

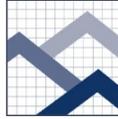
CITY OF PUYALLUP

# **PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR NEW PUBLIC SAFETY BLDG.**

**APRIL 2021**



***ELWAY RESEARCH, INC.***



CITY OF PUYALLUP

# PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR NEW PUBLIC SAFETY BLDG.

April 2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
Methods.....	2
Respondent Profile .....	5
2. Key Findings.....	6
3. Findings.....	8
Need for a New Facility.....	9
Proposed Facility Features.....	16
Willingness to Support Tax Increase .....	19
Influences on Opinion.....	21
4. Summary .....	27
5. Appendix.....	29
Questionnaire with data	
Crosstabulation tables	

DRAFT



CITY OF PUYALLUP

# PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR NEW PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

April 2021

## INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of a survey to assess Puyallup residents' inclination to support construction of a new City public safety building. The survey, designed and conducted for the City of Puyallup by Elway Research, Inc., was organized around three broad questions which comprise a model to assess public support for public projects.

- 1) Do residents recognize the **problem**?  
To what extent do they agree that the current police station needs to be replaced? It is unlikely that citizens will support a tax increase to solve a problem they do not recognize.
- 2) Do residents see the proposed **solution** as viable and effective?  
To what extent do they agree that the proposed new public safety building will address the problem as they see it? Is this an appropriate solution, fitted to the problem?
- 3) Are residents willing to take the **action** being asked of them?  
To what extent do they think that the action they are being asked to take – raising their property taxes – is fair, needed, and will put in place the solution to the problem as they see the problem?

The survey was designed to assess public thinking on all three of these factors. The premise of this model is that citizens will support a program with their taxes if they convinced that taking the **action** being asked – raising their property taxes – will put in place the proper **solution** – a new public safety building – to solve the **problem** – an inadequate police station.

A total of 250 heads of household were interviewed by telephone and online between March 25-30, 2021. Demographic information was collected to compare answers. The questionnaire was developed in close collaboration with city staff.

This report includes Key Findings, followed by annotated graphs summarizing the results to each question. The full questionnaire and cross-tabulation tables are presented in the appendix.

DRAFT



## METHODS

<b>SAMPLE:</b>	250 Heads of Household in the City of Puyallup
<b>TECHNIQUE:</b>	Mixed Mode 35 Telephone landlines with live interviewers 215 on-line survey from text to cell phone.
<b>FIELD DATES:</b>	March 25-30, 2021
<b>SAMPLE FRAME:</b>	All households within the City in which at least one person was registered to vote and for which a telephone number was available (N=10,148). The voter household list was used to ensure that respondents were legal residents of Puyallup. Voter registration status was not asked of respondents.
<b>MARGIN OF ERROR:</b>	±5% at the 95% level of confidence. That is, in theory, had all similarly qualified residents been interviewed, there is a 95% probability that the results would be within ±5% of these results.
<b>DATA COLLECTION:</b>	<u>TELEPHONE:</u> Calls were made during weekday evenings and weekend days by trained, professional interviewers under supervision. <u>ON-LINE:</u> Invitations were texted to cell phone numbers. The invitation included a hyperlink to the survey website where they completed the questionnaire.

DRAFT

It must be kept in mind that survey research cannot predict the future. Although great care and the most rigorous methods available were employed in the design, execution and analysis of this survey, these results should be interpreted only as representing the answers given by these respondents to these questions at the time they were interviewed.



## Mixed-Mode Survey Method

This survey was conducted using a mixed-mode sample design that combined landline and cell phone telephone with online data collection.

Given the proliferation of cell phones and contemporary survey response rates, mixed-mode data collection allows for a more representative sample than either a telephone or web survey alone would have produced. Further, blending of on-line and telephone interviews reduces potential bias in the response resulting from the questionnaire format and presentation.

The most recent count indicates 17,506 voter households in the city of Puyallup, that is, a household in which at least one person is registered to vote in the city. We obtained telephone numbers for 10,148 of those households, including 2297 land line and 7851 cell phone numbers,

Nearly half (46%) of voter households in the city were called or texted for this survey. All 2297 land line telephone numbers were called up to 4 times each or until someone answered and either agreed or refused to be interviewed. Some 5500 cell numbers were texted a message indicating that Elway Research was conducting a survey for the City of Puyallup and inviting recipients to log on to our survey website and complete the questionnaire on-line. A hyperlink to the survey was included in the text.

The survey resulted in 250 interviews, for a *completion rate*<sup>1</sup> of 4%,

The data from both modes were combined into a single data set. The combined data were statistically weighted slightly by gender because 55% of the interviews were completed with women. The adjusted proportion is 53% women.

DRAFT

---

<sup>1</sup> The completion rate is the percentage of completed interviews by the total number of telephone numbers dialed. It includes numbers where no one answered the call.



## Interpreting the Findings

This survey makes use of scale items to measure public opinion. There are many ways to interpret the results from scale items. A common practice is to combine "definitely support" and "probably support" into "total support" and do the same for the "oppose" side of the scale.

In the *realpolitik* of public debate, however, it is likely that those with the strongest opinion will have the loudest voices. Those who say they “definitely” support a proposal are more likely to act on that position and more likely to engage in the debate, than those who say “probably.”

Moreover, there is a known bias toward positive survey responses. Most respondents tend to want to be helpful and polite. It is therefore practical to treat "probably support" answers as less reliable than "definitely support." Think of it as latent support. Those who "probably support" a proposal are positively *inclined* but may not be *convinced* and less likely to act.

Because of this positivity bias, it is useful to consider "oppose" and "definitely oppose" responses to be reliable estimates of active opposition. If people naturally tend to tilt toward positive answers in surveys, then those who say they are “probably” opposed are likely to be opposed.

For purposes of situation assessment and strategy development, then, examining the "definite support" versus the total "opposed" provides a prudent (some would say realistic) assessment of current public thinking.

DRAFT



## RESPONDENT PROFILE

In interpreting these findings, it is important to keep in mind the characteristics of the people actually interviewed. This table presents a profile of the respondents in the survey. The results have been slightly weighted by gender to align with population characteristics.

NOTE: Here and throughout this report, percentages may not add to 100%, due to rounding.

### Sample Profile

<b>GENDER</b>	Female	53%
	Male	47%
	Non-Binary	1%
<b>AGE:</b>	18-35	8%
	36-50	32%
	51-64	29%
	65+	29%
	No Answer	2%
<b>HOMEOWNER</b>	Own	82%
	Rent	17%
	No Answer	2%
<b>HOUSEHOLD:</b>	Couple with children	34%
	Couple with no children	34%
	Single with children	6%
	Single with no children	24%
	No Answer	2%
<b>COUNCIL DIST</b>	Dist 1	30%
	Dist 2	37%
	Dist 3	33%
<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>	Self-employed/Owner	14%
	Private Sector	31%
	Public Sector	20%
	Not employed/Student	7%
	Retired	26%
	No Answer	3%
<b>INCOME</b>	\$50,000 or less	15%
	\$50-75,000	18%
	\$75-100,000	15%
	\$100,000+	37%
	No Answer	15%

DRAFT



# KEY FINDINGS

## Context: High Regard for Police Department

- ◆ 87% of respondents said the Puyallup Police Department was doing an “excellent” (45%) or “good” job (42%).

## Problem Recognition: Need to Replace Police Station

- ◆ Most respondents were familiar with the current police station.
  - 84% were “very” (31%) or “somewhat” familiar (53%) with it.
- ◆ Only 34% had heard of the proposal for a new public safety building.
- ◆ 64% thought there was a “great need” (32%) or “some need” (32%) for a new public safety building. Most likely to say there was a need for a new building were:
  - Those who had heard of the proposal (80% vs. 56% who had not);
  - Those familiar with the current building (67% vs. 45% of those not).
  - Perception of need went up with rating of the Police Department, from 71% who rated the Department “excellent”; to 62% who rated it “good”; to 51% who said “only fair” or “poor”.
- ◆ A 73% majority was inclined to support replacing the police station after hearing a description of the current conditions at the current building.

DRAFT



## **Solution Evaluation: Proposed Building's Features**

- ◆ **60% of respondents rated at least six of the seven features tested as “important”; 22% rated at least five as “very important”.**
  - Two of the four features were rated “very important” by nearly half of respondents: The improved jail (48%) and space for 100+ staff (45%).
- ◆ **Modernization and expansion were seen as the most important features of the proposed facility. The features with the highest “very important” ratings were:**
  - A modern jail with rehabilitative services (46%);
  - Accommodating the current 100+ employees (44%);
  - Replacing the 50-year-old building (42%).
- ◆ **Description of the buildings features prompts increase of support for the proposal.**
  - 79% of respondents were inclined to support the proposal after going through the features, including 36% who were “definitely” supportive.

## **Action: Support Dropped 20 Points When Cost & Taxes Were Introduced**

- ◆ **Inclination to support the proposal was 59% after the cost of the project and its impact on property taxes were introduced – 20 points lower than in the previous question.**
  - This includes a drop of 14 points of “definite” supporters – from 36% to 22%.
  - 37% of all respondents shifted in a negative direction from their response to the previous question.
- ◆ **In the end, “definite” support for the full proposal – after discussion of it features and tax – was 22%.**
  - And additional 37% said they would “probably” support the proposal.
  - Opponents outnumbered “definite” supporters by 26% to 22%.
  - A 52% majority was either “probably” supportive or undecided.
  - Over the course of the interview, total support dropped 5 points and opposition increased by 10 points for a net negative shift of –15 points.
- ◆ **Asked why they supported or opposed the proposal**
  - 65% of supporters cited a general or specific need for the new facility; while
  - 80% of opponents cited the tax increase or cost of the project.

DRAFT



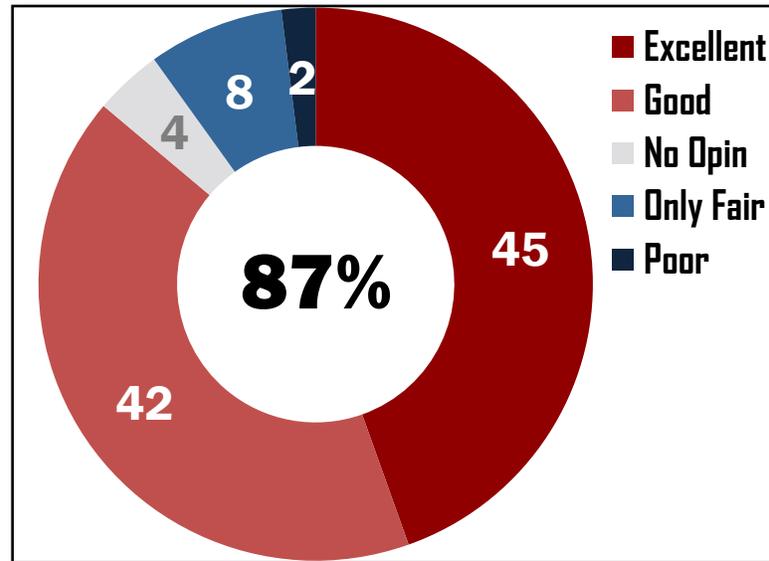
# FINDINGS

- This section presents the survey findings in the form of annotated graphs.
- Bullet points indicate significant or noteworthy differences among population subgroups.

DRAFT



## Universally High Ratings for the Police Department



Q1: These questions are about Puyallup Police Department. First, how would you rate the job being done by the Police Department in Puyallup?

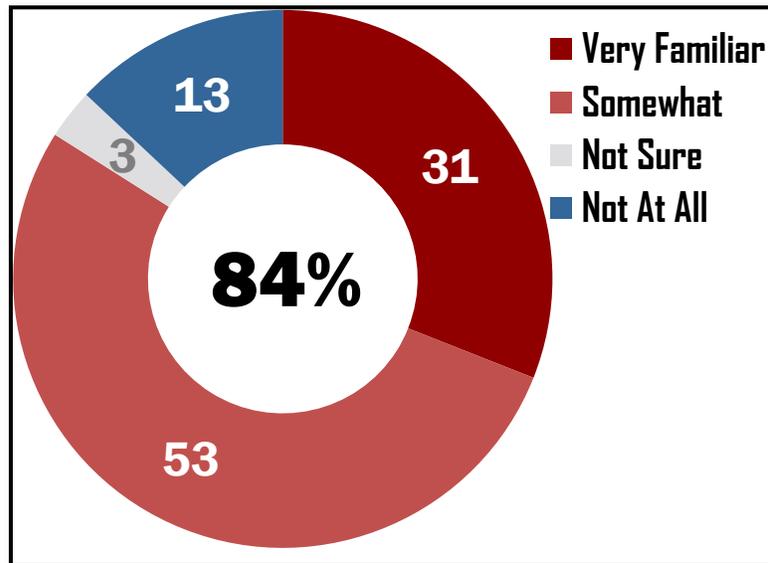
DRAFT

### The Puyallup Police Department enjoys universally high ratings from city residents.

- Overall,
  - “Excellent” ratings out-numbered negative ratings by 4.5:1.
  - 87% of respondents rated the Department “excellent (45%) or “good” (42%); vs. 10% who said “only fair (8%) or “poor” (2%);
- The ratings were consistently high across demographic categories of residents with one exception:
  - Only 54% of respondents under age 36 gave the department positive ratings: 54% said “excellent” (30%) or “good” (24%) vs. 32% who said “only fair” (21%) or “poor” (11%).
  - The Excellent-to-Negative margin was slightly underwater with these younger respondents with 30% saying “Excellent” vs, 32% saying “Only Fair” + “Poor”.
  - There were only 20 respondents under the age of 36, so these results are not statistically significant, although they are notable.



## Most Familiar with Current Police Station



Q2: Are you familiar with the city police station?

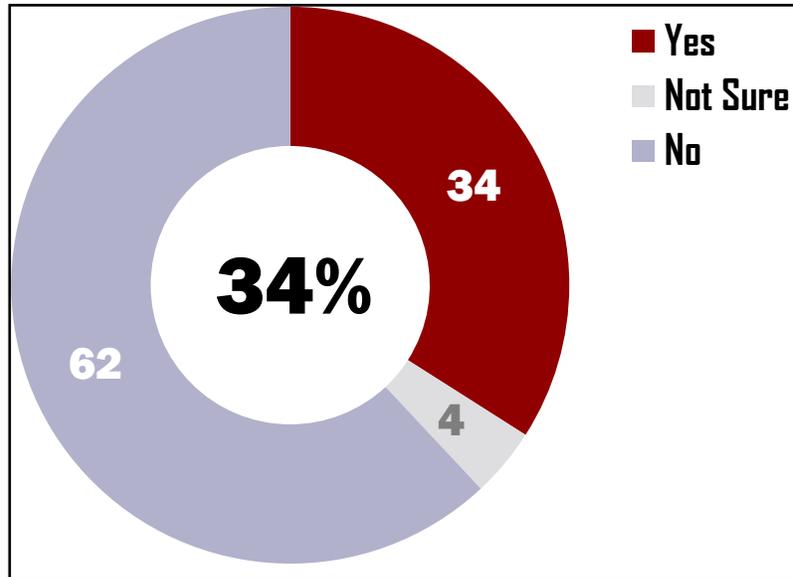
DRAFT

- Although most respondents were familiar (84%) with the current police station, only 3 in 10 said they were “very familiar” with the building.
- Those least likely to be familiar with the station were under age 36:
  - 75% said they were “very” (26%) or “somewhat familiar” (49%) with the station.
- **And Single:**
  - 77% of single respondents said they were at least somewhat familiar with the station.
- **Familiarity differed somewhat by neighborhood:**
  - 91% of respondents in Council District 1 were familiar with the station; vs 87% of those in District 2; and 76% in District 3.



*Defining the Problem*

## 1 in 3 Had Heard of New Public Safety Building Proposal



Q3: There is a proposal being discussed to build a new public safety building in Puyallup. Have you heard anything about that?

**Just 1/3 of respondents (34%) had heard of the proposal to develop a new public safety building.**

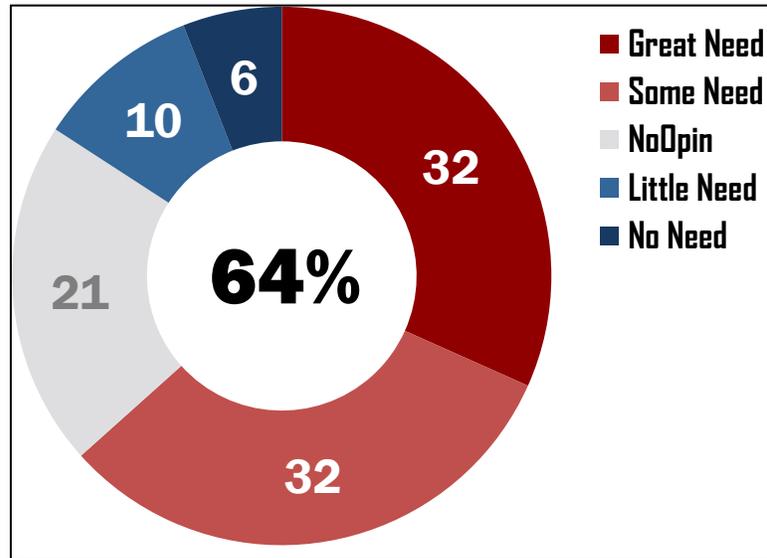
- **Awareness of the proposal was related to rating of the Police Department:**
  - 39% had heard of the proposal who rated the Department as “Excellent”; vs. 26% had heard of it who rated the Department “only fair” or “poor”.
- **And to familiarity with the current police station:**
  - 36% had heard of the proposal of those familiar with the current station; vs. 21% of those not familiar with it.
- **Most likely to have heard of the proposal were:**
  - Retired (44%);
  - People in couples without children at home (44%);
  - Age 51-64 (41%);
  - Those with incomes over \$100,000 (38%);
  - Men (37%) more so than women (30%).
- **Least likely to have heard anything about the proposal were:**
  - Under age 36 (86% had not heard of it);
  - Renters (83%);
  - Singles (77%);
  - People with jobs (72%);
  - Those with incomes under \$50,000 (76%).

DRAFT



*Defining the Problem*

### Most Said There Is Need for a New Public Safety Building



Q4: In your opinion, is there a [READ LIST] for a new public safety building?

DRAFT

Before any description of the current facility was introduced, respondents were asked whether they thought there was a need for a new public safety building.

- Two-thirds of respondents (64%) said there is a “great need” (32%) or “some need” (32%) for a new building.
- Most likely to perceive a need for a new building were those who:
  - Had heard of the proposal (80% vs. 56% of those who had not), indicating that citizens paying attention to the issue were much more likely to see the need than those less attentive. Half of those (48%) who had heard of the proposal said there was a “great need” for a need building.
  - Were familiar with the current station (67% vs. 45% of those unfamiliar), indicating that perception of need went up with awareness of the condition of the current building.
  - Had the most positive view of the police department (71% of those giving it a “excellent” rating, vs. 51% of those with a negative view of the department), indicating that support for the police translates into support for improving the facilities in which they work.

CONT, ►



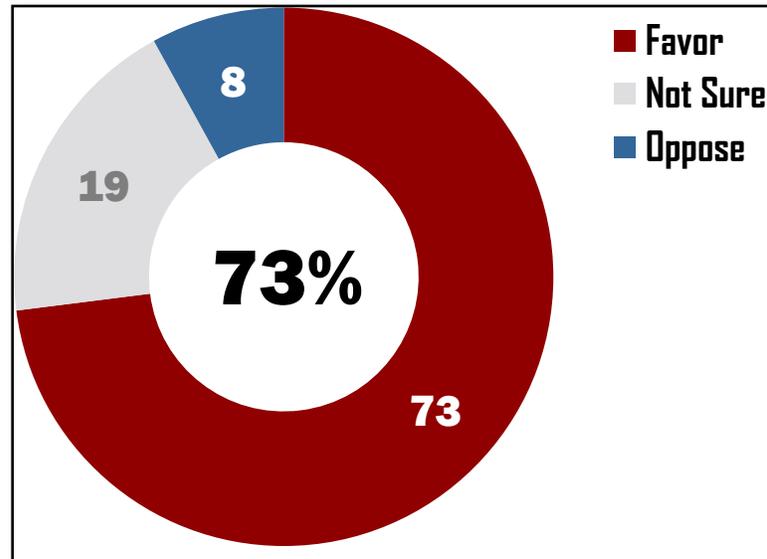
- **Demographically, the perception of need was uniformly high, but there were a few notable differences between categories of respondent:**
  - Respondents with incomes under \$50,000 were 18 points less likely to say there was a need than those with higher incomes (50% - 68%);
  - Renters were 11 points less likely than homeowners (56% - 65%);
  - Retirees were 10 points lower than those working (57% - 67%);
  - Men were 15 points lower than women (56% - 71%), even though men were more likely to have heard of the proposal (37% - 30%).

DRAFT



*Defining the Problem*

### Majority Inclined to Favor New Building



Q5: City officials say that the current police building is well beyond its useful life. The roof, the sewer system and heating and ventilation systems are all failing and require constant repair, The police offices and jail are overcrowded. In addition, the Municipal Court, which is also overcrowded and not secure - is in a leased facility costing the city over \$100,000 per year.

The city is considering a new public safety building that would combine the police department, jail, emergency management and municipal court into one facility. We'll discuss the details in a minute, but given what you have heard, would you be generally inclined to favor or oppose replacing the existing police building and municipal courts with a new public safety building?

DRAFT

**After establishing a baseline perception of need, respondents were read a brief description of the current condition of the police department building, and introduction to the proposed new public safety building (see above).**

- **Following this description,**
  - 73% of respondents said they would “generally be inclined to favor replacing the existing police building and municipal courts with a new public safety building”;
  - only 8% were inclined to oppose it; and
  - 19% were undecided.
- **This initial inclination to favor or oppose the new building was strongly related to ratings of the police department:**
  - 78% of those who had rated the department as “excellent” or “good” were inclined to favor the new building, compared to
  - 38% of those who rated the department “only fair or “poor” – although only 32% of them were inclined to oppose the new building. The remaining 31% had no opinion about it,

CONT. ►

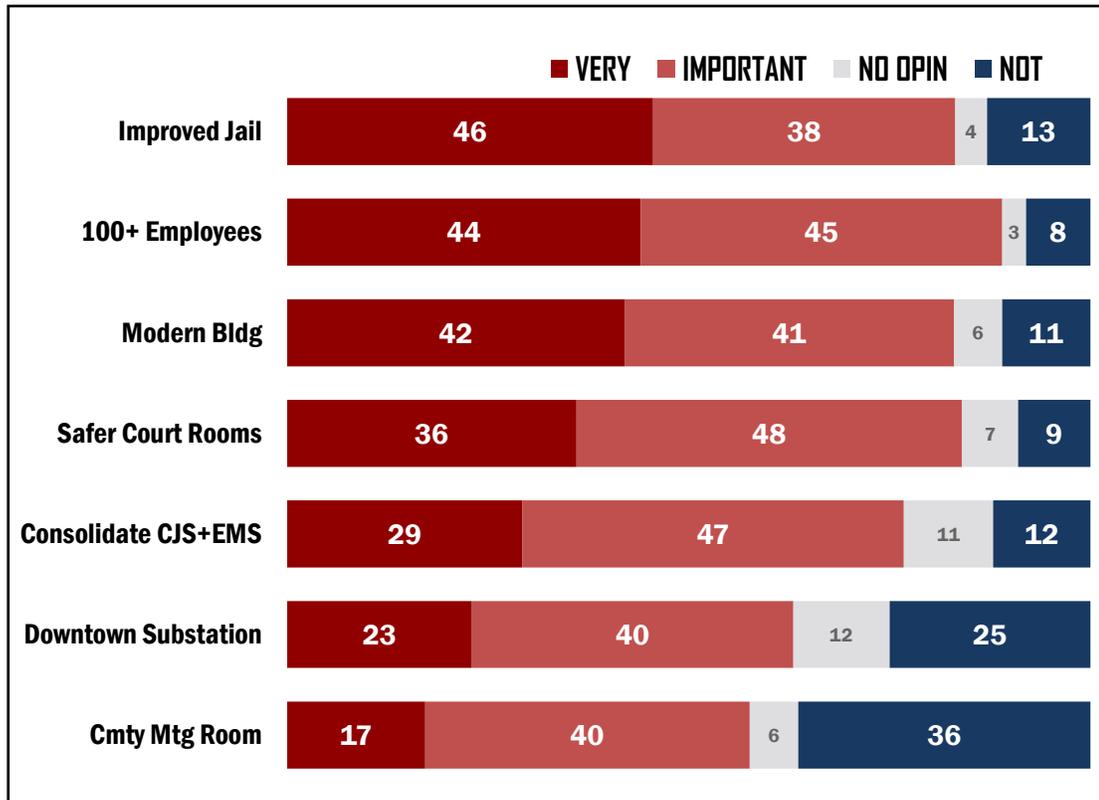


- **There were high levels of favorability from every demographic category, ranging from highs of:**
  - 82% among those with incomes of \$50-74,000;  
81% in District 3;  
80% among women; and  
78% couples with children at home.
- **To lows among:**
  - 66% of residents of District 1;  
65% among men;  
64% among those under age 36; and  
63% among those with incomes under \$50,000.

DRAFT



### Relative Importance of Building Features



Q6: Next, I am going to describe some of the features of this proposed new public safety building. As I read each one, tell me whether you think that feature is Not Important, Important, or Very Important for a new public safety building.

- 1 The new public safety building would include a jail with adequate room to separate inmates, plus space for rehabilitative services, such as mental health, medical and counselling services.
- 2 The current station was built for 40 employees. The new building would accommodate the 100+ people who work there now, with dedicated space for each division and secure areas for equipment, vehicles and evidence.
- 3 The new public safety building would be a modern building replacing the existing 50-year-old building, which requires constant repairs and improvements.
- 4 The new public safety building would include safer court rooms and related facilities, like community court and probation services.
- 5 All criminal justice and emergency services would be consolidated within a single facility – evidence storage, community meetings, investigations, corrections, probation, and training.
- 6 The new police station would be on the hill, with a staffed substation at City Hall in downtown Puyallup
- 7 The new public safety building would include a community meeting room, which could be used by community groups.

Respondents were read a list of seven features of the proposed new building and asked how important each one was, in their opinion. Six of the seven were rated as t least “somewhat important” by most respondents. CONT, ►

DRAFT



## Relative Importance of Building Features

- **All seven features were rated an important by majorities of respondents.**
  - 60% of respondents rated at least six of the seven features as “important”;
  - 22% rated at least five as “very important”.

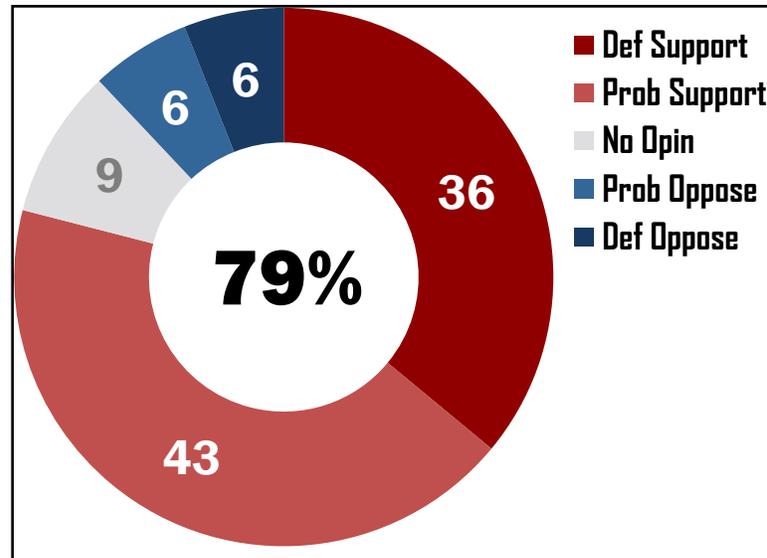
**Given the propensity of survey respondents to give positive answers to questions like these, it is prudent to focus on the “very important” and “not important” answers, and treat the “important” ratings as positive, but not drivers of opinion.**

- **Two of the four features were rated “very important” by nearly half of respondents:**
  - An **improved jail**, including space for rehabilitative and mental health services. 46% said “very important” and overall, 84% said important.
  - **Space for the 100+ employees** who now work in a facility designed for 40 staff. 44% said it was “very important”; 89% said that was important – the highest overall rating of the seven features. Only 8% said that was “not important,” the lowest proportion of “not important” answers in the list.
- **Two features were rated as important, but not as much as the top two:**
  - A **modern building** to replace the current 50-year-old structure. 83% said that was important (42% said “very important”).
  - **Safer courtrooms** were said to be important by 84%, but just 36% said “very important.”
- **Three features were also rated as important by most respondents, but considerably less so than the top four:**
  - **Consolidation** of criminal justice and emergency services was said to be important by 77%, but “very important” by just 27%.
  - The **downtown substation** was rated as important by 63%, but “very important” by just 24%. Notably, 27% said that was “not important” a higher percentage than “very important.”
  - The **community meeting room** was deemed important by 57%, but only 17% said it was “very important” and 36% said that feature was “not important” = by far the highest “not important” rating of the seven features.
- **Later in this report, these features will be evaluated for their individual effect on support for the bond measure.**

DRAFT



## Most Inclined to Support the New Building After Hearing Its Features



Q7: Building a new public safety building would require approval by the voters. As things stand today, would you be inclined to support or oppose building a new police station?

DRAFT

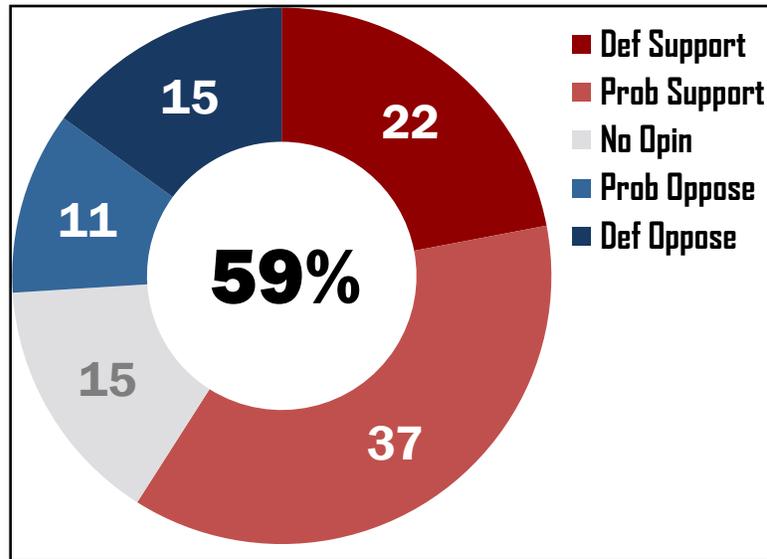
Immediately after rating features of the proposed building, respondents were asked whether they were “inclined to support or oppose building a new police station.”

- 79% of respondents were inclined to support the new building, including 36% who said they “definitely” would support it, and 43% who “probably” would.
  - “Definite” supporters led opponents by 36% to 12%, net positive ratio of 3:1.
- A 52% majority of respondents was either “probably” supportive or undecided.
- Those who said at the beginning of the interview that they saw no need for a new facility were somewhat divided on this proposal:
  - 38% were inclined to support the proposal, while 51% were opposed.
- Overall inclination to support the proposal was uniformly high across categories of respondents.
  - The highest levels of support (“definitely”) came from:**
    - Those who gave the police Department an “excellent” rating (51%);
    - District 3 residents (49%);
    - Renters (44%);
    - Women (41% vs. 29% of men).
  - The highest levels of opposition came from:**
    - Men (22%);
    - District 1 residents (17%);
    - Those with annual incomes under \$50,000 (17%).



*Willingness to Take Action*

### Support Dropped 20% When Tax, Cost Introduced



Q8: The proposed public safety building would cost \$82 million dollars and would increase the property tax by \$270 dollars per year for average home in Puyallup. As things stand today, would you be inclined to support or oppose building this new facility?

DRAFT

Immediately following the question about general inclination to support or oppose the proposal, respondents were told its cost and property tax impact and asked again whether they would “be inclined to support or oppose building the new facility.”

- A 59% majority said they would be inclined to support the proposal, but only 22% were “definitely” so inclined.
  - While this represents a potentially solid majority, it is a 20-point drop in support and puts the proposal on the brink of the 60% approval needed for passage.
  - The “definite” support dropped 14 points from 36% to 22% when the cost and taxes were introduced.
- Among the most committed respondents, opponents led “definite” supporters by 26% to 22%, for a net negative of margin of -4%.
- A 52% majority was either “probably” supportive or undecided – the same percentage as before the cost and tax components were introduced.
- The following section presents an analysis of the shifts in support and opposition to the proposal as the facility features and cost are introduced.



*Willingness to Take Action*

### Many Reasons for Support, One Reason to Oppose

<b>OPPOSE</b>	<b>PROBABLE SUPPORT</b>	<b>DEFINITE SUPPORT</b>
50% Taxes Too High	34% Specific Improvement	44% Specific Improvement
29% Cost too Much	25% "Needed" (non-specific)	24% Public Safety
11% Other Priorities	16% Support the Police	20% Support the Police
8% Police Reforms Needed	14% Public Safety	18% "Needed" (non-specific)
8% Not Needed	10% Improve the Community	16% Population Growth
7% Location	7% Population Grown	13% Consolidate Svcs
6% Need More Info	6% Consolidate Svcs	8% Improve the Community
3% Distrust City Govt	5% Increasing Crime Rate	5% Cost Effective
		5% Mental Health Svcs

Q9: What is the main reason you are inclined to [SUPPORT / OPPOSE] this new facility?  
 Results may total to more the 100% because respondents were allowed to give more than one reason,

Respondents were asked in an open-ended question why they supported or opposed the proposal for a new public safety building. Verbatim answers were recoded and coded after the fact into categories for tabulation.

- The responses formed a classic pattern for municipal bond issues: supporters cited needs and benefits while opponents focused on the tax increase.
  - 76% of those opposed to the proposal cited money - 50% said the tax increase was unacceptable, and 29% said the cost of the facility was too much.
  - Supporters' reasons were more varied. Five or six separate categories of reasons were cited by at least 10% of supporters.
  - The top reason for supporting the proposal was some specific need, such as more space, improved jail, etc. A combined 44% of those "definitely" in support, and 34% of those "probably" cited one or another specific need.
  - Public Safety and support for the police also factored strongly into support, cited by 24% and 20% of respondents, respectively. Taken together, these responses equal the "Specific Need" responses.

DRAFT



---

## INFLUENCES ON OPINION

---

This section more closely examines the shifts in respondent thinking about the public safety building as information is introduced.

The idea is to model how public opinion might change as residents learn more about the specifics of the proposal. Additionally, it allows measurement of which pieces of information appear to have the greatest impact on public opinion.

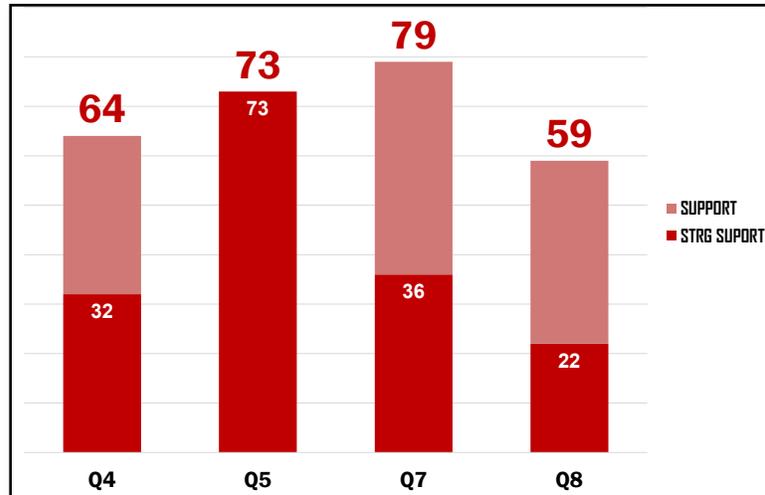
This section examines “movement” as well as “change.” Change looks at the overall difference in total response from one questions to another. Movement looks within that change to see which voters shifted their position.

DRAFT



*Influences on Opinion*

## Levels of Support Changes as Information is Introduced



Q4: Perception of Need  
 Q5: Initial Favorability  
 Q7: After Description of Features  
 Q8: After Tax Introduced

DRAFT

This graph summarizes the progression of respondent support over the course of the interview.

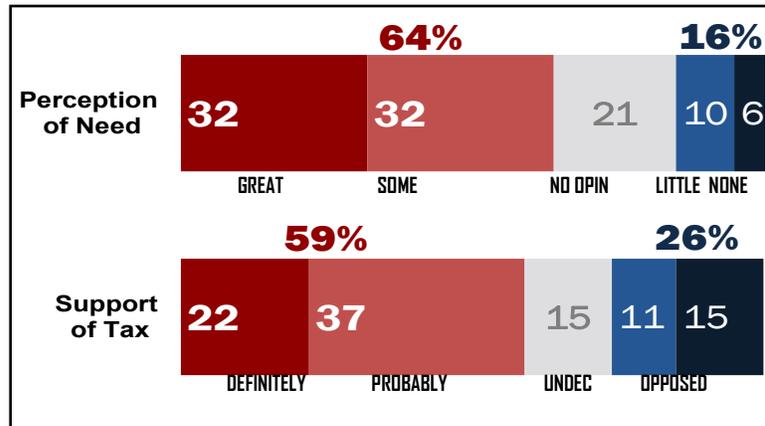
- **Most respondents recognize the problem:**
  - 64% said there was at least some need for a new public safety building, including 32% whose said there was a “great need.”
  - 73% were favorable to replacing the existing building after hearing a description of its condition.
- **Even more agreed with the proposed solution of a new public safety building**
  - After hearing a list of features of the proposed facility, support rose to 79% inclined to support a ballot measure to build it. This included 36% who aid they would “definitely” support it.
- **A majority were willing to increase their taxes to implement the solution.**
  - However, the cost and tax impact cost the proposal 20 points of support and 14 points of “definite” support.

Changes in overall percentage is not exactly the same thing as individuals changing their minds. The graphs on the following page indicate how many people actually moved and in what direction as a result of the information pieces.



Shifts in Support

### Cumulative Effect of Proposal Details on Support



Q4: In your opinion, is there a [READ LIST] for a new public safety building? [Great; Some; Little; No need]

Q8: The proposed public safety building would cost \$82 million dollars and would increase the property tax by \$270 dollars per year for average home in Puyallup. As things stand today, would you be inclined to support or oppose building this new facility?

This graph in effect suggests what public opinion looks like now and what it may look like at the end of an information campaign. It compares the initial perception of need for a new public safety building – before any of the rationale, features or costs have been discussed (top bar) – to support for the specific proposal after residents have been exposed to the particulars about the proposal (bottom bar).

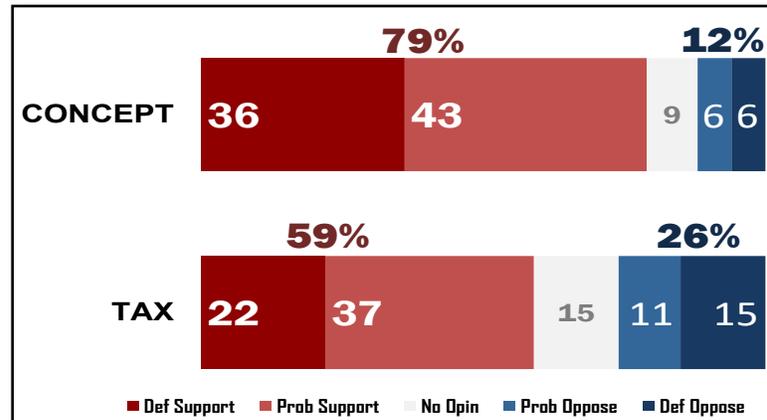
DRAFT

- Overall support dropped 5 points and overall opposition increased by 10 points for a net negative shift of -15 points.
  - “Definite” support dropped -10 points;
  - “Definite” opposition increased +9 points.
- Comparing initial assessment of need to final opinion of the full proposal:
  - 45% saw a “great need” for a new building and were supporters at the end;
  - 12% saw little or no need and opposed it at the end;
  - 22% of respondents shifted in a negative direction;
  - 16% shifted in a positive direction;
  - 5% remained undecided throughout.
- Of those who initially saw a “great need” for a new building (32%):
  - 51% “definitely” supported the proposal with the tax;
  - 31% “probably” supported it;
  - 8% were undecided; and
  - 10% were opposed.
- Of those who initially saw a “some need” for a new building (32%):
  - 11% “definitely” supported the proposal with the tax;
  - 46% “probably” supported it;
  - 18% were undecided; and
  - 25% were opposed.



Shifts in Support

### Impact of Cost / Tax Increase on Support



Q7: Building a new public safety building would require approval by the voters. As things stand today, would you be inclined to support or oppose building a new police station?

Q8: The proposed public safety building would cost \$82 million dollars and would increase the property tax by \$270 dollars per year for average home in Puyallup. As things stand today, would you be inclined to support or oppose building this new facility?

DRAFT

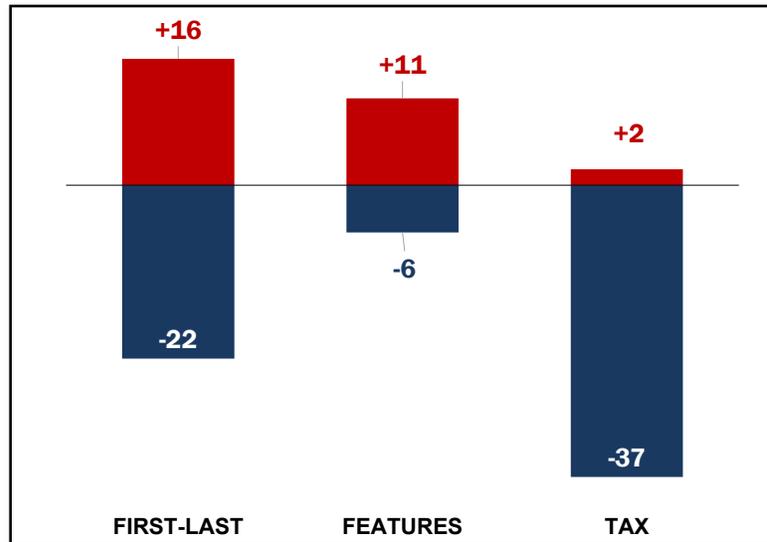
This graph displays the response immediately after the listing and rating of the facility’s features (Top Bar) and the level of support in the very next question when the cost and tax figures are introduced (Bottom Bar).

- The cost of the project and the tax is clearly the most influential factor in this discussion.
- Not only did support drop 20 points, but opposition increased 14 points for a net shift of 34 percentage points to the negative.
- Of those who said they “definitely supported” the new building before the taxes were introduced (36%):
  - 60% still would definitely support after learning about the tax increase;
  - 28% slipped to “probably” support;
  - 7% shifted to undecided; and
  - 6% switched to opposed after hearing about the tax increase.
- Of those who “probably” supported the new building (43%):
  - 1% shifted from “probable” to “definite” support;
  - 62% remained “probable” supporters;
  - 12% moved from support to undecided;
  - 25% switched from support to opposition.



Shifts in Support

### Shifts in Support as Information is Introduced



Percentage of respondents who shifted in a Positive or Negative Direction

DRAFT

This graph indicates the percentage of respondents who shifted in a positive or negative *direction* at three stages of the interview. “Direction” does not necessarily mean switching sides. For example, a shift from “definitely support” to “probably support” is counted as a negative shift.

- “First-Last” indicates that between the first question about the need for a new public safety building and the last question about support for a tax increase to fund it:  
22% of respondents shifted in a negative direction, while 16% shifted in a positive direction.
- “Features” indicates a shift as measured immediately before and immediately after the rating of facility features. Introduction and rating of the proposed building’s features resulted in  
11% of respondents shifting in a positive direction and 6% shifting in a negative direction.
- The most significant shift came as a result of the introduction of the cost and tax impact of the proposal. As noted earlier, the tax impact resulted in a 20-point drop in support for the proposal. As this graph indicates, the total impact was even greater:  
37% of all respondents shifted in a negative direction.



*Shift in Support*

## “Very Important Features” to Staunch Supporters and People Who Shifted Toward Support

STAUNCH SUPPORTERS		POSITIVE SHIFTERS	
Modern Building	58%	Modern, Safer Jail	30%
Modern, Safer Jail	58%	Modern Courtrooms	26%
Accommodate 100+	58%	Substation	25%
Modern Courtrooms	47%	Accommodate 100+	22%
Consolidate Services	39%	Community Mtg Room	15%
Substation	27%	Modern Building	15%
Community Mtg Room	21%	Consolidate Services	8%

% Rating each feature as “Very Important”

This table displays the proposed facility’s features as rated “very important” by respondents who supported the proposal throughout (“staunch supporters”) and those who shifted in a positive direction after hearing the list of features.

- Large majorities of staunch supporters and those who shifted toward support rated each of the seven features as important (“important” + “very”).
  - Staunch supporters rated each of the features as more important than did those who shifted toward support.
  - In contrast, of those staunchly opposed to the project, more than 70% rated each of the features as “not important.”
- The modernization of the facility, particularly the courtrooms and jail, were the strongest attributes for both staunch supporters and those who shifted toward support.
  - Staunch supporters considered the modern building itself and the accommodation of the contemporary workforce (100+ staff) as the most important features of the proposed facility.
  - Those who shifted toward support were more interested specifically in the modern, safer jail and courtrooms than the overall building itself.
  - The substation at city hall was relatively more important to those who shifted toward support (ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>) than to staunch supporters (ranked 6<sup>th</sup>).
- The individual features were more reinforcing than persuasive by themselves. It seems the whole is greater than the sum of the parts for this proposal.

DRAFT



# SUMMARY

The proposal to fund a new public safety building to Puyallup with bonds backed by a property tax increase sets up as a classic conflict between need and cost. The lines of the debate are already drawn: value to the community for tax dollars spent.

Most residents interviewed for this survey were familiar with the current police station and believed there is a need for a new one. Before any of the details were introduced Initial 64% of respondents were inclined to support the new building despite only 1/3 having previously heard of the proposal.

Total support rose to 79% after respondents considered the proposed building's features and improvements over the existing building. This indicates that people are more inclined to support the proposed facility as they learn about it.

Support for the tax increase to fund the new facility was high (59%), but significantly lower (by 20 points) than the support for the concept of it. This is due largely to "sticker shock" when the tax impact was introduced. In the end, potential support for the proposal was left on the brink of the 60% needed for passage.

To win approval for the new facility, the task for proponents will be to reinforce people's innate inclination to support it. This is a much less formidable challenge than convincing people that a new facility is needed or – even harder - changing minds from opposition to support.

The "probable supporters" are key. They comprised more than half of the final support for the proposal. They were the difference between 26% support and 59% support.

For strategic purposes "probable" support should be considered as latent support that needs to be reinforced. They lean toward support but need to hear the arguments in favor of the proposal to be fully convinced. Descriptions of the existing and proposed buildings seemed convincing.

Another factor underlying support is the regard for the police department and concern for public safety in the growing city. Modernization and accommodating the growth in department staff were the highest-rated attributes for staunch supporters. Modernization of the jail was highest rated among respondents who shifted to support over the course of the interview.

As always, the tax issue is a potent argument on the other side, as evidenced by the negative shift in support when a dollar amount was introduced.

CONT, ►

DRAFT



It must also be noted that inertia is on the side of a “no” vote for ballot measures. This is especially true of tax measures. It is easier to tell a pollster you intend to vote for a proposal than it is to cast a ballot to raise your own taxes. Thus, while the overall results are certainly encouraging, they need to be viewed with caution.

Both supporters and opponents saw the need for a new building and the advantages of its features over the existing facility. Opponents talked almost exclusively about high taxes. And even though most residents perceived the need for a new facility and were inclined to support it, most remain to be convinced that the new building is worth the cost.



DRAFT

DRAFT

---

# APPENDIX

---



***ELWAY RESEARCH, INC.***

## TOPLINE DATA

<b>SAMPLE:</b>	250 Puyallup Residents
<b>SAMPLE FRAME:</b>	Voter Households (at least 1 registered voter)
<b>MARGIN OF SAMPLING ERROR:</b>	±5% at the 95% level of confidence
<b>DATA COLLECTION:</b>	Multi-mode: 35 land line with live interviewers 215 cell phone text to online survey
<b>FIELD DATES:</b>	March 25-30, 2021
<b>COUNCIL DIST</b>	DIST 1 = 30%    DIST 2 = 37%    DIST 3 = 33%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The questions are presented here as they were asked in the interview</li> <li>• The figures in bold type are percentages of respondents who gave each answer.</li> <li>• The data were statistically weighted slightly to match the city's adult gender balance</li> <li>• Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.</li> </ul>	

1. These questions are about Puyallup Police Department. First, how would you rate the job being done by the Police Department in Puyallup? Would you say...

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM

- 45** Excellent
- 42** Good
- 8** Only Fair
- 2** Poor
- 4** [NO ANS]

2. Are you familiar with the city police station?

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM

- 31** Very Familiar
- 53** Somewhat
- 2** Not Sure
- 13** Not At All
- 1** [NO ANS]

3. There is a proposal being discussed to build a new public safety building in Puyallup. Have you heard anything about that?

- 34** Yes
- 62** No
- 4** Not Sure
- \*** [NO ANS]

DRAFT

**4.** In your opinion, is there a [READ LIST] for a new public safety building?

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM

- 32** Great Need
- 32** Some Need
- 10** Very Little Need
- 6** No Need
- 21** DK/NA

**5.** City officials say that the current police building is well beyond its useful life. The roof, the sewer system and heating and ventilation systems are all failing and require constant repair, The police offices and jail are overcrowded. In addition, the Municipal Court, which is also overcrowded and not secure - is in a leased facility costing the city over \$100,000 per year.

The city is considering a new public safety building that would combine the police department, jail, emergency management and municipal court into one facility. We'll discuss the details in a minute, but given what you have heard, would you be generally inclined to favor or oppose replacing the existing police building and municipal courts with a new public safety building?

- 73** Favor
- 8** Oppose
- 18** Not Sure
- 1** [NO ANS]

**6.** Next, I am going to describe some of the features of this proposed new public safety building. As I read each one, tell me whether you think that feature is Not Important, Important, or Very Important for a new public safety building

ROTATE	VERY	IMPORT	NOT	DK
<b>A</b> The new public safety building would include a jail with adequate room to separate inmates, plus space for rehabilitative services, such as mental health, medical and counselling services.	<b>46</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>B</b> The current station was built for 40 employees. The new building would accommodate the 100-plus people who work there now, with dedicated space for each division and secure areas for equipment, vehicles and evidence.	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>C</b> The new public safety building would be a modern building replacing the existing 50-year-old building, which requires constant repairs and improvements.	<b>42</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>D</b> The new public safety building would include safer court rooms and related facilities, like community court and probation services.	<b>36</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>

DRAFT

CONTINUED	VERY	IMPORT	NOT	DK
<b>E</b> All criminal justice and emergency services would be consolidated within a single facility – evidence storage, community meetings, investigations, corrections, probation, and training.	29	47	12	12
<b>F</b> The new police station would be on the hill, with a staffed substation at City Hall in downtown Puyallup	23	40	26	12
<b>G</b> The new public safety building would include a community meeting room, which could be used by community groups.	17	40	36	6

**7.** Building a new public safety building would require approval by the voters. As things stand today, would you be inclined to support or oppose building a new police station?

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM

- 36 Definitely Support
- 43 Probably Support
- 6 Probably Oppose
- 6 Definitely Oppose
- 9 DK/NA

**8.** The proposed public safety building would cost \$82 million dollars and would increase the property tax by \$270 dollars per year for average home in Puyallup.

As things stand today, would you be inclined to support or oppose building this new facility? Would you be...

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM

- 22 Definitely Support
- 37 Probably Support
- 11 Probably Opposed
- 15 Definitely Opposed
- 15 DK/NA

**9.** What is the main reason you are inclined to [SUPPORT / OPPOSE] this new facility? [OPEN]

**SUPPORT**

- 38 Name Specific Need
- 23 “Needed” (non-specific)
- 18 Public Safety
- 18 Support the Police

**OPPOSE**

- 50 Taxes
- 29 Cost
- 11 Other Priorities
- 8 Not Needed

DRAFT

**10.** I have just a few last questions for our statistical analysis. How old are you?

- 8 18-35
- 32 36-50
- 29 51-34
- 29 65+
- 2 [NO ANS]

**11.** Do you own or rent the place in which you live?

- 82 Own
- 17 Rent
- 2 [NO ANS]

**12.** Which of these best describes your household at this time:

- 34 Couple with Children at Home
- 34 Couple with No Children at Home
- 6 Single with Children at Home
- 24 Single with No Children at Home
- 2 [NO ANS]

**13.** Which of the following best describes you at this time? Are you. . .

- 14 Self-Employed or Business Owner
- 31 Employed in Private Business
- 20 Employed in the Public Sector, Like a Govt Agency or Educational Institution
- 5 Not employed outside the home
- 2 Student
- 26 Retired
- 3 [NO ANS]

**14.** Finally, I am going to list four broad categories. Just stop me when I get to the category that best describes your approximate household income - before taxes - for this year.

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM

- 15 \$50,000 or less
- 18 \$50 to 74,000
- 15 \$75 to 99,000
- 37 \$100,000 or more
- 15 [NO ANS]

**15.** What is your gender?

- 47 Male
- 53 Female
- 1 Non-Binary

**16.** RECORD COUNCIL DISTRICT

- 30 Dist 1
- 37 Dist 2
- 33 Dist 3

DRAFT