



THE CHAMBER

seattle metropolitan chamber of commerce



THE INDEX

September 2022



Methodology

- Mixed-mode (live phone and text-to-web) survey of Registered Voters in the City of Seattle
- Conducted September 20–25, 2022
- 700 completed interviews; effective margin of error: ± 3.9 points
 - 100 interviews per City Council District
- Data weighted by key demographic variables to accurately reflect the Registered Voter population
- Where available, results are compared to the survey of Seattle Registered Voters, conducted March 2022

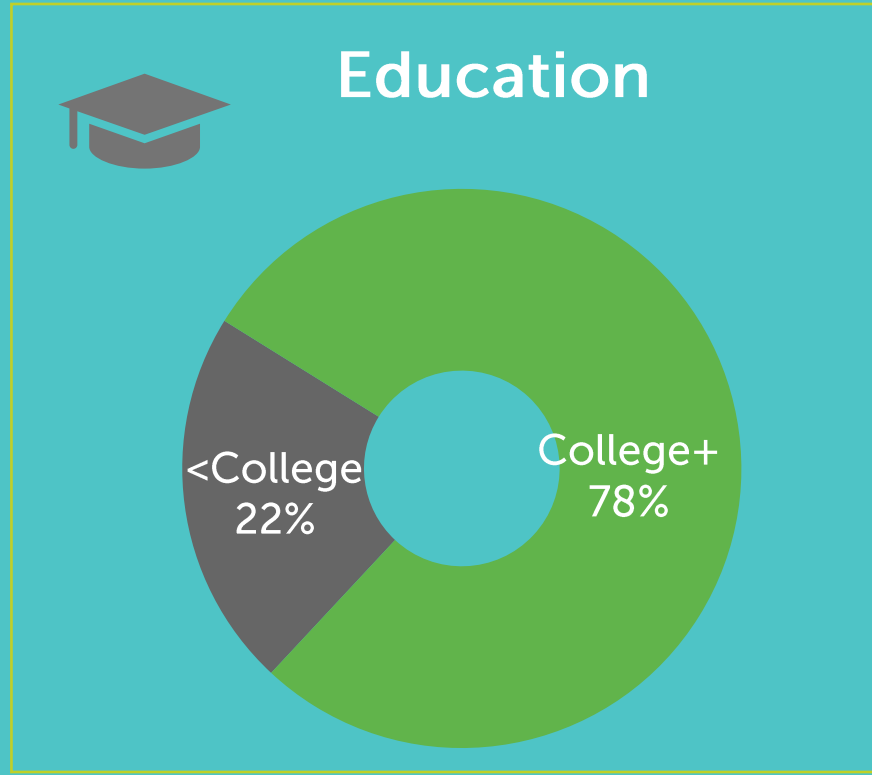
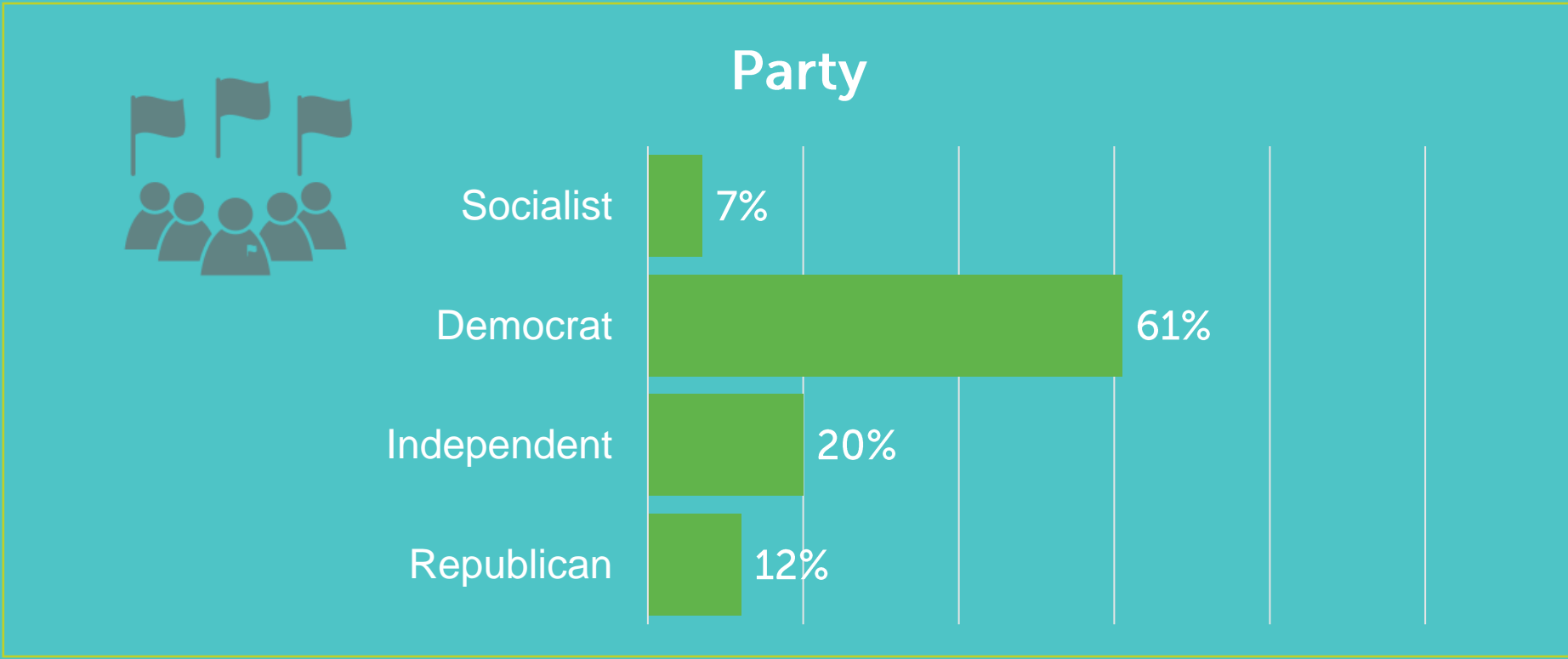
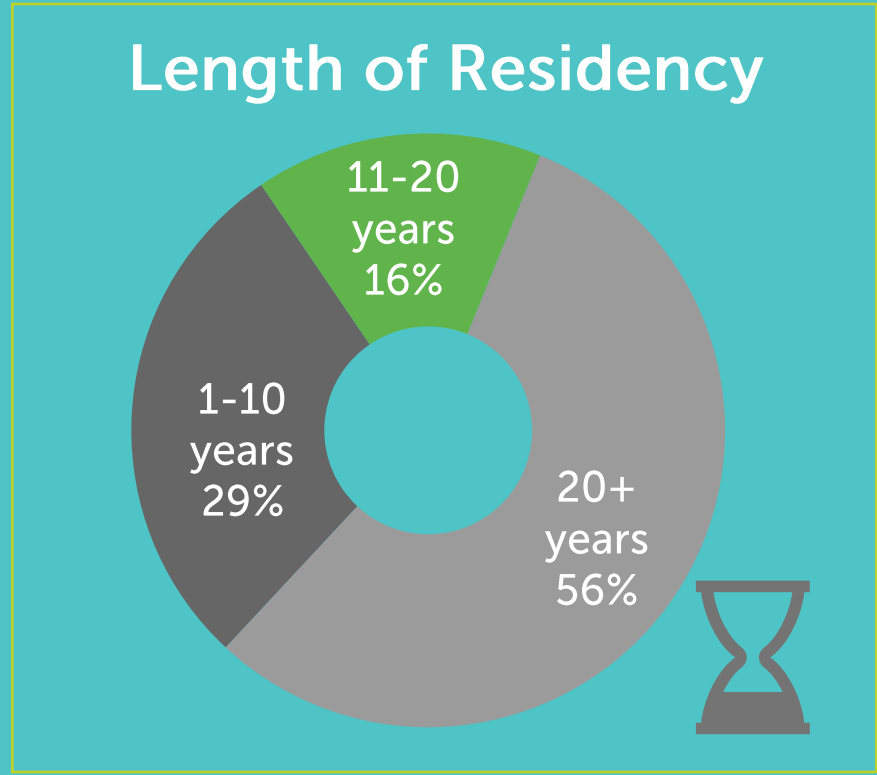
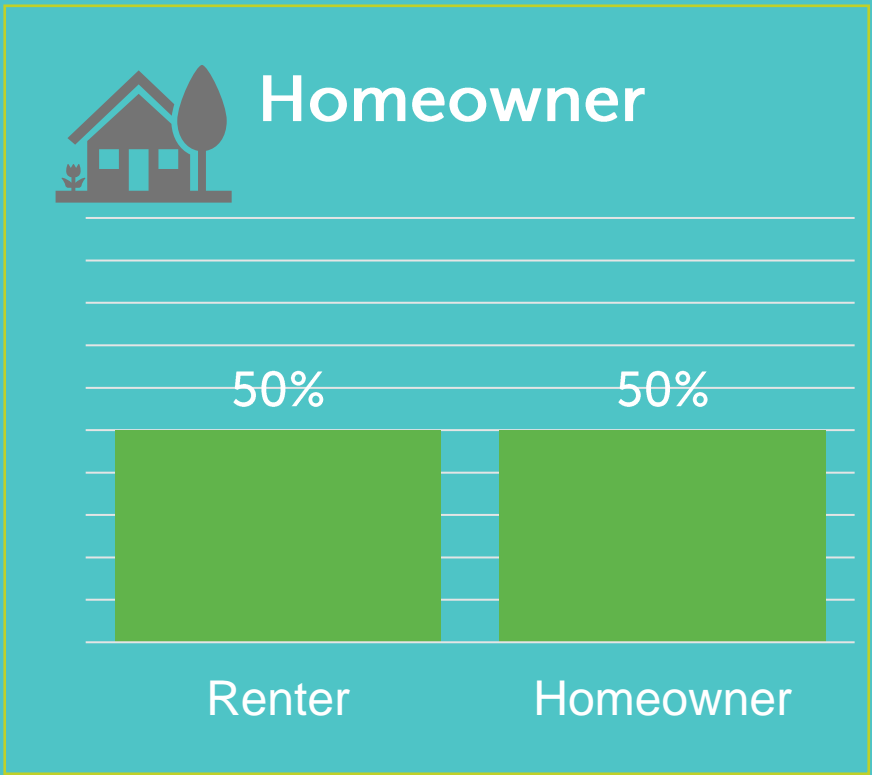
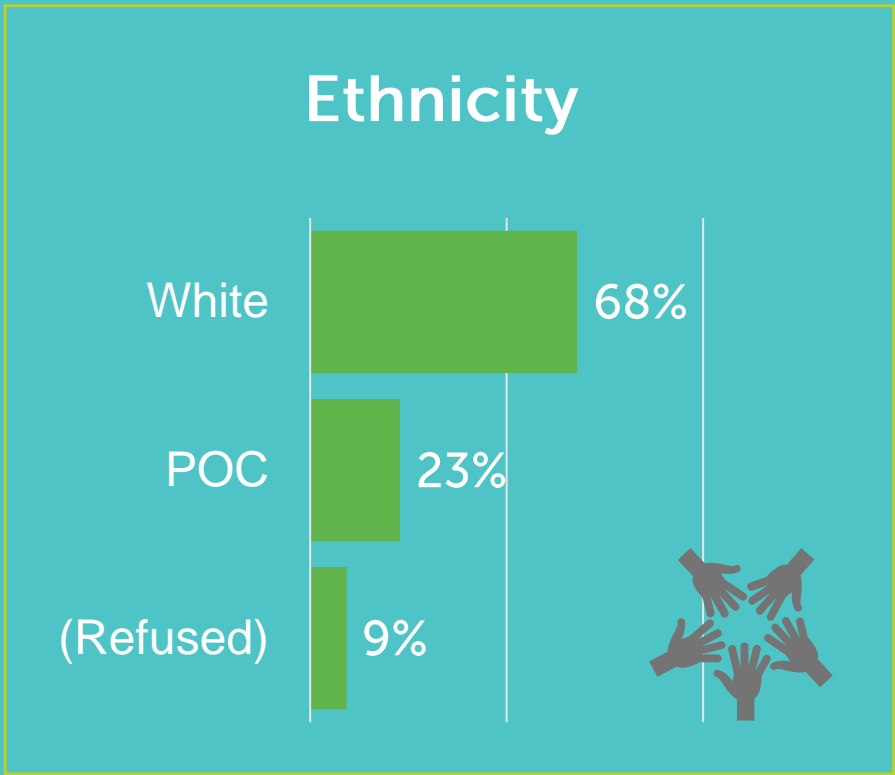
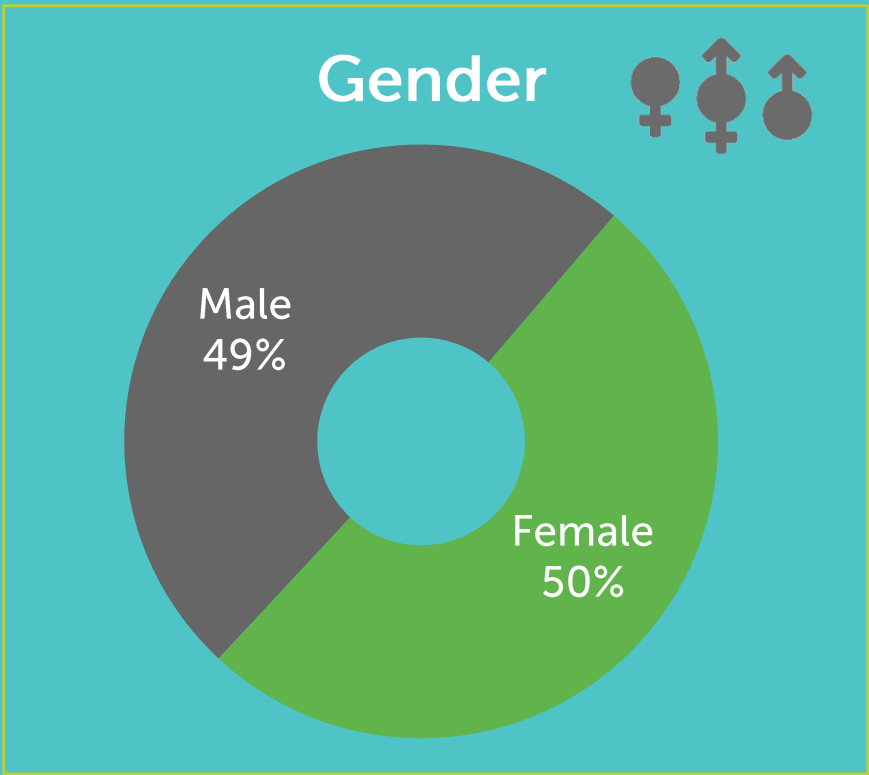
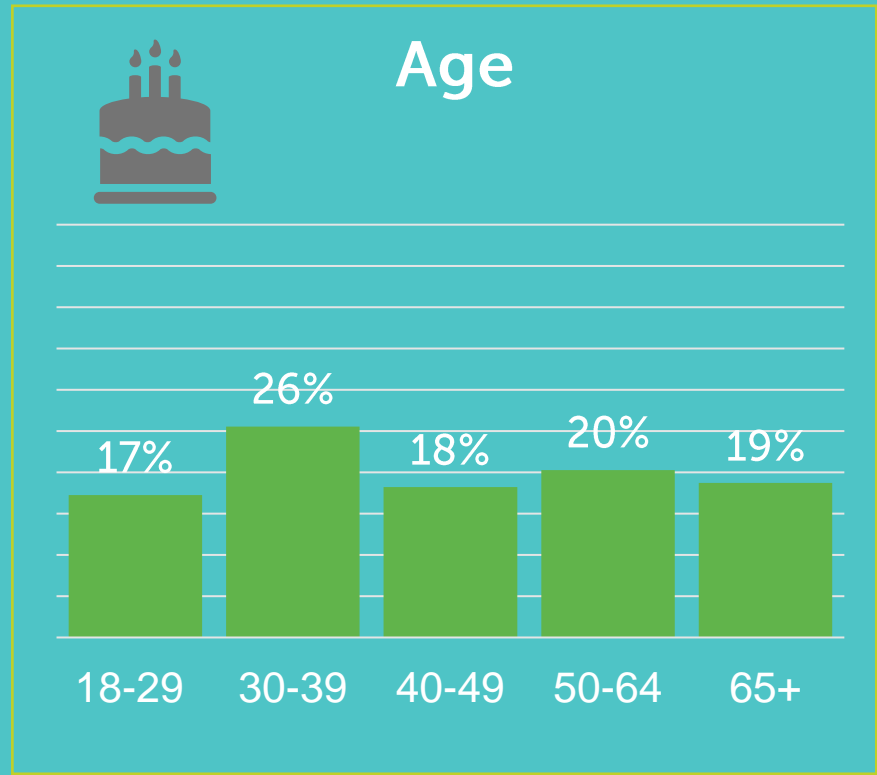
*Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.



Research Notes

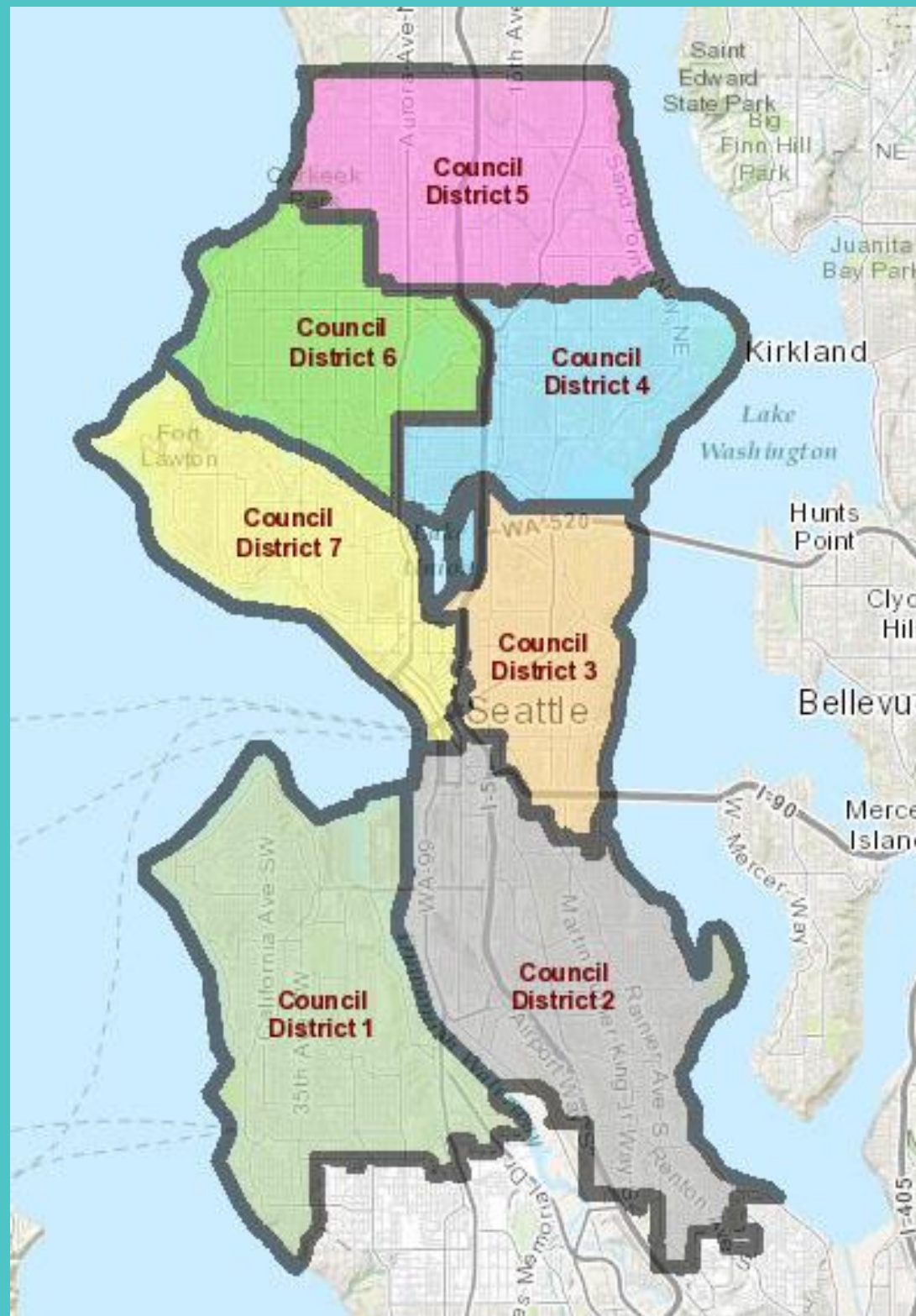
- The sample universe for The Index is All Registered Voters (ARV), not Likely Voters (LV), because the focus is on tracking attitudes over time, not on modeling and analyzing the opinion environment for a specific election.
 - The Registered Voter universe is younger, more progressive, more likely to be renters, more likely to be new to the city, and more likely to be people of color.
- Six-in-10 Seattle voters identify as Democrats, making them the primary driver of overall opinion on all survey questions.

Respondent Profile





Seattle Regions



- 100 interviews in each City Council District (current definition)
- Results weighted to the proportional share of voters in each District

| Region | Districts | Weighted % |
|-----------------|------------|------------|
| North Seattle | 4, 5 and 6 | 42% |
| Central Seattle | 3 and 7 | 31% |
| South Seattle | 1 and 2 | 28% |

Summary



- *Seattle voters are somewhat less pessimistic about the direction of the city and overall quality of life, but most still think the city is on the wrong track and quality of life is worse.*
- *Despite this broader pessimism, voters are optimistic about the region's future, and most say they are proud to be a Seattleite.*
- *Homelessness continues to be the issue voters are most frustrated/concerned about, followed by public safety, and housing affordability/cost of living. Concerns about homelessness – while still quite high – have declined in the last two surveys, while concerns about public safety spiked dramatically in March and are holding steady.*
- *The issues voters think would have the most impact on improving quality of life reflect their top concerns.*

Summary



- *There is broad alignment around approaches to addressing the top challenges facing the city:*
 - **Homelessness:** *Most voters support closing homeless encampments once alternative shelter and services has been provided “even if it means those who refuse help will be displaced” – nearly two thirds strongly support this approach.*
 - **Public Safety:** *Most voters agree that hiring more police officers should be an immediate priority for the city, and 6-in-10 voters support prioritizing hiring and retaining officers “even if it means reducing the resources available to other city departments that provide critical services to Seattleites.”*
 - **Affordable Housing:** *Despite being divided on the overall impact of growth, strong majorities support policies to increase housing, including in their own neighborhoods. Two-thirds support zoning/permitting changes to allow for more density across the city, even if it means more duplexes and triplexes in single-family housing zones.*

Summary



- *Seattle voters are still overwhelmingly concerned about the state of downtown and overwhelmingly recognize the importance to the region of addressing homelessness and public safety challenges downtown.*
- *Most Seattle voters are making fewer non-work visits to downtown, especially those who visited more regularly pre-pandemic. The number of voters who say they would feel safe visiting downtown has increased somewhat after declining between August 2021 and March 2022, although 7-in-10 still say they would not feel safe at night.*
- *Most voters continue to say they feel less safe in their own neighborhoods, most agree that hiring more officers should be an immediate priority, and most do not trust the council on police reform.*
- *A majority of Seattle voters agree that taxes are too high for the level of services the city provides. Most voters do not trust the city to spend responsibly, and most do not believe the city has an effective plan to address critical issues.*

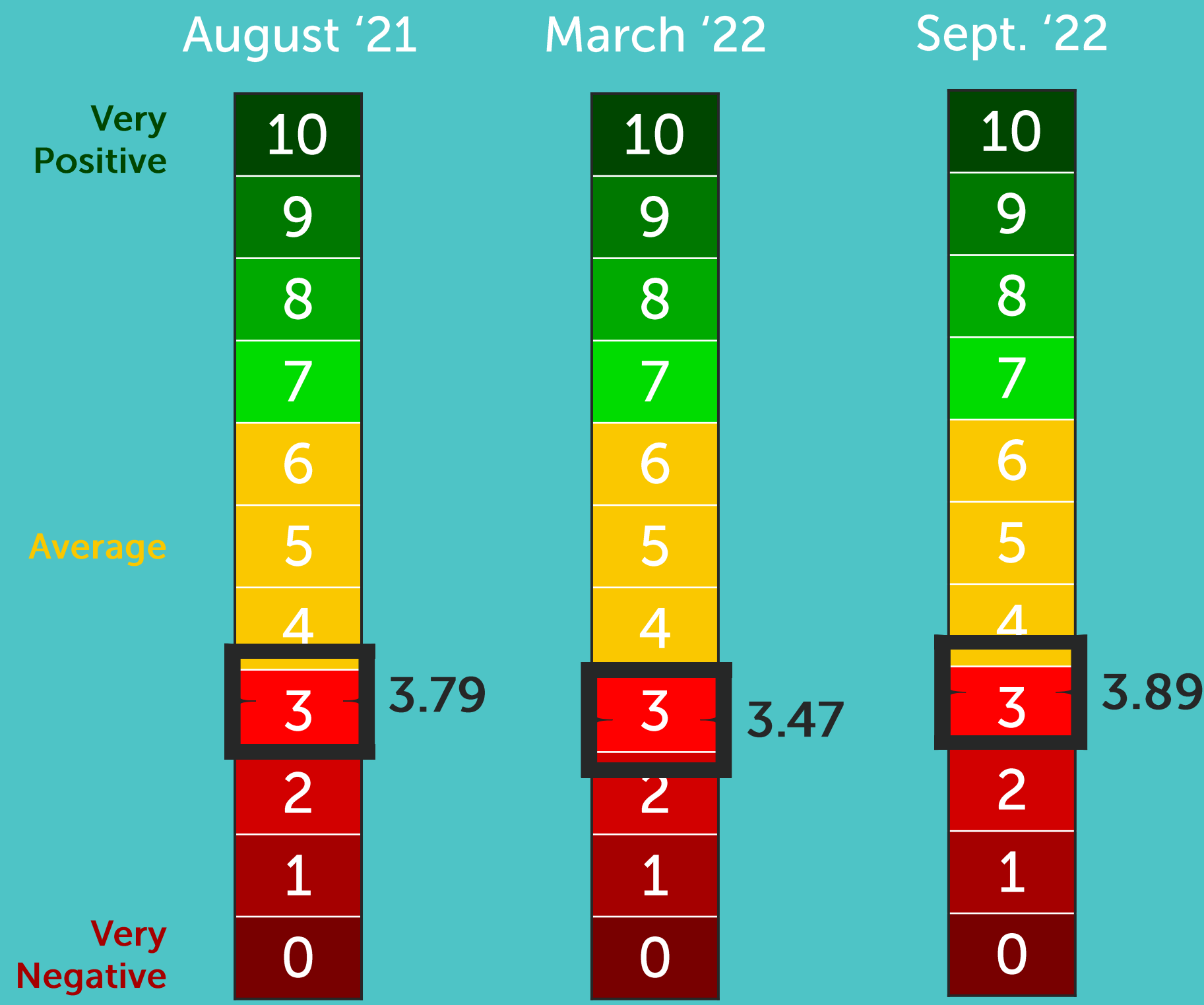


Quality of Life



Quality of Life Index

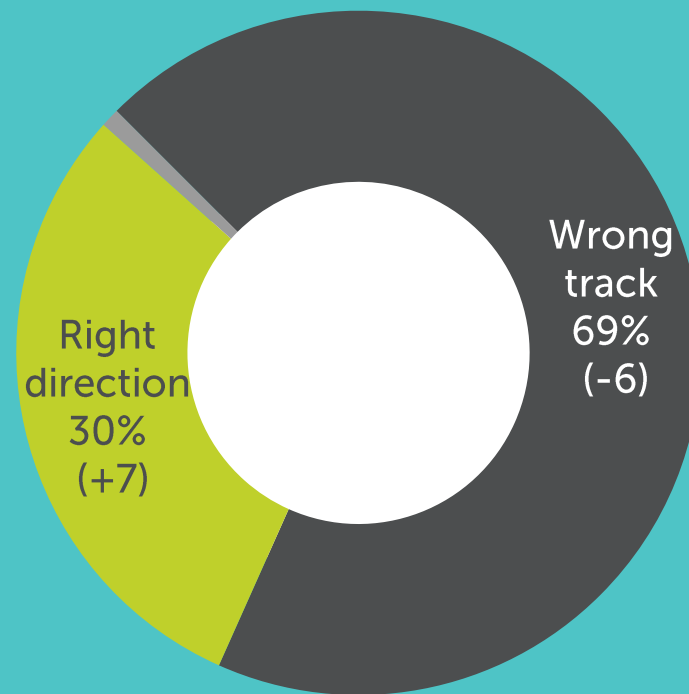
- The Quality of Life Index aggregates multiple survey questions about quality of life:
 - Right Direction/Wrong Track
 - Quality of Life compared to four years ago
 - Actively considered moving out of Seattle
 - Optimistic about the region’s future
 - Perception of safety
 - Concern about Downtown’s future
 - Likelihood to visit Downtown for activities other than work
- The Index does not include any measures related to voter perceptions of Seattle’s government or elected leaders.





Quality of Life: By the Numbers

"Do you feel that things in the city of Seattle are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?"

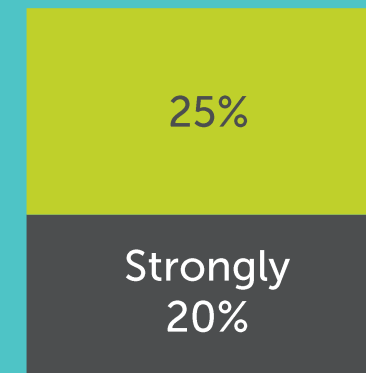


"I'm optimistic about the future of this region."

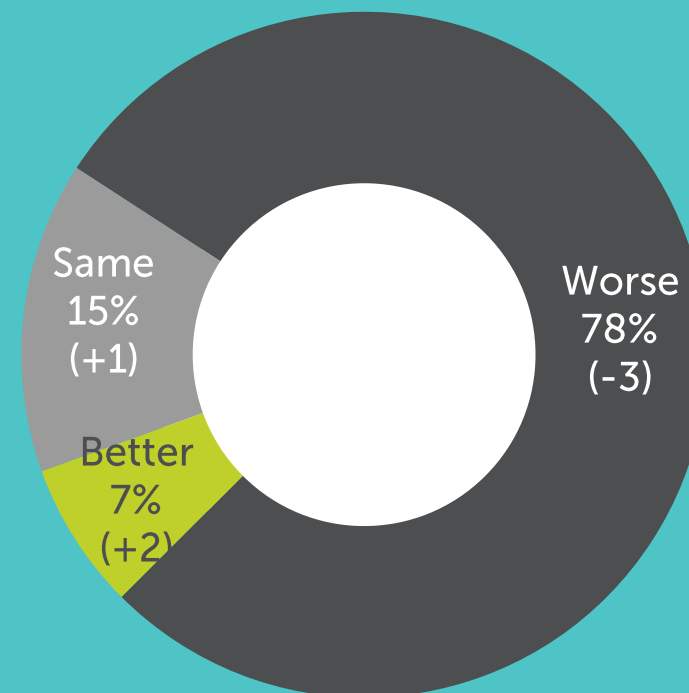
Agree 55%
(+5)



Disagree 45%
(-5)

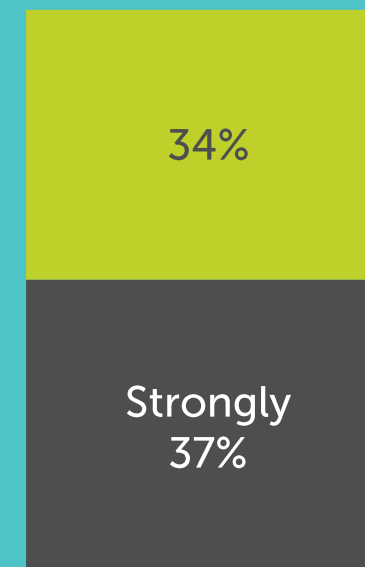


"Do you think the overall quality of life in Seattle is better, the same, or worse than it was 4 years ago?"

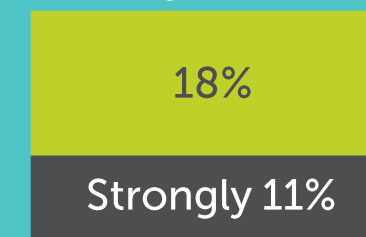


"I'm proud to call myself a Seattleite."

Agree 71%



Disagree 29%



Optimism has increased somewhat, but a supermajority of voters still think things are on the wrong track and that quality life is worse. Optimism about the future has grown and despite broader pessimism, most voters say they are proud to call themselves Seattleites.



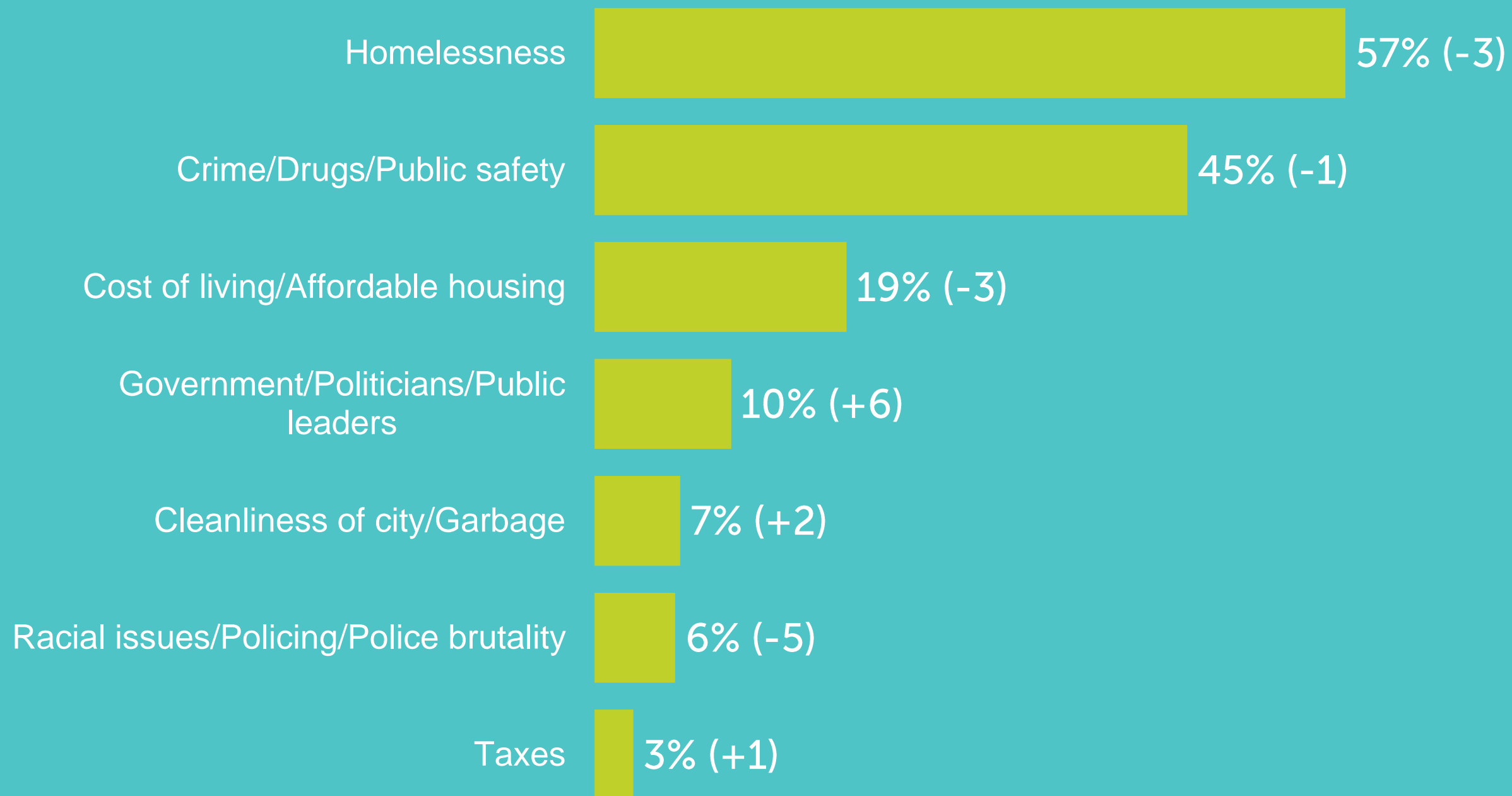
Top Concerns



Top Concerns



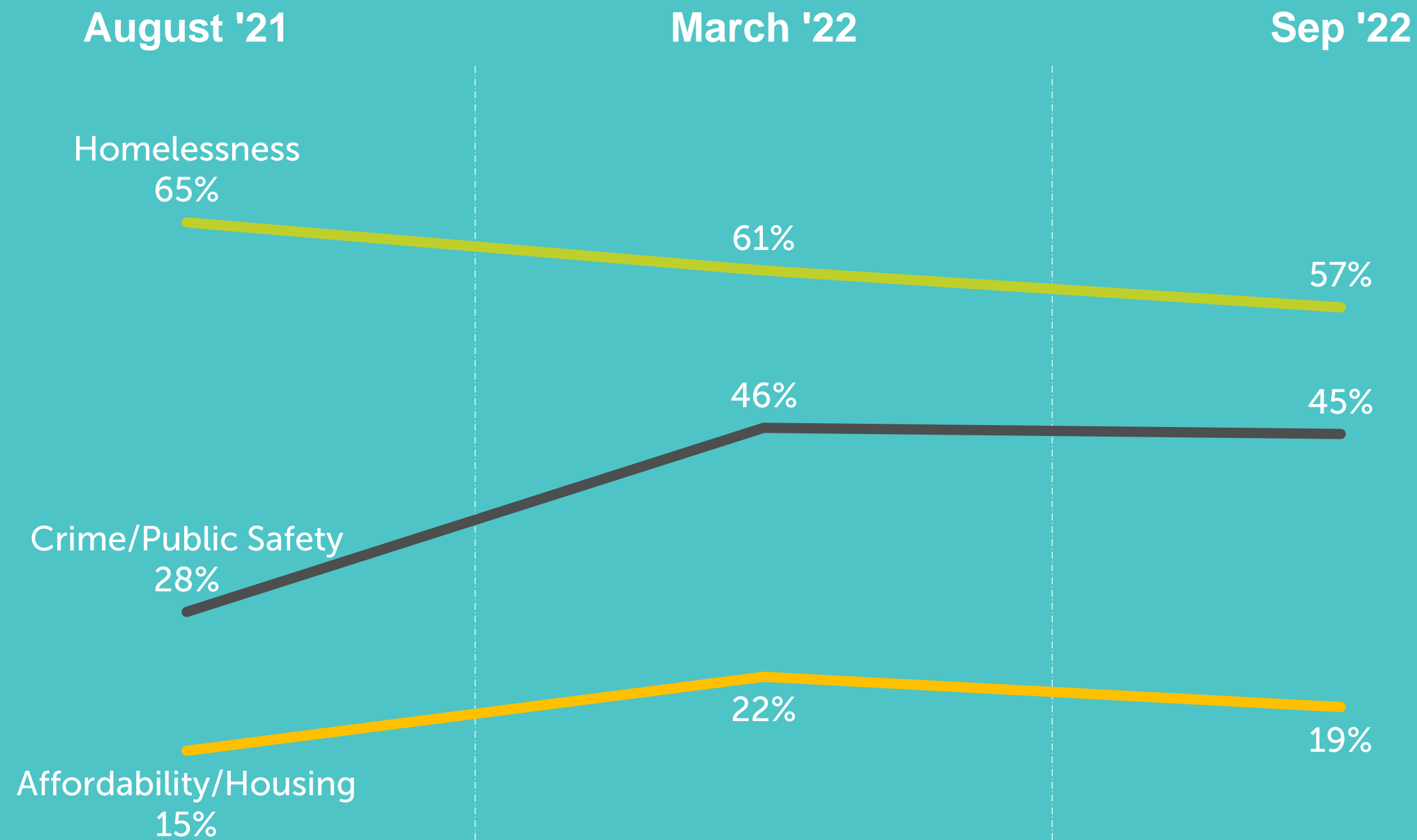
“What are the issues facing Seattle that you are most frustrated or concerned about?”



Homelessness continues to be voters' top concern, followed by public safety issues, and cost of living/housing affordability.



Top Three Concerns - Trend



Concerns about issues related to homelessness have declined in each of the last two surveys. Concerns about public safety, which increased dramatically from August 2021 to March 2022, have remained high.



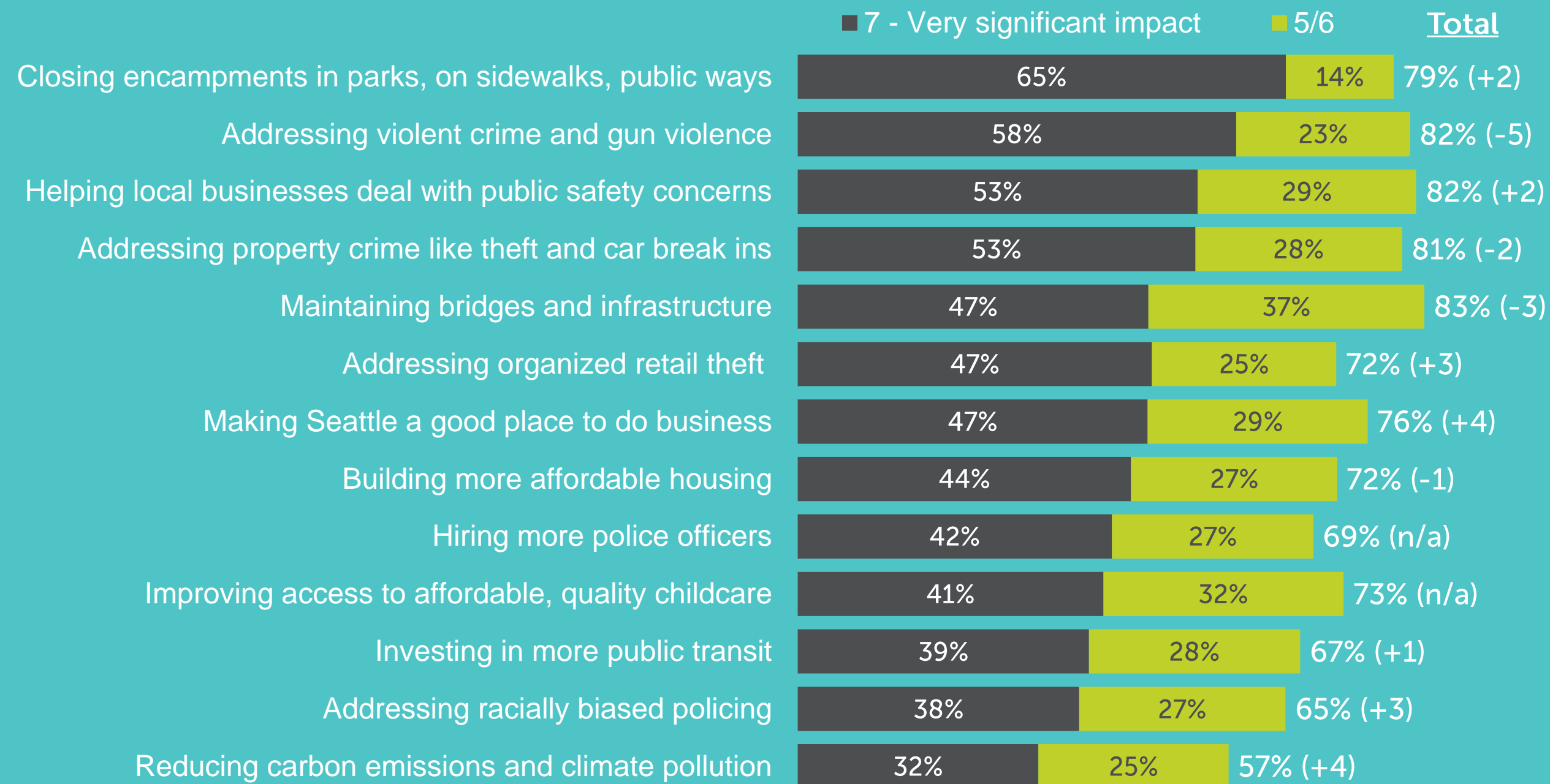
Improving Quality of Life





Improving Quality of Life

“How much impact do you think each of the following would have on improving quality of life in Seattle?”

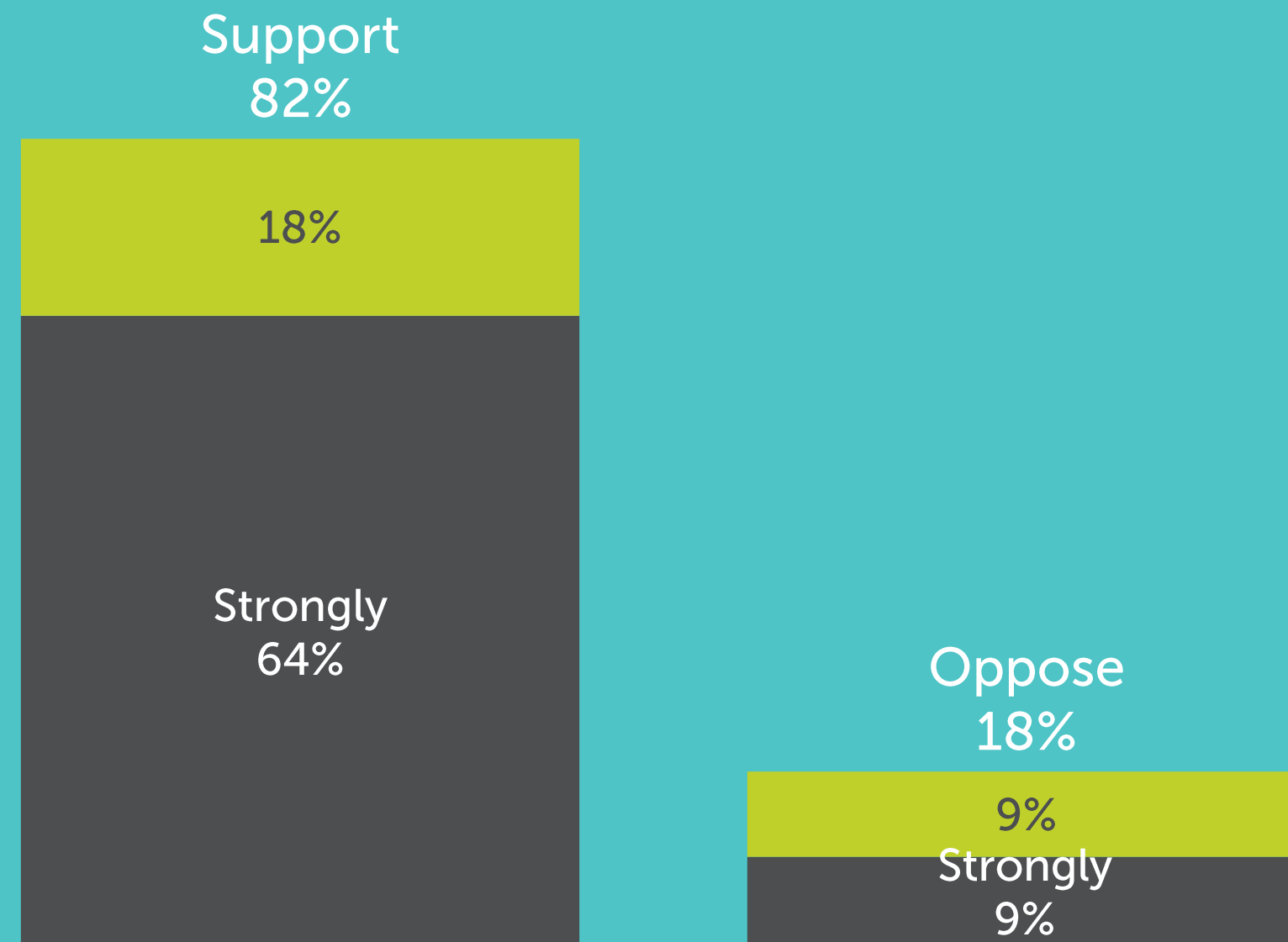


A majority of voters believe each of these actions would improve quality of life. The issues voters say would have the most impact reflect their top concerns – addressing homelessness and public safety.



Addressing Homelessness

"Continue to close homeless encampments once people have been offered shelter and services, even if it means those who refuse help will be displaced"

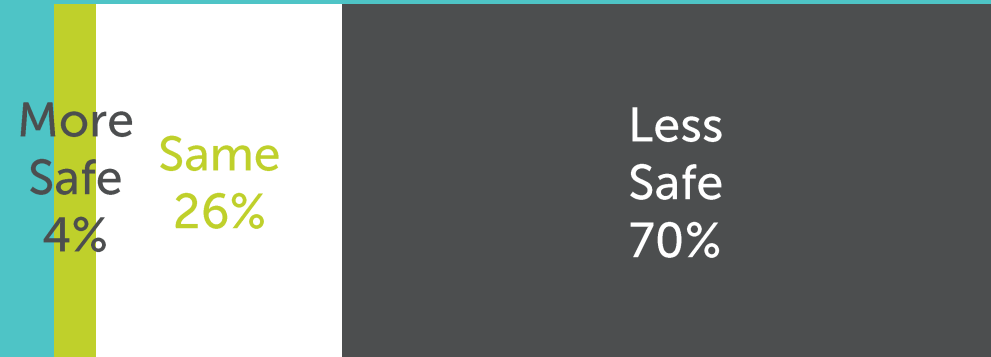


Most voters support closing homeless encampments once alternative shelter and services has been provided even if it means those who refuse help will be displaced. Nearly two-thirds strongly support this approach.



Addressing Public Safety

"Thinking about safety in your neighborhood, including property crime and violent crime, would you say you feel more safe or less safe than you did two years ago?"

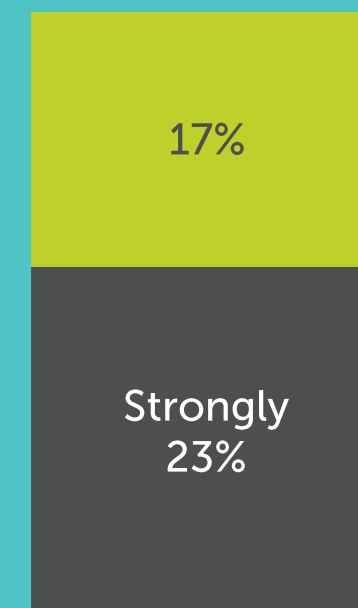


"Prioritize funding for hiring and retention of Seattle police officers, even if it means reducing the resources available to other city departments that provide critical services to Seattleites"

Support
59%

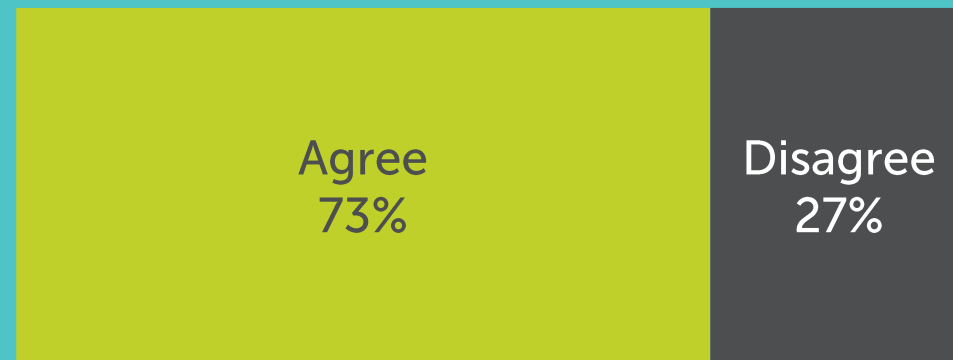


Oppose
41%

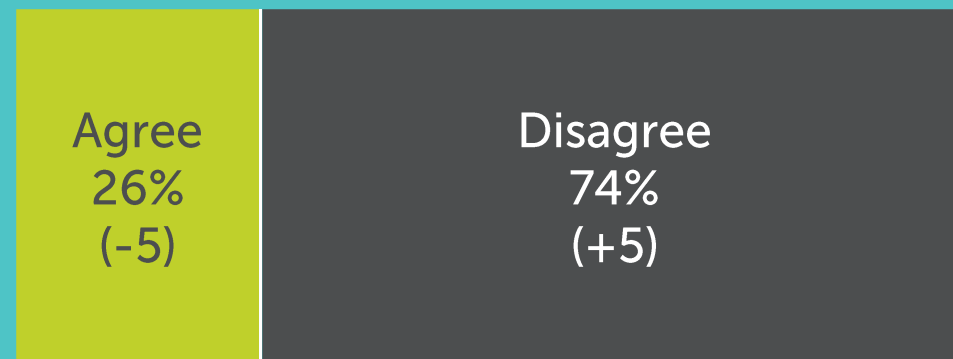


Most voters continue to say they feel less safe in their own neighborhoods, agree that hiring more officers should be an immediate priority, and do not trust the council on reform. Six-in-10 support prioritizing hiring/retaining police officers even if it leads to other cuts in critical services.

"Hiring more police officers should be an immediate priority for the City"



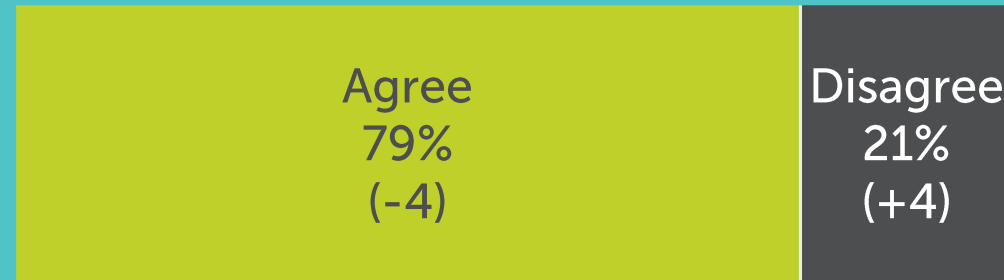
"I trust the Seattle City Council to reform the Seattle Police Department without endangering public safety"



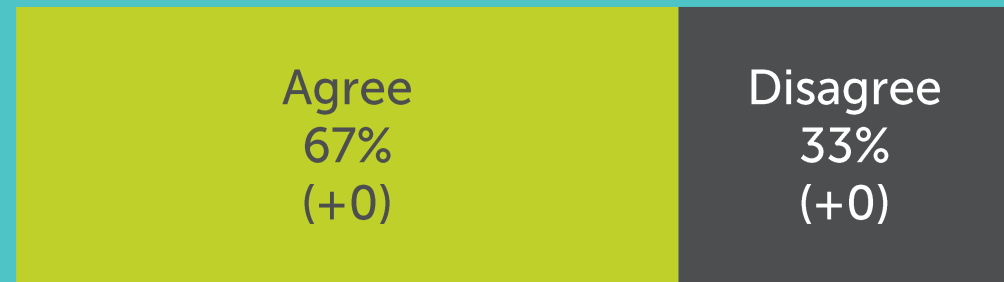


Addressing Housing Affordability

"I support policies that make it easier to build new housing in transit and commercial areas"



"I support the building of new housing in my neighborhood"



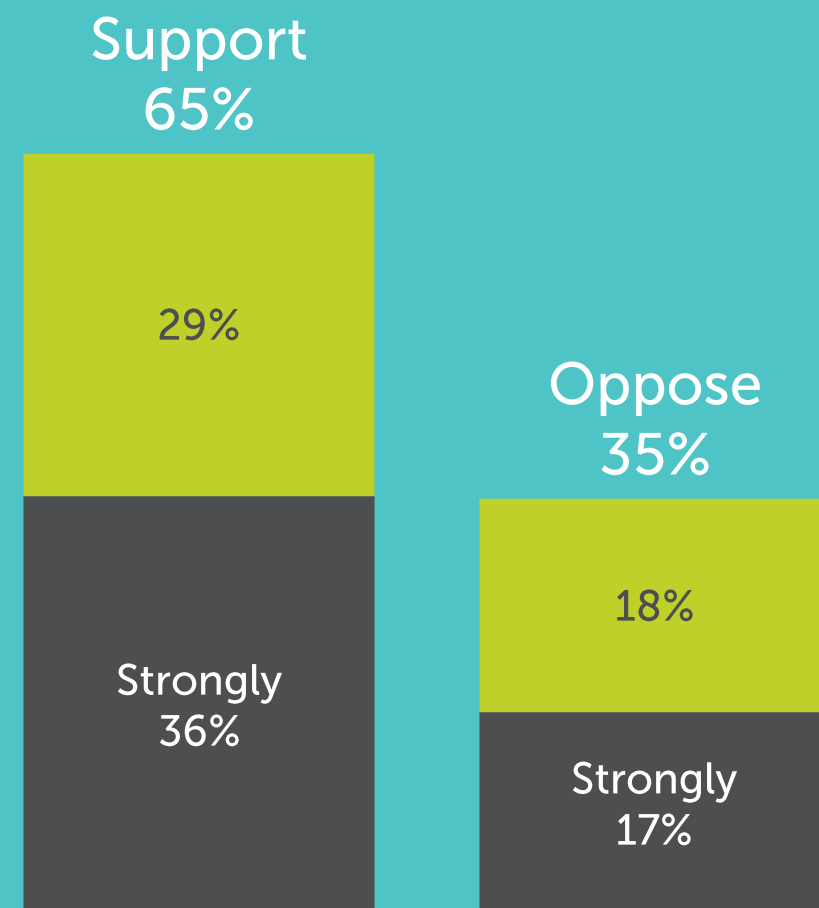
"I support changing regulations to allow for more duplexes and triplexes in residential neighborhoods across Seattle"



"All things considered, growth and development has been a positive for my area"



"To create more affordable housing, update Seattle's zoning laws and expedite permitting to allow for more density across the city, even if it means there will be more duplexes and triplexes in many single-family residential neighborhoods"



Despite being divided on the overall impact of growth, strong majorities support policies to increase housing, including in their own neighborhoods. Two-thirds support zoning/permitting changes to allow for more density across the city, even if it means more duplexes and triplexes in single-family housing zones.

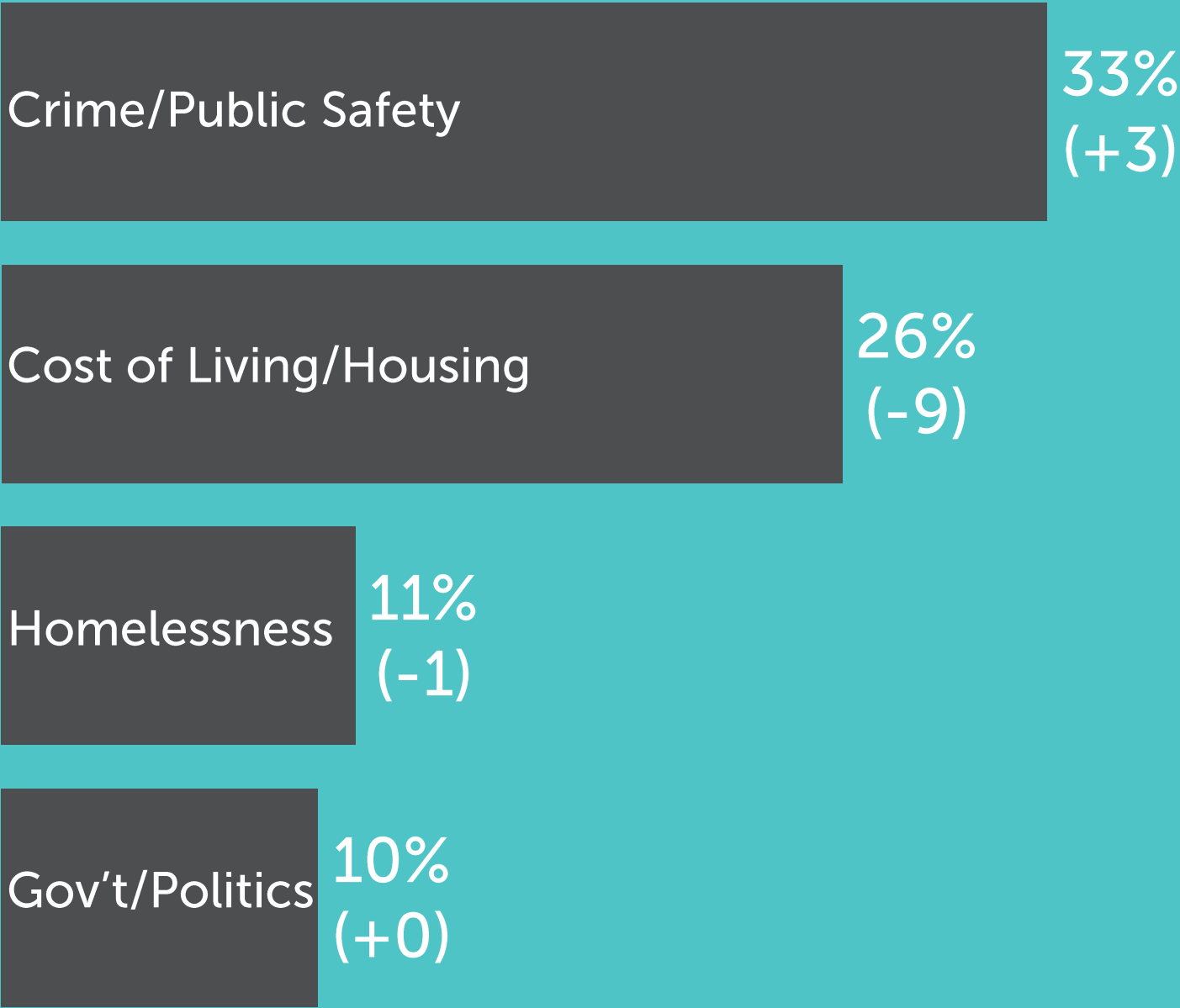
Leaving Seattle



"Have you actively considered moving out of Seattle?"
(IF YES) "And are you still actively considering moving out of Seattle?"



"What is the main reason you have considered moving?"



More than six-in-10 have actively considered moving out of Seattle, and half are still actively considering moving. Crime/public safety has surpassed cost of living/housing affordability as the top reason people have considered moving.



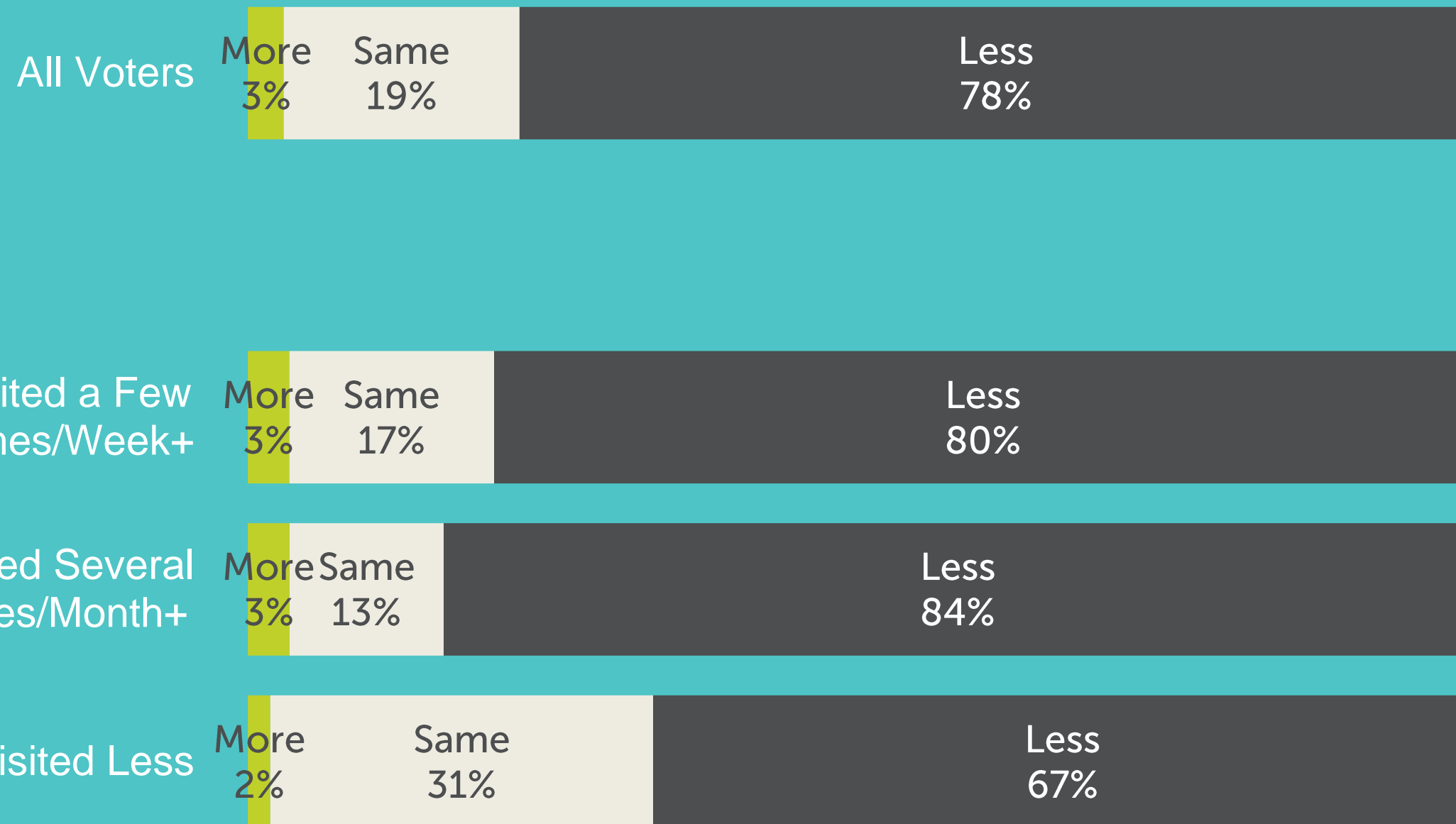
Downtown & Economic Recovery





Visiting Downtown

"And currently, for activities other than work, are you visiting Downtown Seattle more, less, or about the same as you did before the pandemic?"



Most Seattle voters are making fewer non-work visits to Downtown, especially those who visited more regularly pre-pandemic.



Public Safety Downtown

"I would feel safe visiting downtown Seattle during the day"

Agree
66%
(+5)

Disagree
34%
(-5)

"I would feel safe visiting downtown Seattle at night"

Agree
28%
(+3)

Disagree
71%
(-3)



The number of voters who say they would feel safe visiting Downtown has increased after declining between August 2021 and March 2022, although seven-in-10 still say they would not feel safe at night.



Downtown & Economic Recovery

"Downtown Seattle cannot fully recover until the homelessness and public safety problems are addressed"

Agree
91%
(-1)

Disagree
9%
(+1)

"A thriving downtown Seattle is critical to our region's economic recovery"

Agree
91%
(-0)

Disagree
9%
(+0)

"I'm worried about the future of downtown Seattle"

Agree
84%
(-2)

Disagree
16%
(+3)



Seattle voters are still overwhelmingly concerned about the state of Downtown and overwhelmingly recognize the importance to the region of addressing homelessness and public safety challenges.



Taxes & Spending



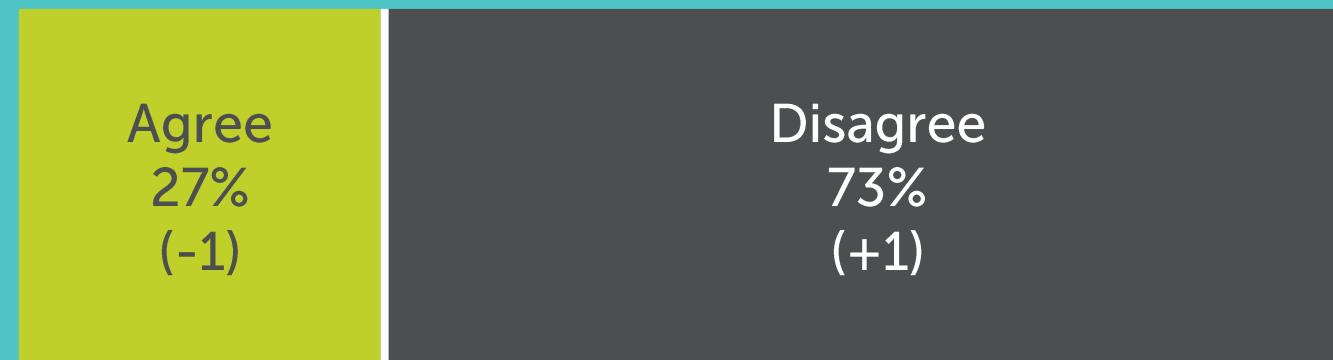


Taxes & Spending

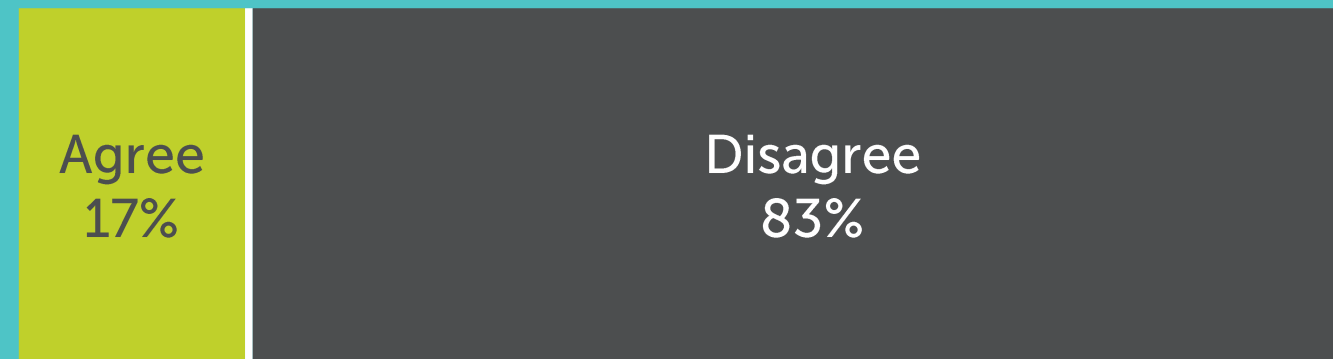
"Would you say that taxes in Seattle are too high, too low, or about right for the level of services the city provides"



"I trust the city of Seattle to spend my tax dollars responsibly"



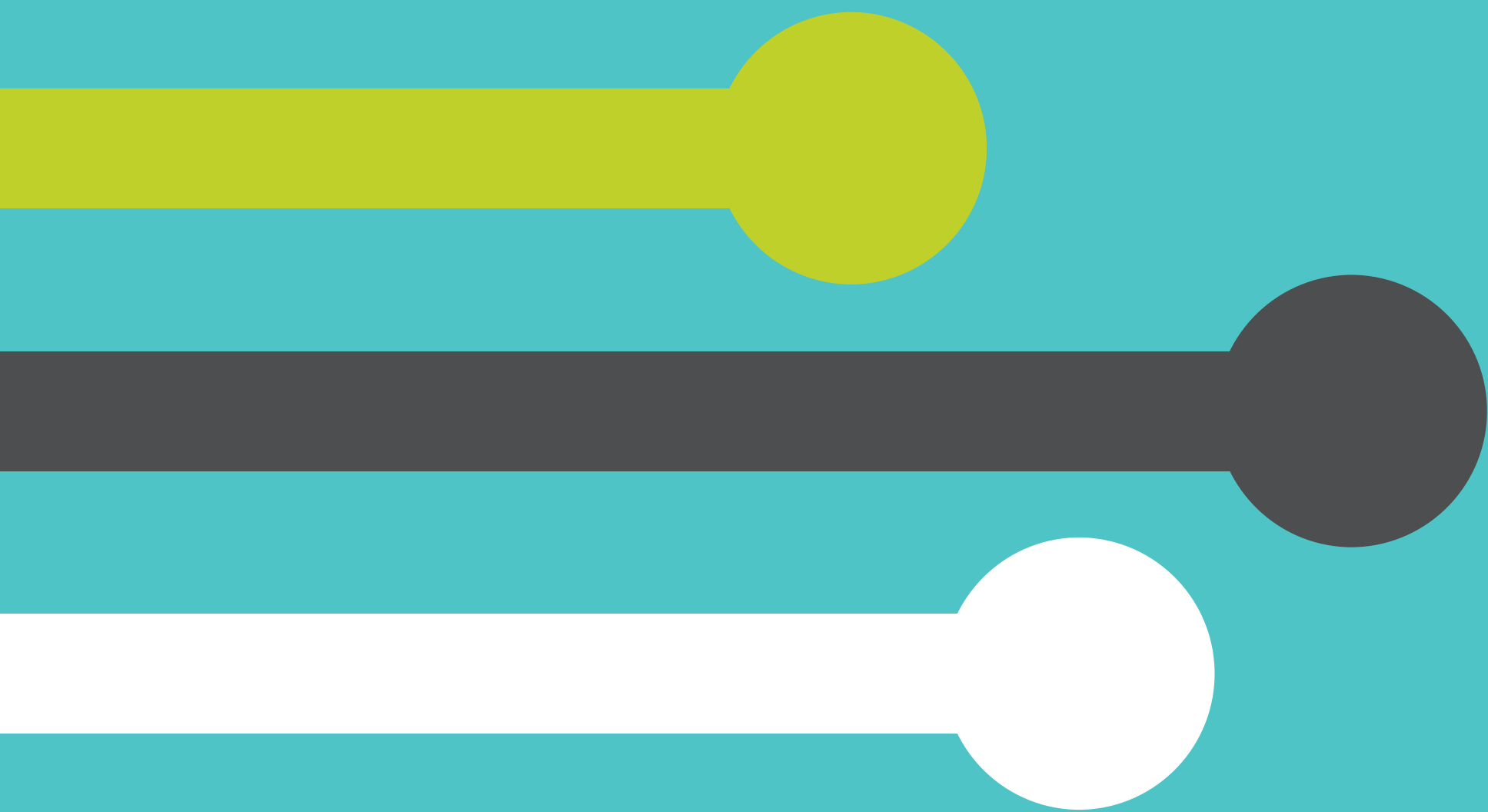
"I trust that the City has an effective plan to address the critical issues facing our city like homelessness, affordability, and public safety."



A majority of Seattle voters agree that taxes are too high for the level of services the city provides. Most voters do not trust the city to spend responsibly, and most do not believe the city has an effective plan to address critical issues.



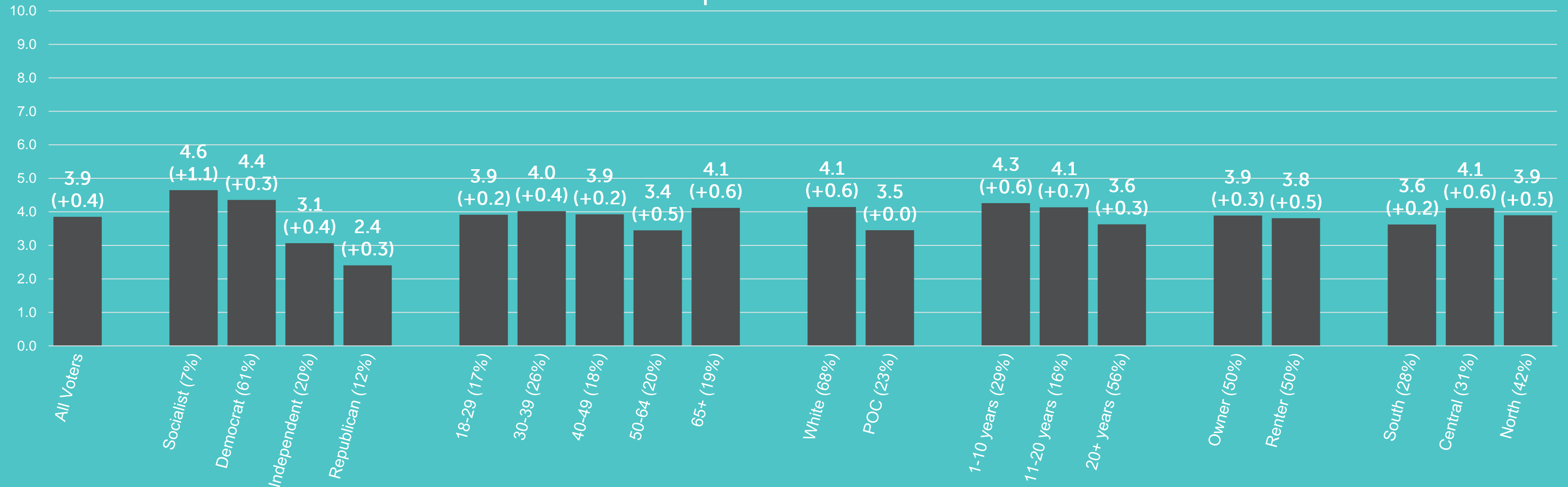
Subgroup Data





Quality of Life - The Index

Quality of Life Index September 2022



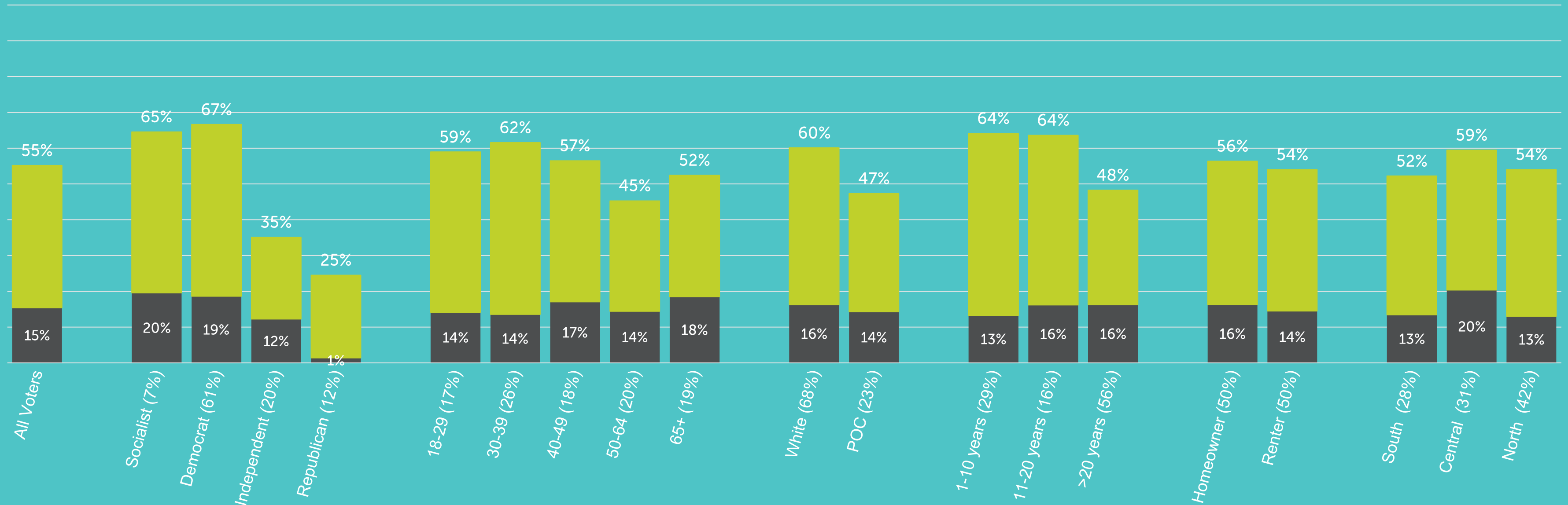
The Quality of Life Index is improved in every subgroup except voters of color. Independents and Republicans continue give the lowest ratings. Socialists are the only subgroup where The Index is close to the midpoint.

Optimism



Optimistic About Future of The Region

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



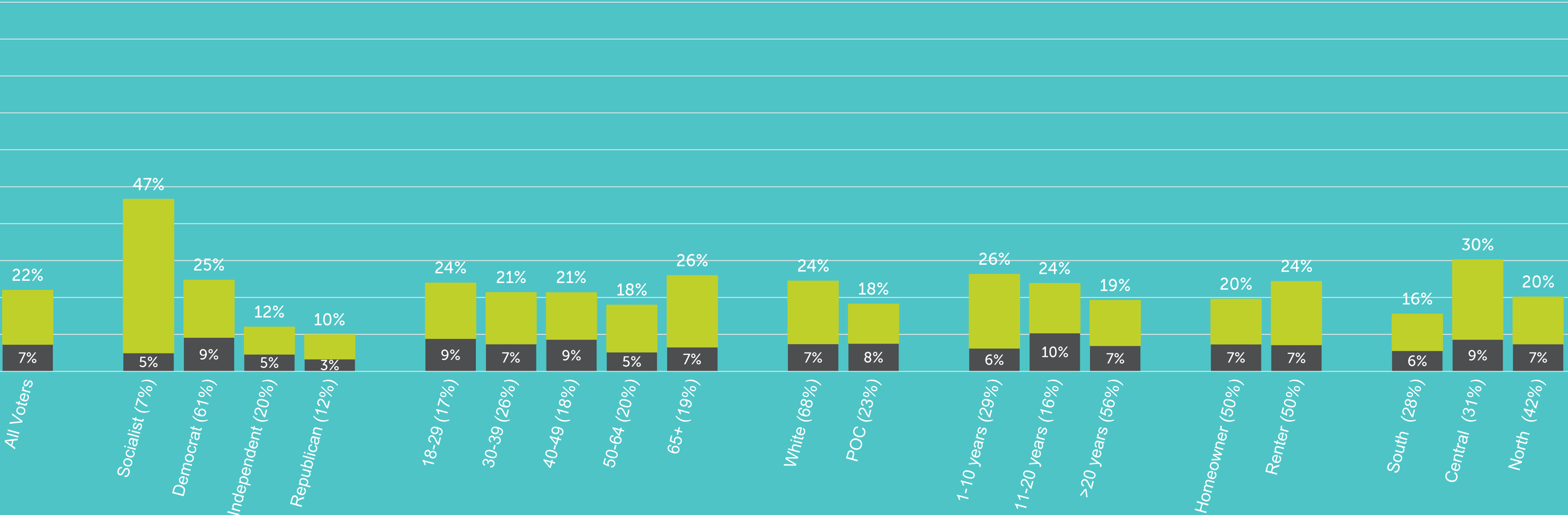
Democrats, Socialists, newer residents, and younger voters are the most optimistic about the future of this region, although intensity ("strongly agree") is low. Republicans and Independents, older voters, long-term residents, and voters of color are the least optimistic about the future.



Quality of Life

Quality of Life Compared to 4 Years Ago

■ Better ■ Same

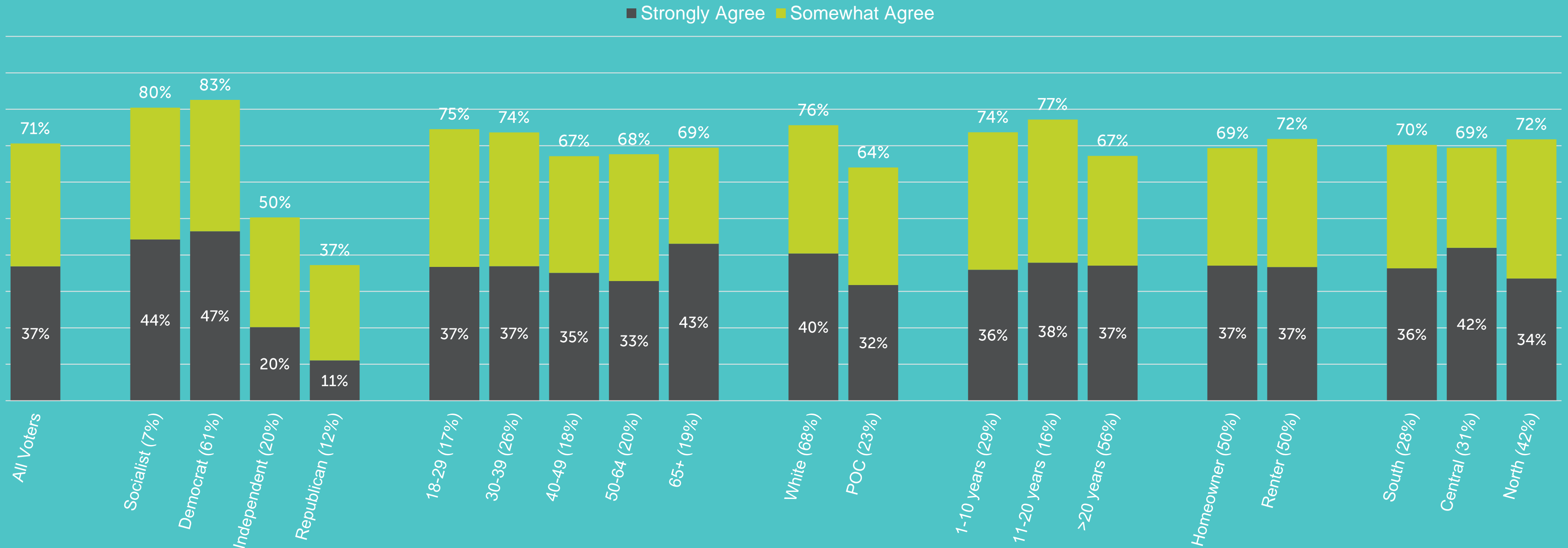


A majority of each group believes quality of life in Seattle is worse compared to four years ago. Socialists are the most likely to say quality of life is better, while Republicans and Independents are the least likely to say quality of life is better.



Proud to Call Myself a Seattleite

Proud to Call Myself a Seattleite



In every group, except Republicans and Independents, a supermajority say they are proud to call themselves a Seattleite.



Top Concerns - Homelessness

"What are the issues facing Seattle that you are most frustrated or concerned about?"
(% Mentioning Homelessness)

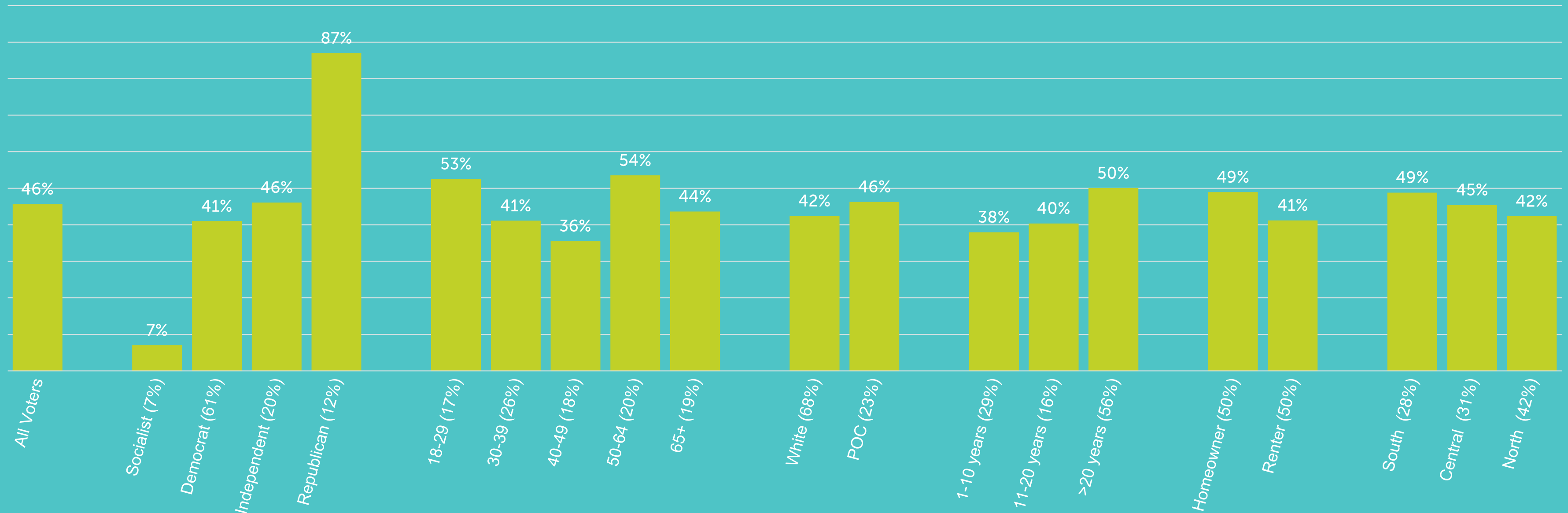


Concern about homelessness-related issues is high across all subgroups.



Top Concerns - Public Safety

"What are the issues facing Seattle that you are most frustrated or concerned about?"
(% Mentioning Crime, Drugs, or Public Safety)



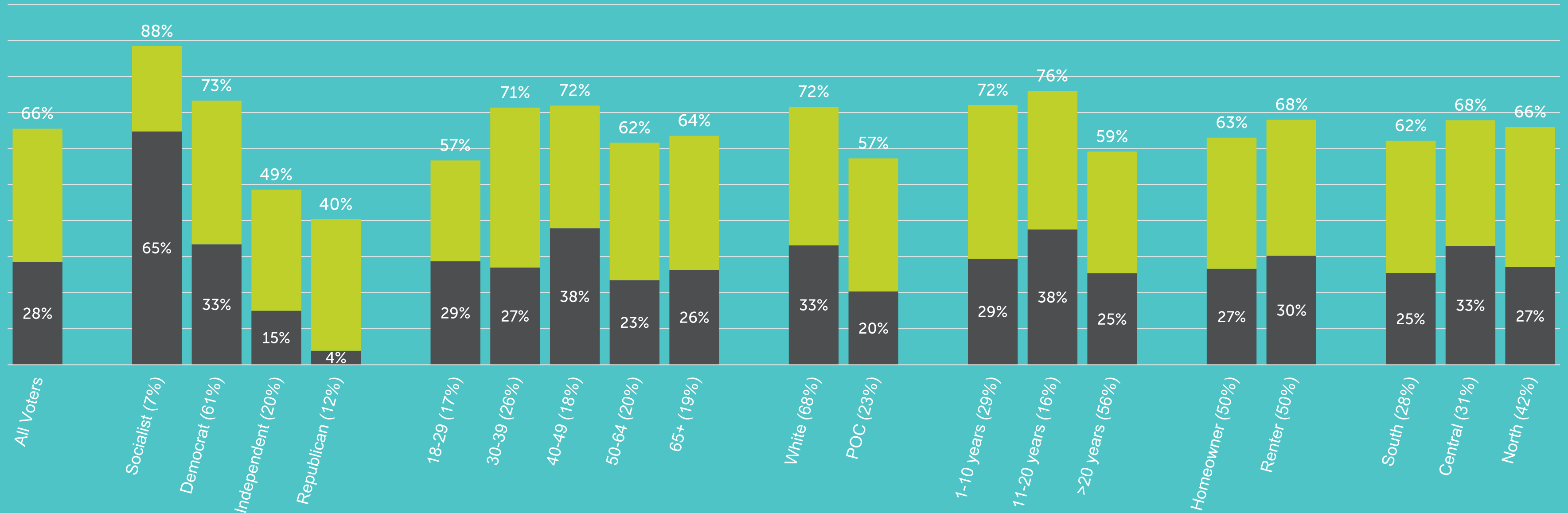
Socialists and Republicans are outliers on public safety, with Republicans being overwhelmingly concerned and Socialists being largely unconcerned.



Safety Downtown: Daytime

Would Feel Safe Visiting Downtown During the Day

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



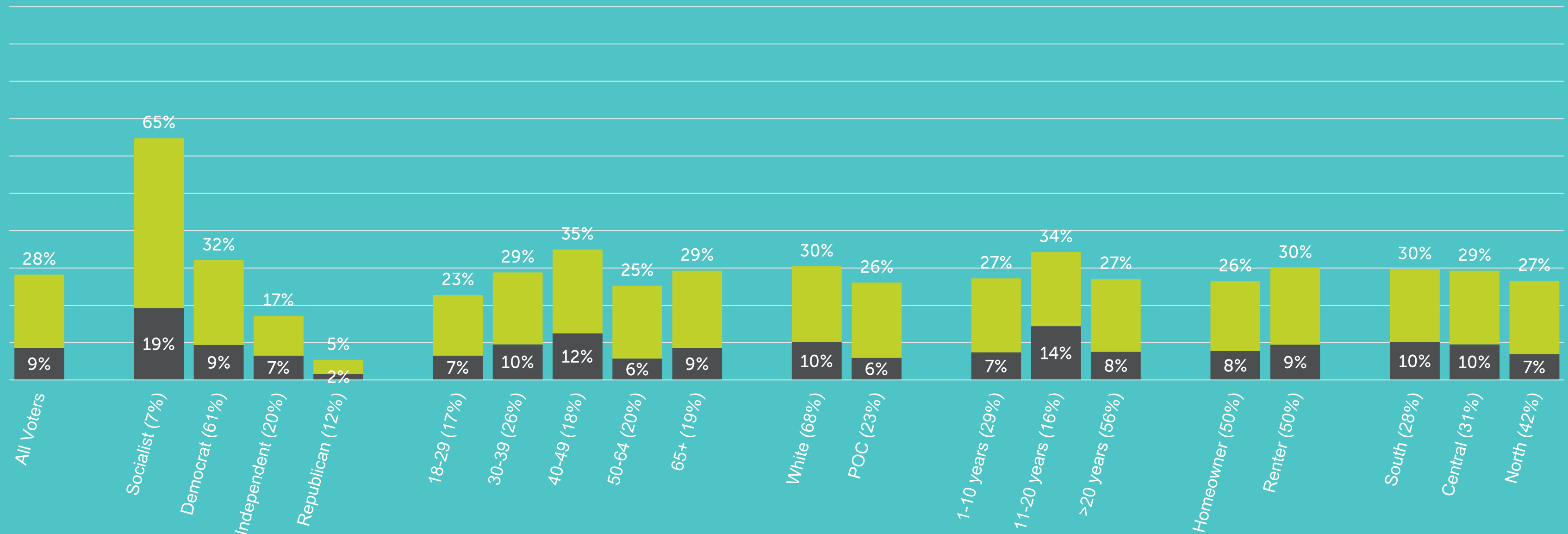
Half or more in all subgroups, except Republicans, say they would feel safe visiting Downtown during the day. Most Socialists agree that they would feel safe. Voters of color are much less likely to say they would feel safe than white voters and Republicans are the least likely to say they would feel safe.



Safety Downtown: Nighttime

Would Feel Safe Visiting Downtown at Night

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



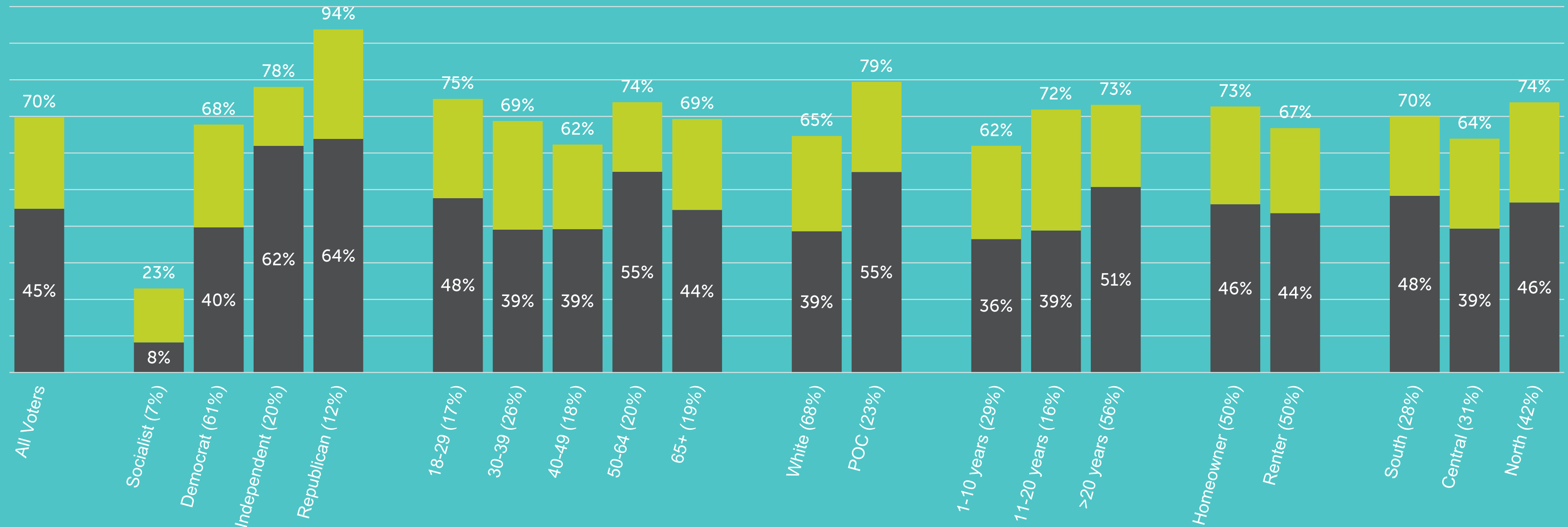
With the exception of Socialists, very few voters in any subgroup agree that they would feel safe visiting Downtown at night, and very few strongly agree that they would feel safe. Republicans are the least likely to say they would feel safe.



Safety in Own Neighborhood

Feel Less Safe in Own Neighborhood

■ Much Less Safe ■ Somewhat Less Safe

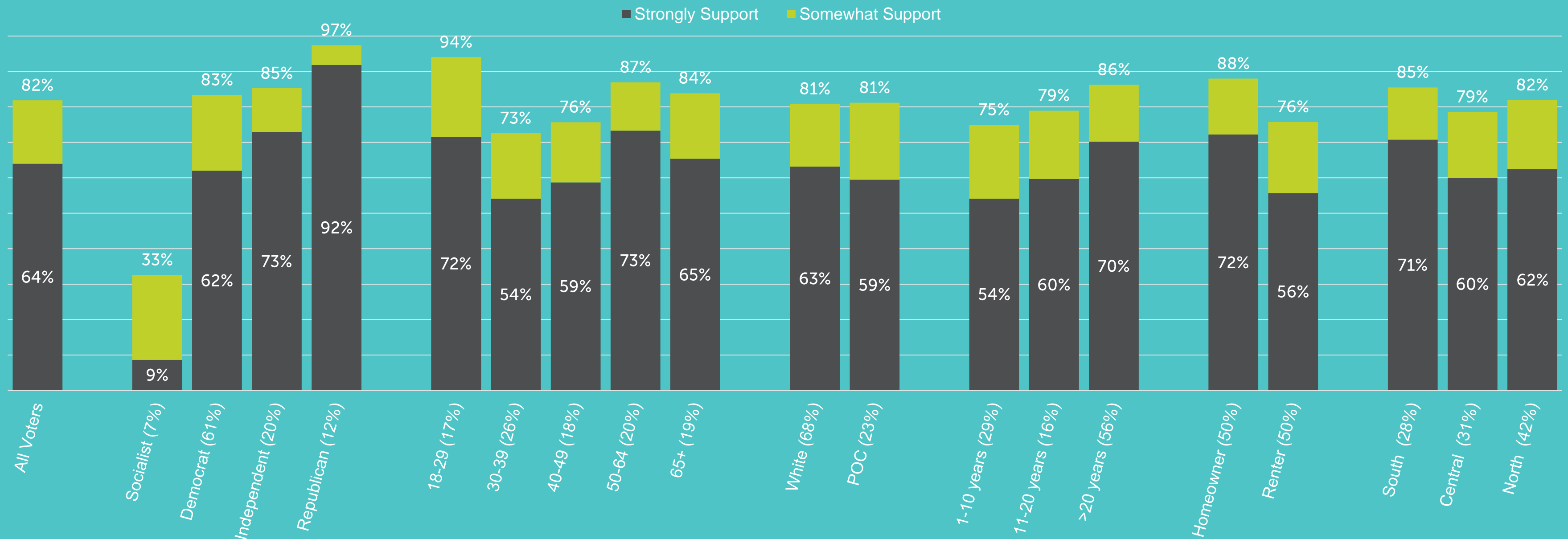


Six-in-10 or more in every subgroup, except Socialists, say they feel less safe in their own neighborhoods than they did two years ago, and many say they feel much less safe.



Continue Closing Homelessness Encampments

Continue Closing Homelessness Encampments Once Offered Shelter



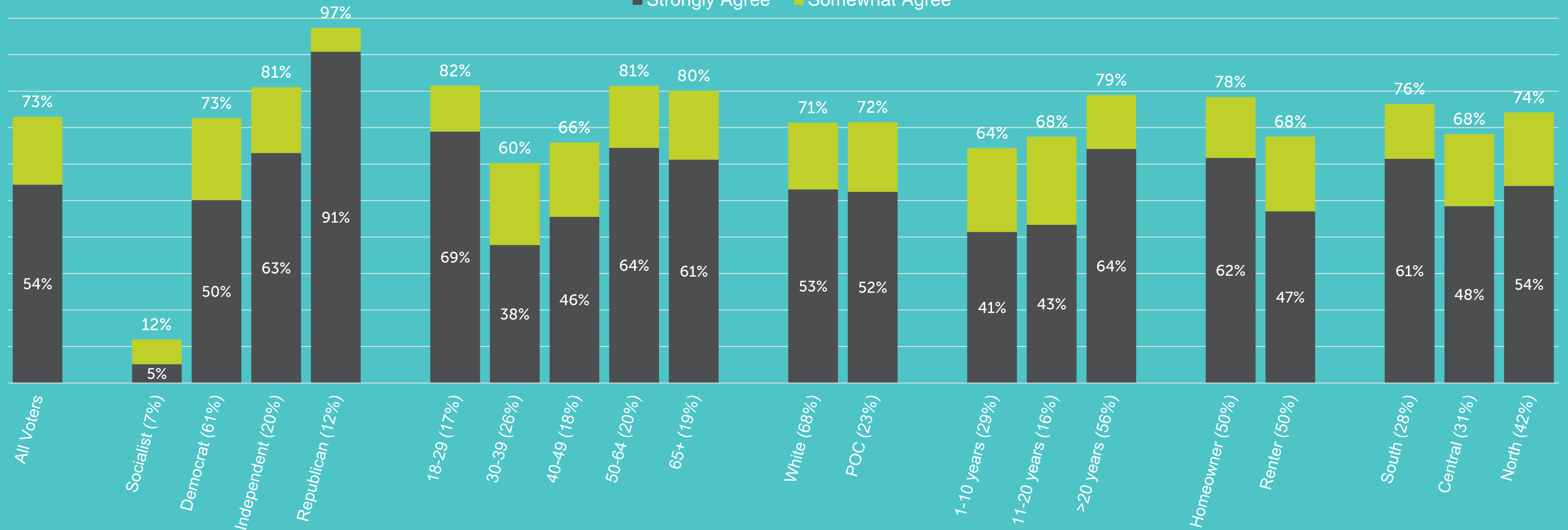
With the exception of Socialists, voters in every subgroup overwhelmingly support closing encampments once people have been offered shelter.



Prioritizing Hiring More Police Officers

Prioritizing Hiring More Police Officers

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



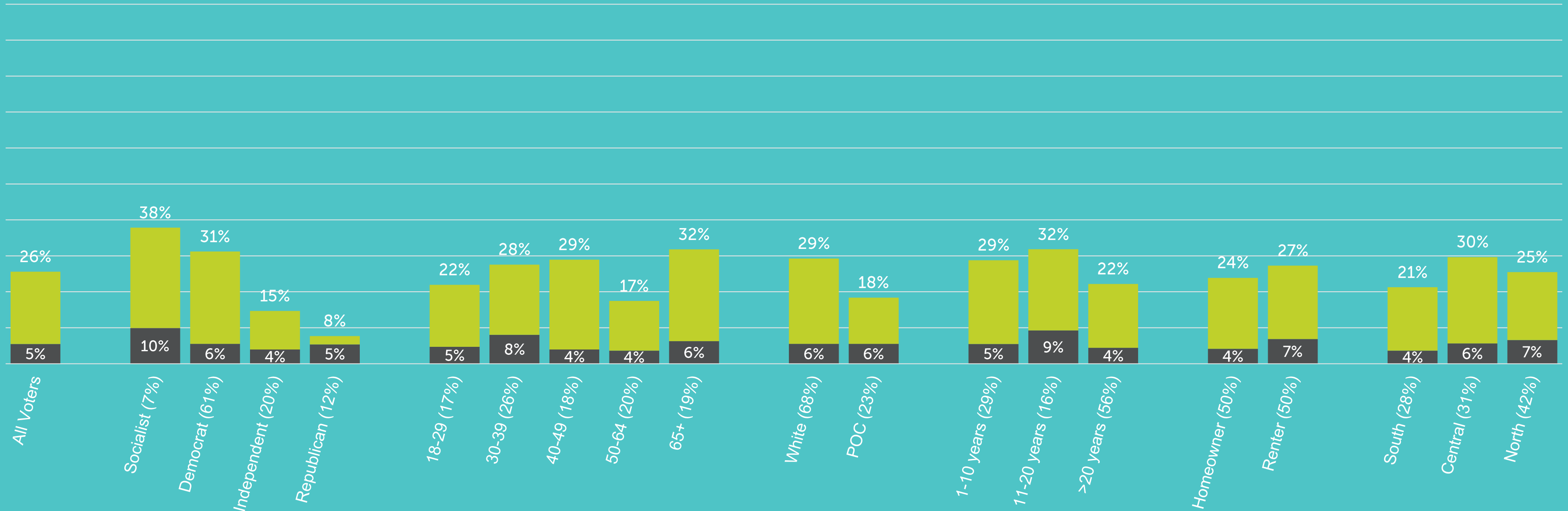
With the exception of Socialists, voters in every subgroup overwhelmingly agree that hiring more police officers should be an immediate priority.



Trust City Council to Reform Seattle Police Department

Trust City Council to Reform SPD without Endangering Public Safety

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree

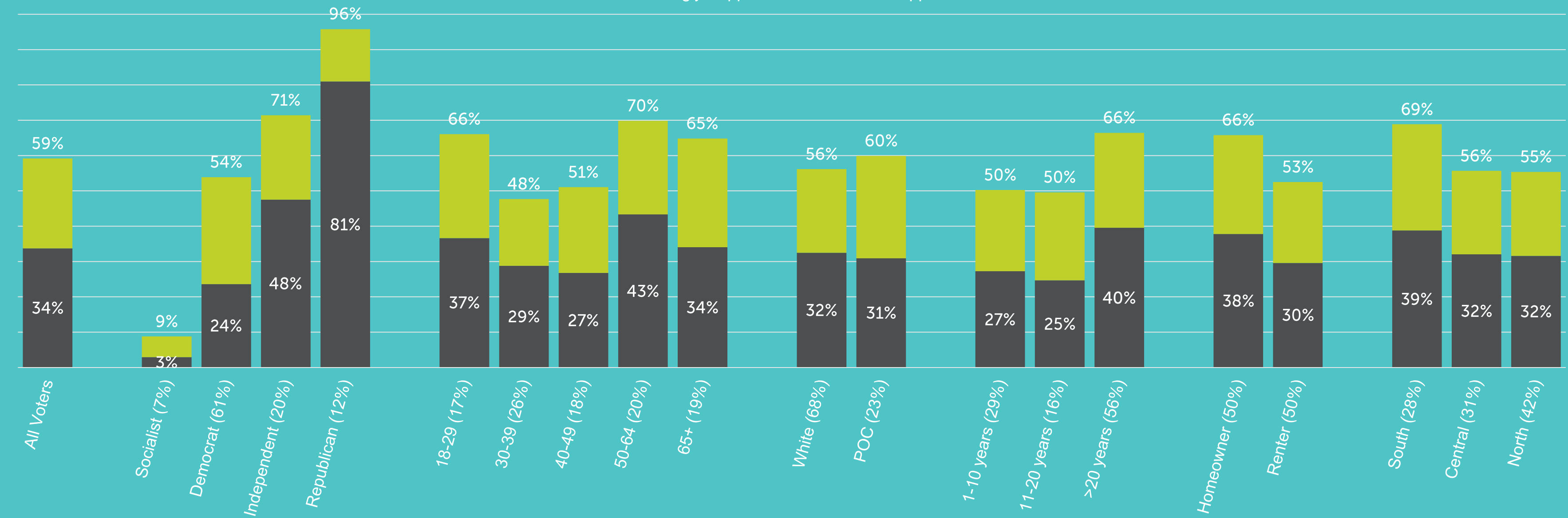


Very few voters trust that the City Council can reform the Seattle Police Department without endangering public safety.

Prioritize Funding For Seattle Police Officers

Prioritize Funding for Hiring Officers Even if it Leads to Other Cuts in Critical Services

Strongly Support Somewhat Support



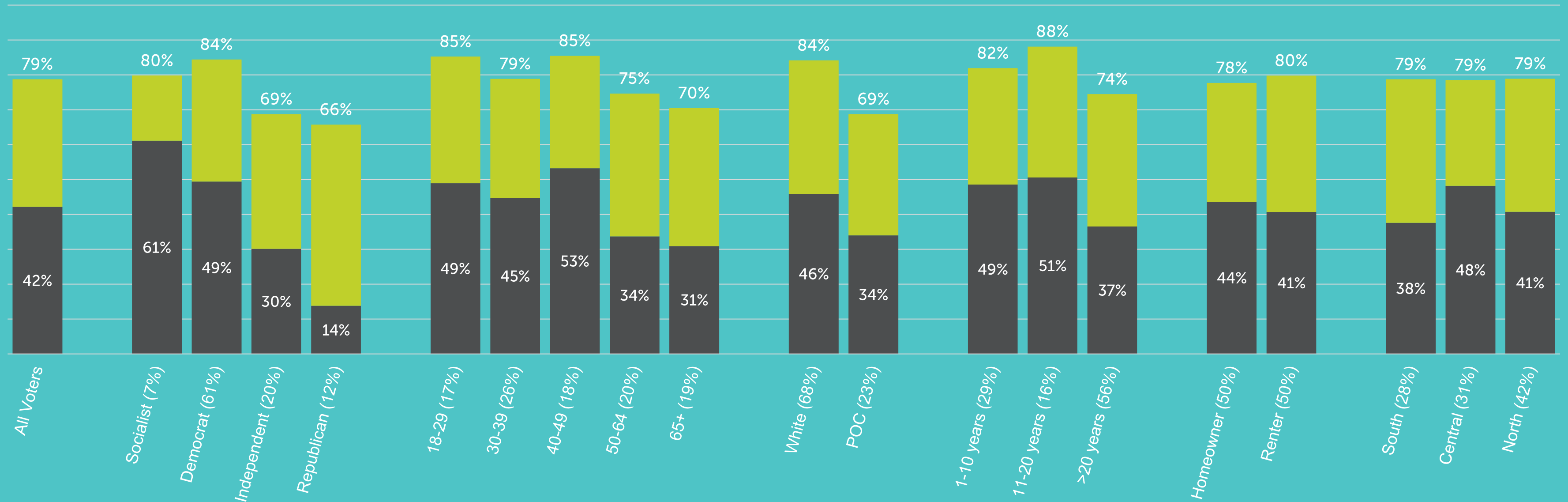
A majority of voters in most subgroups support prioritizing the hiring officers even if it leads to cuts in critical services. Only Socialists are clearly opposed.



Housing in Transit & Commercial Areas

Support Policies to Make it Easier to Build in Transit & Commercial Areas

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



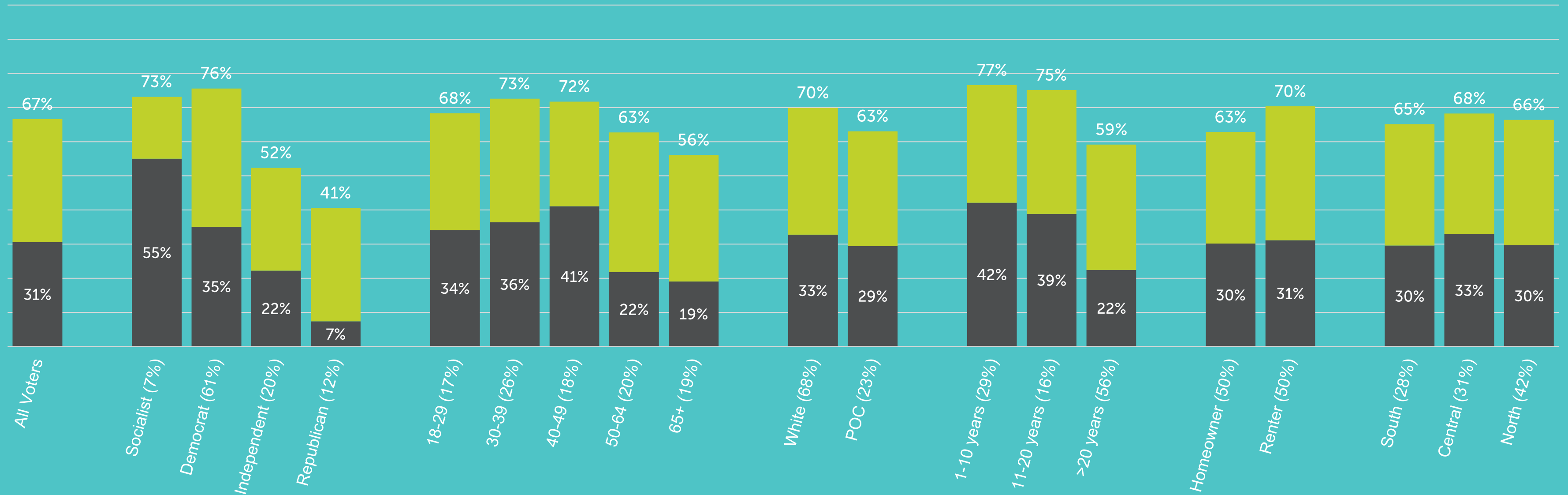
A strong majority of voters in every subgroup support making it easier to build housing in transit and commercial areas.



New Housing in Your Neighborhood

Support New Housing in Your Neighborhood

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



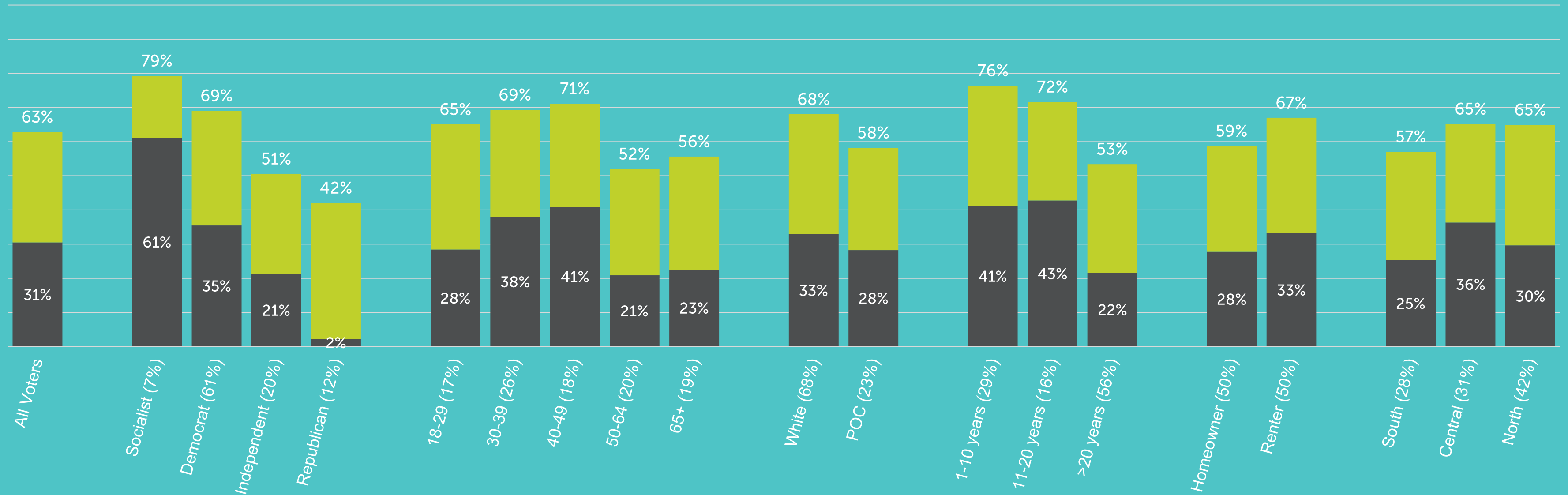
A majority of voters in every subgroup, except Republicans, support new housing in their neighborhood.



Increased Density in SFH Zones

Support Regulations to Allow More Density in SFH Zones

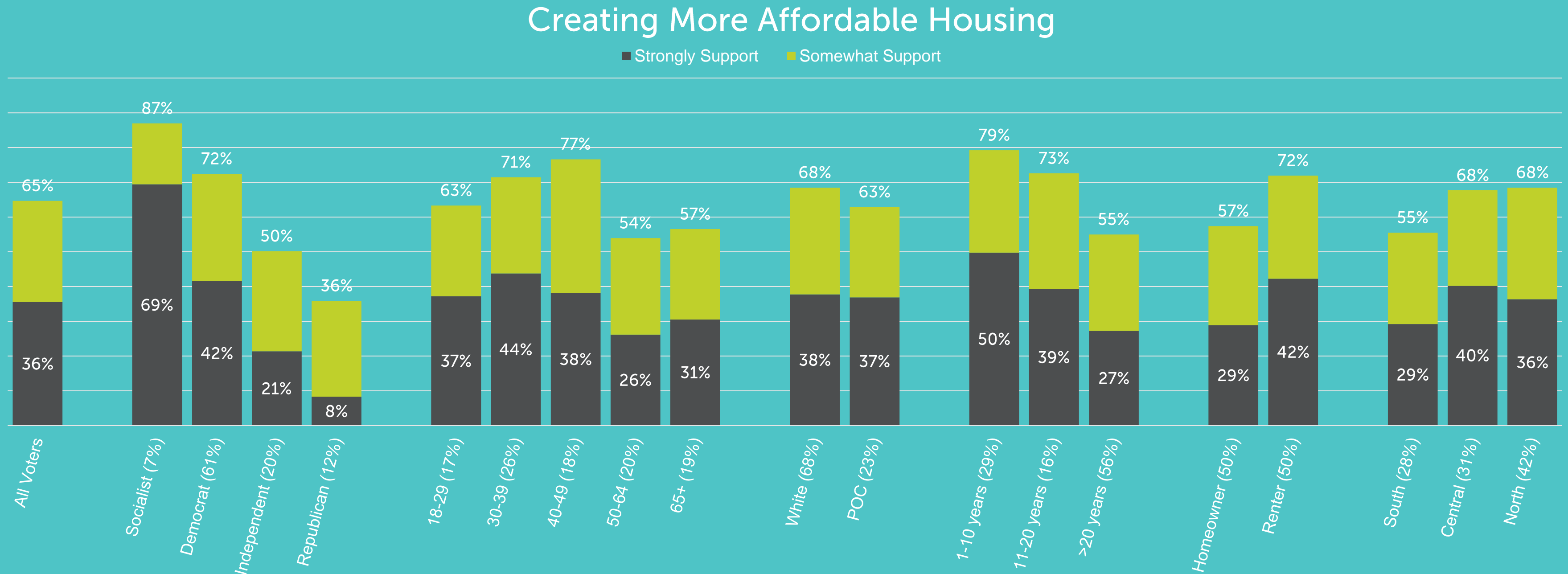
■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



A majority of voters in every subgroup, except Republicans, support allowing more density in single-family housing zones.



Creating More Affordable Housing

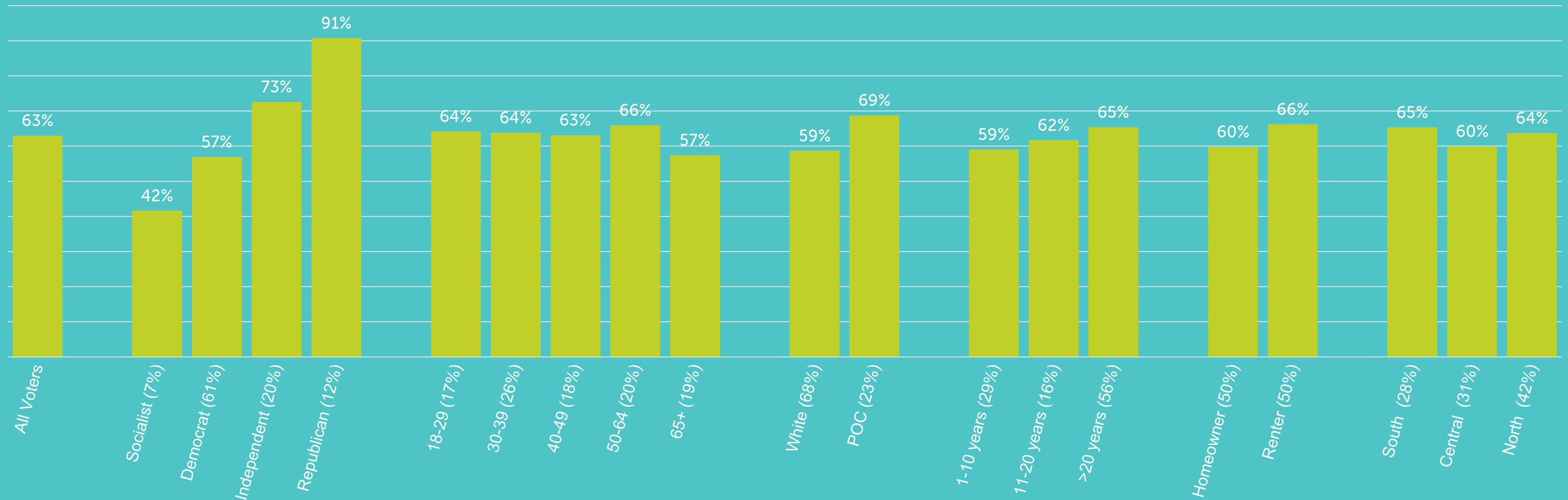


A majority of voters in every subgroup, except Republicans, support zoning and permitting changes to allow for more density across the city.



Actively Considered Moving

Actively Considered Moving

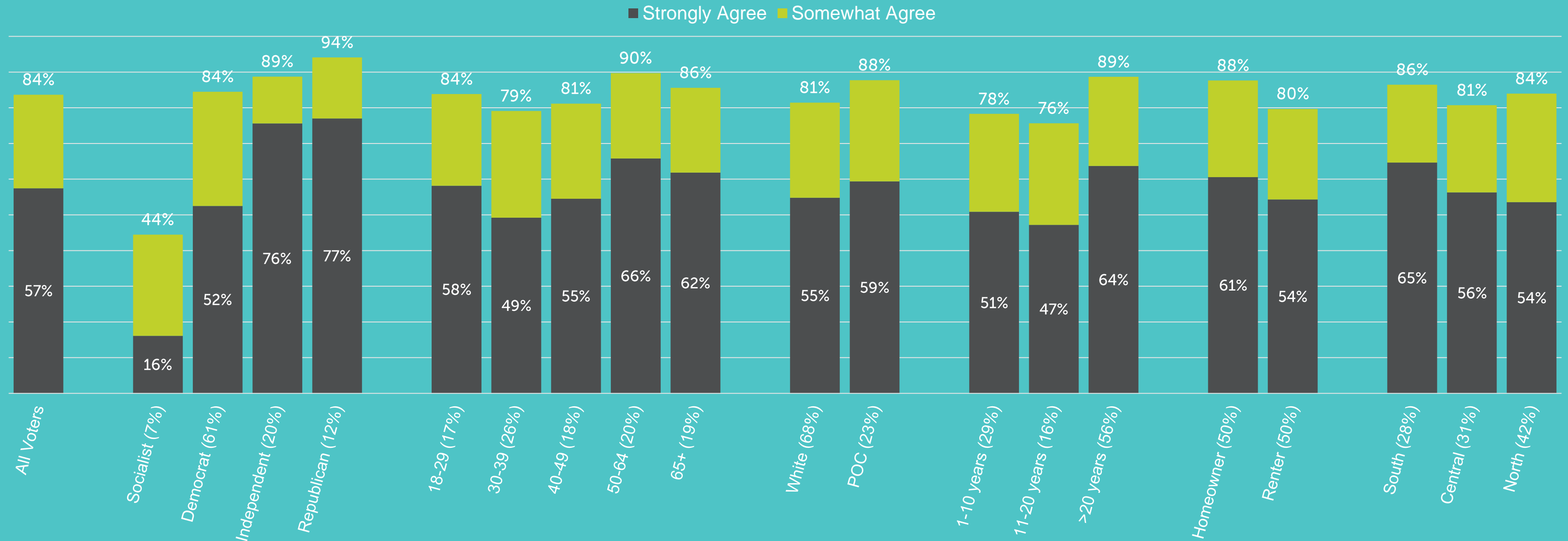


Republicans and Independents are the most likely to have considered moving, although even among Democrats, a majority have considered leaving the city.



Worried About Downtown

Worried About Downtown's Future



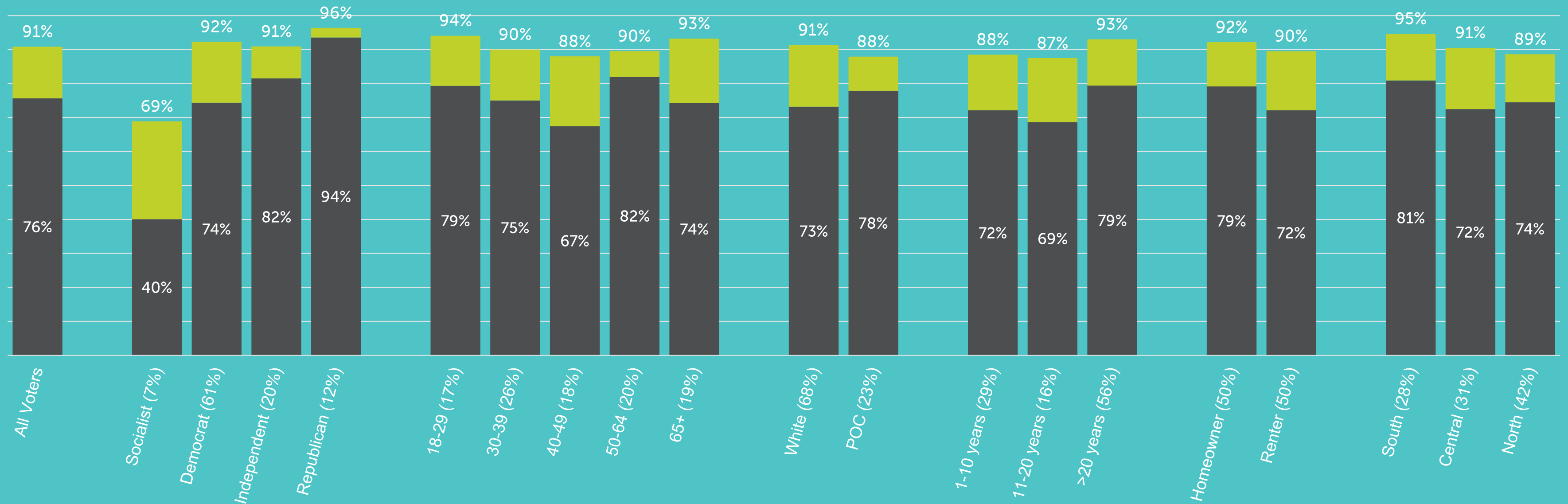
A supermajority of all subgroups – except Socialists - are worried about Downtown's future.



Downtown & Economic Recovery

Downtown Cannot Fully Recover Until Homelessness & Public Safety Addressed

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



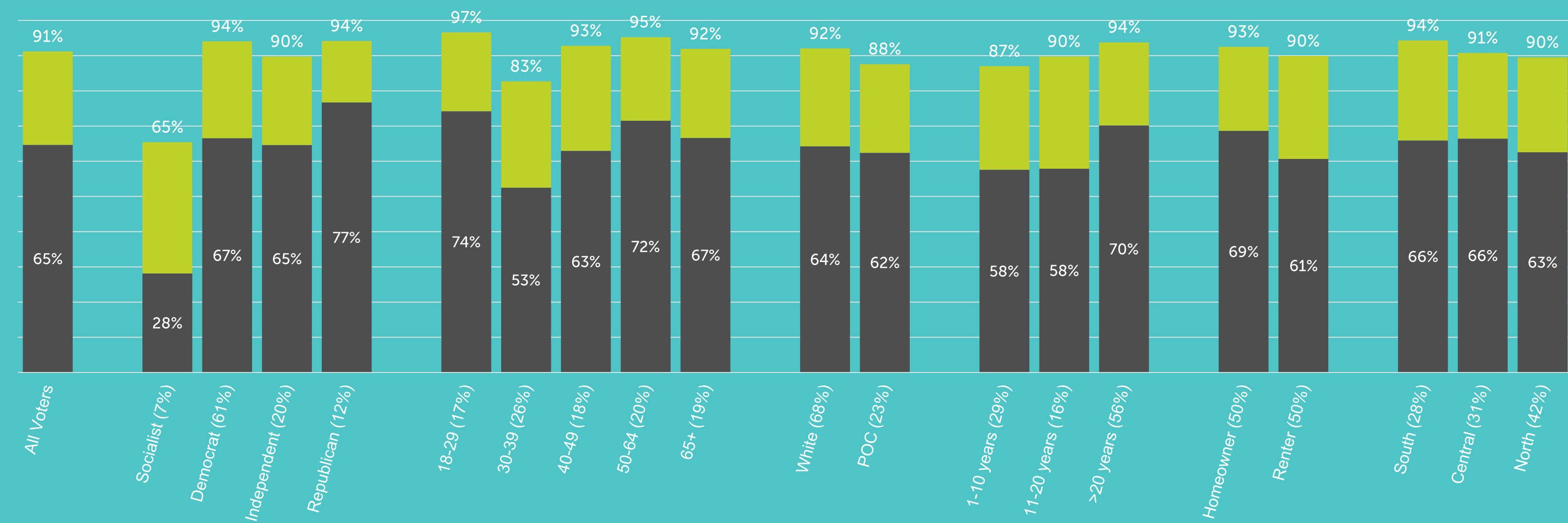
Voters feel strongly about the need to address homelessness and public safety concerns in Downtown Seattle, with over two-thirds in most groups strongly agreeing that these problems need to be addressed.



Downtown Role in Regional Recovery

A Thriving Downtown Seattle is Critical to our Region's Economic Recovery

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree



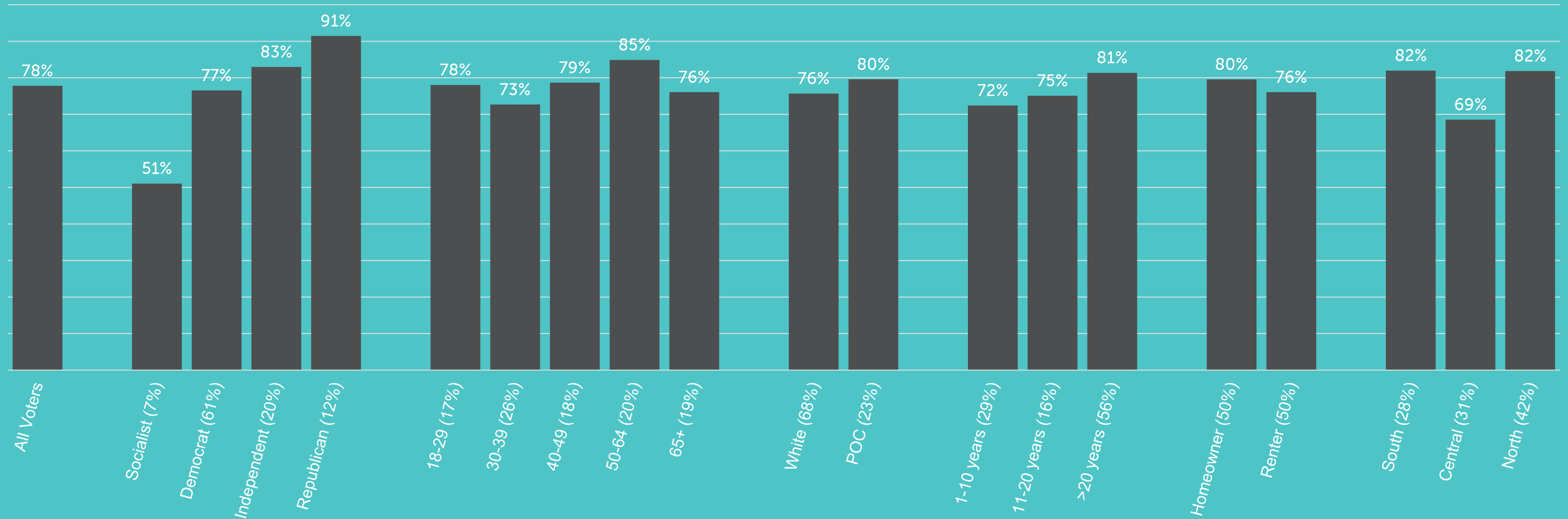
Voters in all subgroups agree that a thriving Downtown is critical to the region's economic recovery. Strong majorities in every subgroup except Socialists agree on the importance of Downtown to the region.



Visiting Downtown

Visiting Downtown for Non-Work Activities

■ Visit Less Often



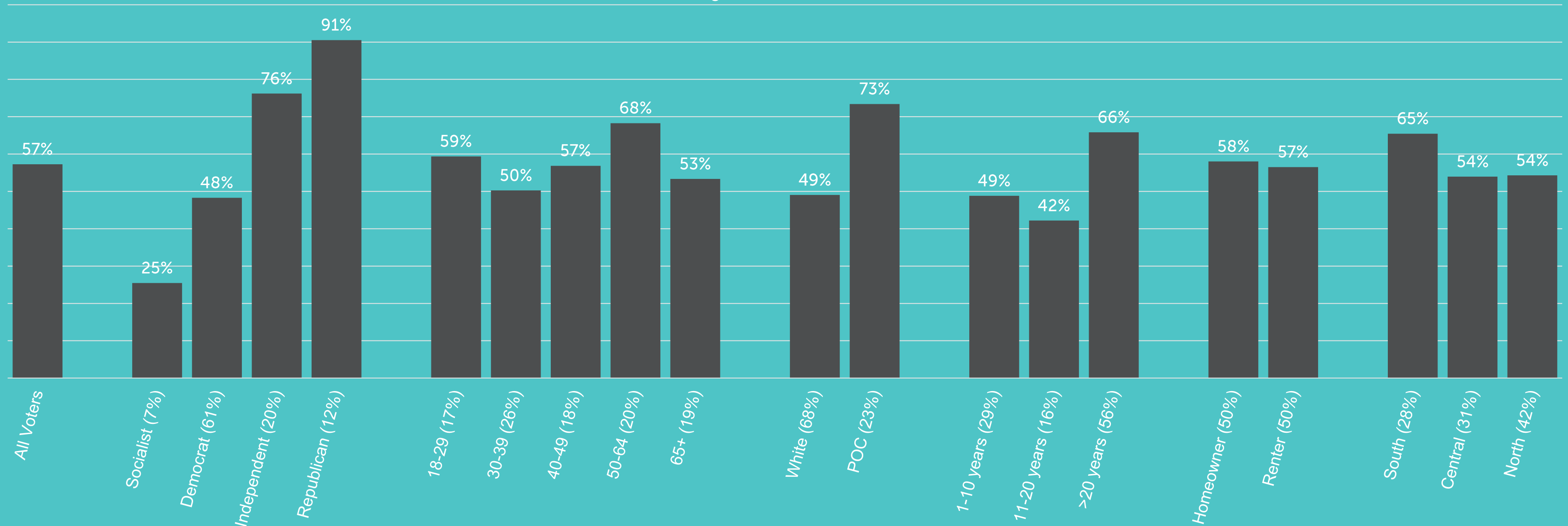
Every group is overwhelmingly visiting Downtown less often than before the pandemic.



Taxes in Seattle

Taxes in Seattle

■ Too High for Service Level



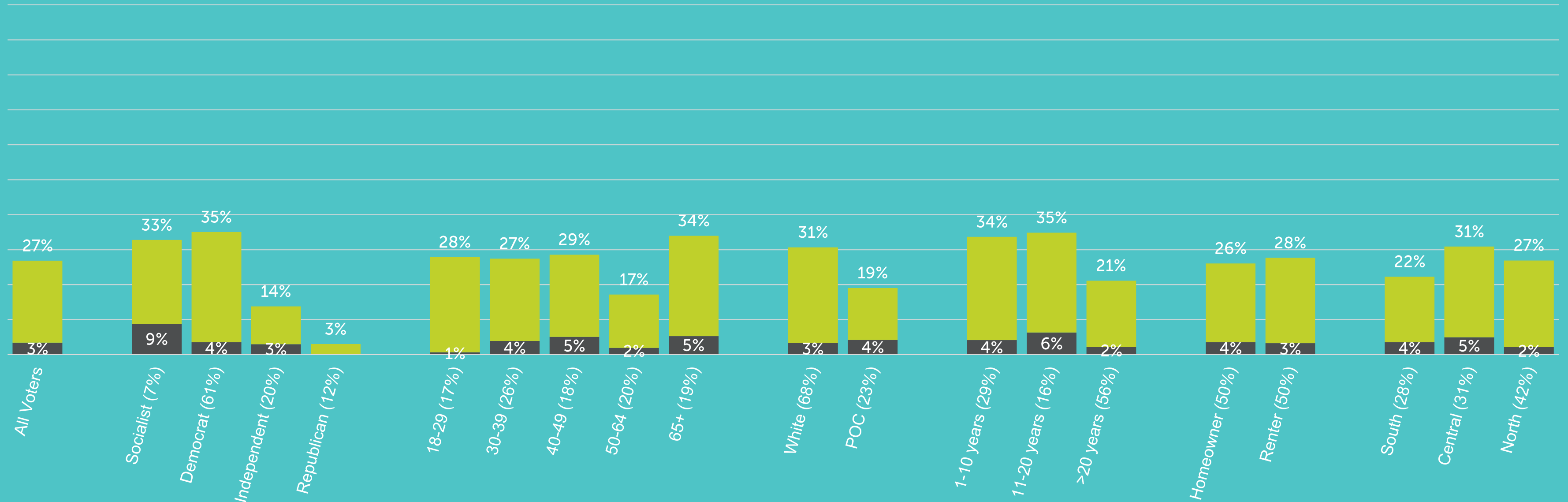
Republicans, Independents, and voters of color are most likely to agree that taxes are too high for the level of services the city provides. Democrats, Socialists, and those who have been in Seattle between 11 and 20 years are least likely to agree that taxes are too high.



Trust on Spending

Trust City on Spending

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



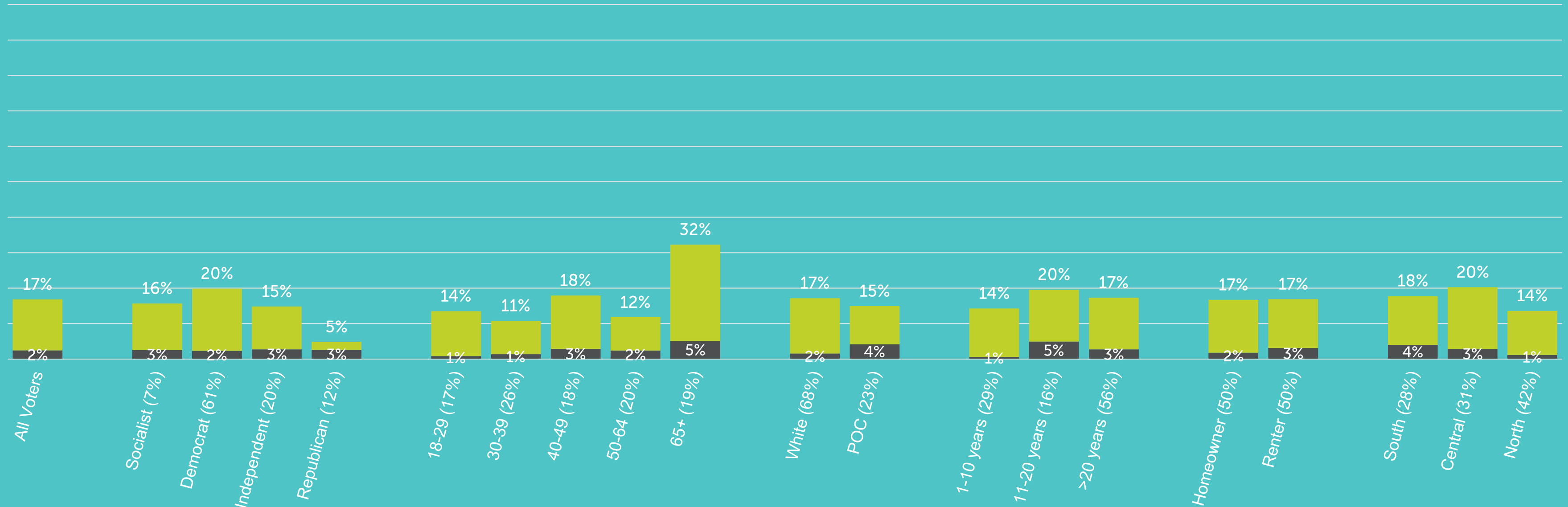
Voters in every subgroup overwhelmingly do not trust the city to spend tax dollars responsibly.



Trust The City Has An Effective Plan

Trust that the City has an effective plan to address the critical issues facing our city

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



Two-thirds or more in every subgroup do not trust that the city has a plan to address critical issues.