

Denver Regional Transportation District FasTracks Survey

January 6 – January 12, 2009

Data & Findings



Methodology

- A phone survey of 700 likely voters (voted in 2006 AND 2008 general elections, or registered since then) in the RTD district, conducted January 6 - 12, 2009
- Sample was distributed to reflect county-by-county percentages of RTD district population.
- Demographics of the survey sample population were balanced to reflect gender, party registration
- Average length of interview: 20 minutes.
- $\pm 3.7\%$ margin of error at a 95% confidence level

GENERAL PERCEPTIONS & ATTITUDES

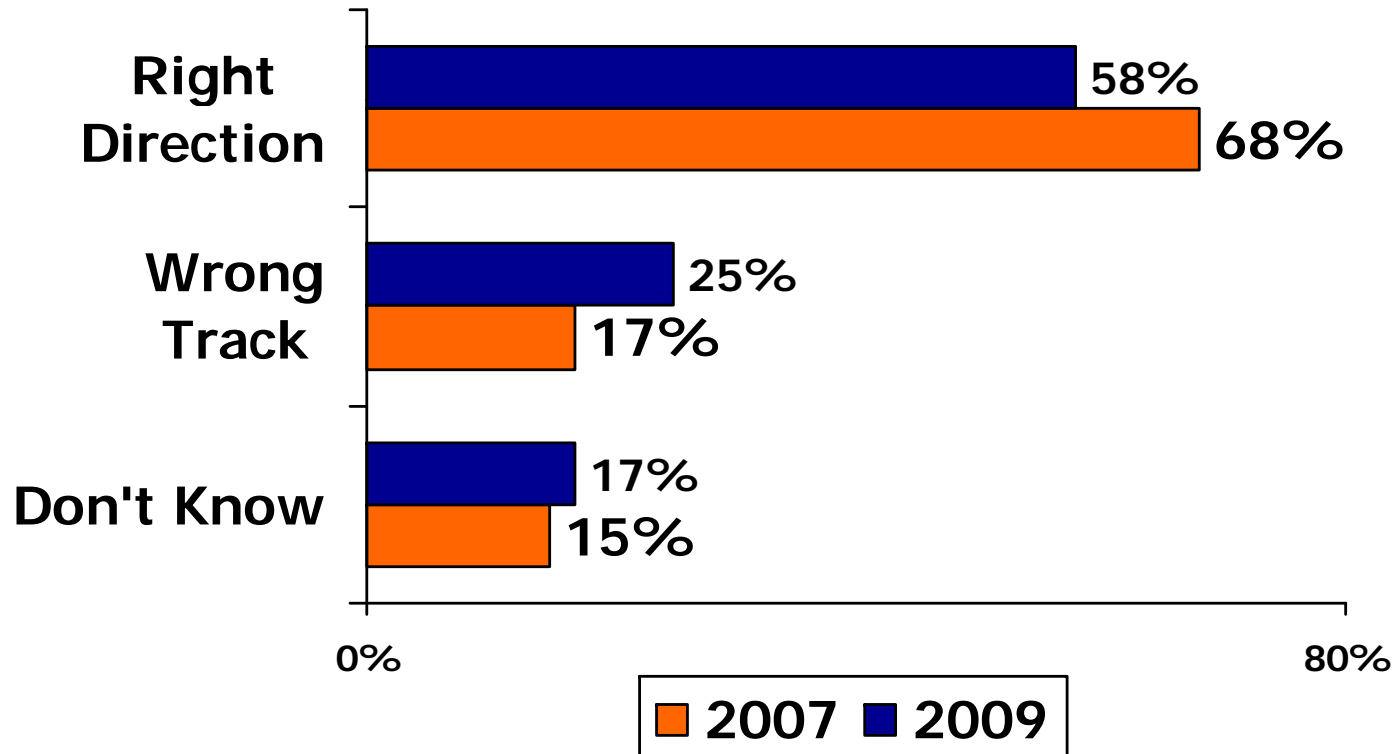


KEY FINDINGS

- The top issues on survey respondents' minds are the economy and jobs, though transportation and traffic congestion remain high on the list
- RTD enjoys high favorability ratings overall

Denver Metro right direction/wrong track

"How do you feel things are going in the Denver metro area these days?"



Economy and jobs are identified by respondents as the top issues facing the Denver metro area.

Thinking about the issues facing the Denver metropolitan area ... in your opinion ... what is the number one priority you would want local officials to focus on in the next couple years? [OPEN END]

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1. Economy | 28% |
| 2. Employment/jobs | 17% |
| 3. Public transportation | 12% |
| 4. Education | 7% |
| 5. Traffic/congestion | 5% |
| 6. Affordable Housing | 3% |
| 7. Illegal immigration | 3% |
| 8. Funding/budget | 2% |
| 9. Bridges/highways | 2% |

Economy & employment/jobs rank #1 & #2 in each county—except Jeffco, where #2 issue is public transportation

Compared to 2007 RTD poll, the economy and jobs have surpassed transportation, growth & traffic as top concerns

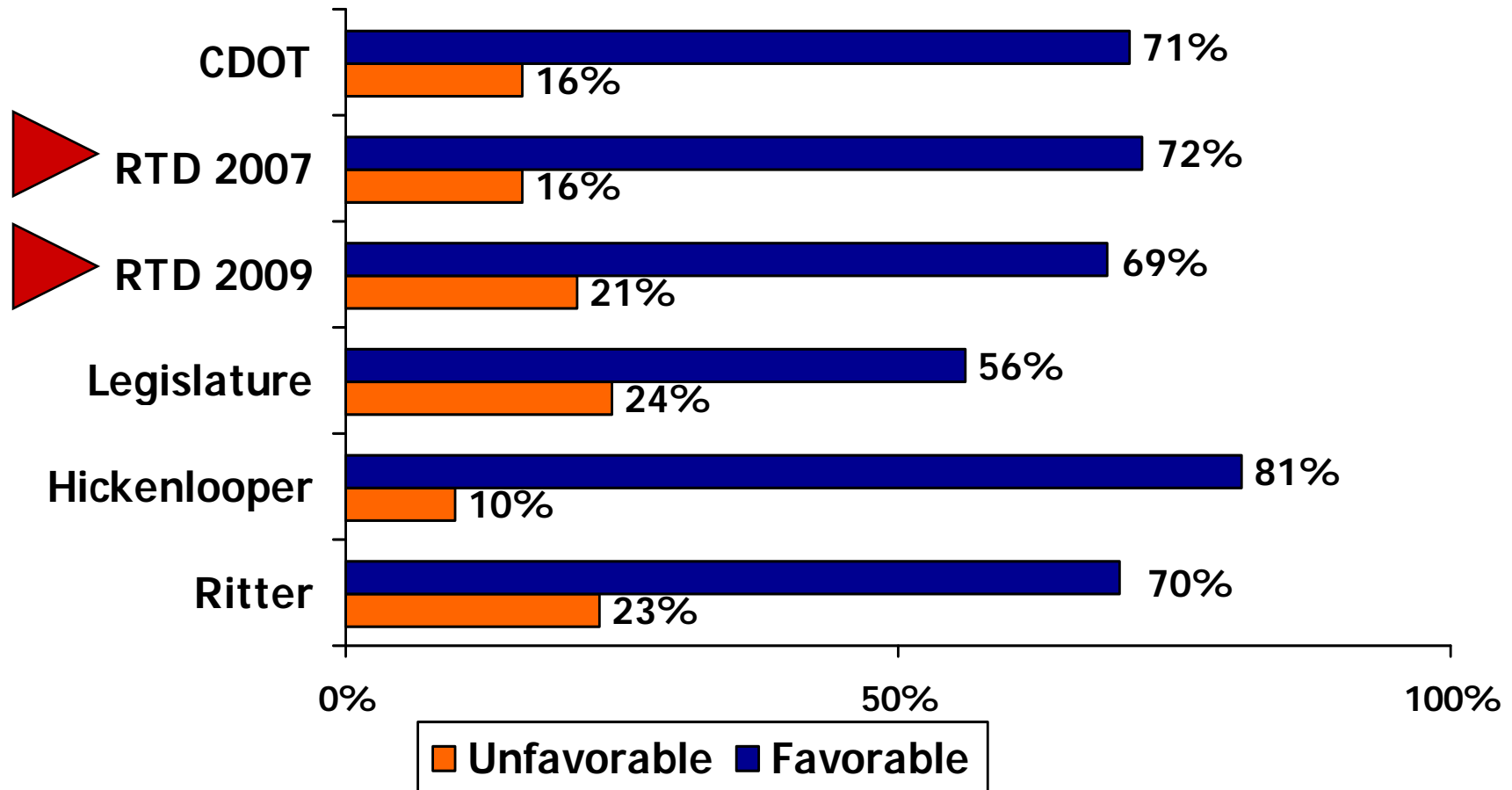
Top answers 2007

- 1. Transportation/
affordable transportation 14%**
2. Too much growth/
overcrowding 10%
- 3. Traffic congestion 9%**
4. Immigration 8%
5. Education/schools 7%
- 6. More mass transit/
Light rail 6%**
7. Housing/real estate issues 5%
- 8. Improve roads/highways 5%**

Top Answers 2009

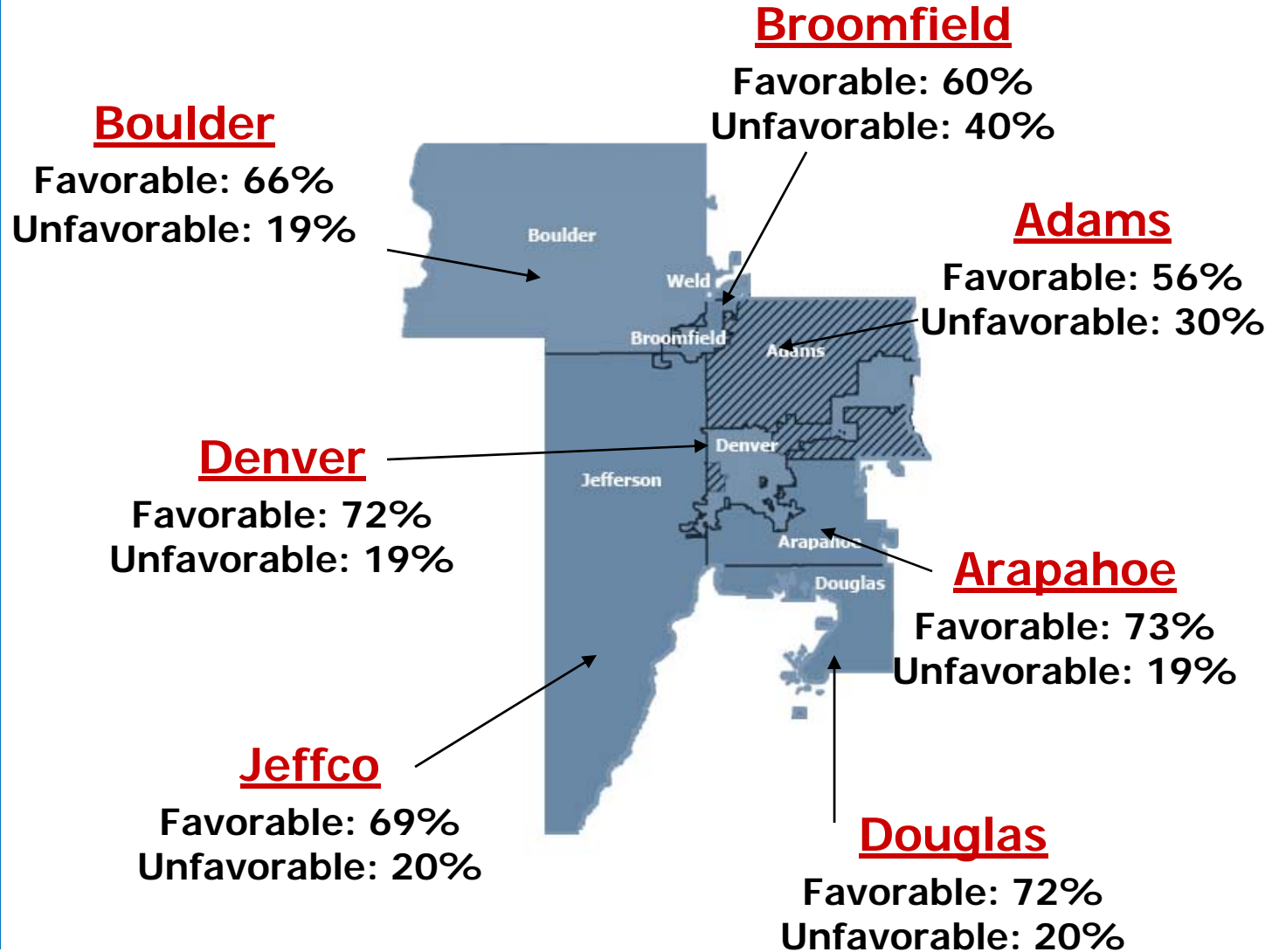
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6. Affordable Housing 3%
7. Illegal immigration 3%
8. Funding/budget 2%

Favorable/unfavorable ratings for public officials and entities



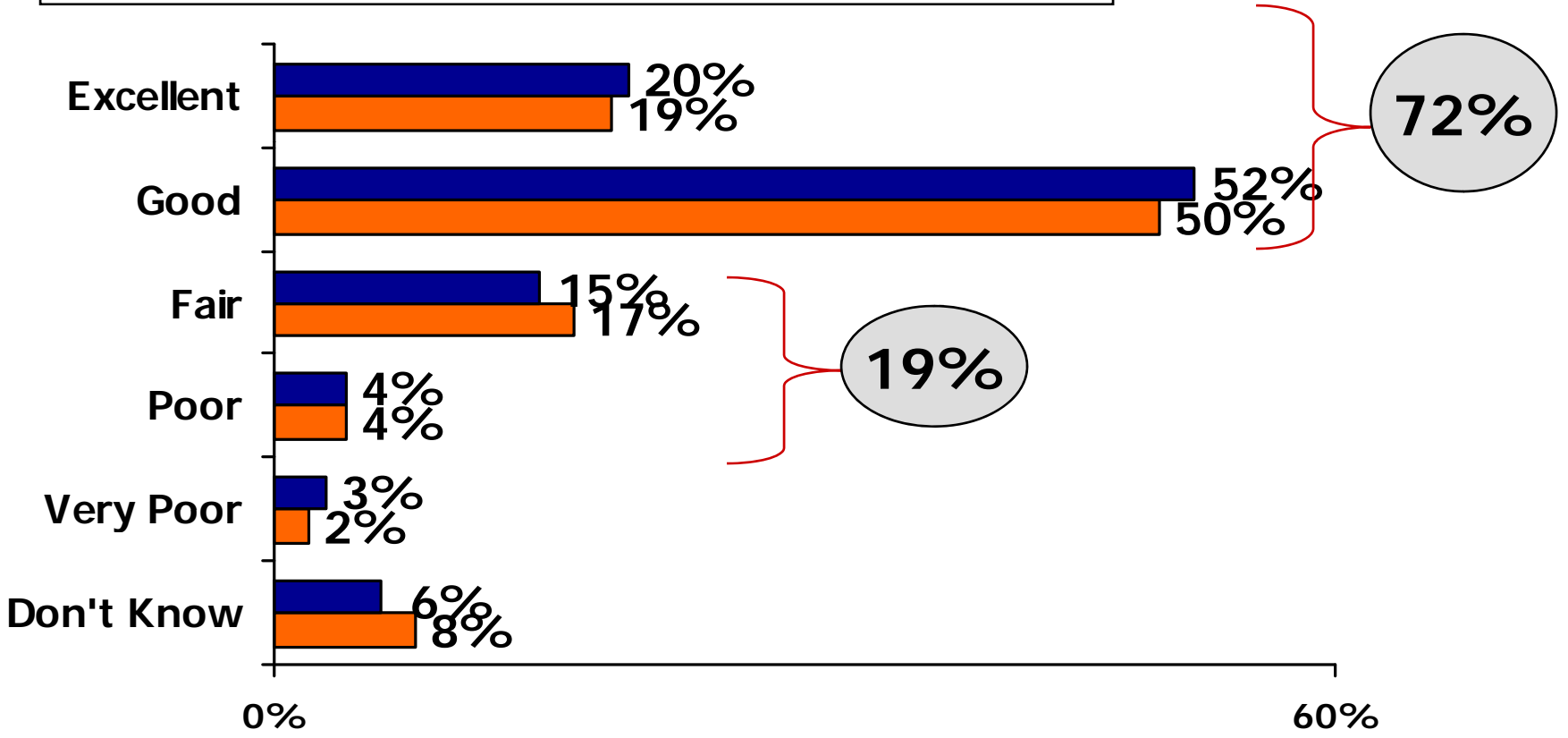
RTD

Favorable/ unfavorable county-by- county



Perception of RTD services is positive—nearly 3 of 4 respondents say services are “excellent” or “good”

“Whether you use RTD services or not, what is your impression of the quality of services provided by RTD?”



RTD & FASTRACKS – GENERAL AWARENESS

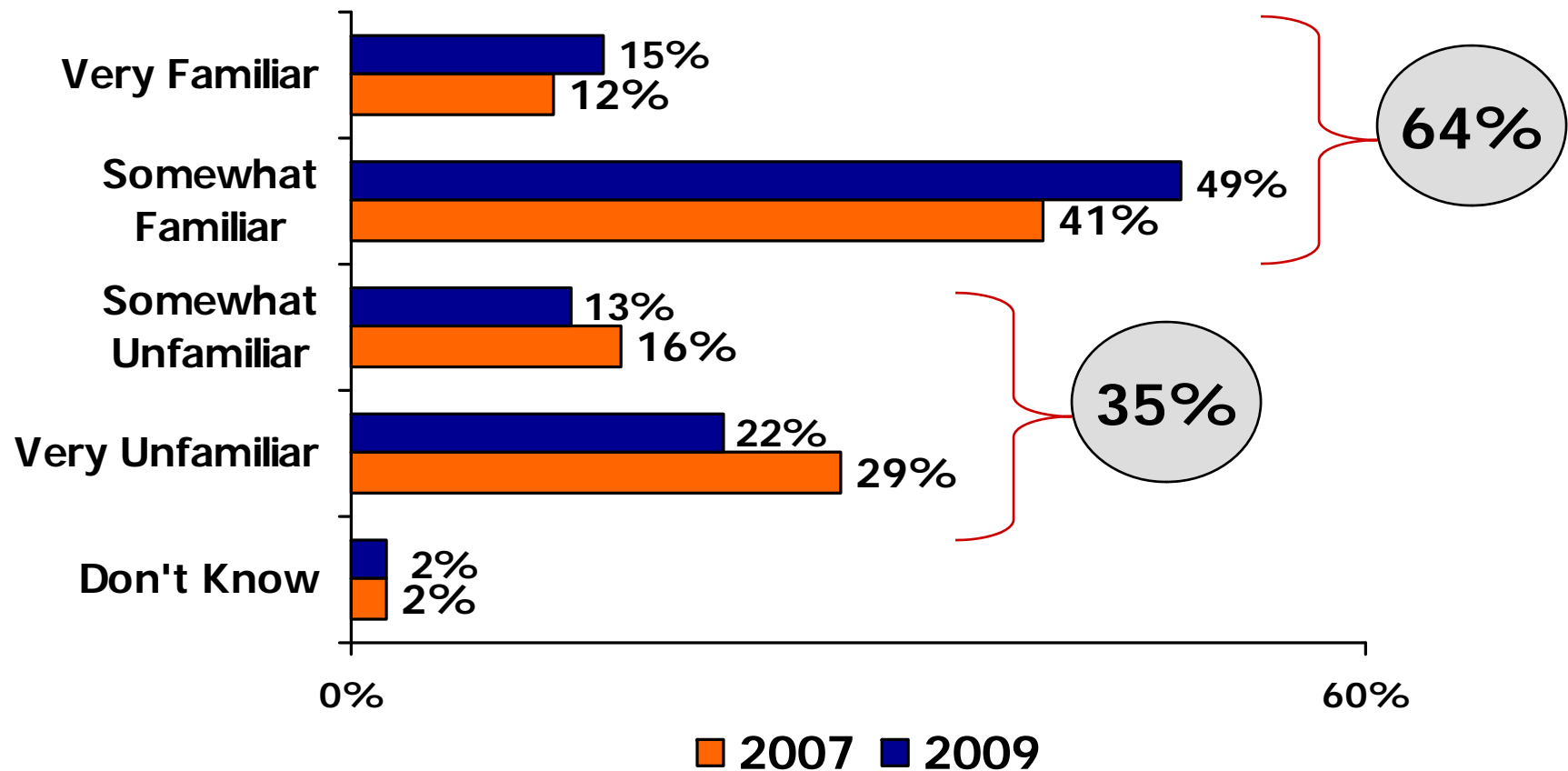


KEY FINDINGS

- Familiarity with FasTracks is increased over 2007 levels
- Number of respondents with a “positive impression of FasTracks” remains relatively high across all demographics and areas of the district
- The approval of FasTracks is still viewed as a positive decision

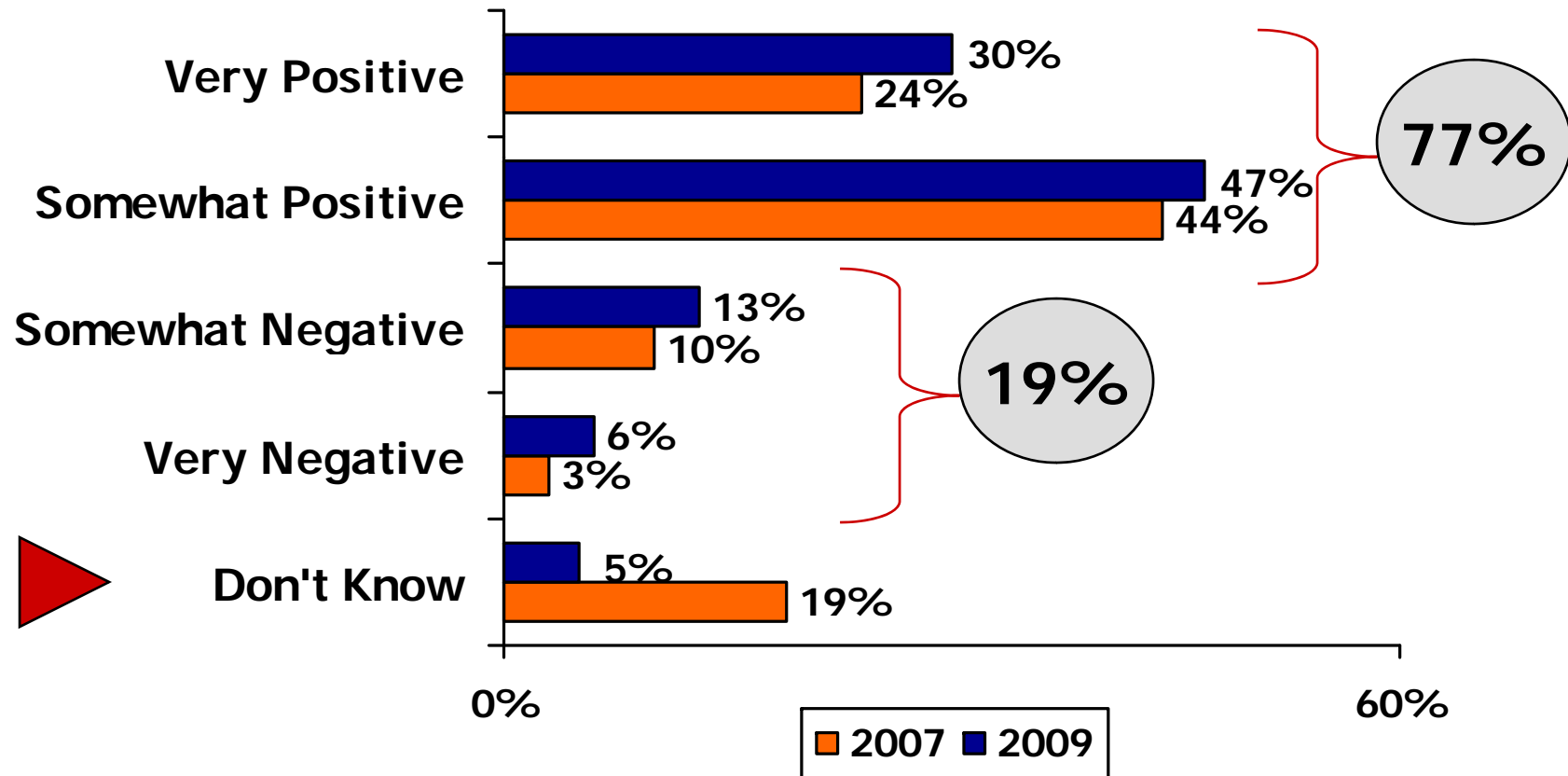
Percentage of respondents familiar with FasTracks has increased from 53% in 2007 to 64%

"How familiar are you with FasTracks?"



Respondents with a positive impression of has increased from 68% in 2007 to 77% in 2009

Based on what you know, what is your impression of FasTracks?



Positive/negative impressions of FasTracks among various demographics

	Positive	<i>Difference</i>	Negative
Adams	64%	36%	28%
Arapahoe	82%	68%	14%
Boulder	75%	54%	21%
Denver	81%	67%	14%
Douglas	82%	66%	16%
Jeffco	76%	58%	18%
Broomfield	60%	20%	40%
Male	71%	47%	24%
Female	82%	69%	13%
Democrats	78%	61%	17%
Republicans	72%	48%	24%
Income <\$25,000	69%	45%	22%
Income \$100,000<	76%	55%	21%
35-55 yrs	77%	58%	19%
65+ years	74%	56%	18%

Positive perceptions of FasTracks are tied to addressing traffic, and the 'importance' of transit—negative perceptions by cost and slow progress.

"What is the primary reason your impression of FasTracks is positive/negative?"

Top POSITIVE answers (n=538)

1. Alleviate traffic problems	14%
2. Needed service	10%
3. Quick/easy travel	7%
4. Mass transit a good idea	7%
5. Good for region/needed	7%

Top NEGATIVE answers (n=129)

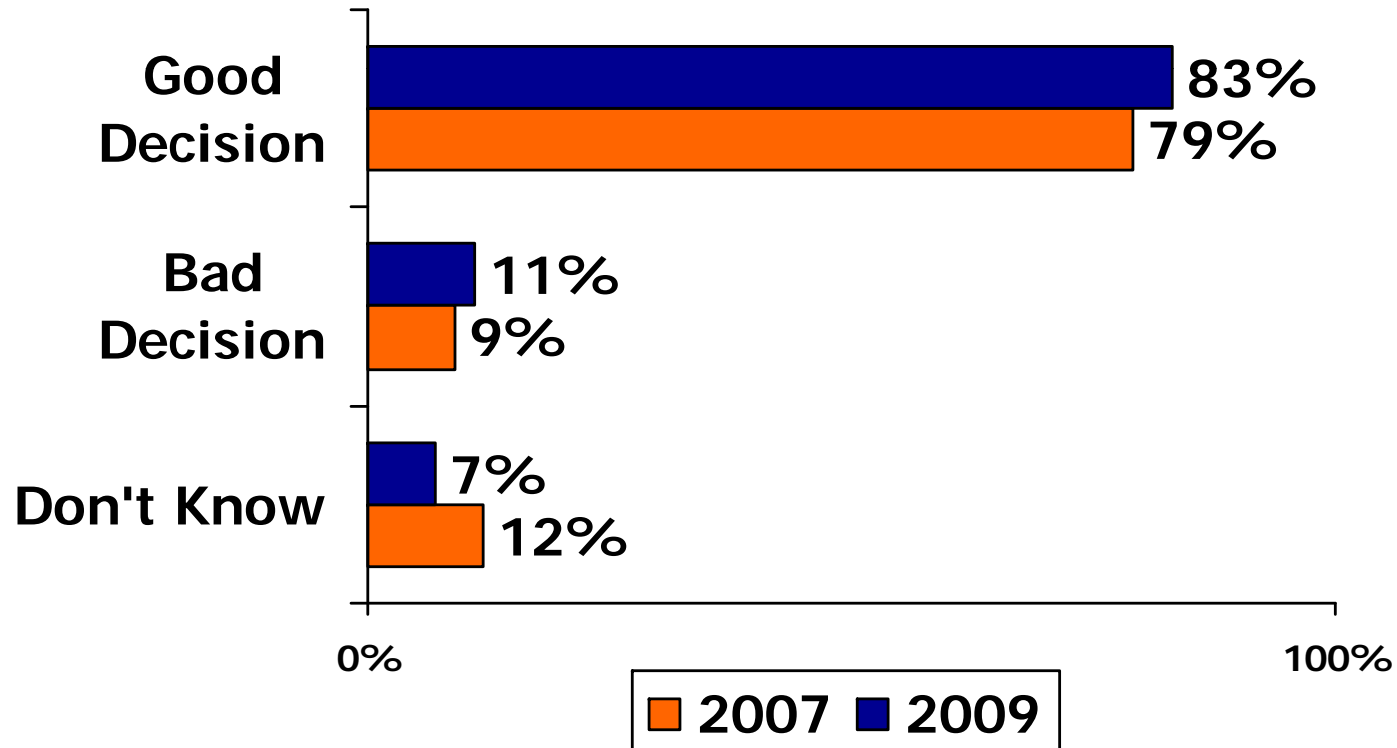
1. Costs too much	9%
2. Too slow/no progress	5%
3. Don't use it/not enough use	5%
4. Nothing in my area/needs to be expanded	4%
5. Management issues/poor planning	4%

“Looking back to the election in 2004, do you recall if you voted for or against FasTracks?”

	2007 poll	2009 poll
Voted For	62%	66%
Voted Against	10%	9%
Didn't Vote	8%	9%
Can't Recall	18%	14%
Refused	2%	2%

Looking back, approval of FasTracks is still viewed by respondents as a good decision

“And regardless of how you voted in that election. . .looking back with the benefit of hindsight. . .do you believe approval of FasTracks was a good decision or a bad decision?”



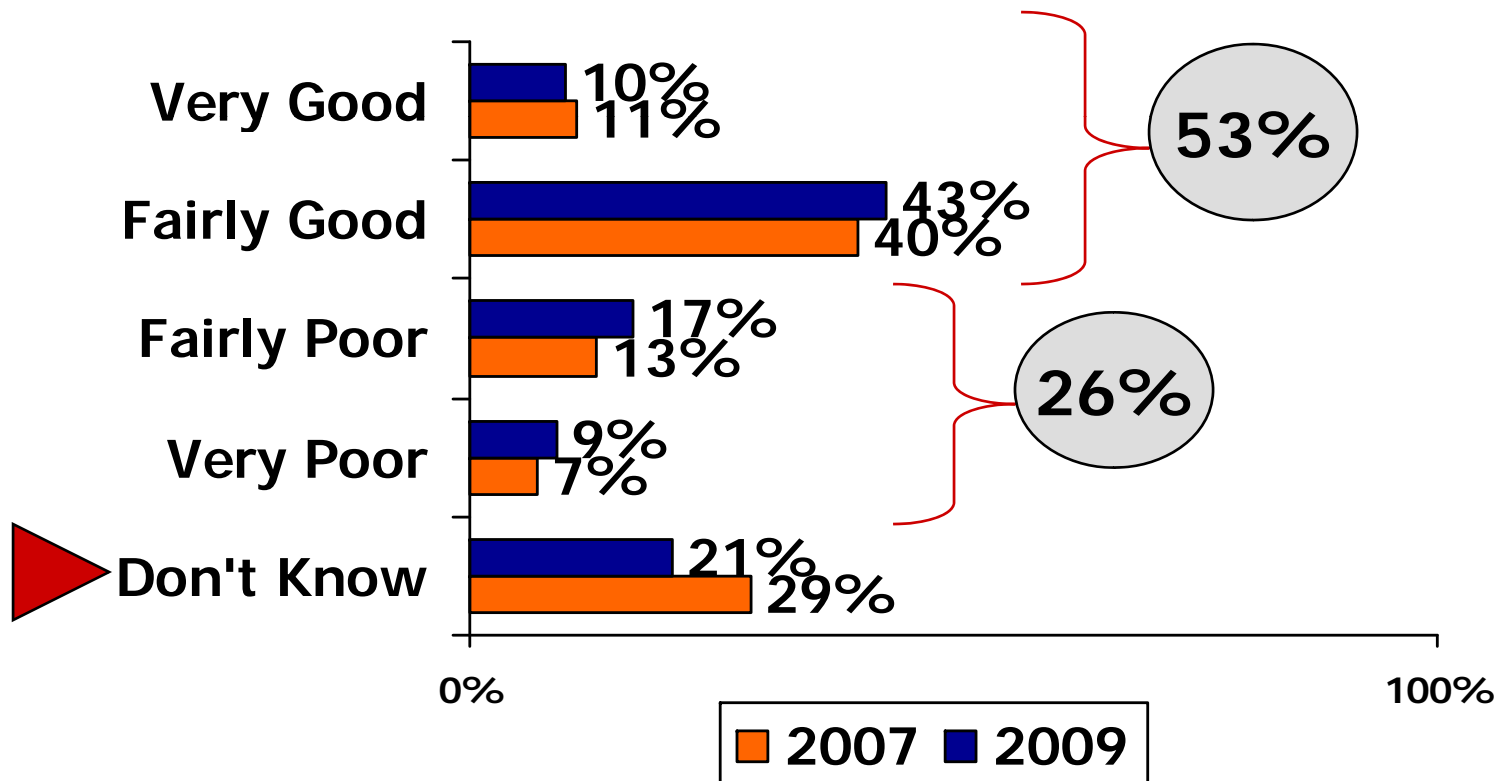
County-by-county breakdown comparison of “FasTracks: good decision or bad decision” results between 2007 and 2009 surveys

“And regardless of how you voted in that election. . .looking back with the benefit of hindsight. . .do you believe approval of FasTracks was a good decision or a bad decision?”

<u>County</u>	<u>Good Decision '07</u>	<u>Good Decision '09</u>
Adams	73%	73%
Arapahoe	80%	83%
Boulder	75%	84%
Denver	86%	84%
Jefferson	76%	85%
Broomfield	76%	60%

Respondents view RTD's implementation of FasTracks as a "good job" by a 2:1 margin. 1 out of 5 do not have a formed opinion.

"Based on what you currently know, how good of a job has RTD done implementing the FasTracks plan that was approved by voters?"



Among the 53% of respondents who give good marks on implementation, there is a general perception that FasTracks is “making progress.”

Why do you rate RTD’s FasTracks implementation as “good”?
[Open-ended question] [n= 373]

Top responses

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Making progress | 22% |
| 2. Works well | 8% |
| 3. Lots of use/personal use | 8% |
| 4. Under budget/on time | 7% |
| 5. Moving as fast as possible | 7% |
| 6. What I have read/heard | 5% |

The 26% of respondents who give poor marks for RTD's FasTracks implementation primarily cite "not enough progress" cost as the top reasons.

Why do you rate RTD's FasTracks implementation as "bad"?
[Open-ended question] [n = 183]

Top responses

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Too slow/not enough progress | 29% |
| 2. Too expensive/cost overruns | 24% |
| 3. Poor planning | 12% |
| 4. Not telling the truth/poor communications | 9% |
| 5. Did not deliver as promised | 8% |
| 6. Did not fully implement | 4% |

Finishing FasTracks is viewed as the top criteria for evaluating program's success—along with support (ridership)

In your opinion, what will make FasTracks successful? [Open-ended question]

Top responses

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Finish it | 15% |
| 2. Utilization/support | 15% |
| 3. Expansion | 13% |
| 4. More money | 4% |
| 5. Planning and placement of lines | 4% |

RTD & FASTRACKS – BUDGET ISSUE AWARENESS & CONFIDENCE

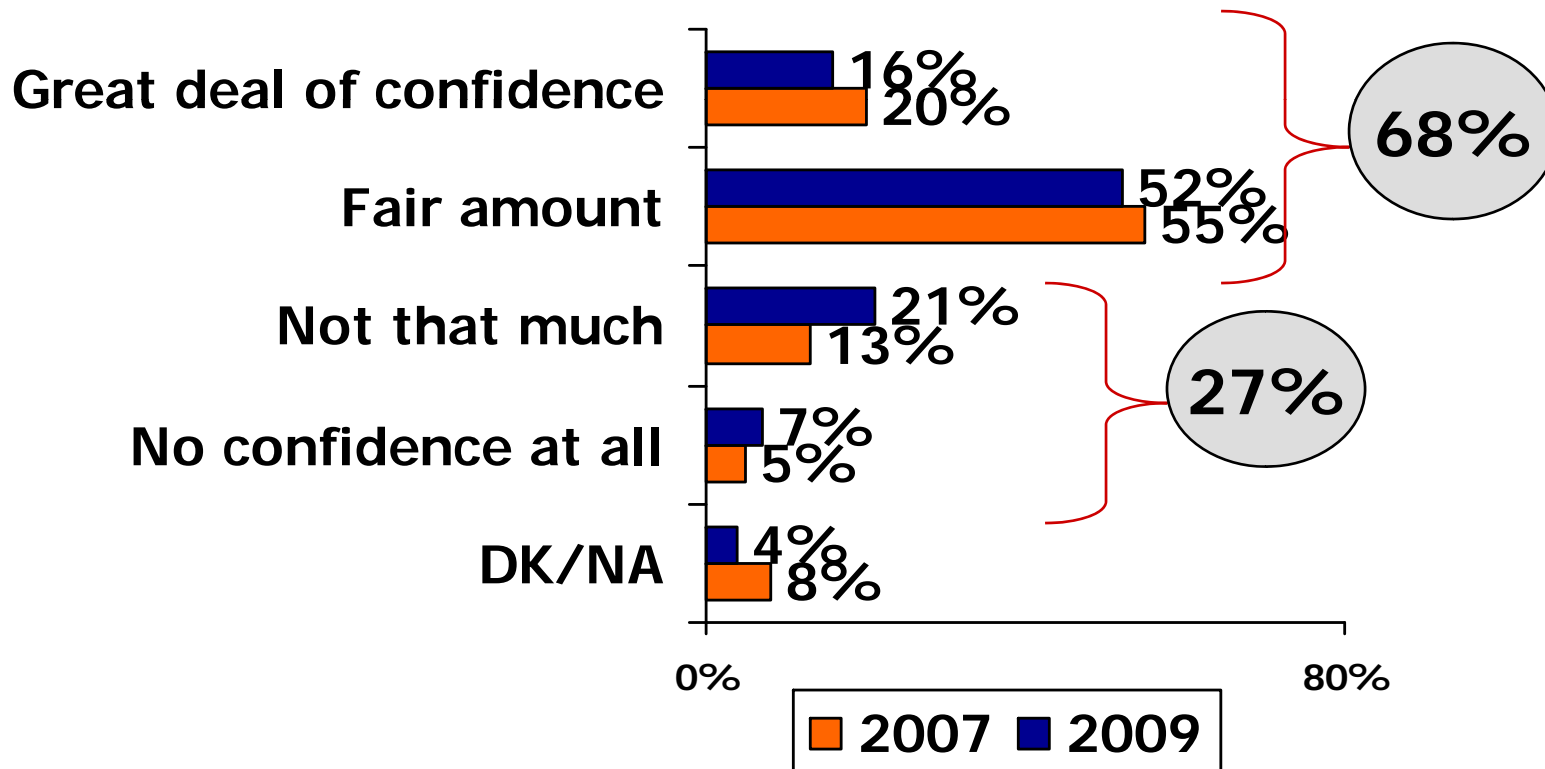


KEY FINDINGS

- Familiarity with RTD budget issues is moderate
- Confidence in RTD is fairly high overall
- However, when more information is provided on the budget challenges, confidence in RTD to deliver the complete system declines

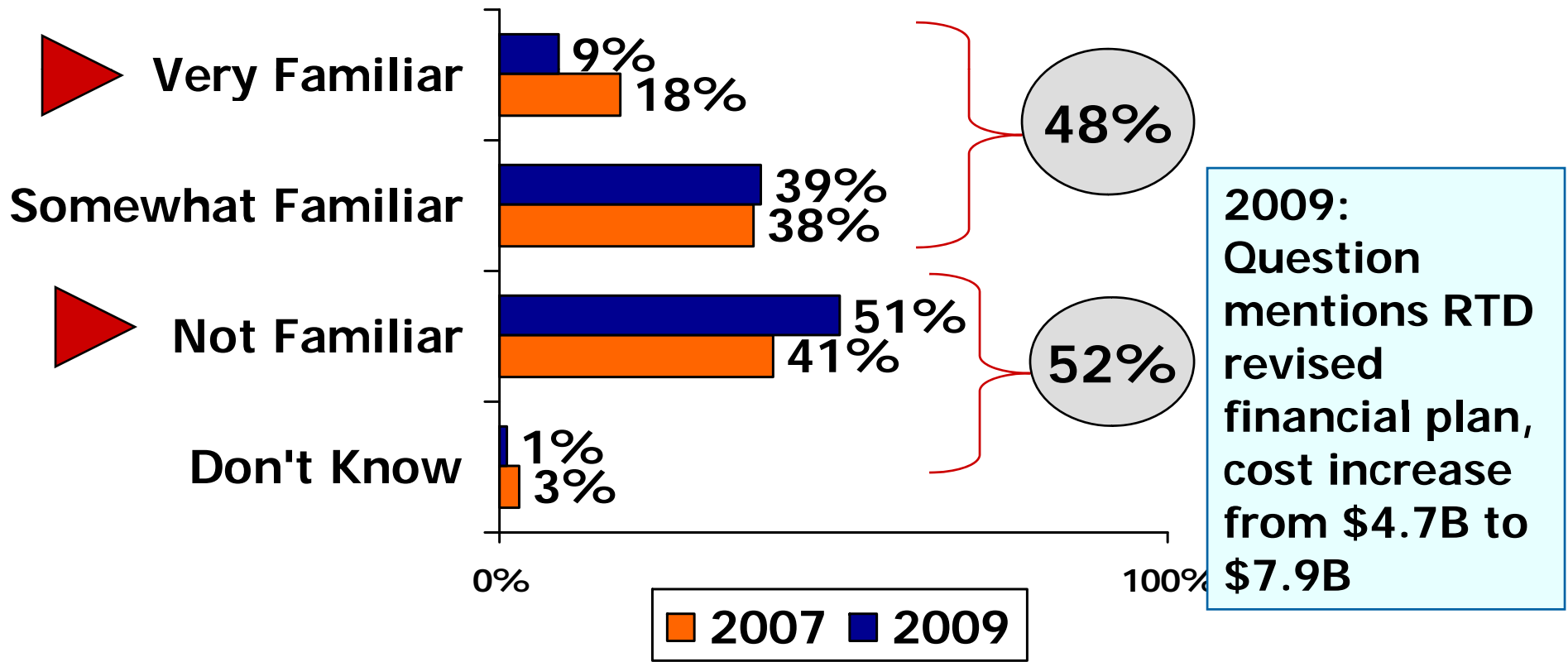
68% have confidence that RTD can complete the original plan approved by voters—slightly eroded from 75% in 2007.

“As RTD continues its planning and design. . .how much confidence do you have in RTD to complete the FasTracks plan that voters approved?”



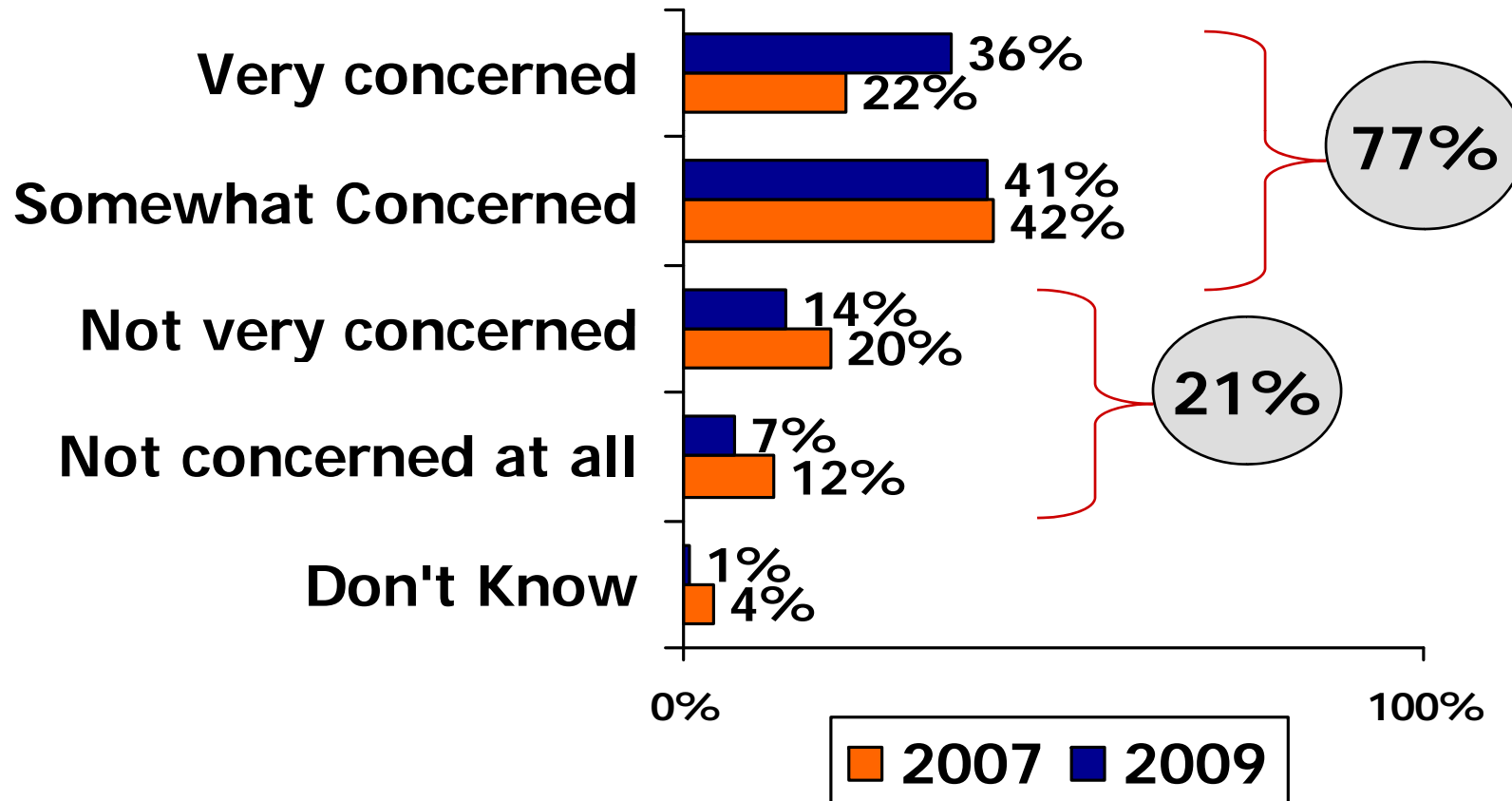
2009 respondents' familiarity with FasTracks' budget challenges shows a decline from 2007 levels

"How familiar are you with the challenges facing RTD that have increased the cost of building FasTracks (e.g. inflation, cost of construction materials?)"



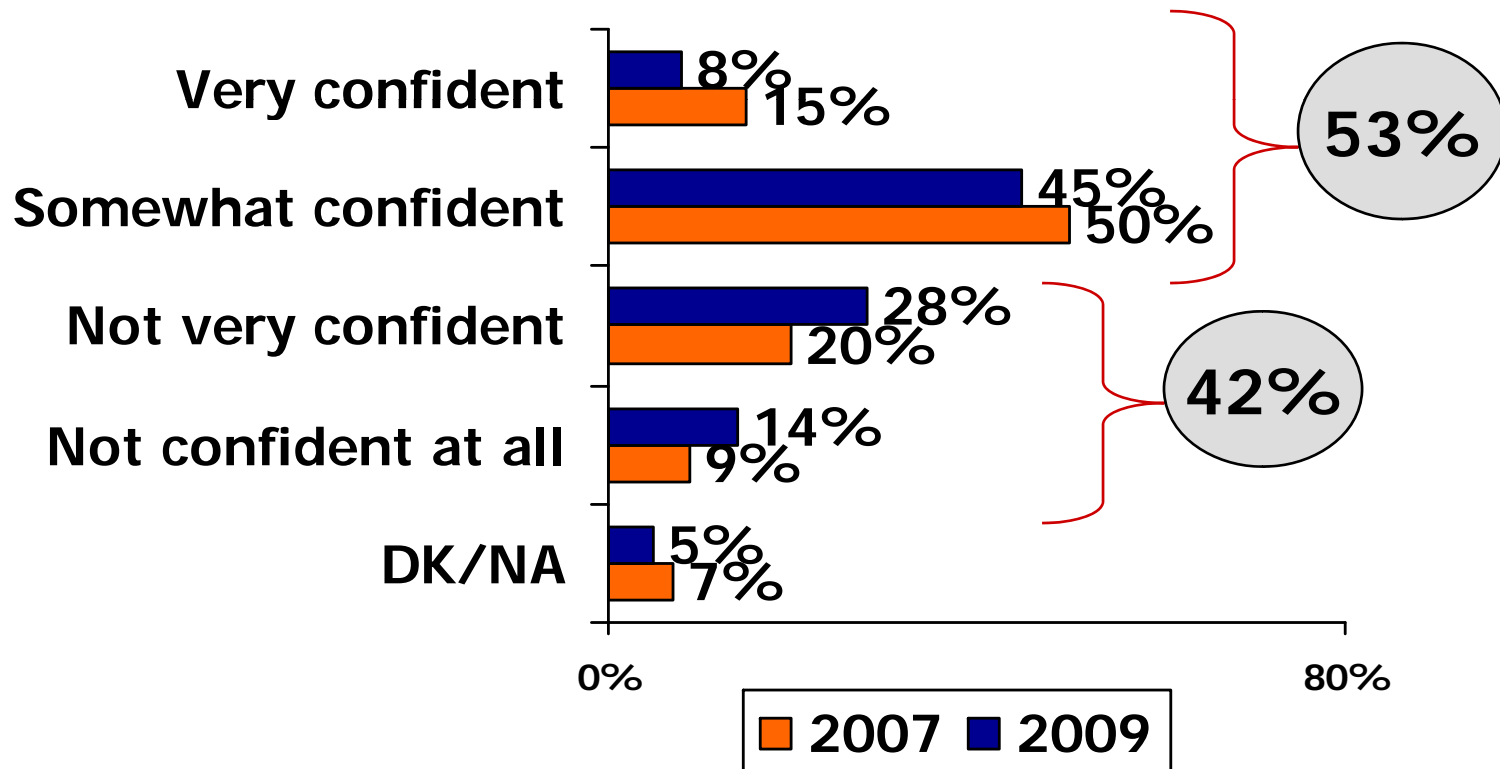
Respondents' concerns about FasTracks cost increases have increased in intensity

"How concerned are you personally about the issue of rising costs of building FasTracks?"



With more information, confidence in RTD to deliver FasTracks erodes—from 68% percent in earlier question to 53%.

“How confident are you that RTD can overcome these challenges of rising costs and deliver FasTracks as approved by voters?”



FASTRACKS – REVIEW OF OPTIONS

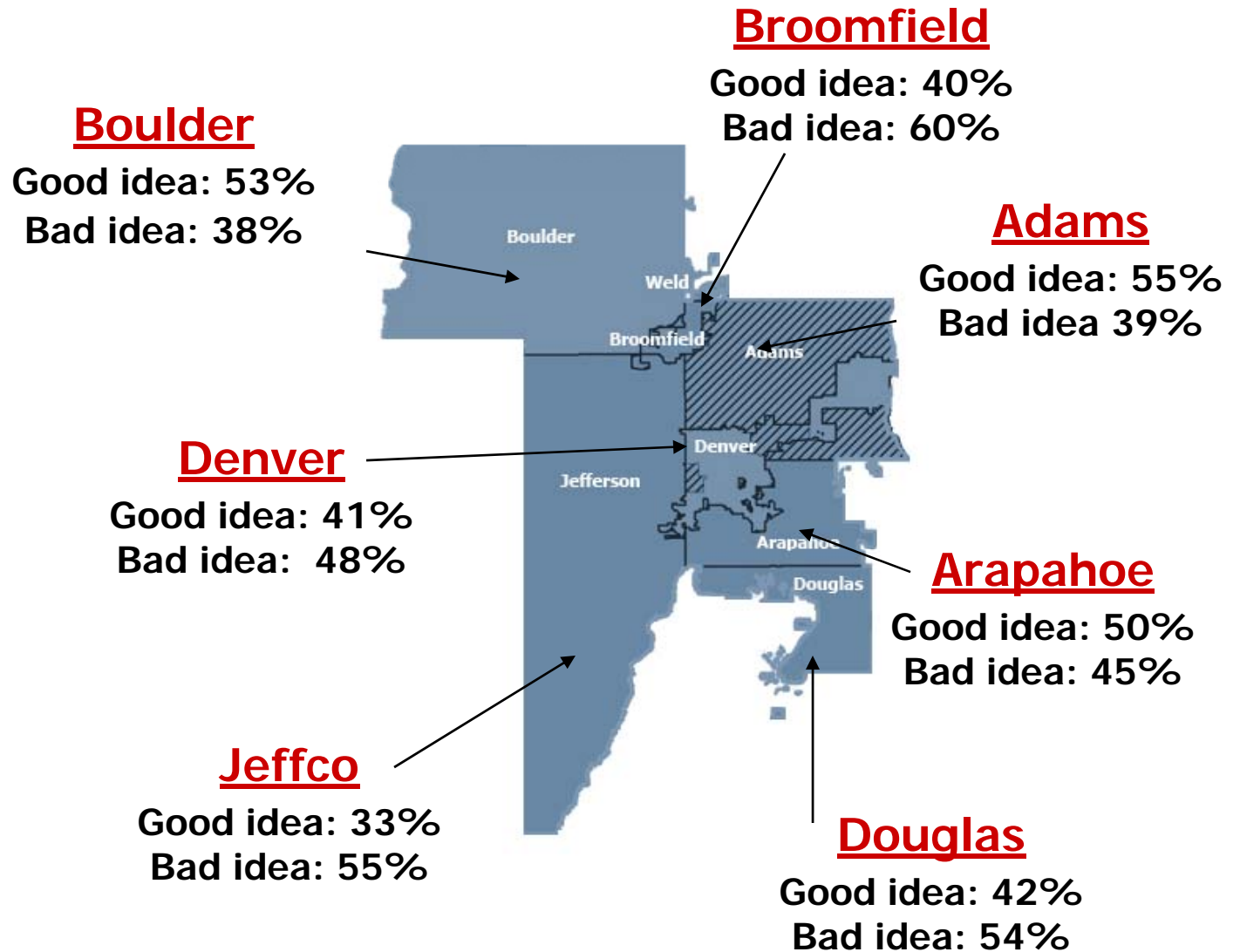


KEY FINDINGS

- Respondents are negative on options to truncate lines, or to extend construction of system to 2034
- Most highly regarded option is to build the full system by 2017—even if that means going back to voters for additional taxes
- If there are going to be cuts to the original plan, decisions should be made according to fiscal & ridership criteria

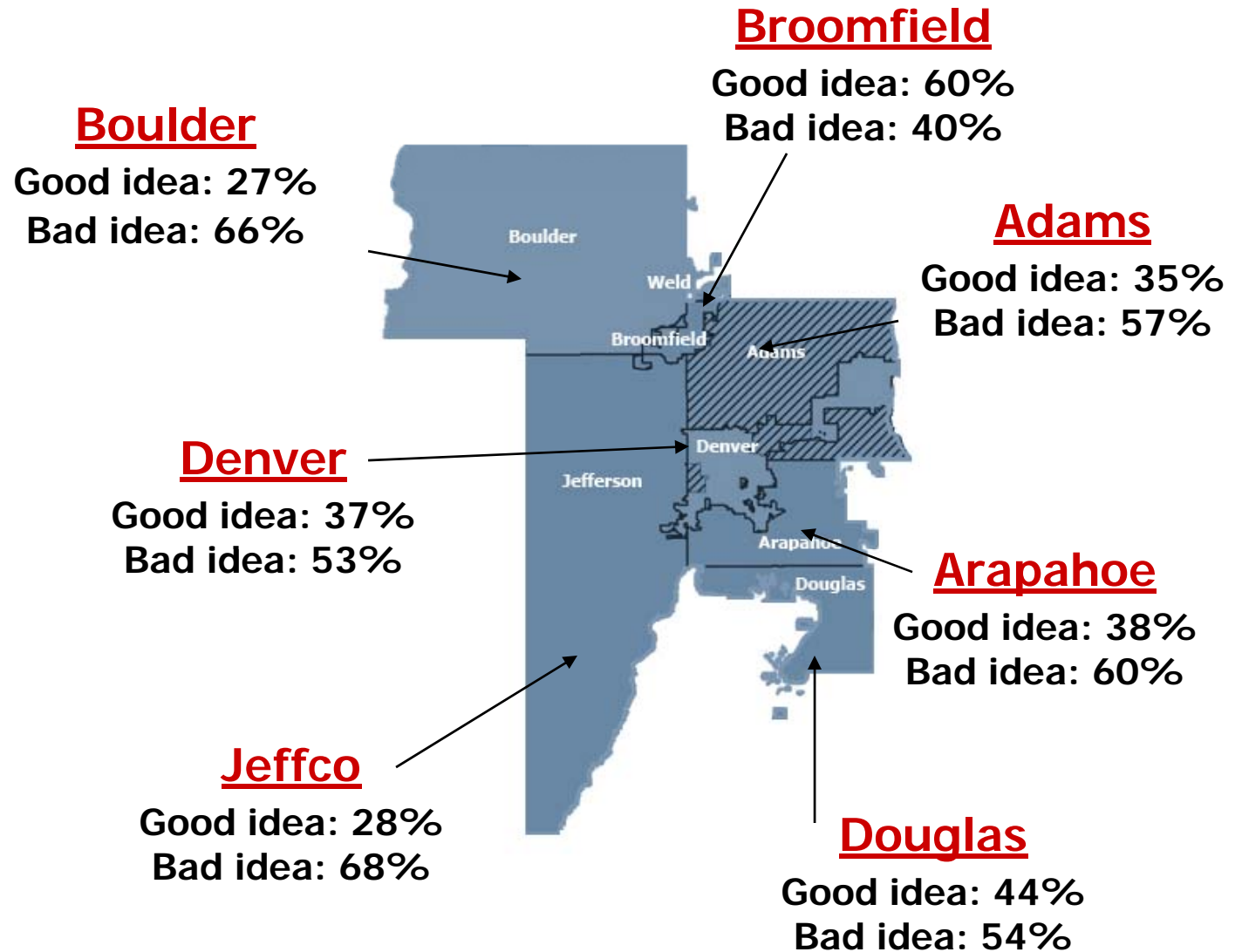
Option:
Build
scaled-
down
version
that we
can
afford,
complete
by
2017—
and end
program

Good idea: 44% | Bad idea: 47%



Option:
Build the entire lengths in original plan, but slow the pace and complete in 2034.

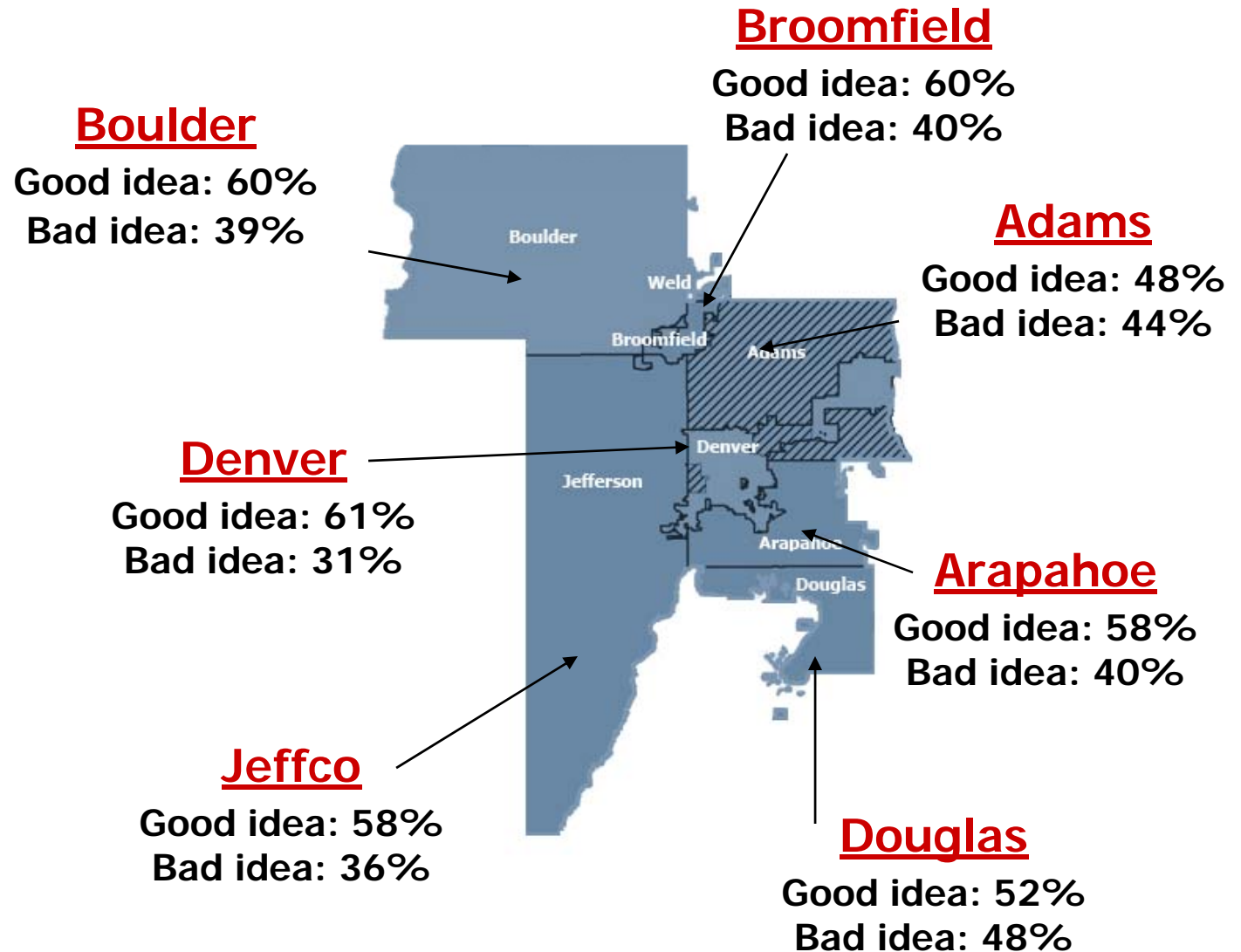
Good idea: 35% | Bad idea: 60%



Option:

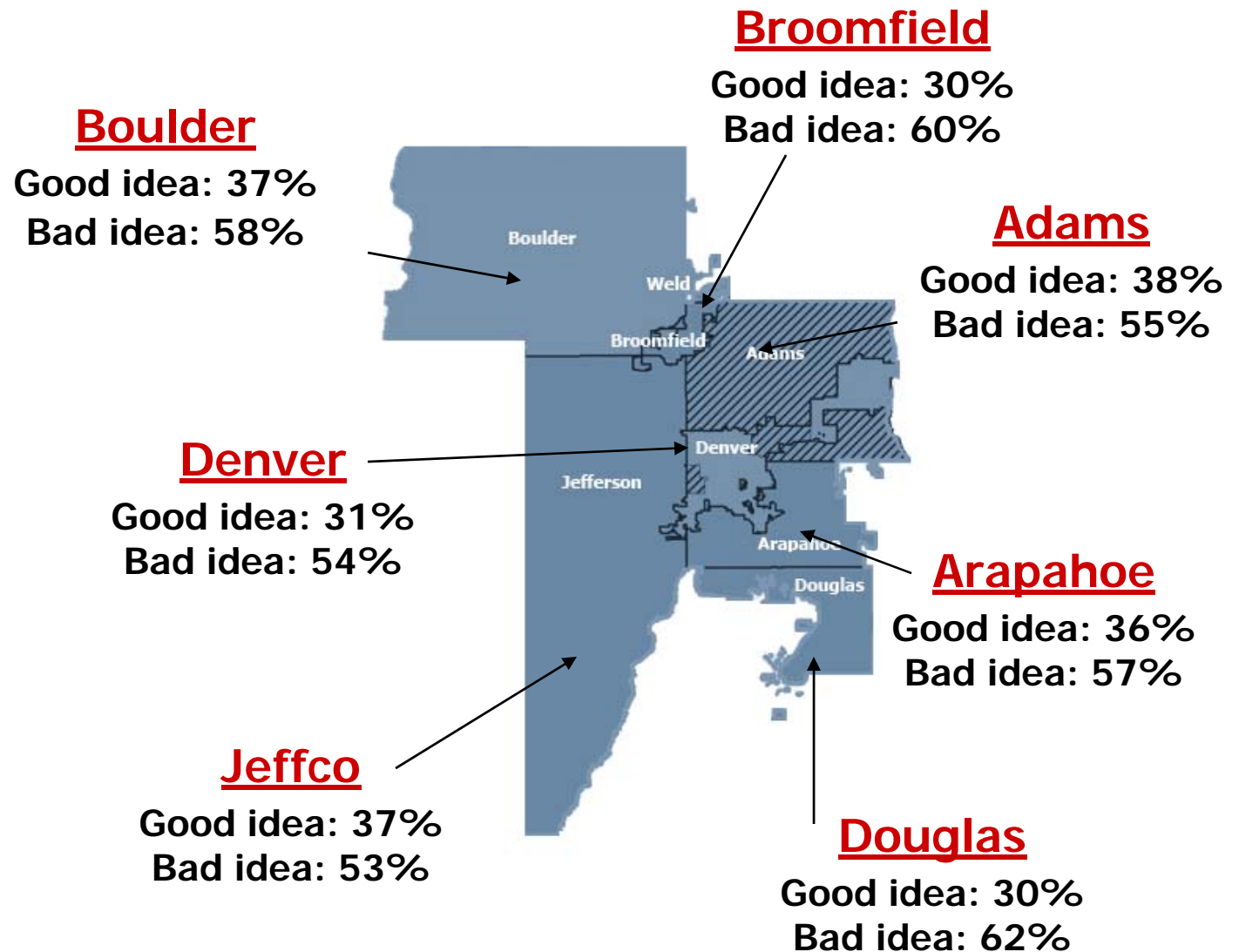
Build the complete original plan by 2017 – and pay for est. \$3.2B add'l costs with additional revenues—including sales tax increase of up to 4-tenths of one percent.

Good idea: 57% | Bad idea: 38%



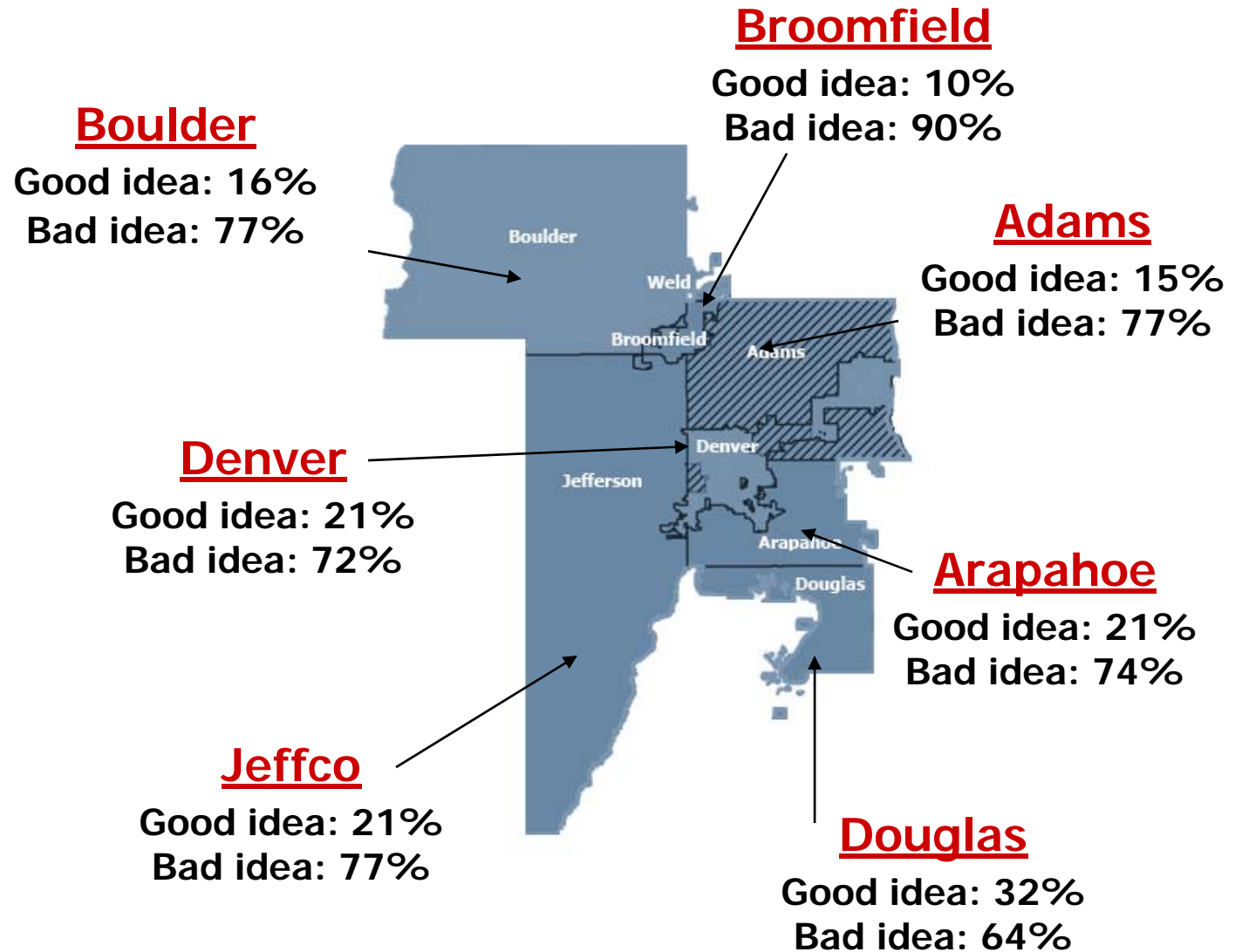
Option:
Build the NW line, the North metro line, and I-225 extension as only single-track lines.

Good idea: 35% | Bad idea: 60%



**Option:
Complete
the West
Corridor
line under
construct-
ion—and
cancel the
rest of
FasTracks**

Good idea: 20% | Bad idea: 74%



Build scaled-down version that we can afford, complete by 2017—and end program

Good idea: 44% | Bad idea: 47%

Build the entire lengths in original plan, but slow pace to complete in 2034.

Good idea: 35% | Bad idea: 60%

Build it all on by 2017 by obtaining more revenues, which could include sales tax increase of up to 4-tenths of one percent.

Good idea: 57% | Bad idea: 38%

Build the NW line, the North metro line, and I-225 as only single track lines.

Good idea: 35% | Bad idea: 60%

Complete the West Corridor line under construction—and cancel the rest of FasTracks

Good idea: 20% | Bad idea: 74%

Complete the FasTracks system that voters approved, even if it means that the timeframe to complete all of the rail lines would need to be **pushed back from the year 2017 to the year 2034.**

FasTracks plan should be **scaled back** to fit the available funds and **stick with the original timing of 2017.** This would require RTD to **finish just the rail lines in the FasTracks plan that make the most fiscal sense.**

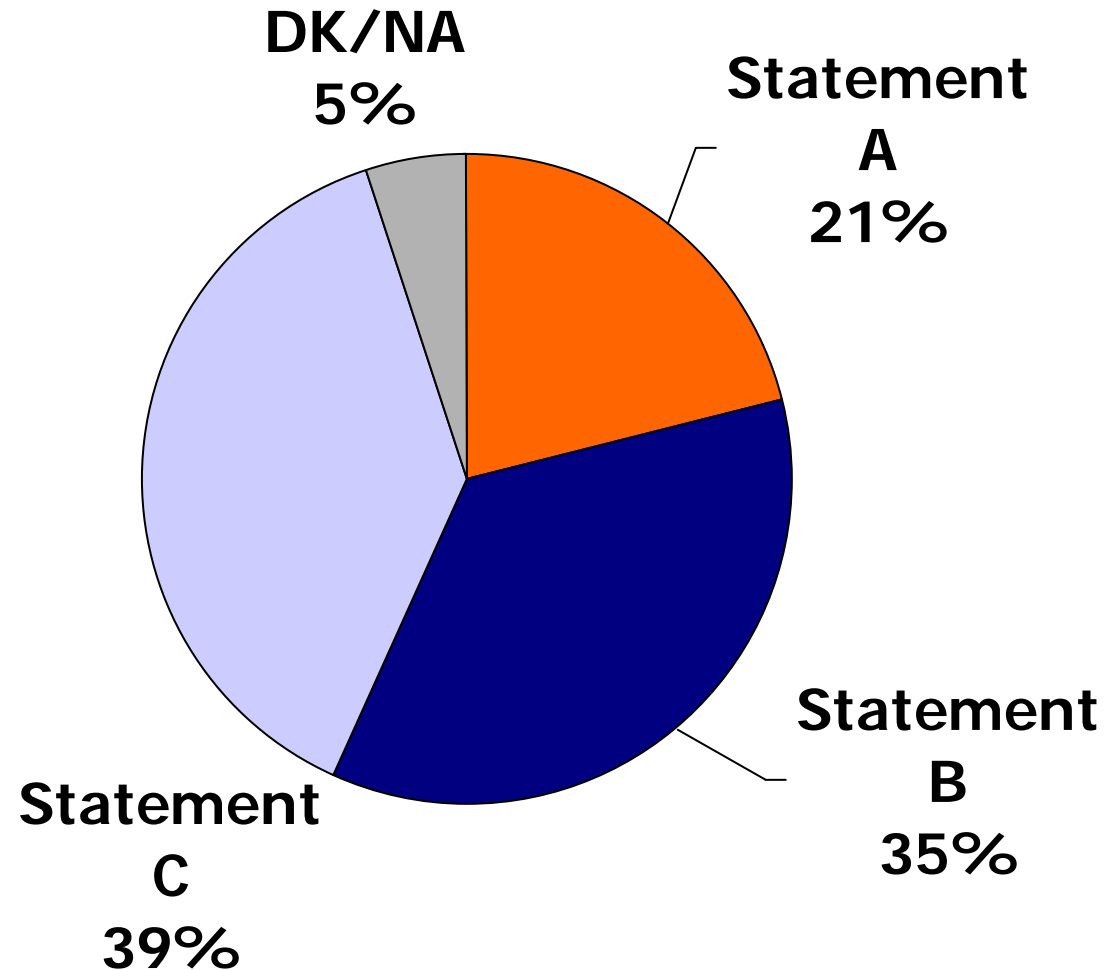
Build the complete FasTracks system that voters approved within the **original completion timeframe of 2017,** which means **going back to voters to seek approval for additional taxes.**

"Generally speaking, which statement comes closest to your personal point of view?"

A

B

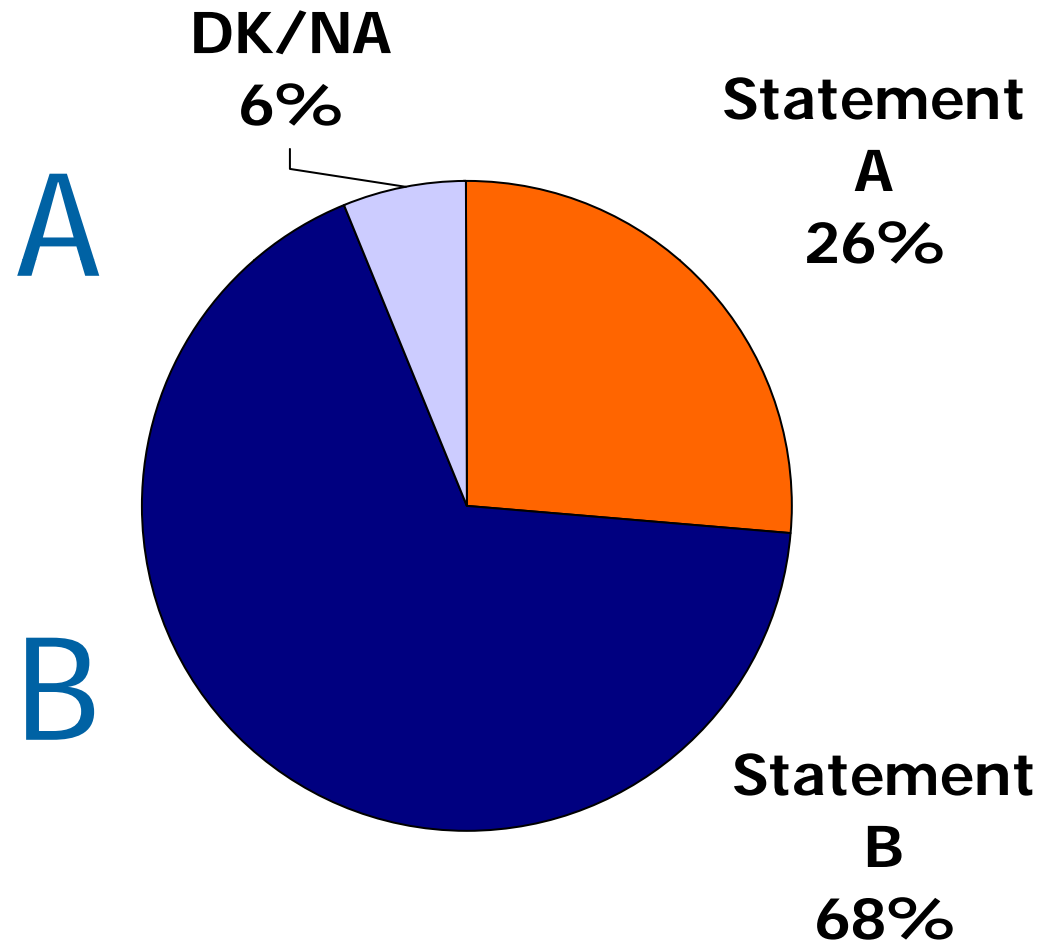
C



If cuts are to be made to the original plan, the strong preference is for decisions to be made using ridership and fiscal criteria.

If RTD makes cuts to FasTracks, they need to be fair and equitable to all cities and counties . . .this means that any **cuts to the rail lines must be made equally.**

Decisions on cuts to program must be **based on a range of factors**, including which lines have the stronger **projected ridership** and are more **financially feasible.**

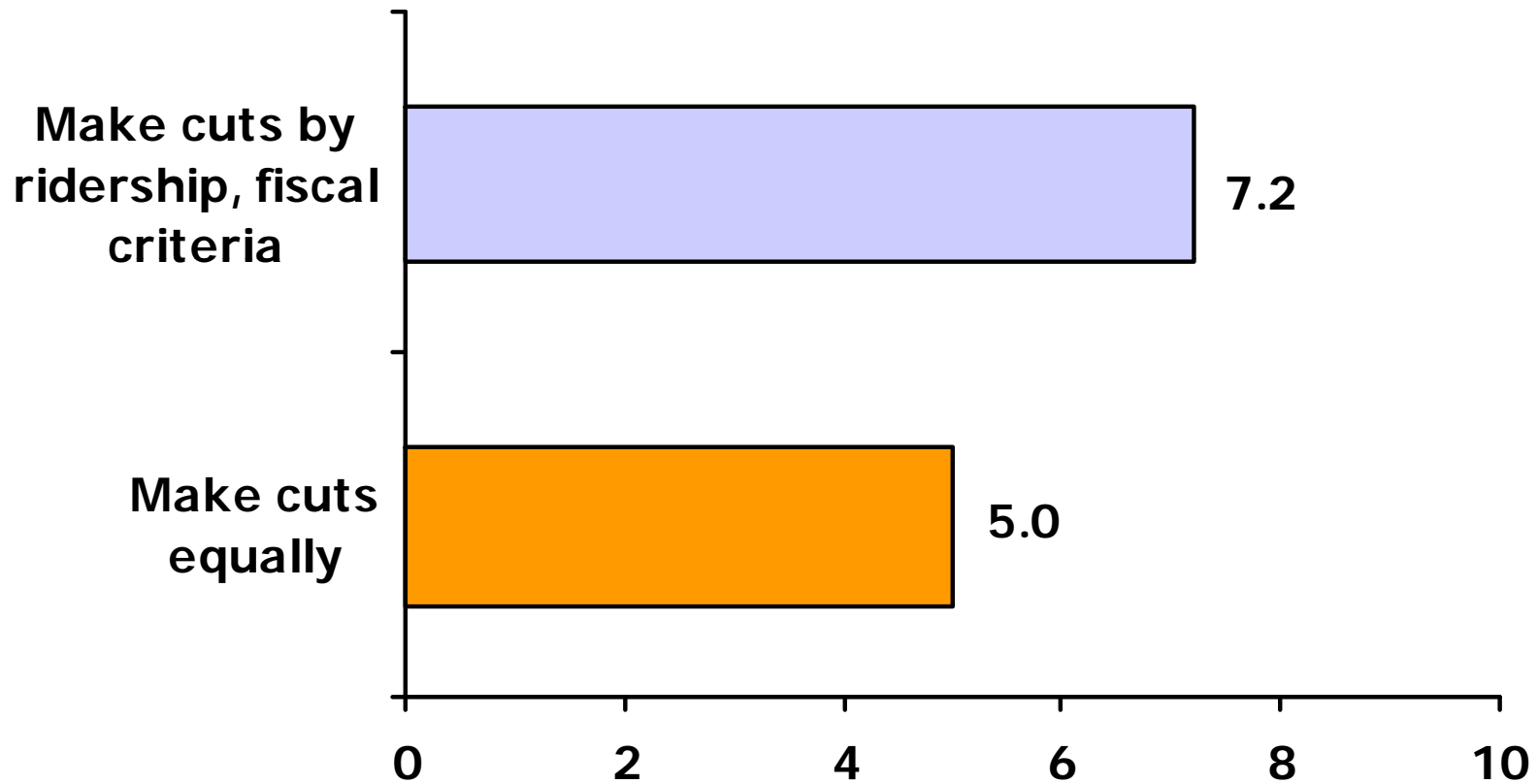


Ranking levels of importance on statements about FasTracks

"I'll read a list of statements about FasTracks. On a scale of 1 to 10 – ten meaning "extremely important" and one meaning "not important at all" – in your opinion, how would you rank the following statements in terms of their importance to you?"

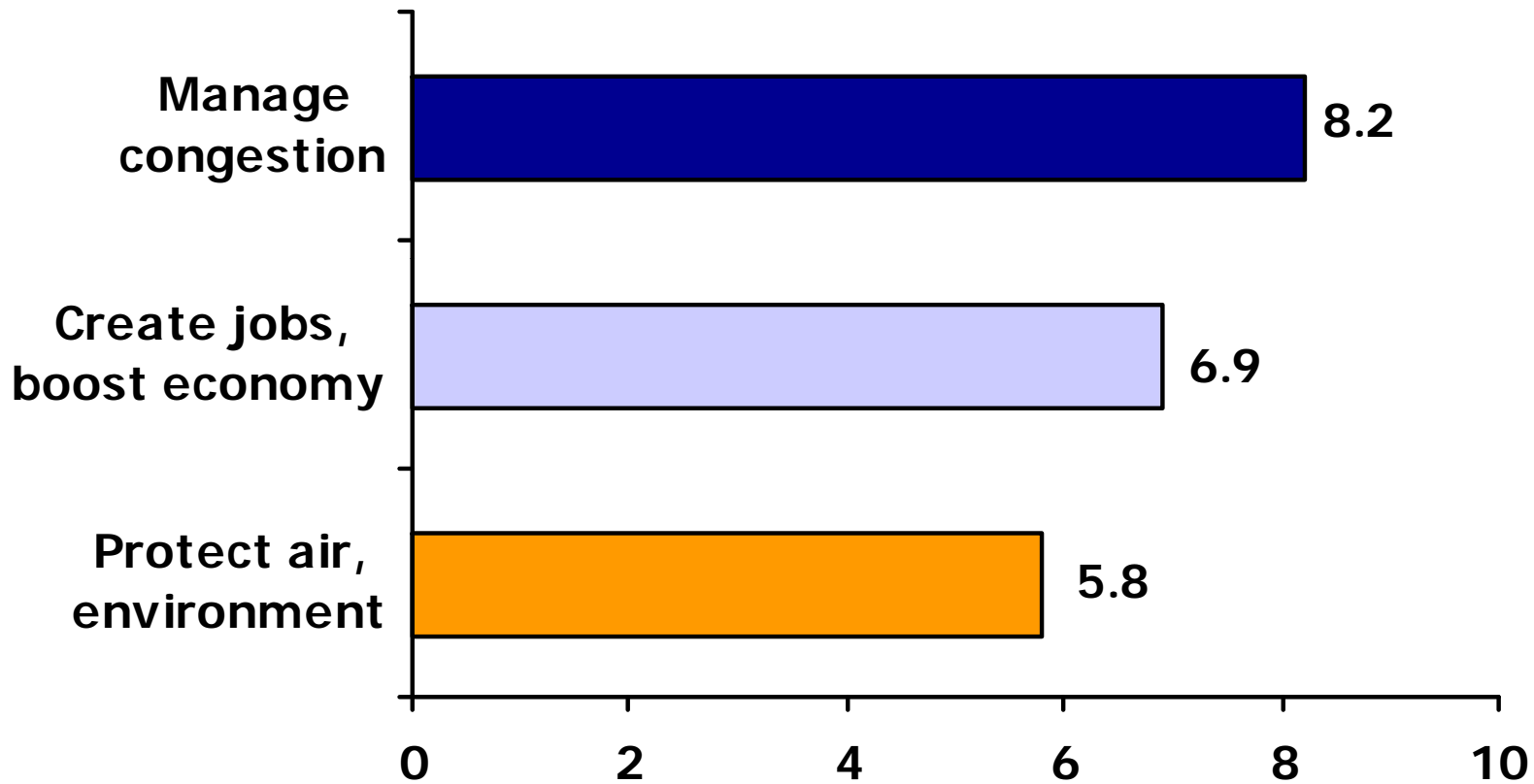
- Stop it in 2017, even if incomplete
- Make cuts equally
- Protect air, environment
- Build complete by 2017, even w/ tax
- Continue until its done
- Create jobs, boost economy
- Make cuts by ridership, fiscal criteria
- Manage congestion

If system cutbacks are made, respondents rank criteria-based decisions above making cuts equally to all lines.



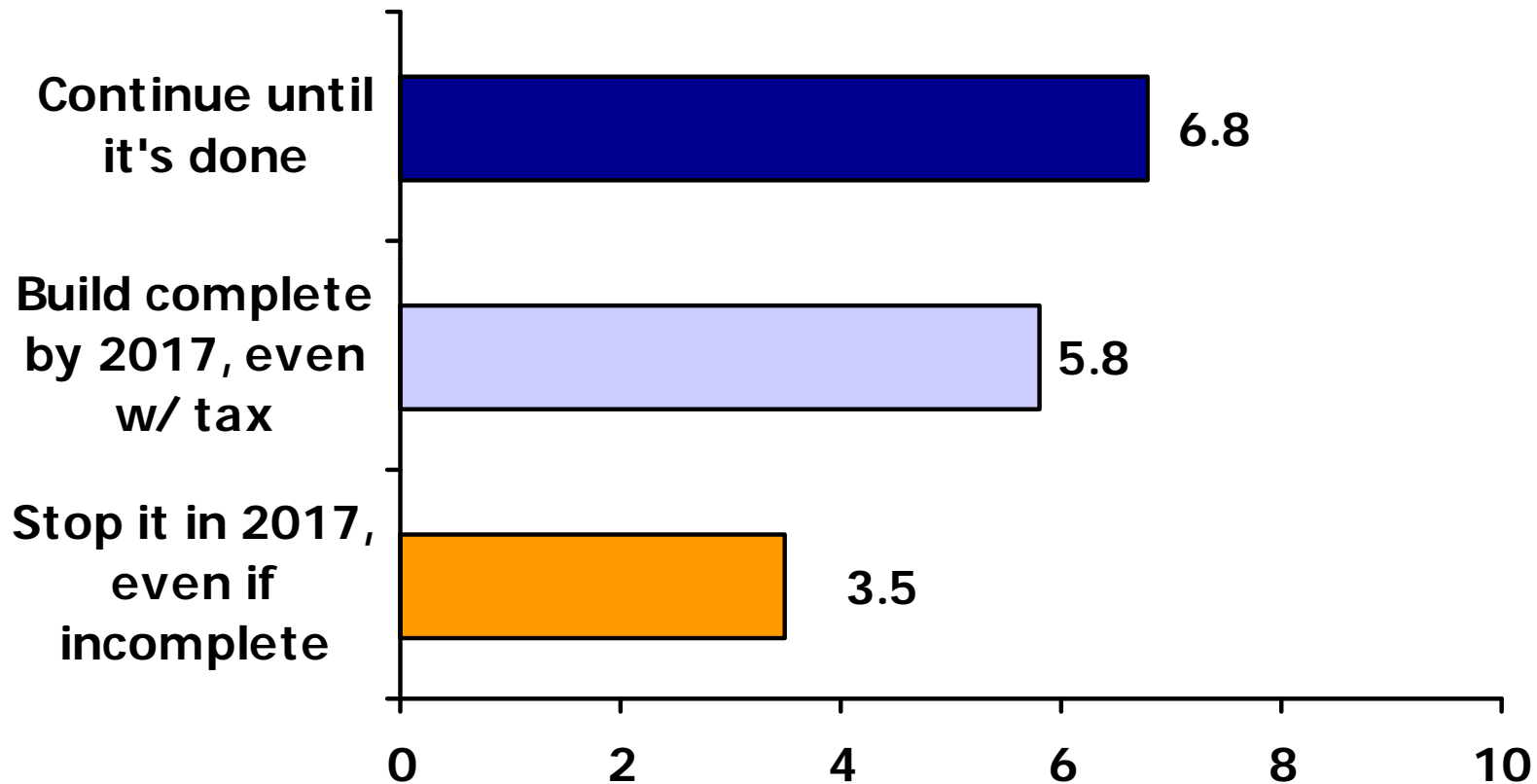
On a scale of 1 to 10, rank the importance to you personally of the following statements about FasTracks

The top-ranked 'attribute' about FasTracks is its importance in managing congestion.



On a scale of 1 to 10, rank the importance to you personally of the following statements about FasTracks

Continue the project to completion is the highest-ranked policy principle in terms of how to proceed.



On a scale of 1 to 10, rank the importance to you personally of the following statements about FasTracks

QUESTIONS ON ADDITIONAL SALES TAX FUNDING



“Although there are currently no specific plans or funding proposals from RTD. . .and of course your personal position would be based upon the ultimate details of any proposal. . .based upon everything you have just heard about the budget challenges facing RTD and FasTracks. . .would you generally support or oppose an increase of up to four-tenths of one percent in the sales-tax rate—that’s four pennies on every ten dollars worth of purchase, in addition to the current four-tenths of one percent in sales tax approved by voters in 2004 for FasTracks—with the goal of completing the FasTracks system in the original proposed timeframe of 2017?”

“To complete the full FasTracks plan by 2017, would you generally support or oppose an increase of up to four tenths of a percent in the sales tax rate—that’s four pennies on every ten dollars?”

Support: 63%
Oppose: 35%
Don't Know: 2%

Boulder
 Support: 68%
 Oppose: 28%

Broomfield
 Support: 60%
 Oppose: 40%

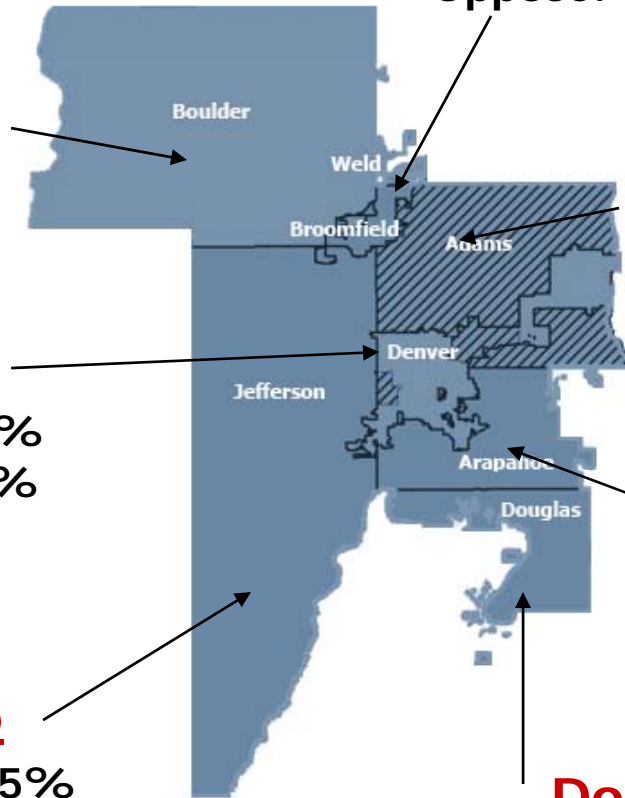
Adams
 Support: 53%
 Oppose: 46%

Denver
 Support: 68%
 Oppose: 31%

Arapahoe
 Support: 62%
 Oppose: 37%

Jeffco
 Support: 65%
 Oppose: 33%

Douglas
 Support: 54%
 Oppose: 46%



Douglas & Adams counties show the lowest intensity in support (but both above 50%), and highest intensity in opposition

	Strongly support	Somewhat Support	<i>NET Support</i>		Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	<i>NET Oppose</i>
Adams	24%	29%	53%		11%	34%	44%
Arapahoe	32%	30%	62%		14%	23%	37%
Boulder	42%	26%	68%		11%	18%	29%
Denver	41%	27%	68%		11%	20%	31%
Douglas	26%	28%	54%		18%	28%	46%
Jeffco	40%	25%	65%		10%	23%	33%
Broomfield	20%	40%	60%		20%	20%	40%

Support/oppose among various demographics

	NET SUPPORT	<i>Difference</i>	NET Oppose
Democrat	72%	46%	26%
Republican	53%	7%	46%
Right Direction	71%	43%	28%
Wrong Track	47%	-6%	53%
<\$25,000	51%	6%	45%
\$26-55,000	69%	39%	30%
\$56-100,000	63%	36%	27%
\$100,000<	69%	39%	30%
<34 years	62%	25%	37%
35 – 54 years	63%	28%	35%
55 – 64 years	70%	40%	30%
65+ years	57%	16%	41%

For the 63% of respondents who “support,” the top reasons center on the need for more transit.

“And, in your own words, what is the primary reason you would vote this way?”

Top responses - Support

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. Need mass transit | 24% |
| 2. Pollution/congestion | 13% |
| 3. Good for region/growth | 7% |
| 4. Need to finish system | 6% |
| 5. Worth the extra tax | 6% |

For the 28% of respondents who “oppose,” the top reasons center on tax concerns and management of RTD

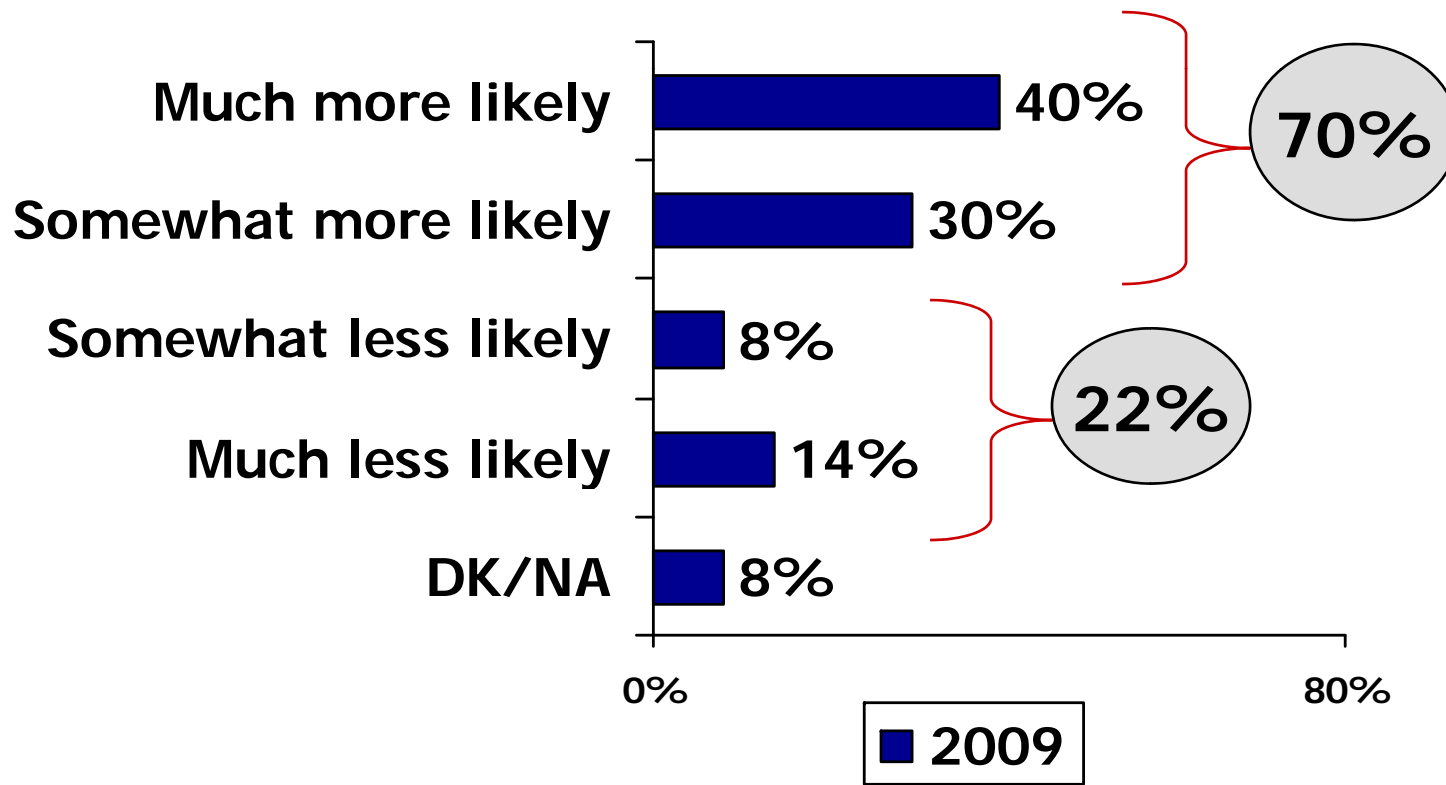
“And, in your own words, what is the primary reason you would vote this way?”

Top responses - Oppose

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Taxes too high | 12% |
| 2. No confidence in management/RTD | 6% |
| 3. Poor economy | 3% |
| 4. Too expensive | 3% |

A sunset or expiration provision on the additional tax generates a positive response.

If I told you that the add'l tax would expire when the bonds for construction of all projects are paid off. . . would that make you more likely or less likely to support?



SUMMARY

- Survey respondents' familiarity with FasTracks has increased, and they have a positive impression of FasTracks.
- No buyer's remorse: FasTracks is viewed as a good decision
- Respondents generally indicate that they want all of the system to be built.
- They want it built sooner (2017), not later (2034).
- Respondents have significant concerns about the FasTracks budget challenges.

SUMMARY

- Survey respondents are “big picture”- not parochial
- BUT: If cuts have to be made to the system, respondents strongly indicate they want RTD to use rational, data-driven fiscal & ridership criteria.