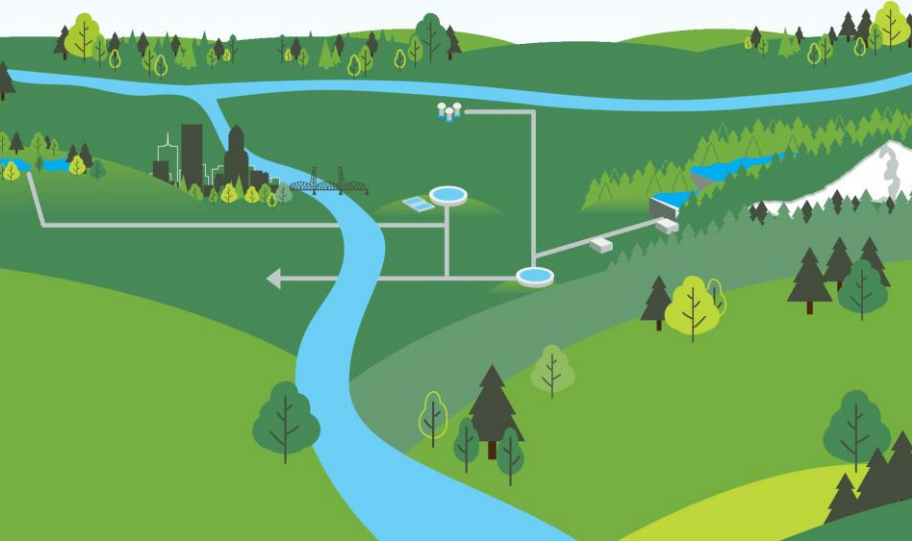


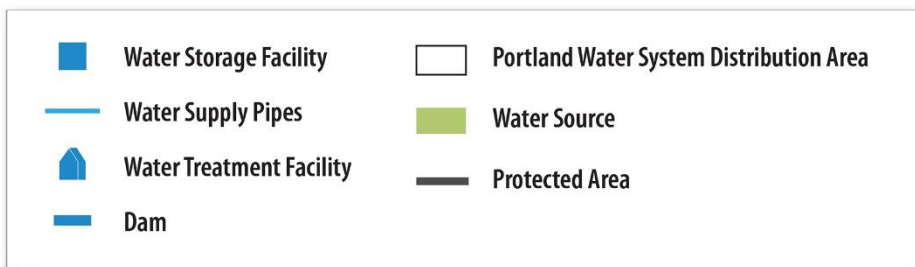
2 May 2019

PORTLAND WATER BUREAU
Bull Run Treatment Program

The Value of Public Engagement
and Community Input

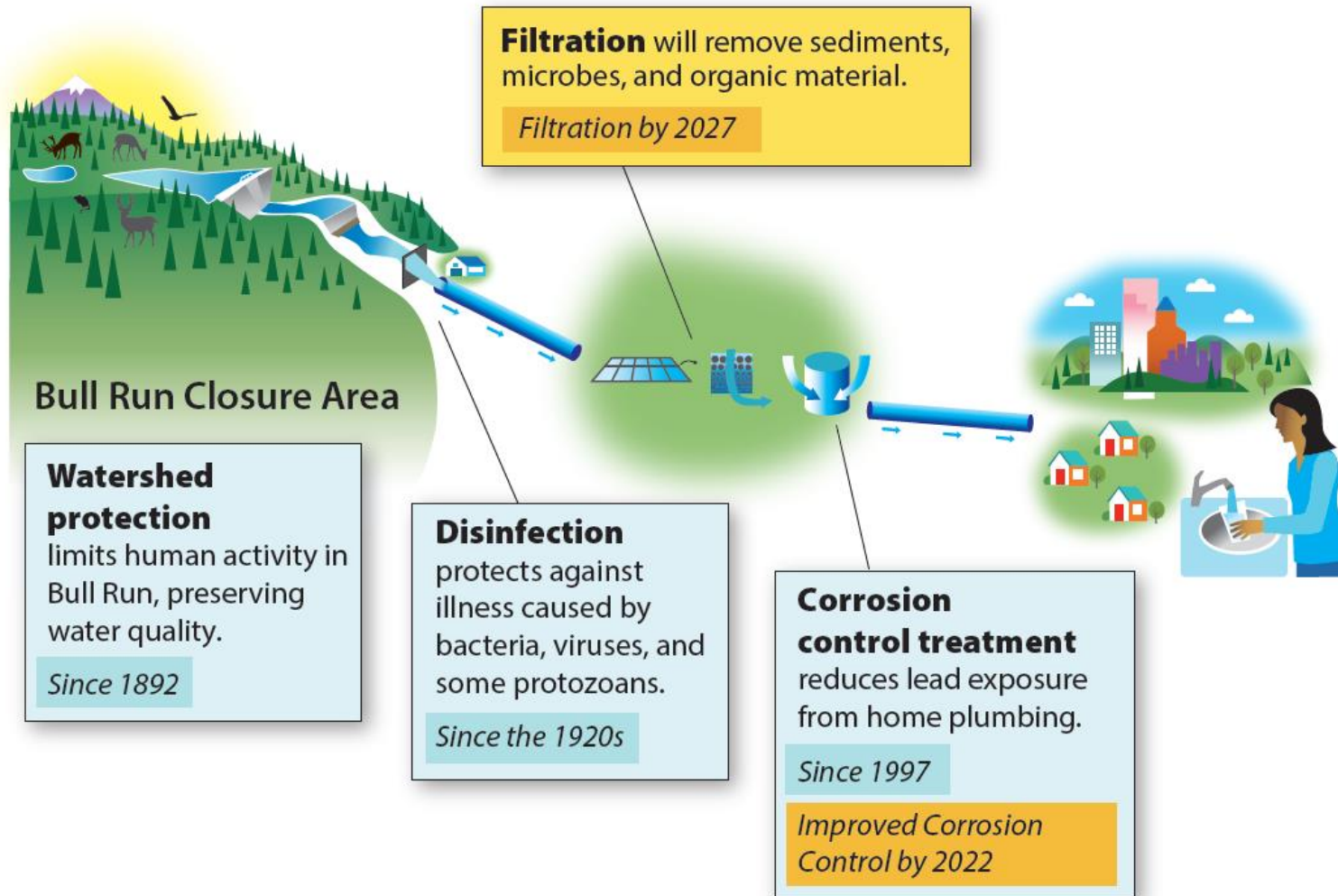


Portland's Water System



- Serves almost a million people
- Uses 100 million gallons of water on an average day
- Serves the City of Portland and 19 wholesale water districts

Bull Run Treatment Projects



Why are the projects needed?

These projects are being built to comply with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations.

Oregon Health Authority has set compliance schedules.

Communication Goals

- ✓ Consider community values in ongoing decisions for treatment projects
- ✓ Increase water ratepayers' awareness of the projects and their benefits
- ✓ Maintain communications with all PWB customers and stakeholders
- ✓ Be transparent
- ✓ Communicate project successes
- ✓ Build trust with site neighbors
- ✓ Keep Water Bureau staff informed

Communication Challenges

What are our **customer's** concerns going to be?

- Changes in water quality
- Rate increases
- Explaining treatment decisions that increase costs
- Others?

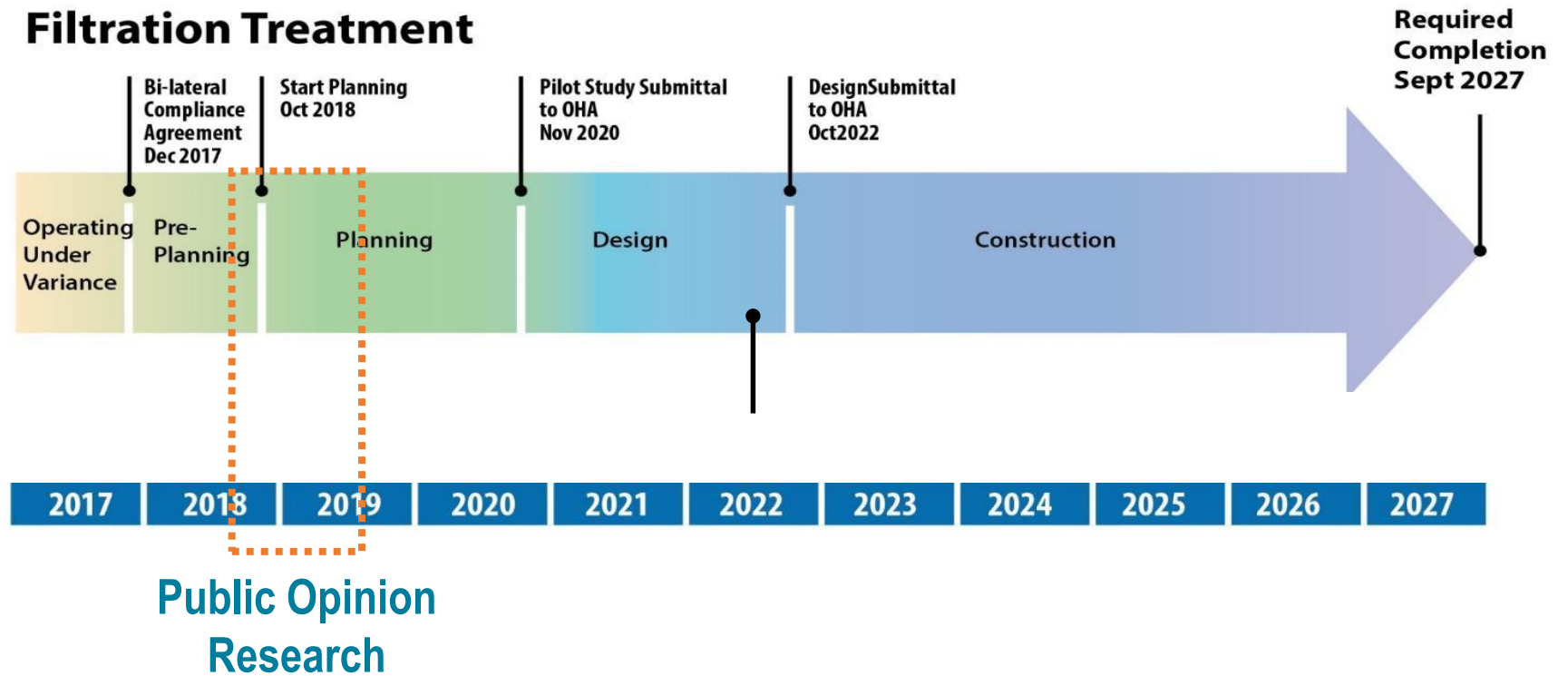


What are our **neighbor's** concerns going to be?

- Viewshed
- Property values
- Permanent change in quality of life
- Construction impacts
- Others?

Overcoming Challenges: Understanding Customers' Concerns

- Stakeholder interviews
- Online survey
- Focus groups
- Telephone survey



Stakeholder Interview & Online Survey

1,653

customers
queried
through our
**online
survey**



Over

183,343

people reached
through
social media



932 followers



9,827 followers



nextdoor

170,412 followers



413 followers



1,843 followers

20 

**stakeholder
interviews**

representing a range of
stakeholder groups:

- Wholesale Customers
- Business/Institutional
- Residential
- Public Health Interests
- Minority Groups/Organizations
- Portland Stakeholders

Stakeholder Interviews

- ✓ The most important, shared community values: cost benefit and public health/water quality.
- ✓ Top values in selecting the filtration plant site are keeping the project easy to implement and engaging the site neighbors.
- ✓ Stakeholders are interested in considering treatment technologies that go beyond *Cryptosporidium* removal, as long as the benefits are commensurate with costs.
- ✓ Plant capacity should plan for the future, but don't overbuild it – phase it, if possible.

Who did we talk to?

- Neighborhood coalitions
- Communities of color
- Wholesale customers
- Industrial customers
- Home Builders Association
- Small Businesses
- Emergency management

Online Survey

Q: How satisfied are you with your drinking water on a scale of 1 (poor) to 7 (excellent)?

Weighted
average



1 Poor	2	3	4	5	6	7 Excellent
23	17	40	98	176	385	481

85% of survey takers rank water above 5

Top Questions: Impact to Bills and Changes to Water

Q: What questions do you have about the filtration plant?

Tier 1

How will it impact my bill?	78%
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Will I notice a change in my water?	70%
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Tier 2

Will the filtration plant impact the Bull Run watershed?	51%
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How does the treatment process work?	50%
--------------------------------------	-----

When will the new filtration plant be operational?	48%
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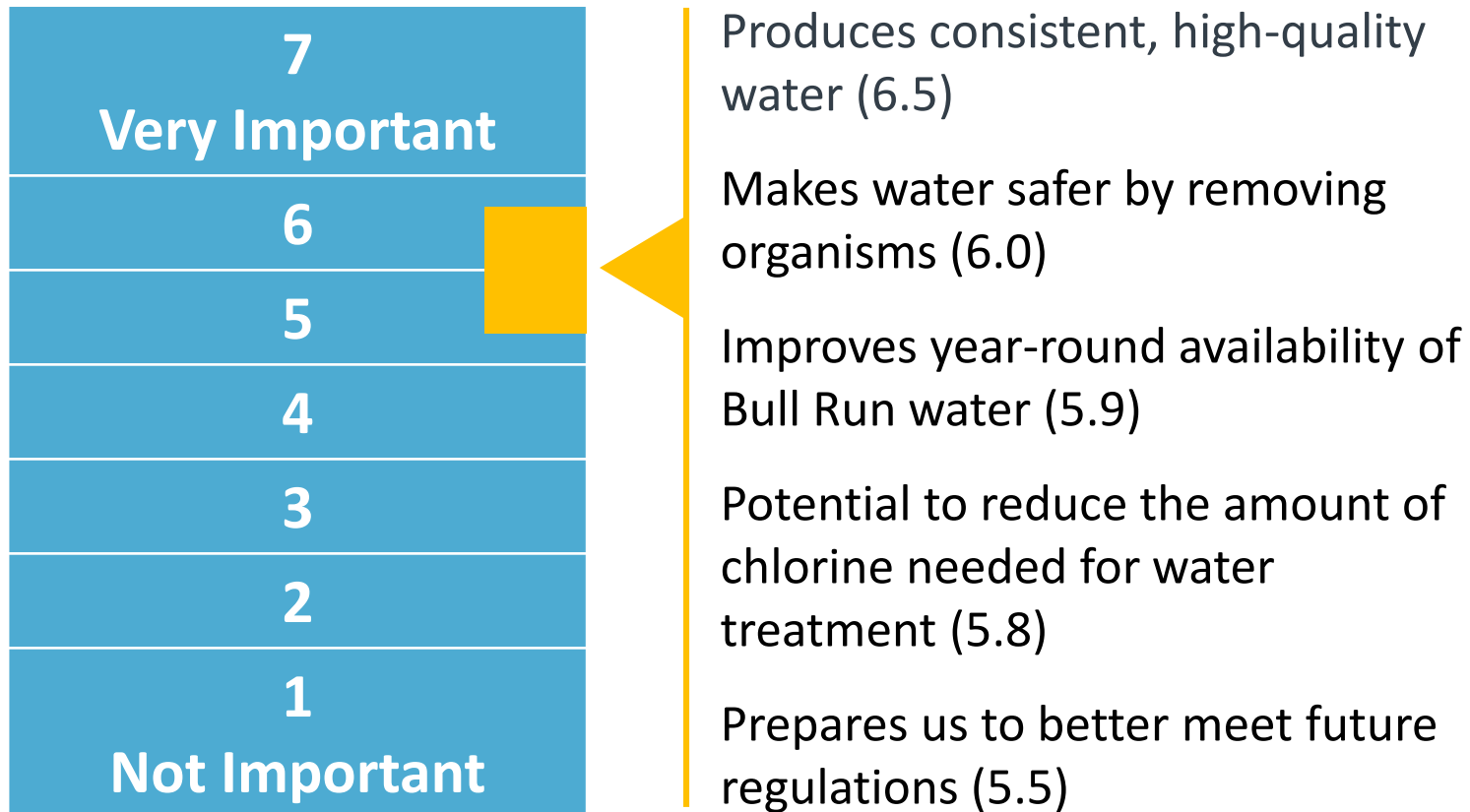
How are decisions being made?	47%
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Tier 3

How will PWB keep me updated?	38%
-------------------------------	-----

All Benefits Are Important

Q: On a scale of 1 (not important) to 7 (very important), how would you rate these benefits of Bull Run water filtration?



Focus Groups

- Four focus groups conducted on February 13 & 16, 2019 with Portland Water Bureau customers.
- Total of 40 participants with 20 each in two segments:
 - 20 PWB customers (general population)
 - 20 low income customers/water users
 - Two-hour sessions combine written exercises with facilitated discussion.



Divergent Views on Water Quality

- Most PWB customers perceive Portland's water quality as excellent, and have not experienced problems.
- *"I feel that our current water quality is excellent. I find it hard to believe that we can improve on what we already have."*
- Most low income participants, however, rate the water quality as just average and/or have experienced issues in their own homes.



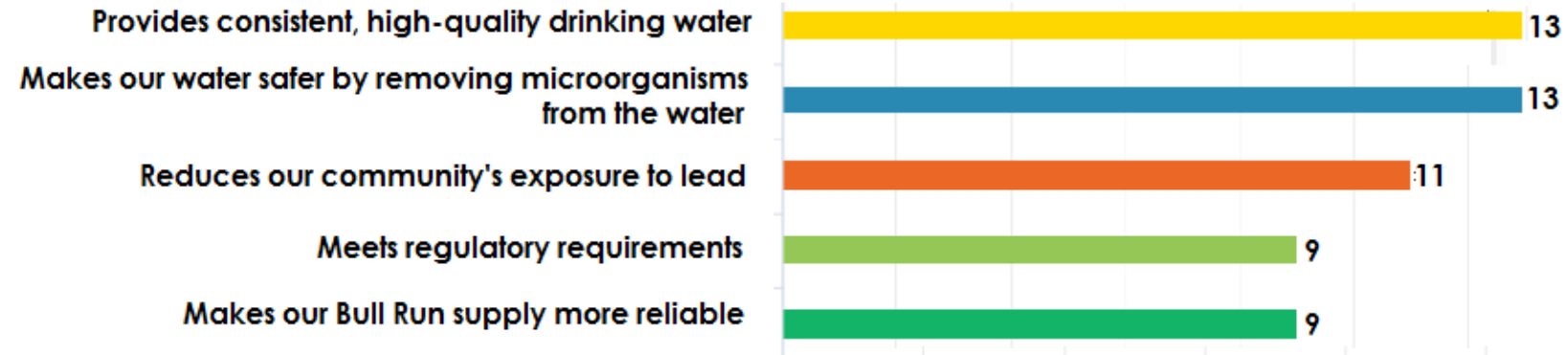
Customers Want to Know – Why?

- What changed to cause this need for new water treatment?
- Why will it take so long?
- How much will it cost and who pays?
- Will the filtration remove the ‘bad stuff’ but keep the ‘good stuff’?
- What chemicals will be used, and how effective will it be?

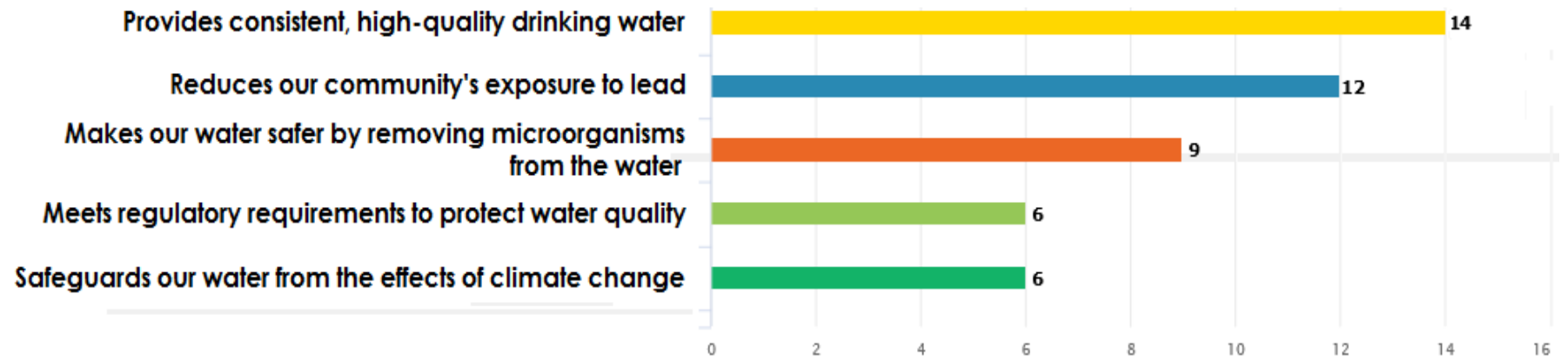


Top Rated Project Benefit: Water Quality

PWB Customers



Low Income



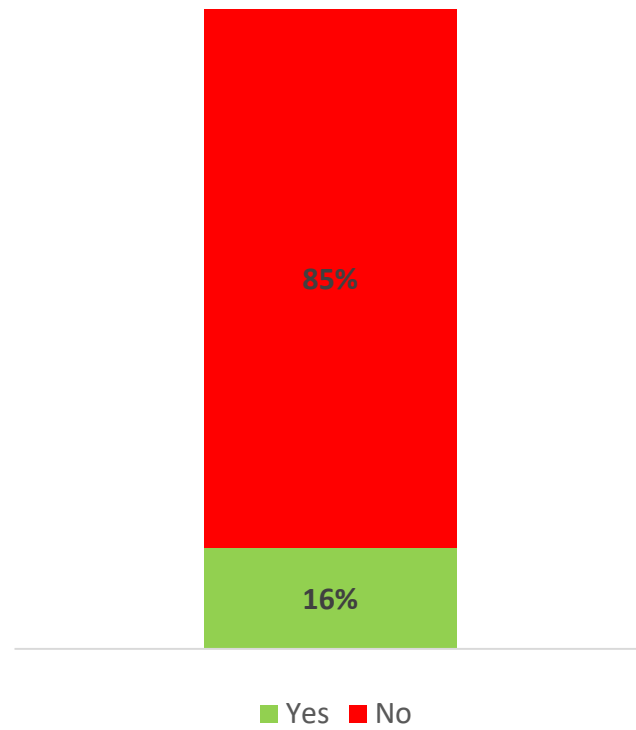
Telephone Survey

- Conducted March 2019
- 400 PWB residential customers, 18+ years old
- 50% female/50% male
- Individual or shared responsibility for household financial decisions
- Proportionate mix: citywide geographic coverage, all age categories, new/long-time residents

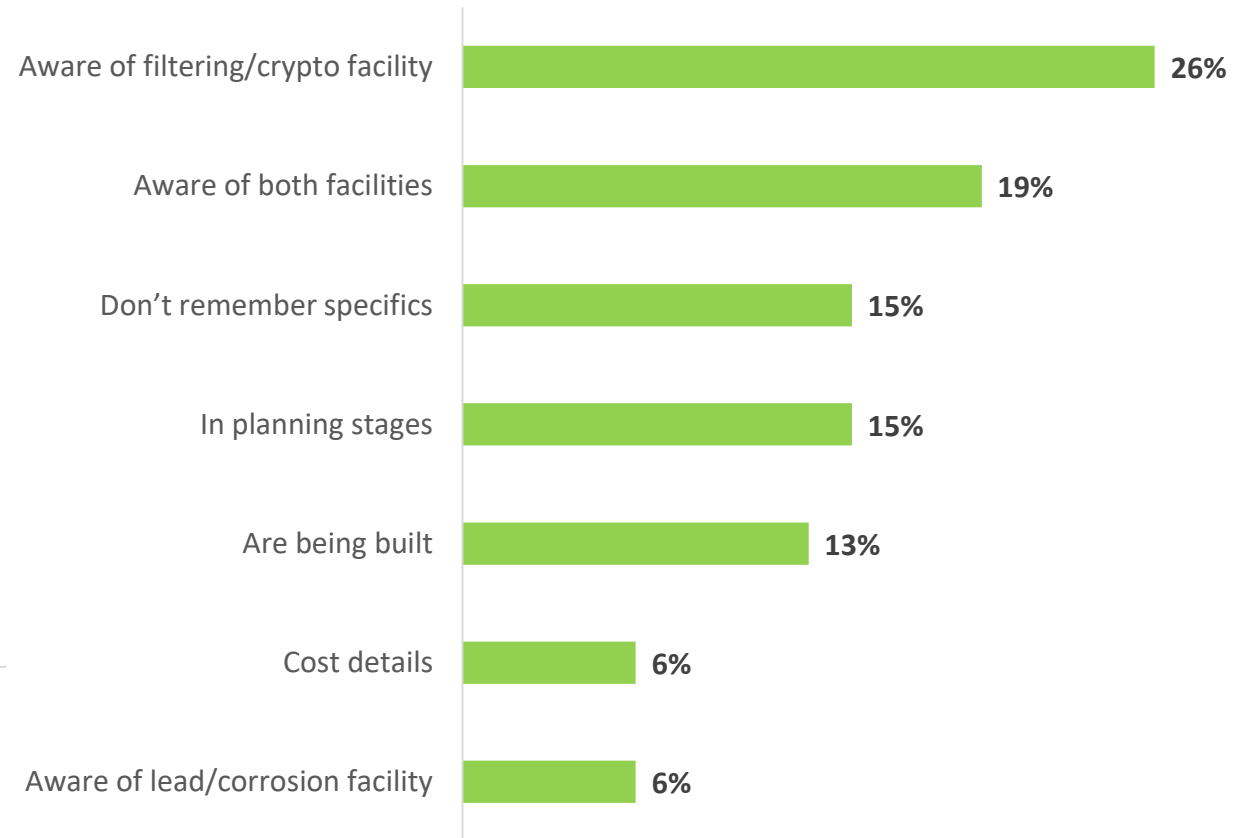


Have you heard anything about these new facilities?

All Respondents



What did you see or hear?



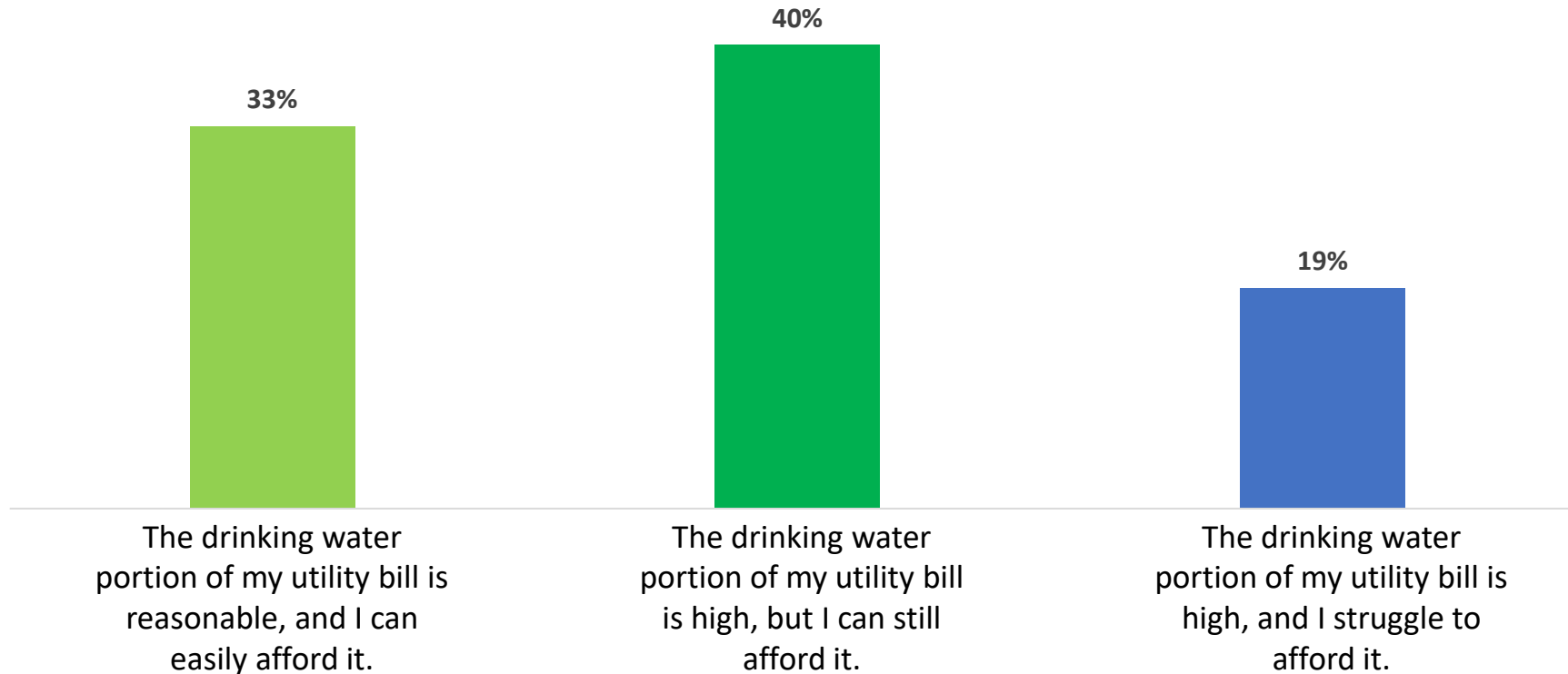
How useful is this information?

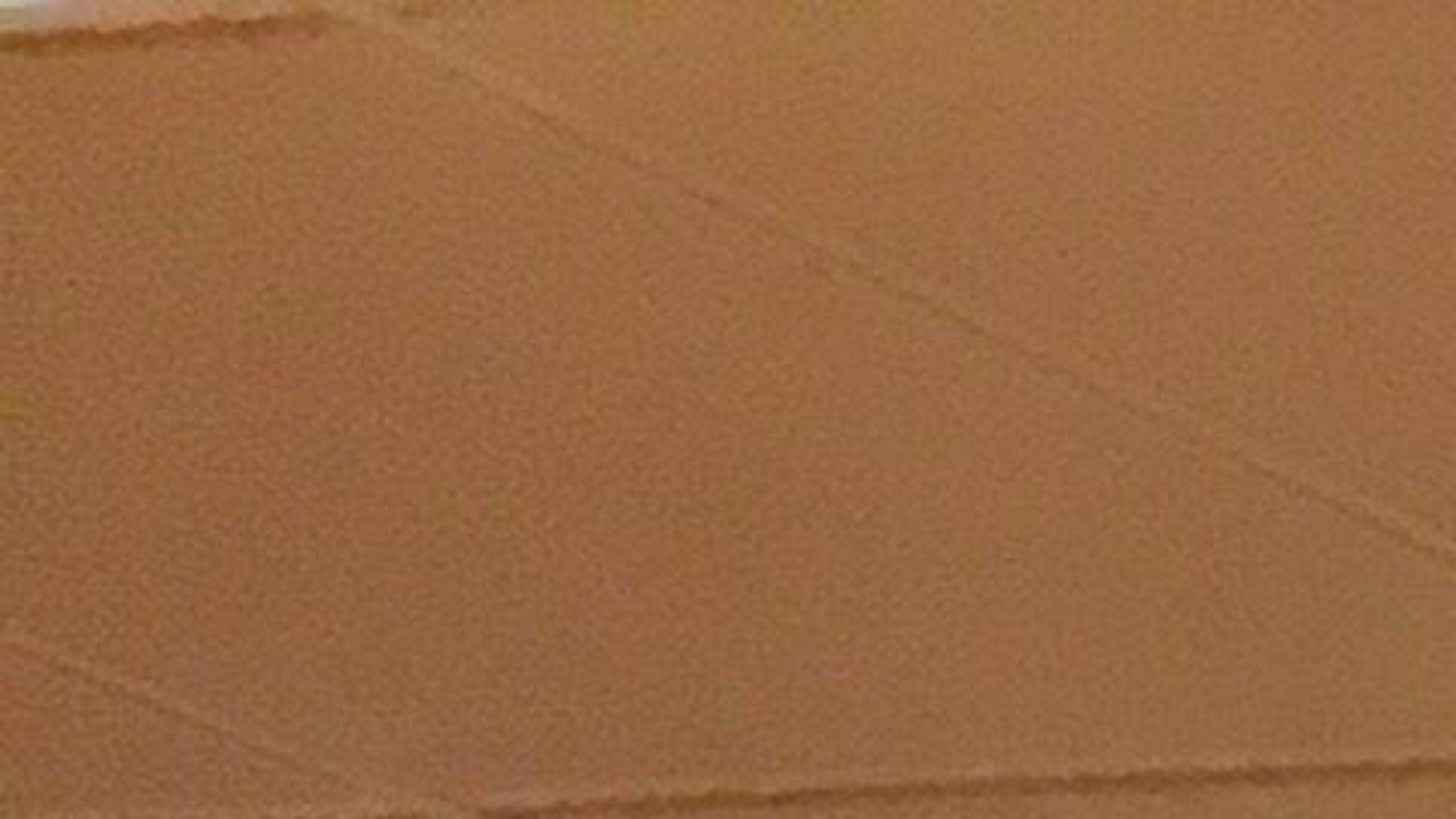
All Respondents – % Very/Somewhat Useful

- 87% Projects will be funded through business and residential customer rate increases and by borrowing money, repaid over many years so future water customers share the cost.
- 83% Portland is required by state and federal law to build both water treatment projects.
- 80% It takes about 10 years to plan, design, permit and construct a new water treatment facility.
- 78% The new treatment methods are commonly used by communities across Oregon and the U.S.
- 65% The water treatment facilities will be located just outside the Bull Run watershed.

Which of the following three statements comes closest to your point of view?

All Respondents – 73% “Affordable”





What we have learned

- **Water quality** and **cost benefit** of improvements are a top priority
- Customers want the basics: why, what, when, how much will it cost me.
- There is a need to get water quality information to low income and underrepresented groups
- Spread the word!

				
Value	Public Health and Water Quality	Resiliency/Reliability	Community Interests	Cost Benefit
Value Description	Provide drinking water that is safe and consistent	Facility maximizes likelihood of continued water provision, even after a fire or disaster	Integrate community interests in the decision-making process	Getting the most benefit for the dollar
Value	Meet Future Needs	Environmental Impacts	Integration	Implementation
Value Description	Maximizes ability to make adjustments in future	Minimize environmental impacts	Optimize operability & integration with PWB's systems & practices	Increases ability to implement and meet compliance schedule

Questions?

David Peters, P.E.
Portland Water Bureau
david.peters@portlandoregon.gov

Libby Barg Bakke
Barney and Worth
libbybakke@barneyandworth.com