May 25, 2023

NDP Holds Modest Edge in Calgary

Alberta Election 2023

ThinkHQ
PUBLIC AFFAIRS INC.

ALBERTA'S UPCOMING PROVINCIAL ELECTION

Among Calgary-Proper Residents

ThinkHQ
PUBLIC AFFAIRS INC.

NDP Holds a Modest Edge in Calgary

(Calgary) As the provincial election campaign 2023 ends, Rachel Notley's New Democrats hold a modest lead over Danielle Smith's UCP in seat-rich Calgary, according to the latest ThinkHQ Public Affairs survey.

City-wide, the New Democrats hold a slight lead in the campaign's dying days with 49% of the decided vote, followed closely by the UCP with 43%, the Alberta Party with 6% and various other parties at 3%. Currently, only one-in-ten (10%) voters remain undecided in Calgary.

- The New Democrats enjoy a more notable lead over the Conservatives north of the river, with the UCP holding a slight advantage in the south

- The two parties are evenly matched in new/suburban and established communities, while the NDP has a 25-point lead in the inner city

- There are significant gender and age gaps in party support, with men and those aged 55+ showing a clear preference for the UCP, while women and voters under 54 are tilting NDP

NDP Holds a Modest Edge in Calgary … continued

- Vote intentions favour the NDP with rising levels of education

- The UCP retains 82% of their voters from 2019, while 15% plan to vote NDP and 3% are looking at other options. In contrast, the NDP are retaining 97% of their 2019 vote

- Looking across the political spectrum, an overwhelming share of self-identified "Left" voters are inclined to support the NDP (94%), while 84% of "Right" voters plan to cast their ballot for the UCP. Among "Centrist" voters, just over one-half (51%) plan to vote NDP compared to 36% UCP

The Push & Pull of Partisanship

There are nearly as many voters in Calgary today who feel "pushed" toward their choice as "pulled" toward it. Only one-half (50%) of eligible voters report that their decision will be guided by an attraction to one party and what they stand for, while almost as many (45%) say their vote will primarily be because they dislike the other parties even more.

- Likely NDP voters are split right down the middle, with roughly equal proportions saying they are voting for the NDP as opposed to "against" the others (primarily UCP)

- Likely UCP voters are more likely to say their decision is due to an affinity for the party and what they stand for (57%)

Leadership

Leadership plays a sizable role in voter decision-making, and in Calgary today NDP leader Rachel Notley holds a notable edge over the UCP's Danielle Smith.

Just under one-half (49%) of those interviewed offer positive ratings of the NDP leader, compared to 47% who disapprove of Notley (36% strongly). Meanwhile, Danielle Smith's ratings are decidedly negative, with 58% saying they dislike the UCP leader (49% strongly), while 38% hold a positive view of her.

Alberta Party leader Barry Morishita receives mixed reviews, with the majority of voters (56%) unable to offer a rating due to a lack of familiarity.

Notley's Ratings

- Most favourable in the north and inner-city communities and among women

- Very popular among those under 35, with approval declining with age

- Most unpopular among those without post-secondary education

Leadership ... continued

Smith's Ratings

- More favourable south of the river and among men than women

- More popular among those aged 55+ (notably lower among those under 35), with approval increasing with age

- Lower approval among those living in the inner-city and those with a university education

Best Premier for Alberta

When asked which party leader would best lead the province, Rachel Notley is the preferred choice for a plurality of Calgarians. Fully 43% say Notley would be the best choice for premier, compared to Smith at 31%, Morishita at 4%, 7% unsure and 15% saying "None of them".

- Preference for Notley is slightly higher in north Calgary and resounding in inner-city communities

- Those aged 55+ tend to favour Smith as premier, while Notley is decidedly favoured by those under the age of 35

- The view that Notley is the best choice for premier tends to increase with education levels

Voter & Partisan Certainty

The NDP enjoy an advantage over the UCP regarding the "firmness" of their vote.

When asked how certain they are to vote in the election, 75% of respondents report they are "absolutely certain" to cast a ballot (100 on a 100-point scale). On a methodological note, this measure is always prone to "Social Desirability Bias" and is invariably inflated. Nonetheless, it is an interesting measure for comparison across party voting intentions.

The NDP has a 6-point edge, with 84% of their likely voters saying they are "absolutely certain to vote" compared to 78% for the UCP. Meanwhile, only 30% of undecideds say they are very sure they will participate in the election.

A similar trend appears with vote intentions. Over six-in-ten (65%) likely NDP voters say they are "absolutely certain" in their party choice, while 59% of likely UCP voters respond in kind.

Interestingly, voters self-identifying as "Left" on the Left-Right Political Spectrum are most assured in their upcoming party choice (73%). In comparison, "Right" voters are notably less decisive about their vote (55%), and "Centrist" voters are most conflicted at 43%.

Commentary

Commenting on these survey results, ThinkHQ President Marc Henry notes:

"We knew Calgary, with 26 seats up for grabs, would be the battleground for this election. The NDP will likely pick up seats in the city; how many is a little tougher to gauge. Even with a 1,000+ sample, the margin of error is still +/- 3 points. Technically speaking, the two parties could be tied, and many of these seats look very competitive.

If these numbers hold over the weekend, the adage about horseshoes and hand grenades may apply here for the NDP. They could expect to capture up to 9 additional seats, but it would still leave them short of forming Government. The path to victory has always been easier for the UCP, given the number of safe rural seats they hold, whereas the NDP needs to thread a few needles to get there.

But there are some wrinkles. First, NDP support is more motivated and firmer than the UCP – among the MOST certain of voters, NDP has a 12-point lead, and that is the kind of election night which would likely put them over the 44-seat threshold in the Legislature (depending on how they have fared in a handful of other seats across the province).

Commentary … continued

On the other hand, the UCP has strong support among older voters (traditionally more habitual in voting) and enjoys some strength outside of the inner-city south of the river. Their biggest challenge is a voting bloc which has typically been supportive but now feels conflicted and challenged by Danielle Smith's leadership.

Although early balloting has already begun, the election will likely be determined this weekend based on the final arguments put forward by the front-running parties and their strength on the ground in getting their voters to the polls."

Media Inquiries:

Marc Henry

President, ThinkHQ Public Affairs Inc.

marc@thinkhq.com

Provincial Leadership Evaluations

Would you generally say you approve or disapprove of the performance of the following provincial party leaders?

■Strongly ■Somewhat

NET Approve

Danielle Smith: United Conservative Party

Approve: 19% | 19% = 38%
Disapprove: 49% | 9% = 58%
Unsure: 4%

-20

Rachel Notley: NDP

Approve: 25% | 24% = 49%
Disapprove: 36% | 11% = 47%
Unsure: 4%
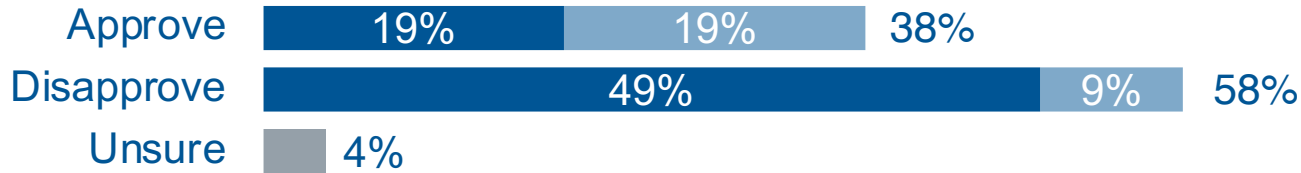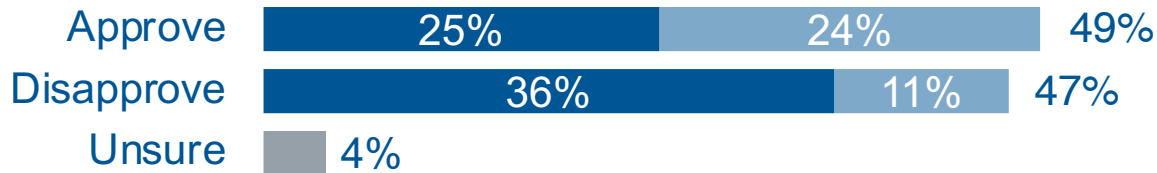
+2

Barry Morishita: Alberta Party

Approve: 15% = 18%
Disapprove: 14% | 12% = 26%
Unsure: 56%
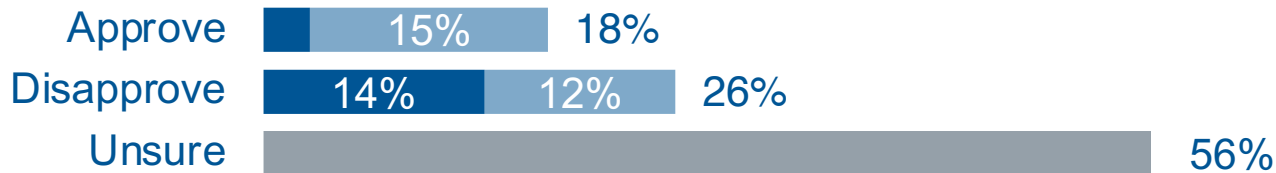
-8

0% — 25% — 50% — 75% — 100%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper (n=1,054) | NET: Approve minus disapprove

Provincial Leadership Evaluation: Danielle Smith's Approval
By Key Demographics

Would you generally say you approve or disapprove of the performance of Premier Danielle Smith?

■ Strongly approve   ■ Somewhat approve   ■ Strongly approve   ■ Somewhat approve

Group	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Total
Calgary-Proper	19%	19%	38%
NW Calgary	16%	18%	34%
SW Calgary	18%	23%	41%
SE Calgary	23%	20%	43%
NE Calgary	21%	15%	36%
New/Suburb	22%	20%	42%
Established comm.	20%	20%	40%
Inner City	12%	17%	29%

Group	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Total
Calgary-Proper	19%	19%	38%
Men	22%	21%	43%
Women	17%	18%	35%
Age <35 yrs	11%	18%	29%
35-54 yrs	19%	17%	36%
55+ yrs	29%	24%	53%
HS education	18%	23%	41%
Some Post Sec.	24%	22%	46%
Uni grad+	18%	18%	36%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper (n=1,054)

Provincial Leadership Evaluation: Rachel Notley's Approval
By Key Demographics

Would you generally say you approve or disapprove of the performance of Rachel Notley?

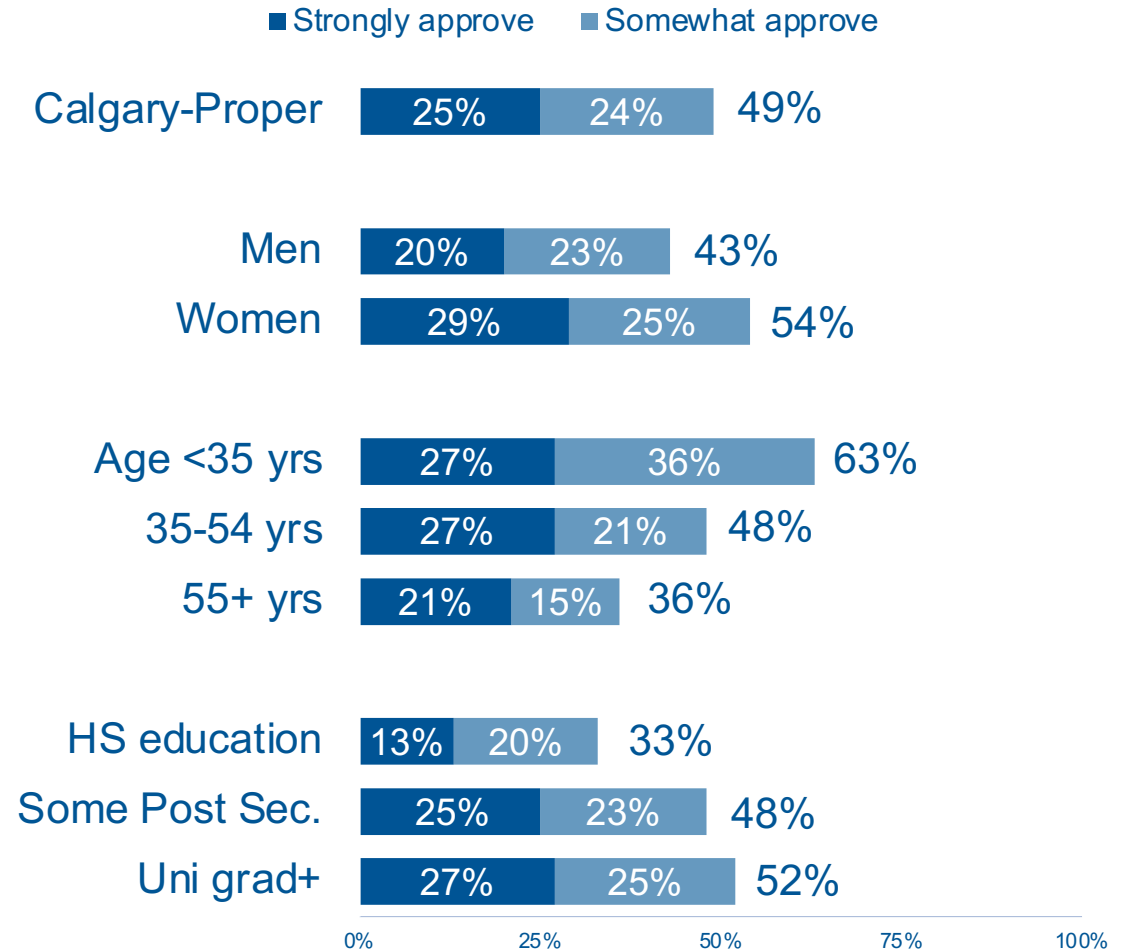■ Strongly approve ■ Somewhat approve   ■ Strongly approve ■ Somewhat approve

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Total
Calgary-Proper	25%	24%	49%
NW Calgary	27%	23%	50%
SW Calgary	20%	25%	45%
SE Calgary	25%	20%	45%
NE Calgary	29%	29%	58%
New/Suburb	23%	26%	49%
Established comm.	22%	23%	45%
Inner City	35%	22%	57%

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Total
Calgary-Proper	25%	24%	49%
Men	20%	23%	43%
Women	29%	25%	54%
Age <35 yrs	27%	36%	63%
35-54 yrs	27%	21%	48%
55+ yrs	21%	15%	36%
HS education	13%	20%	33%
Some Post Sec.	25%	23%	48%
Uni grad+	27%	25%	52%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper (n=1,054)

Provincial Political Horserace

If a provincial election were held today, which one of the following parties' candidate would you, yourself, be most likely to support?

■ Initial Vote ■ Leaners Included

Party	Initial Vote	Leaners Included
The New Democrats	44%	45%
United Conservative Party	38%	40%
The Alberta Party	5%	5%
The Liberals	2%	2%
Another party	1%	1%
Undecided	10%	7%

If a provincial election were held today, which one of the following parties' candidate would you, yourself, be most likely to support?
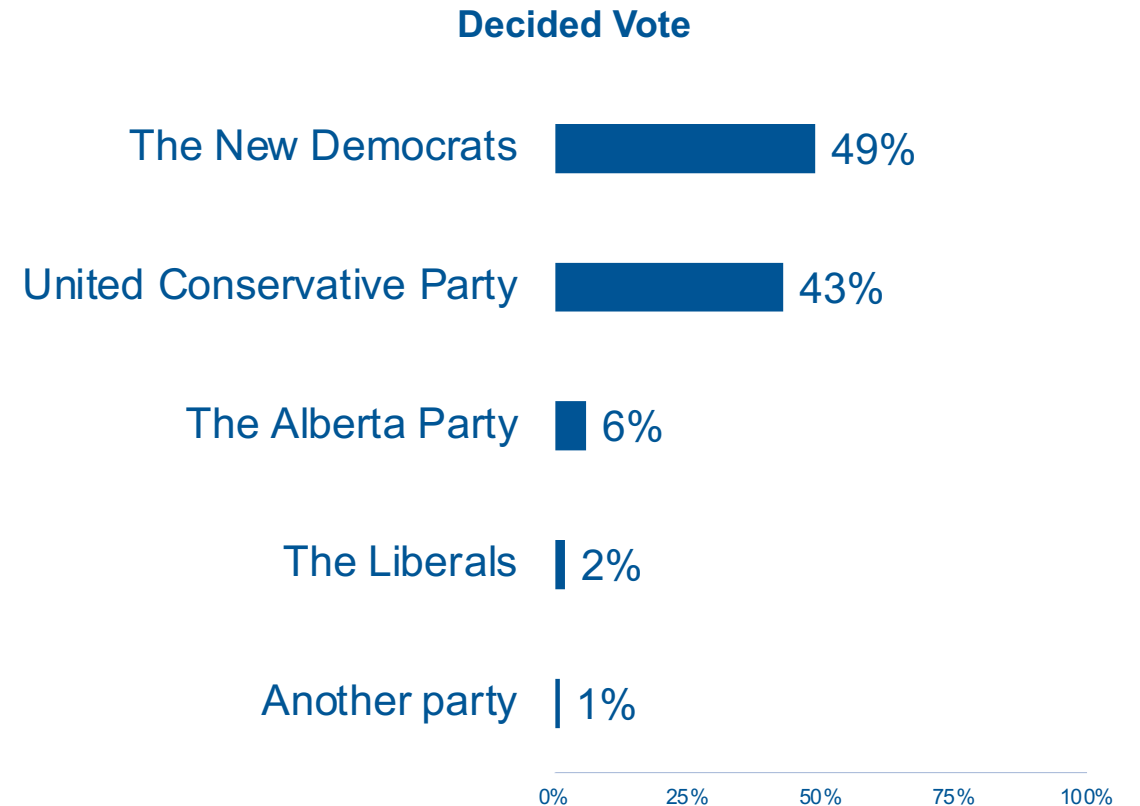
Decided Vote

Party	Decided Vote
The New Democrats	49%
United Conservative Party	43%
The Alberta Party	6%
The Liberals	2%
Another party	1%
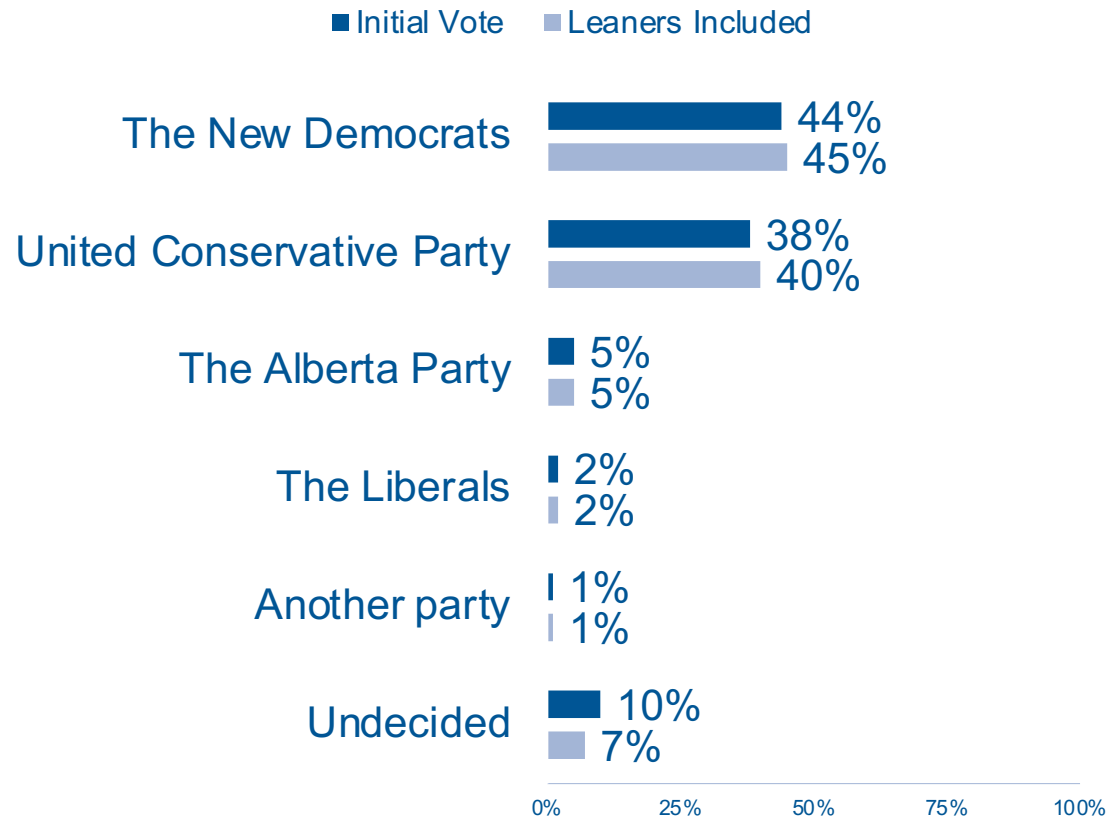
Base: All Calgary-Proper (n=1,054) | Note: 1% say they would not vote

Base: Decided voters – Calgary-Proper (n=973)

The "Pull" & "Push" of Party Support in Alberta

When it comes to choosing which party you will vote for in the next provincial election, would you say your vote will be based more on…?

Provincial Vote Intention

	UCP	NDP	AB Party
	(n=417)	(n=475)	(n=57)*
You like that party and what they stand for — **50%**	57%	48%	53%
Dislike other party choices even more — **45%**	40%	50%	38%
Unsure — **5%**	2%	2%	9%

Base: All respondents – Calgary-Proper (n=1,054) | *Caution: Small base size

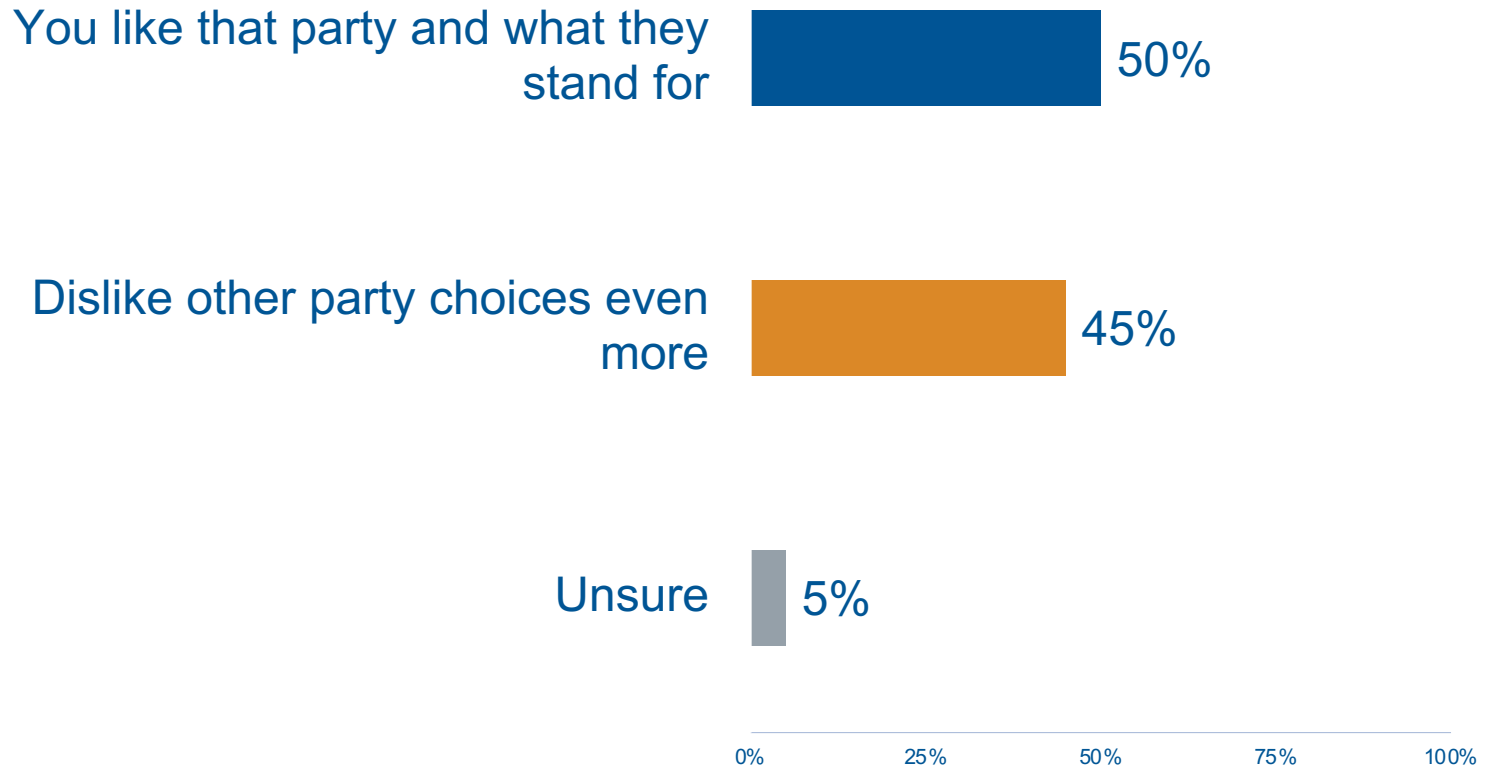# Provincial Political Horserace
By City Quadrant and Community Type

If a provincial election were held today, which one of the following parties' candidate would you, yourself, be most likely to support?

■ UCP ■ NDP ■ Alberta Party ■ Liberals ■ Another party

% Decided voters – Calgary-Proper (leaners included)

CITY QUADRANT

COMMUNITY TYPE

Calgary-Proper: 43%, 49%, 6%, 2%, 1%
NW: 37%, 52%, 9%, 1%, 1%
SW: 49%, 44%, 4%, 1%, 1%
SE: 49%, 46%, 4%, 1%, 0%
NE: 34%, 55%, 7%, 4%, 0%
New/Suburb: 43%, 43%, 10%, 4%, 0%
Established: 48%, 47%, 3%, 1%, 1%
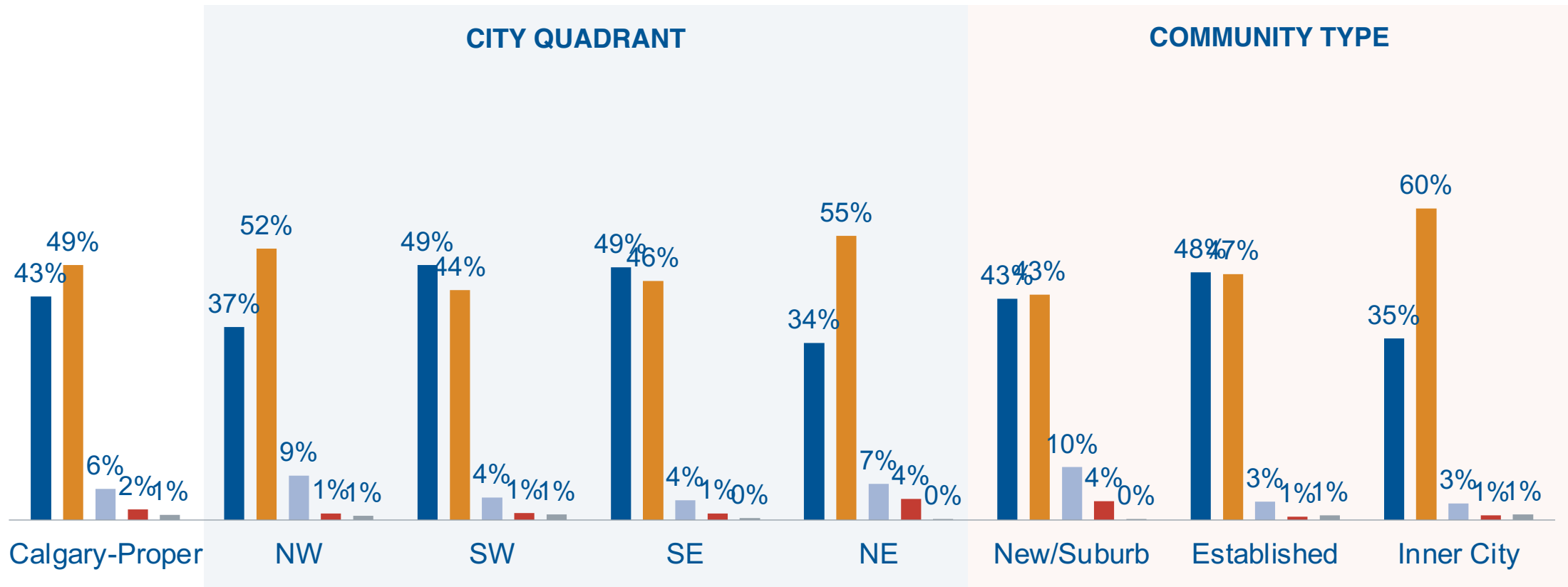Inner City: 35%, 60%, 3%, 1%, 1%

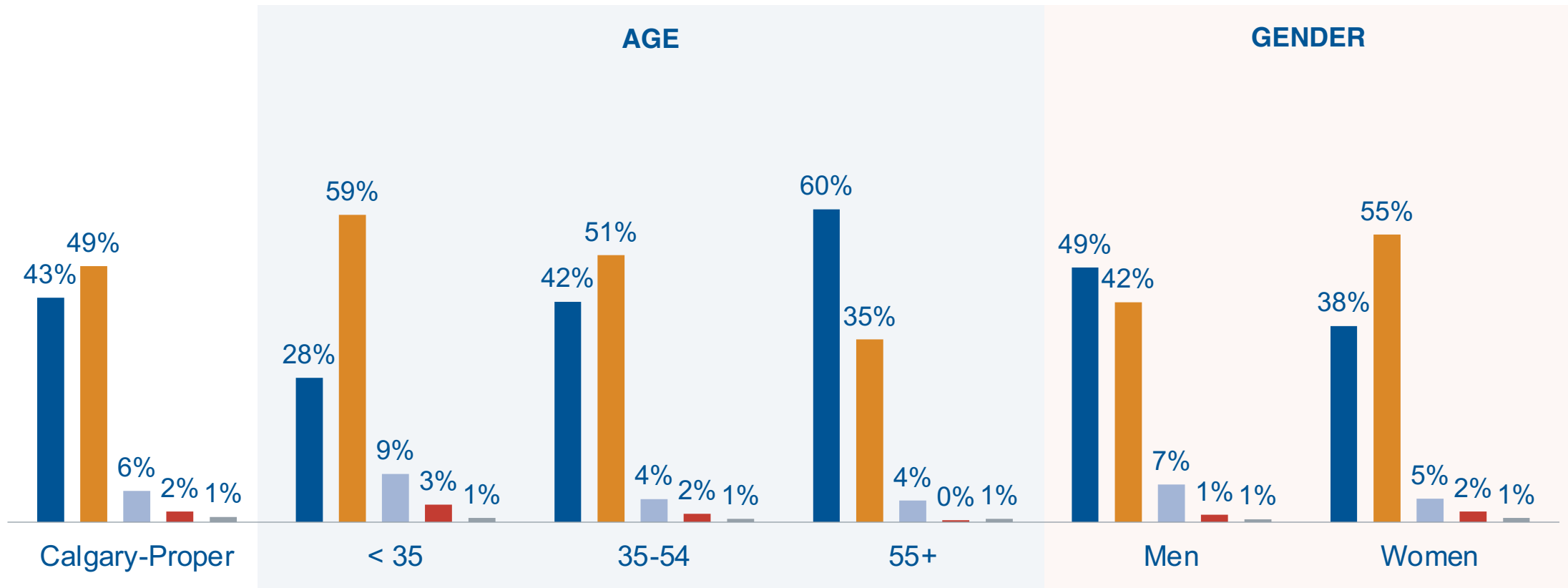Base: Decided voters – Calgary-Proper

Provincial Political Horserace
By Age and Gender

If a provincial election were held today, which one of the following parties' candidate would you, yourself, be most likely to support?

■ UCP ■ NDP ■ Alberta Party ■ Liberals ■ Another party

% Decided voters – Calgary-Proper (leaners included)

AGE   **GENDER**

Calgary-Proper: UCP 43%, NDP 49%, Alberta Party 6%, Liberals 2%, Another party 1%

< 35: UCP 28%, NDP 59%, Alberta Party 9%, Liberals 3%, Another party 1%

35-54: UCP 42%, NDP 51%, Alberta Party 4%, Liberals 2%, Another party 1%

55+: UCP 60%, NDP 35%, Alberta Party 4%, Liberals 0%, Another party 1%

Men: UCP 49%, NDP 42%, Alberta Party 7%, Liberals 1%, Another party 1%

Women: UCP 38%, NDP 55%, Alberta Party 5%, Liberals 2%, Another party 1%

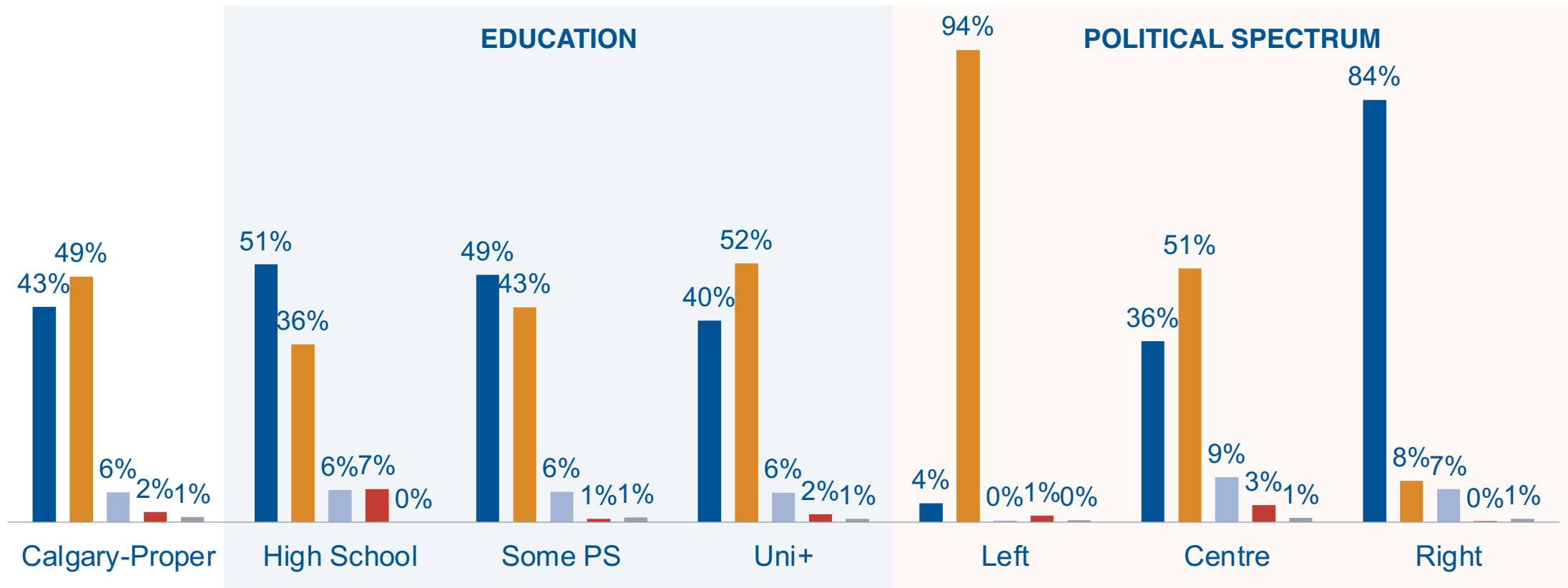Base: Decided voters – Calgary-Proper

Provincial Political Horserace
By Education and Political Spectrum

If a provincial election were held today, which one of the following parties' candidate would you, yourself, be most likely to support?

■ UCP ■ NDP ■ Alberta Party ■ Liberals ■ Another party

% Decided voters – Calgary-Proper (leaners included)

EDUCATION

POLITICAL SPECTRUM

Calgary-Proper: UCP 43%, NDP 49%, Alberta Party 6%, Liberals 2%, Another party 1%

High School: UCP 51%, NDP 36%, Alberta Party 6%, Liberals 7%, Another party 0%

Some PS: UCP 49%, NDP 43%, Alberta Party 6%, Liberals 1%, Another party 1%

Uni+: UCP 40%, NDP 52%, Alberta Party 6%, Liberals 2%, Another party 1%

Left: UCP 4%, NDP 94%, Alberta Party 0%, Liberals 1%, Another party 0%

Centre: UCP 36%, NDP 51%, Alberta Party 9%, Liberals 3%, Another party 1%

Right: UCP 84%, NDP 8%, Alberta Party 7%, Liberals 0%, Another party 1%

Base: Decided voters – Calgary-Proper

NDP Support "Firmer" Than UCP

% Absolutely certain they will vote
(100 on a 100-pt. scale plan to vote)

Total Calgary: 75%

UCP	78%	**Left-Right Spectrum**
NDP	84%	Left 84%
Undecided	30%	Centre 70%
(2019 UCP)	79%	Right 74%

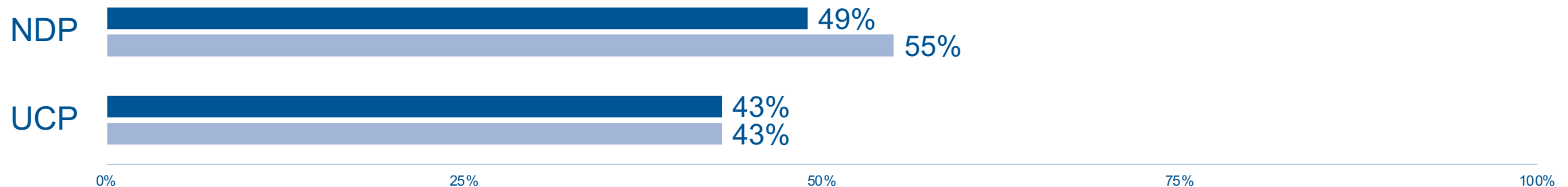## % Absolutely certain of party they will vote for
(100 on a 100-pt. scale certainty of party vote)

Total Calgary: 54%

UCP	59%	**Left-Right Spectrum**
NDP	65%	Left 73%
(2019 UCP)	53%	Centre 43%
		Right 55%

Vote Intention Among Those Certain of Voting AND Party Vote Intention

■ Decided Voters Total (n=973)   ■ Most Solid Voters (n=535)

NDP
- 49%
- 55%

UCP
- 43%
- 43%

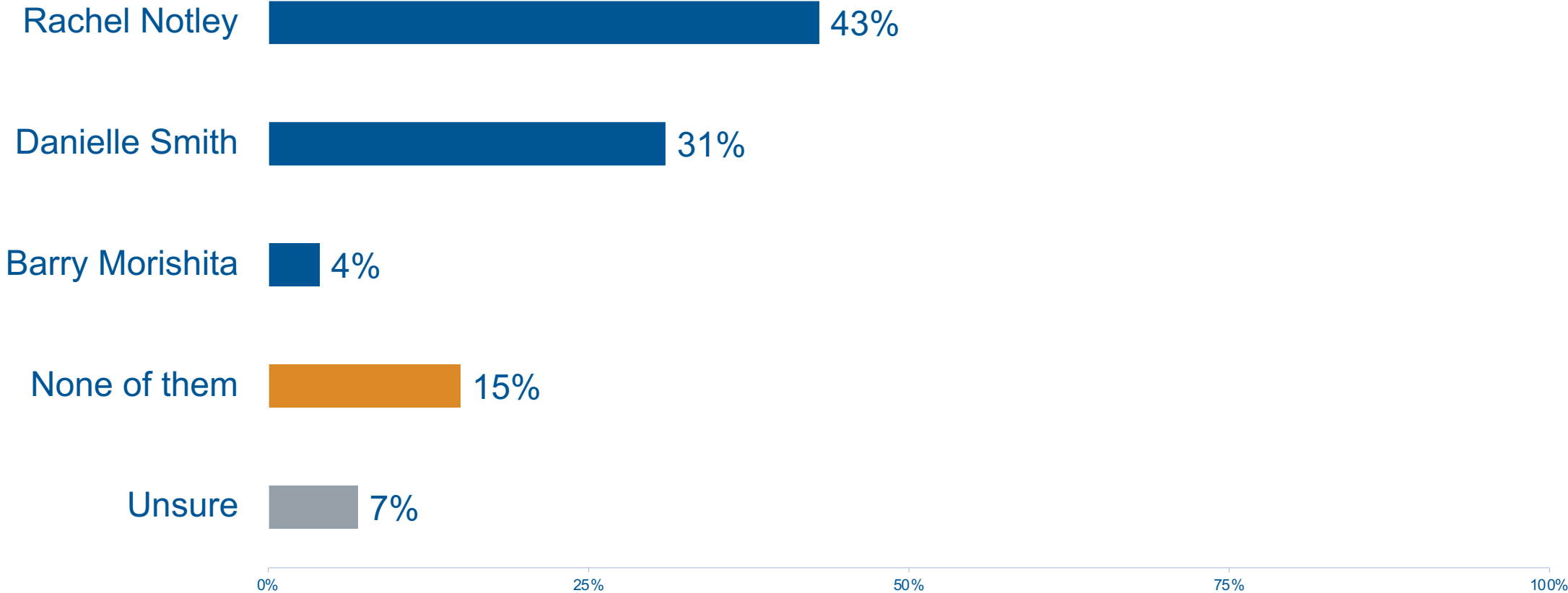0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper

Calgarians' Impressions: Best For Premier

When it comes to the provincial party leaders, who do you personally feel would do the best job as Premier of Alberta?

Rachel Notley — 43%
Danielle Smith — 31%
Barry Morishita — 4%
None of them — 15%
Unsure — 7%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper (n=1,054)

Calgarians' Impressions: Best For Premier
By City Quadrant and Community Type

When it comes to the provincial party leaders, who do you personally feel would do the best job as Premier of Alberta?

	Calgary Proper	City Quadrant				Community Type		
		NW	SW	SE	NE	New/ Suburb	Older/ Established	Inner City
Base:	(n=1,054)	(n=292)	(n=305)	(n=259)	(n=198)	(n=386)	(n=450)	(n=207)
Rachel Notley	43%	46%	40%	41%	47%	39%	40%	57%
Danielle Smith	31%	28%	33%	35%	27%	31%	34%	27%
Barry Morishita	4%	5%	4%	3%	6%	7%	2%	4%
None of them	15%	15%	17%	17%	11%	18%	17%	9%
Unsure	7%	6%	6%	4%	8%	6%	7%	4%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper

Significantly higher   Significantly lower

Calgarians' Impressions: Best For Premier
By Age and Gender

When it comes to the provincial party leaders, who do you personally feel would do the best job as Premier of Alberta?

	Calgary Proper	Age (Years)			Gender	
		<35	35-54	55+	Male	Female
Base:	(n=1,054)	(n=333)	(n=410)	(n=311)	(n=519)	(n=521)
Rachel Notley	43%	53%	45%	31%	37%	49%
Danielle Smith	31%	18%	31%	46%	37%	26%
Barry Morishita	4%	6%	4%	3%	6%	2%
None of them	15%	15%	15%	16%	17%	14%
Unsure	7%	7%	6%	5%	3%	9%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper

☐ Significantly higher   ◯ Significantly lower

Calgarians' Impressions: Best For Premier
By Education and Years in Calgary

When it comes to the provincial party leaders, who do you personally feel would do the best job as Premier of Alberta?

	Calgary Proper	Education			Years in Calgary		
		High School	Some PS	University+	<6 yrs.	6-19 yrs.	20+ yrs.
Base:	(n=1,054)	(n=82)*	(n=161)	(n=798)	(n=92)*	(n=299)	(n=663)
Rachel Notley	43%	27%	40%	46%	50%	51%	39%
Danielle Smith	31%	34%	33%	30%	29%	22%	36%
Barry Morishita	4%	4%	3%	5%	2%	3%	5%
None of them	15%	24%	18%	14%	11%	16%	15%
Unsure	7%	10%	7%	5%	8%	8%	5%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper | *Caution: Small base size

☐ Significantly higher   ◯ Significantly lower

Calgarians' Impressions: Best For Premier
By Last / Next Provincial Vote and Political Spectrum

When it comes to the provincial party leaders, who do you personally feel would do the best job as Premier of Alberta?

	Calgary Proper	Last Prov. Vote		Next Provincial Vote			Political Spectrum		
		UCP	NDP	UCP	NDP	Undecided	Left	Centre	Right
Base:	(n=1,054)	(n=441)	(n=286)	(n=417)	(n=475)	(n=51)*	(n=269)	(n=457)	(n=328)
Rachel Notley	43%	12%	92%	4%	89%	5%	89%	41%	9%
Danielle Smith	31%	59%	2%	73%	1%	7%	1%	23%	67%
Barry Morishita	4%	3%	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	7%	3%
None of them	15%	22%	5%	19%	6%	45%	6%	19%	18%
Unsure	7%	4%	1%	2%	3%	43%	2%	10%	3%

Base: All respondents - Calgary-Proper | *Caution: Small base size

☐ Significantly higher   ◯ Significantly lower

STUDY APPROACH

Research Methodology

- **Approach**: Online survey of Adult Calgarians
- **Region**: Calgary-Proper
- **Field dates**: May 19 - 23, 2023
- **Sample size**: n=1,054
- **Sampling**: A random stratified sample of panelists was invited to complete the survey from THQ's panel partners
- **Weighting**: Weighted to reflect gender, age and region of the Calgary-Proper population according to Stats Canada
- **Margin of error**: The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of this size is **+/- 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20**
- **Sponsorship:** The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ThinkHQ Public Affairs, Inc. for syndication

Sample sizes:	Unweighted	Weighted	MOE*
Calgary-Proper	**n=1,054**	**n=1,054**	**+/- 3.0**
Northwest	n=285	n=292	+/- 5.8
Southwest	n=327	n=305	+/- 5.4
Southeast	n=250	n=259	+/- 6.2
Northeast	n=192	n=198	+/- 7.1
New/suburb	n=368	n=386	+/- 5.1
Established comm.	n=459	n=450	+/- 4.6
Inner city	n=216	n=207	+/- 6.7

*Margin of error: Percentage points 19 times out of 20.

- The margin of error is associated with a probability sample of this size.
- Accuracy of sub-samples of the data decline based on sample sizes.
- Discrepancies in or between totals is due to rounding.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Marc Henry, President

ThinkHQ Public Affairs Inc.
Marc@ThinkHQ.com