



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Technology to the Rescue in Traffic-Clogged Bay Area?

*Voters embrace high-tech traffic signals, flying drones, and ride-hailing services*

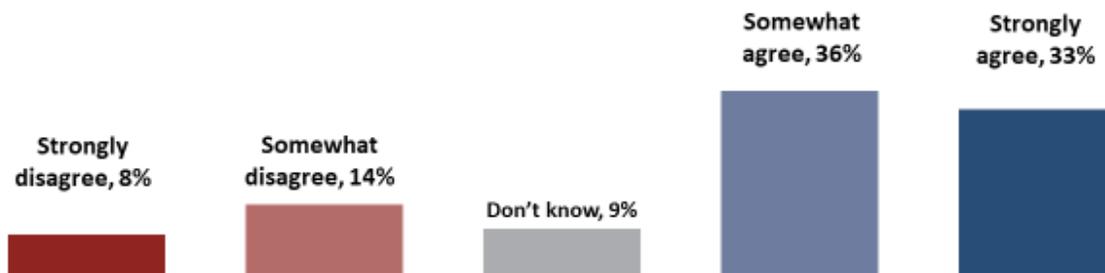
**SAN FRANCISCO**—Bay Area voters are embracing new automobile and transportation technologies, from ride-hailing apps to responsive traffic signals, drones and electric and self-driving cars, to combat the region’s awful traffic, according to the 2018 Bay Area Council Poll.

The poll found a significant 69 percent of voters want traffic signals upgraded with technology that makes them responsive to actual traffic conditions, even if that means diverting money from other transportation priorities. Such technology has been tested in recent years in several Bay Area cities, including San Jose, Palo Alto, Santa Rosa and Hayward, but hasn’t been put into widespread use.

### Transit Attitudes: Traffic Lights



**Traffic lights should be upgraded with technology that allows them to adapt to actual traffic, even if it means spending less money on other transportation needs.**



Ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft continue to be a popular choice for commuters. The Bay Area Council Poll found that from 2015 to 2018 those who have never used a ride-hailing

application dropped from 68 percent to 39 percent, although there was little change from last year. Still, 74 percent said these services are an important part of the Bay Area’s transportation system and 56 percent say they have made it easier to get around.

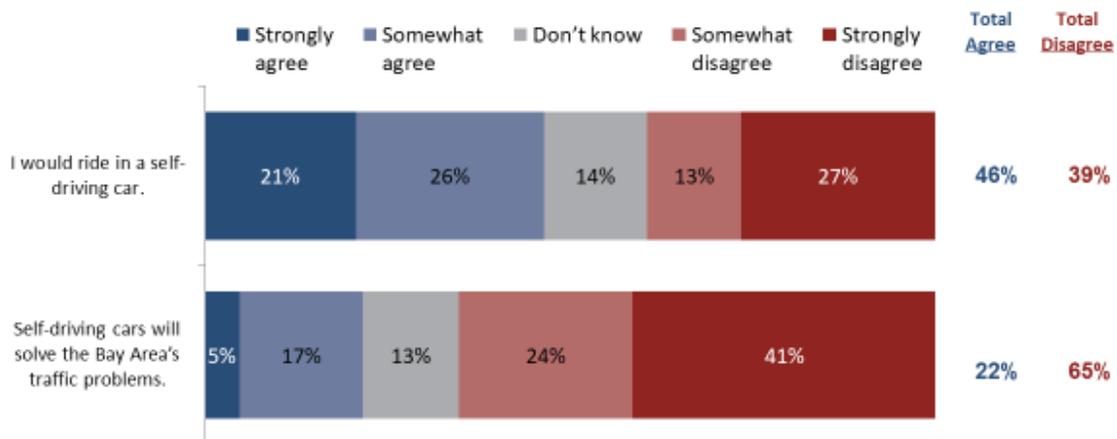
“We need to put the pedal to the metal in developing and deploying new advanced transportation technologies that can improve our region’s mobility,” said Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council. “It may be a number of years before some of these new technologies are fully proven, but that should not delay us in continuing to invest, experiment and learn how they can help solve one of our most intractable problems. With companies like Tesla and Proterra, the Bay Area has quickly become a leading global center for innovation in the automobile and transportation industry. It’s extremely exciting to think about how these technologies will transform the ways in which we get around.”

[See the results>>](#)

### Many Residents Not Ready for Self-Driving Cars

Self-driving cars is one of those early-stage technologies, and they continue to intrigue Bay Area voters. The poll found 46 percent of voters willing to relinquish control of the steering wheel, down from 52 percent in 2017, but consistent with the previous two years. Almost a quarter of voters said self-driving cars can solve the Bay Area’s traffic problem, but the poll found 65 percent of voters remain unconvinced about their traffic-busting ability.

## Transit Attitudes: Self-Driving Cars



That may have something to do with the fact that many voters in the survey still think it will be awhile longer before self-driving cars outnumber human drivers on the road. While 31 percent say self-driving cars will be the majority plying the roads within the next 10 years, 45 percent say self-driving cars won’t rule the roads for 11 to 50 years or more and 8 percent don’t see them ever taking over. The overall average time is 16.36 years.

### Electric Vehicles Gain Traction

As California pushes to meet an aggressive goal set this year by Gov. Jerry Brown of putting 5 million zero emission vehicles on the streets by 2030, voters appear willing to spend a little bit more to help make that happen. The Bay Area Council Poll found that 55 percent would dig a little deeper to drive an all-electric vehicle. Still, voters harbor concerns about the range of electric vehicles, with 40 percent saying they wouldn't use an all-electric car because they don't go far enough on a single charge.

The support for all-electric vehicles is mirrored in voters' attitudes about a proposal to ban all fossil-fuel powered cars in California by 2040. The poll found 52 percent of voters agree California should do away with gas-powered vehicles.

On several of the questions involving self-driving, ride-hailing and electric vehicle technologies, younger voters generally showed higher support.

### **Voters Embrace Ferries and Flying Drones**

Ferries may not meet the strict definition of advanced technology transportation, but voters see them as a popular alternative to the region's clogged roadways and other overburdened mass transit systems. The poll found that 66 percent of voters would take a ferry if it took them where they wanted to go. That should be strong encouragement for the Water Emergency Transportation Authority, which operates the regional SF Bay Ferry service, as it works on an ambitious plan to dramatically expand regional ferry service along traditional east-west routes and new routes connecting with Silicon Valley and Richmond.

Flying drones may not carry commuters (yet), but they offer the chance to remove cars and trucks from the roads. That's appealing to voters in the Bay Area Council Poll, which found 54 percent support the use of drones if it means delivering packages faster, cheaper and with fewer carbon emissions.

## **Transit Attitudes: Drones**



**I support the use of drones to deliver small packages in my area, if it means faster delivery, lower cost, and lower carbon emissions.**



The 2018 Bay Area Council Poll, which was conducted online by Oakland-based public opinion research firm EMC Research from March 20 through April 3, surveyed 1,000

registered voters from around the nine-county Bay Area about a range of issues related to economic growth, housing and transportation, drought, education and workforce.

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### **About the Bay Area Council**

*The Bay Area Council is a business-sponsored, public-policy advocacy organization for the nine-county Bay Area. The Council proactively advocates for a strong economy, a vital business environment, and a better quality of life for everyone who lives here. Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council is widely respected by elected officials, policy makers and other civic leaders as the voice of Bay Area business. Today, approximately 275 of the largest employers in the region support the Bay Area Council and offer their CEO or top executive as a member. Our members employ more than 4.43 million workers and have revenues of \$1.94 trillion, worldwide.*