



THE TOWN OF
WILTON
CONNECTICUT

Board of Finance March 2022 Budget Survey
April 4, 2022

Prepared by Matt Raimondi
On Behalf of the Board of Finance

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Executive Summary

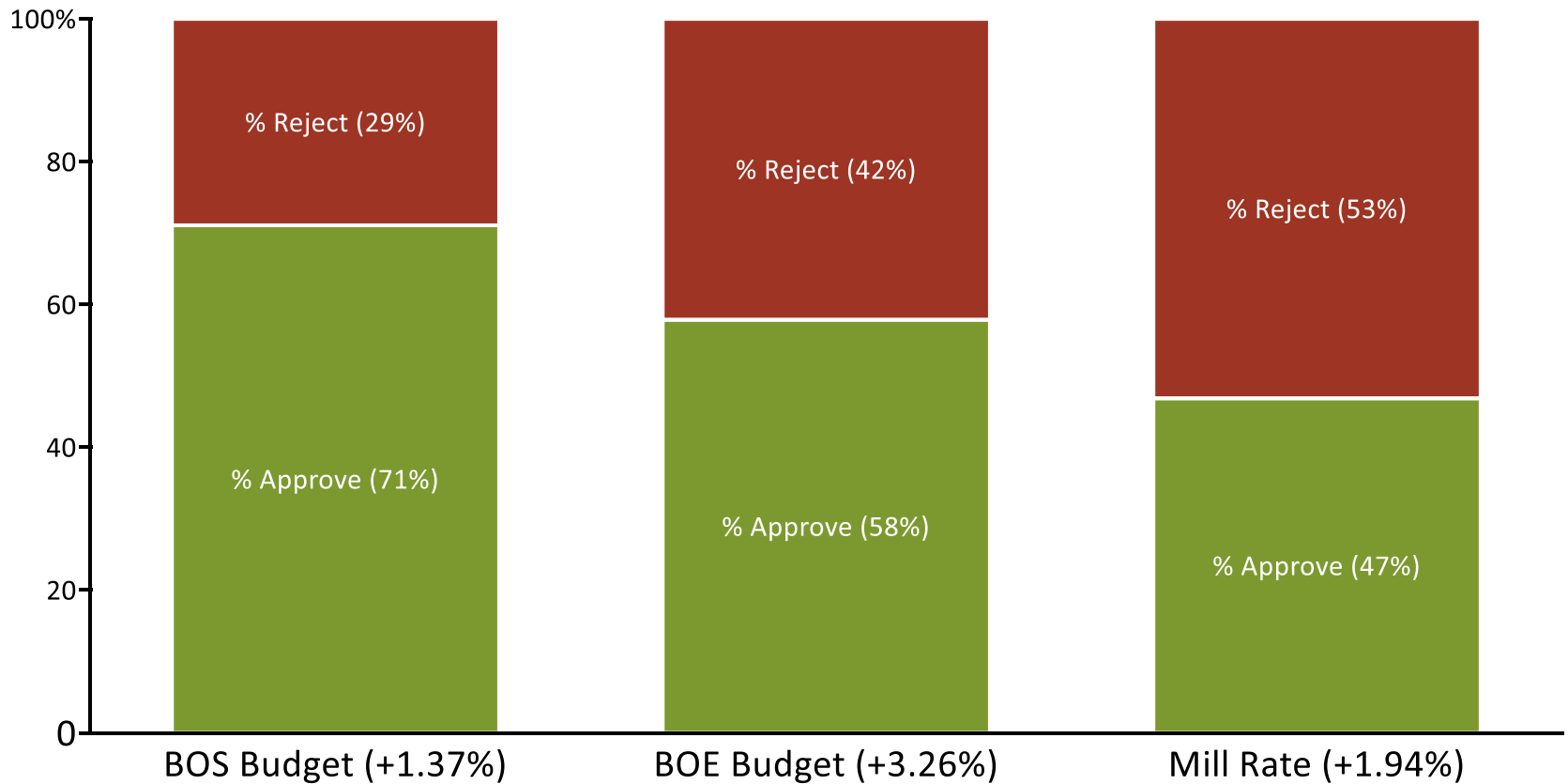
Survey Responses

Executive Summary

- On March 21, 2022 the Board of Finance (“BOF”) launched a survey to poll Wilton’s residents about their sentiments towards the proposed Board of Selectmen (“BOS”) budget, Board of Education (“BOE”) budget, and the consequent mill rate. The survey was in the field until March 31
- As a note, this survey was fielded prior to both the BOS and BOE budget hearings. This survey also does not reflect a change to the BOE budget (as presented during the budget hearings) from a 3.26% increase to 3.02%
- Overall, the survey received 554 unique responses from individuals who responded that they are registered to vote in Wilton. Please see the demographics slides on pages 6 and 8 for a full breakdown
- Based on this survey, 71% of respondents approve of the BOS budget (+1.37% increase) and 58% approve of the BOE budget (+3.26% increase). However, 53% did not approve of the mill rate increase (+1.94% increase)
- Generally, respondents with children attending WPS voted in favor of the BOS budget (74%), BOE budget (71%), and mill rate (57%)
- Respondents that do not have children attending WPS responded in favor of the BOS budget (74%), but responded against the BOE budget (61% against) and the mill rate (67% against)

While the majority of respondents approve of both the BOS (71%) and BOE (58%) budgets, a majority did not approve of the proposed mill rate increase (53%) - *DRAFT* -

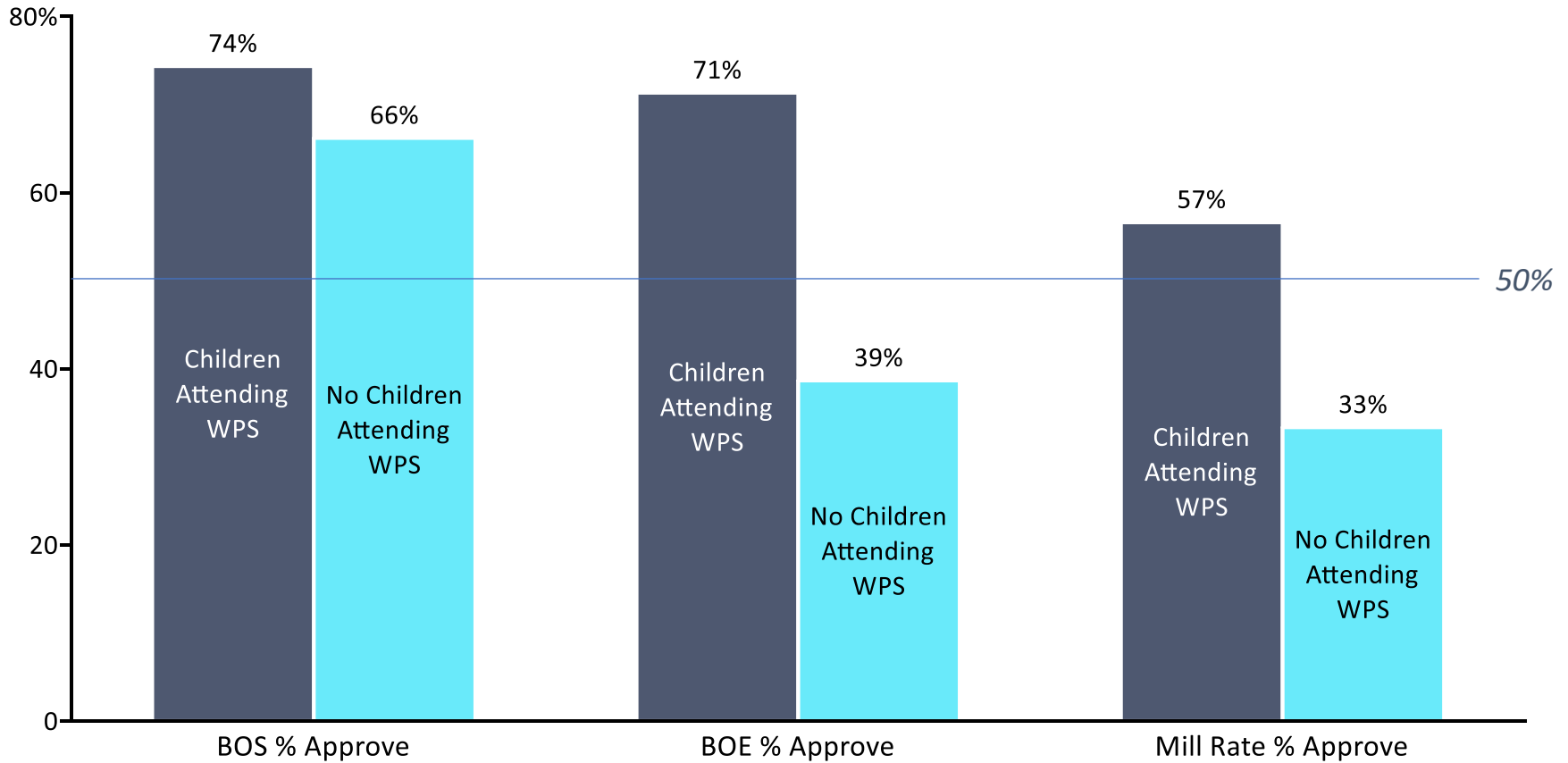
Budget Approval Rating



Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman's budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education's budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?

While respondents with and without children at WPS responded in favor of the BOS budget, the BOE budget and mill rate received significantly less support from those without children attending WPS

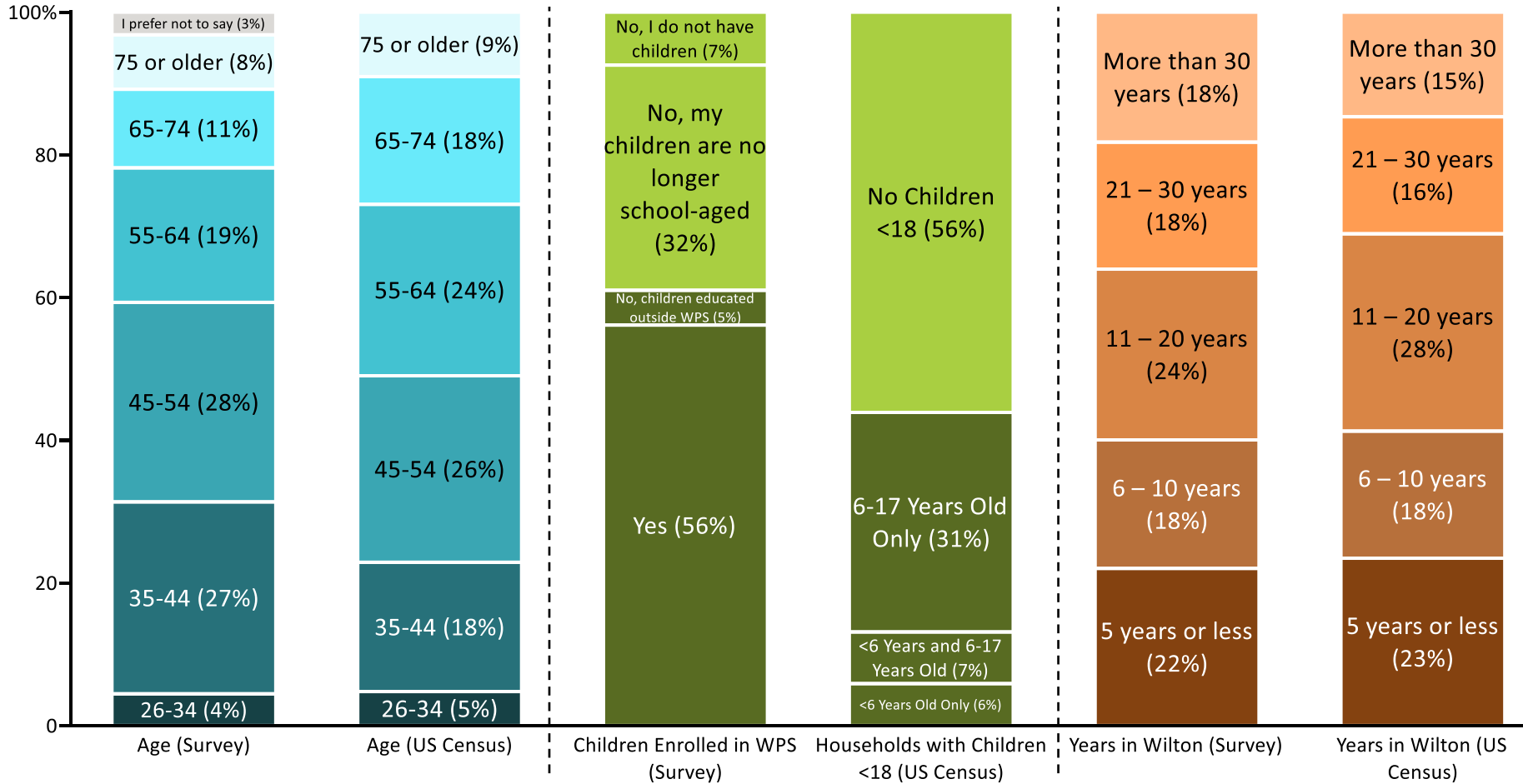
Budget Approval vs Children in WPS



Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman’s budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education’s budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?; Q: Do you have children enrolled in the Wilton Public Schools?

The survey skewed more heavily towards households with children relative to the general population

Survey Demographics vs Wilton Demographics (US Census)



Q: How old are you?; Q: Do you have children enrolled in the Wilton Public Schools?; Q: How long have you lived in Wilton?

Source: United States Census Bureau (2020)

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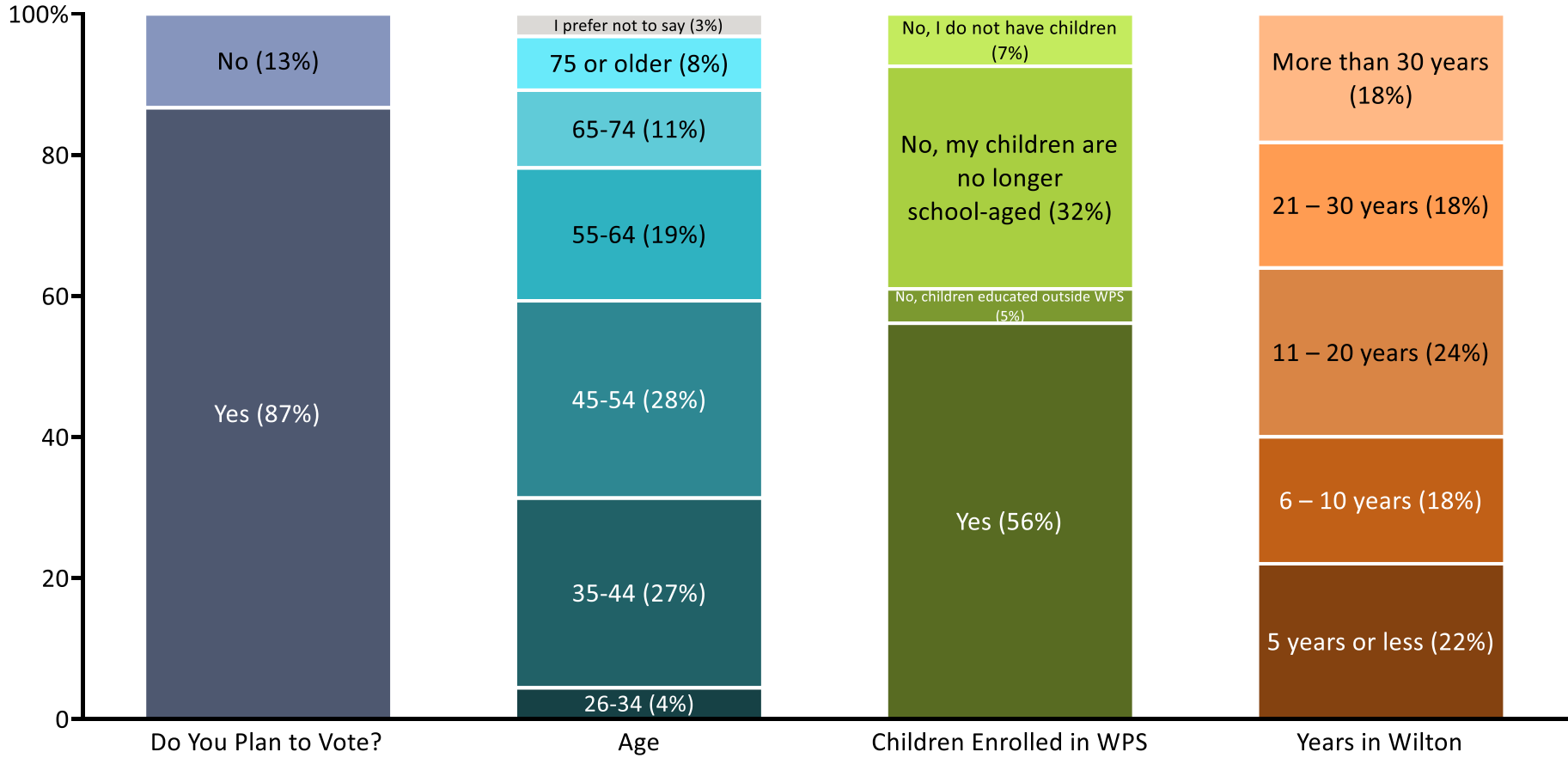
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Executive Summary

Survey Responses

554 unique respondents took the survey from March 21 to March 31

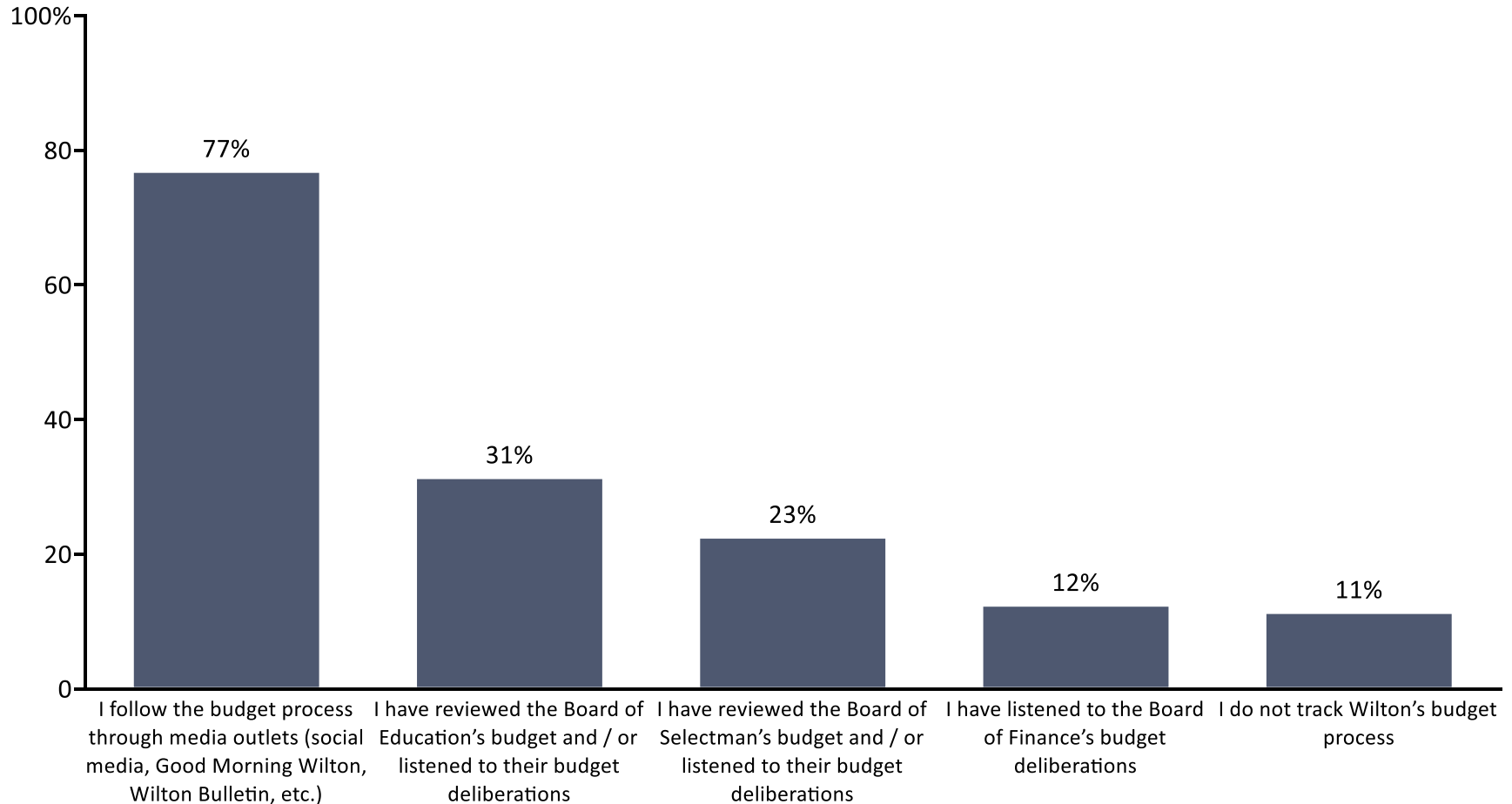
Survey Demographics



Q: Do you plan to vote at the Annual Town Meeting on May 3 or at the Adjourned Town Meeting on May 7?; Q: How old are you?; Q: Do you have children enrolled in the Wilton Public Schools?; Q: How long have you lived in Wilton?

77% of respondents follow the budget process through media outlets. Significantly fewer track the BOS, BOE, and BOF budget deliberations

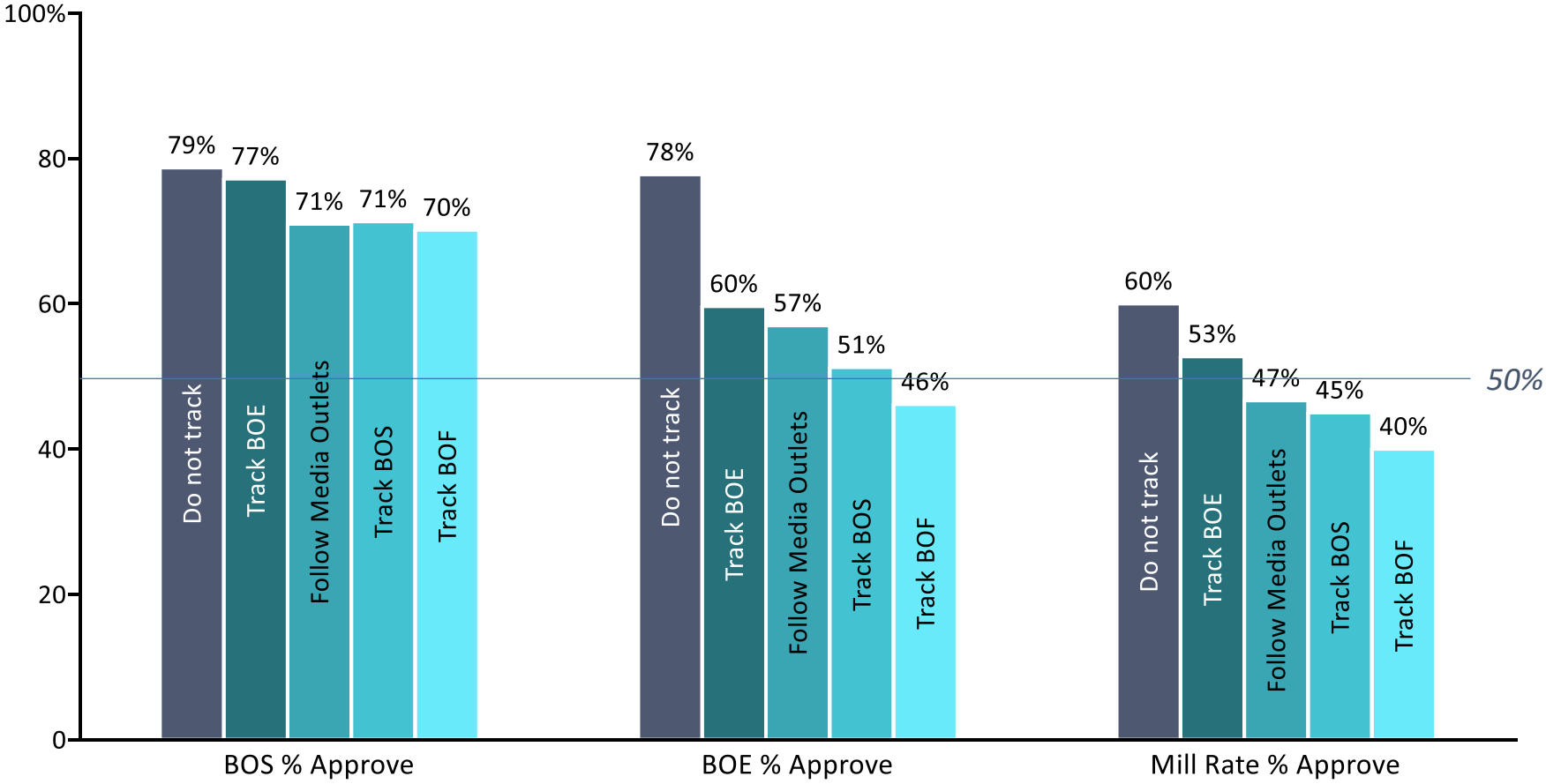
Engagement with Budget Process



Q: How closely do you follow Wilton's town budget process? Please select all the apply

Those who do not track the budget process and those who track the BOE budget process are more likely to be in favor of the proposed budgets and mill rate

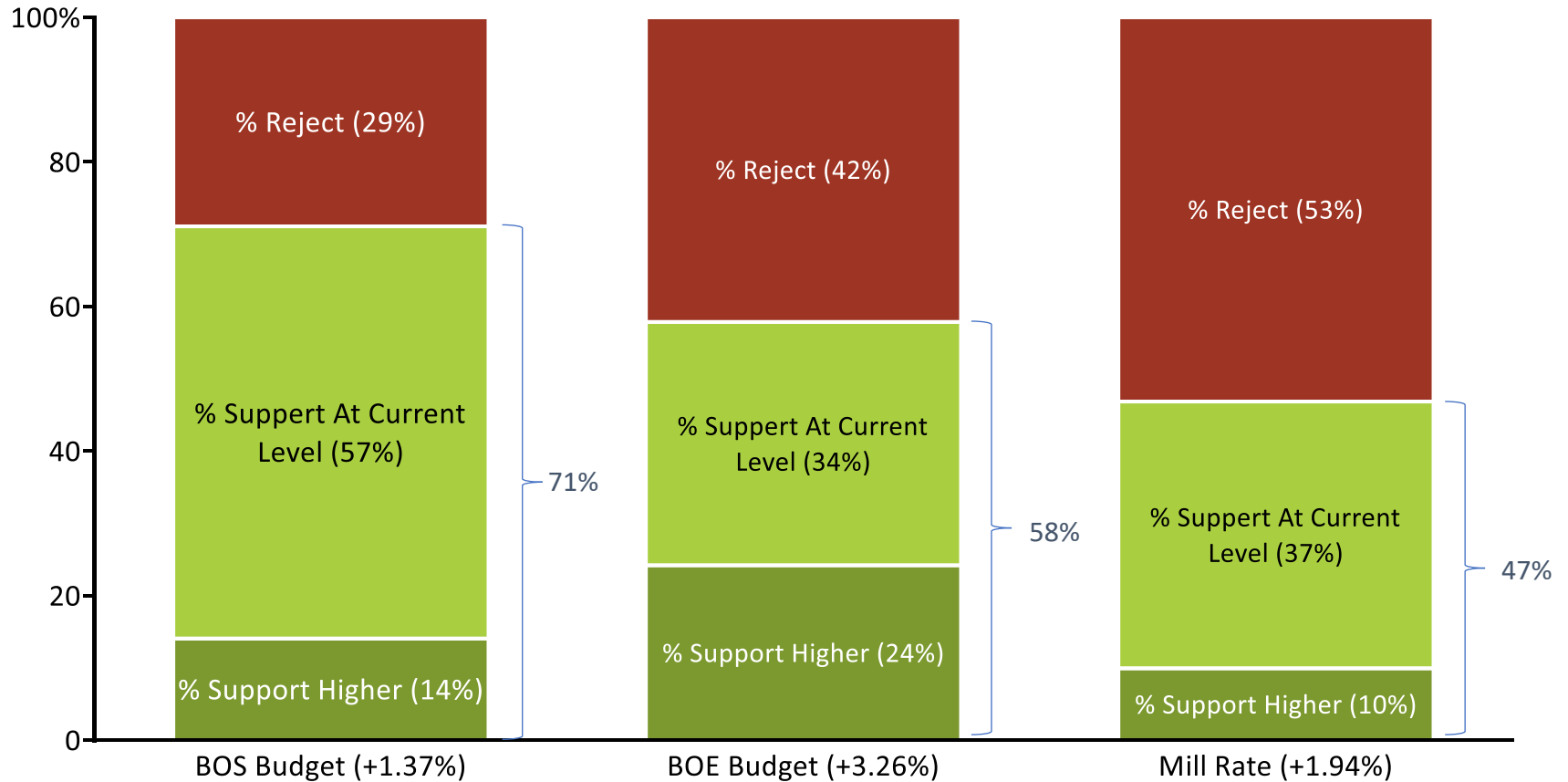
Budget Approval vs Engagement with Budget Process



Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman’s budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education’s budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?; Q: How closely do you follow Wilton’s town budget process? Please select all the apply

While the majority of respondents approve of both the BOS (71%) and BOE (58%) budgets, a majority did not approve of the proposed mill rate increase (53%)

Overall Budget Approval Rating

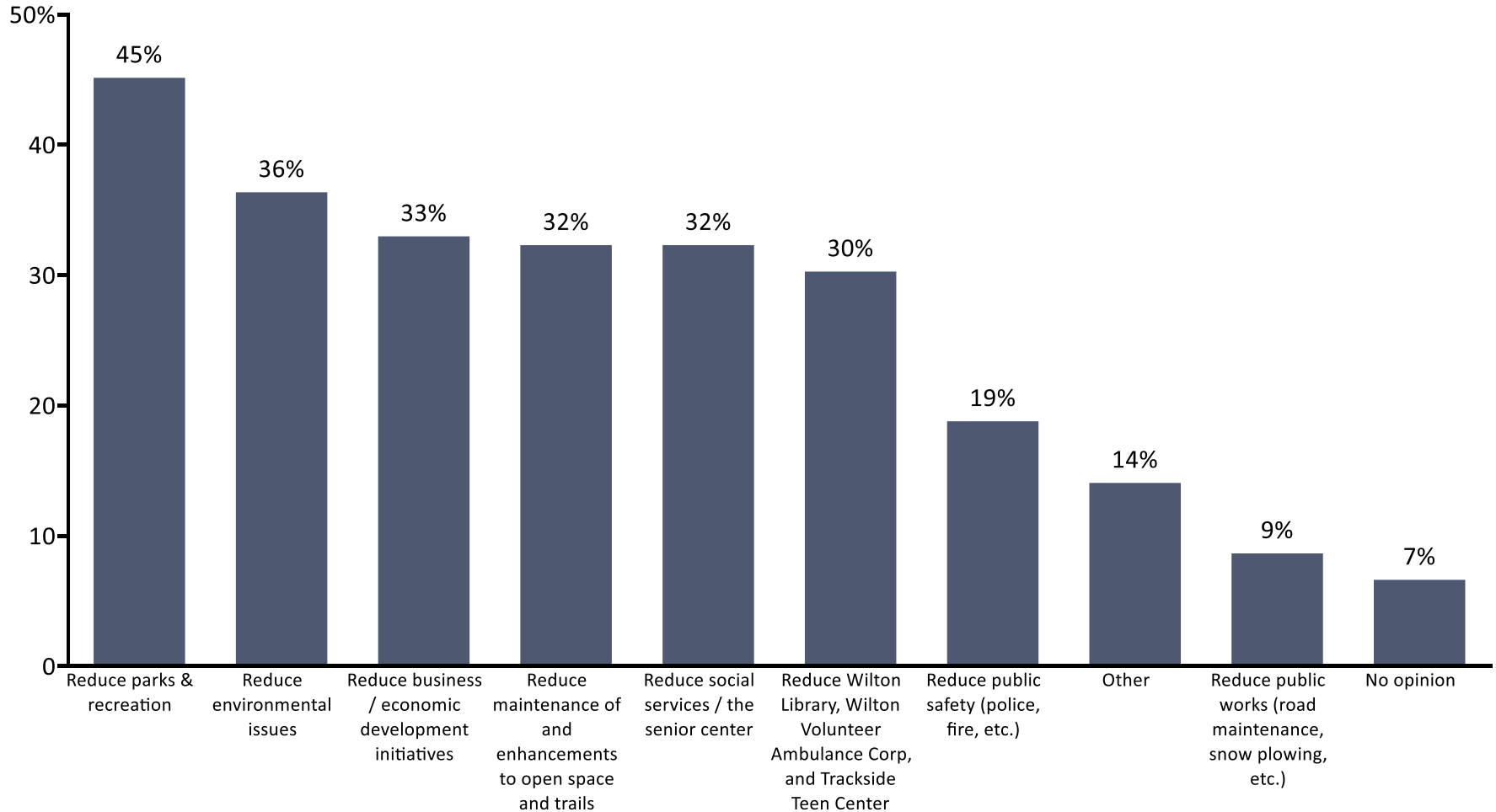


Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman's budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education's budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?

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Of the 29% of respondents who did not vote in favor of the BOS budget, there was no clear consensus on what they would cut

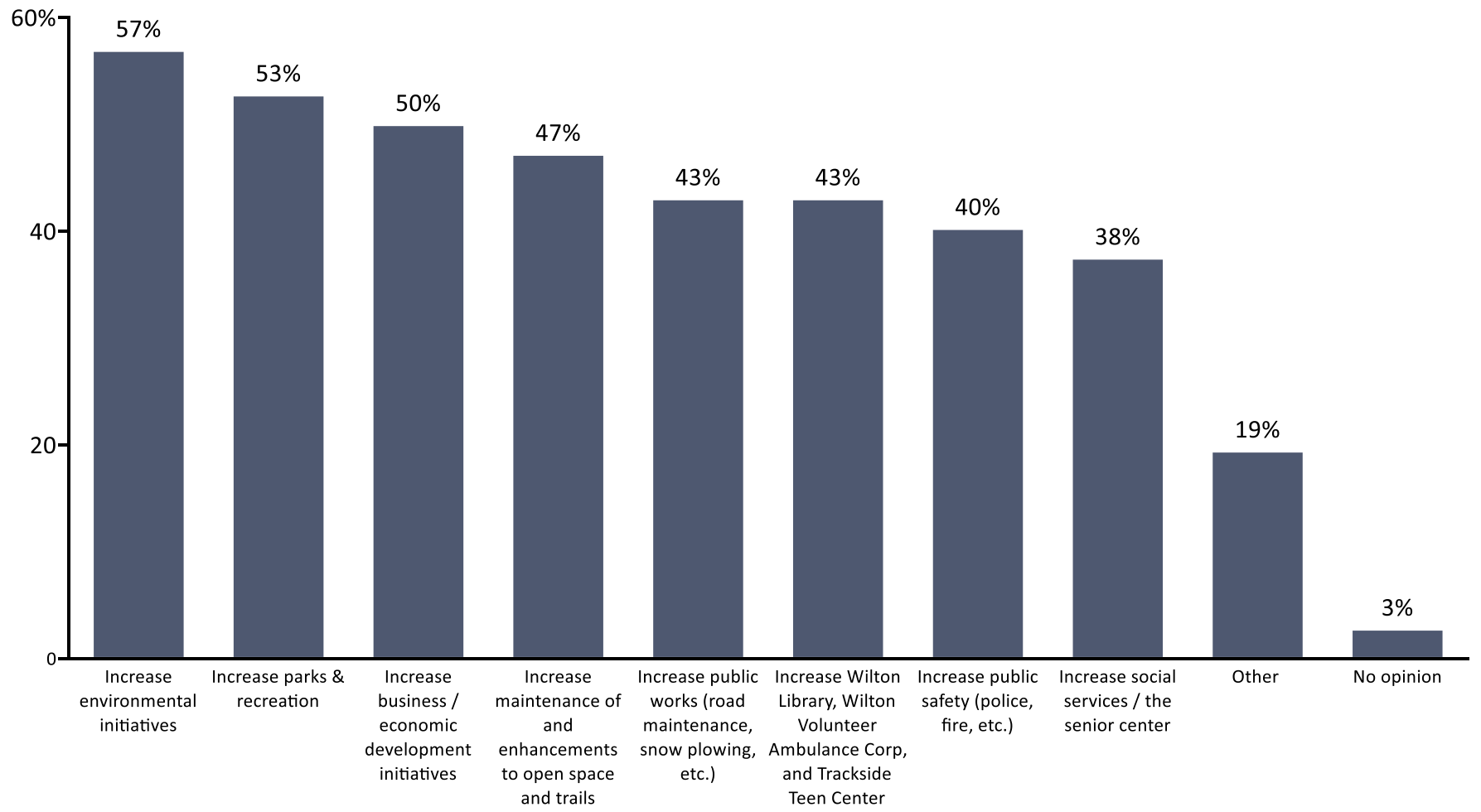
To reduce BOS budget, I would support reducing...



Q: What tradeoffs would you be willing to make to decrease the Board of Selectman's budget? Please select all that apply

Of the 14% of respondents who wanted to raise the BOS budget, a majority favor spending more on environmental issues, parks & rec, and economic development

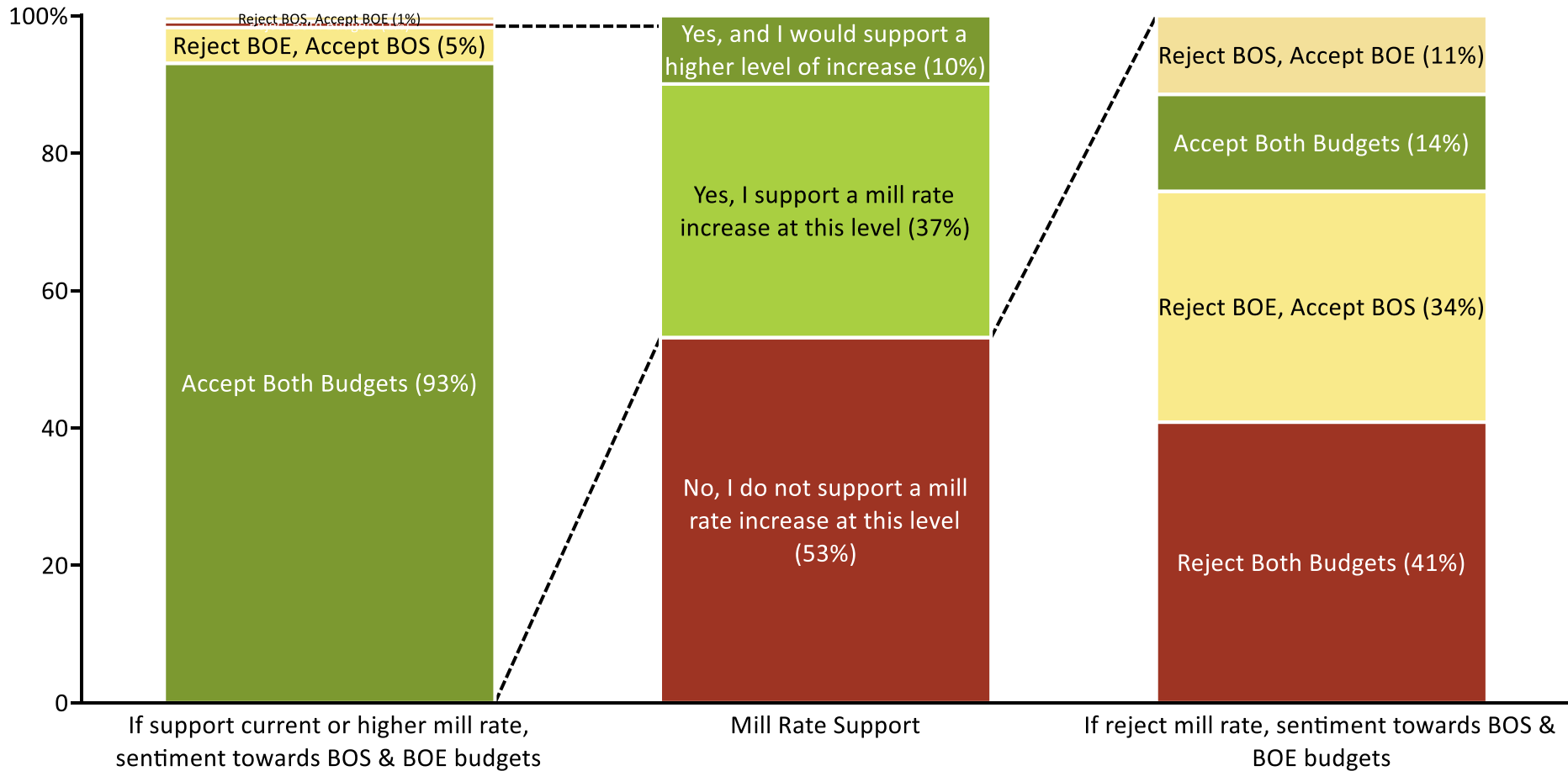
To increase BOS budget, I would support increasing...



Q: In what areas would you support an increase in the Board of Selectman's budget? Please select all that apply

While those in favor of the proposed mill rate increase generally support both budgets, the BOE budget received the greatest scrutiny from those not in favor of the mill rate increase

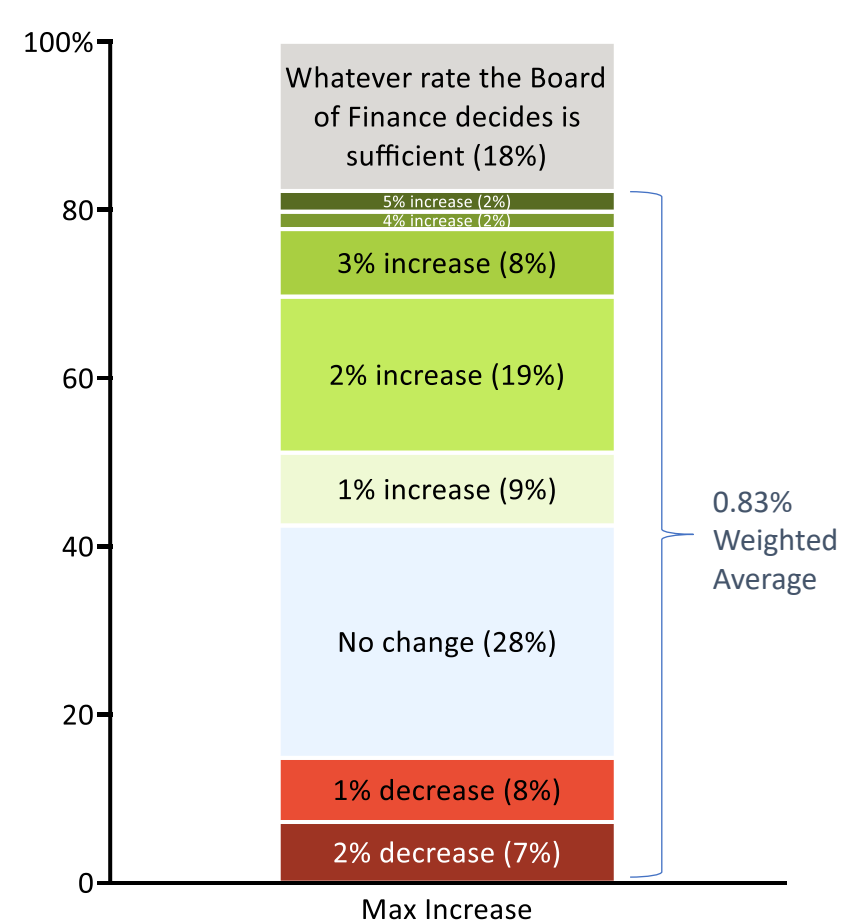
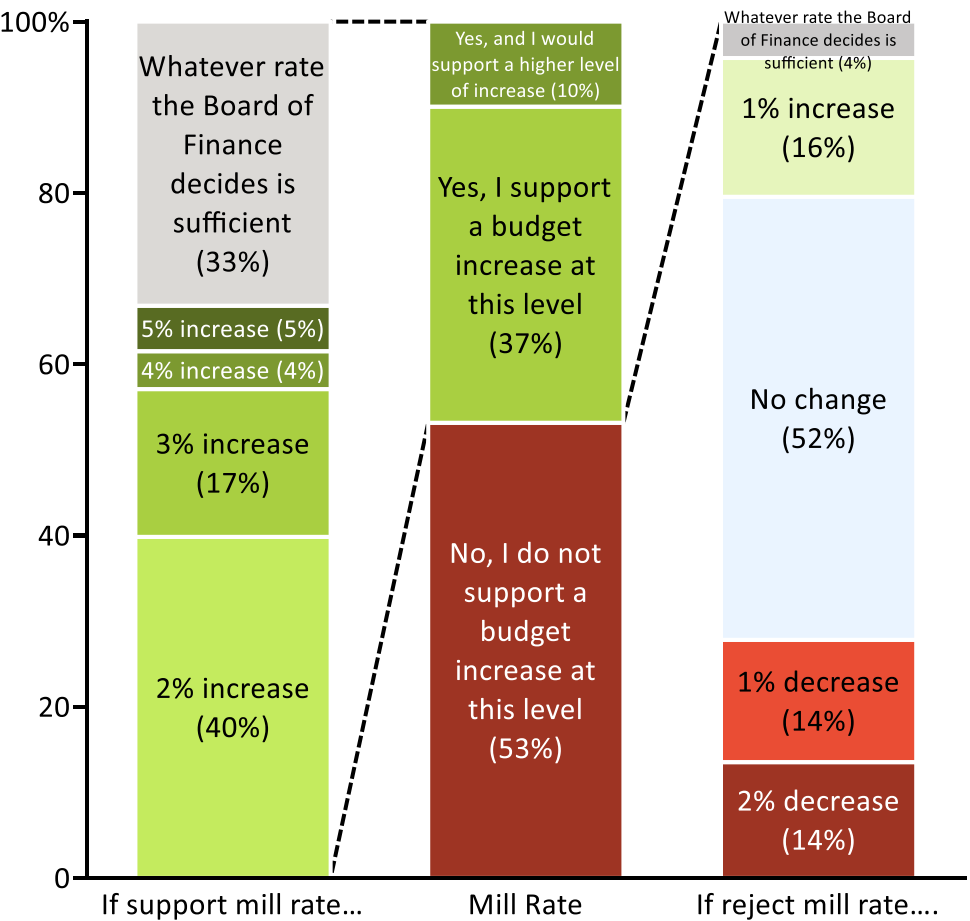
Mill Rate Approval vs Budget Approval



51% of respondents would like to see a mill rate increase of 1% or less, with the weighted average increase calculated at 0.83%

Maximum Mill Rate Accepted

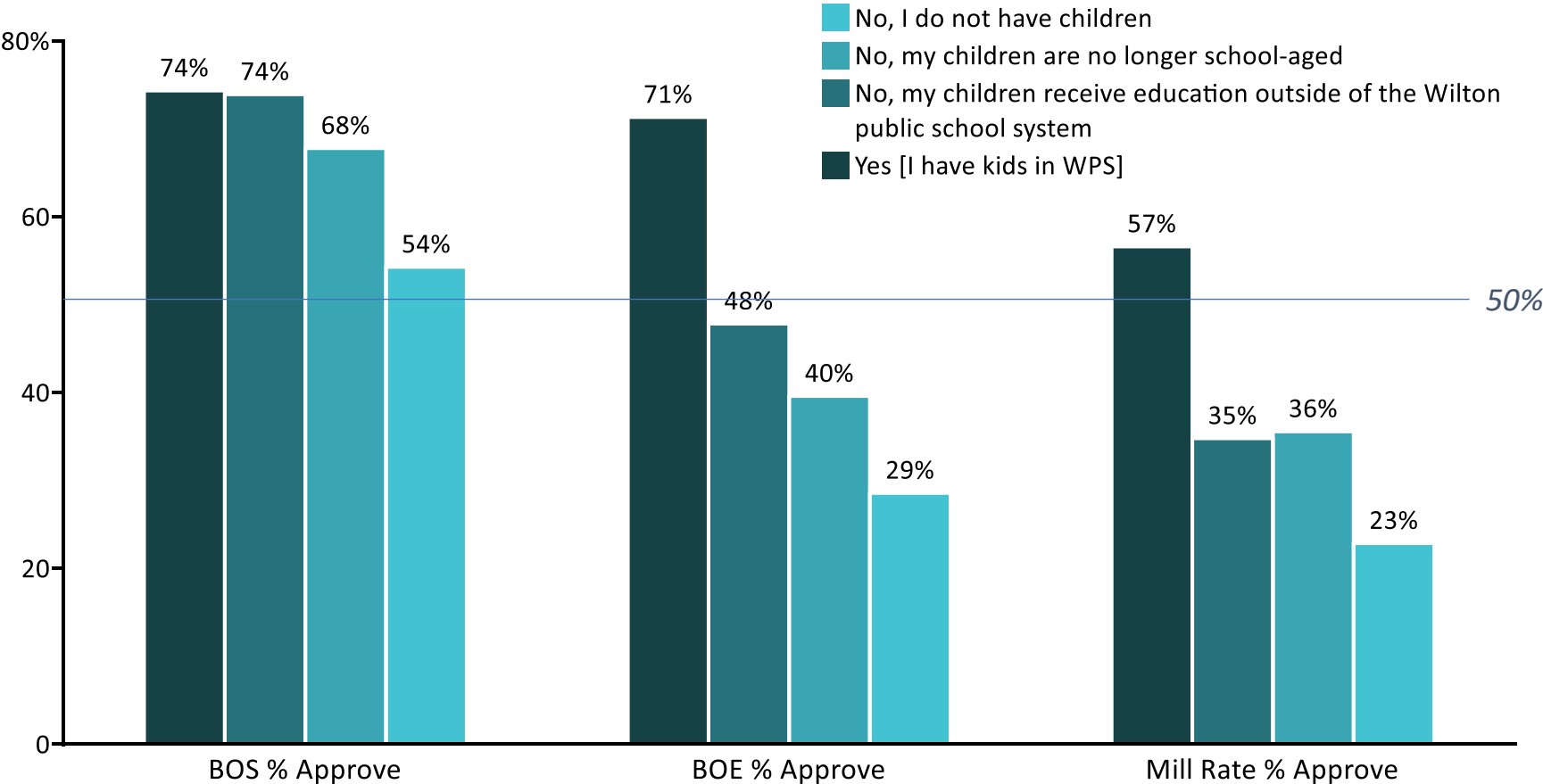
Weighted Average



Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman’s budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education’s budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?; Q: What is the maximum mill rate change you would support?

While respondents with and without children at WPS are in favor of the BOS budget, those without children attending WPS were less supportive of the BOE budget and mill rate

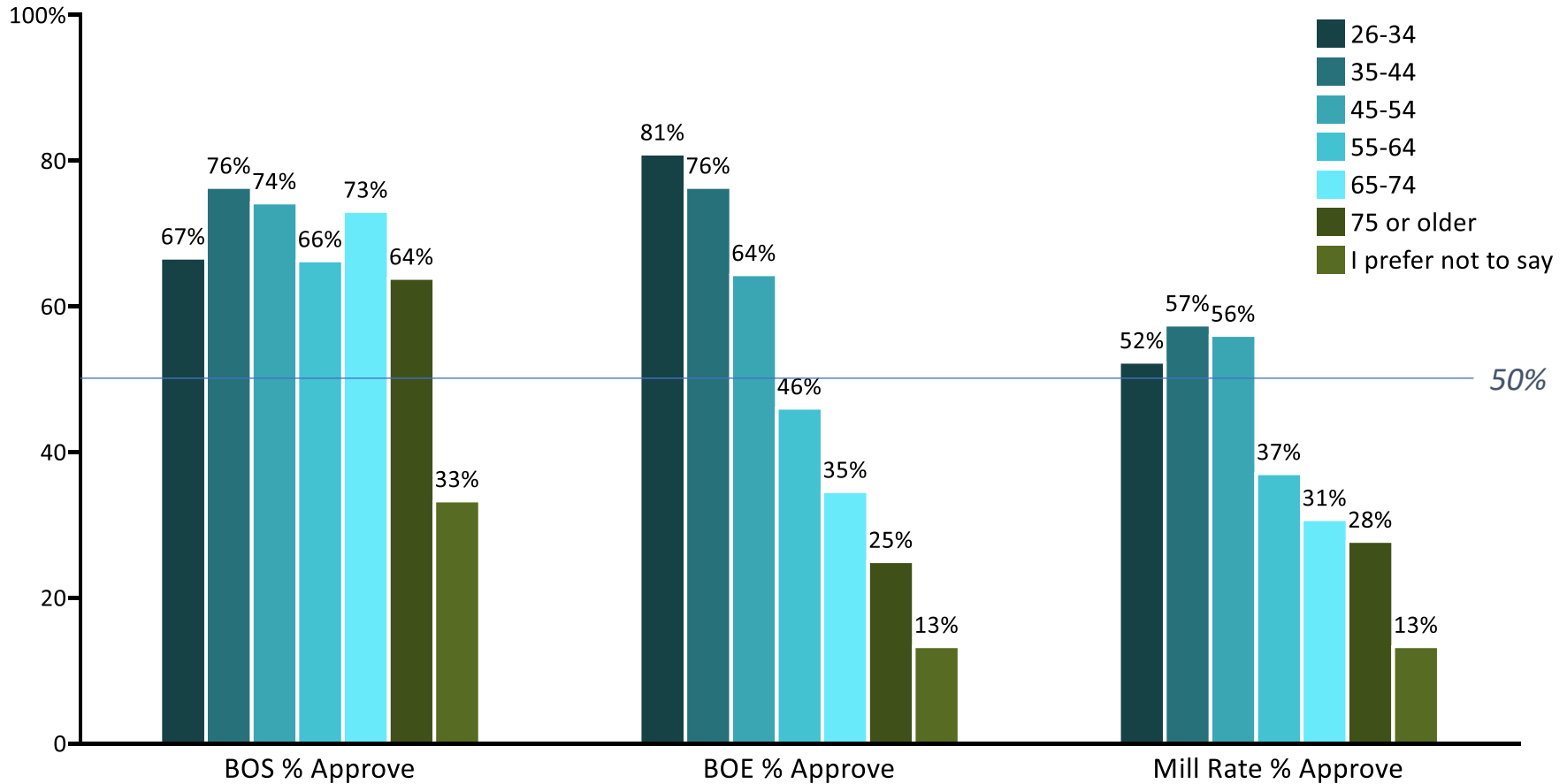
Budget Approval vs Children in WPS



Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman’s budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education’s budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?; Q: Do you have children enrolled in the Wilton Public Schools?

While respondents across all age brackets responded in favor of the BOS budget, the BOE budget and mill rate received significantly less support from the older age brackets

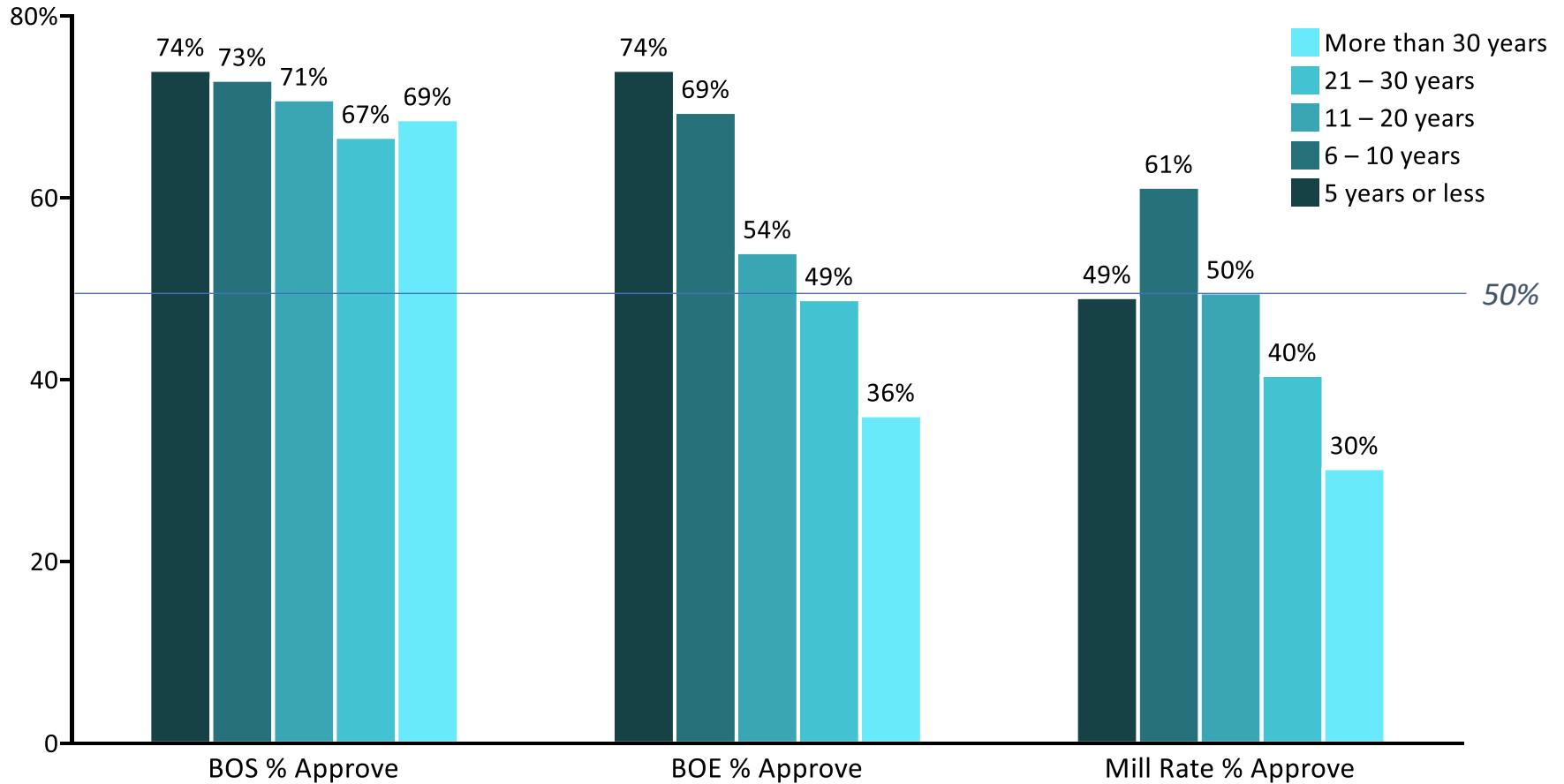
Budget Approval vs Age



Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman’s budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education’s budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?; Q: How old are you?

While a significant majority responded in favor of the BOS budget, the BOE budget and mill rate received significantly less support from residents who have been in Wilton longer

Budget Approval vs Years in Wilton



Q: Do you support the proposed +1.37% increase to the Board of Selectman’s budget?; Q: Do you support the proposed +3.26% increase to the Board of Education’s budget?; Q: Do you support a +1.94% increase to the mill rate, as calculated based on the proposed budgets from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education?; Q: How long have you lived in Wilton?