

***National Association of REALTORS®
Flagstaff, AZ
Housing Affordability***

July 2020

American Strategies designed and administered this telephone survey conducted by professional interviewers. The survey reached 310 adults, age 18 or older, who indicated they were registered to vote in Flagstaff, AZ. The survey was conducted from July 6-12, 2020.

Seventy-seven percent of respondents were reached on wireless phones, five percent on VOIP phones, and eighteen percent on landlines. Quotas were assigned to reflect the demographic distribution of registered voters in Flagstaff, AZ, and the data were weighted to ensure an accurate reflection of the population. The sample was drawn from a third-party vendor voter file. The overall margin of error is +/- 5.6%. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies. Percentage totals may not add up precisely due to rounding.

Executive Summary

While housing affordability and availability is a clear problem in Flagstaff...

- Almost all voters say housing affordability is a problem, with 79% saying it is a big problem.
- Housing availability is also seen as a problem, but not as much as affordability
- Most voters say there is too little housing for:
 - *People with low incomes*
 - *Younger people and those just getting started in their careers*
 - *People with moderate incomes*
 - *People with special needs or who are looking to downsize*
 - *Most say that lack of single-family homes available for purchase is a significant factor in creating Flagstaff's high housing costs*

...most do not want to see increased home construction, or decreased housing regulations.

- A broad demographic plurality say there is too much new housing being built. Only one-quarter say there are too little new homes being built.
- Most say either housing regulations are fine as is or that there should be *more* regulation on home construction. Self-identified Democrats, who make up just under half of registered voters, are the strongest proponents of *increased* housing regulation.
- Even groups traditionally supportive of deregulation, such as Republicans, are not very strong supporters of deregulation when it comes to housing construction in Flagstaff.

Executive Summary

Voters are conflicted about housing regulations in Flagstaff

- Many voters hold conflicting attitudes when it comes to housing regulations. Nearly four-in-ten agree BOTH that there needs to be strong regulations to protect the character of Flagstaff *and* that there needs to be reduced housing regulation to decrease the cost of construction to make housing more affordable.

Among voters in Flagstaff, there is a clear disconnect between increased housing development and reduction of housing costs.

- Most say that lack of single-family homes available for purchase in Flagstaff is a significant factor in creating Flagstaff's high housing costs. But despite clear concern over housing affordability, only one-quarter say there are too few homes being built in Flagstaff.
- A large majority believe that developers should pay more in taxes for the additional strain new homes put on public services. Only one-quarter say they should pay less in taxes and fees because new housing means an expanded tax base to cover the costs of public services.

Executive Summary

To change the mood toward housing development in Flagstaff, a comprehensive education program would be necessary.

- Housing affordability is a clear issue.
- Voters are very responsive to messaging highlighting how residents are being priced out, that first responders cannot afford to live near their jobs, and that without new housing Flagstaff will become strictly a tourist, resort and university town.
- But residents have not made the connection that increasing the housing supply is a way to make housing more affordable.

An education campaign will have to connect the dots for voters that:

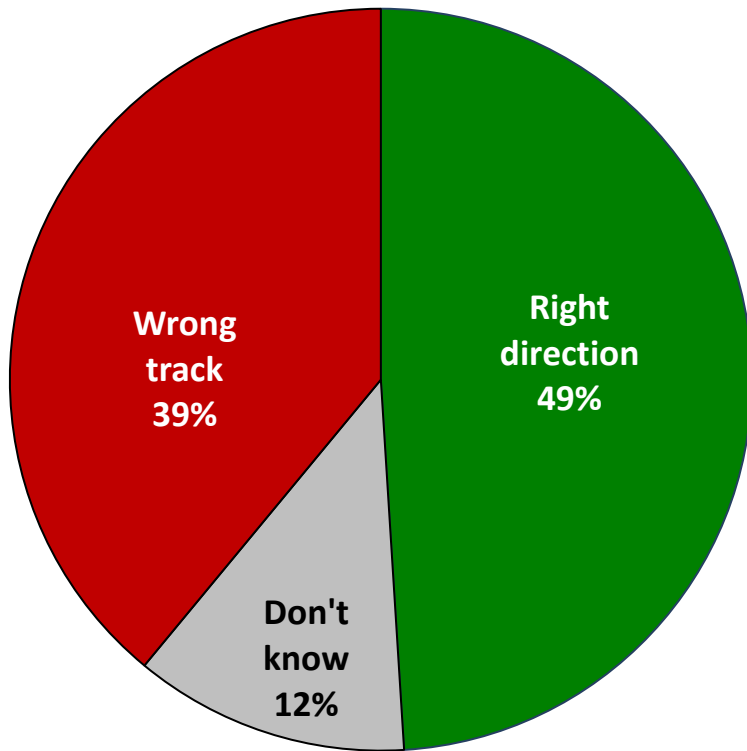
- Lower housing regulations, taxes, and fees means more affordable homes could be built.
- Additional homes means increased revenue from property and sales taxes.
- More affordable housing will keep residents, including first responders and medical professionals, in town and will protect the character of Flagstaff and keep it from being strictly a resort and university town.

Mood in Flagstaff

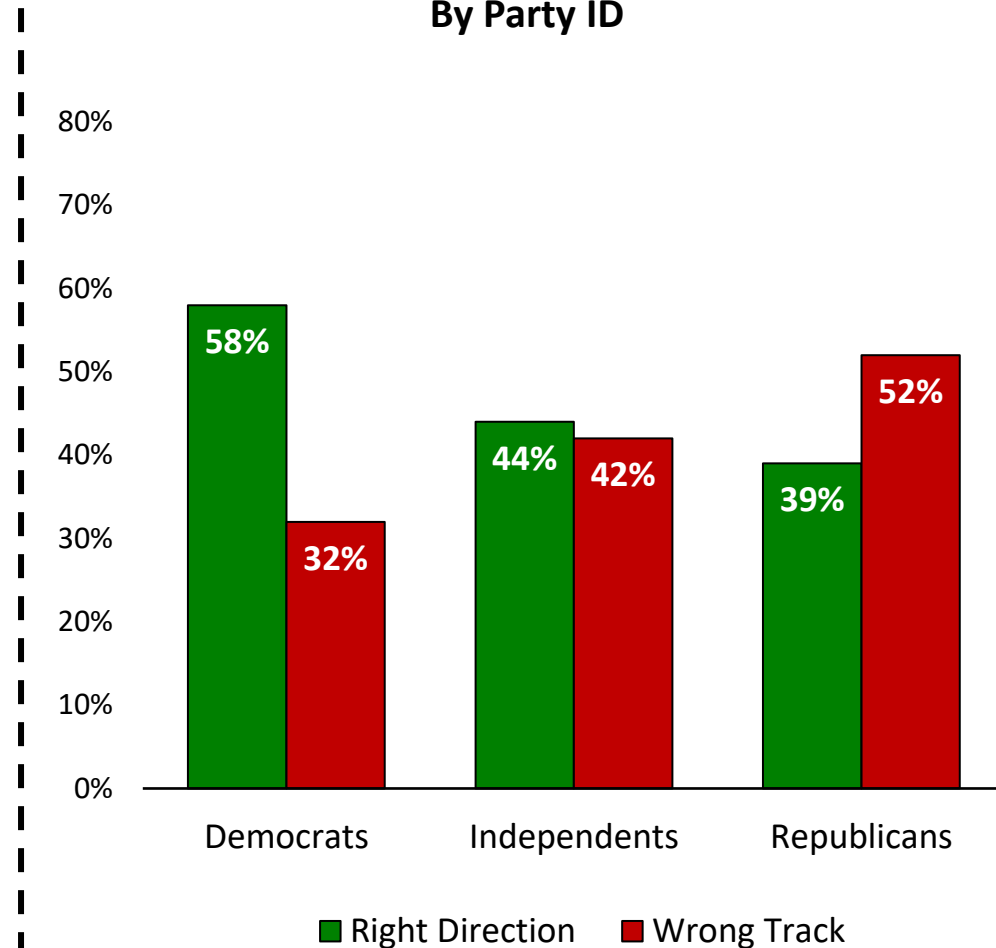
Voters Lukewarm on the Direction of Flagstaff

Democrats much more bullish than independents or Republicans

Direction of Flagstaff



Direction of Flagstaff By Party ID

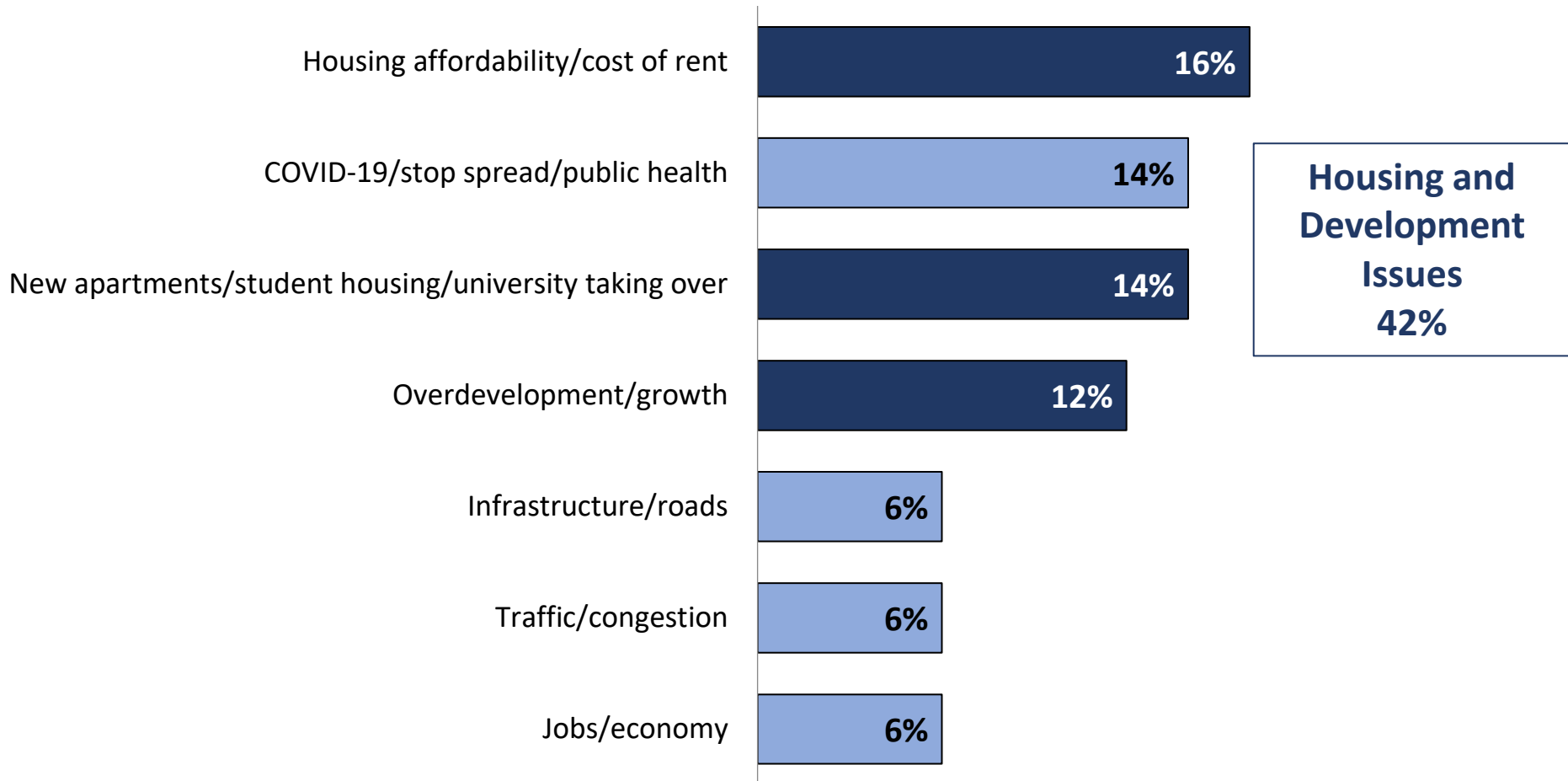


Q.4 Generally speaking, do you think that things in Flagstaff are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?

Housing & Development Dominate Issue Agenda

COVID-19 is also a high concern

Issues in Flagstaff

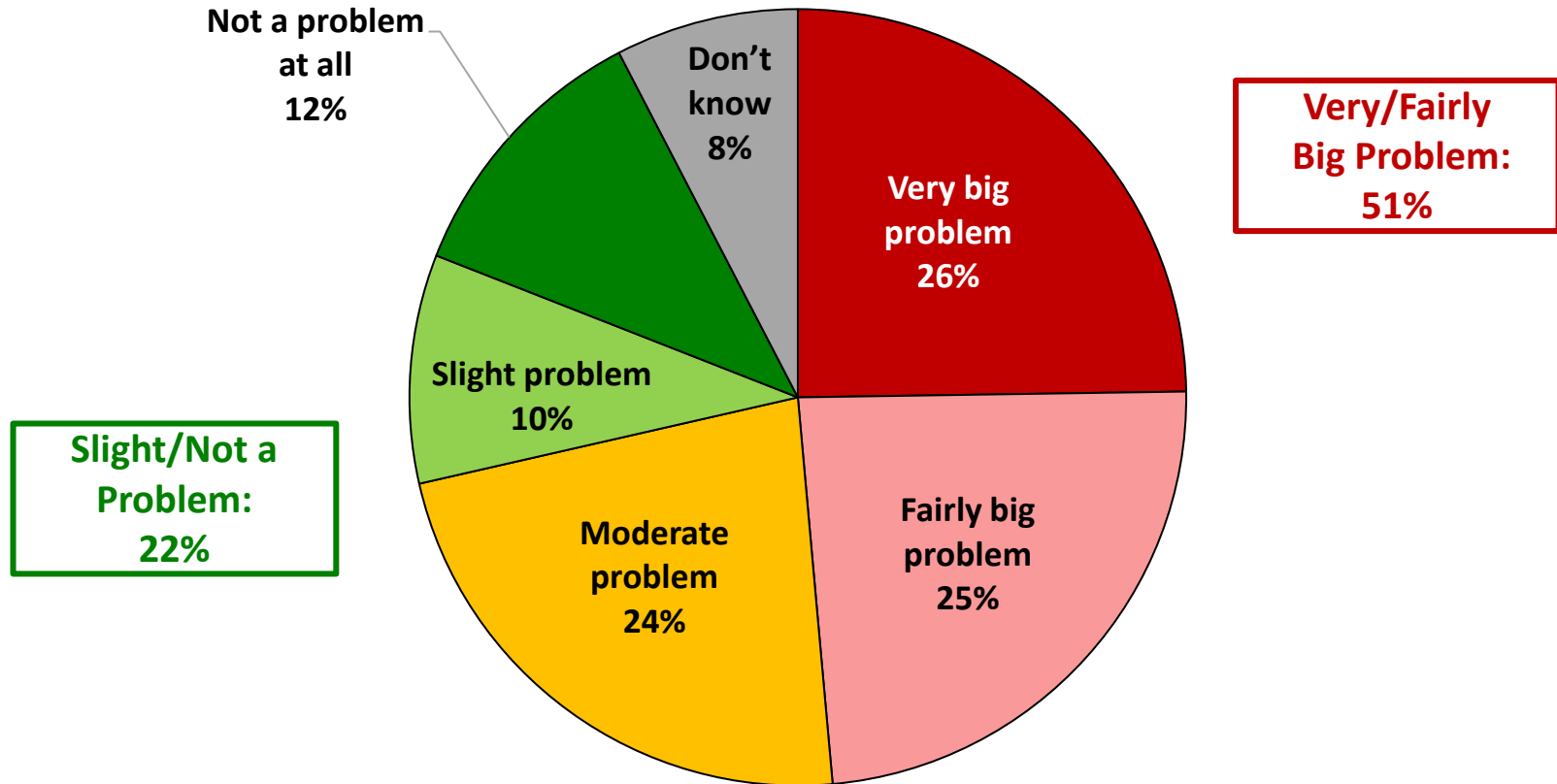


Q.5 And what would you say is the biggest issue in Flagstaff that you would like the mayor and city council to focus on? (OPEN END - RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE - ALLOW MULTIPLE RESPONSES)
(IF DON'T KNOW, PROMPT) Well if you had to decide today, what would you say is the biggest issue in Flagstaff that you would like the mayor and city council to focus on?

Housing Affordability and Availability

Half See Housing Availability as a Big Problem in Flagstaff

Housing Availability

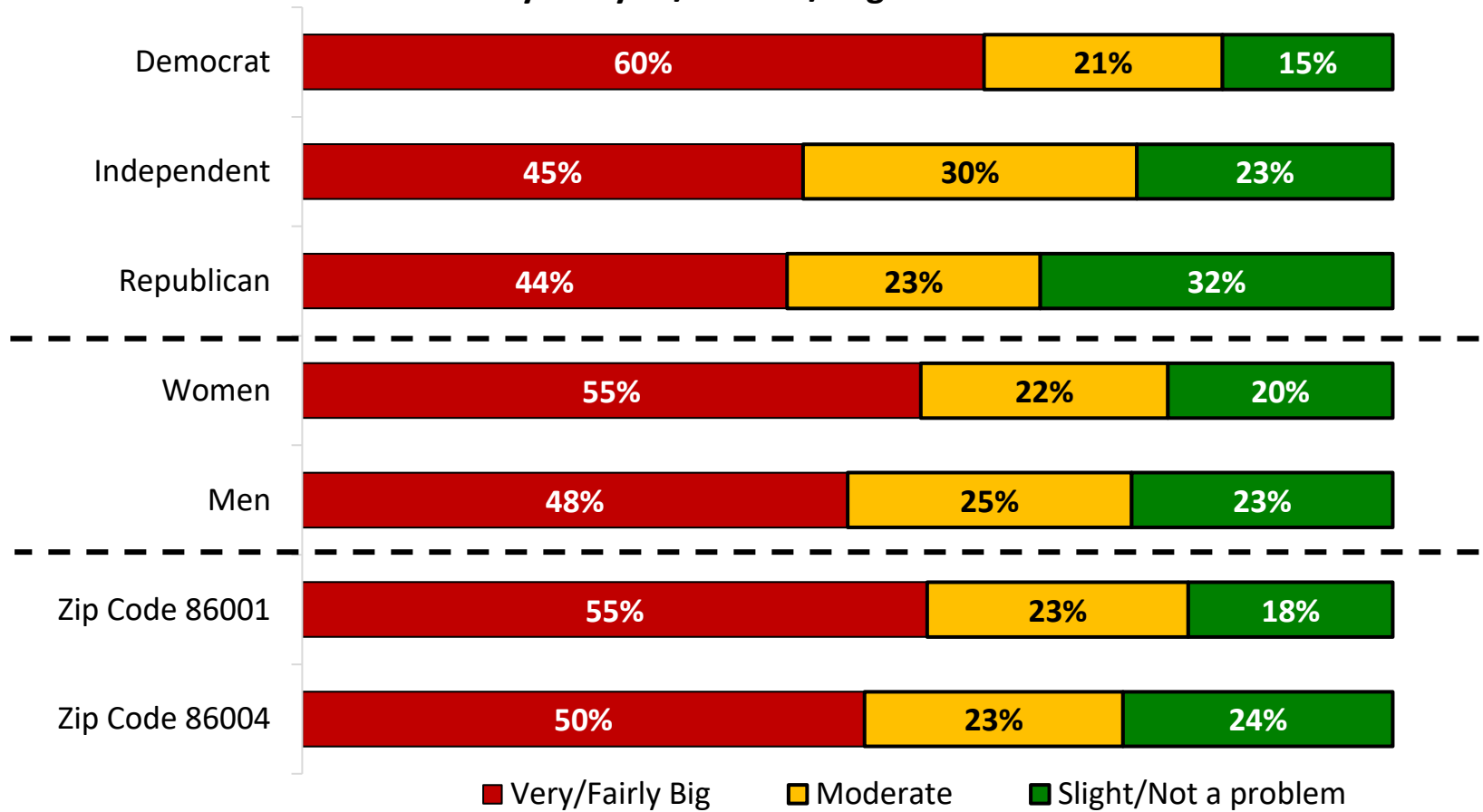


Q.6 Switching gears a bit and thinking about the issue of housing in Flagstaff. (ROTATE Q.6 AND Q.7)
How much of a problem is the availability of housing in Flagstaff, that is to say, the number of homes, condominiums, or apartments that are available to buy or rent?

Is housing availability a (ROTATE FIRST TO LAST AND LAST TO FIRST) very big problem, a fairly big problem, a moderate problem, a slight problem, or not a problem at all in Flagstaff?

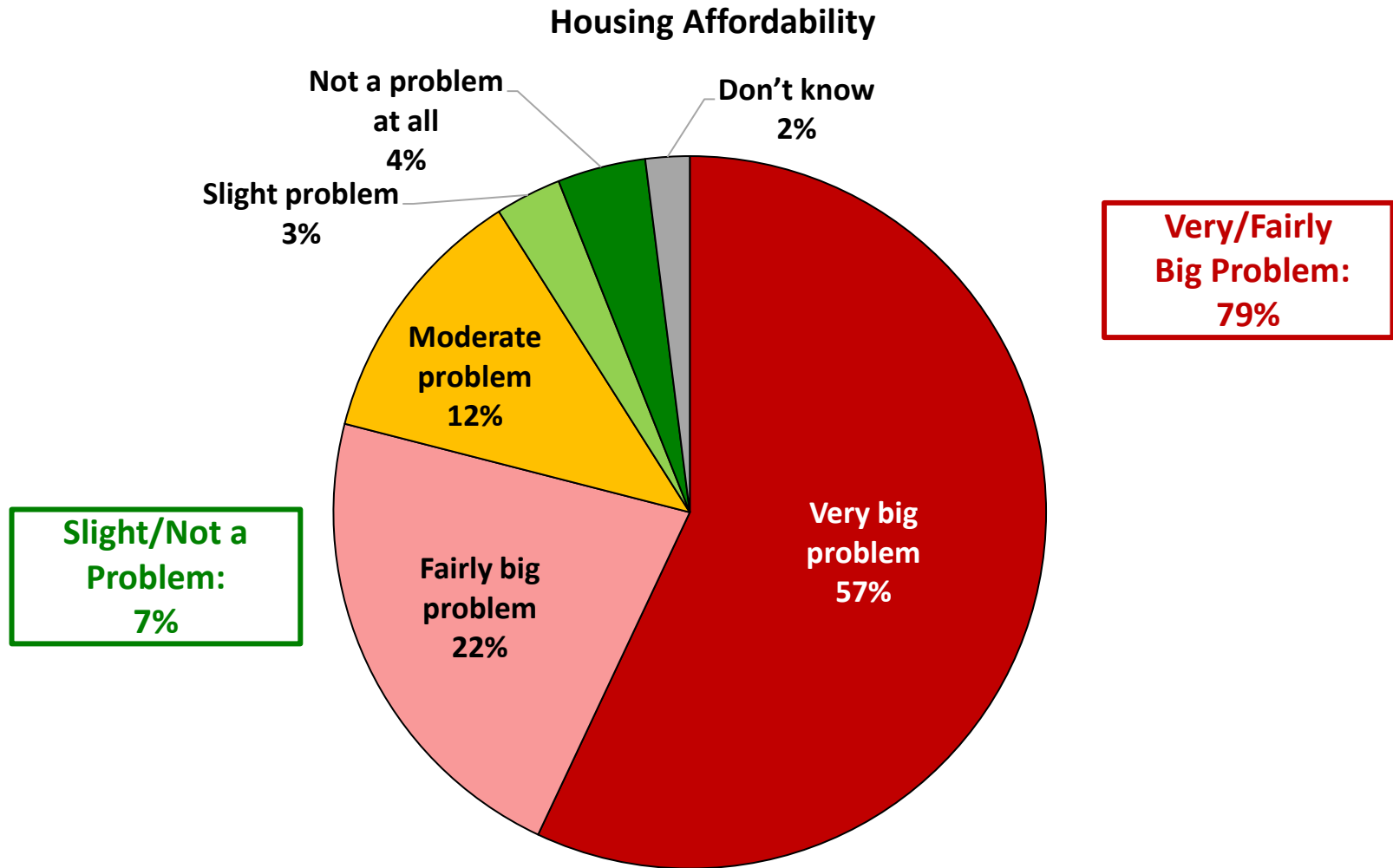
Democrats and Women Most Likely to See Housing Availability As A Big Problem

Housing Availability
By Party ID/Gender/Region



Q.6 Switching gears a bit and thinking about the issue of housing in Flagstaff. (ROTATE Q.6 AND Q.7)
 How much of a problem is the availability of housing in Flagstaff, that is to say, the number of homes, condominiums, or apartments that are available to buy or rent? Is housing availability a (ROTATE FIRST TO LAST AND LAST TO FIRST) very big problem, a fairly big problem, a moderate problem, a slight problem, or not a problem at all in Flagstaff?

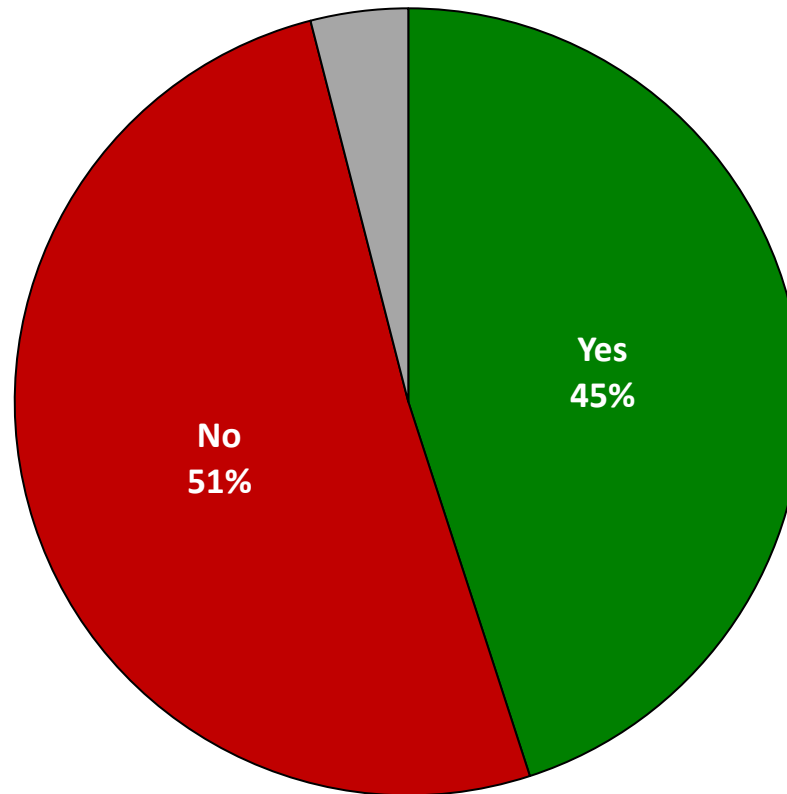
Voters Overwhelmingly See Housing Affordability as a Problem



Q.7 How much of a problem is housing affordability in Flagstaff, that is to say, how much it costs to buy or rent a home? Is it a (ROTATE FIRST TO LAST AND LAST TO FIRST) very big problem, a fairly big problem, a moderate problem, a slight problem, or not a problem at all in Flagstaff?

Voters Split on Whether There Are Enough Housing Options in Flagstaff

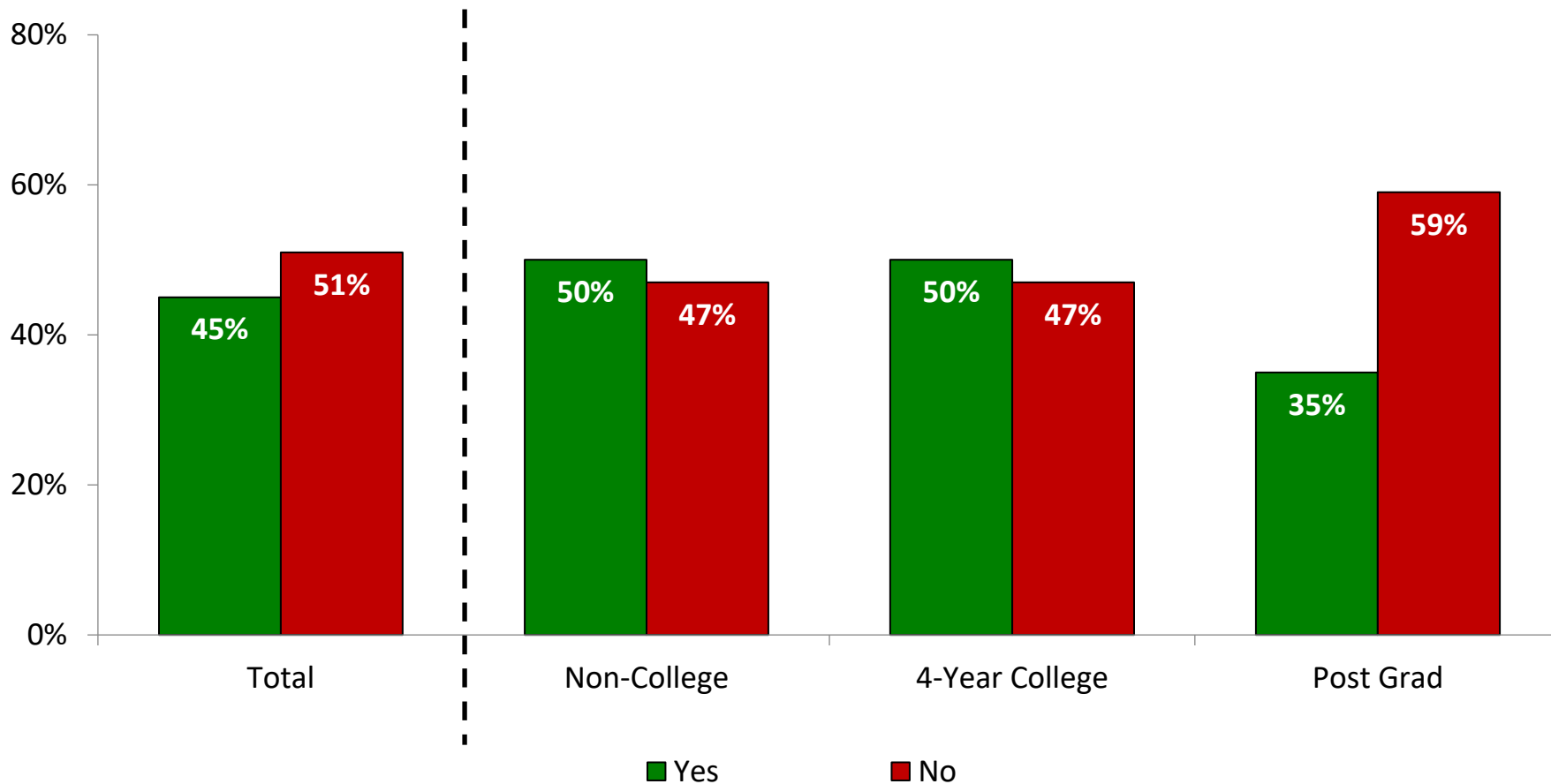
Enough Housing Options in Flagstaff



Q.8 And when it comes to different types of housing options in Flagstaff, things like apartment buildings, condominiums, town homes, and single-family homes, would you say there are enough different housing options available for people who want to live in Flagstaff? Yes or no.

Voters With A Post Graduate Education Are More Likely to Say There Are Not Enough Housing Options

Enough Housing Options in Flagstaff
By Education

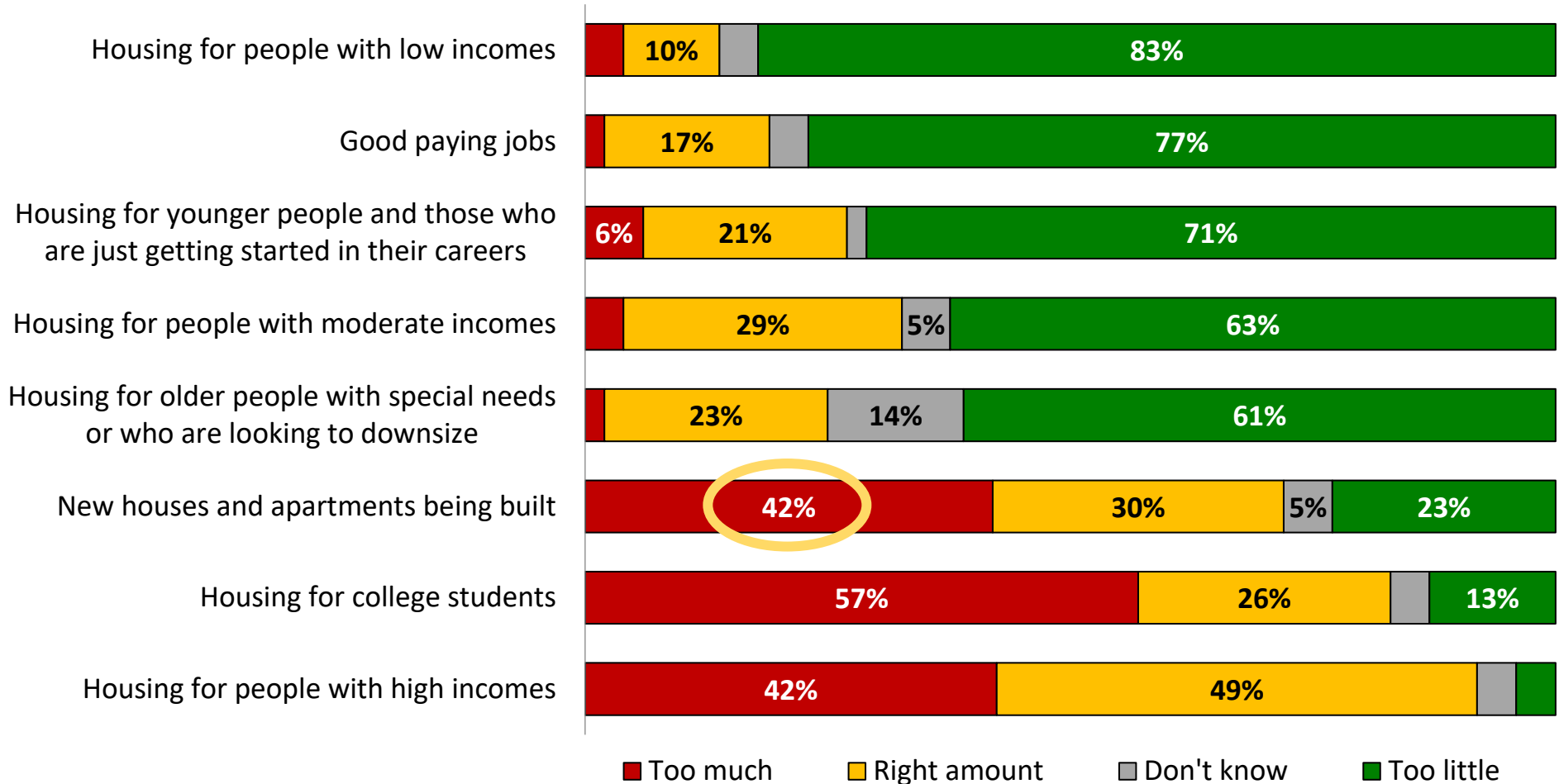


Q.8 And when it comes to different types of housing options in Flagstaff, things like apartment buildings, condominiums, town homes, and single-family homes, would you say there are enough different housing options available for people who want to live in Flagstaff? Yes or no.

While Most See Too Little Housing Available for Key Groups, Plurality Feels that Too MUCH Housing is Being Built

Housing for college students seen as too much

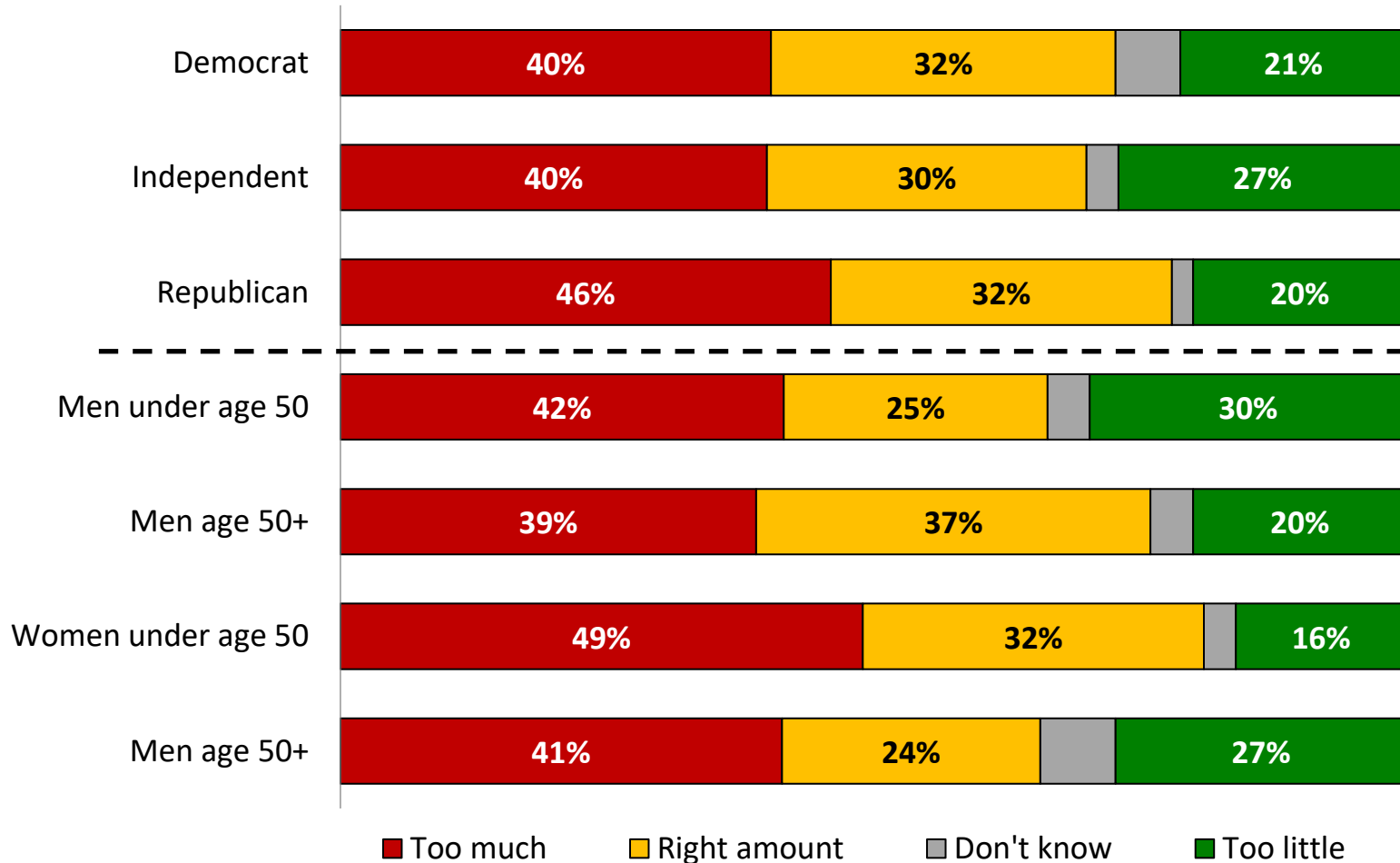
Amount of Housing Available



Q.9 And do you think there is (ROTATE TOO MUCH/TOO LITTLE) too much, too little, or the right amount of each of the following in your part of Flagstaff?

A Plurality Across Party Lines and Age/Gender Groups Feels that Too MUCH Housing is Being Built

New Houses and Apartments Being Built
By Party ID and Gender/Age

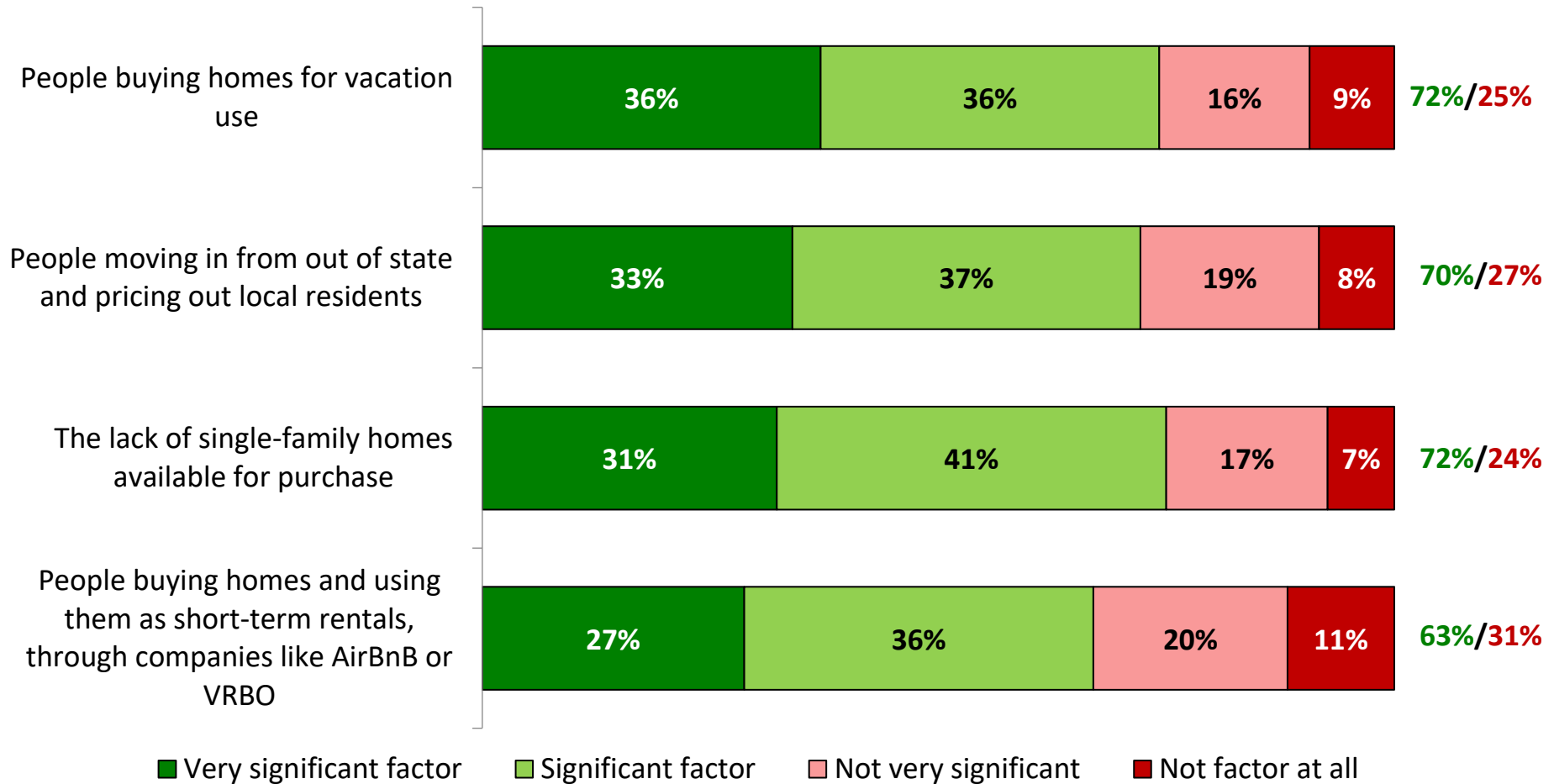


Q.9 And do you think there is (ROTATE TOO MUCH/TOO LITTLE) too much, too little, or the right amount of each of the following in your part of Flagstaff?

Factors for Lack of Affordable Homes in Flagstaff

Outsiders and Lack of Homes Seen As Most Significant Factors For Flagstaff's Housing Costs

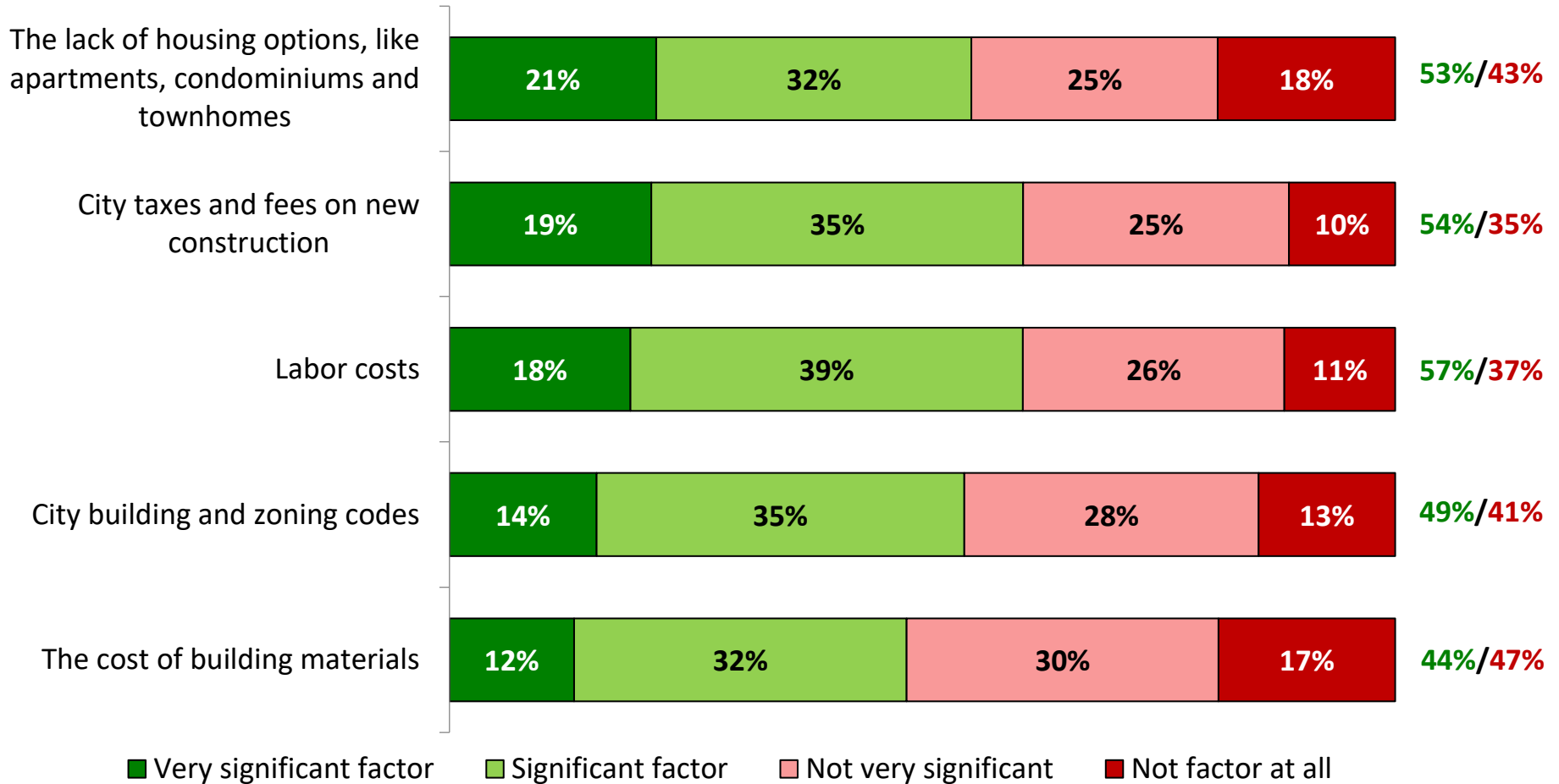
Factors for High Cost of Housing in Flagstaff



Q.10 As you may know, housing costs in Flagstaff have been rising for years and are much higher than in other parts of Arizona. I am going to read to you a list of reasons that some people have given for why housing costs are so high. For each one, please tell me if you think it is (ROTATE FIRST TO LAST AND LAST TO FIRST) a very significant factor, a significant factor, a not very significant factor, or not a factor at all for the high cost of housing in Flagstaff

Building Codes and City Taxes Seen As Less Significant Factors

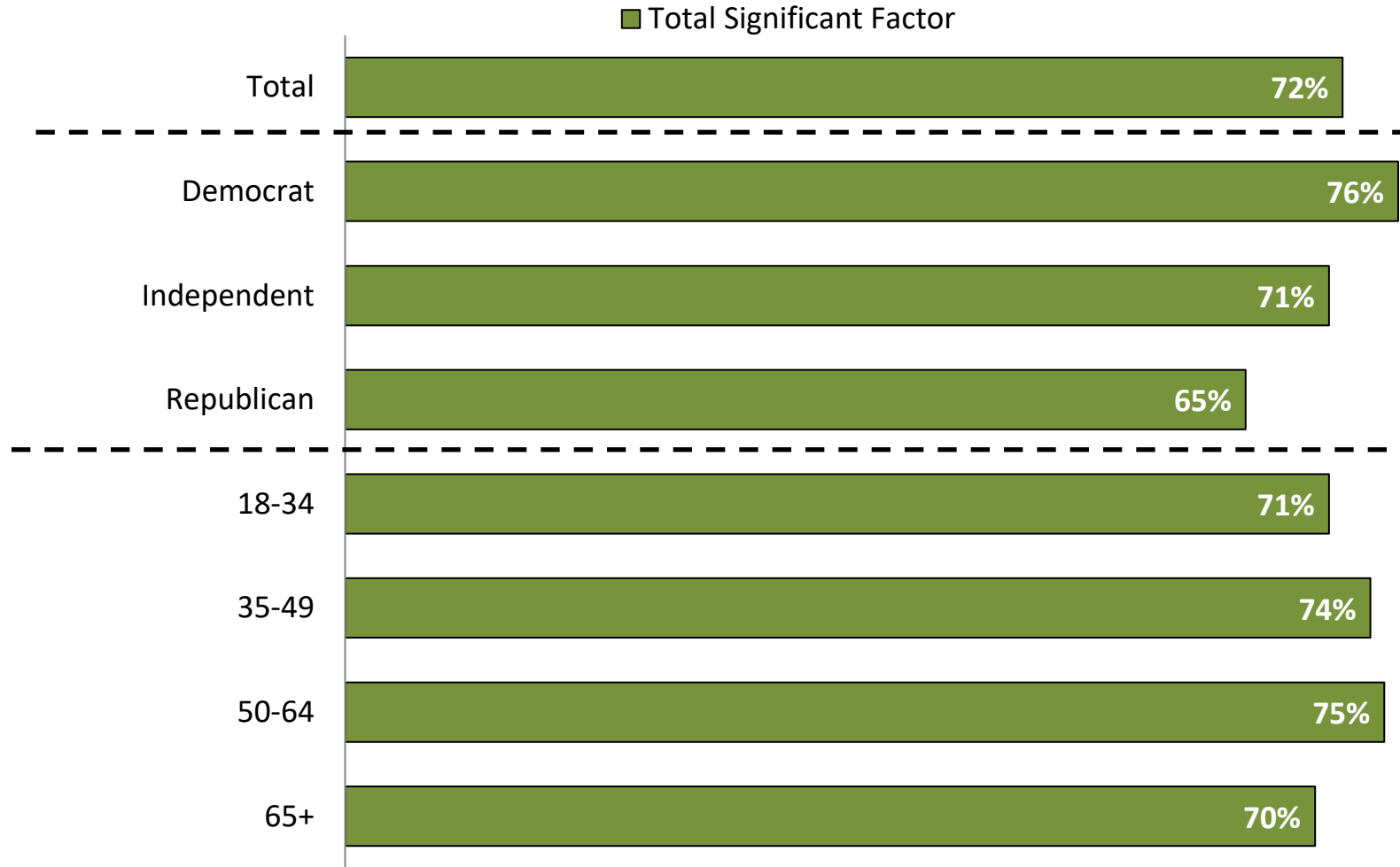
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Broad Agreement on Lack of Homes Available For Purchase Being A Significant Factor for High Housing Costs

The Lack of Single-Family Homes Available for Purchase

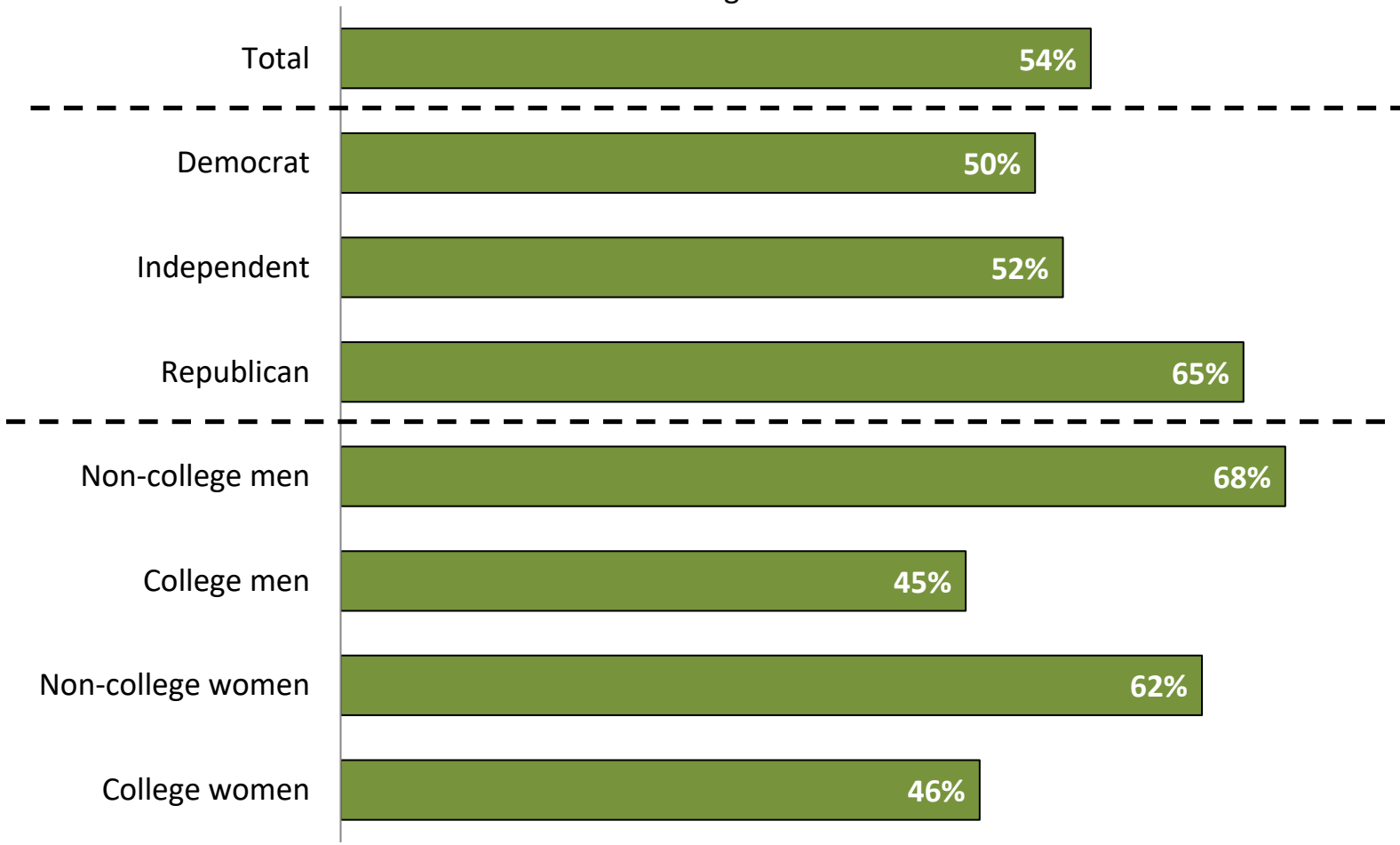


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Republicans And Those Without A College Education Most Likely To Say Construction Taxes and Fees Are Significant Factor

Taxes and Fees on New Construction

■ Total Significant Factor

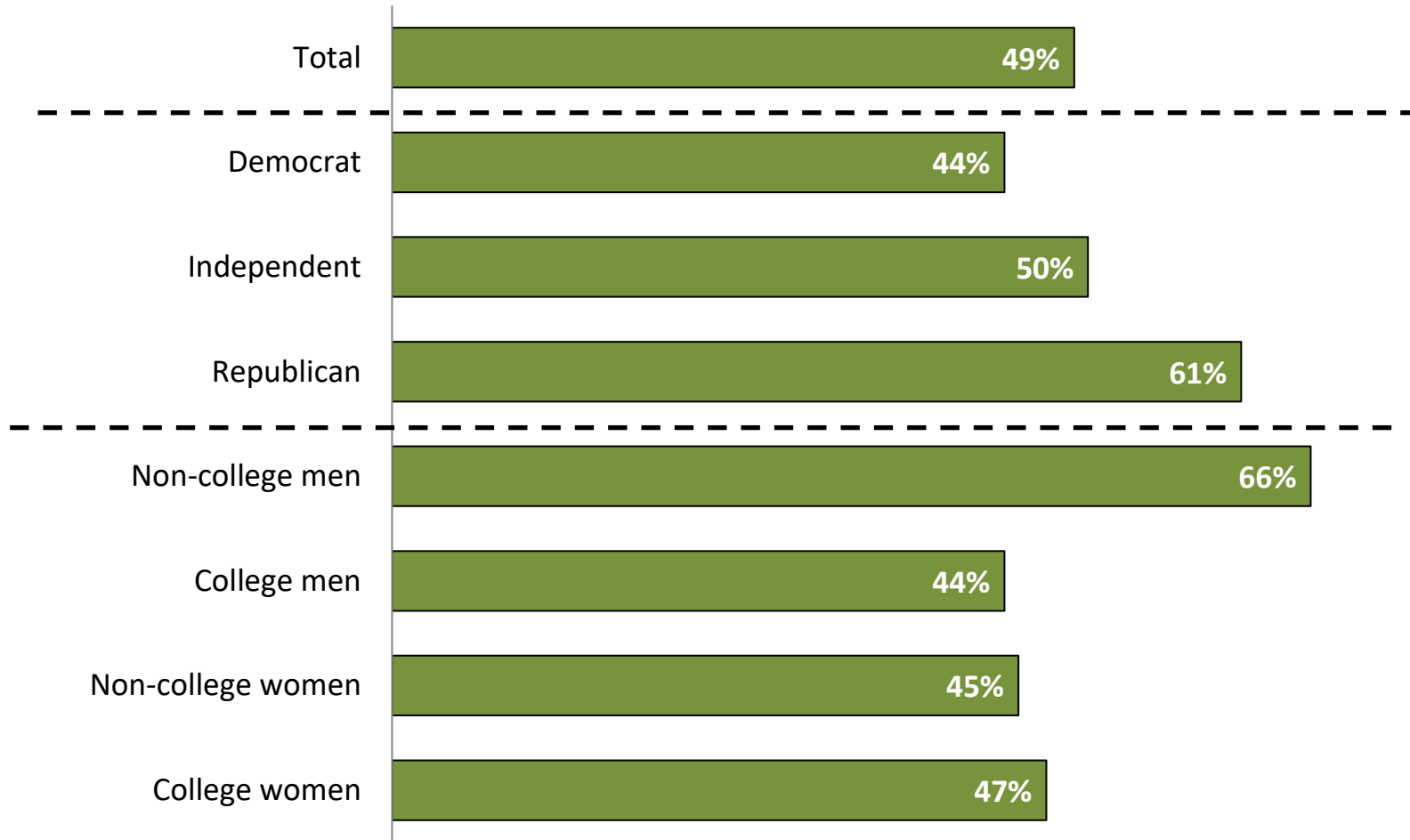


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Republicans and Non-College Men Most Likely to See City Building and Zoning Codes As Significant Factor

City Building And Zoning Codes

■ Total Significant Factor

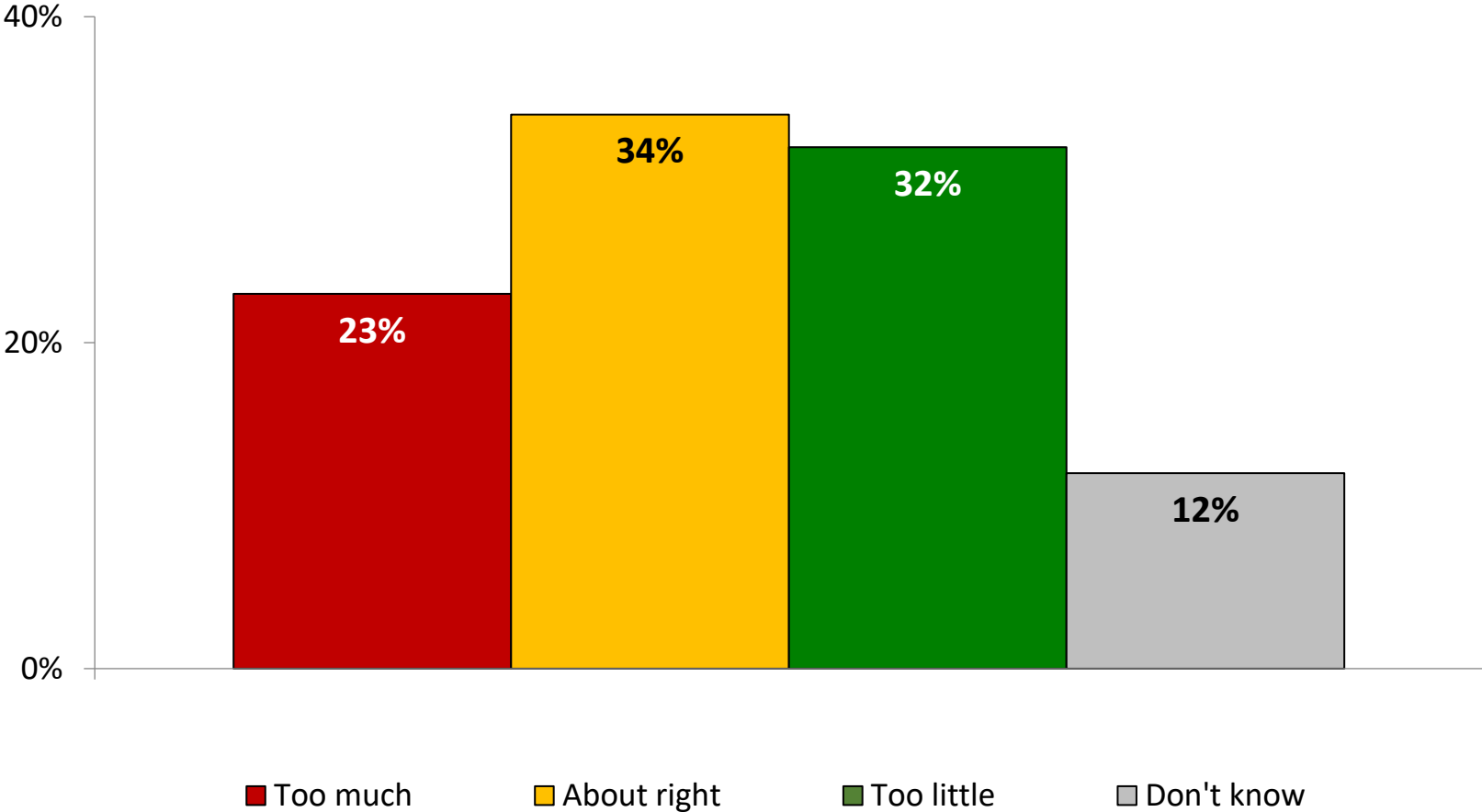


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Most Content With Existing Regulations or Feel That There is Too Little Regulation in Housing and Real Estate

Just one-quarter feel there is too much regulation

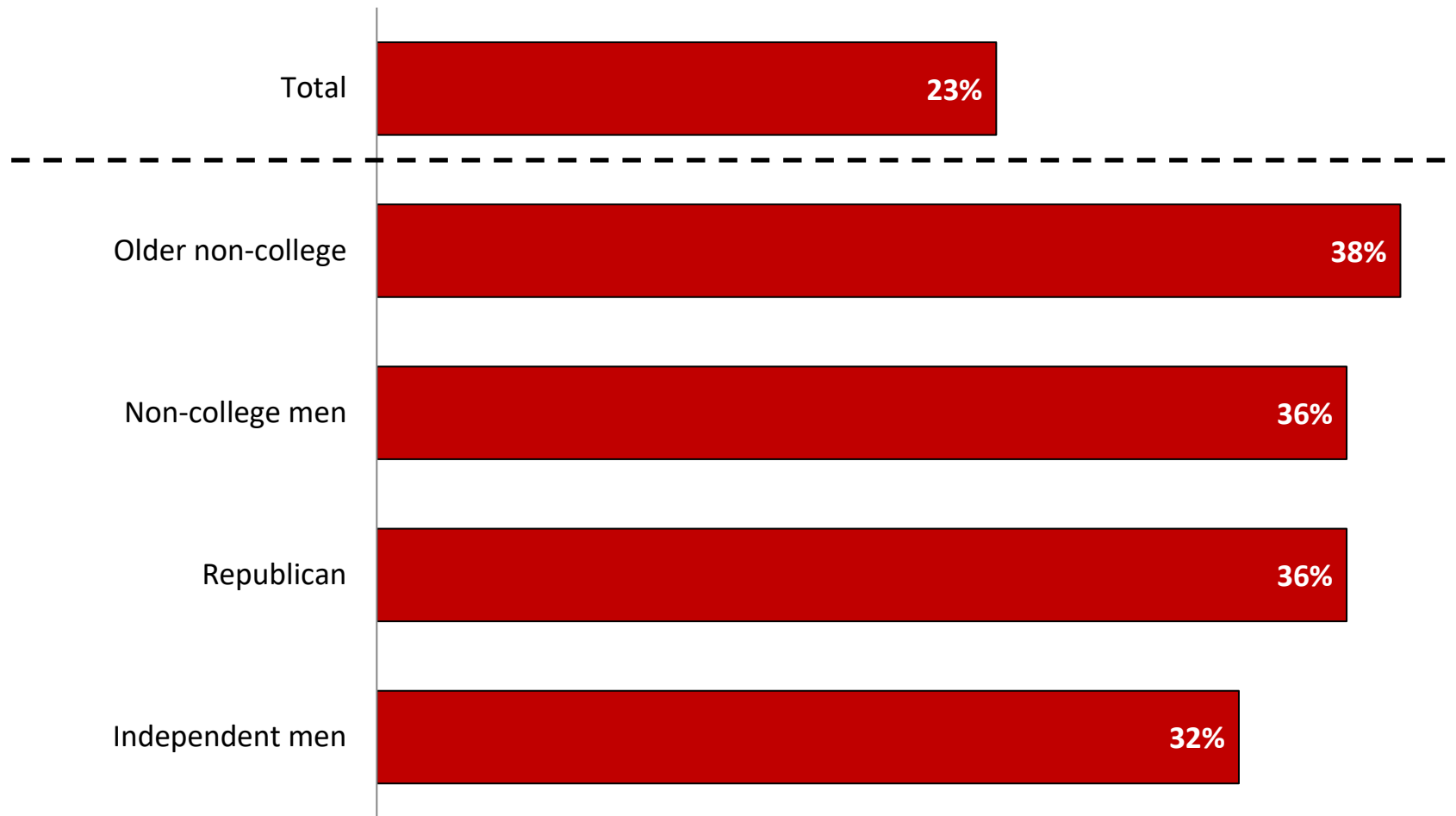
Amount of Local Government Regulation of Housing Construction and Real Estate



Q.11 Still thinking about housing in Flagstaff, do you think there is (ROTATE TOO MUCH AND TOO LITTLE, KEEP RIGHT AMOUNT LAST) too much, too little, or about the right amount of local government regulation of housing construction and real estate?

Older Non-College Men Most Likely to Say There is Too Much Regulation

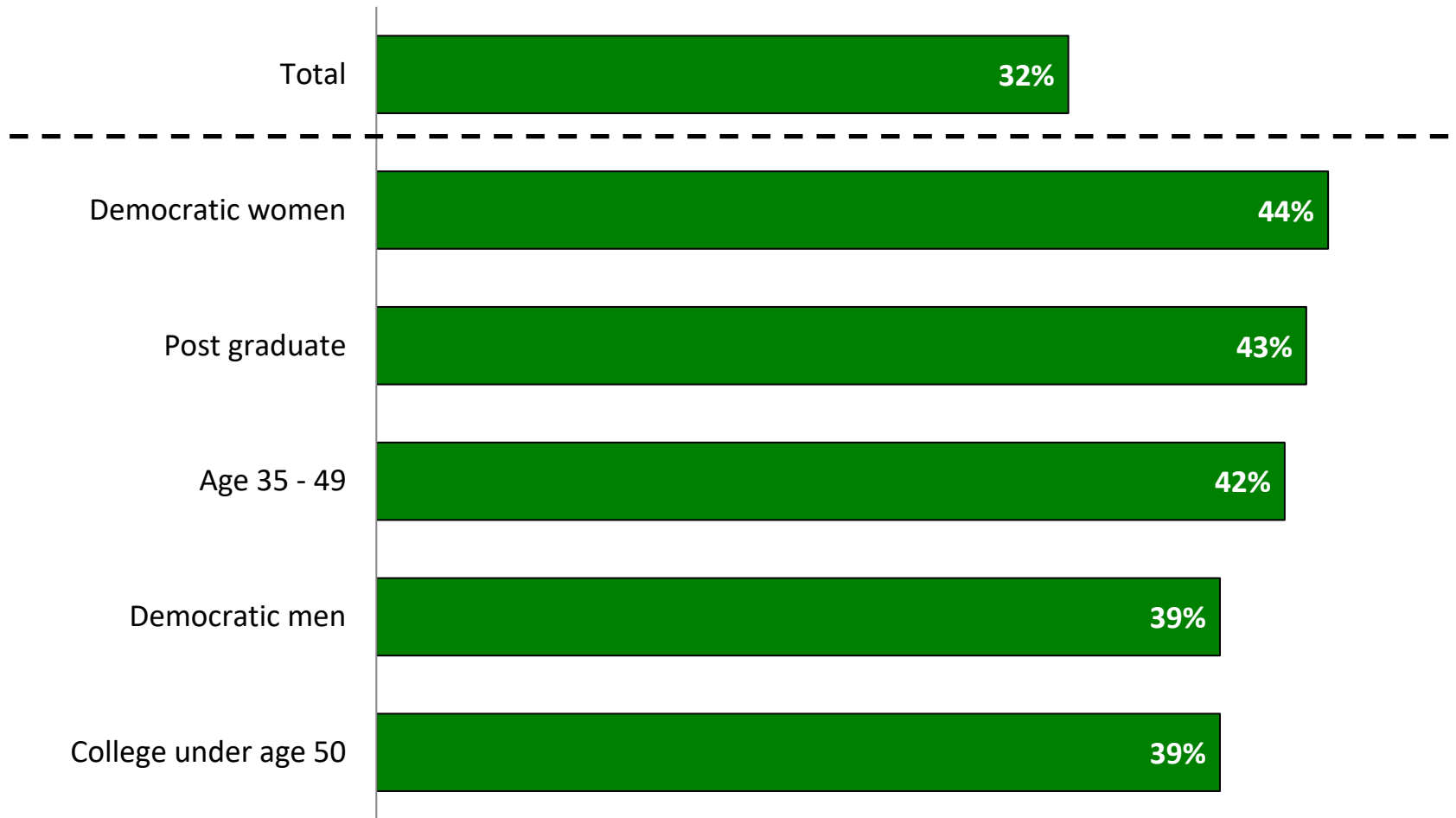
Too Much Local Government Regulation of Housing Construction and Real Estate



Q.11 Still thinking about housing in Flagstaff, do you think there is (ROTATE TOO MUCH AND TOO LITTLE, KEEP RIGHT AMOUNT LAST) too much, too little, or about the right amount of local government regulation of housing construction and real estate?

Democratic Women, Post-Grads, And Middle Age Voters Most Likely to Say There is Too Little Regulation

Too Little Local Government Regulation of Housing Construction and Real Estate



Q.11 Still thinking about housing in Flagstaff, do you think there is (ROTATE TOO MUCH AND TOO LITTLE, KEEP RIGHT AMOUNT LAST) too much, too little, or about the right amount of local government regulation of housing construction and real estate?

Voters Conflicted About Housing Regulations

Many agree that both strong regulations are needed and that regulations should be reduced

Debate on Local Regulations and Fees for Housing Construction

Developers should have to pay more in taxes and fees to pay for the additional demand on public services they create.



We need strong regulations on new housing developments and renovations to protect the character of the city and our quality of life.



Current zoning laws make it impossible to meet housing demand in Flagstaff. We need to update zoning laws to allow for more options, like apartments or townhomes, so that working families are not priced out of the city.



To make housing more affordable, we need to reduce the city regulations and fees that add thousands of dollars to the cost of home construction and renovation.



■ Strongly agree

■ Somewhat agree

Q.12 Let me read to you a series of statements that have been made during the discussion and debate over local regulations and fees having to do with housing construction and renovation. Please tell me whether you (ROTATE) agree or disagree with each statement.

Almost 40 % of Voters Want Strong Regulations to Protect Character of the City and a Reduction of Regulations to Lower Housing Costs

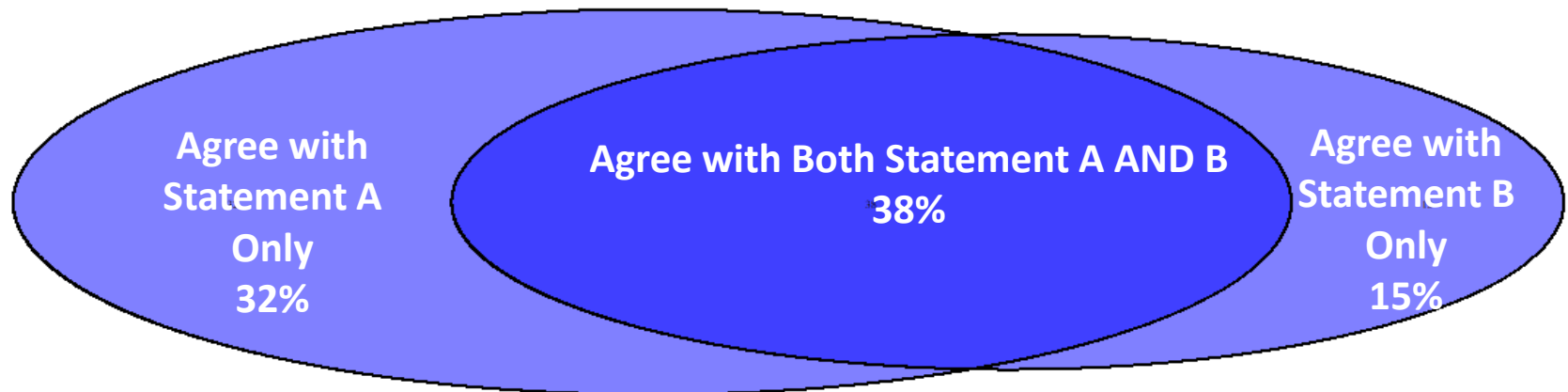
Debate on Local Regulations and Fees for Housing Construction

Statement A

We need strong regulations on new housing developments and renovations to protect the character of the city and our quality of life.

Statement B

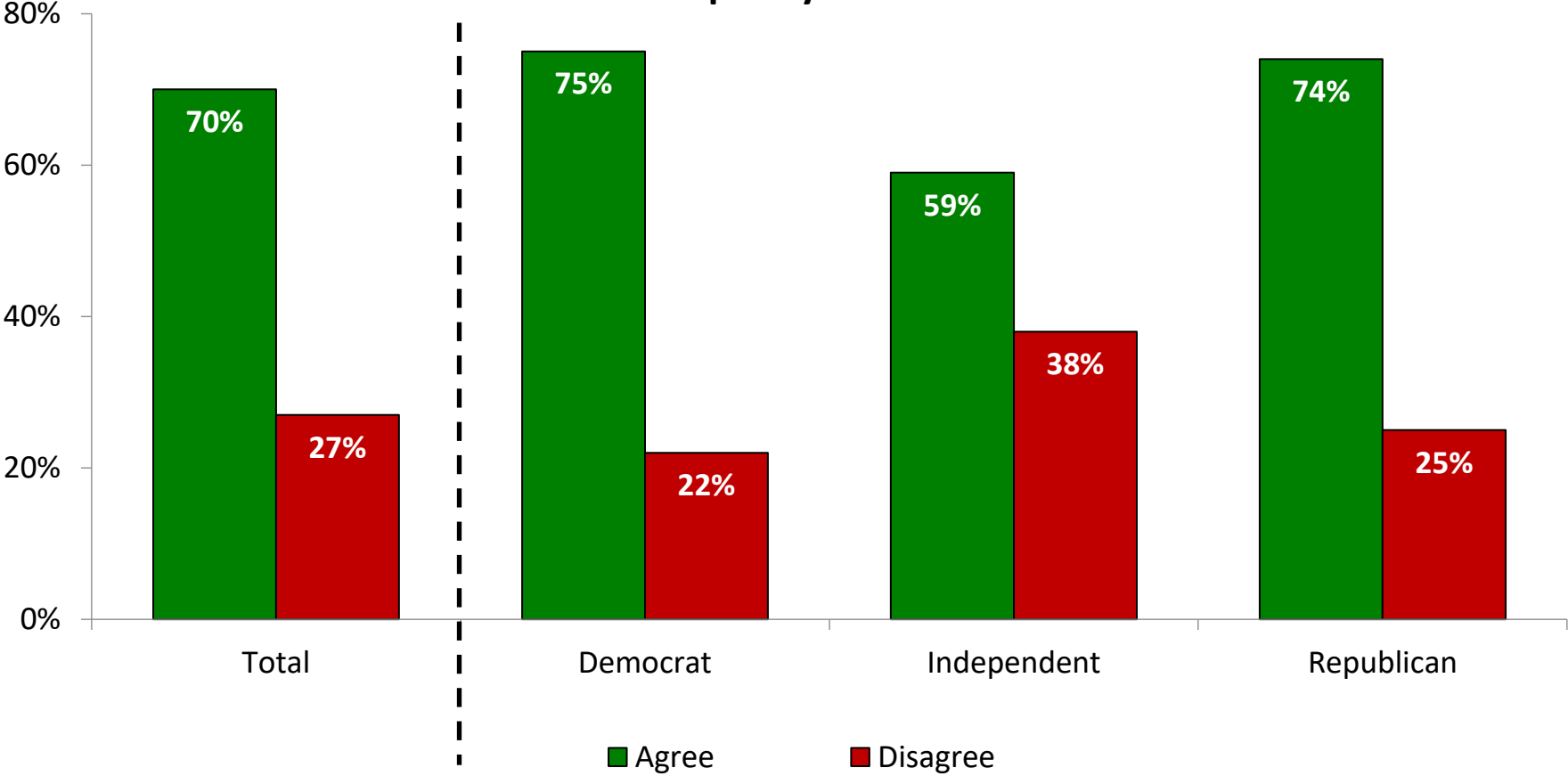
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Broad Partisan Support for Increased Regulations to Protect the Character of Flagstaff

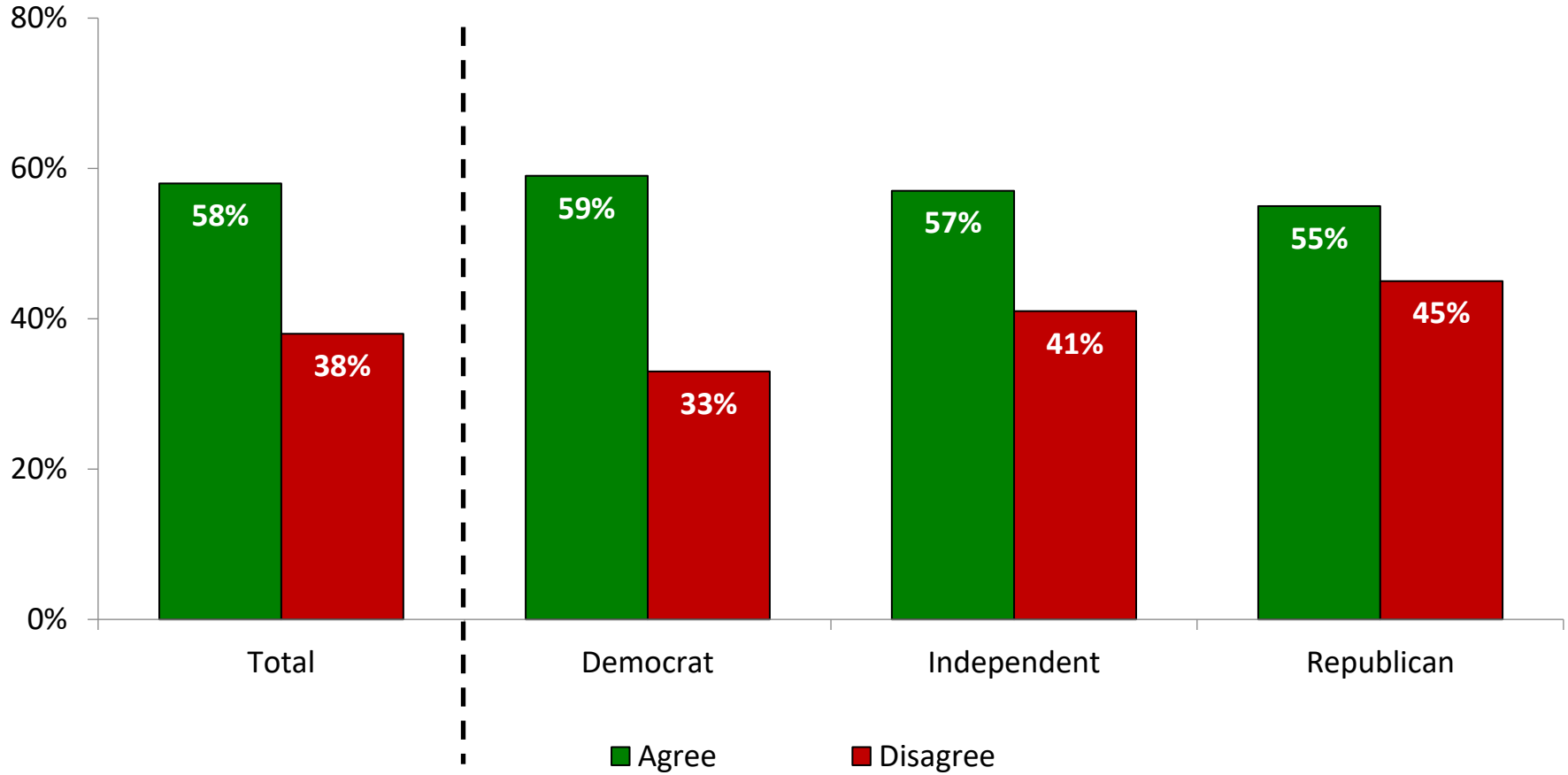
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Strong Majority Agree That Zoning Laws Need to Be Updated to Create More Affordable Housing

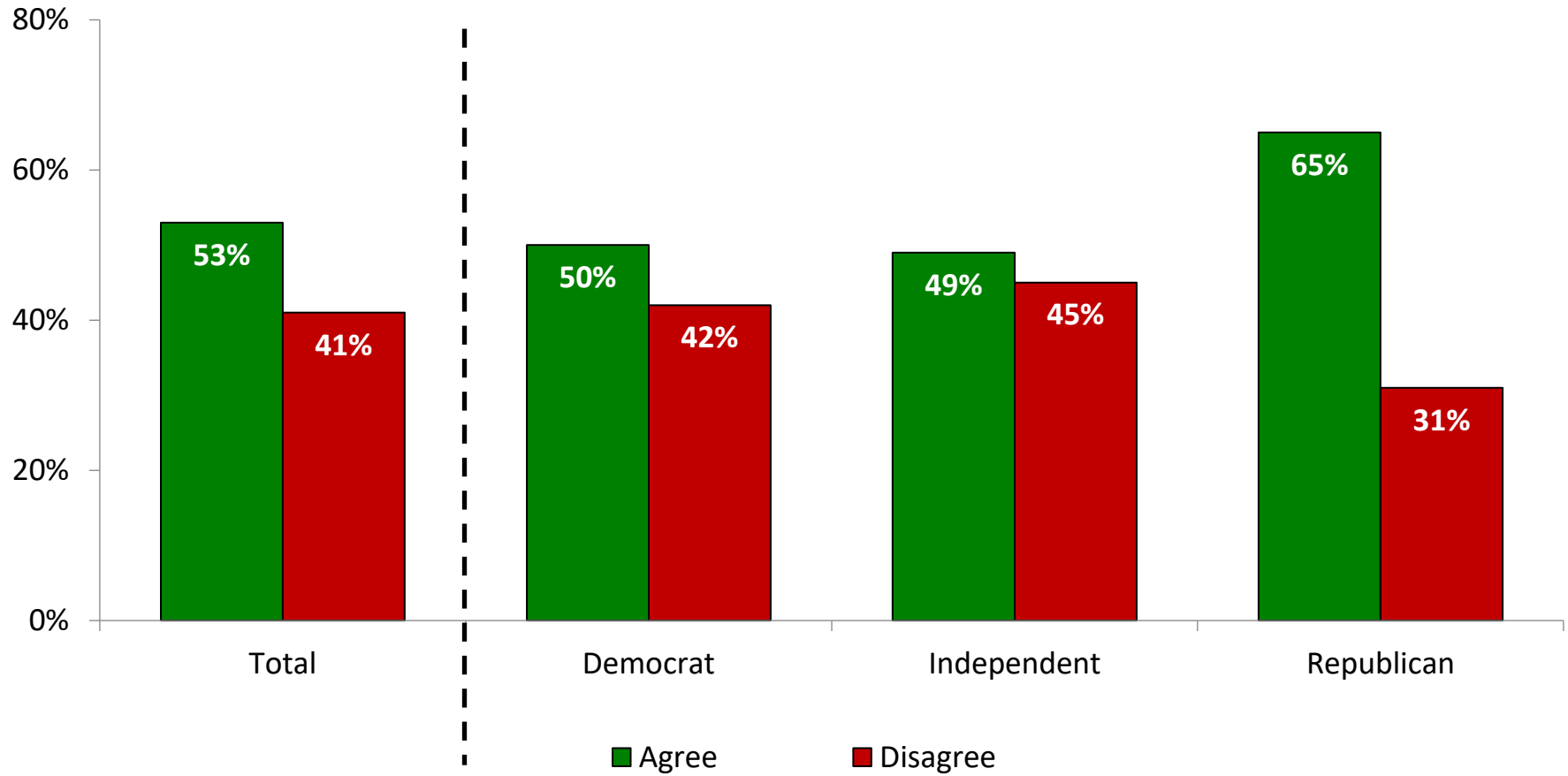
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Two-Thirds of Republicans Favor Reducing Regulations to Reduce Housing Costs; Democrats and Independents Split

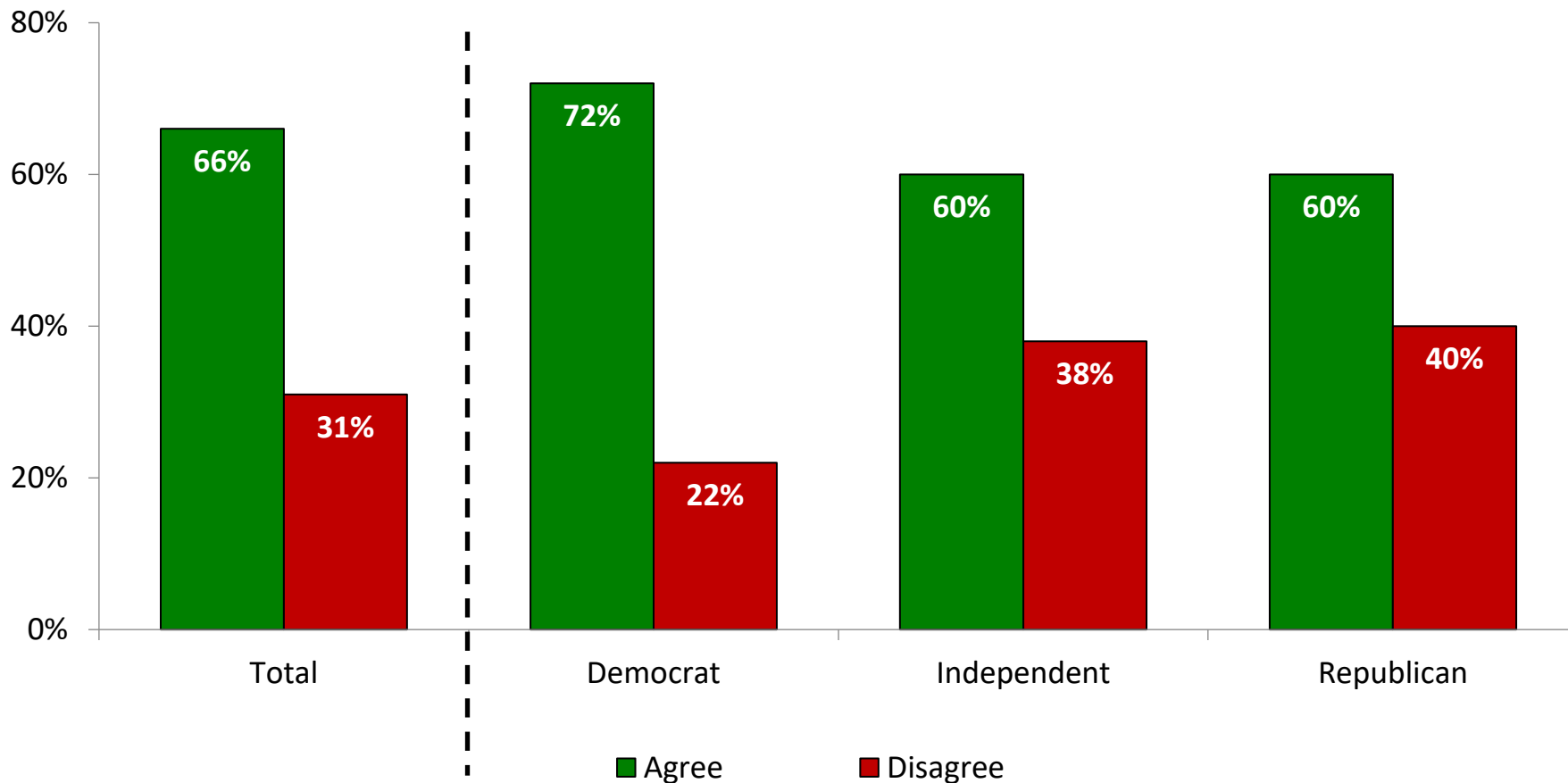
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Partisan Agreement That Developers Should Pay More in Taxes and Fees

Developers should have to pay more in taxes and fees to pay for the additional demand on public services they create.

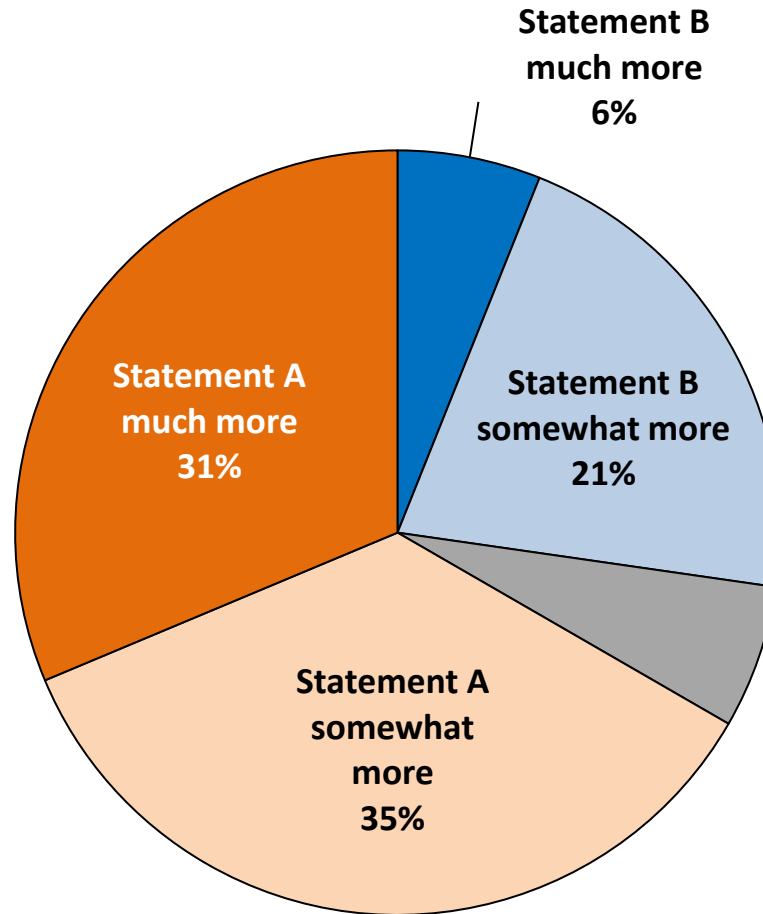


Q.12 Let me read to you a series of statements that have been made during the discussion and debate over local regulations and fees having to do with housing construction and renovation. Please tell me whether you (ROTATE) agree or disagree with each statement.

Two-Thirds Agree Developers Should Pay More in Taxes To Pay For Additional Demand on Services

Paired Statements

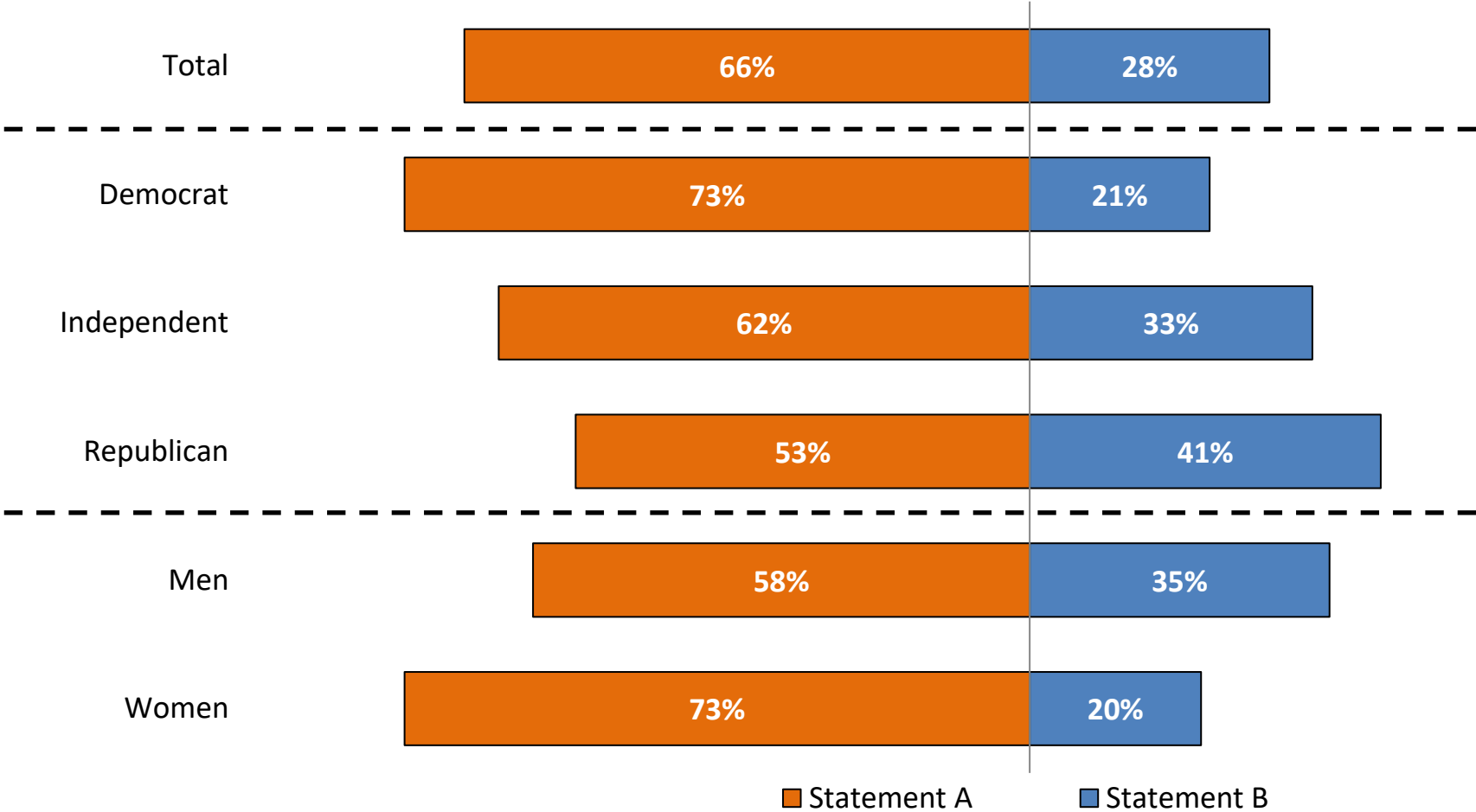
STATEMENT A: 66%
Developers should pay more in taxes and fees on new housing developments to help pay for the additional demand new housing creates on public services, like roads, schools, and public safety.



STATEMENT B: 27%
Developers should not have to pay additional taxes and fees on new housing developments. New housing means more revenue from property and sales taxes and an expanded tax base to cover the costs of public services.

Across Party Lines A Majority Say Developers Should Pay More in Taxes and Fees

Paired Statements
By Party ID and Gender

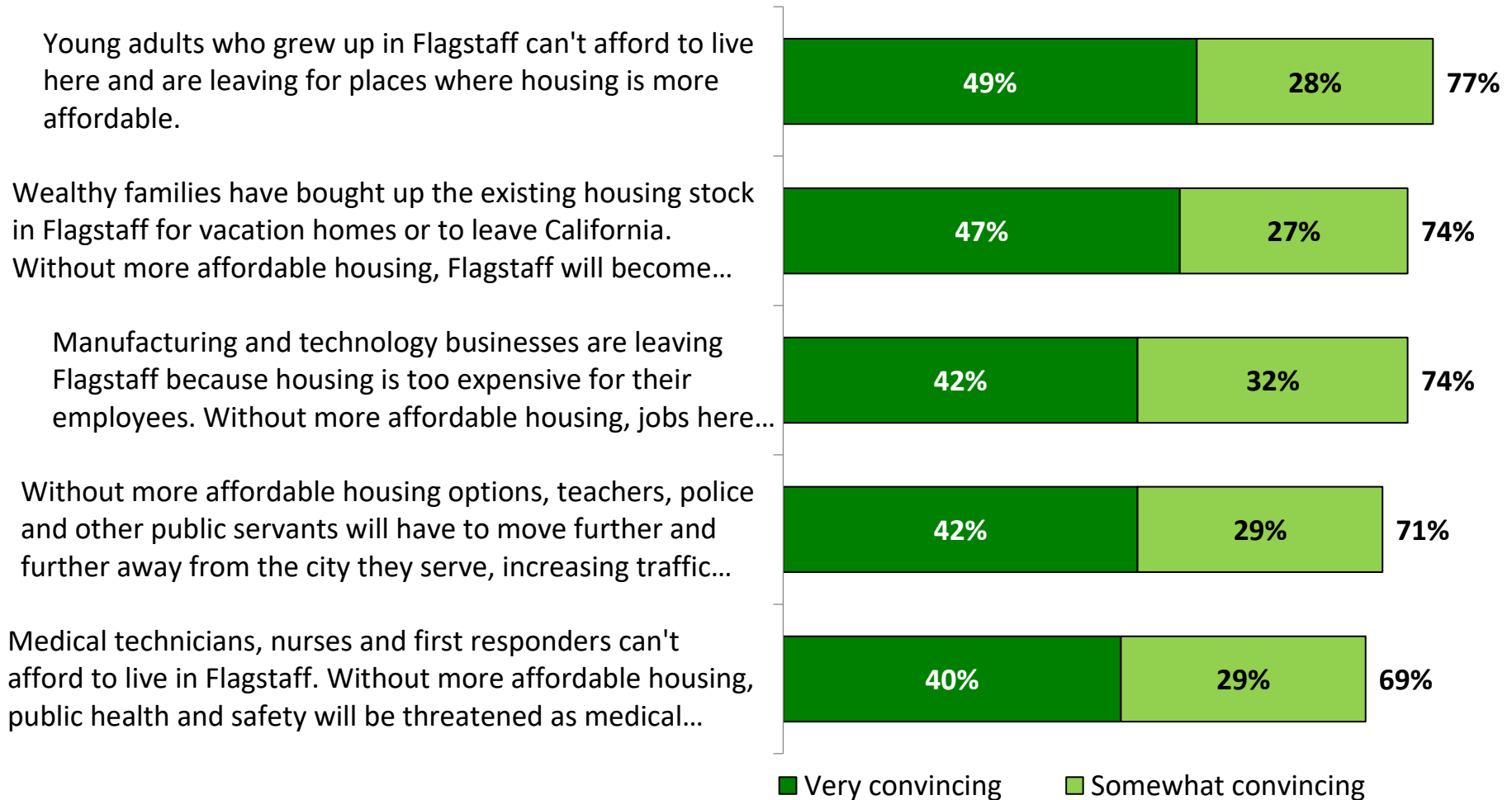


Q.13 Now I am going to read you a pair of statements about developers and new housing developments in Flagstaff, and I want you to tell me which statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right. (ROTATE STATEMENTS)

Messaging

Messaging for More Affordable Housing Resonates Well With Voters

Convincing Statements



Q.14 Now I am going to read you some reasons that people have given for why the city government needs to address the issues of housing affordability and availability in Flagstaff. Please tell me whether each argument is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, a little convincing, or not at all convincing reason to deal with the issues that make housing so expensive in Flagstaff. The first/next argument is...

Democrats Are More Receptive to Affordable Housing Messaging Than Republicans

Convincing Statements by Party ID

% Very Convincing Green = Much Higher Than Total Red = Much Lower than Total	Total	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Young adults who grew up in Flagstaff can't afford to live here and are leaving for places where housing is more affordable.	49%	54%	45%	43%
Wealthy families have bought up the existing housing stock in Flagstaff for vacation homes or to leave California. Without more affordable housing, Flagstaff will become strictly a resort, tourist, and university town.	47%	54%	43%	36%
Manufacturing and technology businesses are leaving Flagstaff because housing is too expensive for their employees. Without more affordable housing, jobs here will be limited to low paying service jobs, the university, and tourism.	42%	39%	48%	37%
Without more affordable housing options, teachers, police and other public servants will have to move further and further away from the city they serve, increasing traffic and pollution in Flagstaff, and making it harder to fill civil service jobs.	42%	49%	42%	23%
Medical technicians, nurses and first responders can't afford to live in Flagstaff. Without more affordable housing, public health and safety will be threatened as medical professionals move to more affordable places to live.	40%	46%	36%	28%

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