

Key Findings

- The overall electoral mood has changed little in the past year.
- Support for a \$29 parcel tax measure is marginally higher than the \$45 measure tested in 2012.
- However, support still falls short of the two-thirds vote threshold both initially (62%) and after positive arguments (64%).

The strongest arguments in favor of a measure cite the need for communications during a natural disaster and highlight how a new system would improve 911 response times. The strongest criticisms note that the last bond is still being paid off and the numerous local taxes approved by voters.

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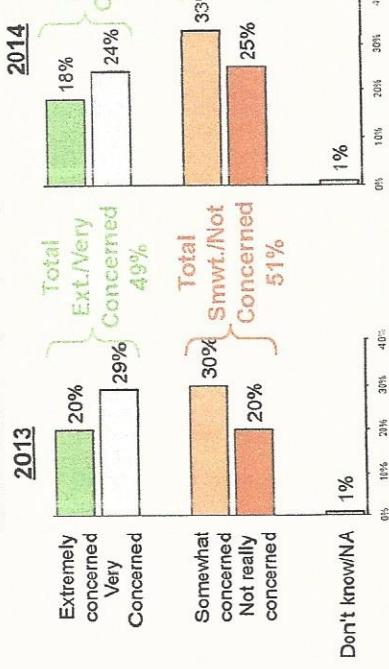
Marin Emergency Radio Authority Finance Measure Tracking Survey

Interviews Conducted:
January 26-29, 2014

Fairbank, Maslin, Metz & Associates FM3
Public Opinion Research, Inc.
220-3765
SANTA MONICA • OCEANSIDE • MADISON • MEXICO CITY

Concerns about reliable emergency communications have diminished slightly over the past year.

In general, how concerned are you about police, firefighters, and emergency medical first responders from different communities maintaining reliable communications during a major emergency or natural disaster?



Ballot Language Tested

2013

County Communications and Measure. To modernize Marin County's emergency communications system used for emergency communications during earthquakes and other natural disasters. Marin County shall establish a \$29 million annual parcel tax mechanism to maintain reliable communications among police, fire, and medical first responders from different communities. Marin County shall spend authorizing an annual parcel tax of \$29 per single-family home, with public audits, expenditure reports, citizen oversight and senior exemptions?

2014

Emergency Communications and 911 Response to modernize Marin County's emergency communications system used for emergency communications during earthquakes and other natural disasters throughout Marin County, shall an ordinance be adopted authorizing an annual parcel tax of \$29 per single-family home, with public audits, expenditure reports, citizen oversight and senior exemptions?

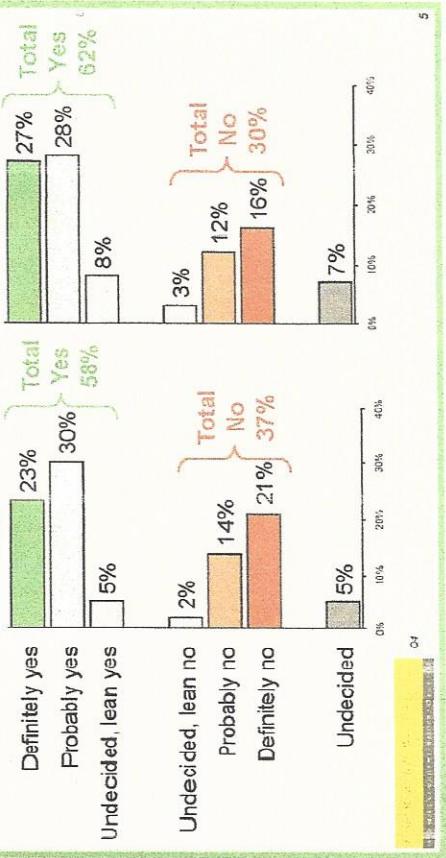
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Although the revised ballot language and electoral climate lead to increased support, it still falls short of two-thirds.

If there were an election today, do you think you would vote "yes" in favor of this measure or "no" to oppose it?

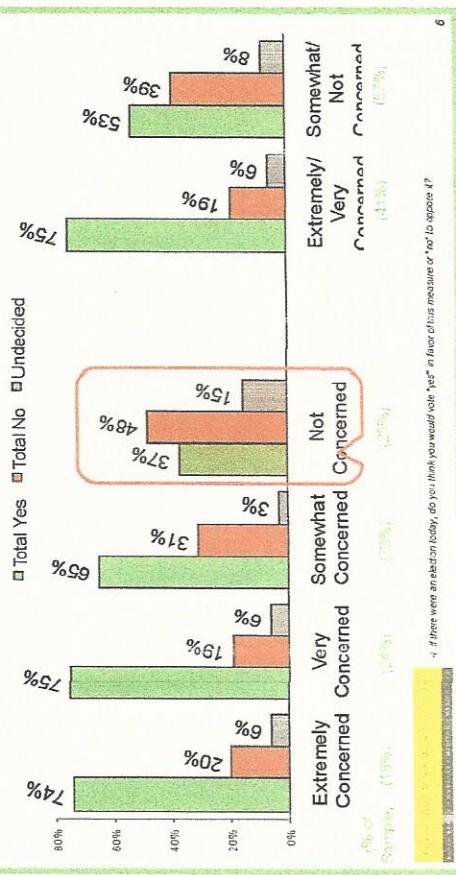
2013



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Those not concerned about communications in emergencies see little reason to vote "yes."

Initial Vote by Concern About Emergency Communication Services

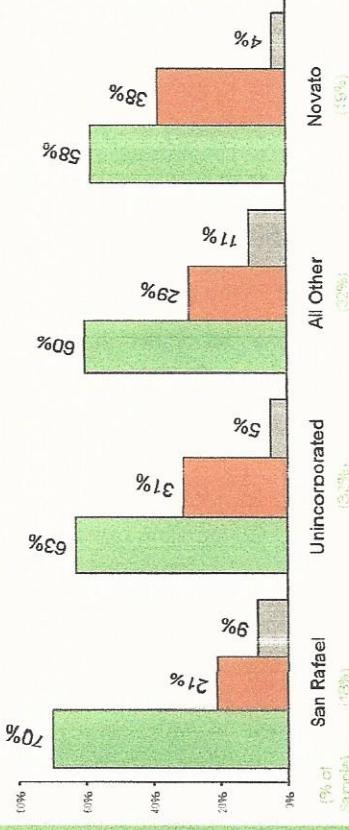


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San Rafael voters are particularly supportive; Novato voters more skeptical.

Initial Vote by City/Town

□ Total Yes ■ Total No □ Undecided

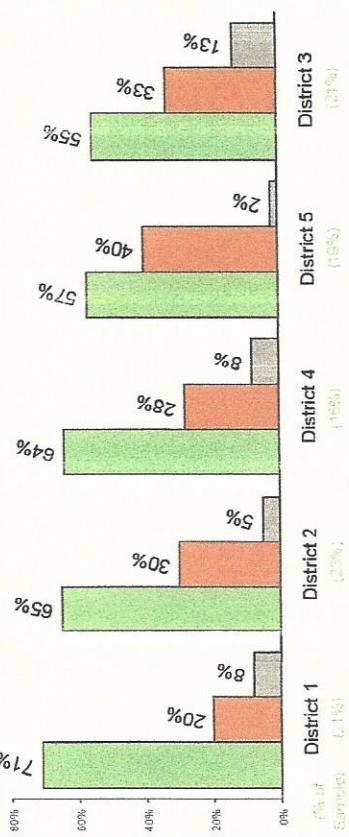


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Support lags in Supervisorial Districts 5 and 3.

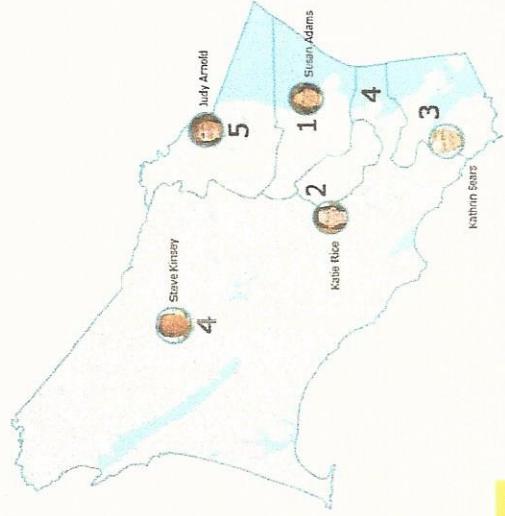
Initial Vote by Supervisorial District

□ Total Yes ■ Total No □ Undecided



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Marin County Supervisor Districts

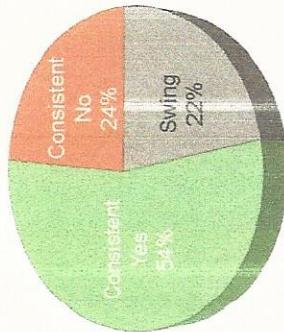


Marin Emergency Radio Authority [MERA]

Reactions to Pro and Con Arguments

Segmenting the Electorate

- ❖ **Consistent Yes:** Voters who consistently indicated that they would definitely vote yes on the measure.
 - ❖ **Consistent No:** Voters who consistently indicated that they would definitely vote no on the measure.
 - ❖ **Swing:** Those who changed their vote or were consistently undecided.
- The following slide shows demographic groups that disproportionately fall into one category or the other.



Demographic Profile of the Segments

Consistent Yes	Swing	Consistent No
54% of the Electorate	22% of the Electorate	24% of the Electorate
Liberal Democrats	Independent Women	Republican Men
Ideology Somewhat Liberal	Ages 75+	Ideology Conservative
Voters of Color	Supervisorial District 3	Republicans Ages 18-59
Ideology Liberal	Ideology Conservative	Independents Ages 60+
Democrats	Conservative Republicans	Republicans Ages 60+
Democratic Women	HH Income <\$75,000	Conservative Republican
Democrats Ages 18-59	Independent Ages 60+	Republican Women
Democrats Ages 60+	Independents	Supervisorial District 5
Democratic Men	Renters	HH Income \$100,000-\$150,000
Ideology Very Liberal		

11

12

Subsets of Persuadable Voters

Initial Positive Soft	Positive Movers
43% of the Electorate	8% of the Electorate
Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent Women
Democrats Ages 18-59	Men Ages 60+
Ideology Somewhat Liberal	Supervisorial District 3
Supervisorial District 4	Ideology Conservative
Democrats	Democrats
Democratic Women	Democratic Men
Ages 18-39	Renters
Democratic Men	San Rafael

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Highlighting the risks due to natural disasters and the benefits of reduced 911 response times are compelling reasons to vote "yes."

Very Conv. Smtv. Conv.

(911 RESPONSE TIMES) Marin County's aging emergency communications system is used by all police, fire and emergency medical personnel in the County anytime anyone calls 911. This measure will help reduce 911 response times by replacing the old communications system.

"(NATURAL DISASTER) This measure will make the emergency communications system in Marin County more reliable during a major natural disaster – such as an earthquake, flood or fire – by enabling it to handle the high volume of communications that follow such disasters.

"(CAPITAL) The funds generated by this measure can only be spent on capital purchases, such as radios, computer systems and communication towers. It cannot be spent on administration, salaries or pensions.

(SCALE) Marin County's existing emergency communications system is currently being used by nearly 400 more radios than the 2,500 it was designed to handle, significantly straining the system during emergencies. This measure will double system capacity to handle the current number of radios, as well as future expansion.

"(STATEMENT) I am going to read you some statements from people who may support this ballot measure. Please tell me whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing. Not Part of Soft Sample

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Putting the measure into daily context is broadly persuasive, but lacks intensity.

Very Conv. Smtv. Conv.

(REPAIRS) Repairs to Marin County's existing emergency communications system are made with used parts because key replacement parts are no longer available. This measure will replace the old system with a modern, more reliable system that will be much easier to maintain.

(DAY-TO-DAY USE) We need to pass this measure to replace Marin County's aging emergency communications system for more than just natural disasters and other major emergencies. It is used by all police, fire and emergency medical personnel in the County for their regular communications and anytime anyone calls 911, handling 5.4 million calls last year.

(PER DAY COSTS) To put it into perspective, this measure would only cost single-family homeowners a little less than eight cents per day. This is a small price to pay to ensure that Marin County's emergency communications system is reliable in cases of emergencies and 911 calls.

"(STATEMENT) I am going to read you some statements from people who may support this ballot measure. Please tell me whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing. Not Part of Soft Sample

15

More complex arguments do not resonate.

Very Conv. Smtv. Conv.

(COVERAGE) This measure will expand Marin County's emergency communications system to better cover several underserved areas in which local police, fire and emergency medical responders currently have limited to no ability to use their radios.

(UNIFIED SYSTEM) Without this measure, local communities will be left without dedicated funding to upgrade their emergency communications technologies. Some emergency responders will be able to upgrade to a similar system, and others will not, leaving an inefficient and less effective patchwork of communications systems across the County.

(GRANTS) Marin County has secured over \$8 million in grants to replace the existing system and will continue to aggressively pursue more in the future. Unfortunately, this measure is needed because the grants are insufficient to pay for the entire project, and budget cuts have dramatically reduced the availability of future federal and state grants.

"(STATEMENT) I am going to read you some statements from people who may support this ballot measure. Please tell me whether you find it very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing. Not Part of Soft Sample

16

Natural disaster risks and 911 responses generate the most intense reactions among persuadable voters.

(% Very Convincing)

Statement	All Voters	Initial Positive Soft	Swing Voters	Positive Movers
911 Response Times	34%	33%	23%	40%
Capital	33%	38%	23%	26%
^Natural Disaster Scale	33%	31%	27%	46%
Repairs	30%	27%	21%	44%
Day-to-day Use	27%	23%	24%	39%
Per Day Costs	27%	26%	20%	17%
Coverage	26%	24%	18%	30%
Unified System	20%	18%	3%	6%
Grants	17%	17%	16%	24%

6. I am going to read you some statements from people who may or may not measure. Please tell me whether you find it convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing, or not a measure. Not Part of Spilt Sample
17

The natural disaster arguments is the most broadly compelling among persuadable voters.

(% Total Convincing)

Statement	All Voters	Initial Positive Soft	Swing Voters	Positive Movers
^Natural Disaster 911 Response Times	78%	88%	79%	93%
Scale	75%	81%	70%	81%
Repairs	74%	80%	83%	100%
Coverage	73%	84%	77%	92%
Day-to-day Use	71%	76%	76%	84%
^Capital	69%	79%	67%	84%
Per Day Costs	68%	80%	74%	86%
Grants	62%	73%	68%	76%
Unified System	60%	65%	46%	54%

6. I am going to read you some statements from people who may or may not measure. Please tell me whether you find it convincing, somewhat convincing, or not convincing, or not a measure. Not Part of Spilt Sample
18

The two most compelling criticisms emphasize the last bond and recent local tax increases.

Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



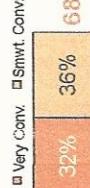
Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



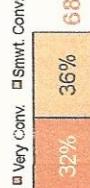
Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



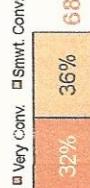
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Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

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Very Conv.

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Very Conv.

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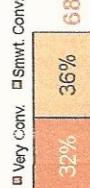
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Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

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Very Conv.

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Very Conv.

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Very Conv.

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Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



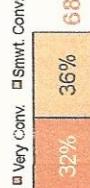
Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



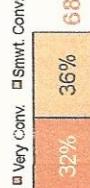
Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



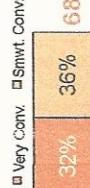
Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



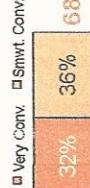
Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.



Very Conv.

Swmt. Conv.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Mobilizing support and educating the public.

Where Are We in Our Outreach?

The Round 1 MERA presentations in 2013 were effective.

2013 survey results lead to the lowering of the parcel tax amount and a more compelling ballot statement.

2014 survey results are improved, but at 63% we're still 4 points short of passage.

Educating the Public on the Urgent Need for Emergency Communications

We learned from the survey that our citizens' willingness to support a parcel tax is directly related to how they prioritize the need for an emergency communications system.

- An expanded public education effort stressing the urgent need for a reliable emergency communication system is required, including:
 - Enlisting the support of more firefighters and police officers to tell the 911/MERA story
 - Expanding our public education through earned media, presentations, mail and TV
 - Asking for MERA Member and BOS support and engagement

Proposed Revised Outreach Budget

EXPENDITURE	Approved G.B. 5/18/13	Revised G.B. 12/11/13	Proposed G.B. 5/18/13	Revised G.B. 12/11/13	Proposed Revised
Consulting Legal Counsel on Public Information Campaigns	\$102,000	\$60,000		\$68,000	\$2,000
Website			\$5,000		\$5,000
Video, Editing & Production	\$5,000	\$5,000		\$10,000	
Video-TV Public Education 6 weeks			\$0	\$100,000	
Digital Web			\$5,000		\$39,200
Tracking Public Survey #2 (completed)	\$16,000	\$16,000		\$15,250	
Mailer #1 introduction, testimonials, promote online info			\$0		\$39,500
Mailer #2 message to Southern Main			\$0		\$11,000
Mailer #3 selected FAQ & testimonials			\$0		\$39,500
Print Materials Graphic Design	\$4,000				(included in other line items)
TOTAL	\$132,000		\$91,000		\$129,450**

**This is an increase of \$197,450 over the previously approved budget.

The Time is Now

We have updated and refined the project – MERA's subcommittees and members have held dozens of meetings to review the next generation system and scale it into a solid project that will win bond passage.

2. We have momentum – With little membership turnover in the last year, MERA has an engaged, knowledgeable and motivated team effort underway.

We cannot afford to wait any longer – MERA has already postponed this project at least a year to make these project revisions.

3. The system cannot wait – Much of the equipment MERA members' use will be at the end of its lifecycle in the next few years. We need to know how we'll be replacing the current aging system now, so we can plan ahead.

4. We know that educating the public is required – Postponing to 2016 is unlikely to help. The public will need to be educated, no matter when we bring a bond measure to them.

With Your Help, We Will:

Educate the public on MERA's mission and need for fast, reliable emergency communication to keep our residents and emergency personnel safe.

Continue to advance 911 and safety communications with a Gen II system that is faster, provides more coverage and remains reliable during natural disaster

Raise \$40 million, or about \$29 for a single family residence, or 7.9 cents per day, via a parcel tax (to be offset as much as possible by State and Federal grants)

Preserves MERA members' precious general fund money for other critical services. This won't be the case if the 'traditional' funding method is used.