



Active Transportation Funding & the Next Transportation Bill

an APBP Webinar featuring:
Kevin Mills, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners

Featuring Results of RTC's Bipartisan National Poll

Purposes of Poll

- ❖ Demonstrate public support for federal role in active transportation



- ❖ Develop more effective **messages** to sway public and decision-makers

Advocacy Context

- ❖ Federal transportation reauthorization timetable
- ❖ Direct attacks: not the federal role/ can't afford
- ❖ Preserve core programs



Over 50 Organizations to Congress: Reject Efforts to Raise the Federal Gas Tax

January 28, 2015

Dear Members of the 114th Congress:

On behalf of our organizations and the millions of Americans we represent across all 50 states, I write to express our strong opposition to legislation that includes an increase to the federal gas tax.

“Washington continues to spend federal dollars on projects that have nothing to do with roads like bike paths and transit as well as completely unrelated projects like museums and squirrel sanctuaries.”

AEA
AMERICAN
ENERGY ALLIANCE



TPN
TEA PARTY NATION



increase in the cost of living have been given some relief with falling gas prices. These lower prices amount to nearly \$100 extra per month for an average family, which is expected to lead to an additional \$100 billion of economic growth. Congress should embrace these lower prices, not confiscate the savings, increase costs, and weaken growth potential.

Moreover, a gas tax increase would exacerbate existing problems with the current transportation infrastructure funding formula. Despite billions in Highway Trust Fund (HTF) shortfalls, Washington continues to spend federal dollars on projects that have nothing to do with roads like bike paths and transit as well as completely unrelated projects like museums and squirrel sanctuaries. Over one-third of HTF spending today is for non-highway purposes.

In addition, Davis-Bacon wage rules and other burdensome regulations needlessly add time and cost to transportation infrastructure projects.



Rails to Trails Conservancy National Poll

Celinda Lake
April 29th, 2015

Conducted by Lake Research Partners & Bellwether Research
Survey Among 1000 Likely 2016 Voters
September 9th – 14th, 2014 (MOE +/- 3.1%)

Methodology

Bellwether Research and Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey which was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers September 9th-14th, 2014.

The survey reached a total of 1000 likely 2016 voters nationwide.

Telephone numbers for the survey were drawn using a voter file sample. The national data were weighted slightly by gender, age party identification, race, and region to reflect the attributes of the actual population.

The margin of error for the total national sample is +/- 3.1%.

Regional Definitions:

New England - Respondents who live in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island or Connecticut.

Northeast

- **Middle Atlantic** - Respondents who live in New York, New Jersey or Pennsylvania.
- **East South Central** - Respondents who live in Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, or Kentucky.
- **West South Central** - Respondents who live in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, or Texas.
- **South Atlantic** - Respondents who live in Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia or Florida.

South

East North Central - Respondents who live in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, or Ohio.

Midwest

- **West North Central** - Respondents who live in Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, or Kansas.
- **Mountain** - Respondents who live in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah or Nevada.
- **Pacific** - Respondents who live in California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska or Hawaii.

West



Context

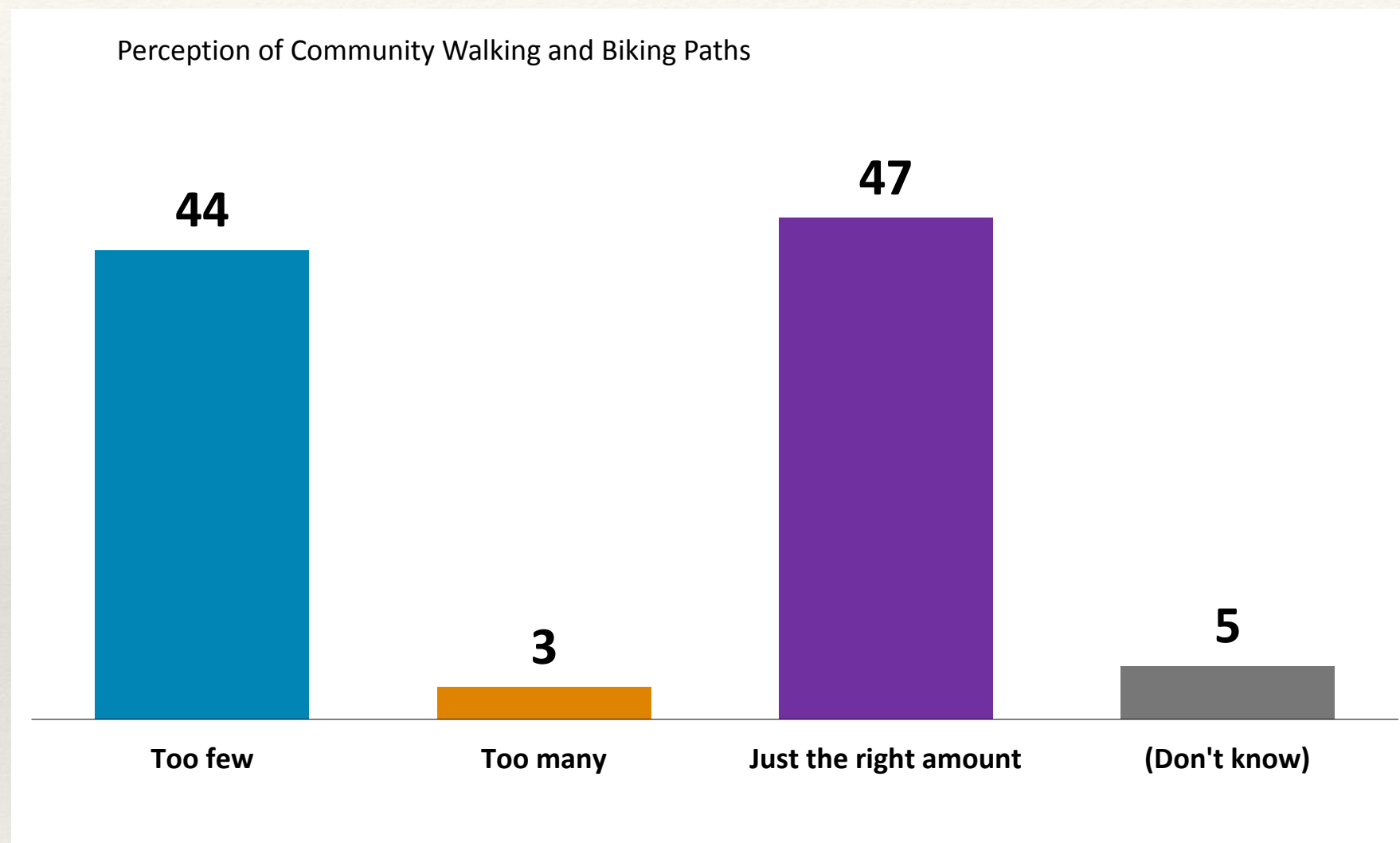
Key Findings – Context

- ❖ Voters favor a federal role in funding walking and biking paths and they do not want to decrease the amount of money being spent.
- ❖ This survey illustrates there is a definite constituency for walking and biking paths and broad support for expenditures in this area.

Key Findings – Context

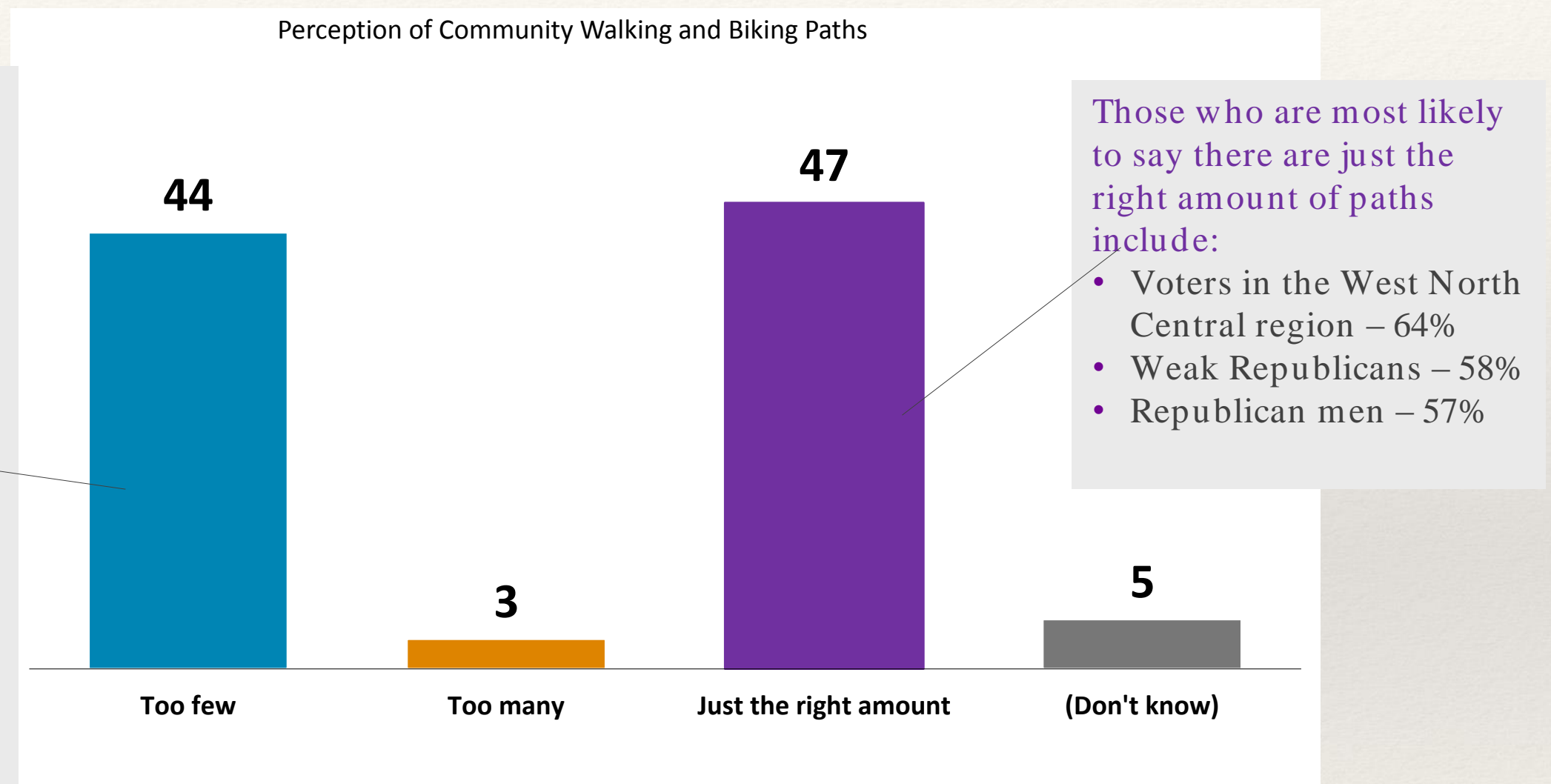
- ❖ Over forty percent of voters say they have too few paths in their communities.
- ❖ It appears that attitudes are highly correlated between perceptions of the number of paths and attitudes toward funding: if a voter thinks the number of paths is about right, they want to maintain current funding. If a voter thinks there are too few paths, then they want to increase funding.
- ❖ Few people want to decrease spending.

Voters' perception of the number of walking and biking paths in their communities is evenly split between having too few paths and the right amount of paths. Very few voters say there are too many paths.



Thinking about the walking and biking paths that exist in your community, would you say that you have too many, too few, or just the right amount?

Democrats and voters in the South Central region are among the most likely to say there are too few paths. Republicans and voters in the Midwest are most likely to say the number of paths is about right.



*Note small sample size

Thinking about the walking and biking paths that exist in your community, would you say that you have too many, too few, or just the right amount?



Funding

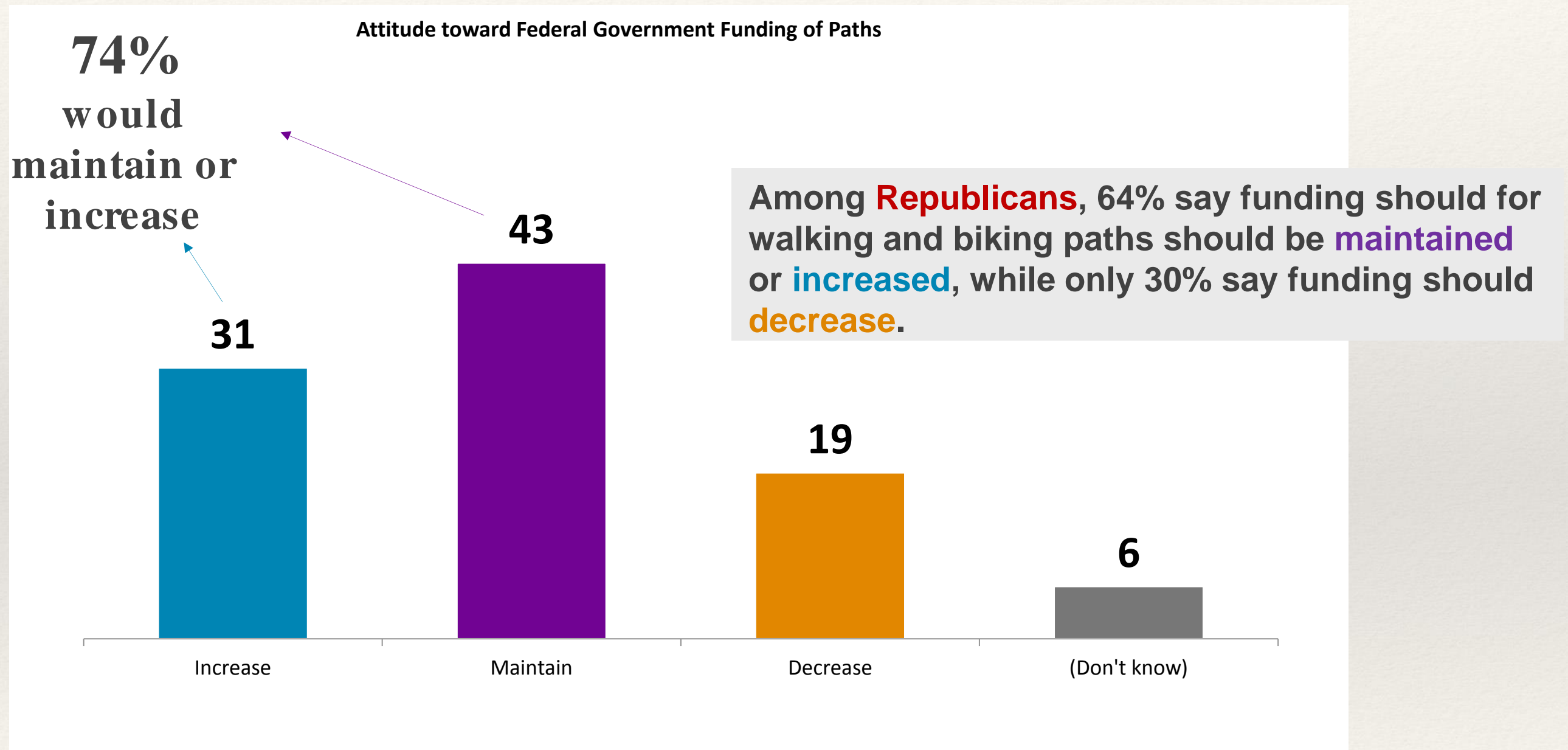
Key Findings - Funding

- ❖ **Voters prefer maintaining or increasing the percentage of federal transportation funds that support walking and biking over decreasing funds by nearly four to one.** More than four in ten voters prefer to maintain the percentage of current federal transportation funds that support walking and biking. A third would increase this funding and a fifth would decrease it.
- ❖ **In a hypothetical exercise, voters would spend significantly more than the current budget on funding for public transportation and walking and biking paths.**
- ❖ **When asked to distribute \$100 in funding across roads, public transportation, and walking and biking paths, voters designate about \$27 to walking and biking paths, 18 times the current funding.**

Key Findings - Funding

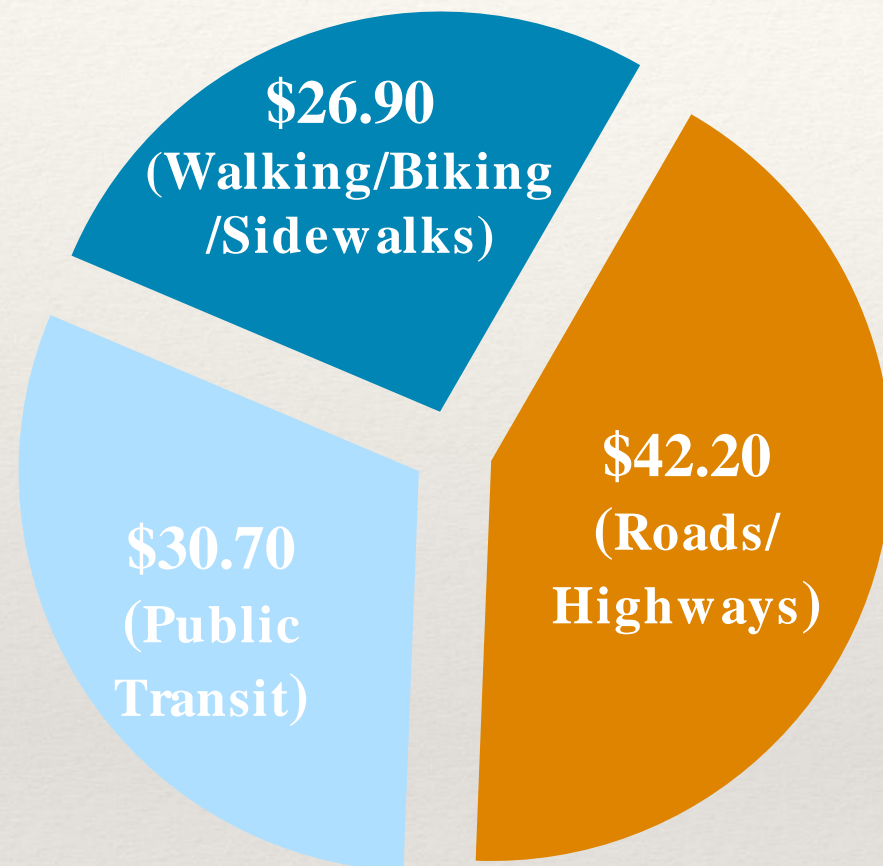
- ❖ Voters seek a **combination** of transportation options and want federal funding to reflect it.
- ❖ **Voters are less likely to vote for a candidate who would eliminate funds for walking and biking paths and says that federal transportation funds should be used only for highways and roads.**
- ❖ Republicans agree, as do Democrats and Independents.

A plurality of voters prefer to maintain 1.5 percent of the federal transportation funds that support walking and biking. A third would increase this funding and a fifth would decrease it.

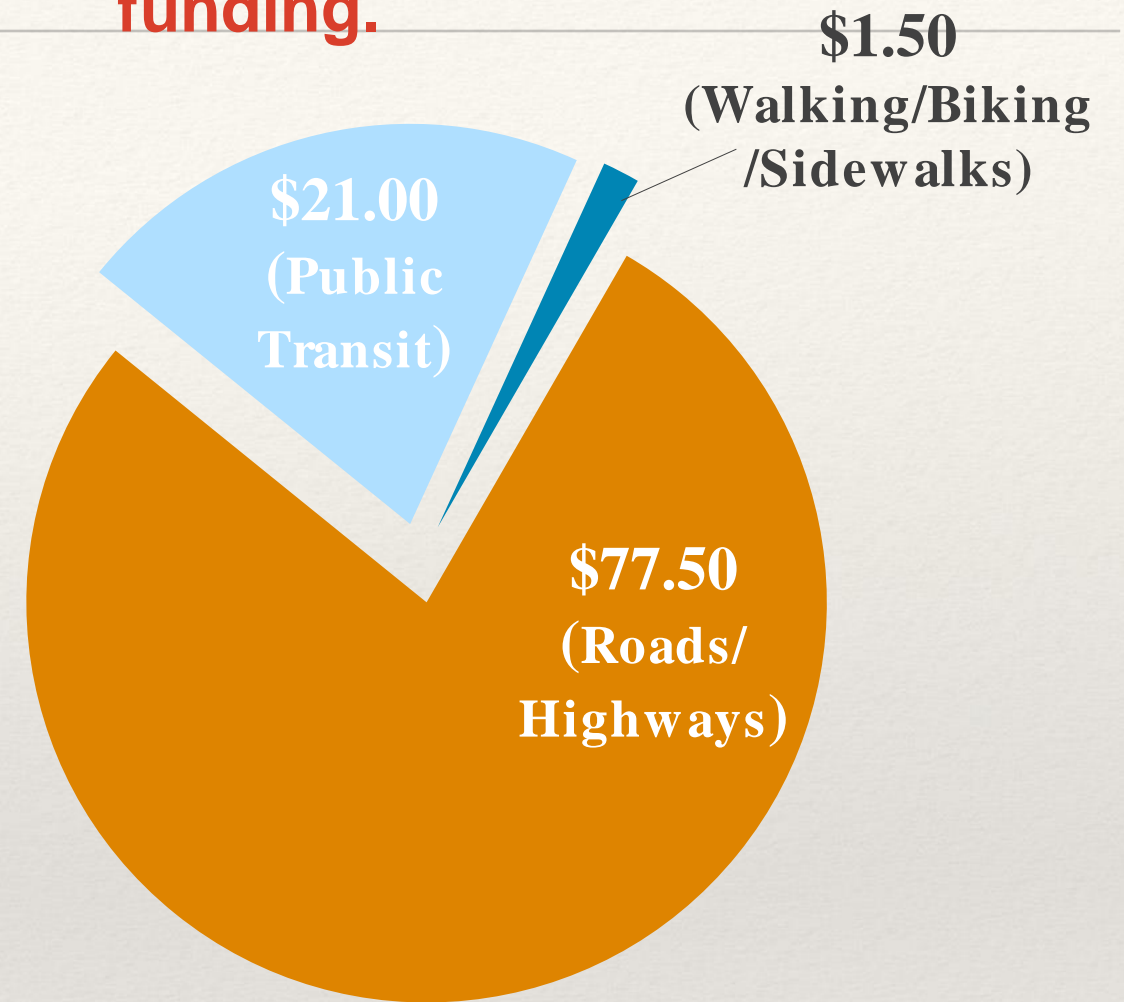


Across demographic subgroups, voters say at least ten times the current budget should be allocated for walking and biking paths, and sidewalks.

Voters seek a mixed plan of transportation options reflected in transportation funding. When asked to distribute \$100 in funding, voters designate about \$27 to walking and biking paths, 18 times the current funding.



Poll Results



**Current Budget
(per \$100)**

78% of voters believe that funding for expanding and improving walking and biking paths should be more than \$2 – the current equivalent distribution in the budget.

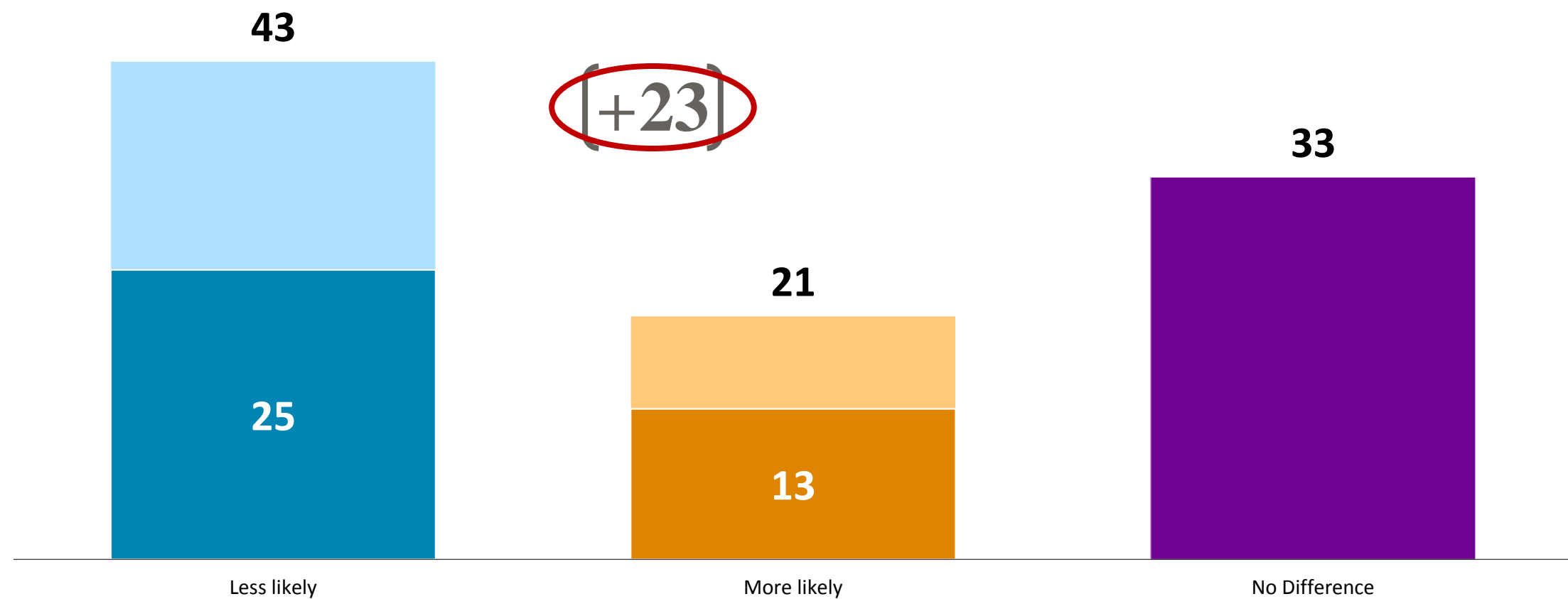
If you had \$100 tax dollars, how would you distribute it among each of the following - maintaining and creating roads and highways; expanding and improving public transportation; expanding and improving walking and biking paths, and sidewalks.

Key 2016 voting blocs support keeping funding for walking and biking trails by wide margins.

Key 2016 Constituencies	Maintain	Increase	Decrease
College-educated women	49	34	13
Republican women	52	15	27
Moms	49	36	11

Voters are less likely to vote for a candidate who would eliminate funds for walking and biking paths and says that federal transportation funds should be used only for highways and roads.

Vote Likelihood for a Candidate that would Fund Only HWYs/Roads and Eliminate Walking/Biking Funds



Split sample question



Across party identification, voters agree.

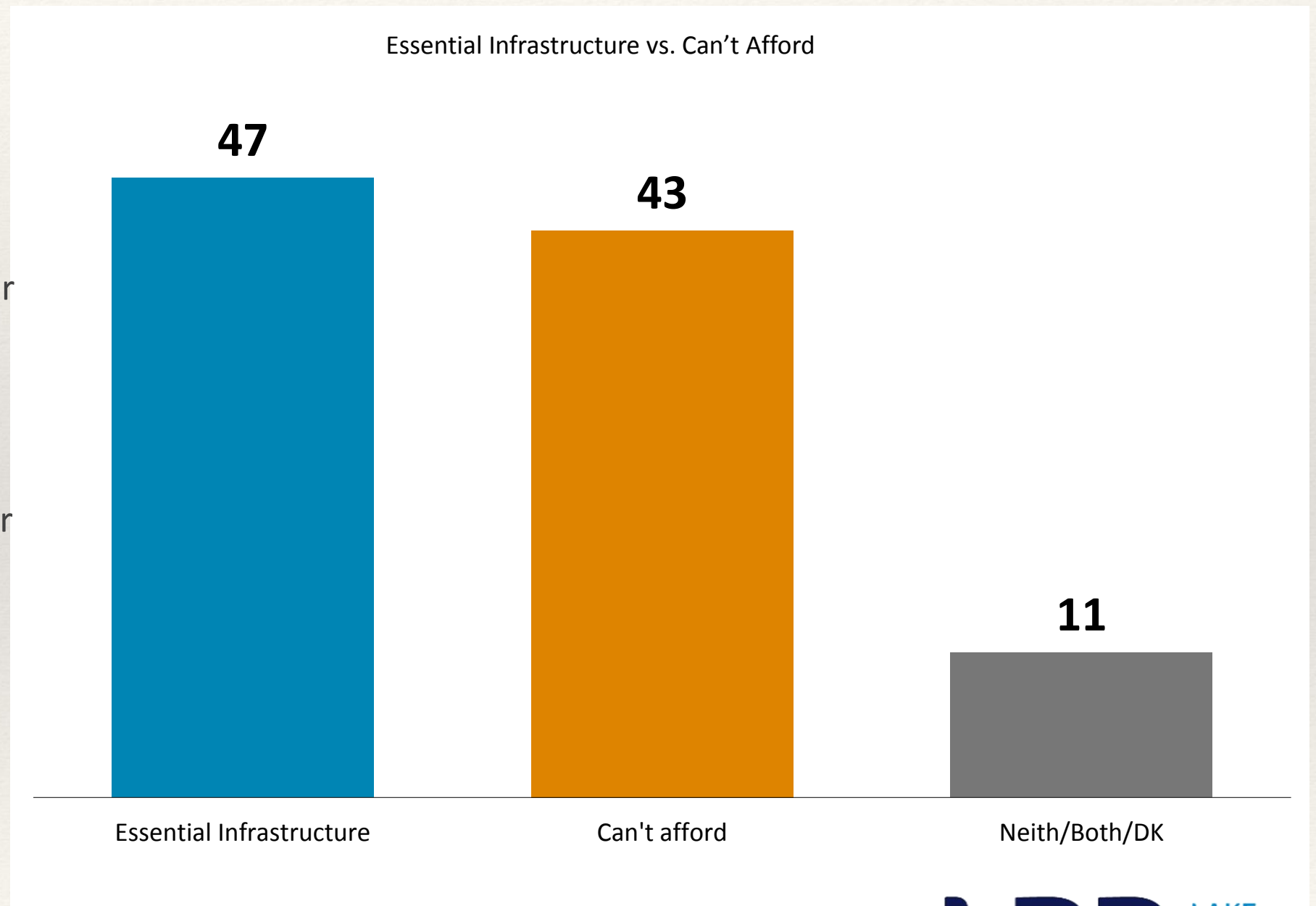
Likely to Vote for a Candidate Who Would Eliminate Funds	Less Likely	More Likely	No Difference
Republican	36	29	34
Independent	40	17	39
Democrat	54	16	26

In an engaged debate, we framed this as a choice of how to spend funds in a tough economy when we can't really afford it and voters **STILL opted (albeit narrowly) to continue funding bike and walk paths.**

Now let me read you two statements and tell me which one comes closest to your view:

Statement A: Some people/other people say that walking and biking paths are essential infrastructure.

Statement B: Some people/other people say that in these tough economic times, we can't afford to spend money on walking and biking paths.

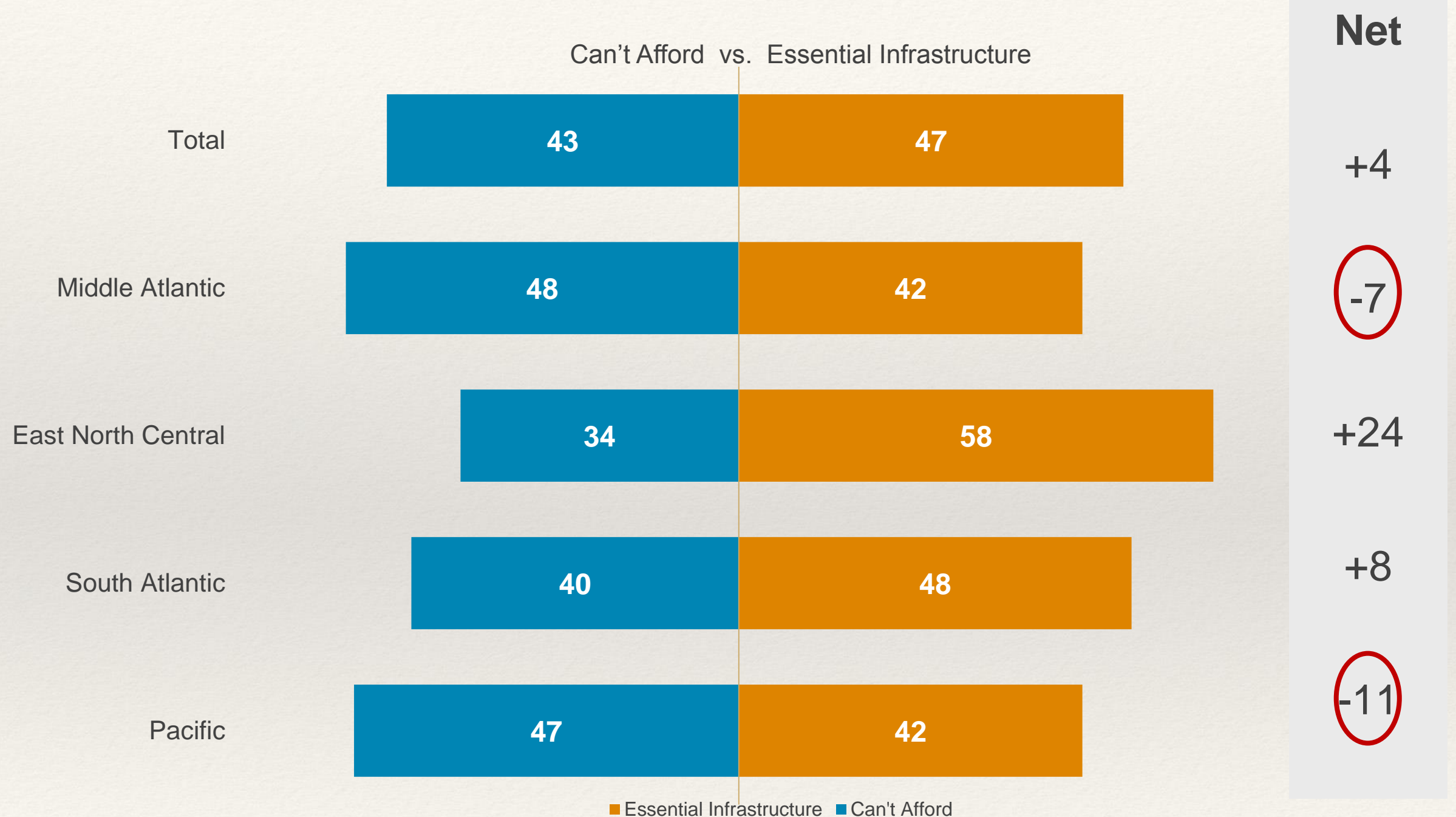


Text of Statements

[Essential Infrastructure] Some people/ other people say that walking and biking paths are essential infrastructure. Investing in paths and sidewalks provides safe places for our children, seniors and people with disabilities to get around. Other Americans want the practical choice to walk or bicycle provided by safe and convenient walking or biking routes that connect the places where we live, work, shop, learn, and play. Everyone deserves access to jobs and other opportunities regardless of whether they can drive.

[Can't Afford] Some people/ other people say that in these tough economic times, we can't afford to spend money on walking and biking paths. We must focus our tax dollars on our deteriorating infrastructure, like our aging bridges and our roads and highways. The federal government must focus their efforts on improving the nation's highways and bridges, not constructing paths. If communities want to expand their paths, then it should be a local issue, not a federal issue.

The Middle Atlantic and Pacific are cost-sensitive when the argument is about infrastructure



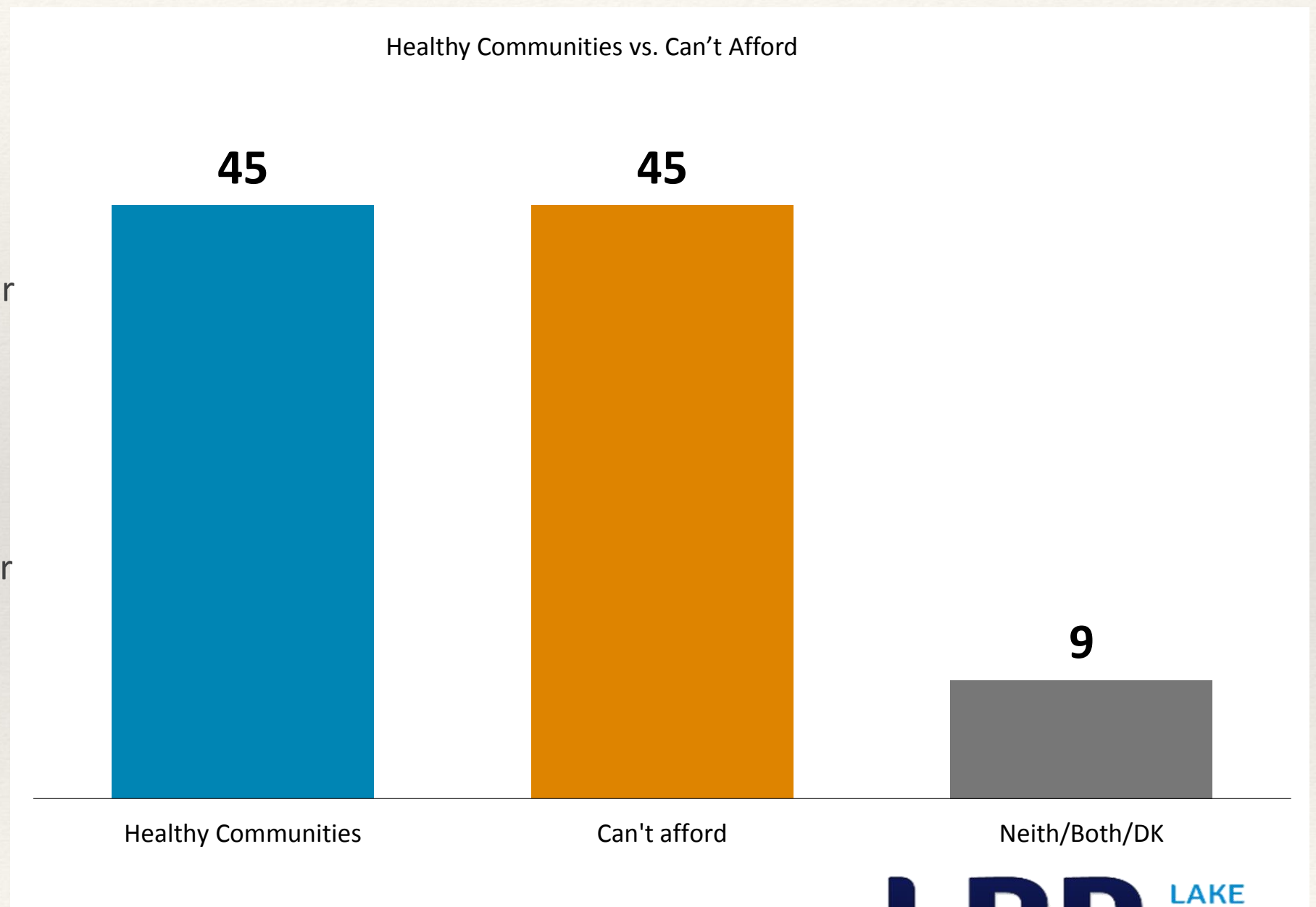
Now let me read you two statements and tell me which one comes closest to your view.

In an engaged debate that pits healthy communities against concerns about not being able to afford the investment, voters split between the two arguments.

Now let me read you two statements and tell me which one comes closest to your view:

Statement A: Some people/other people say America needs to invest in safe routes to walk and bike to build healthy communities for healthy people.

Statement B: Some people/other people say that in these tough economic times, we can't afford to spend money on walking and biking paths.

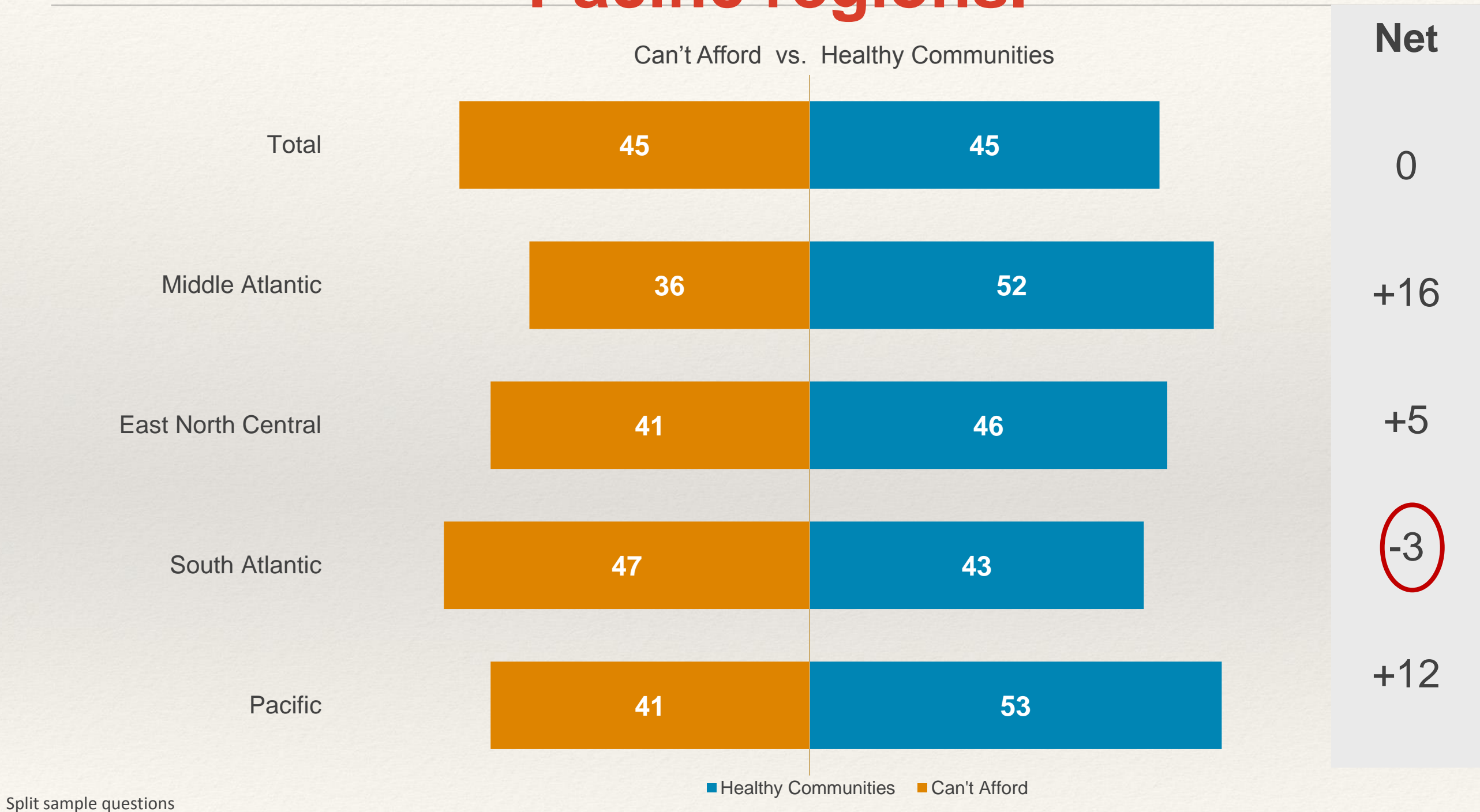


Text of Statements

[Healthy Communities] Some people/ other people say America needs to invest in safe routes to walk and bike to build healthy communities for healthy people. Walking and biking paths provide safe and convenient connections to destinations and help local businesses thrive. Also, physical activity helps prevent chronic diseases, which saves greatly on health care costs. Paths are a highly cost-effective way to meet certain transportation needs, while contributing to the economic and public health of our communities.

[Can't Afford] Some people/ other people say that in these tough economic times, we can't afford to spend money on walking and biking paths. We must focus our tax dollars on our deteriorating infrastructure, like our aging bridges and our roads and highways. The federal government must focus their efforts on improving the nation's highways and bridges, not constructing paths. If communities want to expand their paths, then it should be a local issue, not a federal issue.

Noticeably, it is stronger to talk about healthy communities in the Mid-Atlantic and Pacific regions.



Now let me read you two statements and tell me which one comes closest to your view.



What Resonates

Reasons People Support Walking and Biking Paths

CHILDREN

Walking and biking paths and sidewalks help create safe places for our children to be active.

HEALTH CARE PREVENTION

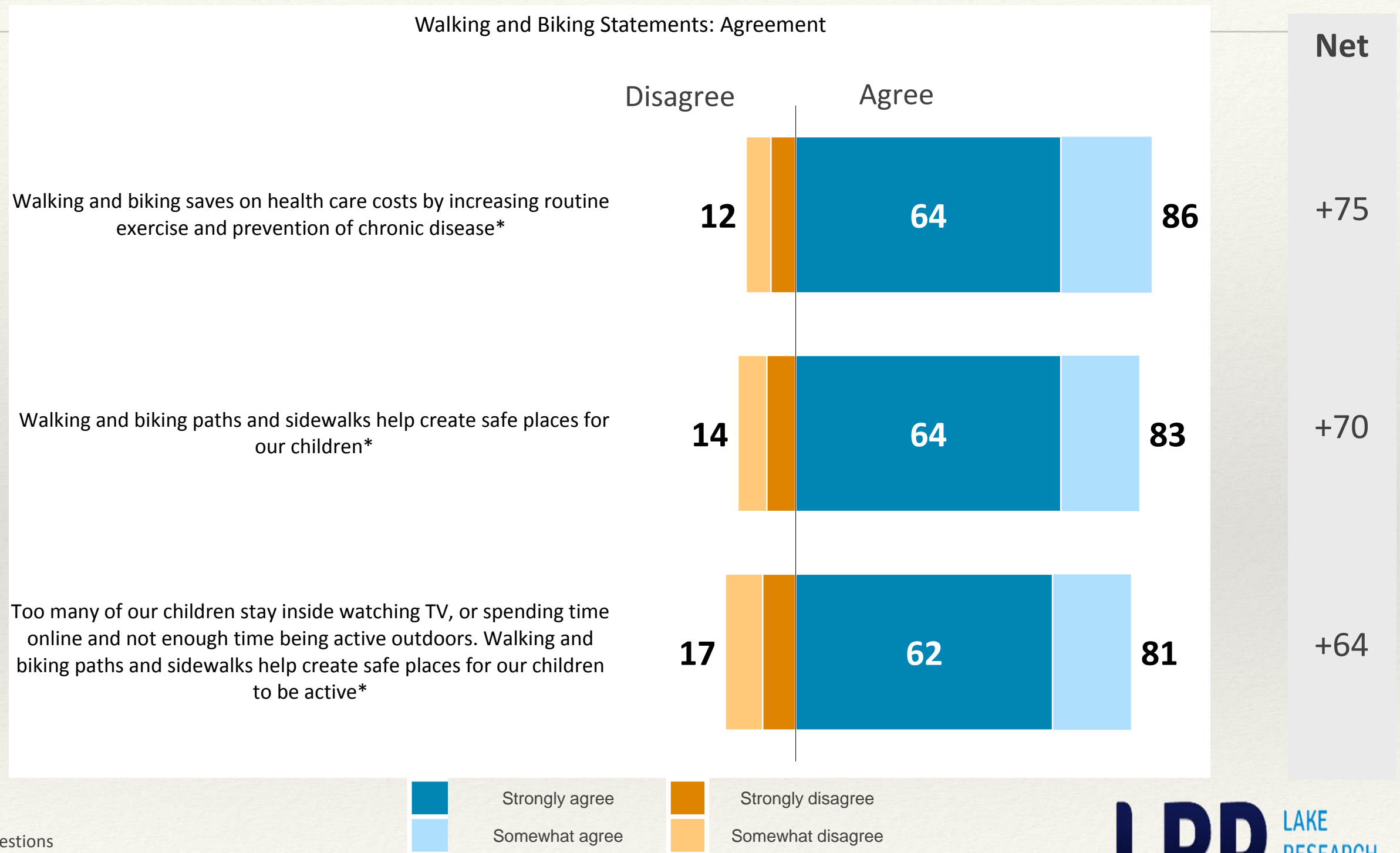
Walking and biking saves on health care costs by increasing routine exercise and prevention of chronic disease.

We should invest federal transportation dollars in walking and biking paths because...

COST SAVINGS

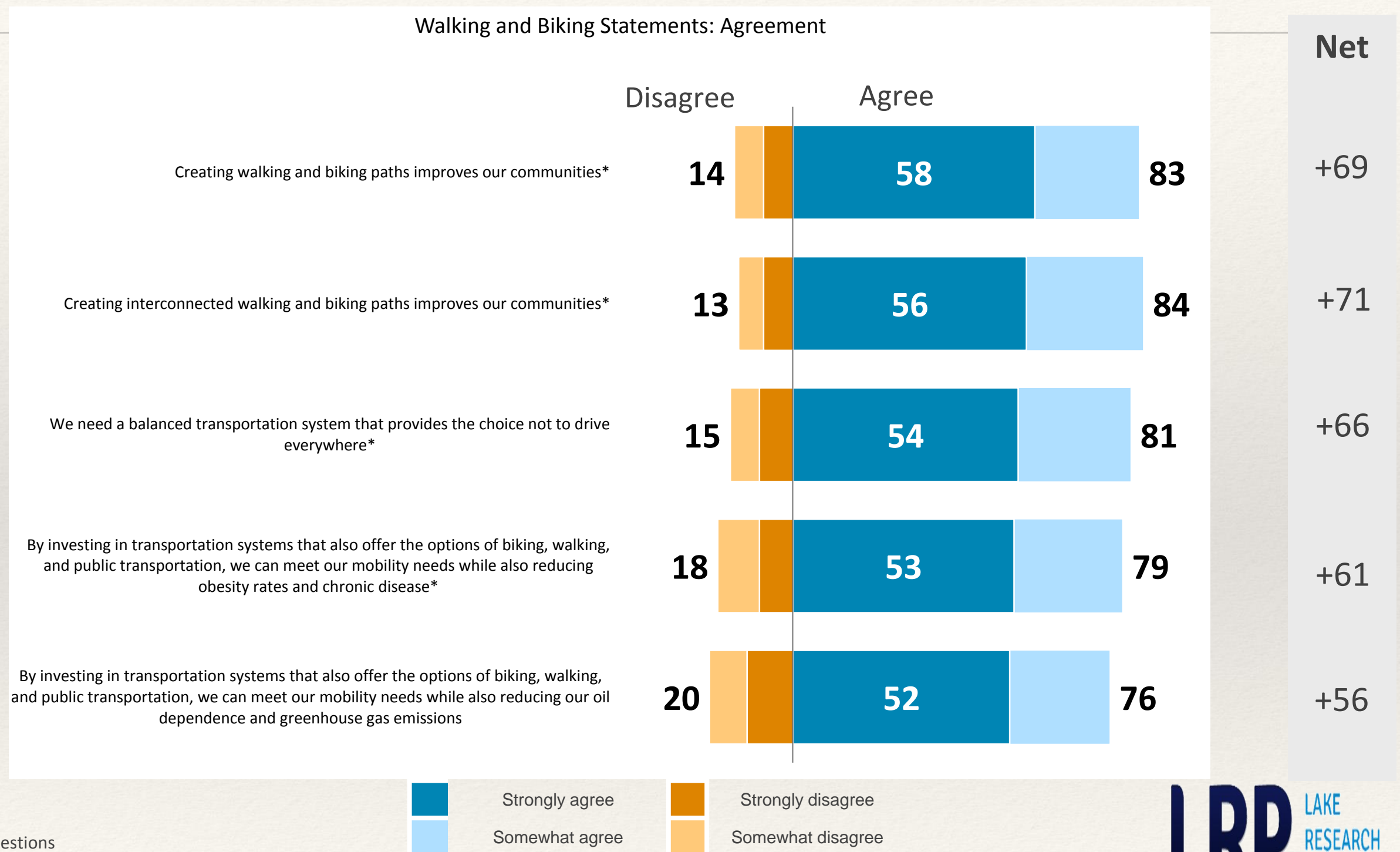
Walking and biking paths are very affordable to build, and nationally they provide billions of dollars in fuel and health care savings every year.

The two pillars of messaging around walking and biking paths are that they save on health care costs and create safe places for children.



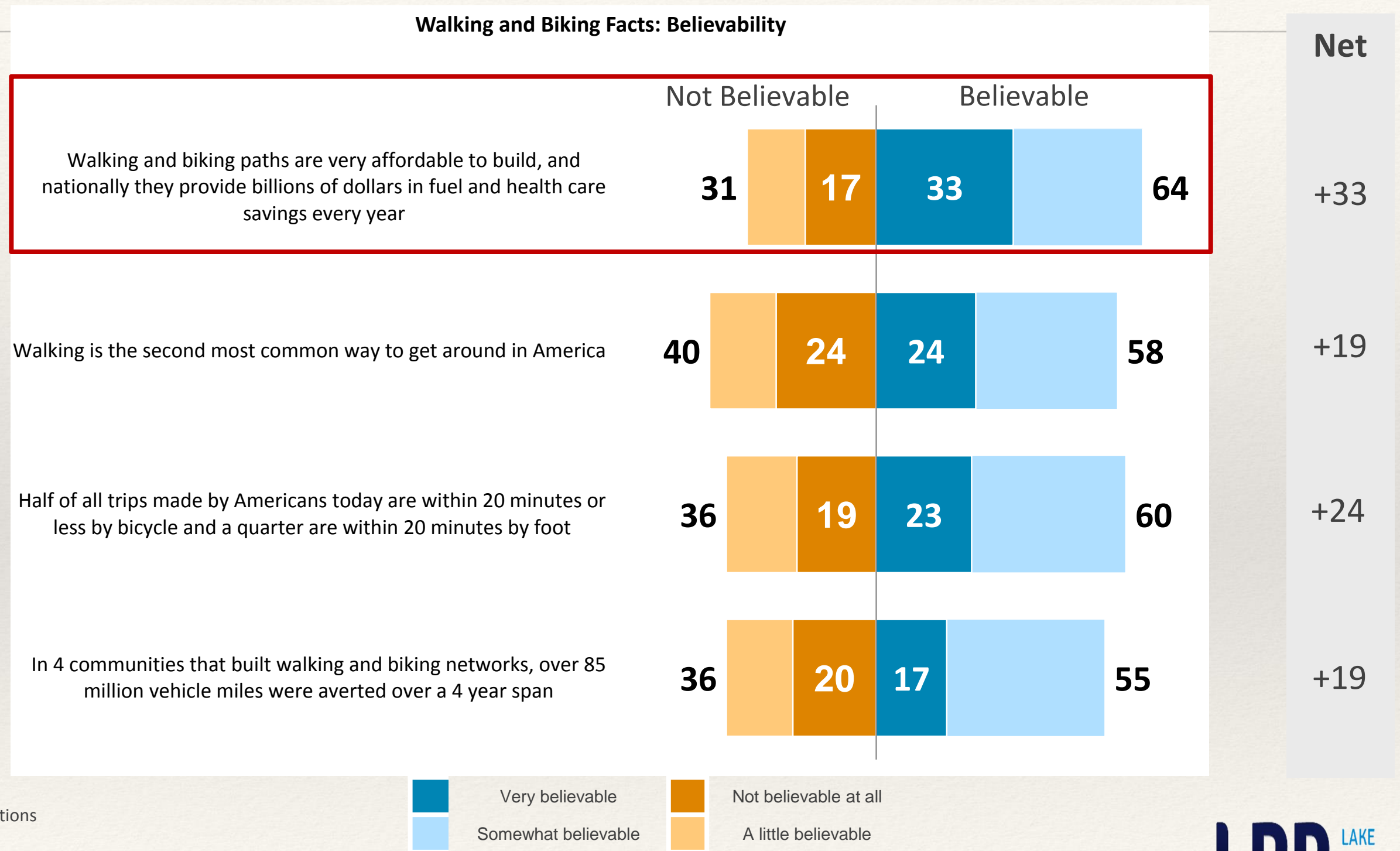
Split sample questions

In a second tier but still with strong support, voters place statements around improving communities, balance and choices, reducing obesity and chronic disease, and reducing oil dependence and greenhouse gas emissions.



Split sample questions

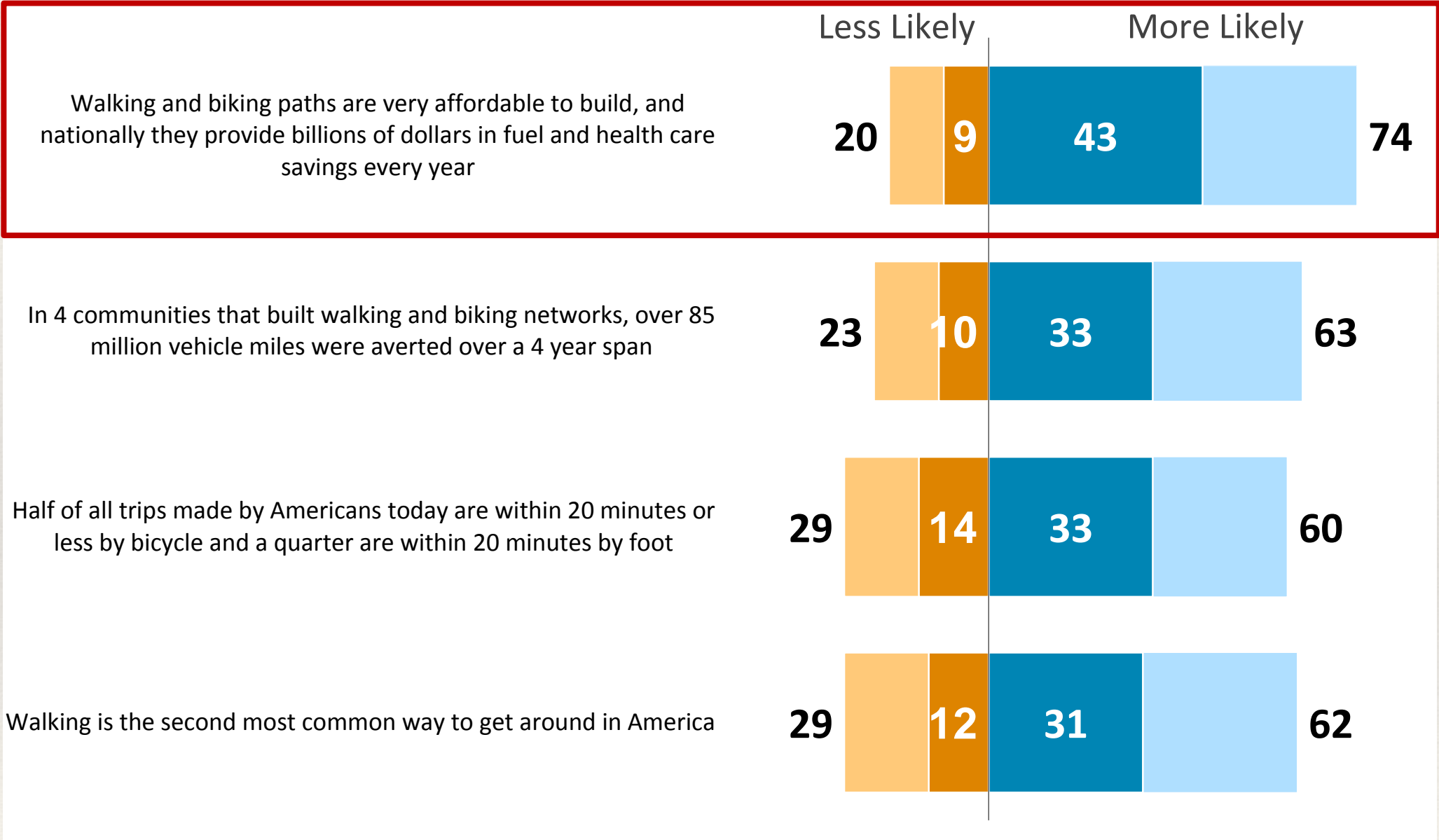
When talking about facts concerning walking and biking, the most believable fact to voters is that paths are very affordable and create significant fuel and health care savings.



Similarly, the fact about affordability and savings is also the strongest in persuading voters to support federal funding for walking and biking paths.

Walking and Biking Facts: Likelihood to Support Federal Funding

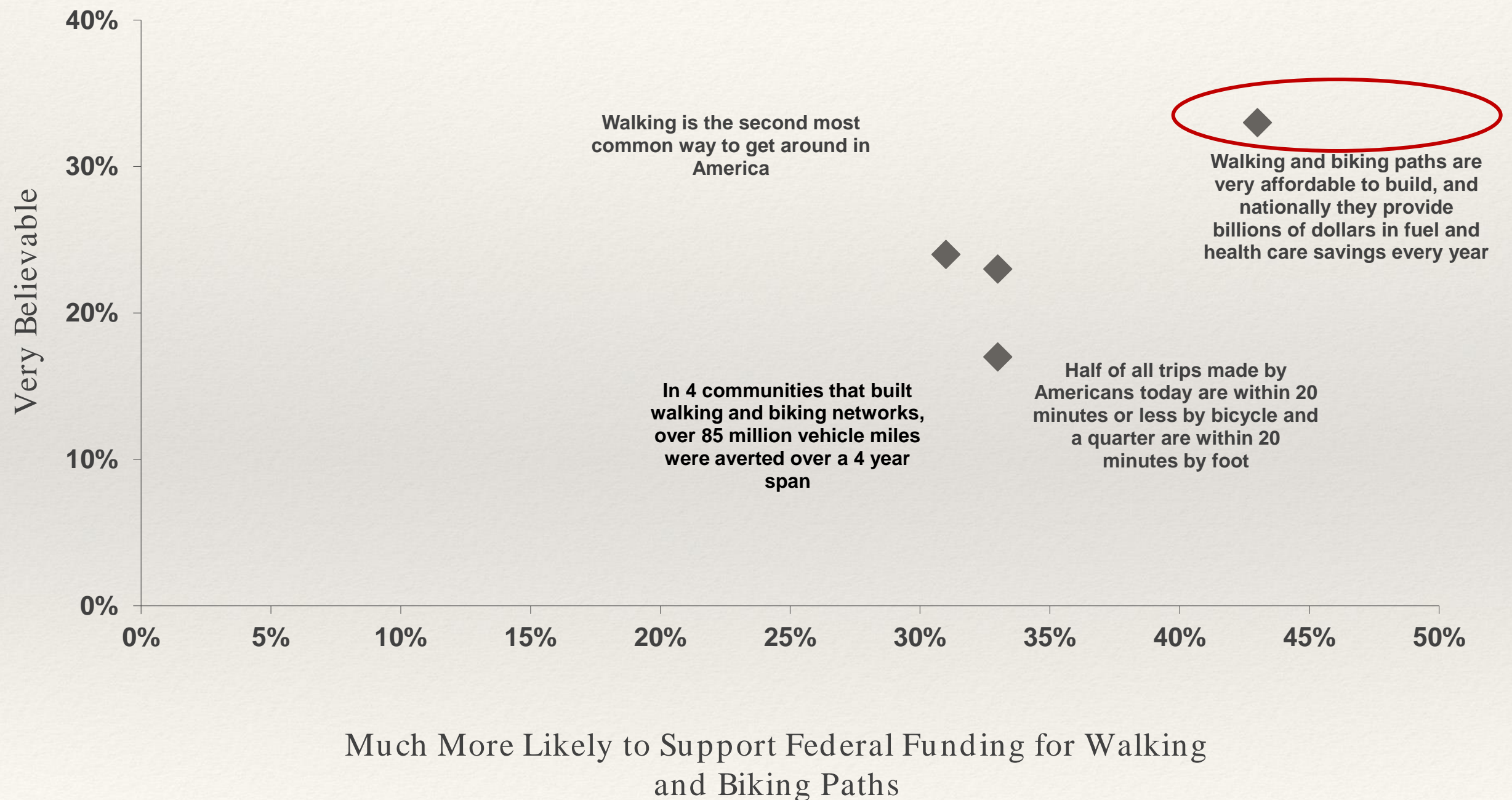
Net



Split sample questions



It is clear that the top fact is affordability and savings.



Across party identification, the fact that is most believable and the most likely to make voters support federal funding for walking and biking paths is that they are affordable and provide billions in savings.

	Democrats		Independents		Republicans	
	Believable	More Likely	Believable	More Likely	Believable	More Likely
Walking and biking paths are very affordable to build, and nationally they provide billions of dollars in fuel and health care savings every year.	70	83	71	75	54	67



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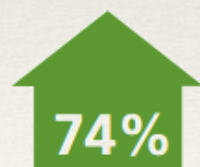
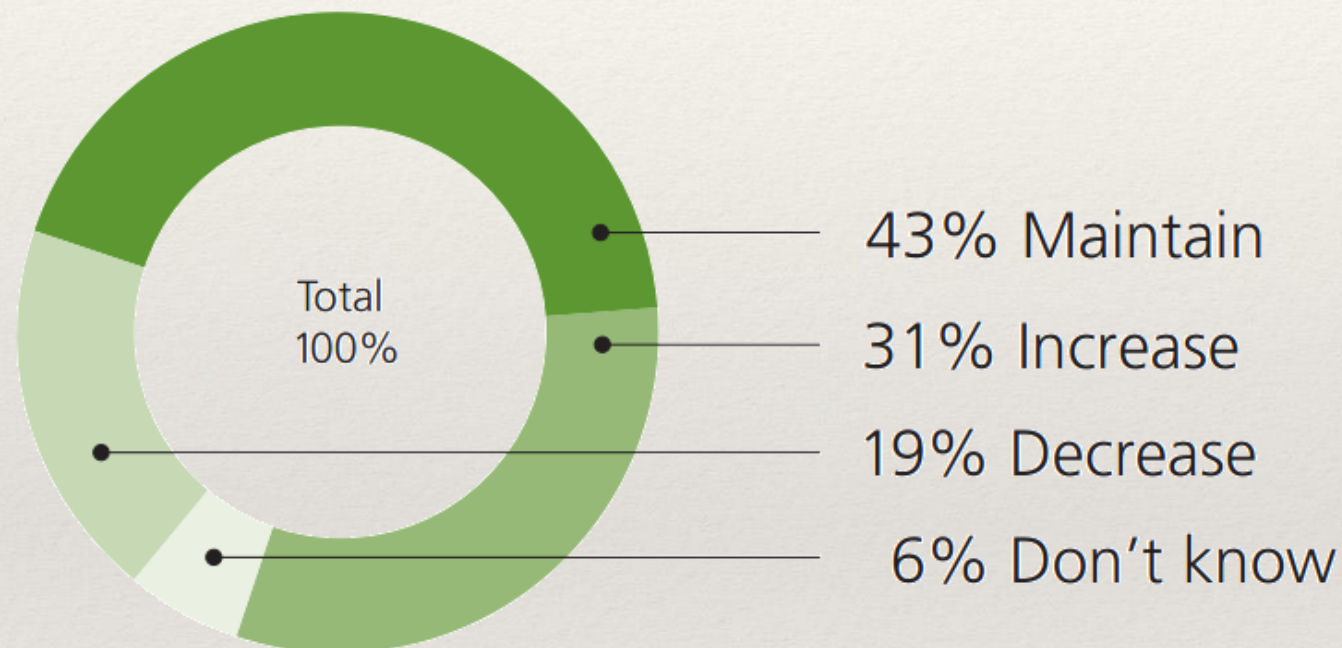
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Using Poll Results in Federal Advocacy

❖ 1. Maintain/ increase most useful politically

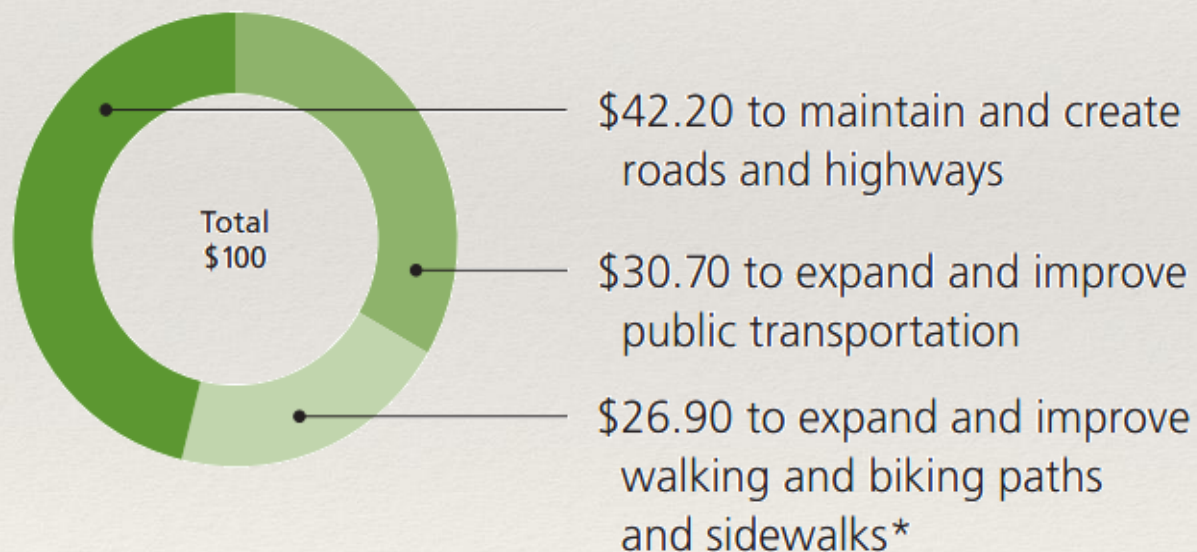


Want to increase or maintain federal funding

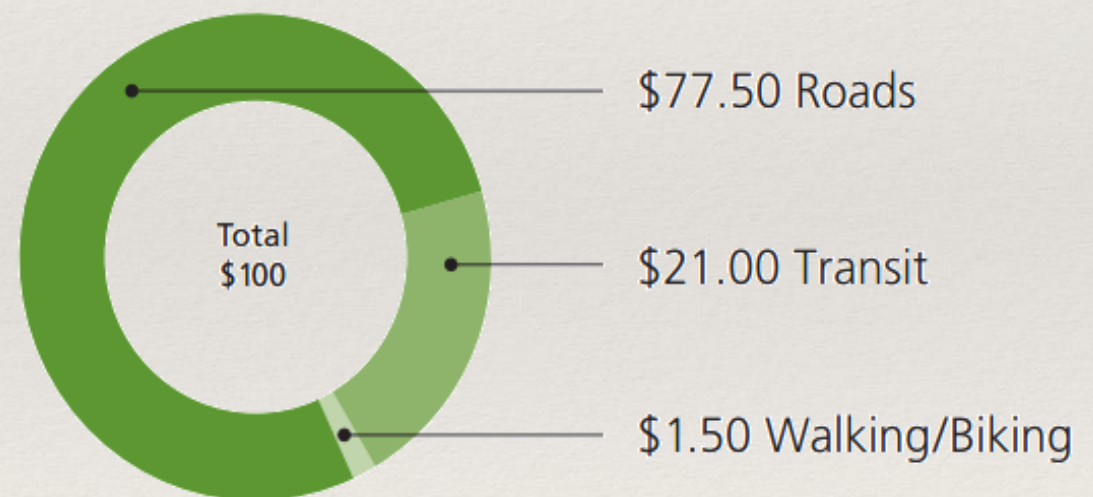
Using Poll Results in Federal Advocacy

❖ 2. “\$100” provocative result; represents ‘balance’

When asked to distribute \$100 of taxes on transportation, voters on average allocated:



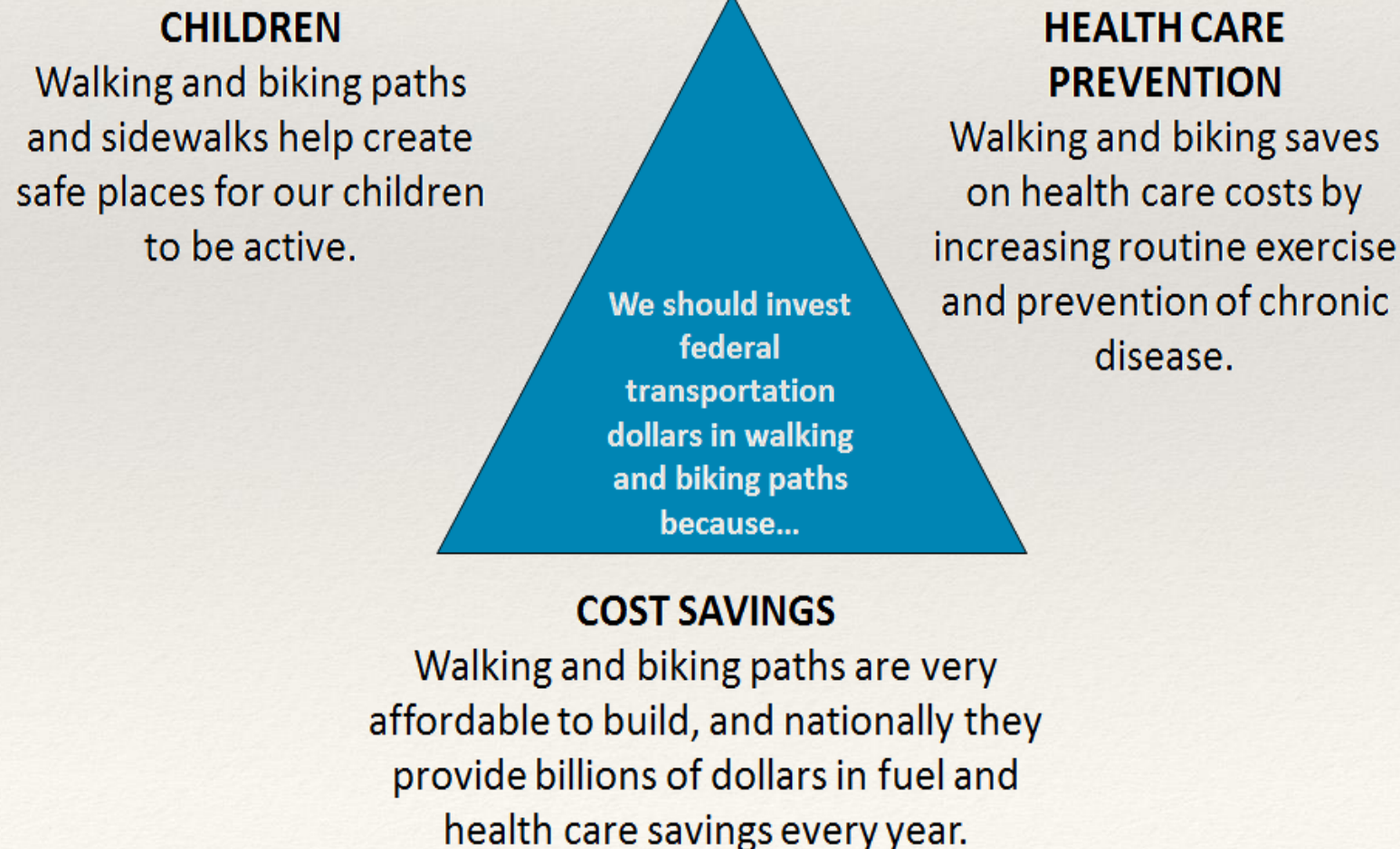
Current federal allocation of transportation funding:



Using Poll Results in Federal Advocacy

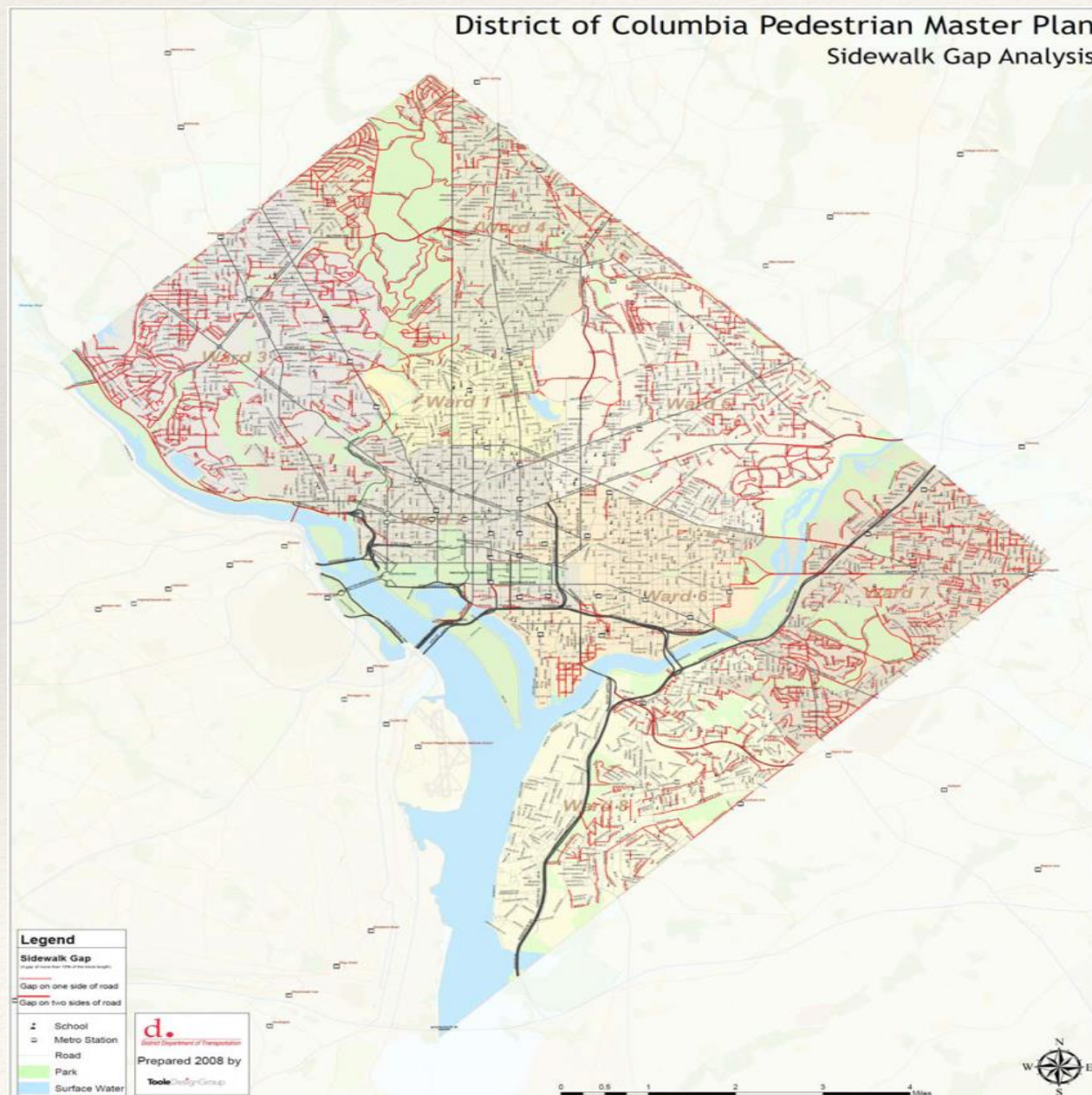
❖ 3. messaging triangle (all positive)

Reasons People Support Walking and Biking Paths



Using Poll Results in Federal Advocacy

4. Emphasize unfinished business (“right amount?”)



Reauthorization Agenda

❖ Protect Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

- ❖ TAP should rise to 3% share with increased transportation funding. At least maintain current funding level in status quo bill.
- ❖ Eliminate state ability to transfer funds out of TAP & the Governor's opt out provision for Recreational Trails. Eliminate TAP eligibilities that relate to regulatory compliance of highway projects

❖ Promote Active Transportation Systems

- ❖ Create means to fill gaps in active transportation networks-- low interest revolving loan fund or loan guarantee opportunity, like TIFIA, made accessible for smaller projects (threshold, costs)



Safe Routes to Everywhere

Building Healthy Places for Healthy People
Through Active Transportation Networks



Partnership for Active Transportation

Online Advocacy Resources

- ❖ Poll results.....[railstotrains.org/ poll](http://railstotrains.org/poll)
- ❖ Making the case material.....
[http:// www.railstotrains.org/ policy/ active-transportation-for-america/](http://www.railstotrains.org/policy/active-transportation-for-america/)
- ❖ Policy platform.....
.....[http:// www.partnership4at.org/ about/ policy-platform](http://www.partnership4at.org/about/policy-platform)
- ❖ Transportation Alternatives Project lists
(TrADE).....
.....[trade.railstotrains.org/ community_data](http://trade.railstotrains.org/community_data)
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Transportation Alternatives Data Exchange (TrADE)

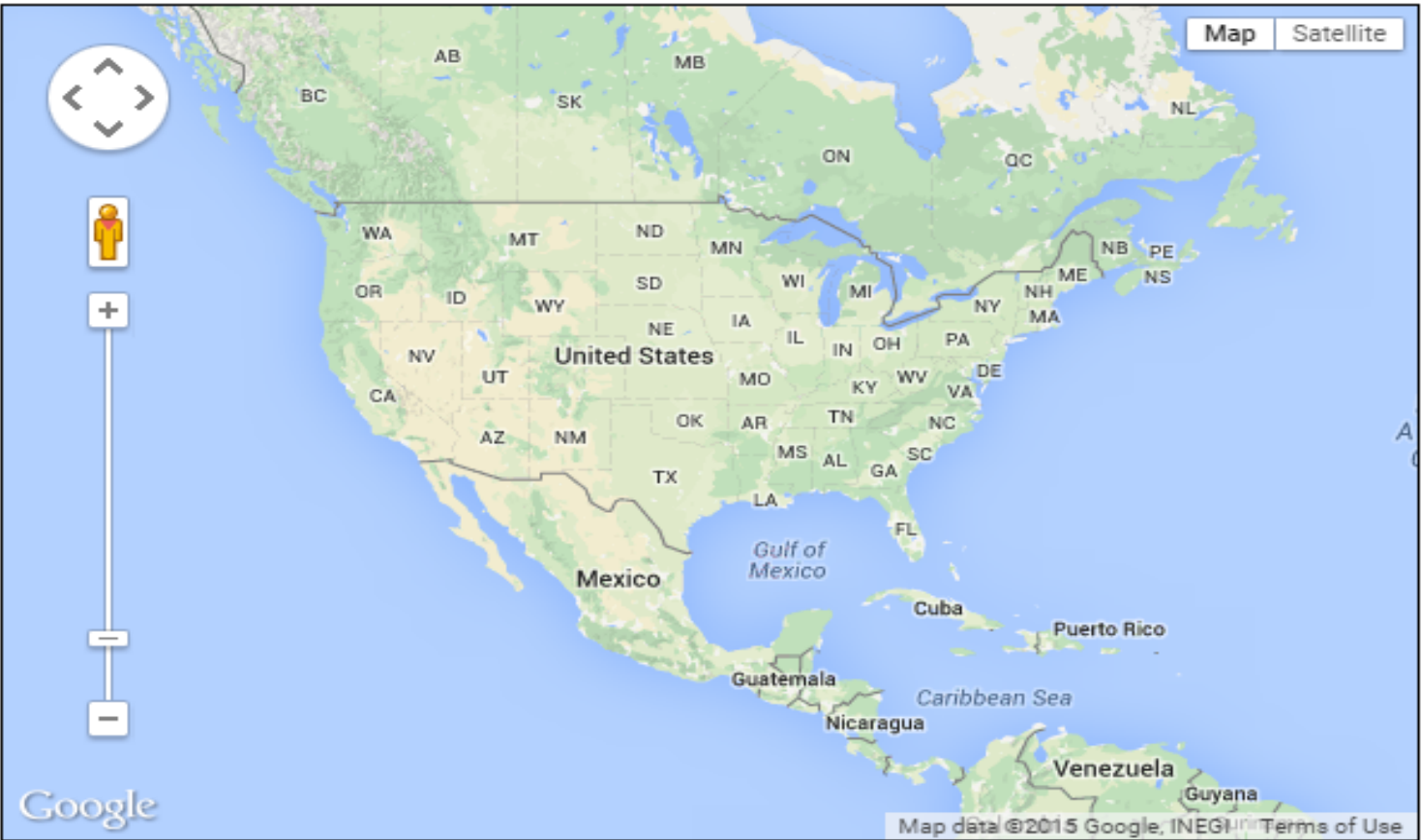
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- State Profiles
- Search Projects
- Project Examples
- Peer Exchange

Community Data

Find a Place: Go!

Choose which layers to display:

- ☐ Federally Funded Projects by Cong. District
- ☐ Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatalities 2006 - 2013
- ☐ Bicycle Infrastructure
- ☐ County Health Data
- ☐ Rural Typology([What's This?](#))



Transportation Alternatives Data Exchange (TrADE)

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Community Data

Find a Place:

Choose which layers to display:



Federally Funded Projects by Cong. District



Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatalities 2006 - 2013



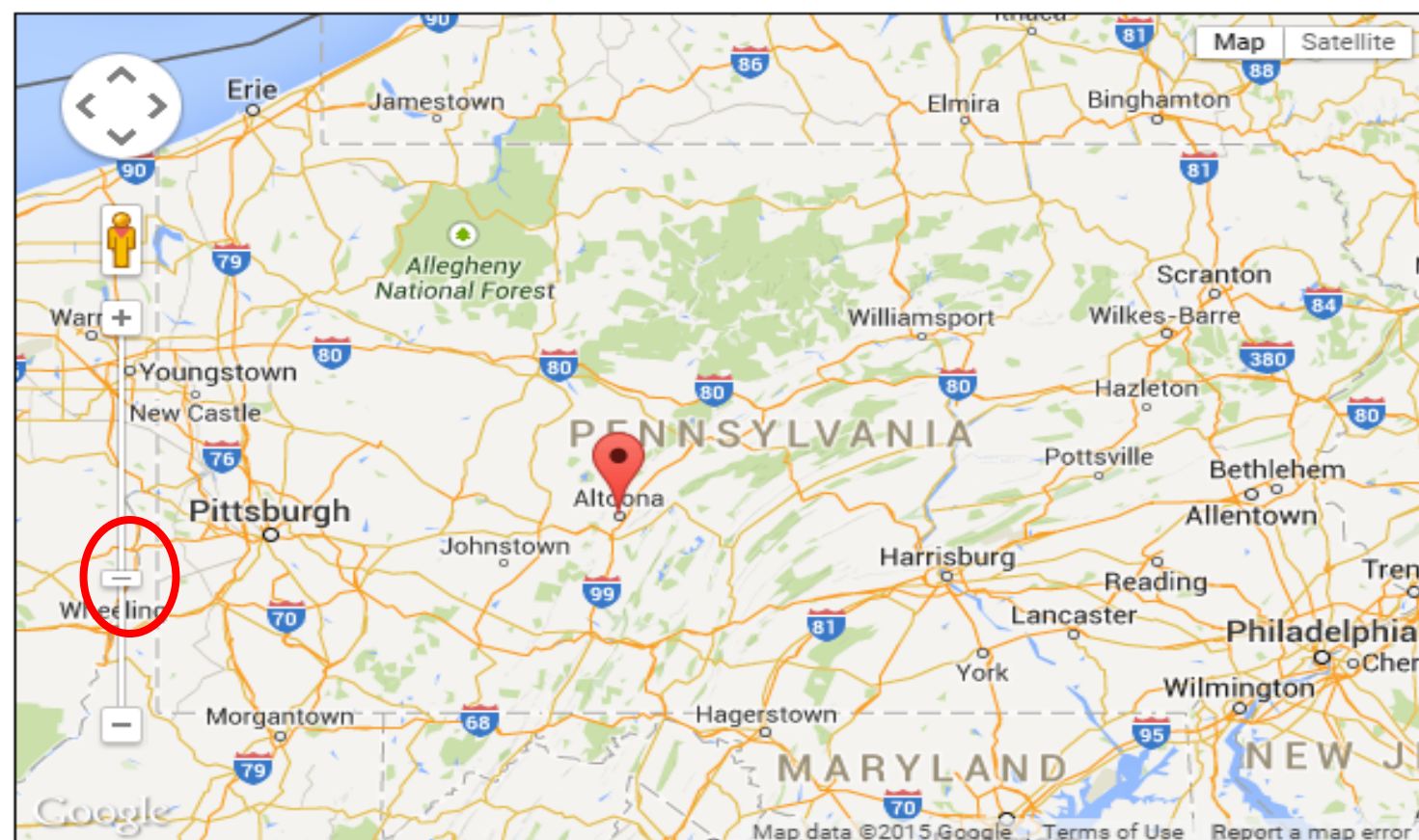
Bicycle Infrastructure



County Health Data



Rural Typology([What's This?](#))



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Community Data

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Choose which layers to display:



Federally Funded Projects by Cong. District



Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatalities 2006 - 2013



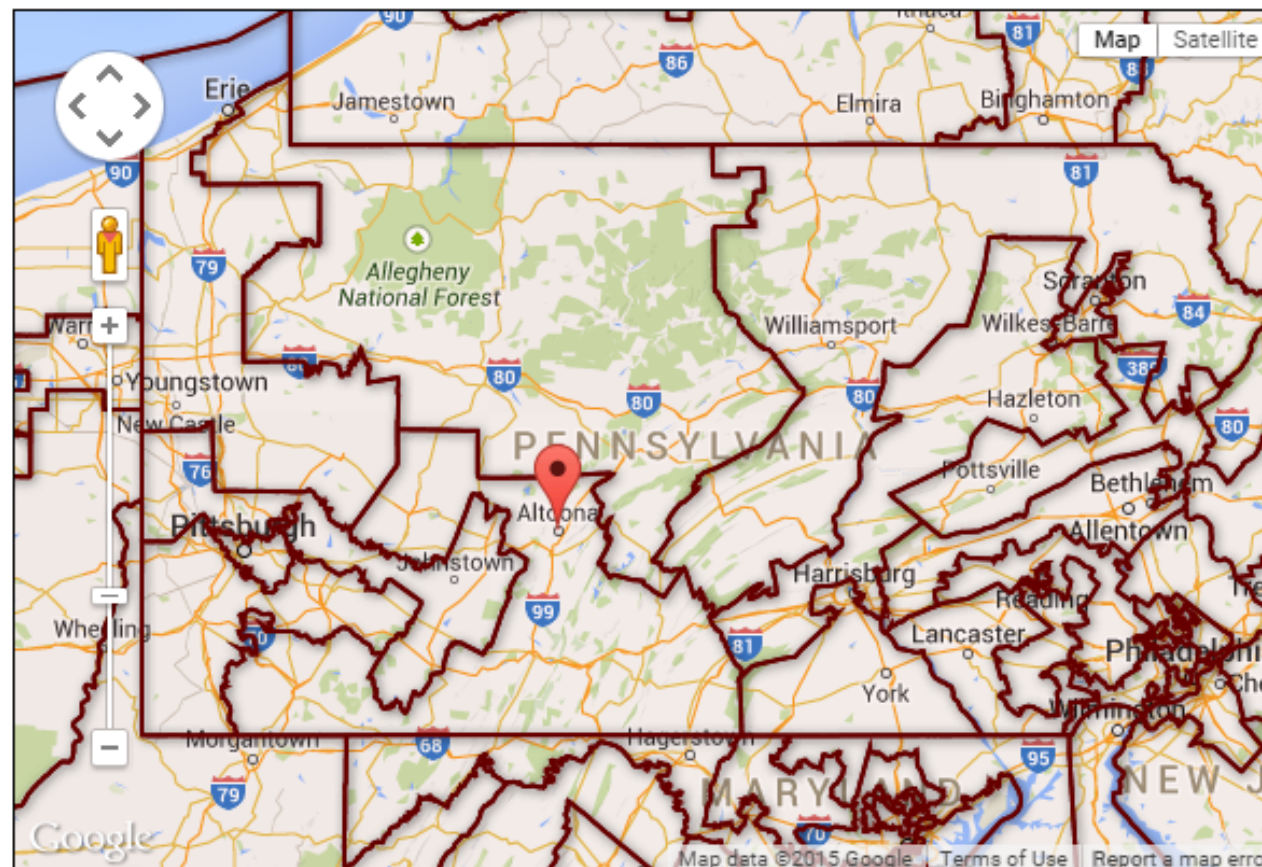
Bicycle Infrastructure



County Health Data



Rural Typology(What's This?)



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Federally Funded Projects by Cong. District



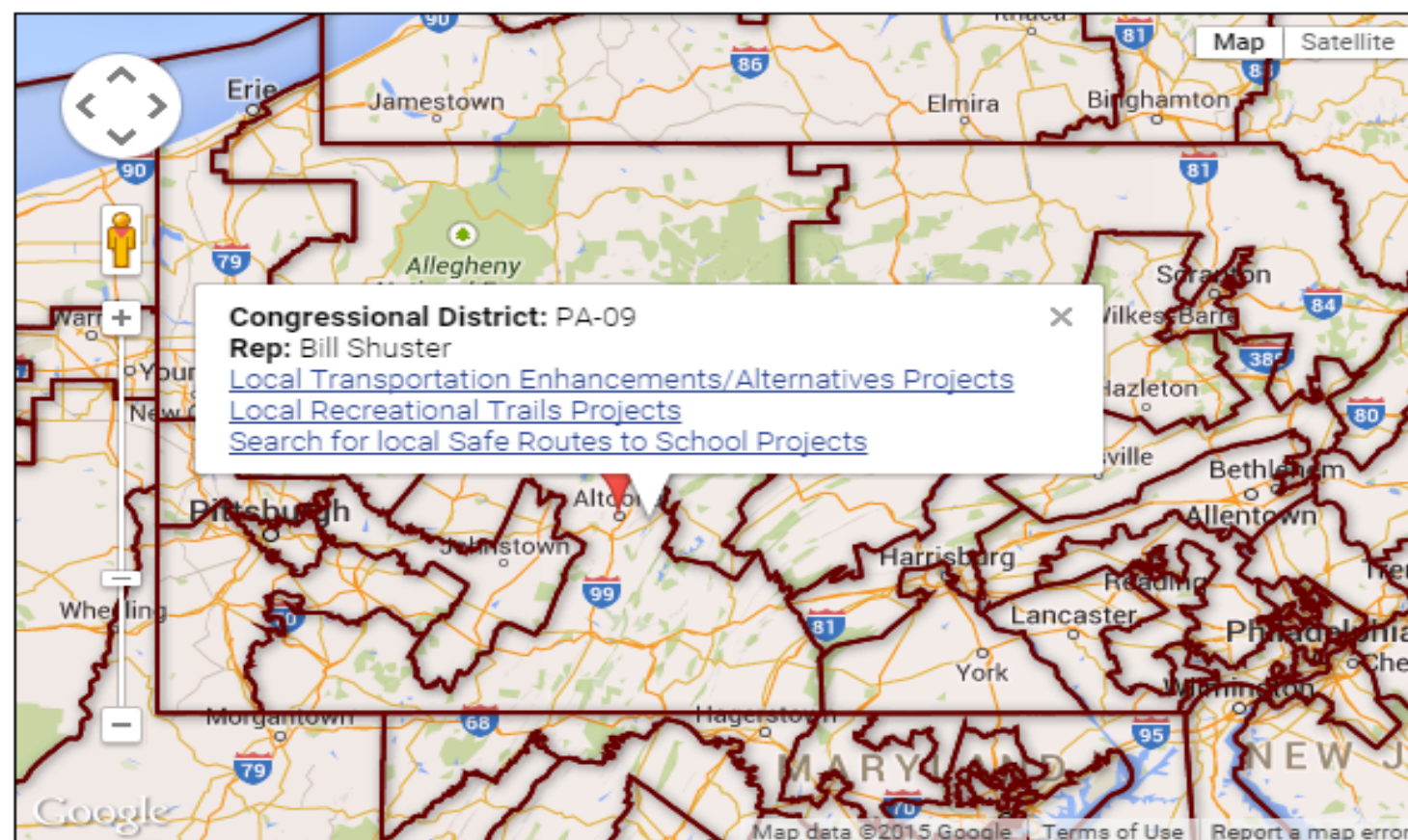
Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatalities 2006 - 2013



Bicycle Infrastructure



County Health Data

Rural Typology([What's This?](#))

Click on map in
district for List
of TAP Projects
by
Congressional
District

Key to Project Types: 1=Ped/Bike Facilities 2=Safety & Educ Activities 3=Scenic/Historic Site Acquisition 4=Scenic/Historic Programs 5=Streetscapes & Landscaping 6=Historic Preservation 7=Historic Trans Structures Rehab/Operation 8=Rail Corridor Preservation & Conversion 9=Outdoor Advertising Removal 10=Archaeology 11=Environment Mitigation 12=Transportation Museums 101=Ped/Bike Facilities 102=Safe Routes for Non-Drivers 103=Rail Corridor Pres & Conversion 104=Scenic Turnouts/Overlooks 105=Outdoor Advertising Mgmt 106=Historic Pres/Rehab of Facilities 107=Vegetation Management 108=Archaeological Activities 109=Stormwater Mitigation 110=Wildlife Management 201=Rec Trails Program 301=SRTS Infrastructure 302=SRTS Non-Infrastructure

Year	Project Name	Type	City	County	Federal	State & Local	Total Funds
1993	Montour Trail	8	Robinson	Allegheny	\$1,402,000	\$350,000	\$1,752,000
2000	Access Improvement Project	6	Bedford	Bedford	\$541,000	\$4,000	\$545,000
2002	Bedford Springs Hotel Ped. Bridge	1	Bedford	Bedford	\$147,461	\$0	\$147,461
2006	Downtown Bedford Streetscape Improvement Project	5	Bedford	Bedford	\$291,661	\$0	\$291,661
2004	Scenic Enhancement of Lutzville Road and Related Historic Sites	5	Colerain	Bedford	\$179,968	\$0	\$179,968
2006	Hyndman Borough Safe Routes to School	1	Hyndman	Bedford	\$576,608	\$0	\$576,608
1993	Scenic Beautification	5	Snake Spring	Bedford	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
1993	Railroaders Museum	12	Altoona	Blair	\$1,788,000	\$447,000	\$2,235,000
1994	Gateway Corridors	5	Altoona	Blair	\$352,816	\$88,204	\$441,020
2000	Altoona 12th Ave. Gateway Project	5	Altoona	Blair	\$93,000	\$23,000	\$116,000
2002	Altoona Gateway- 12th Ave Streetscape	5	Altoona	Blair	\$278,000	\$69,000	\$347,000
2002	Quarter Roundhouse Project	12	Altoona	Blair	\$1,280,000	\$320,000	\$1,600,000
2004	Altoona Heritage Discovery Center - Visitor Center and Transportation	4	Altoona	Blair	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000
2004	Station Mall Health Walkway	1	Altoona	Blair	\$562,532	\$234,100	\$796,632
2005	Pleasant Village	1	Altoona	Blair	\$277,263	\$0	\$277,263
2005	Altoona Streetscape Phase 3	5	Altoona	Blair	\$480,737	\$0	\$480,737
2006	Ward Avenue Curb & Sidewalk Project	1	Altoona	Blair	\$109,000	\$0	\$109,000
2004	Bells Gap Railroad/Logan Valley Streetcar Trail	8	Antis	Blair	\$237,900	\$272,102	\$510,002
1999	Canoe Creek Extension of Lower Trail	1	Frankstown	Blair	\$780,000	\$195,000	\$975,000
1994	Canal Basin Park	1	Hollidaysburg	Blair	\$320,000	\$540,000	\$860,000
1999	Hollidaysburg Borough Sustainable Streets Initiative	5	Hollidaysburg	Blair	\$2,100,000	\$0	\$2,100,000
2000	Canal Basin, PH II & III	6	Hollidaysburg	Blair	\$93,000	\$23,000	\$116,000
2000	Gateway Gardens	5	Hollidaysburg	Blair	\$55,000	\$14,000	\$69,000
2002	Hollidaysburg Sustainable Streets	1	Hollidaysburg	Blair	\$115,500	\$262,056	\$377,556
2006	Broad Street Streetscape/Traffic Calming Project	5	Hollidaysburg	Blair	\$305,060	\$0	\$305,060
2000	Horseshoe Curve Trees	5	Logan	Blair	\$42,078	\$0	\$42,078
1994	1906 Train Station	7	Roaring Spring	Blair	\$50,000	\$12,000	\$62,000
1993	Historic Railway Park	5	Tyrone	Blair	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
1999	Tyrone Borough Sustainable Streets Initiative	5	Tyrone	Blair	\$932,000	\$0	\$932,000
2000	Tyrone Gateway Project	5	Tyrone	Blair	\$86,414	\$17,283	\$103,697
2001	Tyrone Borough Sustainable Streets Initiative	5	Tyrone	Blair	\$60,000	\$0	\$60,000
2002	Tyrone Boro Streetscape/Gateway Phase IIA	1	Tyrone	Blair	\$786,559	\$64,000	\$850,559
2004	TYRONE BOROUGH STREETSCAPE PROJECT, PHASE IIB	5	Tyrone	Blair	\$1,436,000	\$64,000	\$1,500,000
2002	Cycle Southern Alleghenies Bicycle Rt. Signage	1		Blair	\$41,400	\$10,350	\$51,750
1999	C & I Trail Bridge	8	Black Lick	Cambria	\$713,000	\$179,000	\$892,000
1999	C & I Trail- A	8	Black Lick	Cambria	\$525,000	\$20,000	\$545,000