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Report

2023 City of Surrey Police Transition Survey



DATE 2023-12-21 PROJECT NUMBER 83369-001



Methodology

Methodology

Data from the municipality of Surrey residents 18+ years of age was collected through an online methodology using Leger's research panel. A total of 505 surveys were collected.

Data collection commenced on November 30 and ran until December 13, 2023. The confidence interval for the 505-person sample is +/- 4.4%, 19 times out of 20. The confidence interval decreases when examining sub-sets of the overall sample.

The data from this study has been weighted to ensure it reflects the age, gender, ethnic, mother tongue, and geographic population distributions in the City of Surrey according to Statistic Canada's 2021 Census information. A key focus of the weighting was to ensure the appropriate representation of residents who are of South Asian descent, of people of a visible minority in general, and of people whose mother tongue is Punjabi.

City of Surrey Survey Respondent Profile (*weighted*)

Variable	% of n=505	Variable	% of n=505
Gender		Ethnicity	
Male	48%	South Asian	37%
Female	51%	Caucasian (white)	34%
Age		Chinese	10%
18-34	31%	Southeast Asian	6%
35-54	34%	Filipino	3%
55+	35%	Black	3%
Visible Minority		Middle Eastern/North Africa	2%
Yes	66%	Latin American (Mexican, Chilean, Costa Rican, etc.)	2%
No (white/indigenous)	33%	Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, Inuk/ Inuit)	1%
Prefer not to answer	1%	Japanese	1%
		West Asian/Central Asian	<1%
Region		Korean	<1%
North	44%	Self-describe	3%
Central	40%	Prefer not to answer	1%
South	16%		

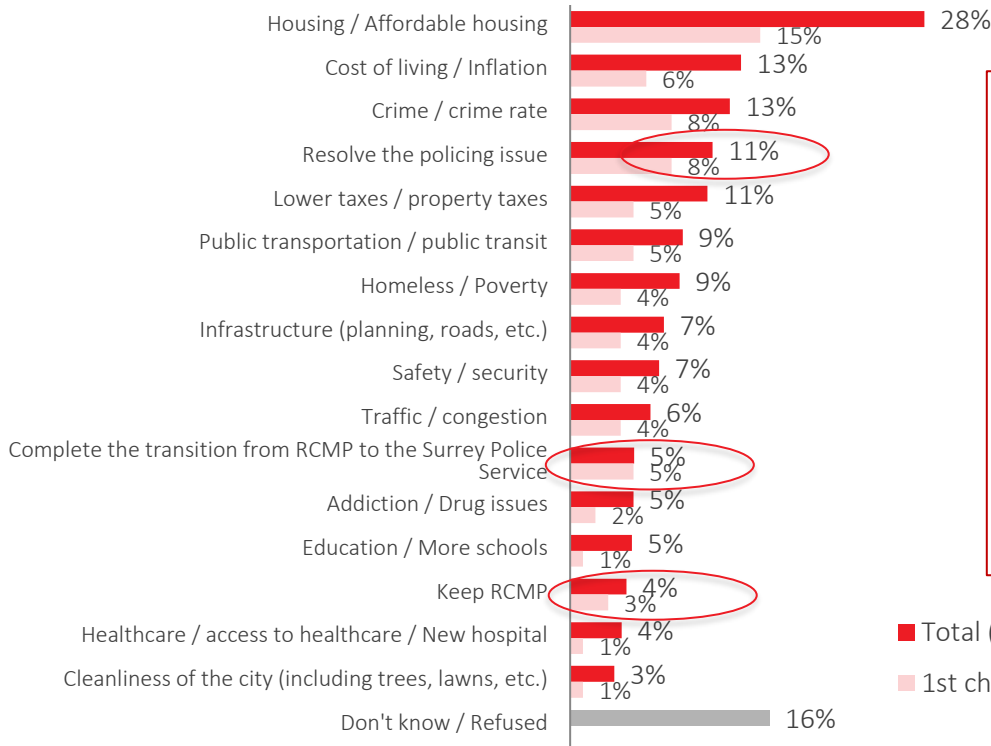
City of Surrey Survey Respondent Profile (*weighted*)

Variable	% of n=505	Variable	% of n=505	Variable	% of n=505
Lived in Surrey		Own or Rent Main Residence		Language	
1 to <3 years	18%	Own	55%	English	54%
3 to <5 years	13%	Rent	43%	Punjabi	24%
6 to <10 years	12%	Prefer not to say	2%	Hindi	13%
10 to <20 years	17%	Income		Urdu	5%
20 years or more	39%	<\$20,000	7%	Yue (Cantonese)	4%
Prefer not to say	1%	\$20,000-under \$40,000	14%	Mandarin	3%
		\$40,000-under \$60,000	14%	Tagalog	3%
Education		\$60,000-under \$80,000	15%	Spanish	2%
High school or less	23%	\$80,000-under \$100,000	11%	Vietnamese	1%
College	22%	\$100,000-under \$125,000	15%	French	1%
University	55%	\$125,000-under \$150,000	8%	German	1%
Prefer not to say	1%	\$150,000+	6%	Other	10%
		Prefer not to say	10%	Prefer not to answer	1%

Research Findings

Top Priority for City of Surrey (Unaided)

Q1: What is the most important priority that you would like the City of Surrey’s Mayor and Council to address over the next year? And second most important priority? Base: All (n=505)



<3% total not shown

While affordable housing was the top mention (28%), priorities regarding the policing situation surface frequently (total 20%) in the following ways:

- Resolve the policing issue (11% total mentions)
- Complete the transition from RCMP to the Surrey Police Service (5%)
- Keep RCMP (4%)

Caucasian residents are significantly more likely vs South Asian residents to mention resolve the policing issue (23% vs. 2%), complete the transition (10% vs. 0%), and keep the RCMP (11% vs. 0%).

Residents 55+ years of age more often mentioned resolve the policing issue (19% vs. 7%) and keep RCMP (10% vs. 2%) than those 18-54 years of age.

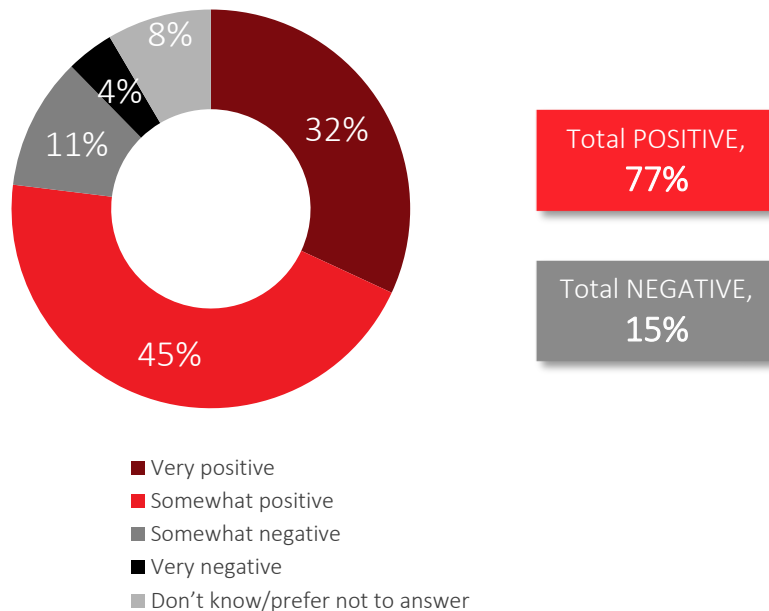
South Asian residents are significantly more likely to mention employment/jobs (6% vs. 0%, Caucasian residents).

■ Total (1st or 2nd)
 ■ 1st choice

Impression of Surrey RCMP

QIMPRESSION: What is your overall impression of the Surrey RCMP?

Base: All (n=505)



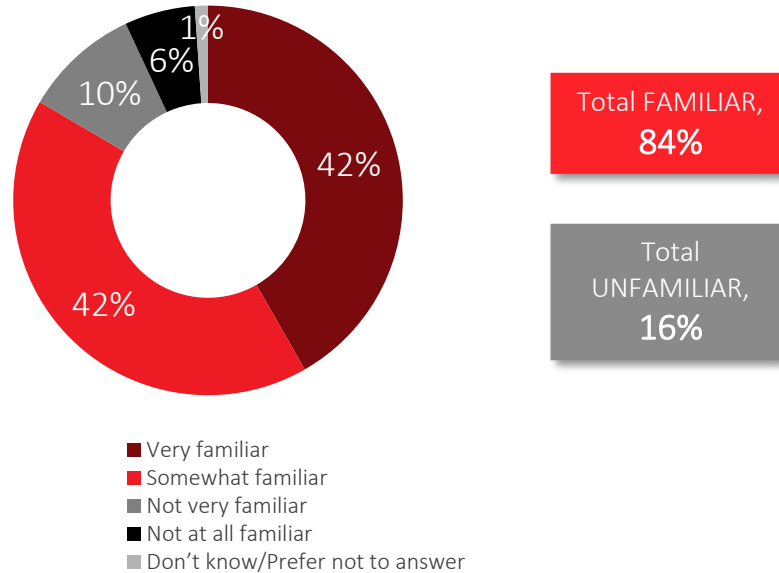
3 in 4 Surrey residents have a positive impression of the Surrey RCMP.

- Caucasian residents are more likely to have a *very* positive impression of the Surrey RCMP vs those from other ethnicities, excluding South Asians (41% vs 20%, respectively).
- Those aged 18-34 are more than twice as likely to have a *negative* impression of the Surrey RCMP (25% vs 10% of those aged 35+).

Familiarity with Police Transition

Q3: It was recently announced that the City of Surrey will soon no longer be policed by the RCMP, and a new independent Surrey Police service will take over. How familiar are you with this news?

Base: All (n=505)



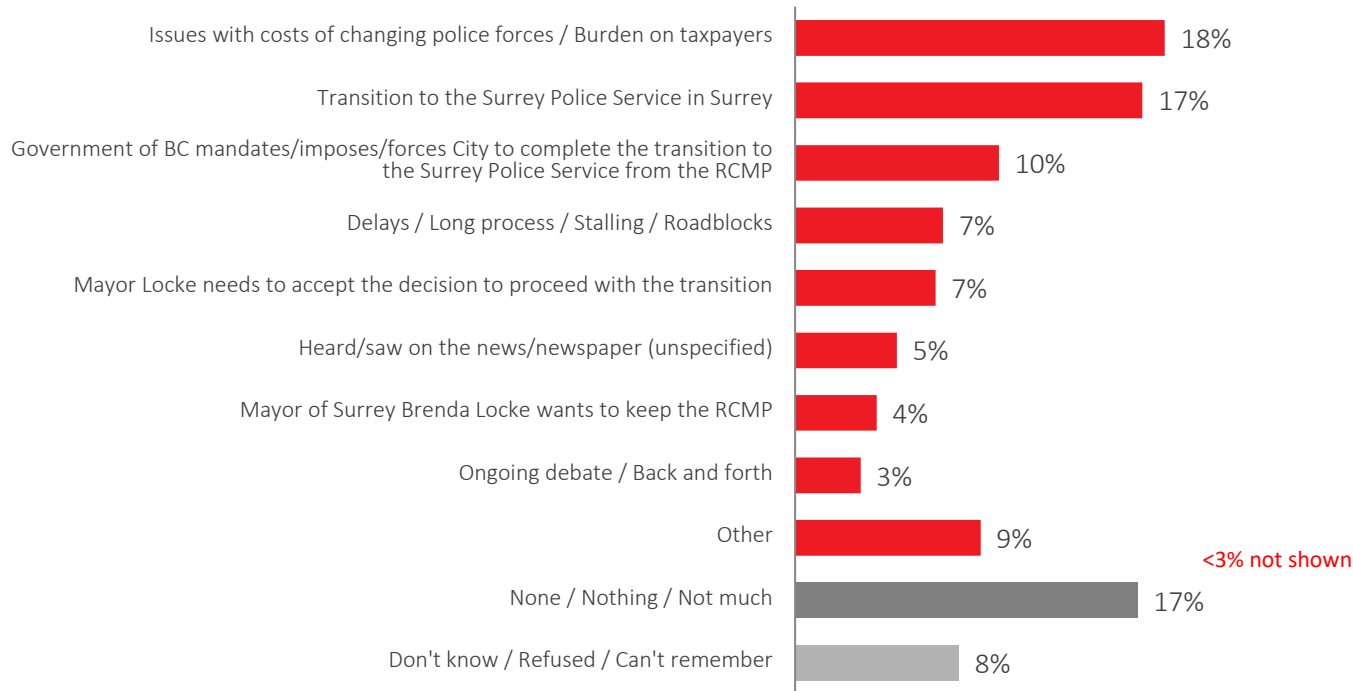
News about the transition is well-known among residents, as 4 in 5 are familiar with it.

- Caucasian residents are more likely to be familiar with the news (93% vs 81% of South Asians); in fact, they are twice as likely to be very familiar (61% vs 30% of South Asians).
- Those aged 35+ (87% vs 75% of those aged 18-34) and those who have lived in Surrey for 20+ years (93% vs 78% of those who have lived in Surrey for <20 years) are also more likely to be familiar with the news.

What Heard about the Police Transition (Unaided)

Q4: What have you read, seen, or heard about the police transition?

Base: Familiar with transition(n=474)



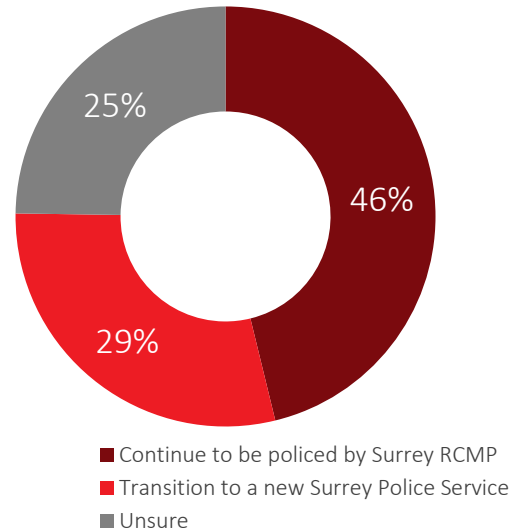
Almost 2 in 10 have heard about issues with costs and additional taxes by changing police forces, news about the transition in general, or nothing at all.

- Caucasian residents are significantly more likely vs South Asian residents to be aware of issues with cost and the burden on taxpayers (30% vs 10%), the Government of BC mandate (17% vs 5%), and delays, the long process, stalling, and/or roadblocks (15% vs just 2%); awareness of these same factors also increases with age.

Prefer to Continue with RCMP or Transition to New Surrey Police Service

Q5: Which option do you prefer?

Base: All (n=505)



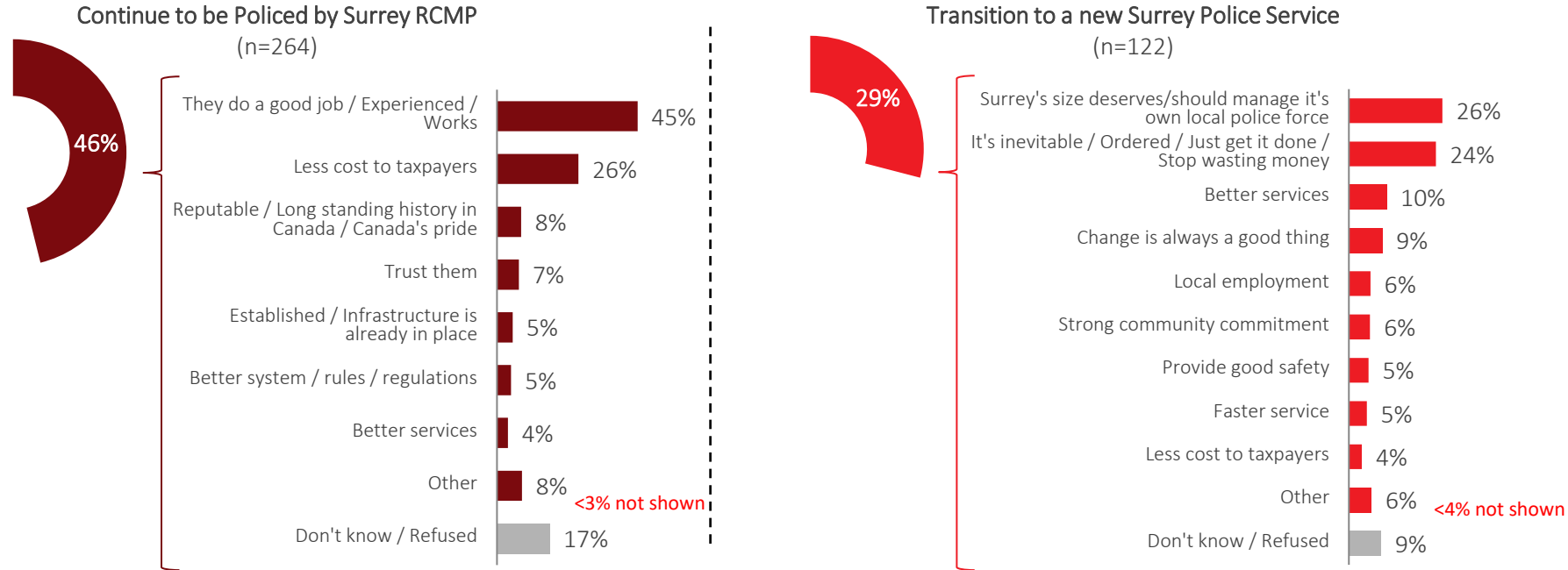
Opinion is divided about the transition, as over 4 in 10 would prefer continue with the current Surrey RCMP, 3 in 10 would prefer the transition, and 1 in 4 are unsure.

- Visible minorities (28% vs 16% of Caucasian individuals) and those aged 18-54 (30% vs 16% of those age 55+) are more likely to be unsure which option they prefer.

Why Prefer to Continue with RCMP or Transition to New Surrey Police Service

Q6: Why do you want Surrey to..?

Base: All respondents (n=505)



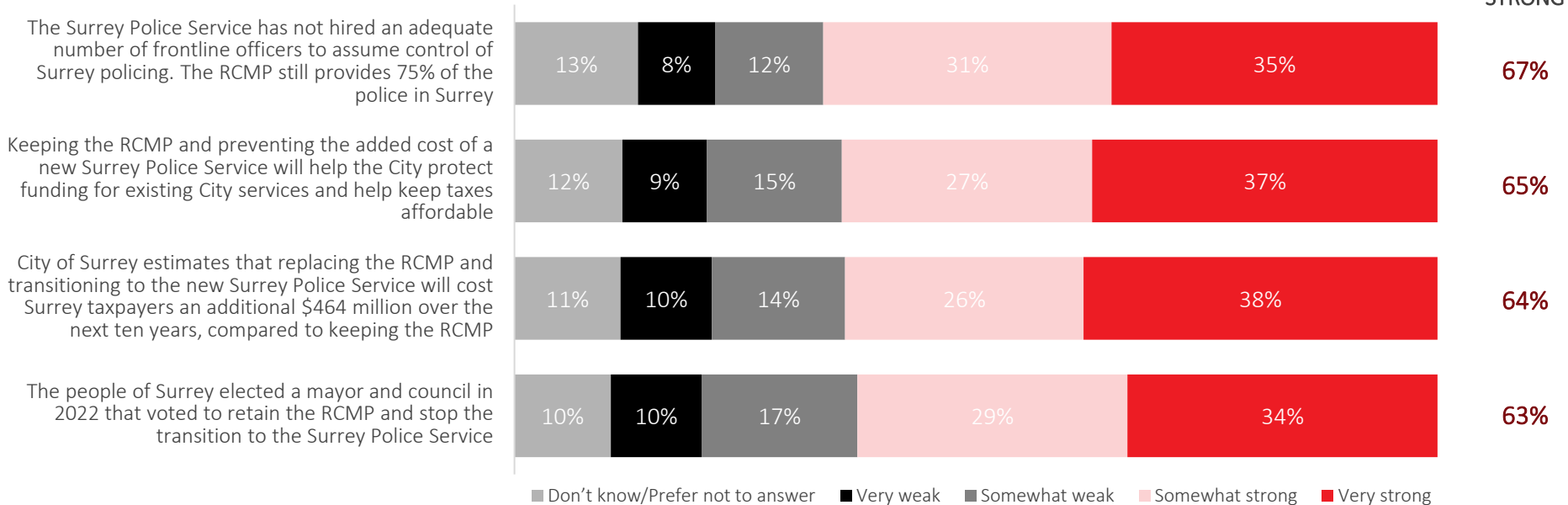
Those who prefer the RCMP still believe more say it is because they do a good job (45%) or costs less to taxpayers (26%). Those who prefer to transition say it is because Surrey deserves its own police force (26%) or feel it's inevitable and just want it done with (24%).

- Those aged 55+ are more likely to mention they do a better job/experienced/works (62% vs 34%) and less cost to taxpayers (35% vs 20%) as reasons to continue being policed by Surrey RCMP compared to those aged 18-54. Conversely, those aged 18-54 are more likely to mention better service (16% vs 2%), local employment (10% vs 0%) and providing good safety (9% vs 0%) as reasons for transitioning to a new Surrey Police Service (vs those aged 55+).

Strength of Arguments against Police Transition (i)

Q7: The City of Surrey has presented several arguments against the Provincial Government's plan to replace the Surrey RCMP with Surrey Police Service. Please indicate how strong or weak you feel each of the arguments are.

Base: All (n=505)



Overall, 60% or more residents feel 8 out of 11 arguments are strong (very or somewhat). The strongest arguments include a lack of frontline officers, that keeping RCMP will help protect City funding/keep taxes affordable, it will add \$464 million of the next 10 years, and officials elected in 2022 voted to retain the RCMP.

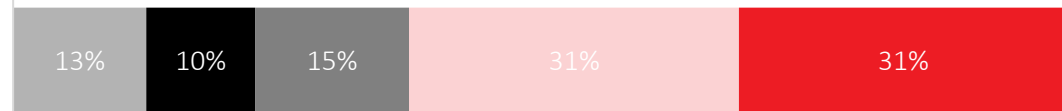
- South Asian residents are more likely to feel that “keeping the RCMP and preventing the added cost of a new Surrey Police Service will help the City protect funding for existing City services and help keep taxes affordable” is a *strong* argument (77% vs 64% of Caucasian residents).

Strength of Arguments against Police Transition (ii)

Q7: The City of Surrey has presented several arguments against the Provincial Government's plan to replace the Surrey RCMP with Surrey Police Service. Please indicate how strong or weak you feel each of the arguments are.

Base: All (n=505)

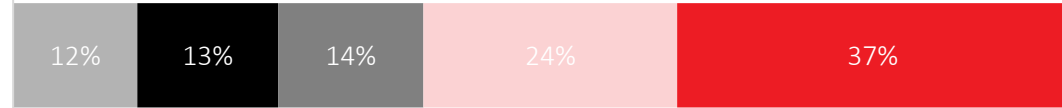
The provincial government has not provided a transition plan for the Surrey Police Service to the City of Surrey. It is not known how long it will take to fully staff a new Surrey Police Service, nor exactly how much it will cost



TOTAL
STRONG

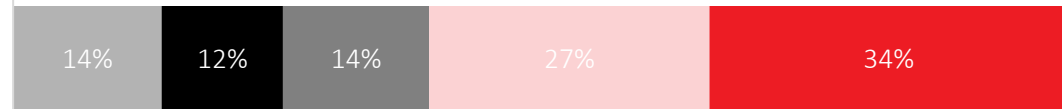
62%

Transitioning to the Surrey Police Service will mean less funds for housing, schools, hospitals, transit, parks, rec centres, and other local priorities



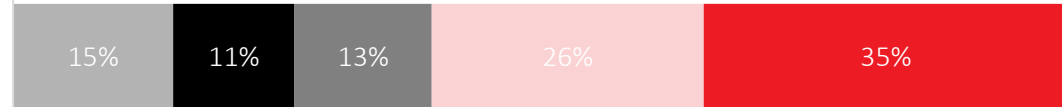
61%

The provincial government has offered to fund \$150 million to fund the transition cost, but that falls well short of the \$464 million that City staff estimates the transition to cost Surrey taxpayers over ten years, and does nothing to cover the additional year over year cost of the Surrey Police Service



61%

A massive double-digit tax hike will be necessary to pay for the NDP imposed transition



60%

■ Don't know/Prefer not to answer ■ Very weak ■ Somewhat weak ■ Somewhat strong ■ Very strong

60% feel arguments that are strong include a lack of a transition plan, less funds for other local priorities, that the \$150m the province offered is not enough, and a massive tax hike will be required to pay for it.

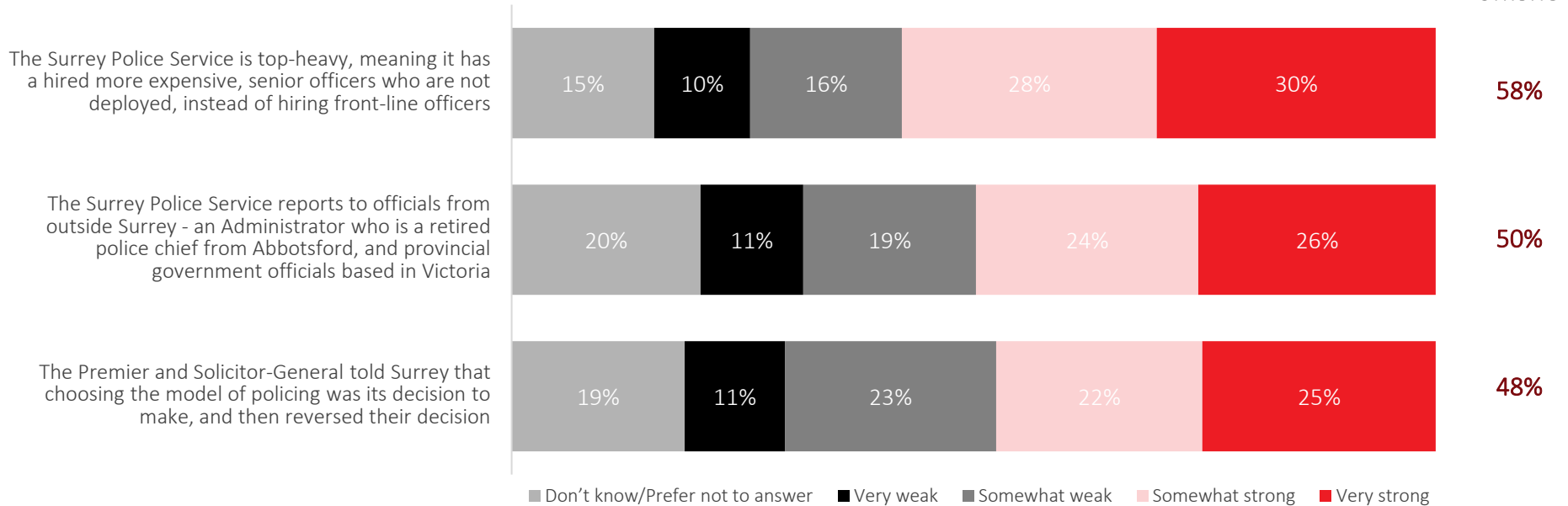
- Those aged 18-54 are more likely to believe the provincial governments offer falling short of the estimated cost to the Surrey taxpayers is a *strong* argument (65% vs 53% of those aged 55+).

Strength of Arguments against Police Transition (iii)

Q7: The City of Surrey has presented several arguments against the Provincial Government's plan to replace the Surrey RCMP with Surrey Police Service. Please indicate how strong or weak you feel each of the arguments are.

Base: All (n=505)

TOTAL STRONG



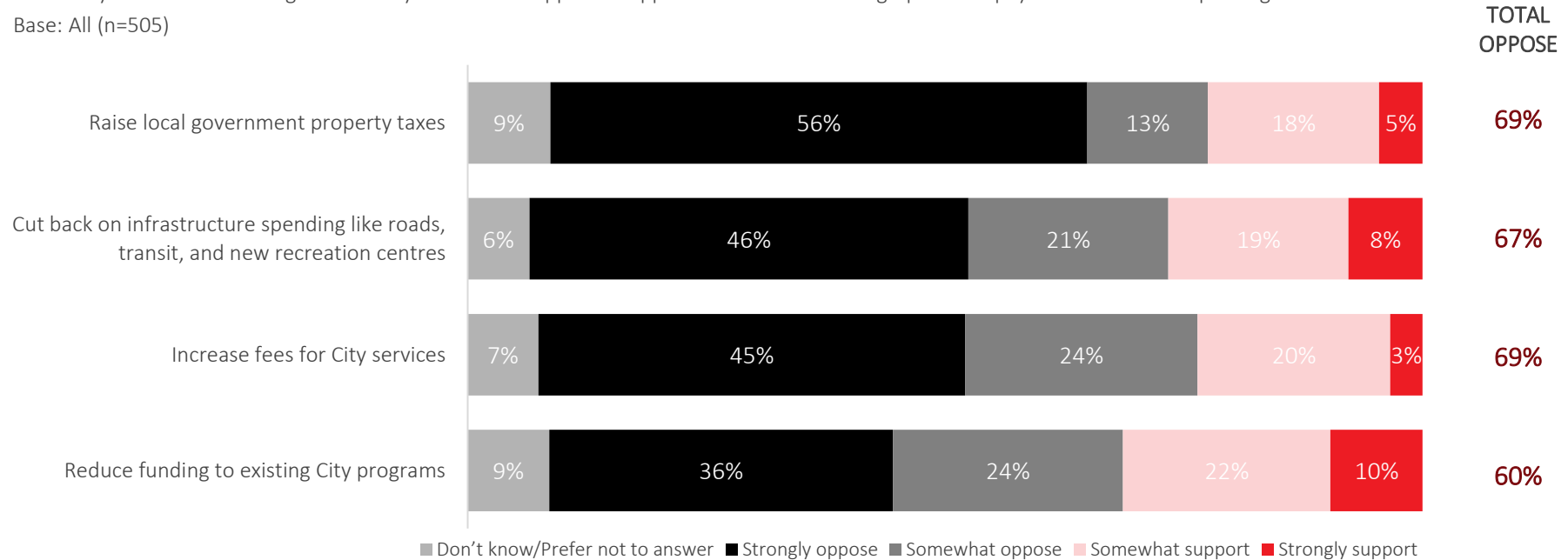
Less effective arguments (i.e. less than 60% strength) consist of the police service being top heavy, the service reports to officials outside the City, and the Premier and Solicitor-General reverse their decision about the policing model.

- Both Caucasian and South Asian residents are more likely than those of other ethnicities to feel that the Surrey Police Service reporting to officials outside of Surrey is a *strong* argument (55%, collectively, vs 35%)

Support/Oppose Options for Increase Policing Costs

Q8: If the City of Surrey is unsuccessful at stopping the provincial government from replacing the Surrey RCMP and imposing the Surrey Police Service, City staff estimates that Surrey taxpayers will be required to fund the increase in costs to the amount of at least \$314 million over 10 years, which is above and beyond what the provincial government is committed to funding. In addressing this requirement to fund new policing costs, the City of Surrey would need to identify funds from its budget. What is your level of support or opposition for the following options to pay for the increased policing costs:

Base: All (n=505)



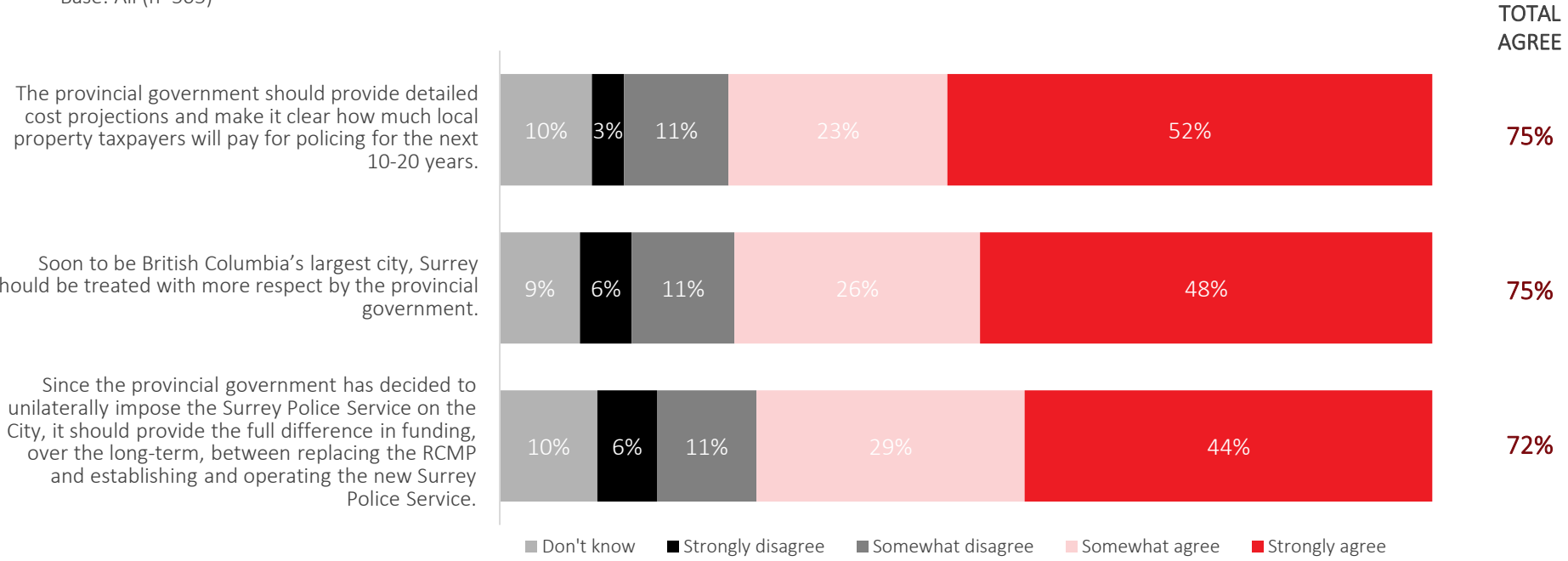
Notably, support was low for all options when it came to increasing police costs, with less than a third of residents supporting any of the presented options.

- South Asian residents (vs Caucasian residents) are more likely to support reducing funding to existing city programs (42% vs 25%) and cutting back on infrastructure spending (37% vs 17%). Those aged 18-34 (vs 35+) are more likely to support each of these options, except for increasing fees for city services.

Strength of Arguments regarding Provincial Government (i)

Q9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All (n=505)



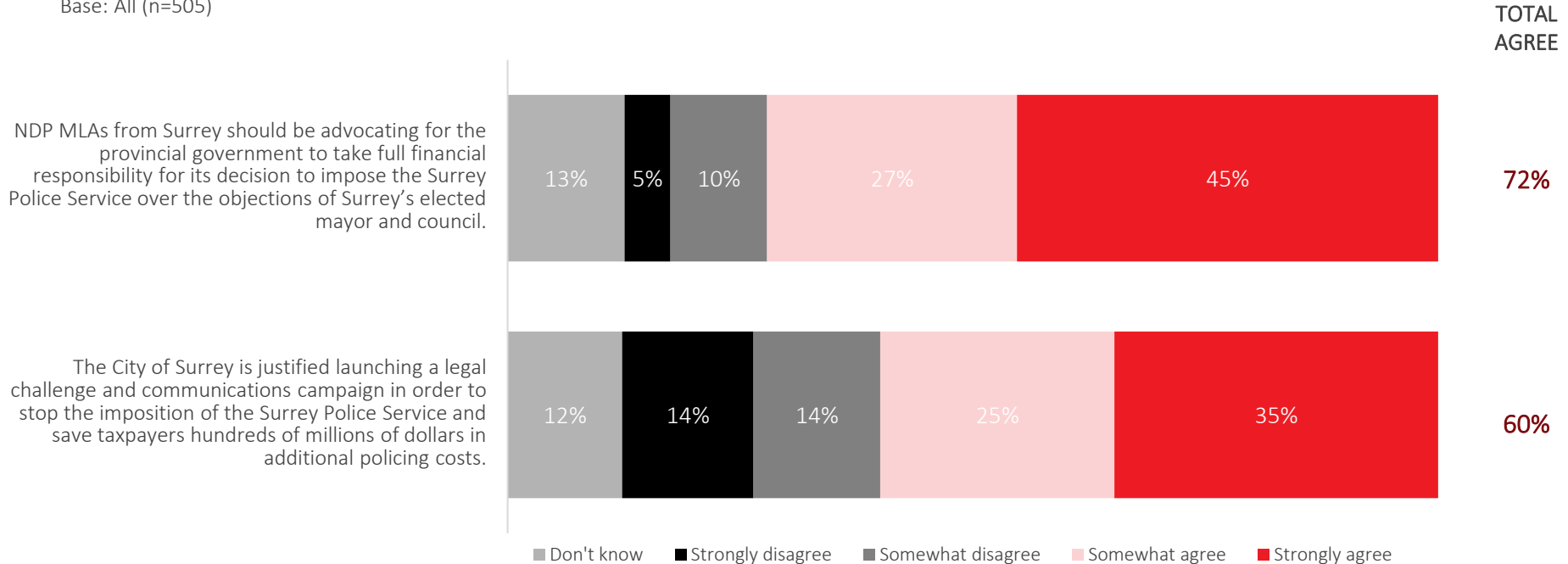
Approximately three-quarters of residents agree with 4 out of 5 arguments presented, indicating a strong disapproval about how the provincial government has handled the transition.

- Caucasian residents are more likely to agree the provincial government should provide detailed cost projections (84% vs 71% of South Asian residents) while those aged 35+ (vs those aged 18-34) are more likely to agree with each of these statements.

Strength of Arguments regarding Provincial Government (ii)

Q9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: All (n=505)

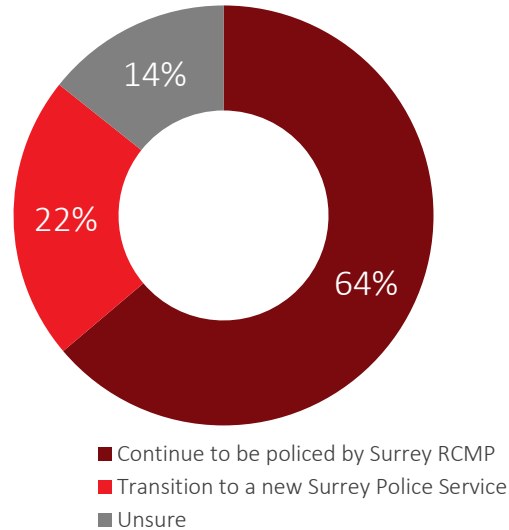


60% of residents agree that City is justified in launching a legal challenge and communications campaign to stop the transition.

Those aged 55+ are more likely to agree that NDP MLAs should advocate for the provincial government (79% vs 68% of those 18-54) while those living in Surrey for <20 years are more likely to agree the City of Surrey is justified in launching a legal campaign (67% vs 49% 20+ year residents).

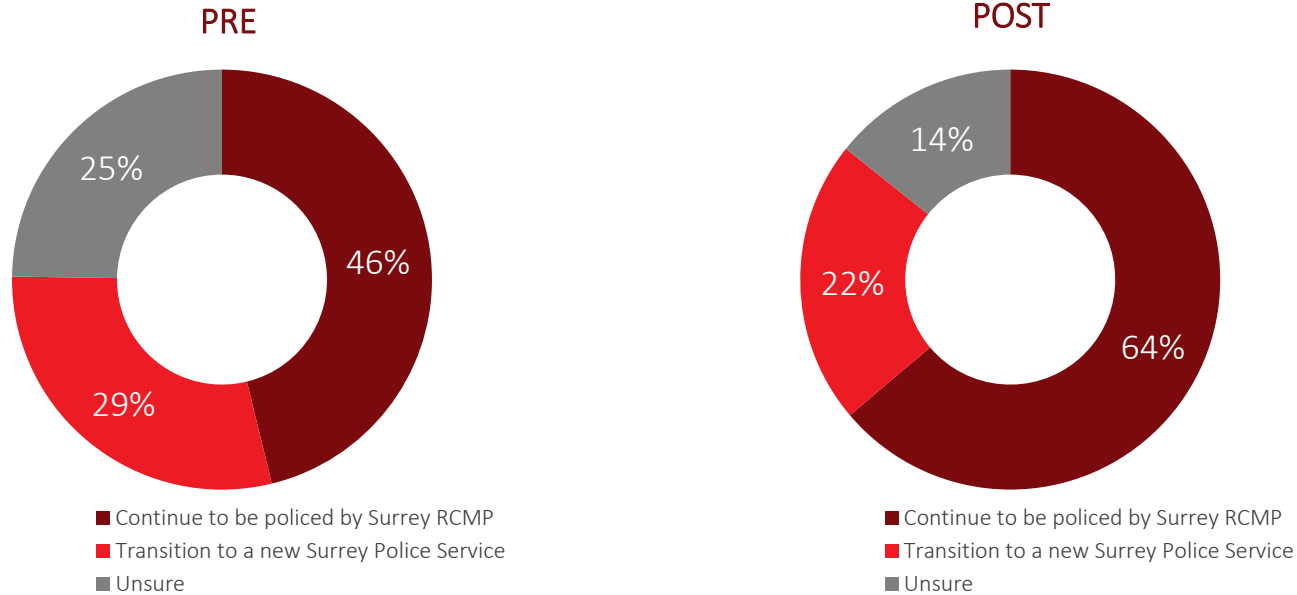
Prefer to Continue with RCMP or Transition to New Surrey Police Service - After Additional Information

Q11: Now that you have reviewed additional information, which option do you prefer? Base: All (n=505)



After additional information has been presented, over 6 in 10 now prefer continue with the current Surrey RCMP, versus 2 in 10 who would prefer the transition, and less than 2 in 10 are unsure.

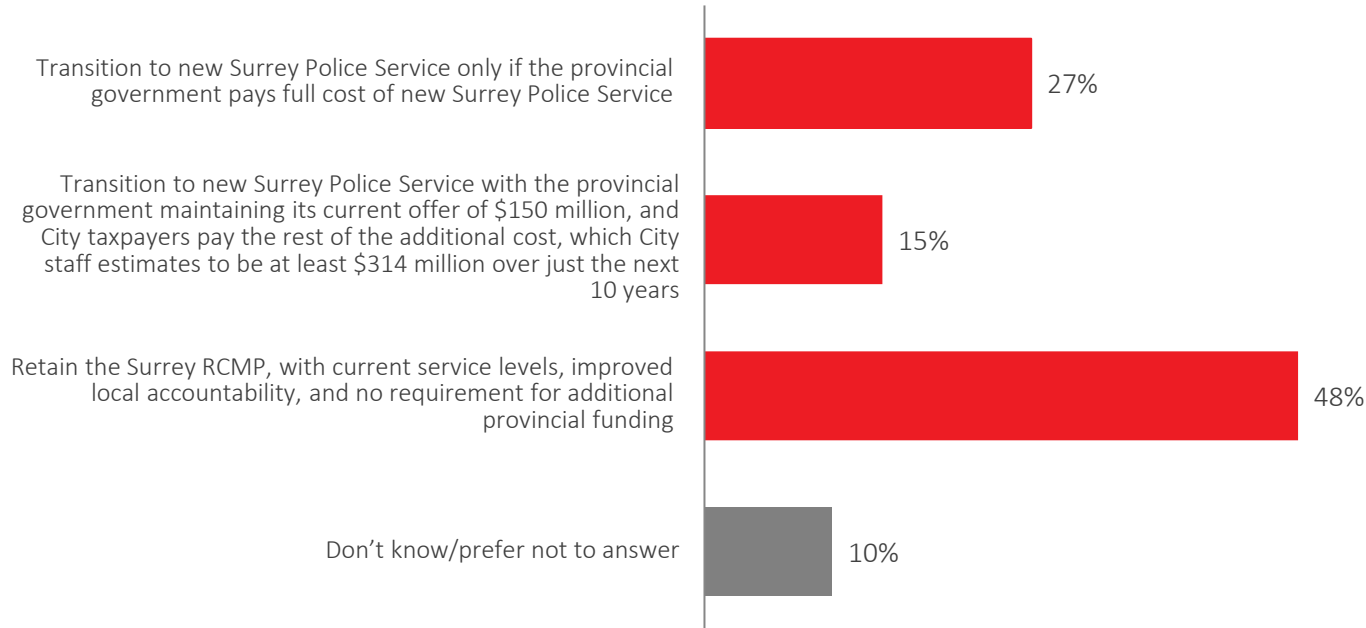
Prefer to Continue with RCMP or Transition to New Surrey Police Service - Before and After Additional Information



As illustrated above, after being presented additional information regarding the transition, opinion to continue with RCMP increases by 18 points. Support for the RCMP appears to be drawn from those who were originally unsure (down 11 points) along with changing the minds of those who originally said they would prefer transitioning to a new Surrey Police Service (down 7 points).

Preferred Funding Scenario

Q12: And which of the following funding scenarios do you prefer.
 Base: All (n=505)



Almost half would retain the RCMP at its current service with no requirement for additional provincial funding. 2 in 5 would prefer a new service if the provincial government pays for part or all of it.

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