

Public Opinion on Open Space Protection in York County, Pennsylvania

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INSTITUTE *for* **PUBLIC POLICY**

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Thank you

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Goals of Research

1. The importance of land preservation to York County residents;
2. The value of the County's work in preserving agricultural and natural lands and parks and recreation areas;
3. If York County's current efforts should increase, decrease, or stay the same regarding land protection and preservation; and,
4. If York County residents would be willing to support the establishment of a dedicated and sustainable funding source for open space protection.

What is Open Space?

For the purpose of this research, the York County Land Protection Committee and the Arthur J. Glatfelter Institute for Public Policy defined open space as publicly or privately owned land and water that is:

- Predominately in a natural state;
- Dedicated to providing areas for passive or active public recreation (Parks and Trails);
- Agricultural lands privately owned and managed for food & fiber production;
- Lands protecting natural (water, air, soil, minerals, forests, wildlife) or historic resources; or
- Lands preserving scenic quality and maintaining community character.

Methodology

- Two Tiered Survey Method
 - Tier-one: A randomized sample of York County households by address
 - Includes households that in which a “super voter” was identified as present.
 - Tier-two: An open-access survey that was available online through the York County Land Protection Committee’s website

Presentation of Results

Types of Results Reported		
<i>Format</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Margin of Error</i>
<u>Overall</u>	Both tier-one random sample respondent households and tier-two voluntary open-access respondents	N/A
<u>Tier-One Respondents</u>	Only respondents from tier-one random sampled respondent households	4.51%
<u>Super Voter Respondents</u>	Only respondents from tier-one random sampled respondent households that have also voted in the past four consecutive elections	5.59%

Conversion of land area

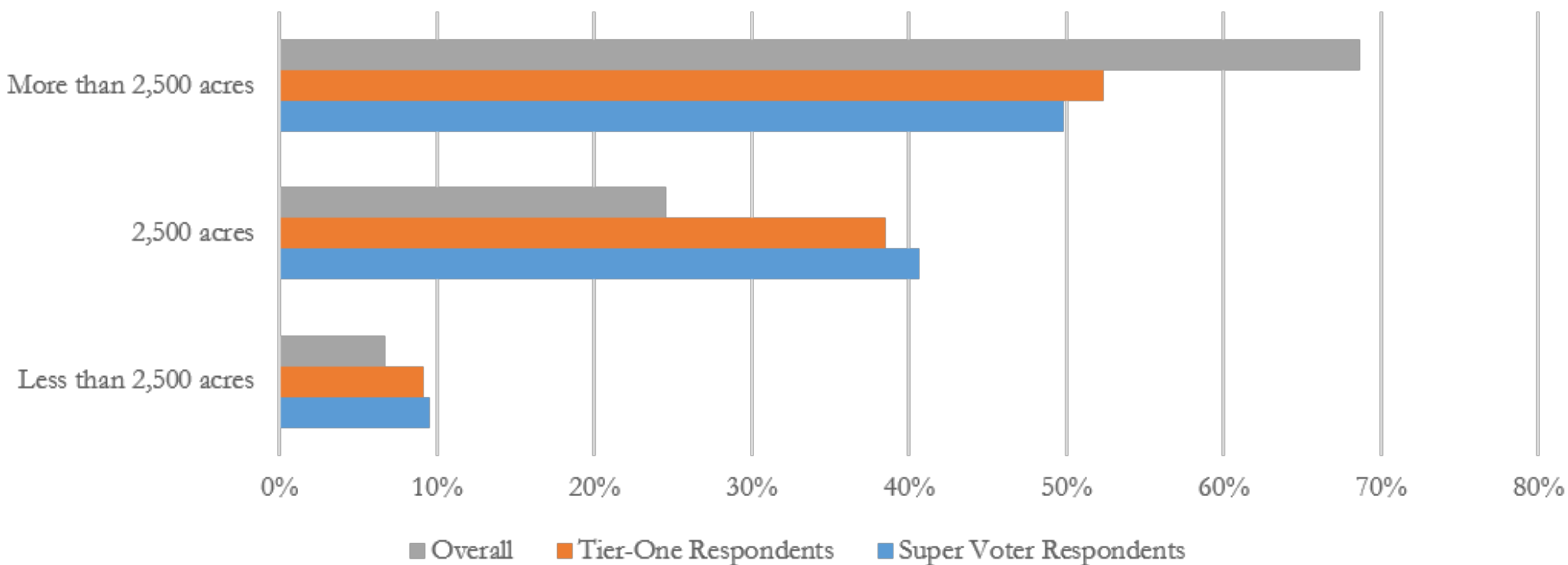
The total land and water area covered by York County is approximately 583,000 acres, or 911 square miles.

Acres	Square Miles	Percentage of York County
<i>85,000 acres</i>	<i>132 square miles</i>	<i>14.5% of York County</i>
<i>70,000 acres</i>	<i>109 square miles</i>	<i>12.0% of York County</i>
<i>2,500 acres</i>	<i>3.9 square miles</i>	<i>0.4% of York County</i>

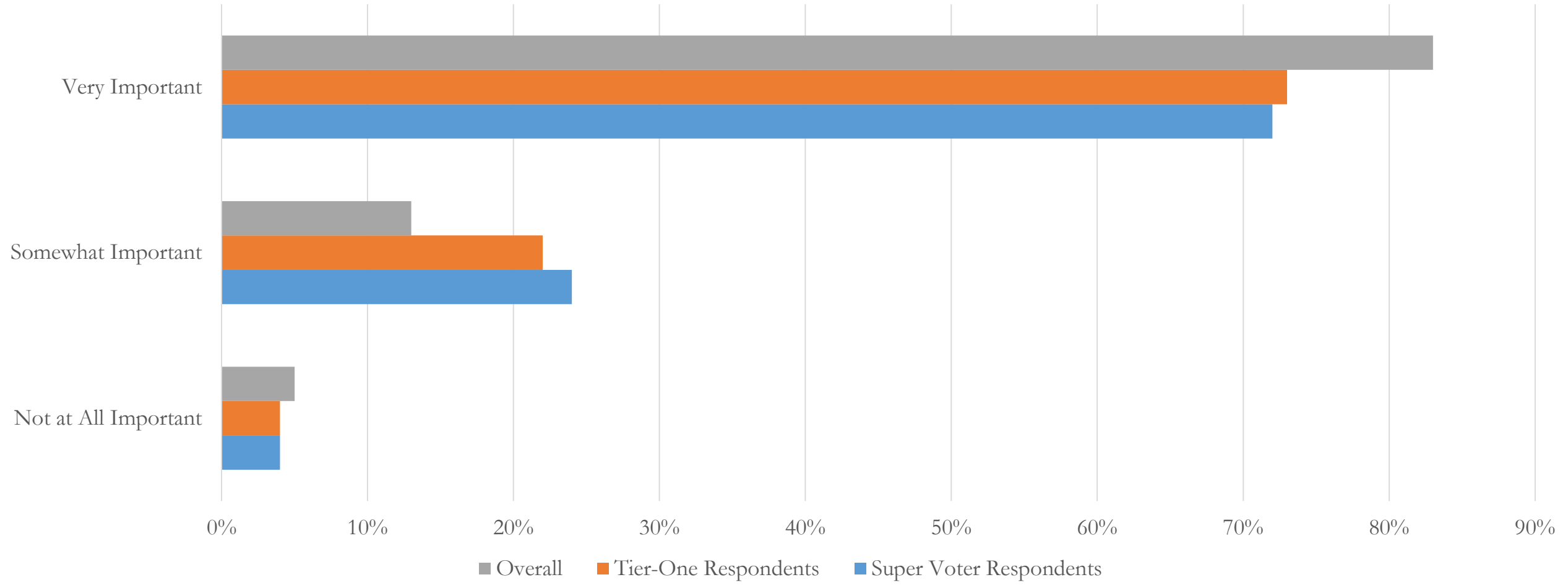
Key Findings

- How much open space should York County continue to protect each year?
- How important is the goal of protecting 85,000 acres of open space over the next 30 years, by protecting 2,500 acres of open space each year?
- Should the York County Commissioners identify a dedicated and predictable funding stream for continued open space protection?
- What amount would you be willing to contribute in tax dollars each year for the continued protection of open space?

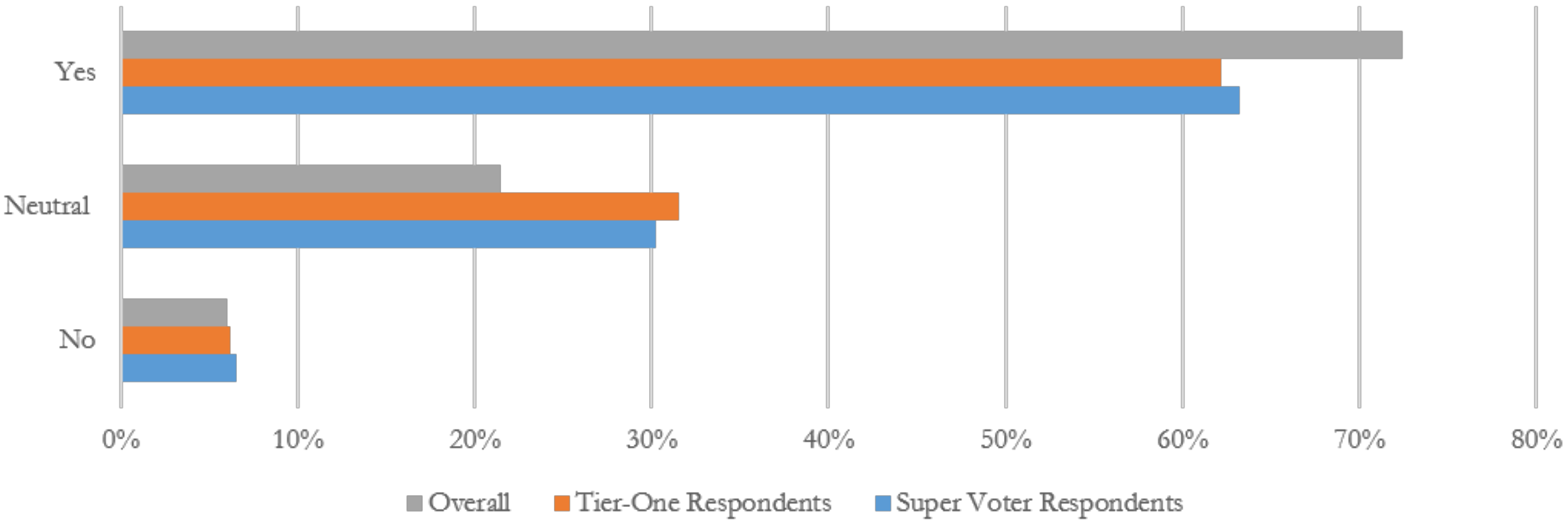
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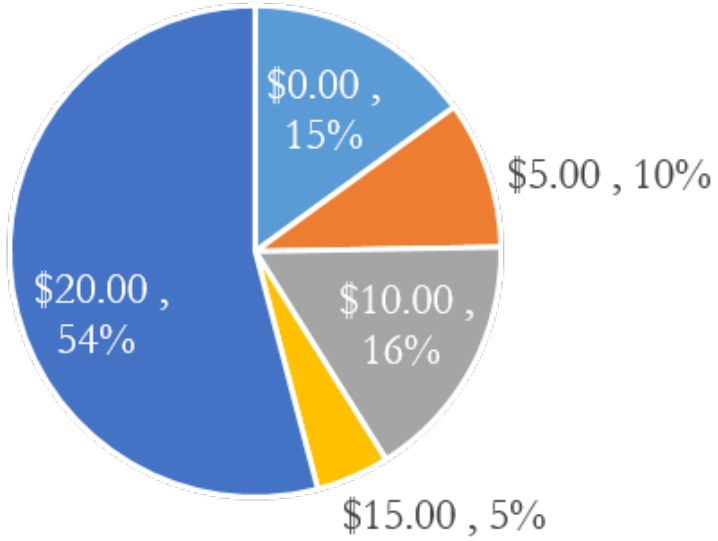


Should the York County Commissioners identify a dedicated and predictable funding stream for continued open space protection?

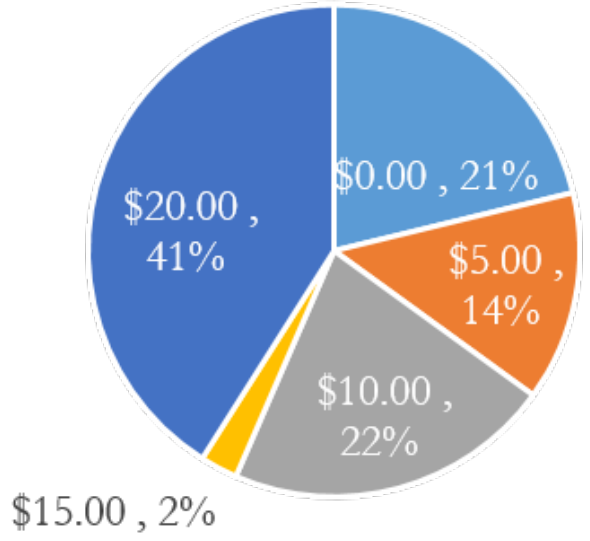


What amount would you be willing to contribute in tax dollars each year for the continued protection of open space?

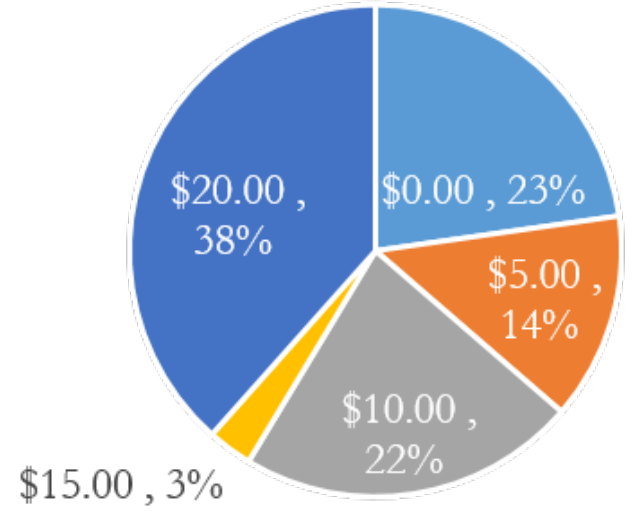
Overall Distribution of Willingness for Additional Tax



Super Voter Respondent Distribution of Willingness for Additional Tax



Tier-One Respondent Distribution of Willingness for Additional Tax



Other Findings

- At least 10% of respondents visited open spaces on a daily basis.
 - At least 33% of respondents visited open spaces on a weekly basis.
- Over 75% of respondents viewed open space as “very important” to themselves or their families.
- Over 80% of respondents considered open space to be “very important” to a good quality of life in York County.

Other Findings

- At least 60% of respondents were “very concerned” about losing open space to development.
- About 90% of respondents felt that the protection of open space is “very important” for future generations.
- At least 80% of respondents viewed York County’s past efforts of open space protection as “very valuable.”

Questions?

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