



TO: Downtown Seattle Association
Seattle Metro Chamber of Commerce
FROM: Andrew Thibault, EMC Research
RE: Seattle Issues Survey Results
DATE: November 6, 2020

SUMMARY

*Based on research conducted in late October with Seattle voters a majority are clearly **unhappy** about the direction of the city and are strongly **dissatisfied** with the performance of the City Council on critical issues.*

*A substantial majority of voters – including two thirds of voters of color – **do not support** making substantial cuts in the number of police officers and **do not trust** the Council to reform the Seattle Police Department without harming public safety.*

*On homelessness, three quarters of voters are **unhappy** about the proliferation of unauthorized tent encampments in neighborhoods and in city parks and playgrounds and a majority **reject** the Council's approach of ending almost all encampment clean ups.*

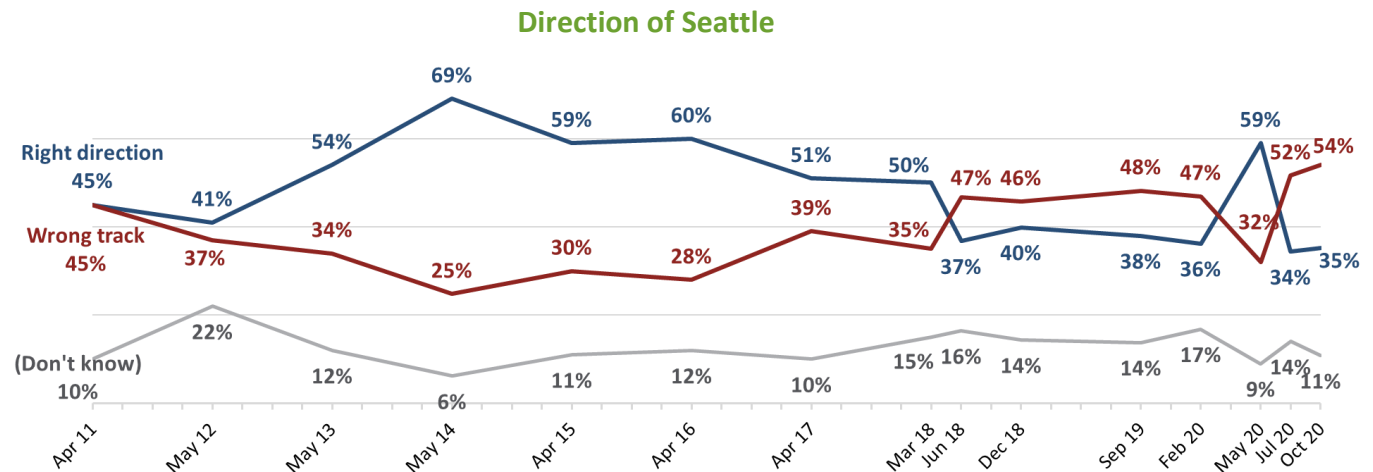
METHODOLOGY

EMC Research completed 900 mixed-mode interviews (live telephone and text-to-web) among likely November 2021 voters in the City of Seattle. The interviews were conducted between October 21st and October 27th. A total of 546 interviews were conducted citywide with oversamples in City Council Districts 1, 2, 6, and 7. The overall margin of error for these results is ± 4.2 points at the 95% confidence interval.

KEY FINDINGS

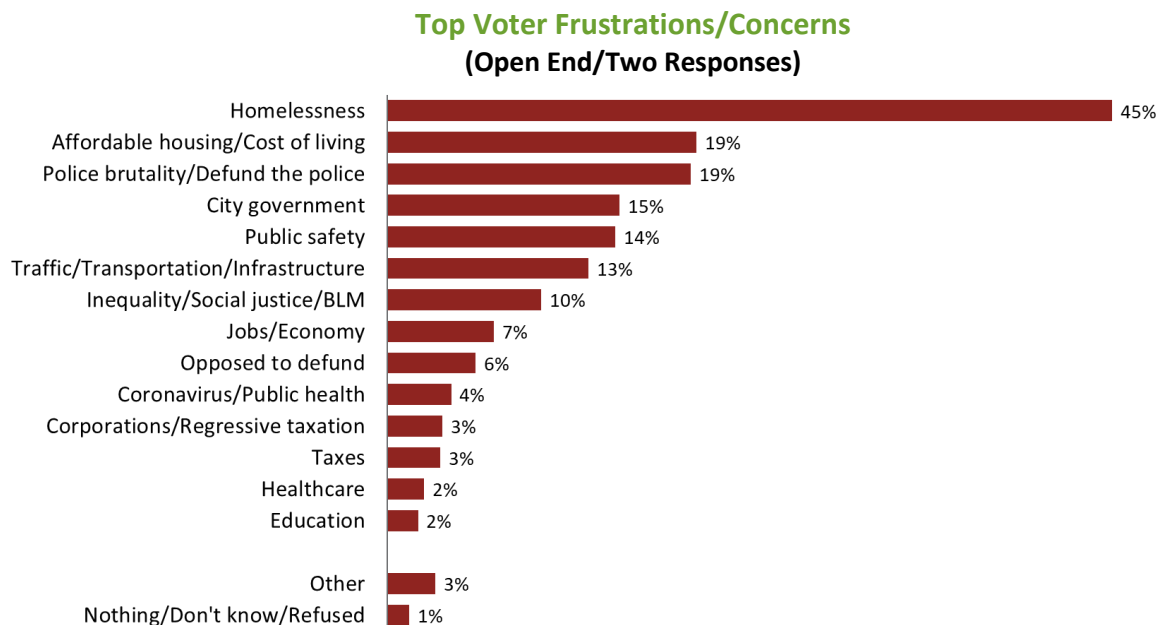
Seattle voters are very pessimistic about the direction of the city. Homelessness is their top concern by a wide margin.

- A majority of voters (54%) feel things in Seattle “have gotten **pretty seriously** off on the wrong track.” Only a third (35%) think things are “generally going in the right direction.”



Q6. Do you feel that things in Seattle are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

- In an open-end question (no response options offered), nearly half (45%) of Seattle voters mention homelessness as the issue they are most “frustrated or concerned about.”

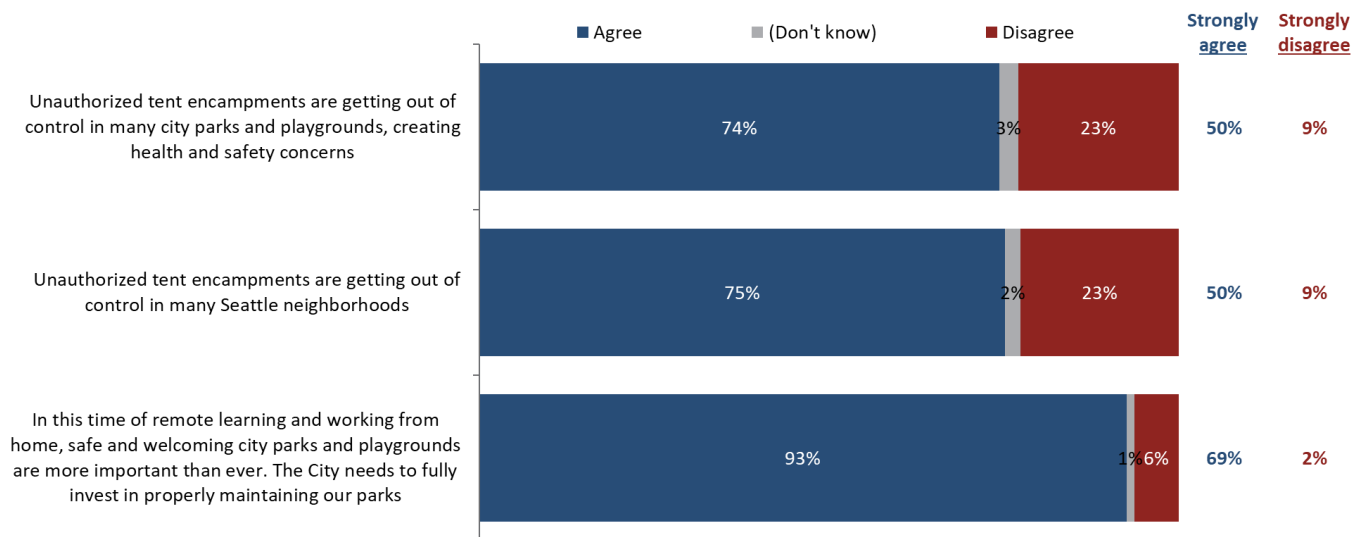


Q7. What are the issues facing Seattle that you are most frustrated or concerned about? (Up to two responses accepted, combined response shown)

Voters' overwhelming concern about unauthorized tent encampments in neighborhoods and in city parks and playgrounds coupled with strong frustration about the lack of progress on homelessness has pushed Seattle voters to a tipping point with a strong majority now saying the city needs to remove unsafe/unhealthy encampments.

- Three-quarters of likely voters say that unauthorized tent encampments are getting out of control “in many Seattle neighborhoods” and “in many city parks and playgrounds” with half “strongly agreeing.” And nearly all voters agree that “the City needs to fully invest in properly maintaining our parks.”

Attitudes about Tent Encampments and Public Spaces



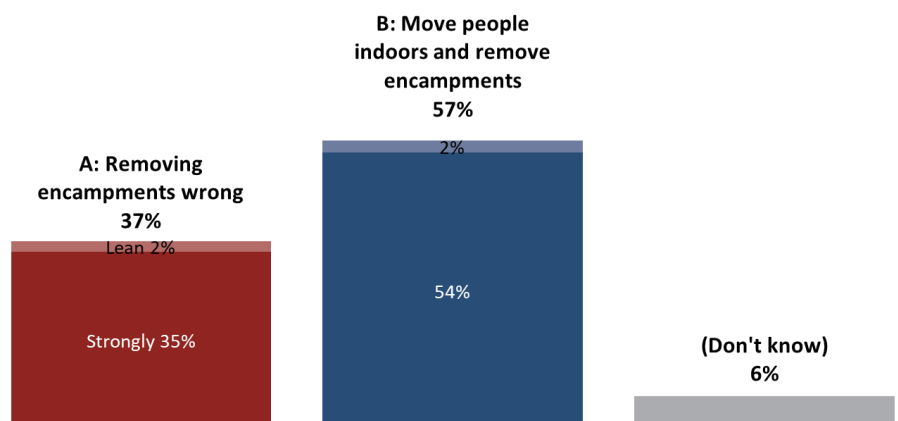
- A majority of voters in every significant subgroup except voters age 18-39 say that unsafe/unhealthy encampments need to have compassionate outreach, but ultimately must be removed. This includes 57% of white voters and 57% of voters of color.

Attitudes about Homelessness/Encampments

A: People experiencing homelessness deserve our compassion and help. Removing tent encampments is not an effective or humane policy and the Council was right to stop the sweeps and redirect those resources to community interventions and affordable housing.

OR

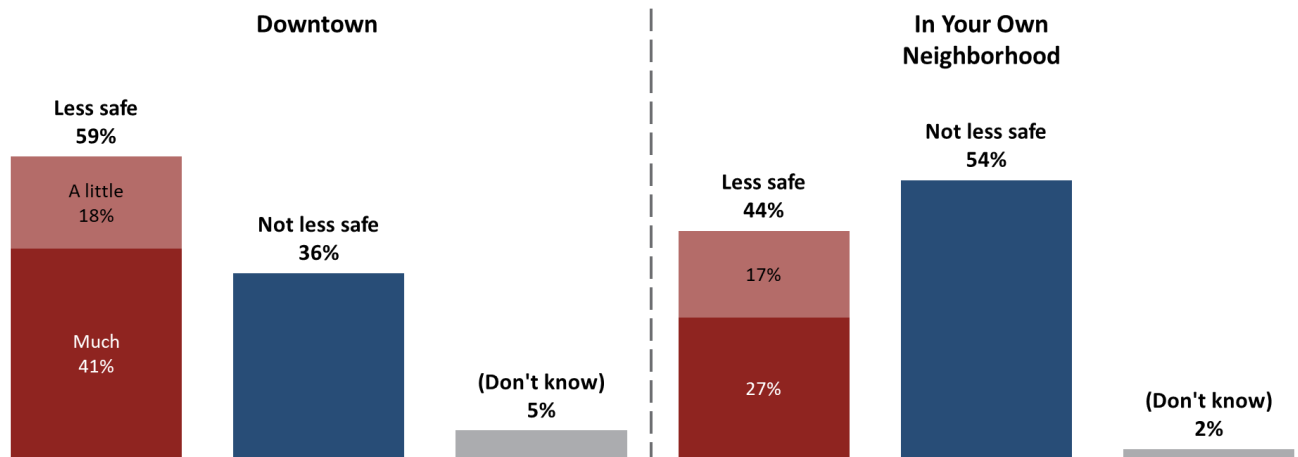
B: Leaving people in dangerous tent encampments is not compassionate or sustainable. Allowing these encampments to take over our parks, playgrounds, and sidewalks is impacting us all and has created health and safety hazards and some increased crime. The city needs to continue to do compassionate outreach to move people indoors to designated hotels and shelters, while removing encampments that are health and safety risks.



Voters are also very concerned about the potential public safety impacts of significant cuts to the SPD budget and they **do not trust** the City Council to reform the department without harming public safety.

- Six in ten voters (59%) say significant cuts to the SPD budget will make downtown less safe and almost half (44%) say cuts would make them “feel less safe in [their] own neighborhood.”

Public Safety Impacts of Significant Cuts

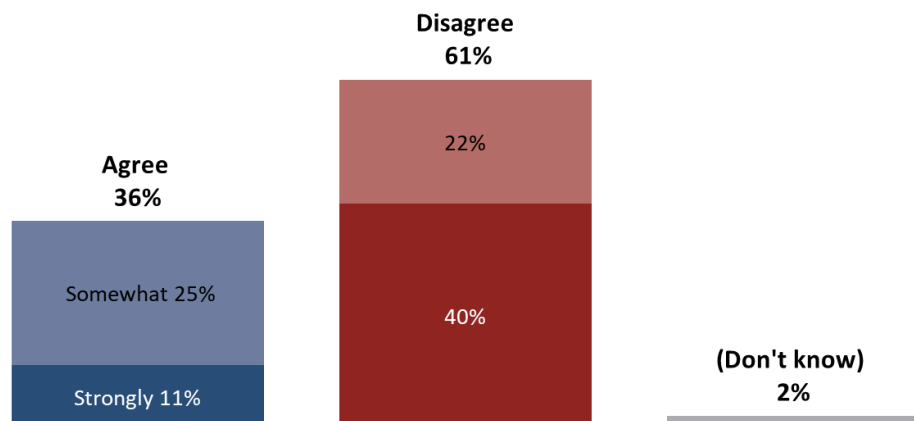


Q39. If the City Council cuts the SPD budget by up to fifty percent and lays off hundreds of officers, do you think it will make Downtown Seattle less safe or not?
 Q40. And do you think you will feel less safe in your own neighborhood or not?

- Six-in-ten voters (61%) say they **do not** trust the City Council “to make significant cuts to the Seattle Police Department budget in a way that will address systemic racism while keeping our neighborhoods and downtown Seattle safe.”
- This includes a strong majority of white voters (61%) and voters of color (63%).

Trust Council to Reform SPD

“I trust the City Council to make significant cuts to the Seattle Police Department budget in a way that will address systemic racism while keeping our neighborhoods and downtown Seattle safe.”



When presented with three options about SPD cuts, 6-in-10 voters favor either reform without laying off hundreds of officers or not cutting any officers at all; 4-in-10 support cutting the SPD budget by up to 50%.

- A majority of men (60%), women (60%), voters age 40-64 (68%) and voters age 65+ (74%) **oppose defund**. More voters of color (67%) are opposed than white voters (58%).
- Voters age 18-39 are the **only** subgroup where a majority support defunding SPD.

Reforming SPD

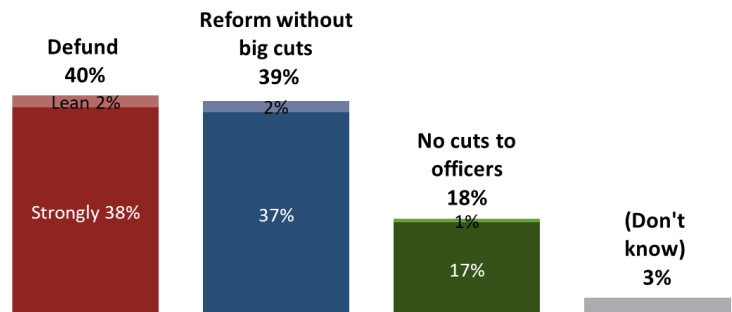
[Defund] The repeated police attacks on peaceful protestors and the violence directed at people of color have demonstrated that partial measures won't work. Cutting the police budget by up to fifty percent and redirecting those resources to community groups is the best way to address the problem of systemic police violence and racism.

OR

[Reform w/o big cuts] Policing must be reformed but cutting hundreds of police officers is the wrong answer. Current staff levels are the same as 25 years ago, 911 response times are going up, and Seattle just had a record number of homicides. This Council's reckless ideological approach has already pushed out Police Chief Carmen Best. While we must demilitarize the police and fund alternatives like social services and community-based programs, we should not do it by dramatically cutting the SPD budget and laying off hundreds of officers.

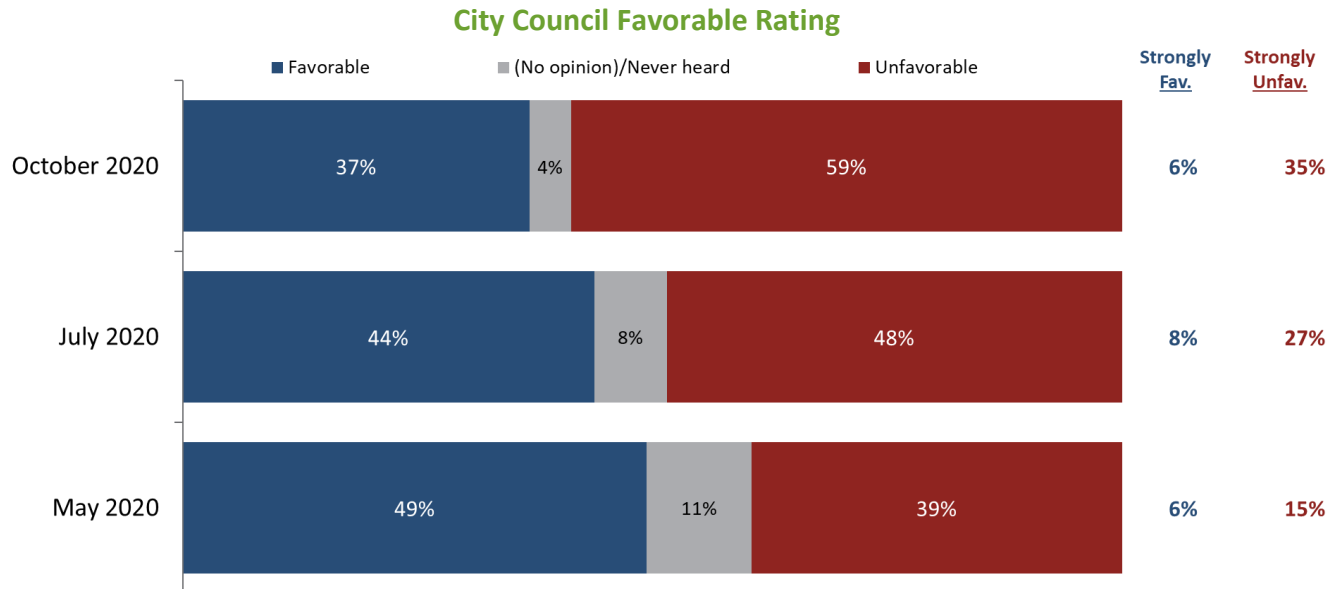
OR

[No cuts] We shouldn't be cutting any police officers right now. Seattle already has one of the lowest ratios of officers to residents compared to similarly sized cities and cutting hundreds of officers will only make emergency response times worse.

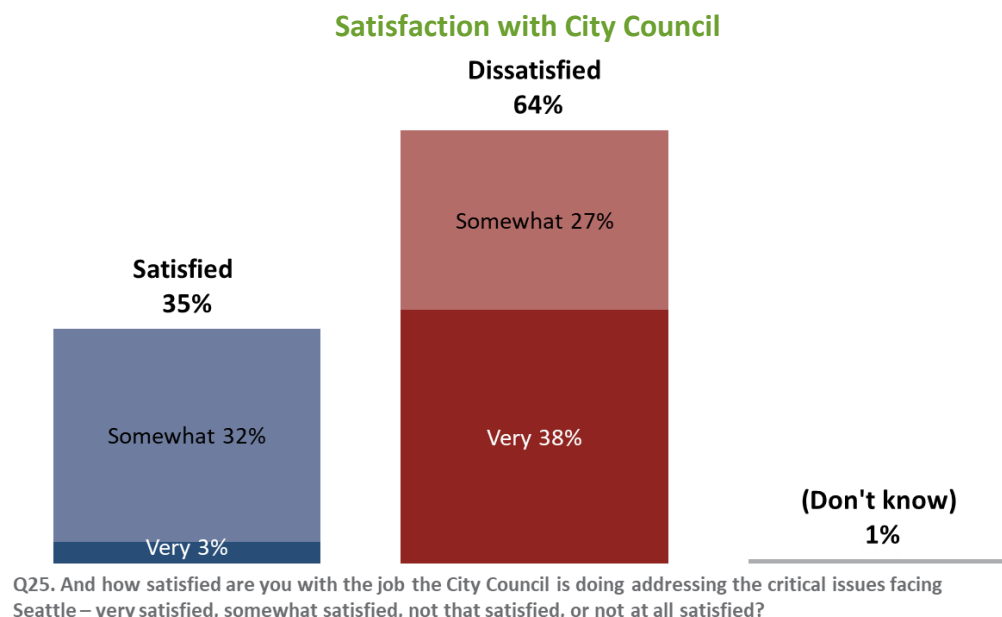


The City Council's favorable rating has declined dramatically over the last five months (37% Favorable / 59% Unfavorable) and nearly two-thirds of likely voters say they are dissatisfied with the job the Council is doing "addressing the critical issues facing Seattle."

- Six in ten (59%) voters have an unfavorable view of the Council. The Council's favorable rating is 18 points more negative than in July and 32 points more negative than in May.
- Majorities of men and women, younger voters and older voters, white voters and voters of color have a negative view of the City Council.



- Nearly two-thirds of likely voters (64%) are dissatisfied with the job the Council is doing addressing the critical issues facing Seattle and 4 in 10 are "very dissatisfied."



APPENDIX

Satisfaction with City Council

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net Satis.
Overall	35%	64%	-30
Men (48%)	35%	65%	-30
Women (52%)	35%	64%	-29
18-39 (35%)	48%	52%	-4
40-64 (42%)	29%	70%	-41
65+ (24%)	27%	73%	-46
Democrat (64%)	36%	63%	-27
Republican (7%)	14%	86%	-71
Other party ID (30%)	37%	63%	-26
Homeowner (51%)	25%	74%	-49
Renter (49%)	45%	55%	-9
White (75%)	35%	64%	-29
Non-White (25%)	34%	65%	-32
CCD 6 (n=157)	32%	67%	-35
CCD 7 (n=165)	29%	71%	-42

Reforming SPD

	Defund	Reform w/out big cuts	No cuts to officers
Overall	40%	39%	18%
Men (48%)	40%	34%	22%
Women (52%)	40%	44%	14%
18-39 (35%)	59%	28%	11%
40-64 (42%)	32%	44%	20%
65+ (24%)	26%	46%	23%
Democrat (64%)	41%	45%	11%
Republican (7%)	8%	29%	61%
Other party ID (30%)	45%	27%	23%
Homeowner (51%)	29%	49%	20%
Renter (49%)	52%	29%	16%
White (75%)	42%	38%	17%
Non-White (25%)	33%	41%	21%

Trust Council to Reform SPD

Q. I trust the City Council to make significant cuts to the Seattle Police Department budget in a way that will address systemic racism while keeping our neighborhoods and downtown Seattle safe.	Agree	Disagree	Net Agree
Overall	36%	61%	-25
Men (48%)	37%	61%	-24
Women (52%)	36%	62%	-26
18-39 (35%)	49%	48%	+1
40-64 (42%)	30%	69%	-39
65+ (24%)	29%	68%	-39
Democrat (64%)	39%	59%	-20
Republican (7%)	8%	92%	-84
Other party ID (30%)	37%	60%	-23
Homeowner (51%)	31%	67%	-37
Renter (49%)	42%	55%	-13
White (75%)	37%	61%	-24
Non-White (25%)	35%	63%	-28

Attitudes about Homelessness/Encampments

	Removing encampments wrong	Move people indoors/ remove encampments	Net Remove
Overall	37%	57%	+20
Men (48%)	36%	59%	+23
Women (52%)	38%	55%	+17
18-39 (35%)	51%	46%	-5
40-64 (42%)	30%	61%	+31
65+ (24%)	28%	64%	+37
Democrat (64%)	37%	59%	+23
Republican (7%)	16%	72%	+56
Other party ID (30%)	42%	47%	+5
Homeowner (51%)	28%	66%	+37
Renter (49%)	46%	47%	+1
White (75%)	38%	57%	+19
Non-White (25%)	35%	57%	+22

Attitudes about Homelessness/Encampments

Q. Unauthorized tent encampments are getting out of control in many Seattle neighborhoods	Agree	Disagree	Net Agree
Overall	75%	23%	+53
Men (48%)	76%	22%	+54
Women (52%)	74%	23%	+52
18-39 (35%)	63%	35%	+29
40-64 (42%)	82%	16%	+66
65+ (24%)	80%	17%	+63
Democrat (64%)	77%	21%	+56
Republican (7%)	93%	7%	+86
Other party ID (30%)	68%	30%	+38
Homeowner (51%)	80%	17%	+62
Renter (49%)	70%	28%	+42
White (75%)	74%	24%	+50
Non-White (25%)	78%	20%	+59