



Welcome to the Special Meeting of the Elk Grove Charter Commission

March 24, 2009

Presented by

Elk Grove Charter Commission Chair Jake Allen

Topics to be covered

- Charter Law City vs. General Law City
- Directly Elected Mayor vs. Selected Mayor
- Council Districts and Redistricting
- By and From Districts
- Campaign Finance Reform
- Public Works Projects



Charter Law vs. General Law

- **Form of Government**
 - General law the state provides explicit rules on a five person council, a city clerk, a city treasurer, a police and fire chief and subordinate officers
 - Charter law allows citizens to define their council and the city officers.
- **Elections**
 - General law cities are bound by the elections codes
 - Charter law cities can determine when, where and how their elections will be held.



Charter Law vs. General Law cont...

- City Council member qualifications
 - General law has a specific set of threshold requirements for becoming a city council member
 - Charter law cities define the qualifications of the elected officials
- Public Funds for Candidates in Municipal Elections
 - General law cities have no ability to fund campaigns
 - Charter law cities determine their own rules for allowing public financing of candidates



Charter Law vs. General Law cont...

- Council member compensation
 - General law determines compensation based on population.
 - Charter law allows city to determine compensation, e.g. A citizens advisory board on council compensation
 - Both require 2 hours of ethics training if council members receive any compensation
- Legislative Authority
 - Specific guidelines on when, how and where ordinances can be passed
 - Allows city to determine rules on passage of ordinances



Charter law vs. General law

cont...

- Contracting services
 - General law cities are allowed to enter into contracts for necessity purposes
 - Charter law cities have full authority to contract consistent with the charter
- Public contracts
 - General law cities have the authority to enter “no bid” contracts up to \$5,000.
 - Charter law cities determine the amount of no bid contracts as long as the contract pertains to a municipal affair



Charter law vs. General law cont...

- Financing and taxation
 - Both General law and Charter law cities are subject to Proposition 218
 - General law cities can tax businesses for the purpose of regulation or revenue
 - Charter law cities can tax businesses for any purpose
 - General law cities can use a series of special assessment districts determined by the state
 - Charter law cities can utilize either general assessments or special assessments



General law vs. Charter law Financing and Taxation cont...

- General law cities may not impose a real property transfer tax
- Charter law cities can impose a real property transfer tax
- In general charter law cities have a broader authority to tax unless limited by the charter, state or federal law



Mayor

- Directly elected mayor vs. a selected mayor
 - Directly elected mayor would be elected by the citizens of Elk Grove
 - The Mayor could serve up to four years as the mayor
 - Currently, a selected mayor is chosen amongst the current council members to serve for one year
 - General law allows for the mayor to serve as a head of the city council, to be a voting member, and to serve as a “Head of State” for the city at various functions
 - Charter law could allow for the mayor to take on more than ceremonial roles



Strong Mayor vs. City Manager

- General law cities utilize a City Manager form of government
 - The day to day operations are installed in a hired professional City Manager
 - General law cities allow City Managers to expend up to \$5,000.00 without prior City Council approval
- Charter Law cities can utilize either a City Manager or a Strong Mayor
 - Charter cities with Strong Mayor install the day to day operations in the Mayor.
 - This is usually a full time highly compensated position.



Districts: Voting “By” or “From”

- “By” District voting means that the council members are voted on only by the constituents in their district. They are voted on by district.
- “From” District voting means that each district has a council member that is voted on from the district they represent, but is voted on by all constituents within the city boundaries. The council members are voted on from their district.



Alternatives to district voting

- The Charter Commission has come up with 3 different systems of district voting
 - The first is redistricting to 6 districts with an elected Mayor with “by” district voting
 - The second is redistricting to 6 districts with an elected Mayor with “from” district voting
 - The third is leaving the 5 districts in place and adding an at large elected mayor and an at large elected council member.



Other considerations for districts

- The city will be redistricting after the 2010 census information is released under California State Law.
- The decennial population count forces cities to look at their current districts and then bring them into compliance within a given tolerance according to the Voting Rights Act (VRA)



Campaign Finance Reform

- Under either General Law or Charter Law city campaign finances are controlled largely by either California State laws or by federal laws.
- Under Charter Law, Elk Grove could chose to use public funds to fund political campaigns.
 - If a candidate utilizes public funds, restrictions can be placed on the campaign for a variety of reasons.
 - Charter cities can also limit the amount and source of campaign contributions to candidates



Public Works

- Public Works is restricted in many ways for General Law Cities
 - Most importantly any project over \$5,000 must be approved by the City Council
 - The City is restricted in its bidding process for all levels of Public Works projects.
- A Charter City may determine its own rules for Public Works
 - The minimum amount for a bid can be determined by the citizens
 - The City may utilize agreements with third parties to provide specific City projects



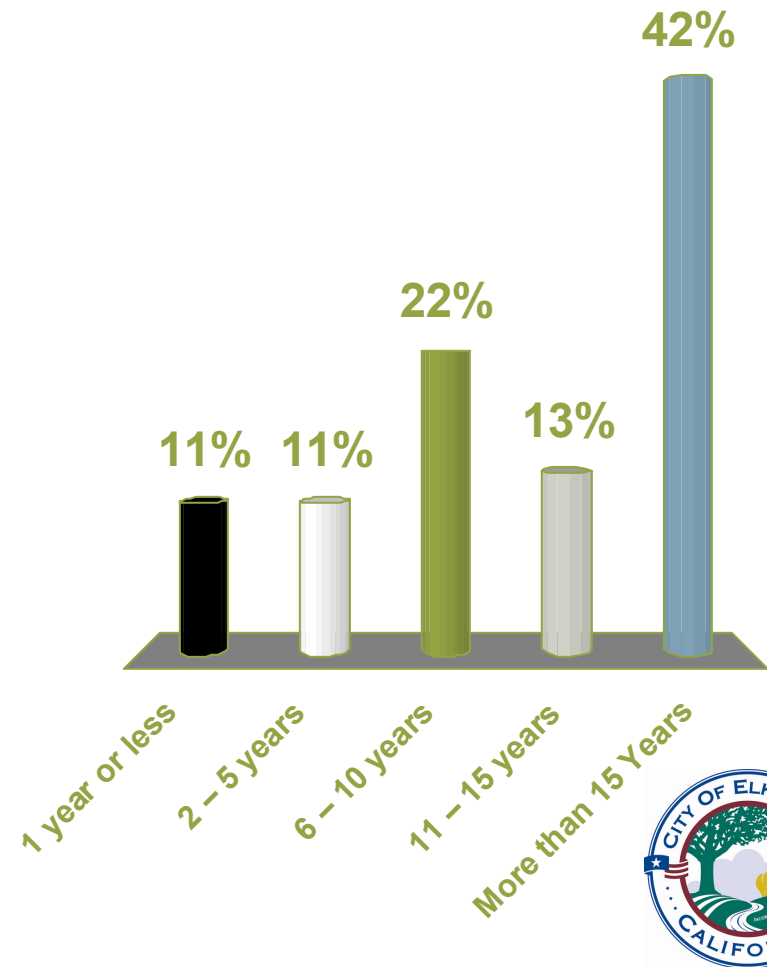
City Charter Live Polling

- Participant Live Polling Exercise:
 - We'll ask a series of questions regarding your interests/priorities
 - You'll vote using response cards
 - We'll show instant results on the collective response in the room



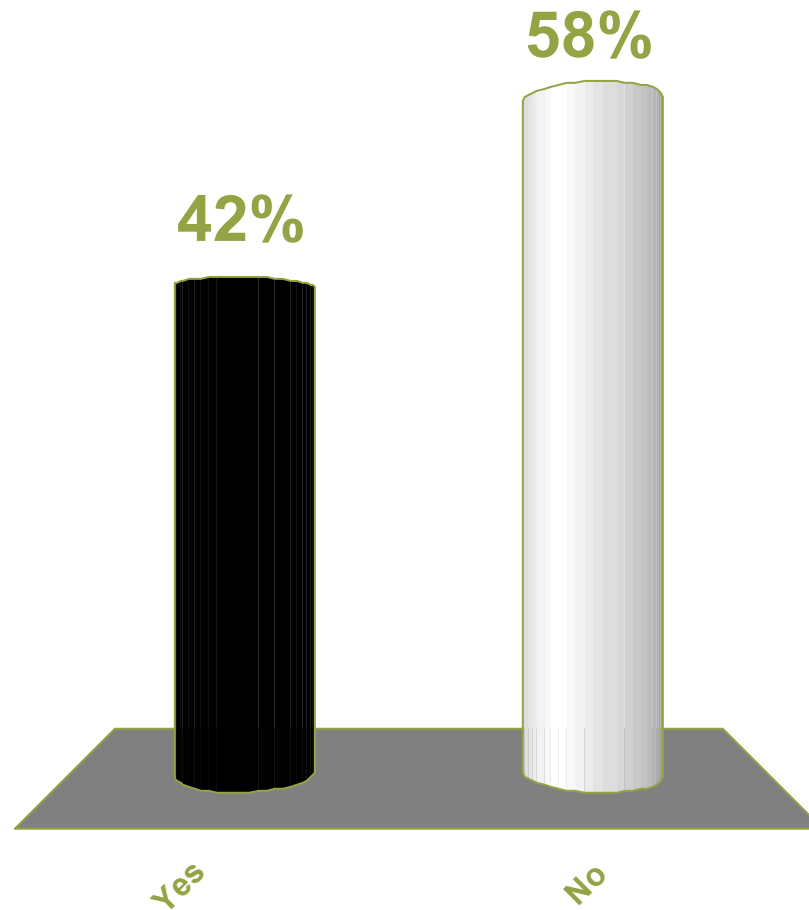
Warm up Question: How long have you lived in Elk Grove?

1. 1 year or less
2. 2 – 5 years
3. 6 – 10 years
4. 11 – 15 years
5. More than 15 Years



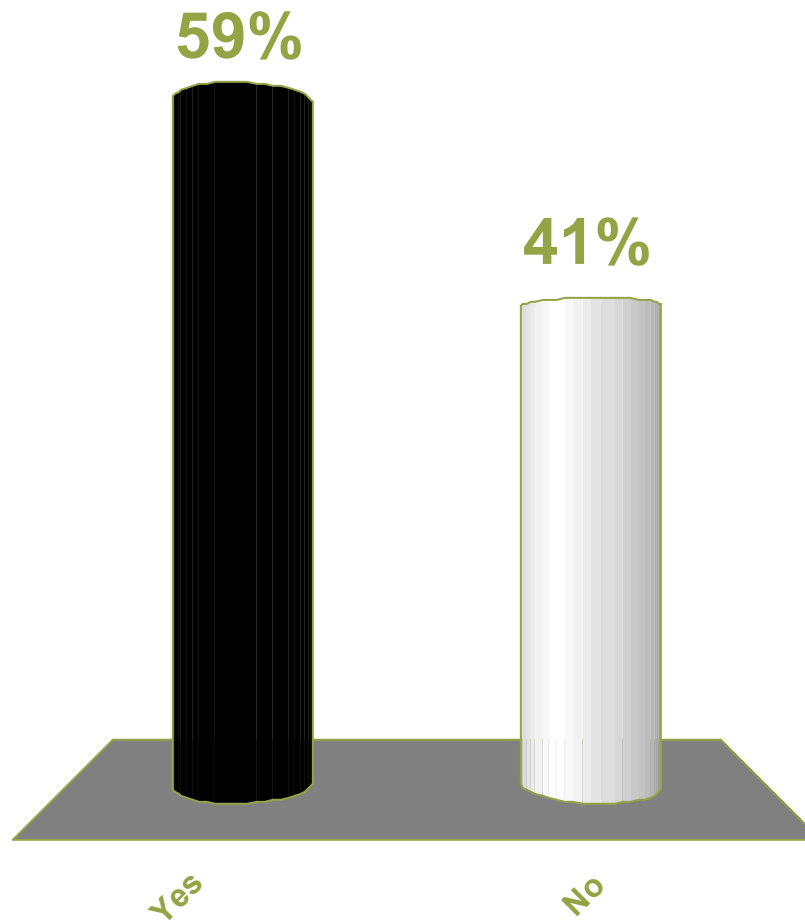
Do you want a charter?

1. Yes
2. No



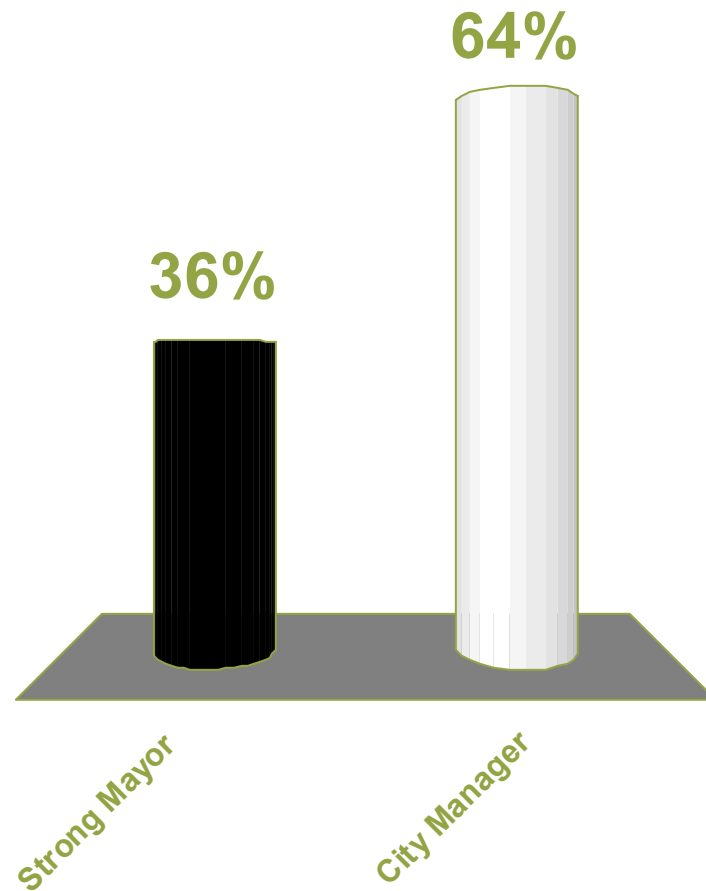
Do you want an elected mayor?

1. Yes
2. No



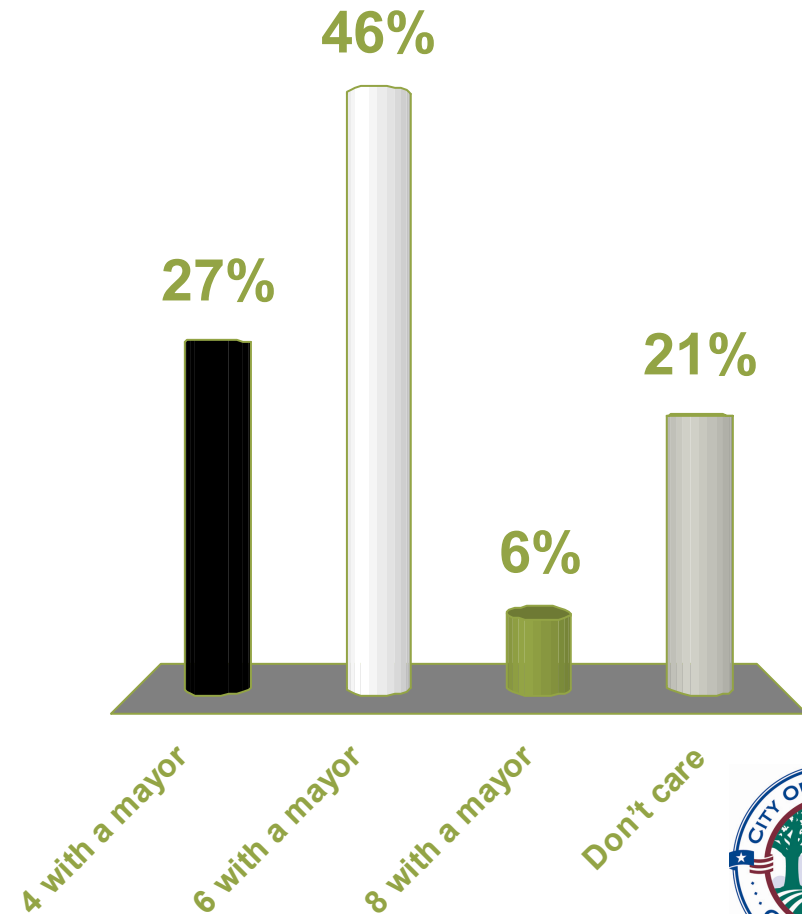
Do you want a Strong Mayor or City Manager form of government

1. Strong Mayor
2. City Manager



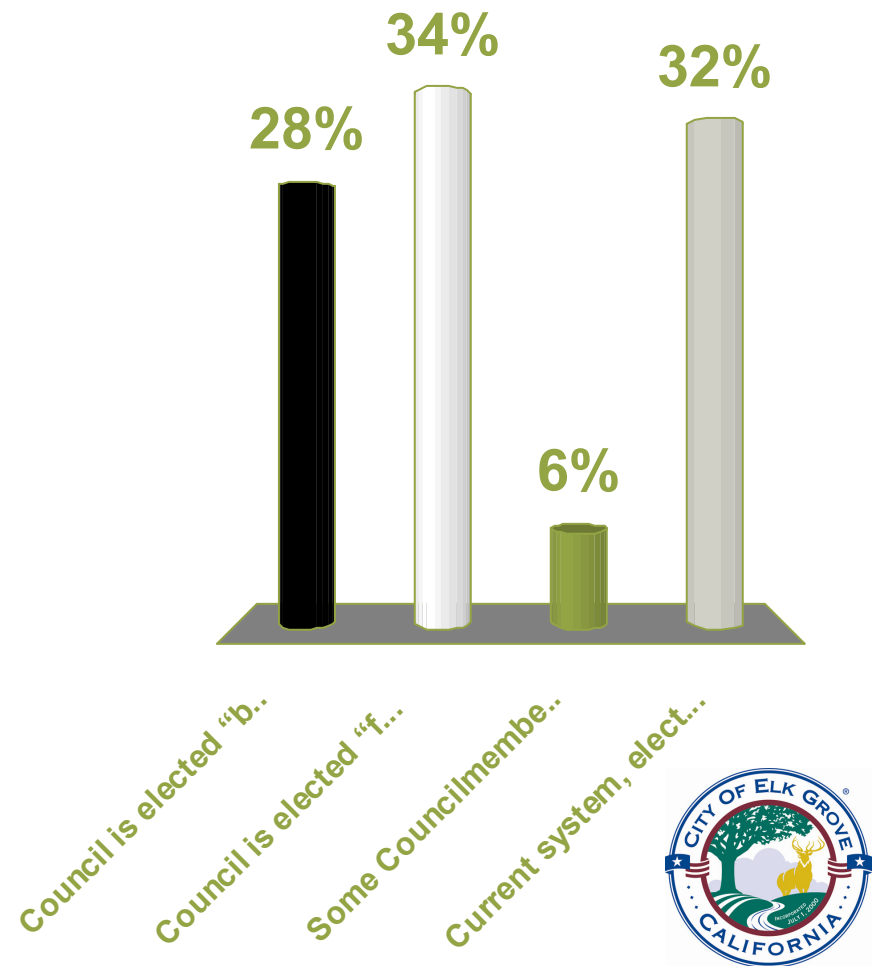
How many Council Districts do you want?

1. 4 with a mayor
2. 6 with a mayor
3. 8 with a mayor
4. Don't care



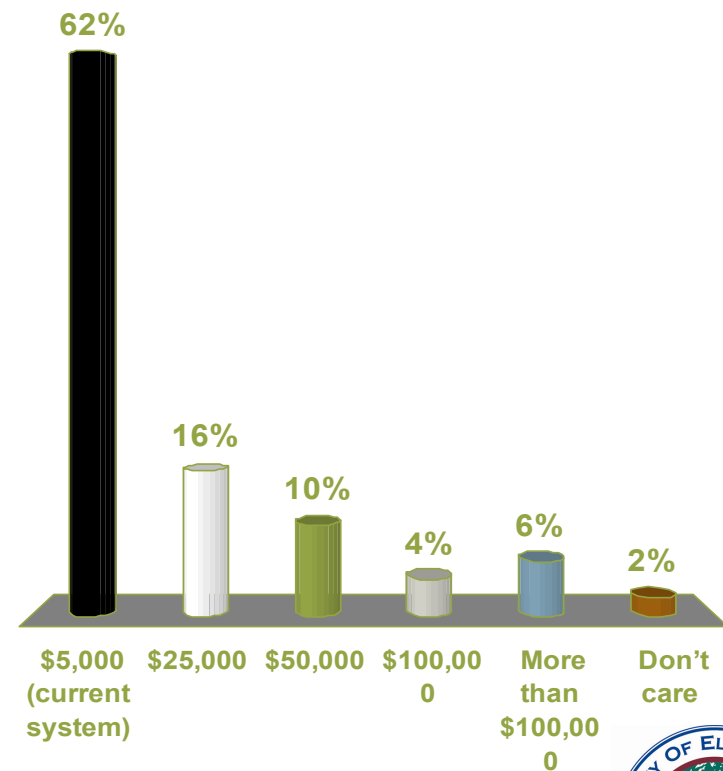
How do you want to elect City Councilmembers

1. Council is elected “by” district and the mayor is elected at large
2. Council is elected “from” district and the mayor is elected at large
3. Some Councilmembers are elected by district and the mayor and one councilmember is elected at large
4. Current system, elect council and the council appoints the mayor



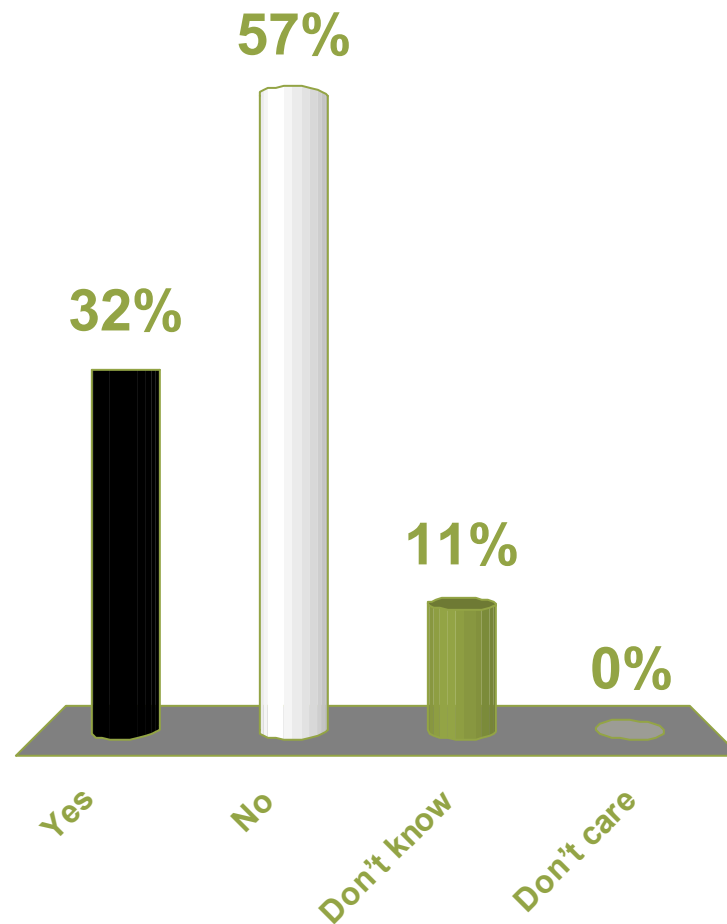
What amount of money should the City be able to spend on public works projects before it needs to advertise for bids?

1. \$5,000 (current system)
2. \$25,000
3. \$50,000
4. \$100,000
5. More than \$100,000
6. Don't care



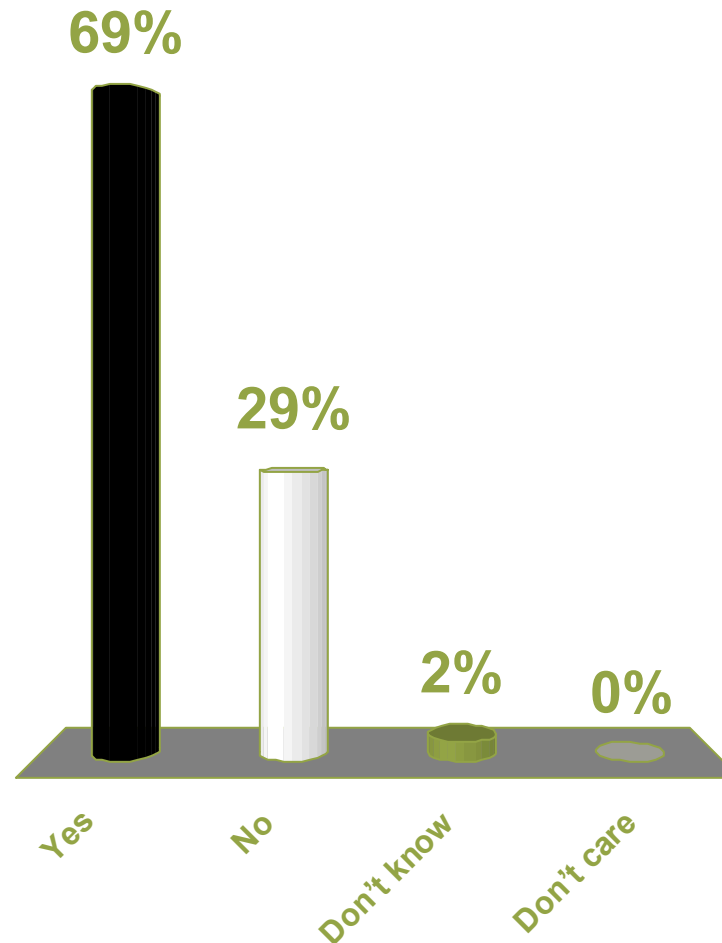
Would you like to limit special interest campaign contributions by substituting public funds

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Don't care



Should the City attempt to limit the size of campaign contributions a candidate can receive from any individual source

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Don't care



Thank You for your participation

- I encourage the public to attend the Charter Commission meetings on the First and Third Tuesday of every month
- Charter Commissioners are available to attend any public meeting such as a Home Owners Association or Civic Group
- For more information please visit our website at www.elkgrovecity.org/charter-commission

