure maintenance—coupled with the State's recent funding cuts—Park County, Cody, Powell and Meeteetse are considering returning to the ballot with a 1% General Purpose Tax proposal. However, no action will be taken until you—our taxpayers—are given the opportunity to provide your thoughts and recommendations.

Following are the types of questions we'd like to get your input on as we evaluate how best to fund our highest priority infrastructure needs:

- **What are your concerns, if any, regarding a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax?**
- **In your opinion, are there projects that should—or should not—be funded with this type of tax?**
- **Would you prefer to see a 1% Specific Purpose Tax on the ballot to address infrastructure needs rather than a 1% General Purpose Tax?**

Before completing the attached survey, please take a few minutes to review the enclosed "Just The Facts" sheet, which provides additional information regarding the 1% General Purpose Tax and proposed use of proceeds.

Nothing is set in stone regarding the 1% General Purpose Tax proposal until we gather additional community feedback. We sincerely mean that. We do not want to pursue another tax proposal if there is not going to be strong county-wide support from our residents.

You have the final word. Always.

Survey inside ▶

Public Opinion Survey

Thank you for participating in this important Public Opinion Survey. The results of this survey will play an important role in whether or not a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax is pursued this fall and the composition of that proposal, if pursued. Please review the following questions, review with other members of your household, and complete the survey. A self-addressed, postage-paid envelope is enclosed for your convenience. **All responses are anonymous. The results will be independently tallied and reported by a third-party firm. Please complete and return the survey by April 22, 2016. All surveys must be returned in the postage-paid reply envelope provided. Thank you for participating.**

Please Review "Just the Facts" Document Before Completing Survey

Q1. Before receiving the enclosed information, how much had you read, seen or heard about Park County considering placing a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax on the November 2016 ballot? **(Please check one)**

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Hardly anything
- ☐ Nothing at all

Q2. Many residents are not familiar with the ins and outs of the 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax, including how the tax is calculated, the types of purchases that are exempt and the percentage of revenues that go back to local governments. Before receiving the enclosed information, how familiar were you with the details of this tax? **(Please check one)**

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Some
- ☐ A Little
- ☐ Nothing at all

Q3. There are a number of projects that the proposed 1% General Purpose Tax would address (as further detailed in the enclosed Fact Sheet). On a scale of 1 to 5, what priority should be placed on funding each of the following projects with a 1% General Purpose Tax? **(Please circle one number next to each item):**

	Low Priority ←				→ High Priority
a) Repairing Park County's bridges that are in the greatest need of improvements.	1	2	3	4	5
b) Repairing or replacing roadways in Park County to extend their useful life and enhance vehicle safety.	1	2	3	4	5
c) Constructing a water storage tank off of Beacon Hill in Cody to improve fire protection, water storage and water system maintenance.	1	2	3	4	5
d) Upgrading Cody's wasterwater lagoon system, parts of the existing storm drainage system, and irrigation system improvements.	1	2	3	4	5
e) Completing ADA ramp projects throughout Cody to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
f) Reconstructing Beacon Hill Road and a section of Sheridan Avenue, as well as 29th Street curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements in Cody.	1	2	3	4	5
g) Improvements in Powell along Absaroka Street (from Third to Seventh), including rebuilding the water line; street widening; storm drains; curb, gutter and sidewalks; trees; and ADA projects.	1	2	3	4	5
h) Storm drainage improvements along Division Street in Powell—from Avenue E to Seventh Street—including ADA ramps at corners, as well as improvements to Grand Street (overlay), widening of A,B,C and D avenues, and repaving of Seventh Street (from Bernard to Division).	1	2	3	4	5
i) Water, sewer, street and solid waste management projects in Meeteetse, including 65-year-old water distribution line replacement along Hwy 290, water treatment plant and tank improvements, fire hydrant upgrades, pump station rehabilitation, storm drain and street chip sealing.	1	2	3	4	5

Q4. Some residents would like to see a 1% General Purpose Tax fund non-infrastructure projects. On a scale of 1 to 5, what priority should be placed on funding each of the following projects with a 1% General Purpose Tax? **(Please circle one number next to each item):**

	Low Priority ←				→ High Priority
a) Recreation-related projects like bike paths, ball fields, horse trails and skate parks.	1	2	3	4	5
b) Funding for community groups and organizations like senior citizen centers, food banks and Boys and Girls Clubs.	1	2	3	4	5
c) Endowments to go toward operating costs of swimming pools, recreation centers and similar facilities.	1	2	3	4	5

Q5. Following are some arguments people have made against Park County's 1% General Purpose Tax proposal. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not At All Convincing" and 5 being "Very Convincing", how would you rate each of the following arguments as a reason to vote AGAINST Park County's proposed 1% General Purpose Tax? **(Please circle one number next to each item):**

	Not At All Convincing ←				→ Very Convincing
a) The State already has in place a 4% sales tax. Adding another 1% sales and use tax is a 25% increase. That's too much of a tax burden.	1	2	3	4	5
b) With the oil and gas industry struggling statewide, now is not the time to be increasing taxes.	1	2	3	4	5
c) Park County, Cody, Powell and Meeteetse should be setting aside existing tax dollars to tackle large infrastructure projects, rather than raising taxes.	1	2	3	4	5
d) Local retailers could be negatively impacted from a 1% sales and use tax increase as a result of fewer purchases being made within Park County.	1	2	3	4	5
e) The 1% General Purpose Tax will cost the average household in Park County an additional $80 per year. That amount of a tax increase will likely be a hardship for many low-income families and seniors on a fixed income.	1	2	3	4	5
f) While voters in Park County would have the opportunity to vote on the 1% General Purpose Tax after it has been in place for four years, it's unlikely that it will be voted down once it's in place. Voters in other counties keep voting the tax in every four years.	1	2	3	4	5
g) It makes more sense for Park County to pursue a 1% Specific Purpose Tax rather than a 1% General Purpose Tax. The 1% Specific Purpose Tax goes away once the specific projects are fully funded. (Refer to Fact Sheet for additional details regarding the difference between these two taxes.)	1	2	3	4	5

Q6. Following are some arguments people have made in favor of Park County's 1% General Purpose Tax proposal. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not At All Convincing" and 5 being "Very Convincing", how would you rate each of the following arguments as a reason to vote IN FAVOR of Park County's proposed 1% General Purpose Tax? **(Please circle one number next to each item):**

	Not At All Convincing ←				→ Very Convincing
a) With the State of Wyoming cutting funding to Park County, Cody, Powell and Meeteetse, revenues from a 1% General Purpose Tax are more important than ever to address high priority street, bridge, water, sewer and other infrastructure projects.	1	2	3	4	5
b) Unlike the existing 4% Sales & Use Tax, in which local governments get to keep only 30% of the tax revenues, local governments get to keep 99% of the 1% General Purpose Tax revenues. This is an important reason why 21 of 23 counties in Wyoming have approved the 1% General Purpose Tax.	1	2	3	4	5
c) The 1% General Purpose Tax would have a four-year renewal election in Park County. The tax would have to be approved by voters every four years for it to continue.	1	2	3	4	5
d) Revenues from a voter-approved 1% General Purpose Tax would be distributed based on size of population. For example, 43% of the tax revenues would go to Park County, 34% to Cody, 22% to Powell and 1% to Meeteetse.	1	2	3	4	5
e) There are 49 exemptions from the 1% General Purpose Tax, according to State Statute 39-15-105, including real estate purchases, food, fuel, fertilizer, livestock, feed and farm equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
f) Revenue from a voter-approved 1% General Purpose Tax would include sales tax generated inside Yellowstone National Park. In fact, the Wyoming Department of Revenue estimates that about 30% of the 1% General Purpose Tax in Park County would be paid by travelers from outside Park County.	1	2	3	4	5
g) For a $10 purchase, the tax is an additional 10 cents. For a $100 purchase, the tax is an additional $1.00. Many residents consider this a reasonable amount to pay to protect critical infrastructure, property values and our ability to attract and retain local businesses in Park County.	1	2	3	4	5

Survey continued on back ▶

JUST THE FACTS.

Please review before completing Public Opinion Survey

1. The State of Wyoming has a general 4% sales tax that applies to all 23 counties.
2. Local governments keep 30% of the 4% sales and use tax revenues. The State of Wyoming keeps the other 70%.
3. The existing 4% sales and use tax funds make up about 17% of Park County's general fund, 37% of Cody's general fund, 30% of Powell's general fund and 23% of Meeteetse's general fund.
4. Because local governments get less than one-third of the existing 4% sales and use tax revenues, many counties and municipalities have sought voter approval of a General Purpose Sales & Use Tax (often referred to at the *General Purpose Tax, 1% Optional* or *5th Cent Tax*). In fact, 21 of Wyoming's 23 counties currently have a voted-in General Purpose Tax.
5. The average household income in Park County is $50,000. Based on a formula provided by the State of Wyoming Office of Economic Analysis, from a report titled *Tax Rates and Tax Burdens* (dated November 2014) the AVERAGE impact of an additional 1-cent sales tax on a $50,000 household income would be $80/year. (NOTE: The $80 is in addition to the $317 (average) of sales taxes already paid as a result of the existing 4% state sales tax.)
6. The General Purpose Tax is an additional 1% tax. For example, on a $10 purchase, the tax is an additional 10 cents. On a $100 purchase, the tax is an additional $1.00.
7. Local governments get to keep 99% of a voter-approved 5th cent tax.
8. Revenues from a voter-approved General Purpose Tax are distributed based on population. For example, if Park County voters approved a General Purpose Tax, the revenues would be distributed as follows: 43% to Park County, 34% to Cody, 22% to Powell and 1% to Meeteetse.
9. A voter-approved General Purpose Tax would generate about $7 million—based on the 2014/15 sales tax receipts—for Park County and its municipalities annually ($3 million for Park County, $2.4 million for Cody, $1.5 million for Powell and $100,000 for Meeteetse). This is almost as much revenue that the County and municipalities get from the existing 4% sales and use tax.
10. There are 49 exemptions from the General Purpose Tax, according to State Statute 39-15-105, including real estate purchases, food, fuel, fertilizer, livestock, feed and farm equipment.
11. According to the Wyoming Department of Tourism, it is estimated that about 30% of a voter-approved General Purpose Tax in Park County would be paid by travelers from outside Park County.
12. Property taxes fund a relatively small percentage of the general funds of our local municipalities in Park County. In fact, only about 6.5% of Cody's and Powell's general fund is derived from property taxes. In Meeteetse, this amount is even lower at 2.8%.
13. The General Purpose Tax would have a four-year renewable election in Park County. The tax would be voted on every four years.
14. Revenue from a voter-approved General Purpose Tax would include sales taxes generated inside Yellowstone National Park.
15. Following are key differences between a "General Purpose" and a "Specific Purpose" tax:

General Purpose Sales & Use Tax
- Enforced for a specific time period (four years)
- Voted on again in four years

Specific Purpose Sales & Use Tax
- Ballot question includes a specific dollar amount and specific projects
- Tax remains in place until dollar amount is raised

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JUST THE FACTS.

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Following is a sampling of the 49 sales/use tax exemptions currently administered by the State of Wyoming:

- Real estate purchases.
- Gasoline, gasohol and diesel.
- Food for domestic home consumption.
- Prescription items, prosthetic devices, durable medical equipment, mobility equipment, any assistive device.
- Water delivered by pipeline or truck.
- Non-capitalized medical equipment, disposable medical and dental supplies.
- Livestock, feed, seeds, bulbs, fertilizer.
- Farm implements.
- Newspapers and school annuals.
- Transportation, loading, unloading, assembly or disassembly of a drilling rig.
- Machinery used to manufacture tangible personal property as well as ingredients or components used in manufacturing, processing or compounding.
- Services of professionals leading up to establishment of an oil or gas well.
- Intrastate transportation of raw farm products.
- Aircraft used in FAA commercial operation, including repair and replacement parts as well as services to aircraft at a certified repair station.
- Equipment used to generate electricity from renewable resources.
- Power or fuel consumed in manufacturing, processing, agriculture, generating motive power by a transportation business, or to create electricity.
- Interstate transportation of freight or passengers.
- Vehicles, and leases of vehicles, used in interstate commerce.
- Sales to State of WY or its political subdivisions, religious and charitable organizations, joint powers board, WY irrigation district and WY weed and pest control district.
- Intrastate transit of persons by government, charitable or nonprofit organization.
- Tangible personal property or services to fix railroad rolling stock.
- Wholesale sales.

Infrastructure improvements that Park County, Cody, Powell and Meeteetse like to address with a 1% General Purpose Sales & Use Tax include:

Park County

- Major roadway repair, replacement and reconstruction.
- Repair and reconstruction of bridges in greatest need of improvements.

City of Cody

- Reconstruction of Beacon Hill Road and a section of Sheridan Avenue, as well as curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements along 29th Street and Central Avenue.
- Upgrade of the wastewater lagoon system.
- Construction of a water storage tank off of Beacon Hill to improve fire protection, water storage and water system improvements.
- Completion of ADA ramp projects city-wide.
- Storm drainage improvements on Stampede Avenue.
- Raw water irrigation project.

City of Powell

- Improvements along Absaroka Street from Third to Seventh, including rebuilding the water line; street widening; storm drains, curb, gutter and sidewalks; trees; and ADA projects.
- Storm drainage improvements along Division Street, from Avenue E to Seventh Street, including ADA ramps at corners.
- Improvements to Grand Street (overlay).
- Widening of A, B, C and D Avenues.
- Repaving of Seventh Street from Bernard to Division.

Town of Meeteetse

- Replacement of 65-year-old water distribution line, improvements to water treatment plant, lagoon and tank, and upgrades to fire hydrant.
- Rehabilitation of pump station and storm drain
- Street improvements.

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