

# City of Bellevue All Bellevue Voters Shoreline Property Owners Telephone Survey

**September 10, 2008**  
**EMC 08-3746**



MARKET  
& OPINION  
RESEARCH  
SERVICES

# Presentation Overview



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- Project Sequence and Purpose
- Methodology
- Results
- Key Findings

# Project Sequence and Purpose

- The State of Washington has directed Cities and Counties to update their Shoreline Management Plans by 2010.
- Plan changes Bellevue makes should be in line with State Guidelines approved in 2003. The guidelines are intended to protect shorelines, improve public access to water bodies, and set priorities for use of shorelines as parks, marinas, houses, businesses, ports or wildlife.
- The entire project includes a telephone survey (this presentation) followed by focus groups. The telephone survey provides data that can be projected to a larger population. The focus group are designed to see and hear how residents and property owners talk about the issues in their own words and language, as well as to understand what is “behind the numbers” that is driving opinion, outlook, and attitude on the issue.
- The survey and its results are designed to understand the views of Bellevue voters on a variety of issues, attitudes, and opinions relating to the update of Bellevue’s Shoreline Management Plan.

# Methodology

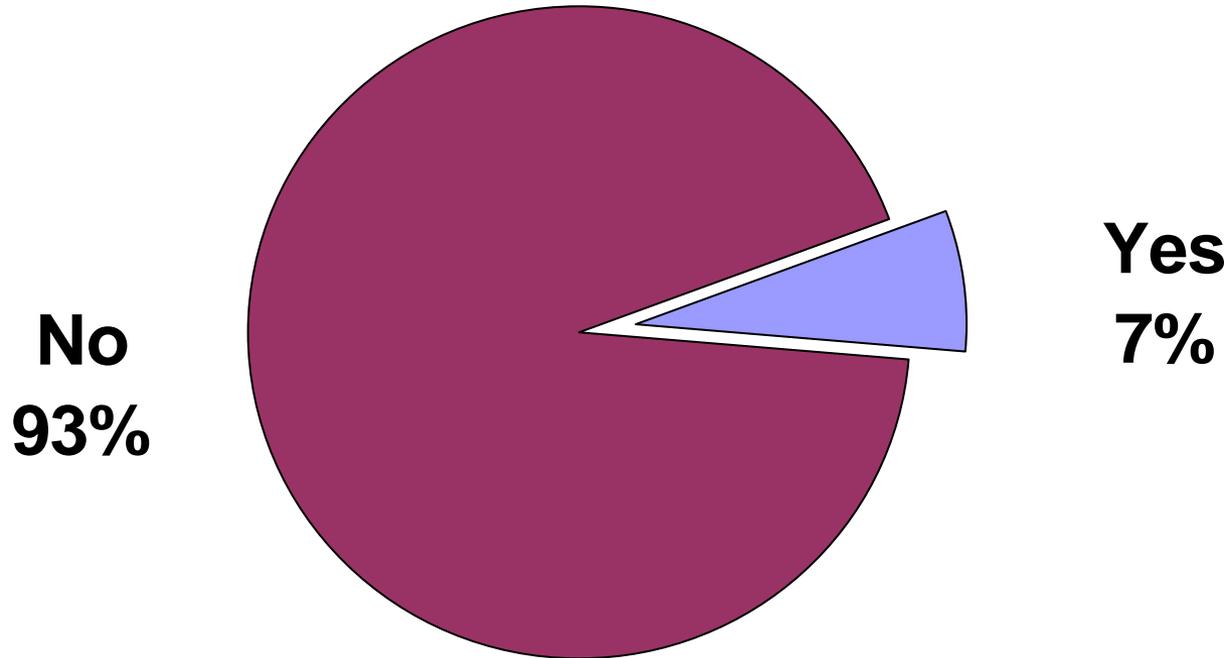
- The survey was developed by EMC Research with assistance from the Development Services Department and The Watershed Company.
- Surveys were conducted by trained, professional interviewers in a central, monitored location during evening and weekend hours of June 24 – July 08, 2008.
- The survey consisted of two target groups, registered voters in the City of Bellevue, and owners of shoreline property in Bellevue.
- 400 interviews were completed with registered voters in the City of Bellevue. The results of these interviews can be projected to all registered voters in the City of Bellevue to a  $\pm 4.9$  percentage point margin of error.
- 120 interviews were conducted among Bellevue voters who also own shoreline property. The results of these interviews can be projected to all voter shoreline owners in the City of Bellevue to a  $\pm 8.9$  percentage point margin of error.
- Both margins of error are calculated at the 95% confidence interval. This means that if the survey were repeated 100 times, the results shown would be correct to within the stated margins of error 95 times out of 100.

# Voters vs. The Alternative

- A major factor in this decision is driven by budget. With voters, there is a list of respondents connected to a specific, defined geography. Without this, the time & expense of contacting shoreline owners would be exorbitant as shoreline owners are a tiny minority of the overall population.
- Further, if one segment was conducted among voters and the other not, we would not have known if the differences seen between shore line owners and non-shoreline owners was based on opinion differences or sampling differences.
- In general, voters pay more attention to issues in their community and are generally more active on policy decisions made. Given the wide variety of outcomes this project is serving, the team felt this universe made the most sense.
- The focus groups will provide information from general residents without regard to whether they are registered to vote or not, (as will the open houses and other outreach events).

# % of Bellevue Shoreline Property vs. Not

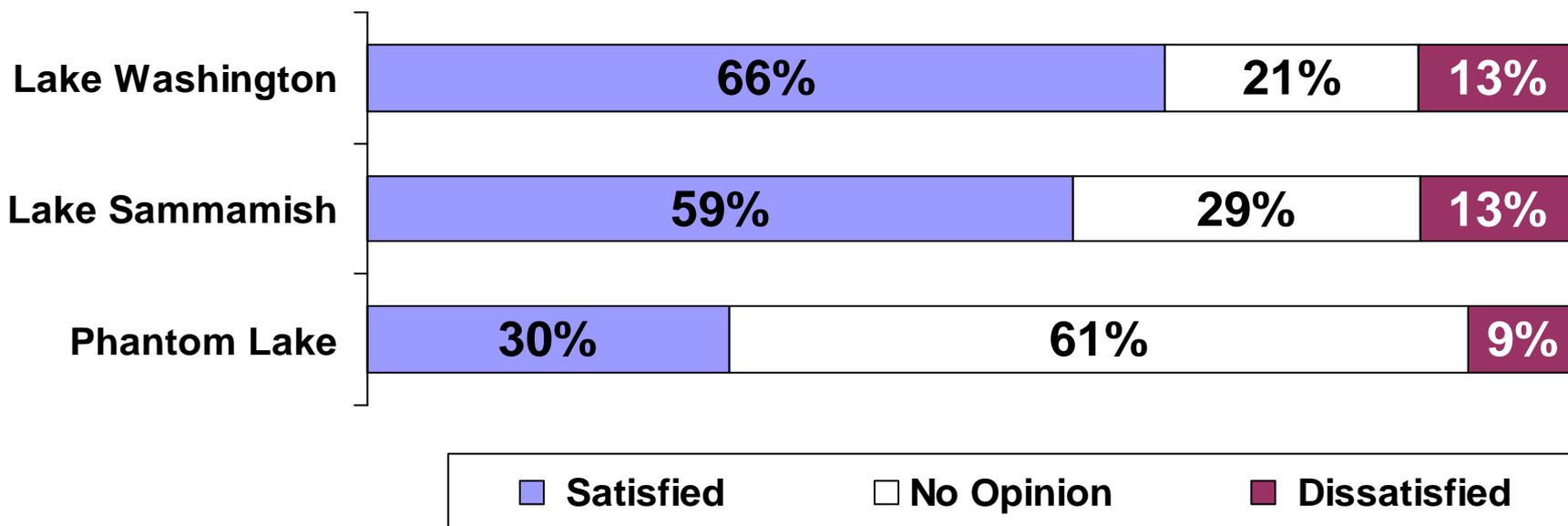
Does your property have a shoreline on a lake, river, or other body of water within Bellevue?



Shoreline owners comprise roughly 7% of the voting population.

# High Satisfaction with Shoreline Access

Would you say you are (satisfied/dissatisfied) with your access to \_\_\_\_\_, or do you not have an opinion?



The vast majority who offer an opinion are satisfied with their access to the shoreline. At the same time, significant proportions do not have an opinion at all locations, particularly Phantom Lake.

# Shoreline Management Act: Three Goals

The State of Washington has rules on the management of shorelines, known as the Shoreline Management Act. This law says that Bellevue must manage the shoreline balancing three goals:

One, housing and water-oriented businesses

Two, protection of shoreline environmental resources

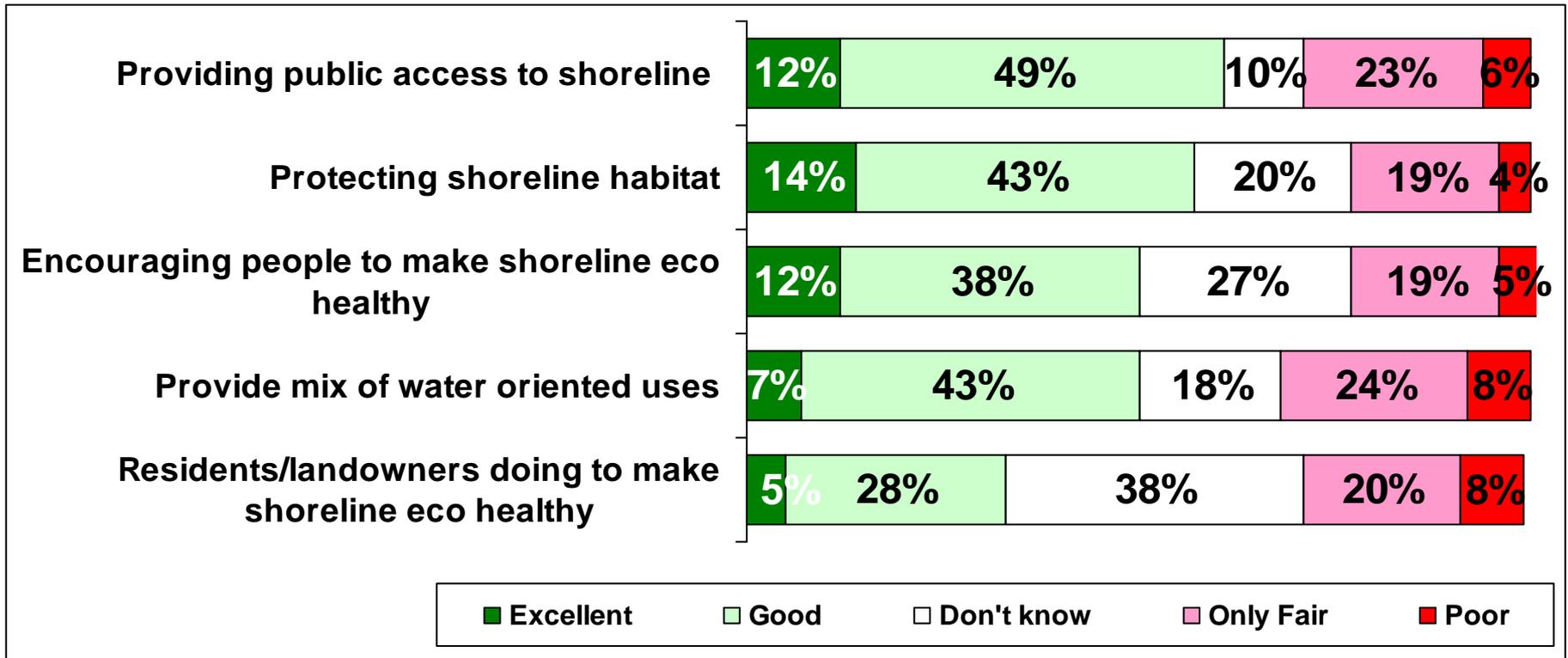
Three, protection of public access and use of public of shorelines

Which of the following comes closest to your opinion even if it isn't exactly right?

Bellevue maintains a good balance among these three goals	<b>57%</b>
Bellevue has an unequal balance among these goals, that is, some of these items are better maintained than others.	<b>32%</b>
Bellevue is not balancing any of these well at all.	<b>5%</b>
No Opinion/Don't know	<b>6%</b>

A majority say that Bellevue is maintaining a good balance among the three goals, with a third (32%) saying there is an unequal balance. There is little variation by significant subgroups on this question.

# Rating the City of Bellevue on Shoreline Management



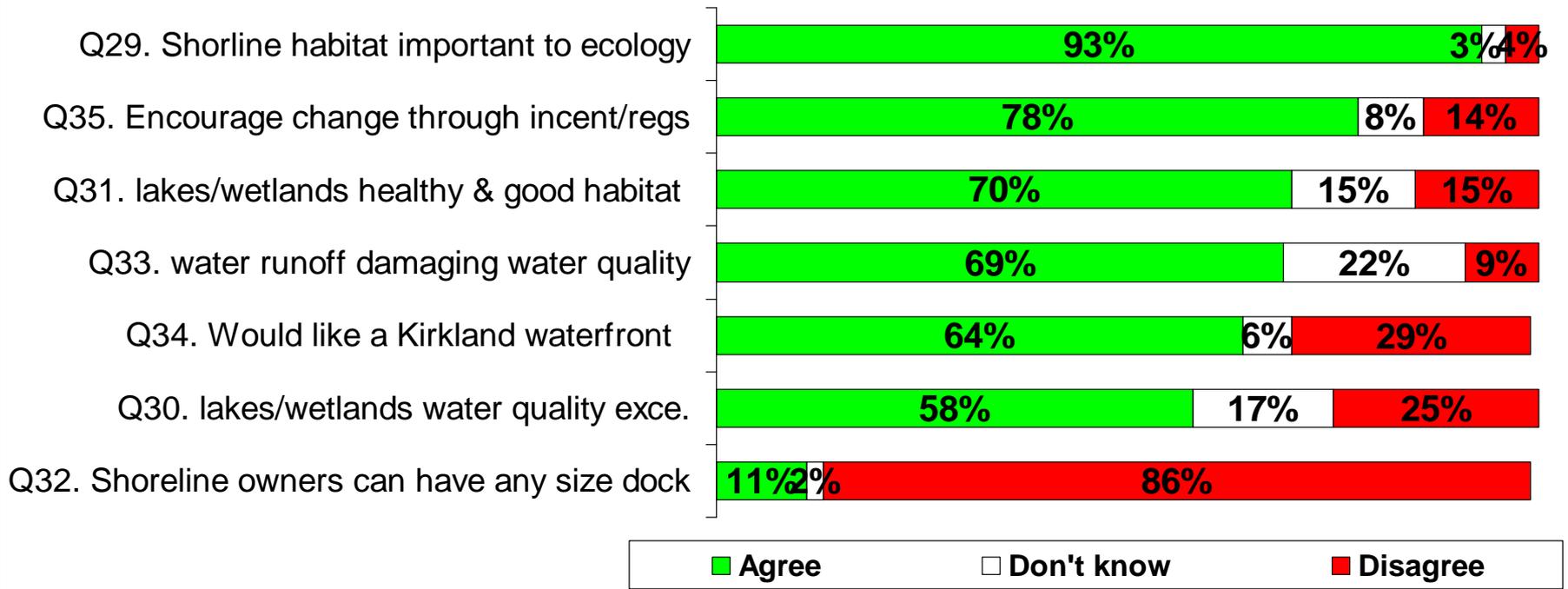
Generally, voters give the City positive ratings for their efforts on a variety of shoreline related issues. However, at least a quarter give an “only fair/poor” answer.

The weakest rating is for the job residents and landowners are doing to make shorelines ecologically healthy. Only a third (33%) give positive ratings on this measure.

Ratings do not vary by frequency of shoreline visits, but ratings by shoreline property owners are more positive for each item, ranging from a net 2 to 40 points higher than the overall.

# Voter Opinion About the Shoreline

## All Bellevue Voters



Voters are asked to agree or disagree with a series of statements about shorelines.

Among the more interesting findings are that three quarters (78%) of all Bellevue voters agree that the city should encourage improvements to the shoreline with incentives and regulations.

While nearly as many say that Bellevue’s water bodies are healthy (70%) the percentage who think it is “excellent” is just over a majority (58%).

A strong majority (86%) disagree that shoreline owners can have any size dock they want. Page 10

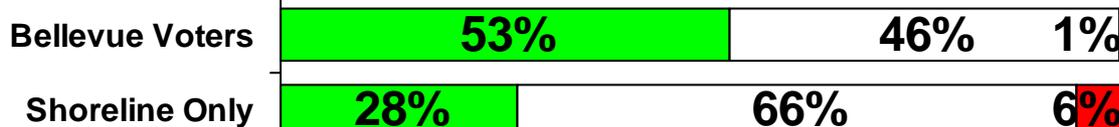
# Future Preferences: 20 Years from Now

20 years from now, should there be...

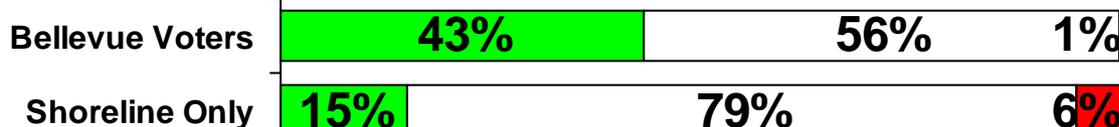
**More/Less/Same:  
Water-oriented uses like  
marinas, restaurants,  
businesses on the shoreline**



**More/Less/Same:  
Habitat for fish and wildlife  
on the shoreline**



**More/Less/Same:  
Public access to the  
shoreline**



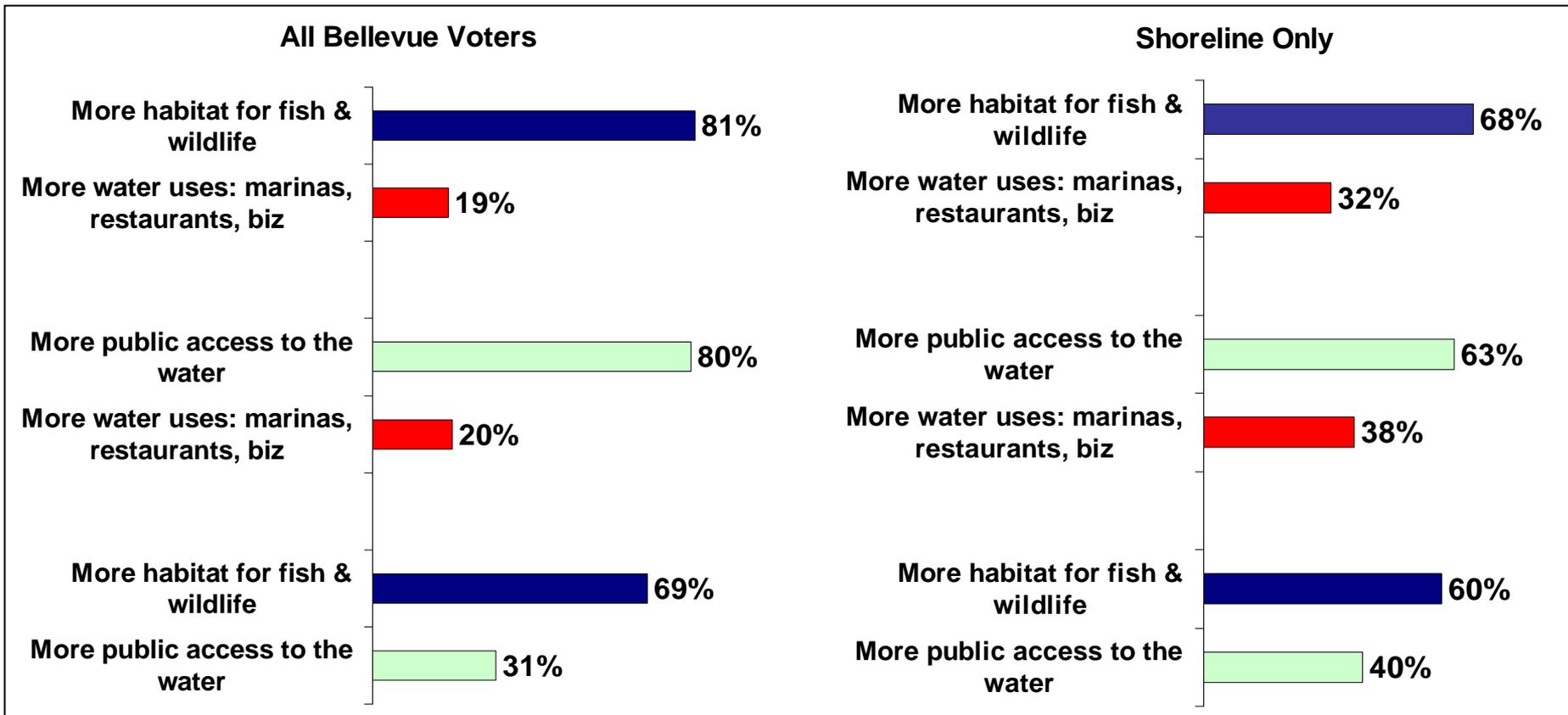
Opinions by shoreline owners/non-owners are divergent on how shorelines should look 20 years from now, particularly on issues of habitat and public access.

A majority of voters citywide favor more habitat for fish and wildlife on the shorelines (53%), while an even stronger majority of shoreline owners favor the same level of habitat (66%).

Voters citywide are much more likely to support more shoreline public access (43% vs. 15% Owners). Despite this, a majority in both groups support the same public access as today.

# Future Preferences: Forced Tradeoff

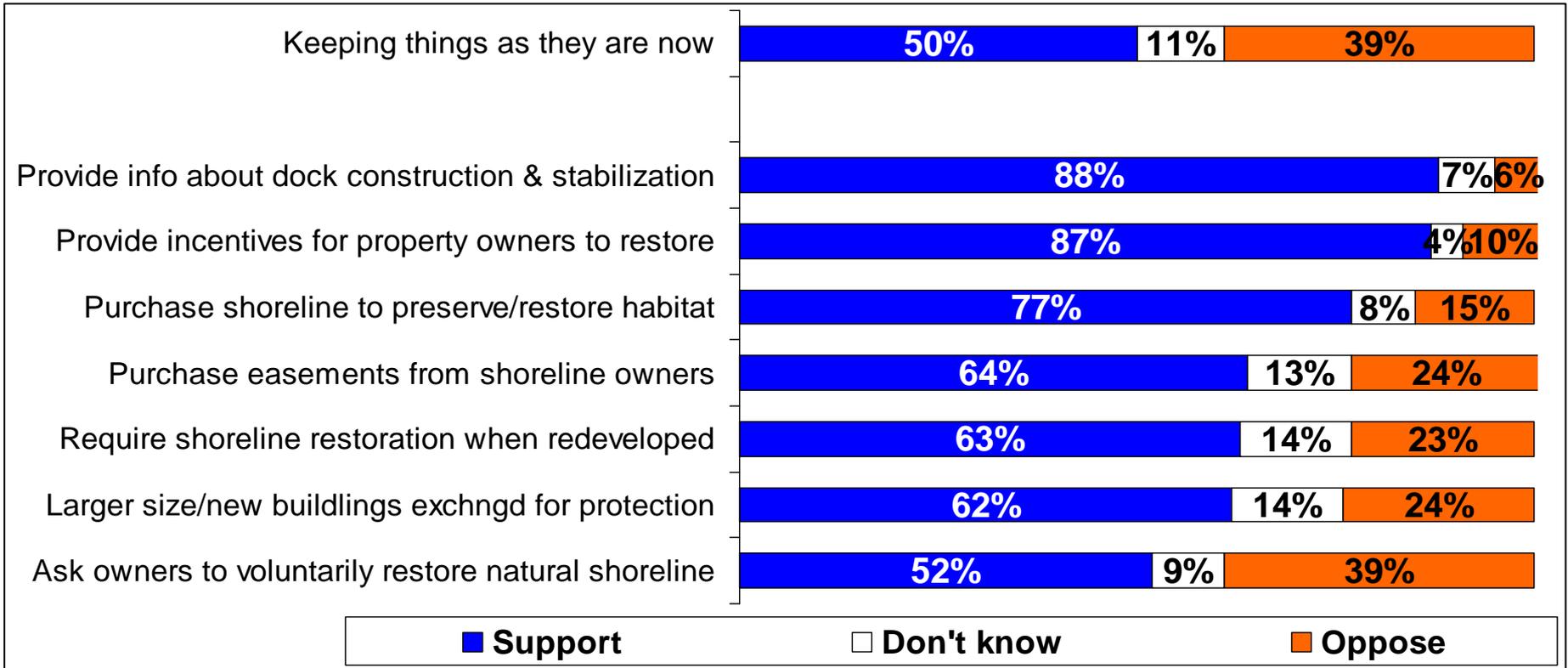
For each pair, choose the one you think is more important.



These tradeoffs are more transparent when respondents are forced to choose only one option. Whether among all voters or shoreline property owners, more habitat for fish and wildlife is always the top choice, more public access is second, and more water oriented uses is the third.

The choice gaps are closer among shoreline property owners than among voters citywide.

# Shoreline Restoration Options: All Voters

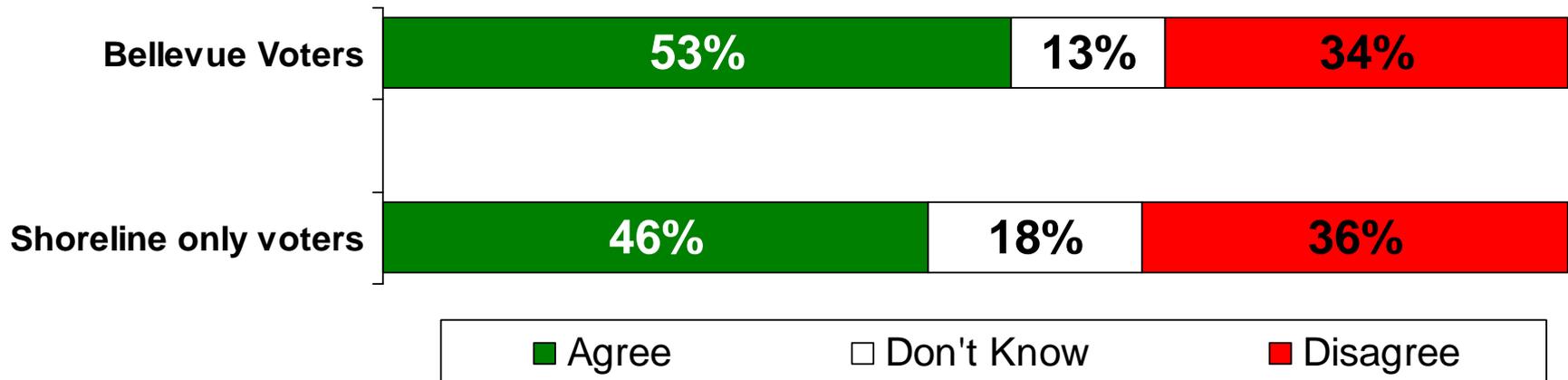


This series tests potential measures the City could take: the strongest support is for providing information on environmentally sensitive dock construction (88%), an incentive program for owners to restore shorelines (87%), & shoreline purchase for restoration & preservation (77%).

Easements, restoration requirements, and land in exchange for protection receive majority support, but are not as strong. The status quo (keeping things as they are now) is supported by half (50%) of voters; shoreline owners support the status quo even more (70%).

# Funding Shoreline Restoration

**Since restoring shorelines has environmental benefits for the whole city, all residents should help fund the restoration of shorelines on public and private property.**

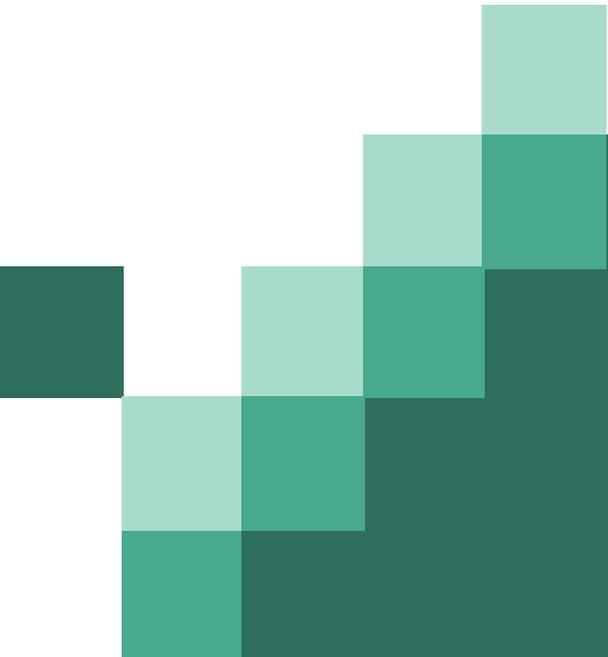


A slim majority of Bellevue voters agree that all residents should help fund restoration of shorelines on public and private property.

Even though this might defray the costs, shoreline only voters are divided on this question, and are less likely than all voters to agree with the statement.

Agreement is higher among Women (57% Agree), and those with children (62%).

Agreement is lower among Men (50%), and those without children (50%).



# Shoreline Property Owners Questions

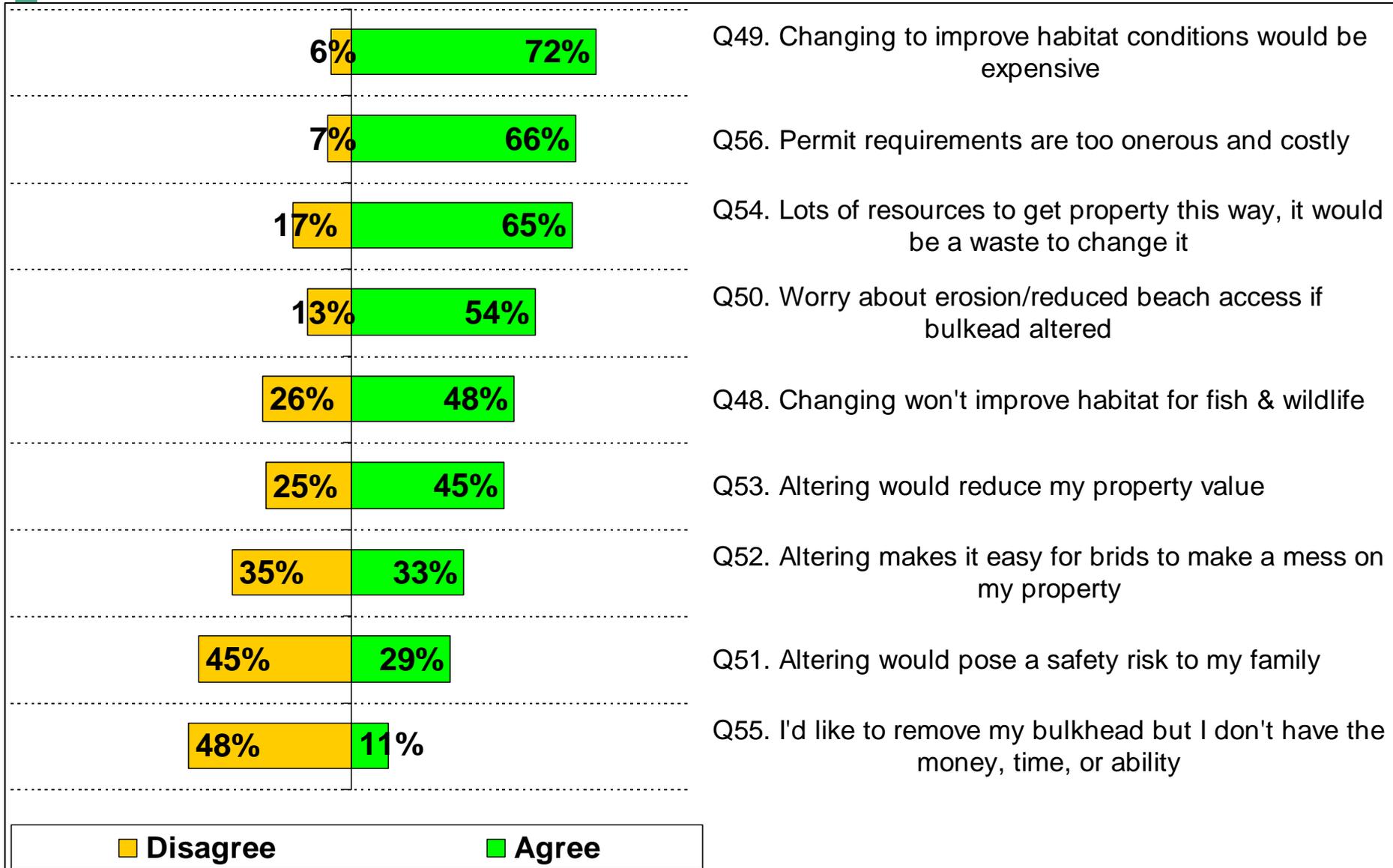
# Shoreline Owners Attitudes and Opinions



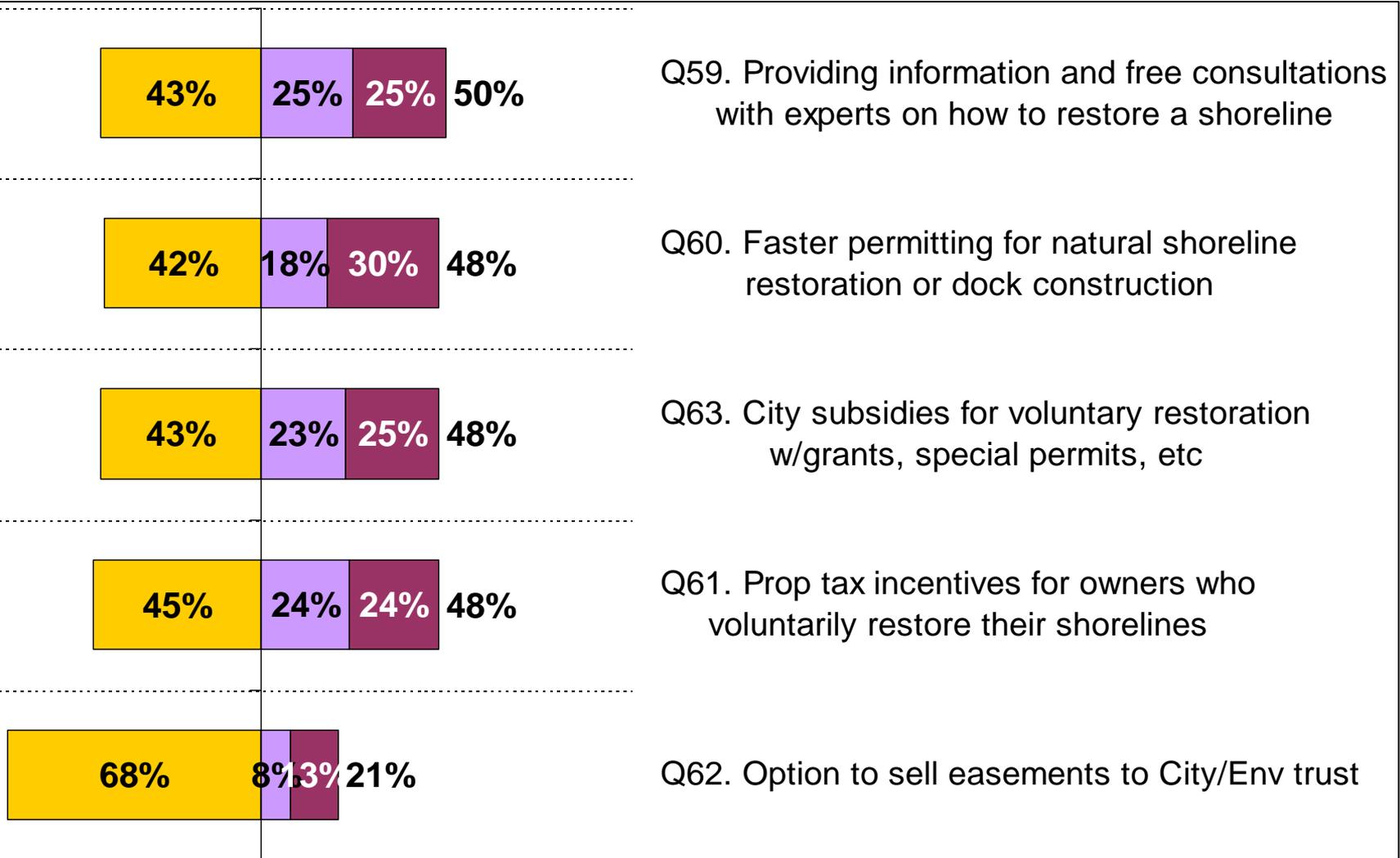
Shoreline property owners are asked a series of questions about ways they could create a more natural shoreline on their property.

The series is designed to better understand the potential physical, opinion, and resource obstacles that shoreline owners might think are preventing them from creating a more natural shoreline.

# Shoreline Owners Opinions



# Shoreline Owner Interest in Measures



■ Not Interested    
 ■ Somewhat Interested    
 ■ Very Interested

# Key Findings

## **Bellevue Voters Satisfied with Shoreline Access**

The vast majority of voters are satisfied with their access to shorelines in Bellevue. At the same time, a significant proportion have no opinion on their shoreline access.

## **A Majority Believe Bellevue Balances SMA Goals**

A strong majority (57%) believe Bellevue maintains a good balance between the three goals of the Shoreline Management Act, while a third (32%) think Bellevue has an unequal balance.

## **A Majority Give the City Positive Ratings on Shoreline Issues**

- Providing public access (61% Excellent/Good)
- Protecting the shoreline (57% Excellent/Good)
- Encouraging people to make shorelines ecologically healthy (50% Excellent/Good)
- Providing a mix of water oriented uses (50% Excellent/Good).

At the same time, at least a quarter give a negative answer (Only Fair/Poor) for each item tested.

# Key Findings – Cont.

## **Differing Views on Shoreline Property Owners and Shoreline Ecology**

Voters citywide and shoreline owners have differing views of the job shoreline owners are doing to make the shoreline ecologically healthy.

Only a third (33%) citywide rate this positively, while a strong majority (68%) of shoreline owners give this item (and essentially themselves) a positive rating

## **Voters Support City Incentives for Shoreline Landowners**

An overwhelming majority (78%) say that the City should encourage shoreline landowners to change their docks, bulkheads, and lawns to improve habitat and water quality through incentives and regulations.

## **Voters Oppose Unlimited Dock Size**

A strong majority disagree (86%) that shoreline owners can have any size dock they want.

# Key Findings – Cont.

## More Habitat for Fish and Wildlife Always Top Choice

In a forced tradeoff between habitat, water oriented uses, and public access, more habitat for fish and wildlife is always the top choice, followed by public access, and finally more water oriented uses.

## Voters Have the Strongest Support for These Restoration Options:

- Providing information about environmentally sensitive dock construction (88% Support)
- An incentive program for property owners to restore their shoreline (87%)
- Shoreline purchase for restoration and preservation (77%)

## Voters Support Funding Restoration

A slim majority (53%) of Bellevue voters agree that all residents should help fund restoration of shorelines on public and private property.