



Executive Summary

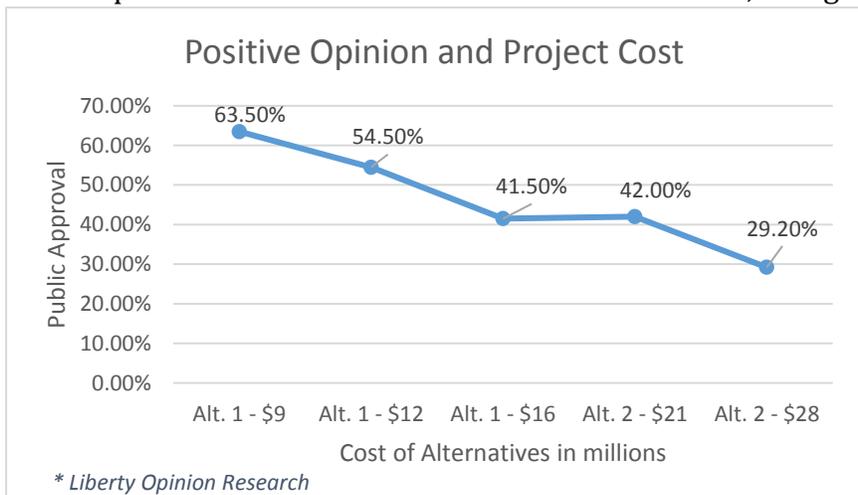
Liberty Opinion Research was contracted by the Orchard Park Town Board to survey public opinion among Orchard Park residents concerning a prospective referendum to be voted upon during the upcoming November 08, 2016 elections. This poll tested two variations for a consolidated recreation and community center as well as the associated tax increases brought on by project costs.

Sample Size: 668
Question Participation: 100%
Survey Dates: July 6-11, 2016
Survey Times: Mornings 10-11:30 and Evening 6-9:00

Executive Summary

Participant responses indicate that Alternative No.1 has a much stronger chance of passing a town-wide referendum in the upcoming November referendum. In non-competitive questioning (yes, no, or unsure), a strong plurality of likely voters were in favor of Alternative No.1 (41.4%) whereas a majority were directly opposed (53.6%) and a substantial minority were unsure (17.2%) of their opinion toward Alternative No.2.¹ Surprisingly, when asked to select the most appealing version (Alternative No.1 or Alternative No.2), public opinion was in favor of Alternative No.2 by a slim 3.6-point margin (48.2-51.8%).

Overall, cost was a determining factor for many, as revealed by a steady trend of increased support with decreasing cost. Reduced long-term operational and maintenance costs was the premier reason for 42 percent of those who selected Alternative No.1, though the opportunity for more community activities was a close second with support from 35.5 percent. Supporters of Alternate No.2 selected exercise and recreational programs overwhelmingly over sports opportunities by a 54.2 percent margin (77.1-22.9%).



¹ “non-competitive questioning” means that these two alternatives were first presented as a standalone opportunity. A comparison of which was option was more favored came further down the questionnaire.



Alternative No.1

Alternative No.1 received 41 percent in favor of the \$16 million tax burden with an annual tax increase of 67.69\$ or \$5.64 per month for the average home owner. The remaining 58 percent of opposed and unsure residents were prompted to reconsider Alternative No.1 if the tax burden was lowered by 25 percent.

At the tune of \$12 million, 22 percent of those who had been against or unsure became in favor of the town project. 18.7 percent of those still not in favor were persuaded by a further 25 percent reduction.²

Out of the total sample, 41 percent were in favor the original \$16 million proposal. Offering cost cuts, first to \$12 million and then to \$9 million, convinced 13 percent and 8.5 percent of the study, respectively.³

Estimated Cost	Favorability Total
• \$16m	41.5%
• \$12m	54.5%
• \$9m	63.0%

With the two Alternatives juxtaposed, 48.2 percent of likely voters found Alternative No.1 more appealing than Alternative No.2. For those in favor of Alternative No.1 amid non-competitive questioning, cost was noted to be the favored benefit for most of those who preferred the policy, with activities and community/recreational space trailing behind.

Favored Benefit	
• Cost	42.0%
• Activities	35.5%
• Space	22.5%

² Question 2 of the survey asked, "If the project cost were reduced by 25%, and would then come at a cost of \$4.23 month or \$ 50.76 year, would you support it?"

³ Question 3 of the survey asked, "If the project cost were reduced by a further 25%, and would then come at a cost of \$3.17 month or \$38.07 year, would you support it?"



Alternative No.2

After a brief explanation of the \$28 million version of the proposal, all survey participants were asked if they would vote for Alternative No.2 if it was brought to referendum on the ballot of the November referendum.⁴ Only 29.2 percent responded in favor of the measure, with 53.6 percent indicating “no” in opposition. The remaining 17.2 were uncertain of their stance toward Alternative No.2.

Those who had indicated that they were opposed or unsure were asked to reconsider Alternative No.2 if the tax burden was decreased by 25 percent.⁵ Even with the reduction, only 10.6 percent of those previously opposed to Alternative No.2 changed their minds.

31 percent of those who had been unsure voted in favor of the reduced price, indicating the cost was a critical factor in their thought process. In all, the additional support for 25 percent cost reduction added 11 percent favorability, bringing the total to a 40.2 percent minority. This nearly 10-point negative gap suggests the low level of approval for Alternative 2.

Estimated Cost	Favorability Total
• \$28	29.2%
• \$21m	40.2%

Yearlong exercise and recreational opportunity was the most attractive of the two listed benefits for Alternative No.2. Demographic factors will be explored in the following section.

Favored Benefit	Favorability Total
• Yearlong exercise/recreation opportunity	77.1%
• Yearlong sporting opportunities	22.9%

⁴ Question 4 of the survey asked, “The project cost for this option would be approximately \$28 million. For the average homeowner in our community that would equate to a tax increase of \$ 9.87 month, which is \$118.45 year. Come November, would you vote for this option?”

⁵ Question 5 of the survey asked, “If the project cost were reduced by 25%, and would then come at a cost of \$ 7.40 month or \$88.84 year, would you support it?”



Demographics

Women comprised 53.6 percent of the study, 75 percent of participants were married, and 70.2 percent did not have children under 18 years of age as dependents.

With the exception of voters in the 31 to 45 years old, age was not a determining factor according to this study. While all other age categories were divided almost evenly with a 2-4 percentage margin, 77 percent of individuals between the age of 31-45 favored Alternative No.2.

Gender held no statistical significance as a factor in favoring one alternative over another in either competitive or non-competitive questioning.

Likely voting residents who had dependent children under the age of 18 favored Alternative No.2 strongly (74-26%). 58 percent of those without children would rather vote for Alternative No.1.

Relationship status did not have a visible effect on the competitive selection of one alternative over another, but did play a significant role in which benefits were preferred. Of those in favor of Alternative No.1, 34 percent of married and 54 percent of widowed individuals saw increased activities as their primary rationale. 41 percent of single people preferred an increased community sports as a project benefit. Across the board, between 70-80 percent of all other categories (married, divorced, and widowed) favored an increase in community activities and recreation programs.

METHODOLOGY

The sample size for the survey is 668 registered voters, resident in the Town of Orchard Park of New York and the margin of error (M.O.E.) is 3.7. Responses were gathered through landline interviews conducted using IVR Automated Phone Calls. The survey was conducted by Liberty Opinion Research LLC July 6-11, 2016 between the morning hours of 10:00-11:30 AM and evening hours of 6:00-9:00 PM.