

**Presented to
Town of Wilton Board of Finance**

December 18, 2018

Background and Research Design



BACKGROUND:

The Town of Wilton's Board of Finance formed a subcommittee for the purpose of conducting a survey among town taxpayers. Members of the committee are:

- Board of Finance – Richard Creeth (Committee Chair)
- Board of Selectmen – Deborah McFadden
- Board of Education – Deborah Low
- Economic Development Commission – John Kelly
- Citizen Volunteer – David Rothstein (owner, RTi Research)

OBJECTIVE:

- The objective of the survey was to determine the spending priorities of Wilton taxpayers.

METHOD:

An online survey was conducted among taxpayers of Wilton, CT. The survey was open from October 9, 2018 through November 25, 2018, during which 1,411 surveys were completed. Participation was publicized and encourage through local print and online media, school communications, town related Facebook groups, signage around town, library signage, and on Election Day at polling places.

The survey was completely anonymous – no identifying information was collected from respondents. 88% of submissions were from unique IP addresses, with no more than three surveys submitted from a single IP address.

With substantial input and participation from the subcommittee, RTi Research, a Norwalk based marketing research company was engaged to manage the research which included: survey design, data collection, data tabulation, analysis, and reporting. RTi Research completed the work pro-bono; no fees of any kind were charged to the Town.



Background and Research Design (continued)



Data Weighting:

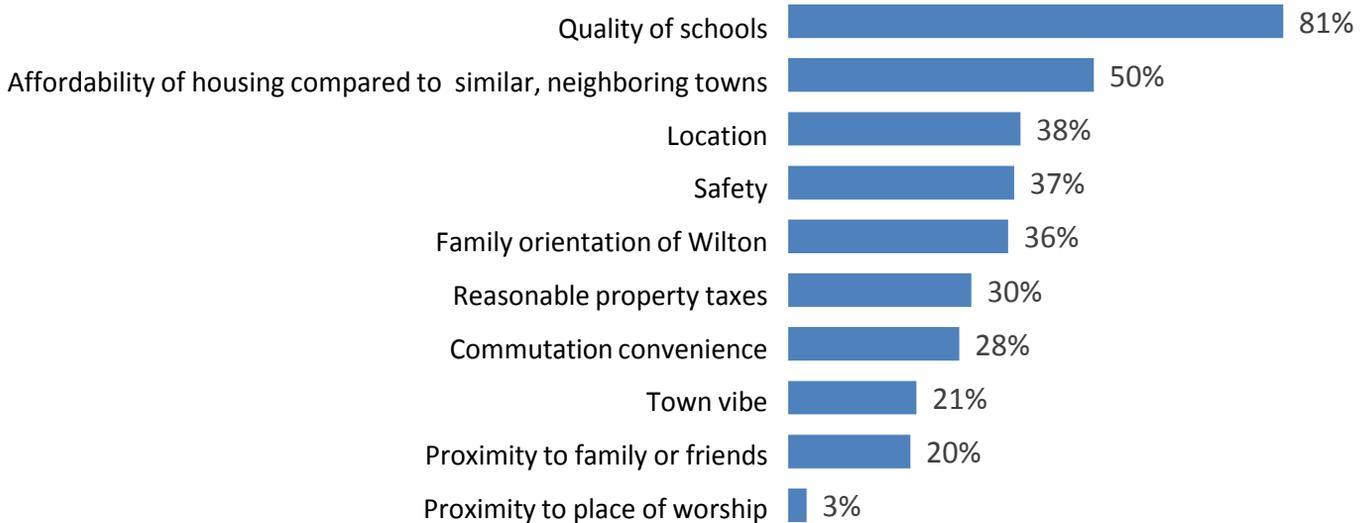
Survey data was weighted according to age to match the most recent census data available. Only four surveys were recorded from respondents under 25; they were excluded and the remaining 1,411 respondents were weighted from the proportions as collected (column D) to match the population of residents 25 and older (column B).

The 1,411 respondents represent approximately 12% of the town's 25+ population (11,847)

Age	Total Population of Wilton (A)	Target: Population as a % of 25 and older (B)	Survey Results	
			N (C)	% of Total (D)
Under 25	37%	NA	NA	NA
25 to 49	25%	40%	697	49%
50 to 64	24%	38%	494	35%
65 and older	14%	22%	220	16%
Total	100%	100%	1,411	100%

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

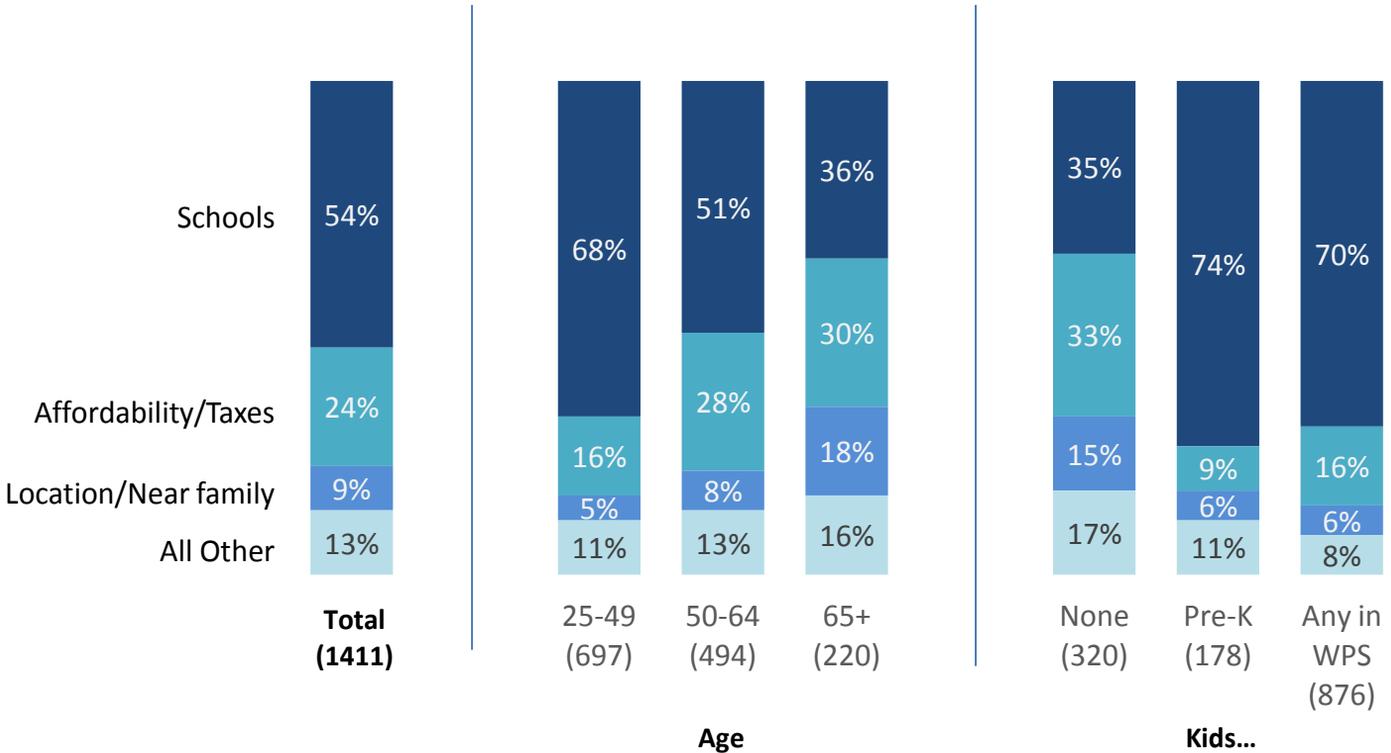
Reasons for Moving to Wilton



Reasons for Moving to Wilton

	Total	Age			Children in Household							
		25-49 (A)	50-64 (B)	65+ (C)	None (D)	Preschool or younger (E)	Other (F)	Any WPS (G)	MD (K-2) (H)	CM (3-5) (I)	MB (6-8) (J)	HS (9-12) (K)
Base	(1411)	(697)	(494)	(220)	(320)	(178)	(262)	(876)	(226)	(316)	(393)	(429)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Quality of schools	81	68	84	60	64	93	84	94	97	94	94	93
Affordability of housing compared to similar, neighboring towns	50	49	51	52	53	48	59	49	53	49	47	47
Location	38	33	35	50	48	28	30	33	37	30	34	31
Safety	37	46	32	29	32	50	29	40	48	46	41	35
Family orientation of Wilton	36	43	38	22	28	46	43	43	49	44	42	44
Reasonable property taxes	30	21	35	40	42	11	39	23	18	20	22	26
Commutation convenience	28	27	27	32	34	29	31	26	29	25	26	25
Town vibe	21	2	19	18	19	24	25	22	26	24	22	21
Proximity to family or friends	20	22	18	20	19	27	20	19	18	22	19	18

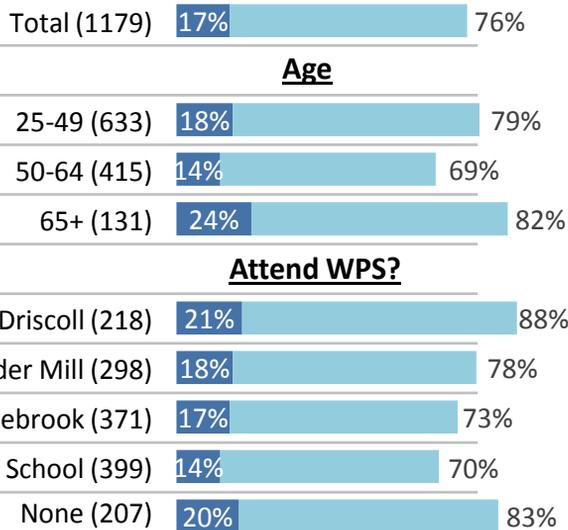
Single Most Important Reason for Moving to Wilton



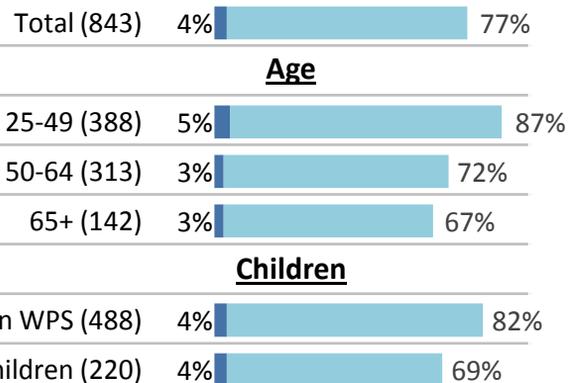
Degree Town Has Met Expectations Based on Reasons Given for Moving to Wilton

- Exceeds
- Meets or Exceeds

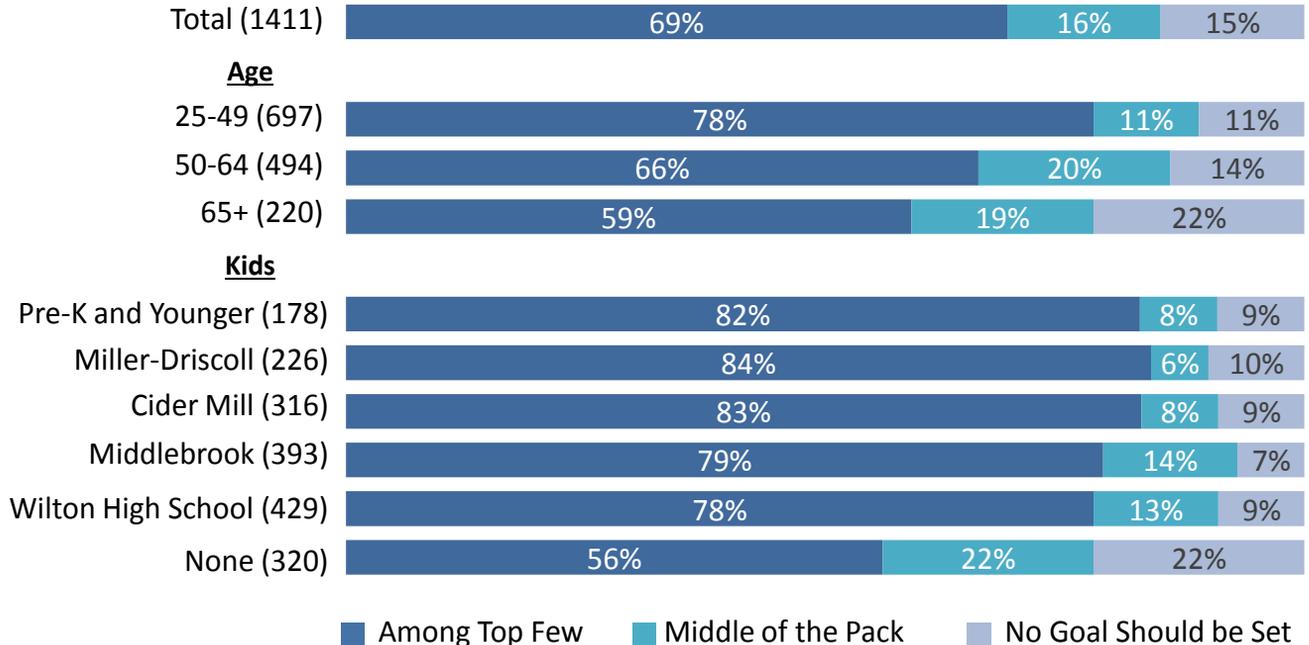
Came to Wilton for Quality of Schools



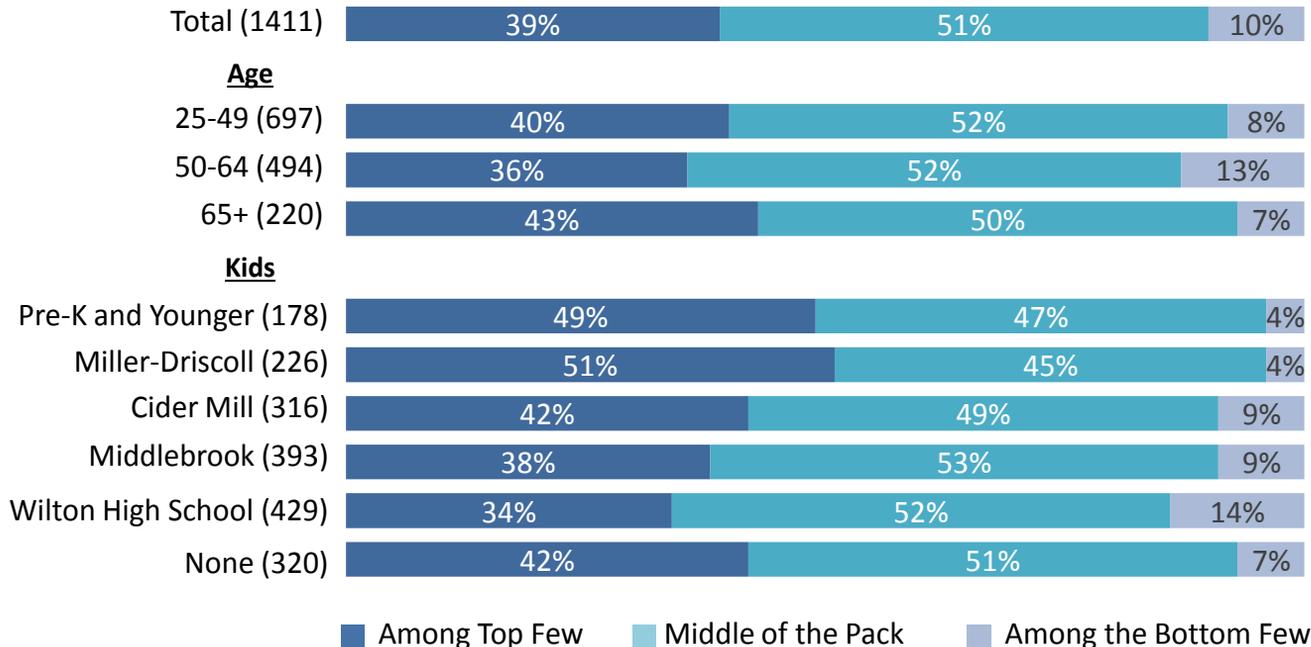
Came to Wilton for Housing Affordability



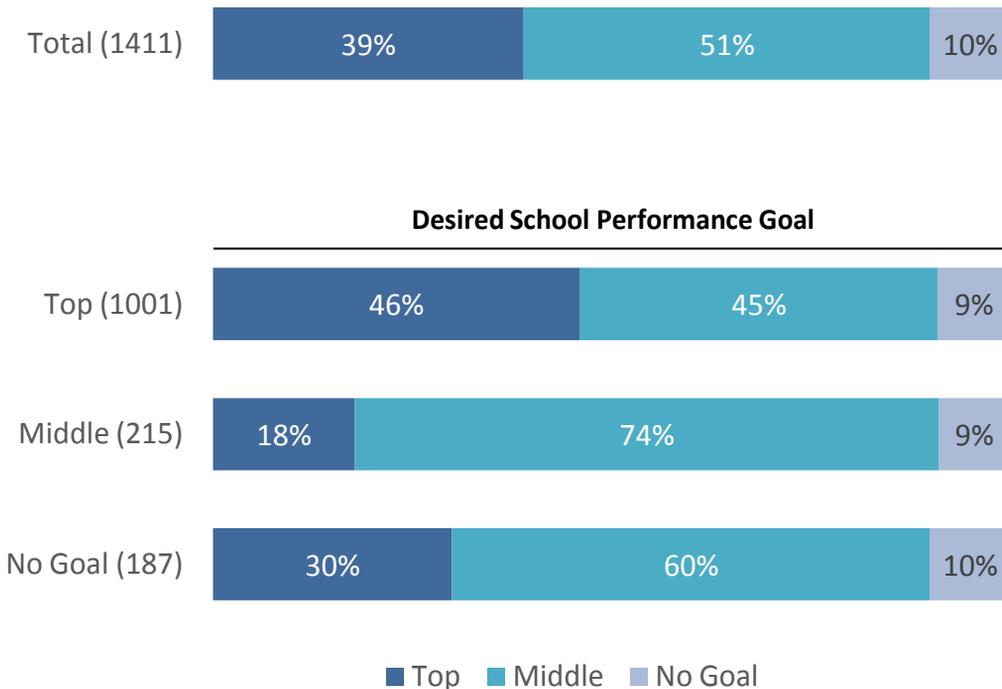
Desired Performance Goal for Wilton Schools Compared to Neighboring Towns (Darien, New Canaan, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Easton)



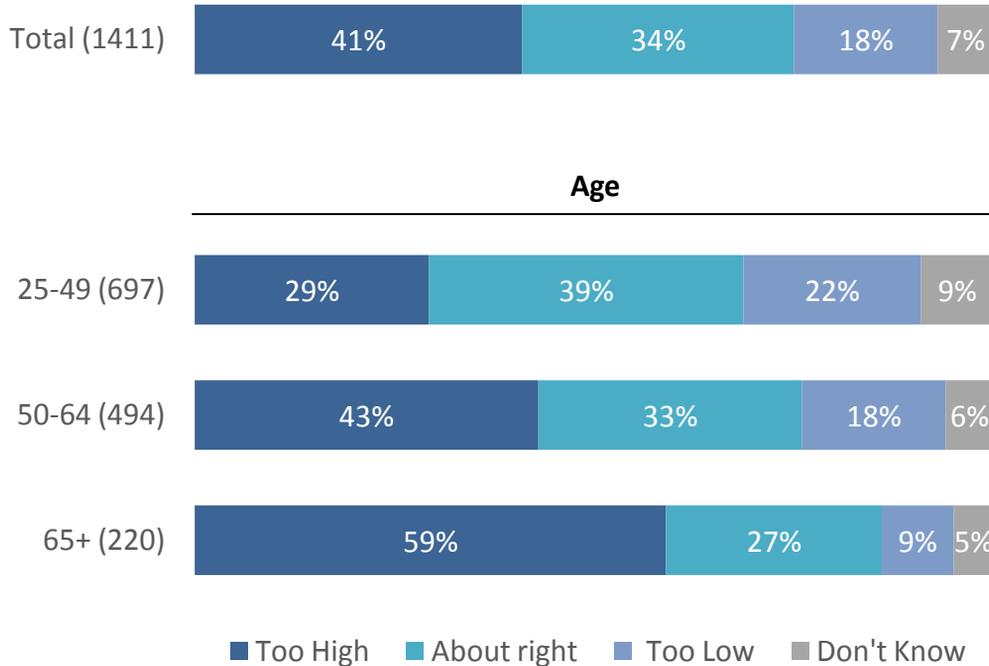
Perception of Performance of Wilton Schools Compared to Neighboring Towns (Darien, New Canaan, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Easton)



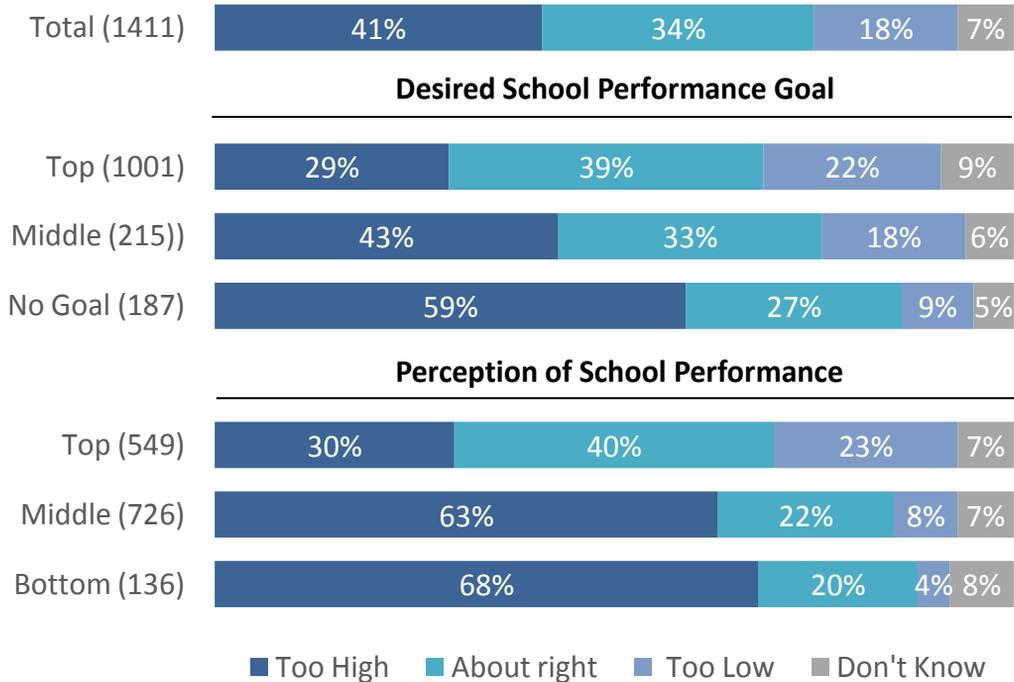
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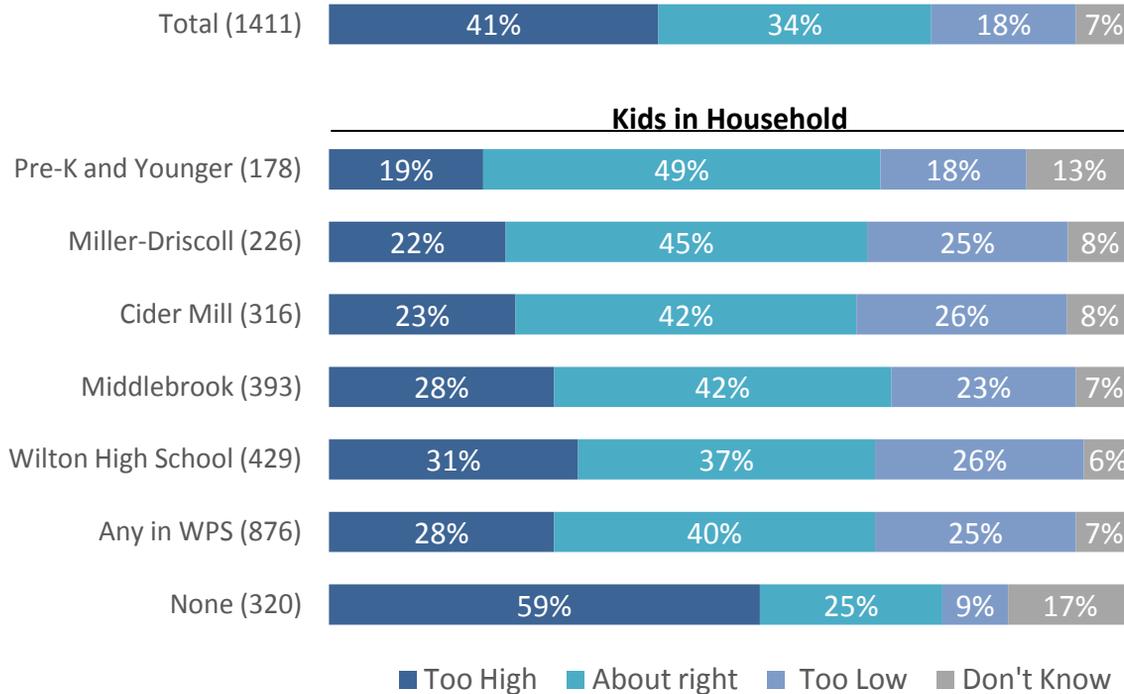
Perception of Current Level of Spending for Wilton Schools



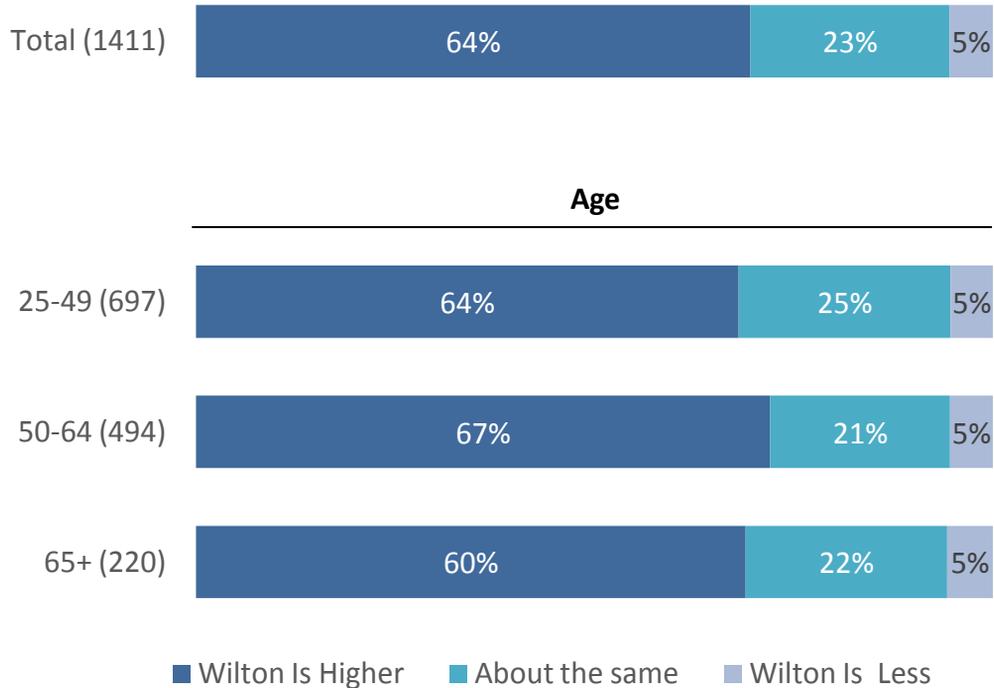
Perception of Current Level of Spending for Wilton Schools



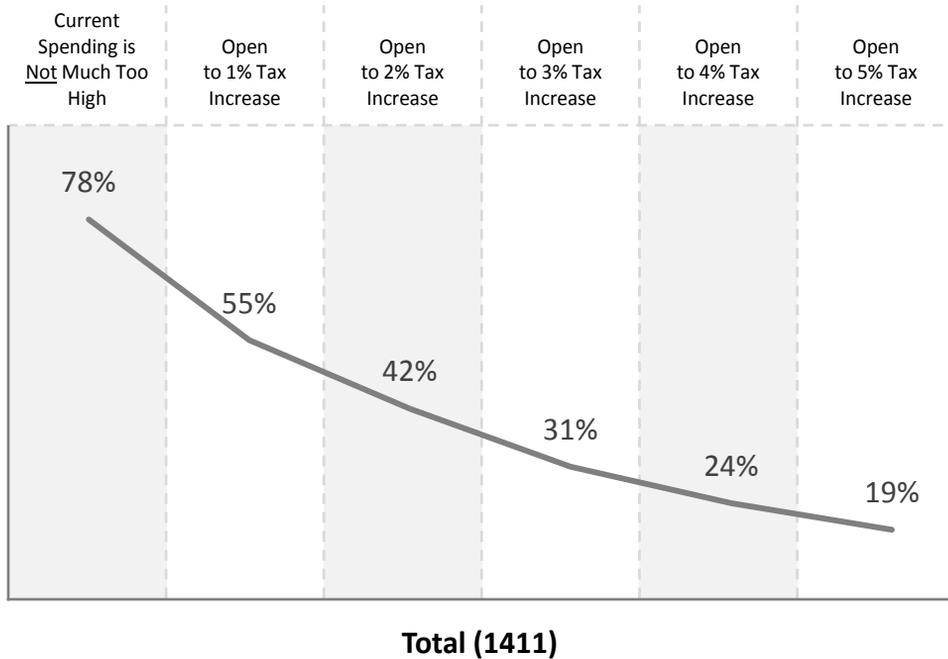
Perception of Current Level of Spending for Wilton Schools



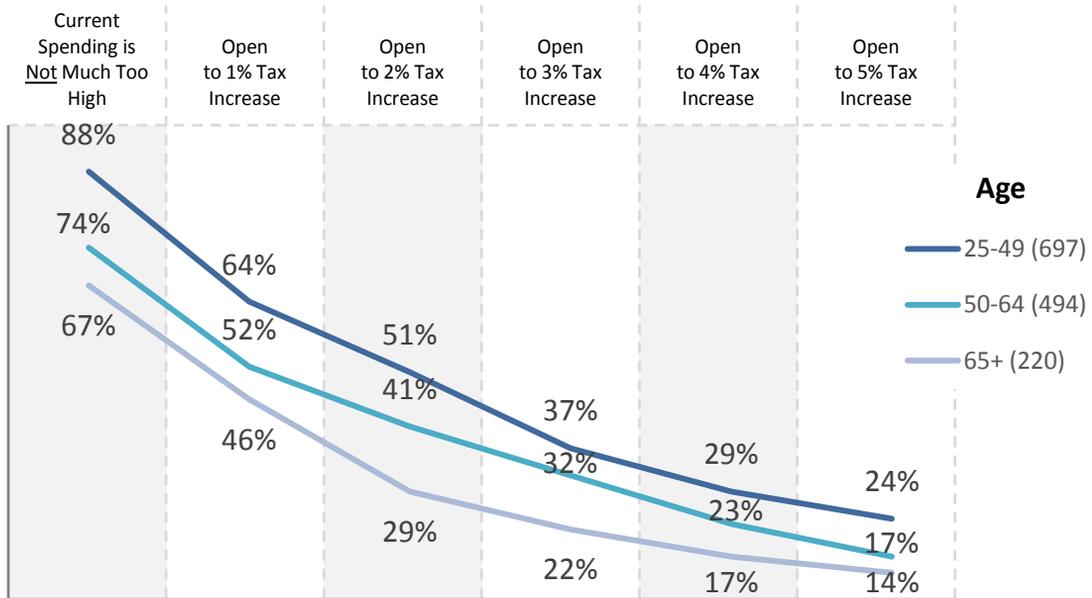
Perception of Wilton Taxes Compared to Neighboring Towns (Darien, New Canaan, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Easton)



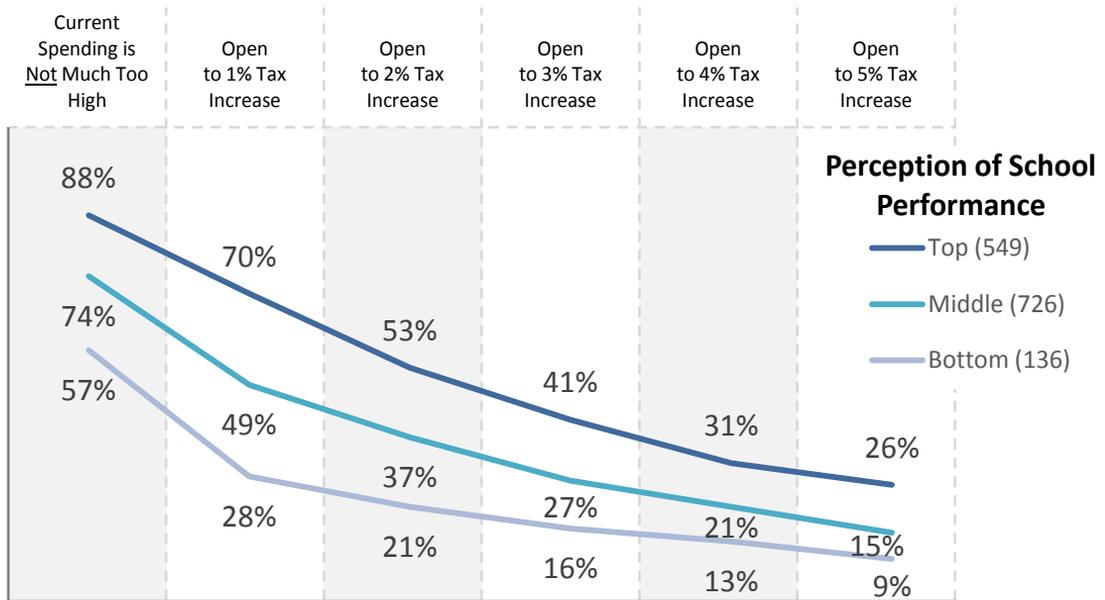
Openness to Tax Increase (Not Strongly Opposed)



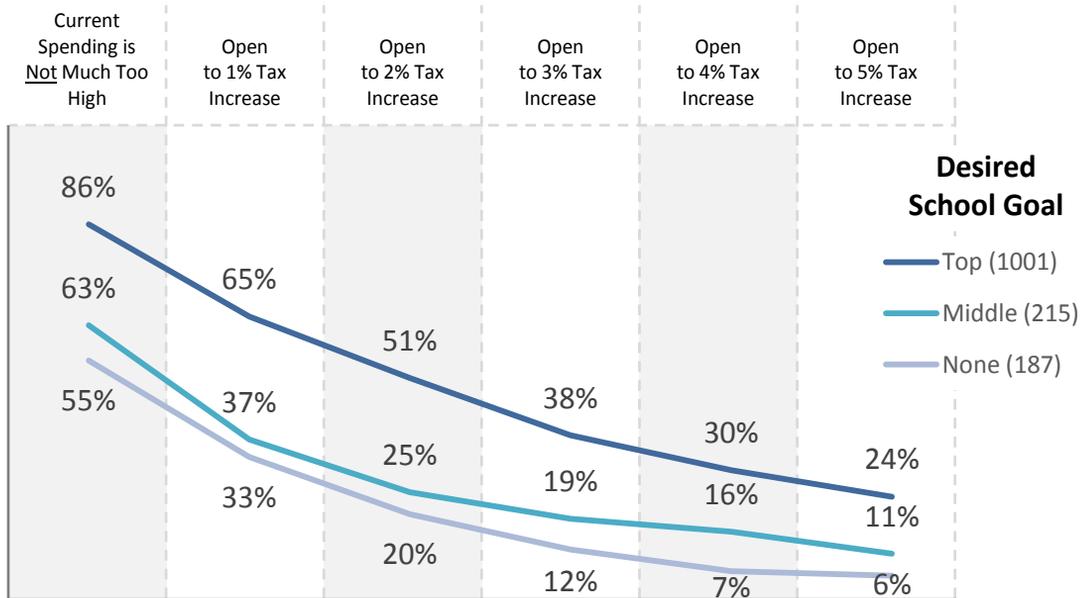
Openness to Tax Increase — By Age (Not Strongly Opposed)



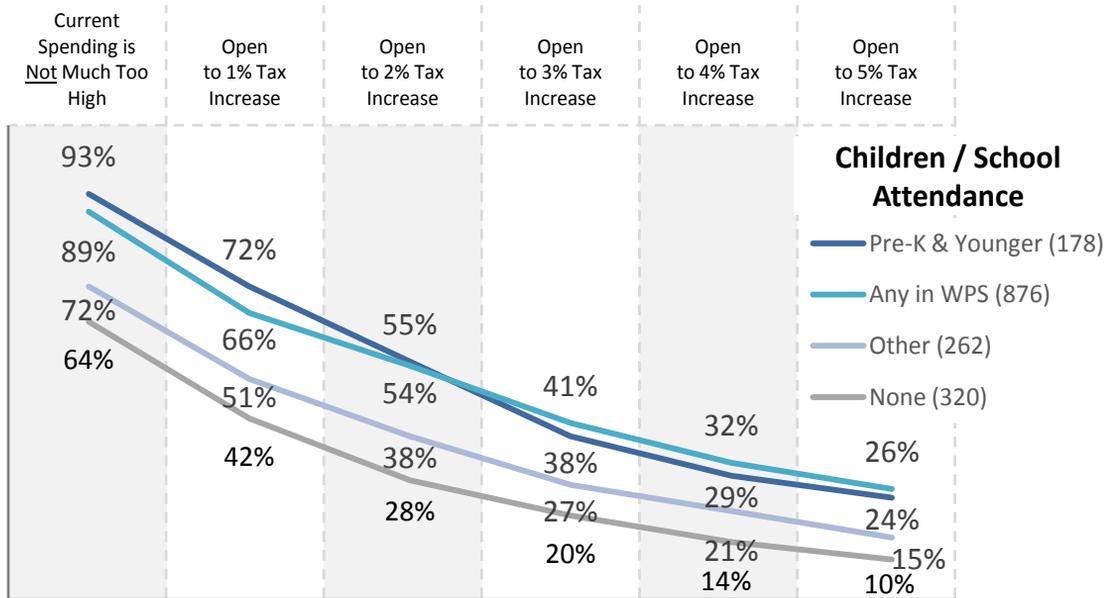
Openness to Tax Increase — By Perception of School Performance



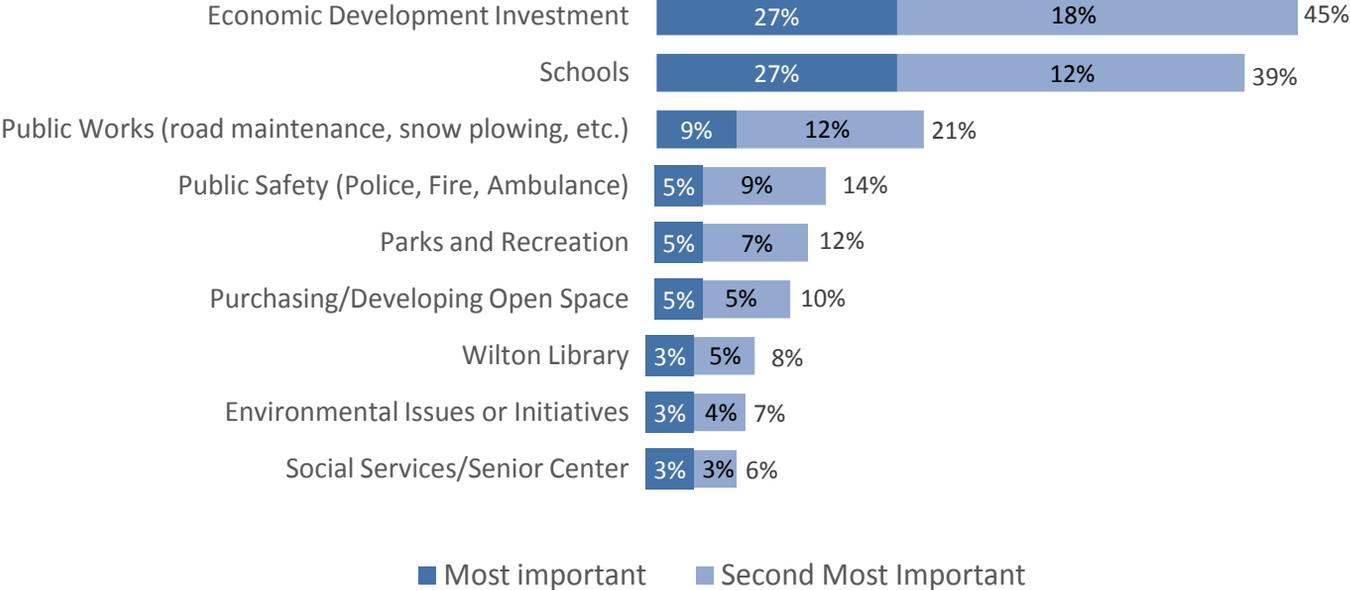
Openness to Tax Increase — By Desired School Performance Goal



Openness to Tax Increase — Presence of Children / School Attendance



Support for Services to Receive Increase in Funding



Support for Ways to Reduce Property Taxes

	Age			Children in Household				Income (000's)				
	Total	25-49 (A)	50-64 (B)	65+ (C)	None (D)	Preschool or younger (E)	Other (F)	Any WPS (G)	Less than \$150 (L)	\$150-249.9 (M)	\$250-399.9 (N)	\$400+ (O)
Base	(1411)	(697)	(494)	(220)	(320)	(178)	(262)	(876)	(252)	(274)	(258)	(293)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Utilize shared services with other towns	79	77	81	78	78	77	81	79	77	81	81	78
Invest in Economic development in an attempt to grow the grand list	70	74	71	65	65	75	75	73	65	71	73	77
Reduce funding for Historic Preservation	39	41	38	36	37	43	37	40	28	40	43	36
Reduce funding for the Trackside Teen Center	35	31	39	35	42	31	38	30	29	31	32	33
Reduce funding for Schools	27	15	31	42	45	9	31	14	32	29	15	18
Reduce funding for Environmental Issues or Initiatives	25	27	23	24	23	25	27	27	21	25	24	27
Reduce funding for Social Services/Senior Center	19	23	20	11	15	25	20	23	13	17	21	24
Reduce funding for the Wilton Library	18	17	20	18	23	13	21	16	17	17	15	17
Reduce funding for Parks and Recreation	13	11	14	17	17	8	13	10	16	12	11	9
Reduce funding for Public Safety (Police, Fire, Ambulance)	10	10	11	8	7	7	17	11	7	13	11	12
Reduce funding for Public Works (road maintenance, snow plowing, etc.)	3	3	4	3	2	3	4	4	3	5	2	4
None of these	4	4	3	5	3	3	3	4	6	4	4	2
Average Number of Areas	3.39	3.29	3.52	3.35	3.55	3.16	3.64	3.26	3.09	3.40	3.28	3.33

Single Best Way to Reduce Property Taxes

	Age			Children in Household				Income (000's)				
	Total	25-49 (A)	50-64 (B)	65+ (C)	None (D)	Preschool or younger (E)	Other (F)	Any WPS (G)	Less than \$150 (L)	\$150-249.9 (M)	\$250-399.9 (N)	\$400+ (O)
Base	(1411)	(697)	(494)	(220)	(320)	(178)	(262)	(876)	(252)	(274)	(258)	(293)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Invest in Economic development in an attempt to grow the grand list	39	44	37	31	30	49	37	45	35	36	42	48
Utilize shared services with other towns	24	25	26	19	22	23	22	26	21	27	29	25
Reduce funding for Schools	16	6	18	28	29	3	19	6	21	13	7	9
Reduce funding for Historic Preservation	6	7	4	7	6	6	5	6	6	8	6	4
Reduce funding for the Trackside Teen Center	5	5	6	5	6	3	6	5	4	6	4	3
Reduce funding for Environmental Issues or Initiatives	2	3	2	1	1	4	2	2	2	1	3	3
Reduce funding for Public Safety (Police, Fire, Ambulance)	2	1	2	2	1	1	3	2	2	2	1	3
Reduce funding for Social Services/Senior Center	2	4	2	0	1	6	2	3	2	2	3	3
Reduce funding for the Wilton Library	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	2	1
Reduce funding for Parks and Recreation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Reduce funding for Public Works (road maintenance, snow plowing, etc.)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
None of these	4	4	3	5	3	3	3	4	6	4	4	2

Support for Shared Services with Neighboring Towns



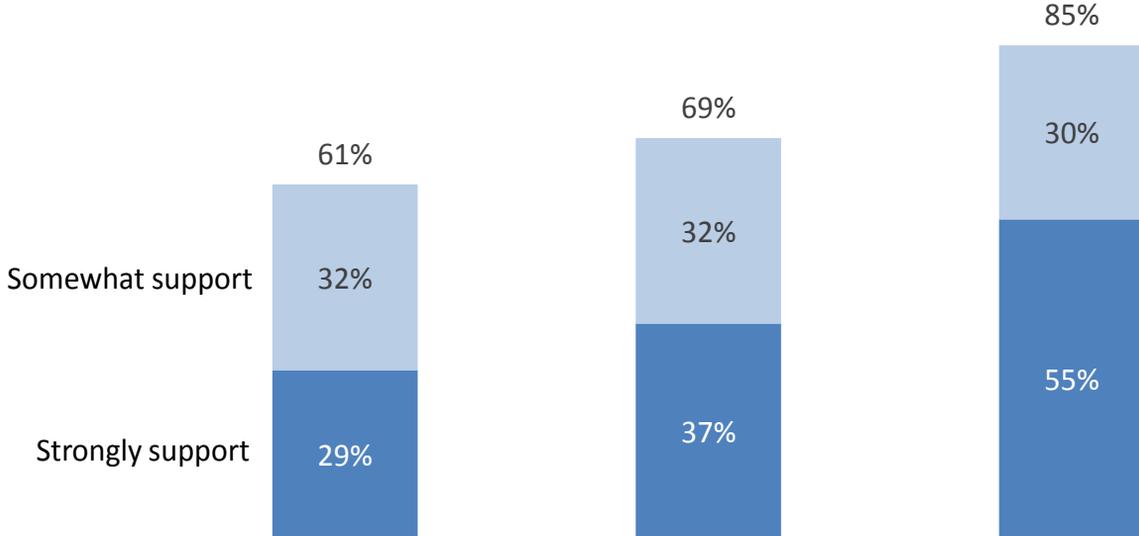
Shared Police Force



Shared Town Hall Services



Shared Transfer Station



Most Popular Grand List Growth Areas to Pursue

	Age				Income (\$000)			
	Total	25-49 (A)	50-64 (B)	65+ (C)	Less than \$150 (L)	\$150-249.9 (M)	\$250-399.9 (N)	\$400+ (O)
Base: Investing in Economic Development	(994)	(412)	(376)	(206)	(185)	(195)	(171)	(211)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
More commercial/retail development	76	80	76	68	65	75	83	81
Offer tax incentives to major corporations who are willing to invest in Wilton	73	78	73	61	72	68	76	76
Allow denser housing in appropriate locations	45	45	44	48	44	47	48	46
Double down on amenity investments in Town to encourage development and raise property prices overall	37	43	38	25	27	34	47	43
Hire a full-time economic development manager to pursue all these goals	32	31	32	35	32	35	27	42
New user fees where appropriate	17	15	17	21	15	15	17	19
Other	11	10	12	11	11	8	13	9
Average Number of Areas	2.91	3.02	2.91	2.68	2.65	2.81	3.09	3.16

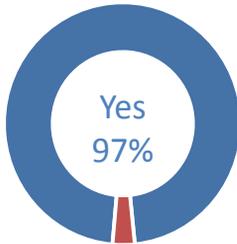
Single Grand List Area Thought to Have Greatest Positive Impact

	Total	Age			Income (\$000)			
		25-49 (A)	50-64 (B)	65+ (C)	Less than \$150 (L)	\$150-249.9 (M)	\$250-399.9 (N)	\$400+ (O)
Base: Proposed investing in Economic Development	(994)	(412)	(376)	(206)	(185)	(195)	(171)	(211)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Offer tax incentives to major corporations who are willing to invest in Wilton	34	38	33	27	36	37	34	30
More commercial/retail development	32	31	31	34	30	25	35	37
Hire a full-time economic development manager to pursue all these goals	11	9	11	15	12	16	10	9
Allow denser housing in appropriate locations	10	9	11	13	11	10	12	13
Double down on amenity investments in Town to encourage development and raise property prices overall	8	9	7	6	4	8	6	9
New user fees where appropriate	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Other	5	4	7	3	5	4	3	2

Satisfaction with Police Department Responsibilities



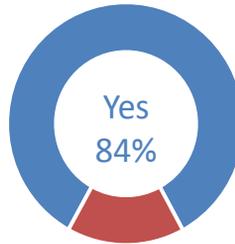
Overall Level of Safety in Wilton



No
3%



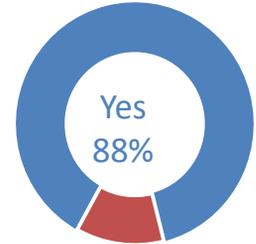
Current Level of Traffic Enforcement in Wilton



No
16%

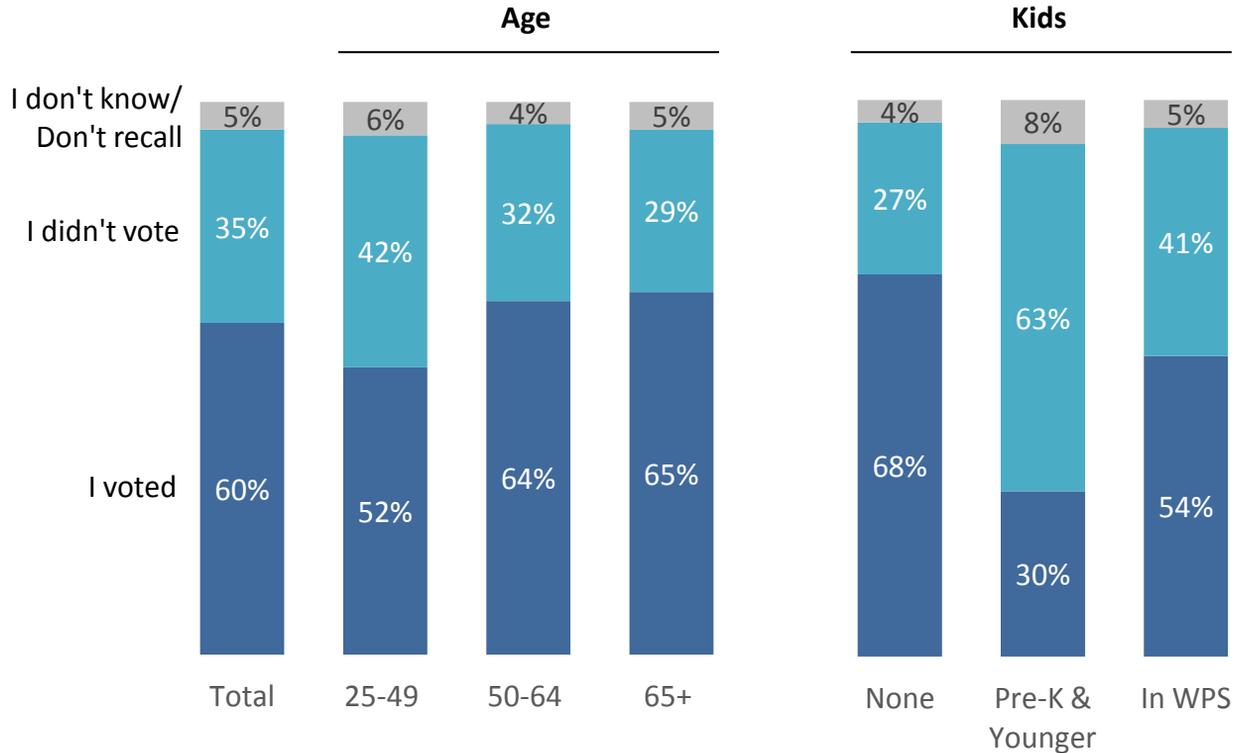


Current Level of Neighborhood Patrols in Wilton



No
12%

Whether Voted on Budget in May, 2018



Base: Total (1411), 25-49 (697), 50-64 (494) 65+ (220).

Base: Kids; None (320), Pre-K & younger (178), In WPS (876).

q.25. Did you vote on the 2018 budget this past May at either the annual town meeting or at the polls on the Saturday following the town meeting?

Reasons For Low Turnout at Annual Budget Vote

	Age				Voted	
	Total	25-49 (A)	50-64 (B)	65+ (C)	Yes (P)	"No/ Don't Know" (Q)
Base	(1411)	(697)	(494)	(220)	(822)	(589)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not interested/Don't care	56	55	55	58	66	40
Too busy/conflicting schedule	54	65	51	38	52	56
Didn't know about the vote	29	35	27	22	22	40
Meant to vote, but forgot	26	28	27	21	27	24
Out of town	13	13	13	14	15	10
Aware there was a vote, but didn't know where to vote	8	10	7	5	6	11
Illness or disability	2	1	1	5	3	1
Transportation issue/couldn't get to the polls	2	2	1	4	2	2
Other reason	22	16	24	27	23	20

Demographic Summary

	Total (1411)
Age	%
25-49	40
50-64	38
65+	23

	Total (1411)
Gender	%
Male	50
Female	50

	Total (1411)
Income	%
Less than \$150K	20
\$150-\$249,999	19
\$250-\$399,999	17
\$400,000 or more	19
Prefer not to say	25

	%
Presence of Children	72
Have Children in Wilton Public Schools	56
Have Children not in Wilton Public Schools	18
Have Children Younger than Kindergarten	10
No Children Living in Household	28

	Total (1411)
Size of Household	%
1	20
2	24
3	15
4	33
5	17
6+	4

	Total (1411)
IP Addresses	%
1 survey submitted (unique)	88
2 surveys submitted	11
3 surveys submitted	1

