Public Opinion Research on Capital Investment

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Capital Planning Committee
April 17, 2023
Research Objectives

Better understand voter sentiment to inform the 10-Year Capital Plan and its G.O. Bond Program, including:

- Support for capital investment;
- Types of projects/programs that garner the most support;
- Potential for support of bond(s) outside of the 2006 tax rate policy constraint;
- Potential for novel groupings of projects/programs given no odd-year elections.

FM3 Research conducted four focus groups in November 2022 and a Survey in December 2022.
San Francisco Voter Attitudes Toward the Capital Plan

Key Findings from a Citywide Survey
Conducted December 6-14, 2022
# Survey Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Dates</strong></th>
<th>December 6-14, 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Survey Type</strong></td>
<td>Dual-mode Voter Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Population</strong></td>
<td>Likely November 2024 Voters in the City of San Francisco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Interviews</strong></td>
<td>854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Margin of Sampling Error</strong></td>
<td>(Full Sample) ±3.5% at the 95% Confidence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact Methods</strong></td>
<td>Telephone Calls, Email Invitations, Text Invitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Collection Modes</strong></td>
<td>Telephone Interviews, Online Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>English and Chinese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Note: Not All Results Will Sum to 100% Due to Rounding)*
Voters are more negative about the direction of the city than ever before.

Do you feel things in San Francisco are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Right Direction</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Wrong Track</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2022</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2022</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2021</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2021</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March/April 2020</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February/March 2019</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2018</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2017</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March/April 2016</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2015</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Voters are divided on whether city infrastructure is well-prepared for a major earthquake and for the impacts of climate change.

I’m going to read you some statements about San Francisco. Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco’s infrastructure is well prepared for the impact of a large earthquake</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure spending makes up a very small part of the San Francisco city budget</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco’s infrastructure is well-prepared for the impacts of climate change</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three in five say the City should continue to invest in infrastructure rather than cutting back to fund services.

Which of the following statements about City spending comes closest to your opinion:

- San Francisco should continue its investment in maintaining and improving infrastructure – even with other critical issues facing the City, we need to make sure our public safety, public health, and transportation infrastructure are up-to-date and prepared for emergencies and climate change. (60%)

- Right now with the cost of living, crime, and homelessness as enormous concerns, the City of San Francisco should spend more on services to address these issues and cut back what it spends on maintaining and improving infrastructure. (30%)

- Both/Neither/Don't know (10%)
Seven in ten say the Capital Plan process is effective, but few feel strongly.

The San Francisco Capital Plan is a 10-year plan to restore, improve, and build San Francisco’s public infrastructure. Projects included in the plan are sized and sequenced to ensure that they will not require any increase in tax rates. Infrastructure projects in the plan are grouped into eight service areas: Affordable Housing; Economic and Neighborhood Development; General Government; Health and Human Services; Infrastructure and Streets; Public Safety; Recreation, Culture, and Education; and Transportation. The plan is updated on an ongoing basis in every odd-numbered year.

Q11. Does this sound like an effective or ineffective approach to planning for San Francisco’s infrastructure needs?
Affordable housing and earthquake safety are rated the most important capital projects.

I am going to read you a list of specific project areas that are part of the Capital Plan. Please tell me how important each of these projects is for investment—is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing and maintaining affordable housing for extremely-low, low-, and middle-income households</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving earthquake safety and near-term flood resilience of bridges, roads, stairways, and sidewalks</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the Emergency Firefighting Water System, which provides additional protection on top of the domestic water system</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving Muni and other transportation projects to address delays, improve reliability, and increase the safety and comfort of transit customers</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving city-owned hospitals and community health clinics to improve patient care and reduce wait times</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
San Francisco parks rank lower in importance.

### Renewing and repairing City-owned homeless shelters, including improving earthquake safety, and planning for additional capacity

- **Ext. Impt.** 33%
- **Very Impt.** 33%
- **Smwt. Impt.** 22%
- **Not Too Impt.** 10%
- **Don’t Know** 66%

### Repairing and improving streets and sidewalks to make them safer and more accessible for everyone

- **Ext. Impt.** 30%
- **Very Impt.** 36%
- **Smwt. Impt.** 26%
- **Not Too Impt.** 6%
- **Don’t Know** 66%

### Improving earthquake safety and near-term flood resilience of the Embarcadero Seawall and other waterfront assets facing similar vulnerabilities

- **Ext. Impt.** 28%
- **Very Impt.** 36%
- **Smwt. Impt.** 24%
- **Not Too Impt.** 9%
- **Don’t Know** 65%

### Improving public buildings and infrastructure including fire stations, police stations, and health service facilities in case of a major earthquake

- **Ext. Impt.** 27%
- **Very Impt.** 36%
- **Smwt. Impt.** 28%
- **Not Too Impt.** 7%
- **Don’t Know** 63%

### Improving San Francisco’s parks, recreation centers, and open spaces

- **Ext. Impt.** 17%
- **Very Impt.** 30%
- **Smwt. Impt.** 39%
- **Not Too Impt.** 12%
- **Don’t Know** 47%

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Q12. I am going to read you a list of specific project areas that are part of the Capital Plan. Please tell me how important each of these projects is for investment—is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important. Split Sample
Only one in fifty voters is “very familiar” with the Capital Plan.

How familiar are you with the San Francisco Capital Plan?

- Very familiar: 2%
- Somewhat familiar: 15%
- Not too familiar: 19%
- Not at all familiar: 58%
- Don't know: 5%

Total Familiar: 18%
Total Not Familiar: 77%
Three-quarters approve of tax cap as currently implemented in the capital plan...

The Capital Plan raises much of its money for infrastructure improvement projects through voter-approved bond measures. When voters approve a bond, the City is authorized to borrow money immediately to pay for infrastructure improvements, which it pays back over a time, with interest, from the City’s property taxes. Under the Capital Plan, the City has a policy of limiting the size of new bond measures and spacing them out as old bond measures are paid off. Using this approach, the City has been able to ensure that bonds approved under the plan do not require any increase in property tax rates.

Q13. Do you approve or disapprove of this approach?
...but a little more than one-third are open to the idea of increasing tax rates to carry out high-priority projects sooner.

Which of the following statements comes closer to your personal opinion about this approach:

The City should **continue** to space out bond measures and limit their size so that property tax rates do not increase, even if it means delaying addressing high-priority infrastructure needs by a decade or more

- **51%**

The City should place bond measures on the ballot for urgent infrastructure projects more quickly and at a larger size, even if it means that San Franciscans’ property tax rates may increase

- **37%**

Both/Neither/Don't know

- **12%**
In fact, two-thirds of voters are willing to pay up to $80 per year more in taxes to support such projects.

Suppose the City placed a bond measure on the ballot to fund high-priority infrastructure improvements, but that it did require a small increase in property taxes. Would you be willing to pay an additional ____ in property taxes if it were dedicated to repairing and improving high-priority infrastructure?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total Willing</th>
<th>Total Unwilling</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$60 Per Year</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>+45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80 Per Year</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>+42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120 Per Year</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>+25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Voters view a public health bond and an ESER bond as most acceptable.

Here are some of the projects that could be funded by a bond measure that might require a small increase in property taxes (HALF SAMPLE: of up to $120 per year for the typical homeowner). Would you find a small property tax increase to fund each of the following bond measures to be very acceptable, somewhat acceptable, somewhat unacceptable, or very unacceptable?

A public health bond funding improvements to hospitals and community health clinics to improve patient care and reduce wait times

- Very Acc.: 34%
- Smwt. Acc.: 39%
- Smwt. Unacc.: 11%
- Very Unacc.: 12%
- Don't Know: 5%

Total Acc.: 73%
Total Inacc.: 22%

An earthquake safety and emergency response bond to fund improvements to neighborhood fire stations, police stations, and other first-responder facilities and related infrastructure to withstand a major earthquake

- Very Acc.: 32%
- Smwt. Acc.: 40%
- Smwt. Unacc.: 11%
- Very Unacc.: 13%

Total Acc.: 73%
Total Inacc.: 24%

A transportation bond funding Muni and other transportation projects to improve the reliability and safety of transit and repairing streets and sidewalks so they are safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers

- Very Acc.: 38%
- Smwt. Acc.: 32%
- Smwt. Unacc.: 12%
- Very Unacc.: 14%

Total Acc.: 71%
Total Inacc.: 25%
Two-thirds of voters say paying increased taxes for a climate bond would be acceptable.

A climate bond to protect critical infrastructure from damage caused by rising sea levels and severe storms (HALF SAMPLE ONLY: and to convert buildings from natural gas to electric to reduce carbon pollution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Acc.</th>
<th>Total Unacc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>68%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A housing and homelessness bond providing affordable housing for extremely-low, low-, and middle-income households, and improving infrastructure to expand City-owned homeless shelters and ensure they can withstand a major earthquake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Acc.</th>
<th>Total Unacc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

72% find the climate bond acceptable without reference to building decarbonization; 64% find it acceptable with building decarbonization included

Q16. Here are some of the projects that could be funded by a bond measure that might require a small increase in property taxes (SPLIT SAMPLE A ONLY: of up to $120 per year for the typical homeowner). Would you find a small property tax increase to fund each of the following bond measures to be very acceptable, somewhat acceptable, somewhat unacceptable, or very unacceptable?
Nearly-two thirds see it as “very important” to prepare infrastructure for climate change.

How important do you think it is to prepare San Francisco’s infrastructure for the impacts of climate change:

- Extremely important: 30%
- Very important: 34%
- Somewhat important: 24%
- Not important: 10%
- Don't know: 2%

Nearly-two thirds see it as “very important” to prepare infrastructure for climate change.
Protecting utilities, water conservation measures, and protecting Muni and BART infrastructure are rated the most important climate investments.

I’m going to read you a list of potential climate-related infrastructure projects in San Francisco. Please tell me how important it is to complete this project: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting utilities from rising sea levels, extreme heat, and other weather events</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing water conservation measures</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting Muni and BART infrastructure from flooding caused by sea level rise and storms</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting more trees and urban greenery to reduce heat and improve air quality</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the waterfront and Seawall from sea level rise</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q18. Split Sample
## Converting gas appliances to electric is least important to voters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Ext./Very Impt.</th>
<th>Very Impt.</th>
<th>Smwt. Impt.</th>
<th>Not Too Impt.</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making streets and sidewalks safer to for pedestrians and bicyclists and reducing the risk of injury</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting natural areas, wetlands, and parks that help to naturally reduce the pollution that causes climate change</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing in public transportation to reduce car trips and lower greenhouse gas emissions</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installing cooling, ventilation, and solar and battery storage on public facilities for use during extreme weather events</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converting natural gas heaters and appliances to electric in lower- and middle-income residential buildings and public buildings to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower greenhouse gas emissions</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q18. I’m going to read you a list of potential climate-related infrastructure projects in San Francisco. Please tell me how important it is to complete this project: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important. Split Sample