



# 2018 City of Oakland Budget Priorities Survey

*Key findings from a survey of Oakland residents  
conducted December 7-20, 2018*



OPINION  
RESEARCH  
& STRATEGY

# **Summary Findings**

# Summary Findings

- ✓ Overall, Oakland residents continue to largely enjoy the City's quality of life, though a bit less than in recent years.
- ✓ Housing and homelessness are overwhelmingly the top concerns for residents, outstripping any other priority by a wide margin.
- ✓ Residents prefer paying more to maintain or improve a wide variety of City services and programs, with street repairs, youth programs, and services for the homeless at the top of the list.
- ✓ When it comes to communities of color, top-tier City investments have to do with reducing violence and police use of force, and improving health outcomes for children.

# Survey Specifications



- ✓ The CFP states that the Budget Survey is basis and tool for the Mayor and Council to begin discussing priorities for the coming biennial budget cycle
- ✓ 1,595 interviews with randomly selected Oakland residents conducted in English, Spanish and Chinese (target of 1,200 interviews, but we had a particularly robust online response)
- ✓ Margin of sampling error of  $\pm 2.5\%$  at the 95% confidence interval ( $\pm 6.3\%$  -  $\pm 6.6\%$  in each City Council District)
- ✓ Survey conducted using a random a list of residential addresses.
- ✓ Participants were invited to participate by phone call, an email, or a postcard and respond via phone interviews or online.

# **Profile of Survey Respondents**

# Age, Race/Ethnicity, Language, and Gender

Age	
60+	22%
50-59	15%
40-49	17%
30-39	23%
18-29	20%
Refused	3%

Race/Ethnicity	
Asian or Pacific Islander	17%
Latino	21%
African American	25%
White	29%
Mixed/Other/Refused	9%

Gender	
Male	48%
Female	50%
Something Else/Refused	2%

Survey Language	
English	88%
Spanish	8%
Chinese	3%

# Education, Household Income, and National Origin

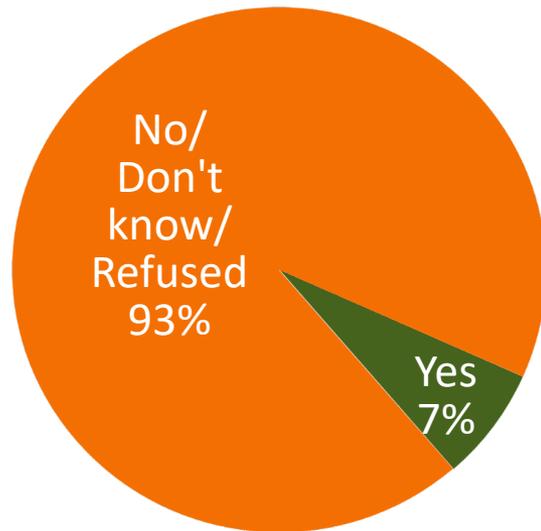
Education	
Post-Graduate Educated	21%
Four-year College Graduates	24%
Some College/ Business/Associates Degree	27%
High School or Less	27%
Refused	1%

Household Income	
\$150,000 and over	20%
\$100,001-\$150,000	14%
\$60,001-\$100,000	19%
\$30,001-\$60,000	17%
\$30,000 and under	20%
Refused	11%

National Origin	
Immigrated	23%
Born in US	76%
Don't Know/NA	1%

# 7% of respondents reported lack of permanent housing in the last year; and 6% live with a currently or formerly incarcerated person.

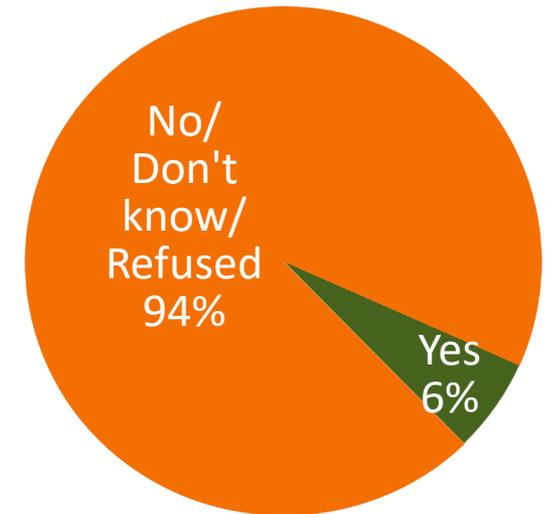
*In the last year, have you been without permanent housing, that is, have you slept in a car, outdoors, or stayed temporarily with friends or family?*



## Who Has a Close Tie to an Incarcerated Person?

- Housing insecure in the last year
- Men without a college education
- Latino residents
- 21 to 40 years in Oakland
- African-Americans
- Unmarried men

*Is anyone in your household currently or formerly incarcerated in jail or prison?*



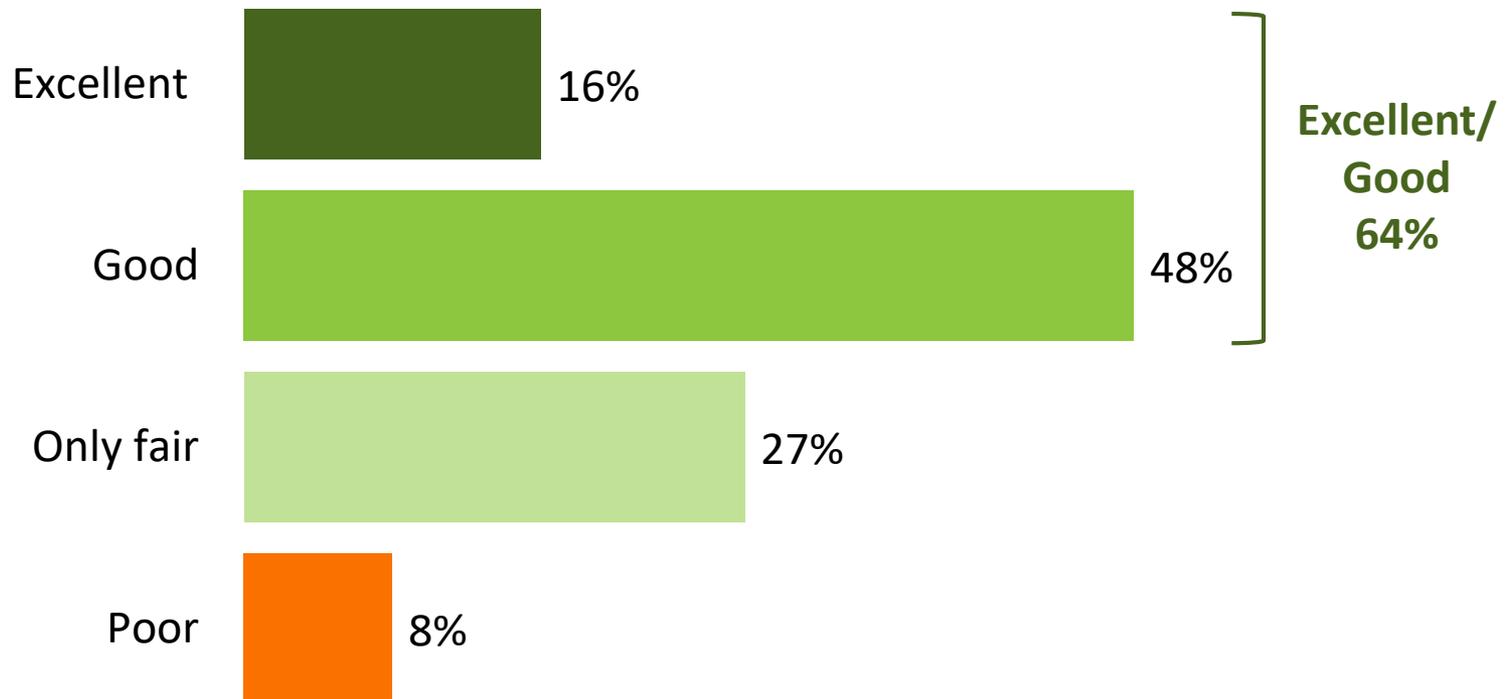
## Who were most likely to lack permanent housing?

- A family member has been incarcerated
- Household incomes under \$30,000 annually
- Part-time workers
- Single adults
- Residents under 30
- Mothers
- Residents with less than a college education

# **Impressions of Life in Oakland and City Government**

# Nearly two-thirds of residents rate Oakland as an “excellent” or “good” place to live.

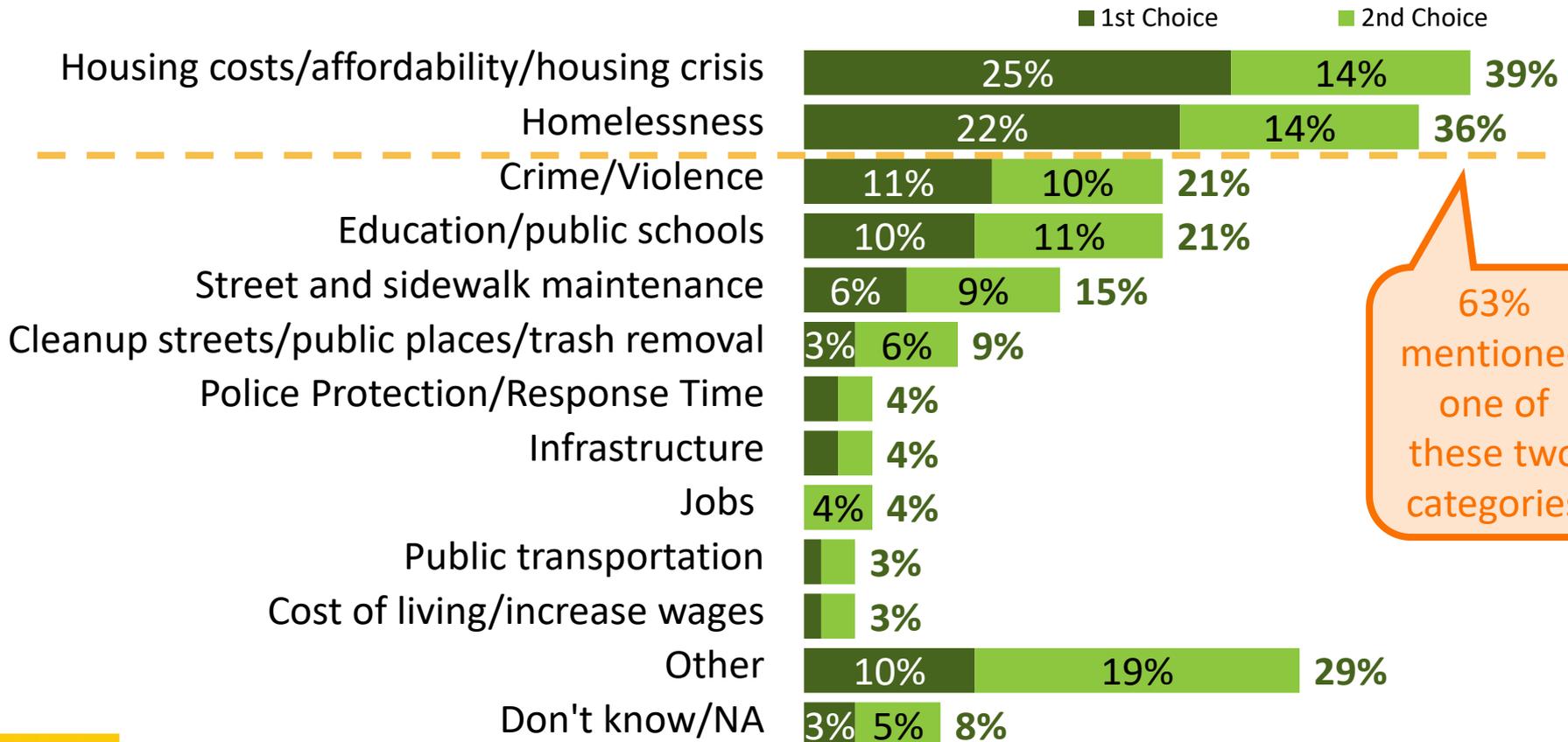
*Generally speaking, how would you rate Oakland as a place to live:  
Is it an excellent place to live, a good place, only fair, or a poor place to live?*



# **Specific Budget Priorities**

# Homelessness and housing are clearly the top issues residents want to see prioritized.

*In the upcoming two-year budget, what are the two most important issues facing Oakland residents that you would like to see prioritized in the City government budget?*  
(Open-Ended)



63% mentioned one of these two categories

# Housing emerged as a key concern in 2017 and has remained one; homelessness is now named a top issue by three times as many.

*(1<sup>st</sup> Choice; 3% and Above Shown)*

Issues	2000	2002	2005	2015	2017	2018
Housing costs/ Affordability/Housing crisis	8%	12%	5%	10%	26%	<b>25%</b>
Homelessness	3%	4%	2%	2%	7%	<b>22%</b>
Crime/Violence	19%	26%	22%	20%	15%	<b>11%</b>
Education/Public schools	33%	14%	35%	17%	13%	<b>10%</b>
Street and sidewalk maintenance	3%	4%	4%	8%	6%	<b>6%</b>
Jobs/Keeping businesses	5%	3%	4%	7%	3%	<b>0%</b>

# Next, respondents were presented with a list of services and asked to make trade-offs.

*I am going to mention some of the services the City provides its residents. Every two years, the City faces hard choices about these services in order to balance its budget. After you hear each one, please tell me whether you think cuts should be made to that service in order to balance the budget, or whether you would be willing to pay additional taxes or fees to maintain or improve that service.*

*If they were...*

Willing to pay additional taxes or fees to maintain or improve a service

*They were then asked if they would be willing to pay...*

Significantly more to improve that service

OR

A little more to maintain that service

*If they thought...*

Cuts should be made to a service in order to balance the budget

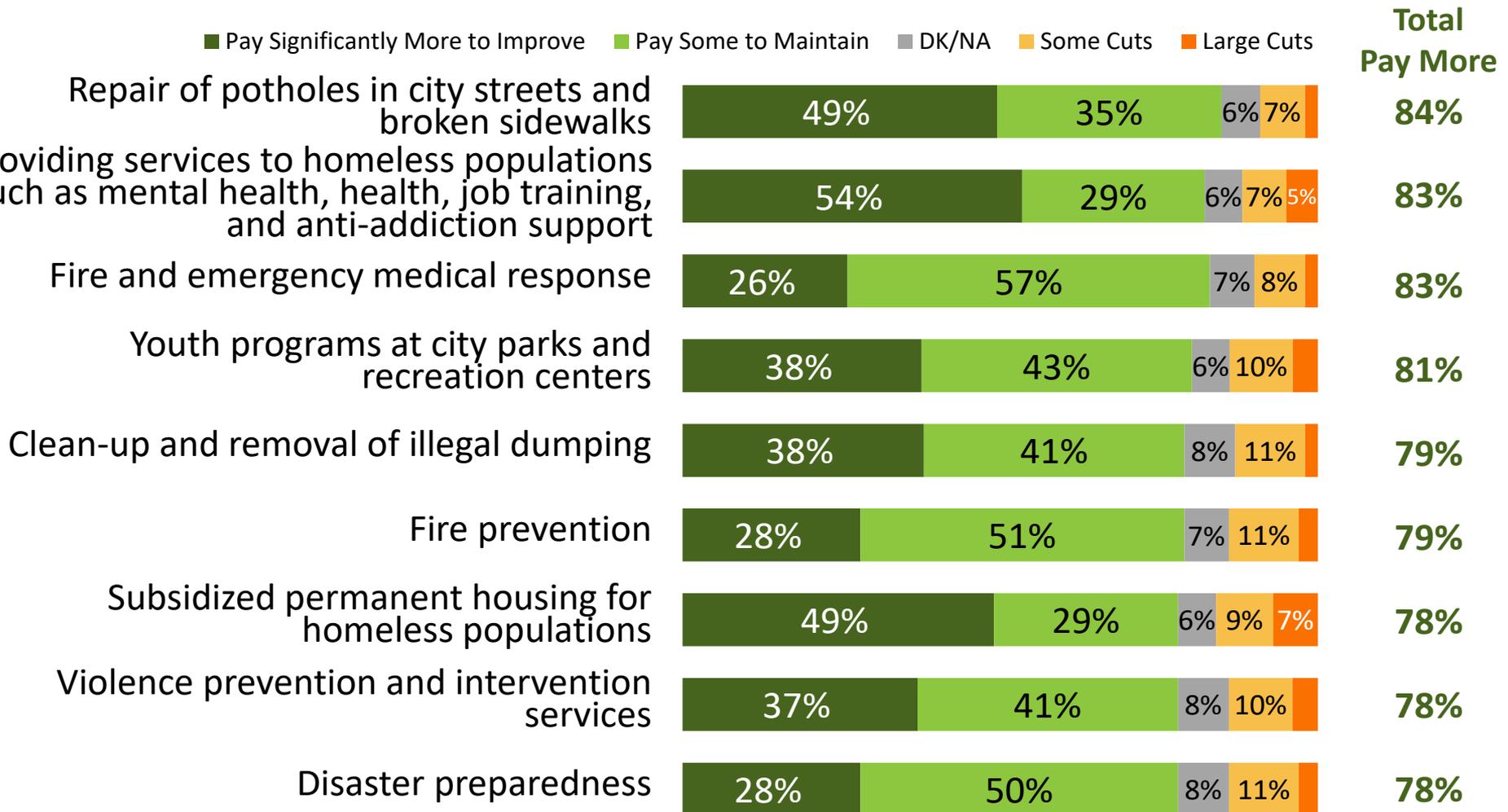
*They were then asked if they would you be willing to make...*

Just some cuts to that service

OR

Large cuts to that service

# Key areas of desired investment included street repairs and homeless services.



# Nearly half would pay significantly more to support other housing investments.

■ Pay Significantly More to Improve   ■ Pay Some to Maintain   ■ DK/NA   ■ Some Cuts   ■ Large Cuts

**Total  
Pay More**

Providing temporary shelter and sanitation such as tough shed communities, mobile housing, and traditional shelter beds to homeless populations



**77%**

Maintenance of public parks, street medians and other open space



**77%**

Maintenance of public buildings like libraries and recreation centers



**77%**

Child care and Head Start programs



**76%**

Police 911 response



**76%**

Affordable housing development and housing programs



**74%**

Police patrols in neighborhoods



**74%**

Job training and employment programs



**73%**

Police investigations to solve crimes

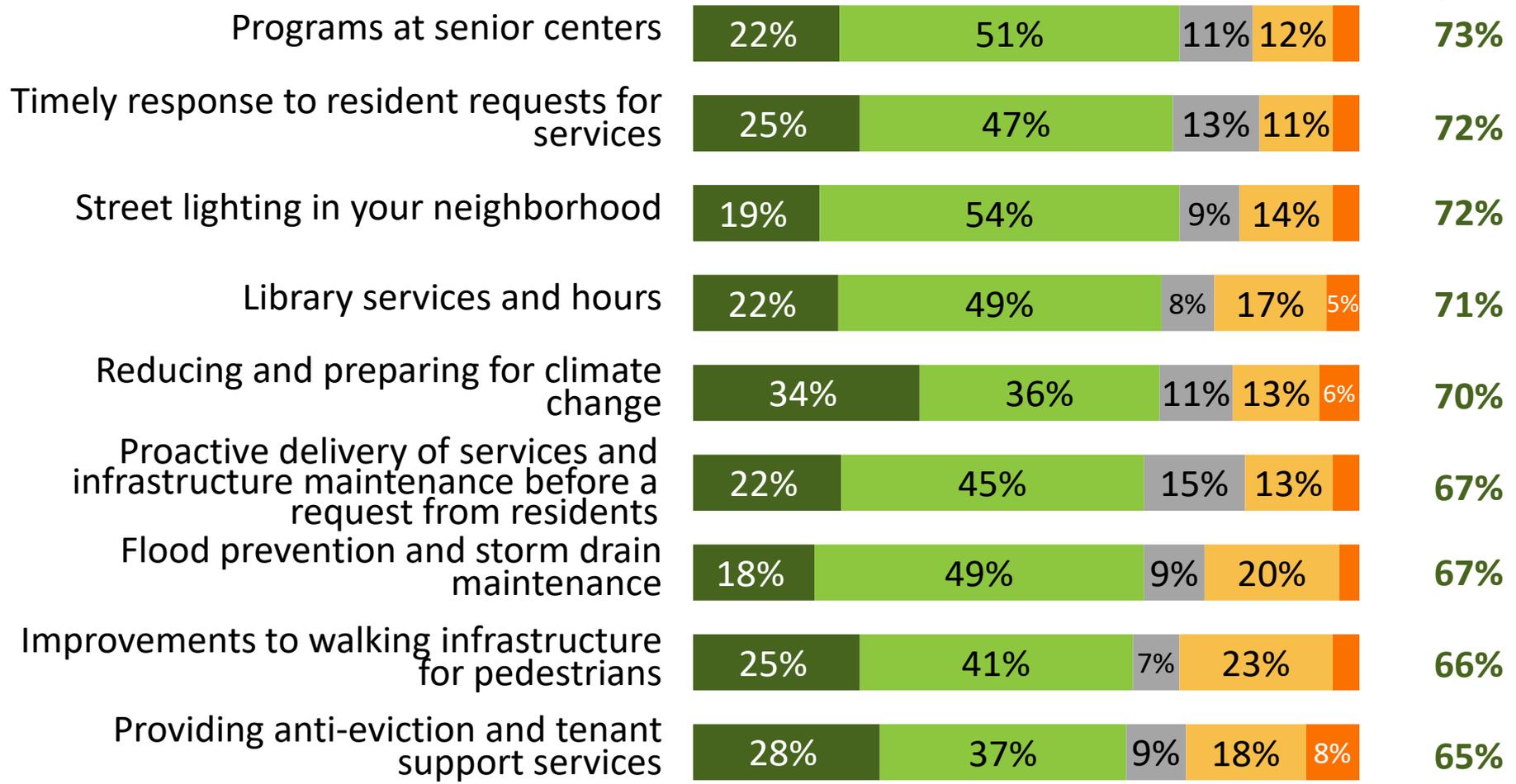


**73%**

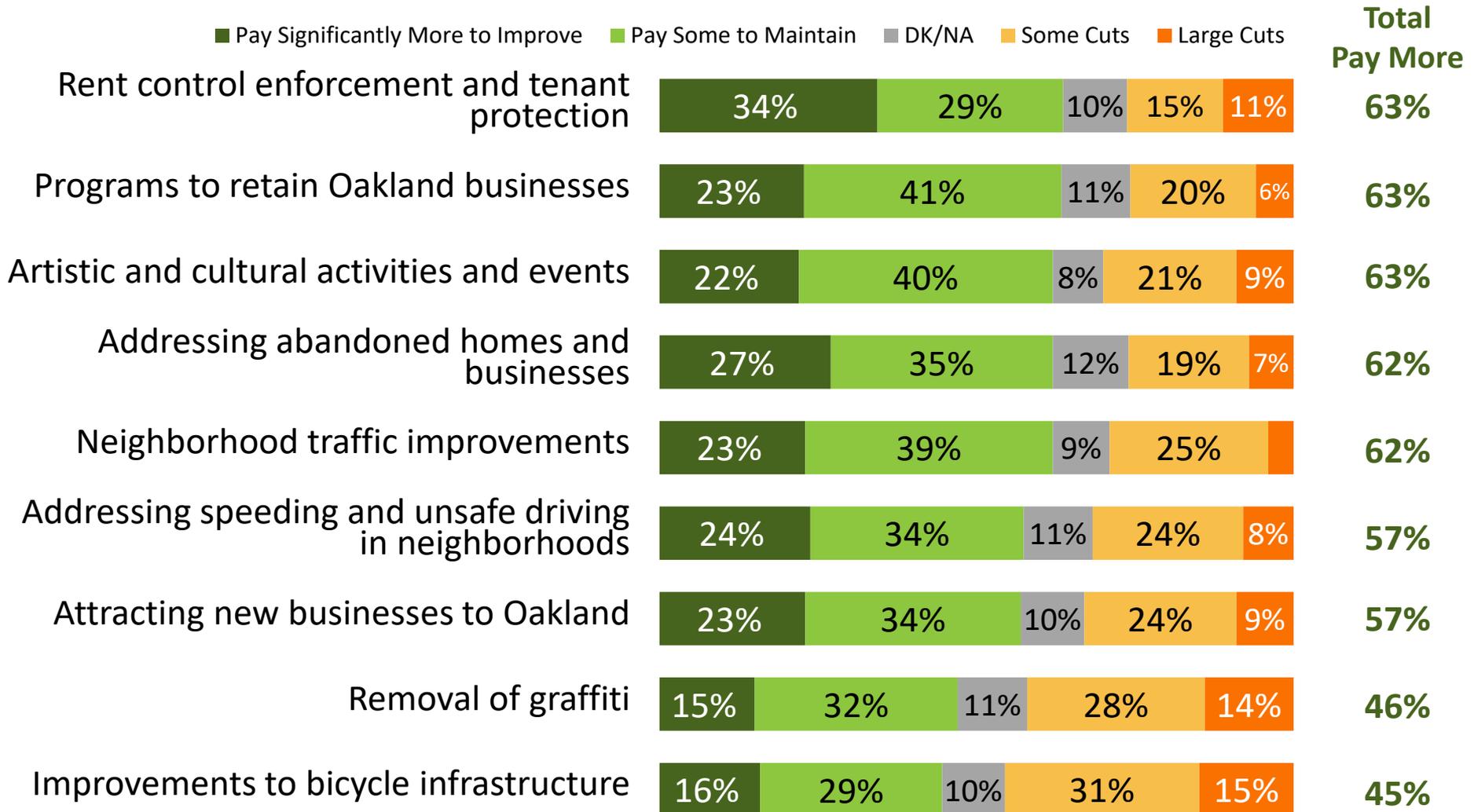
# One-third would pay more to improve climate change reduction/preparation.

■ Pay Significantly More to Improve 
 ■ Pay Some to Maintain 
 ■ DK/NA 
 ■ Some Cuts 
 ■ Large Cuts

**Total Pay More**



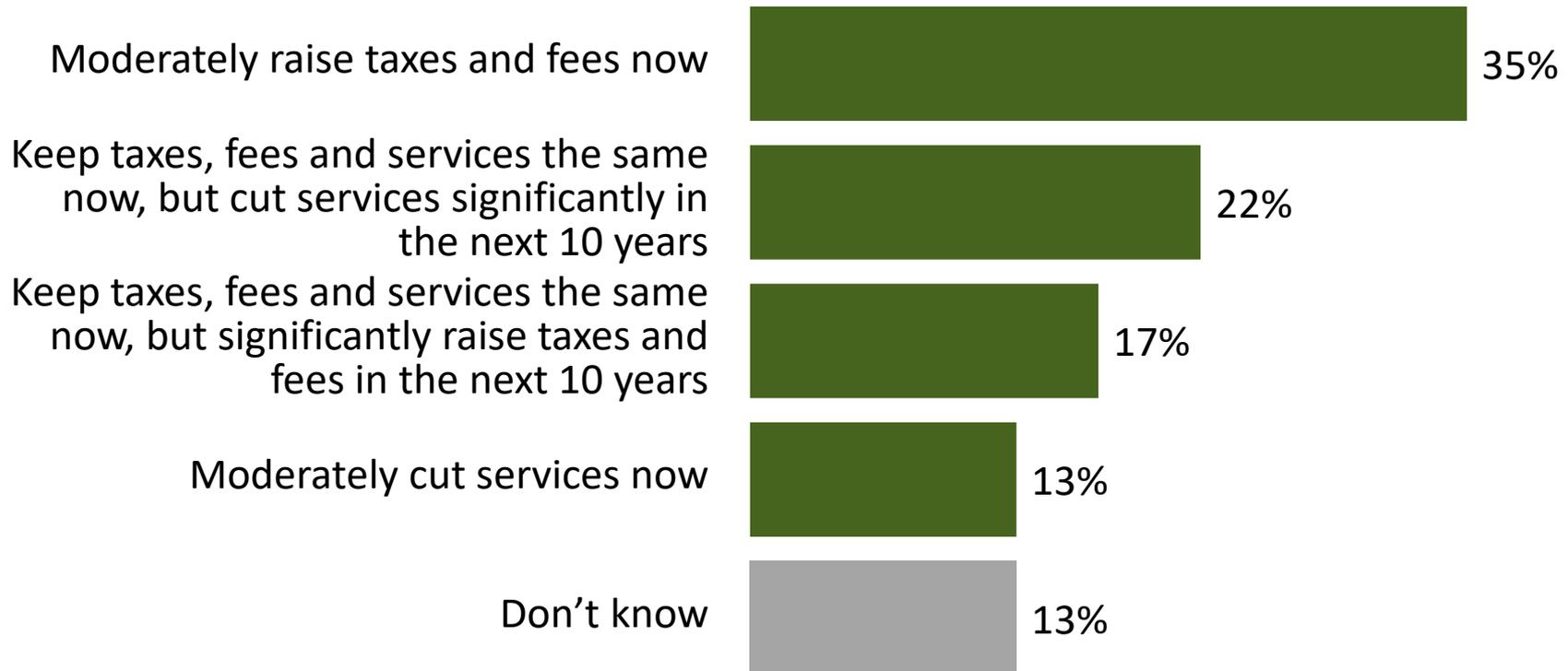
# Graffiti removal and bicycle infrastructure improvements were the lowest priorities.



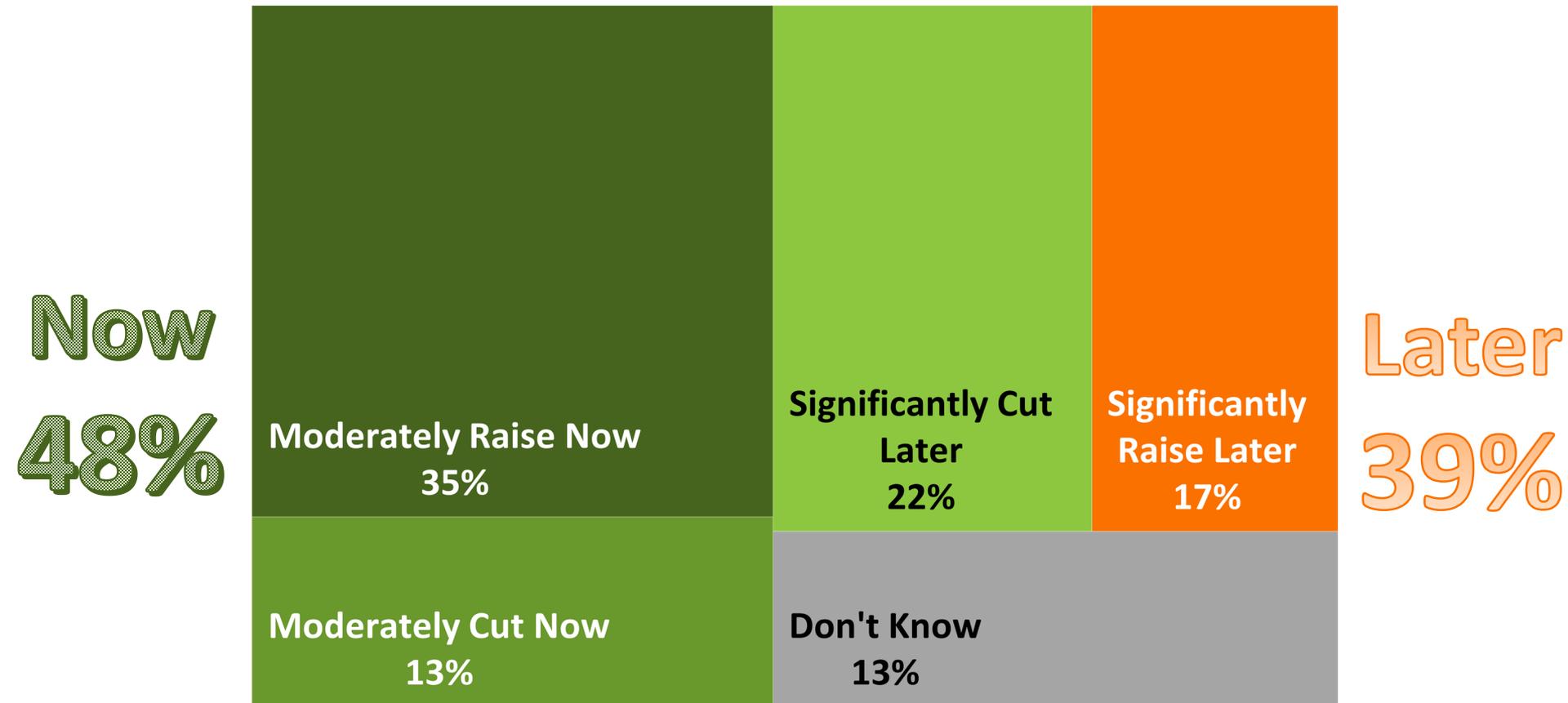
# **Balancing Long Term Budget Challenges**

# Given the choice, a plurality preferred moderately raising taxes and fees now to cutting services or putting off action.

*Over the next ten years, the City of Oakland will face tens of millions of dollars in budget shortfalls for employee health and retirement benefits. To keep a balanced budget, the City will have to raise taxes and fees or make cuts to City services. I am going to read you four potential options, and I would like you to tell me which comes closest to what you would prefer.*



# Taken together, a plurality favored acting now, whether making cuts or raising taxes.



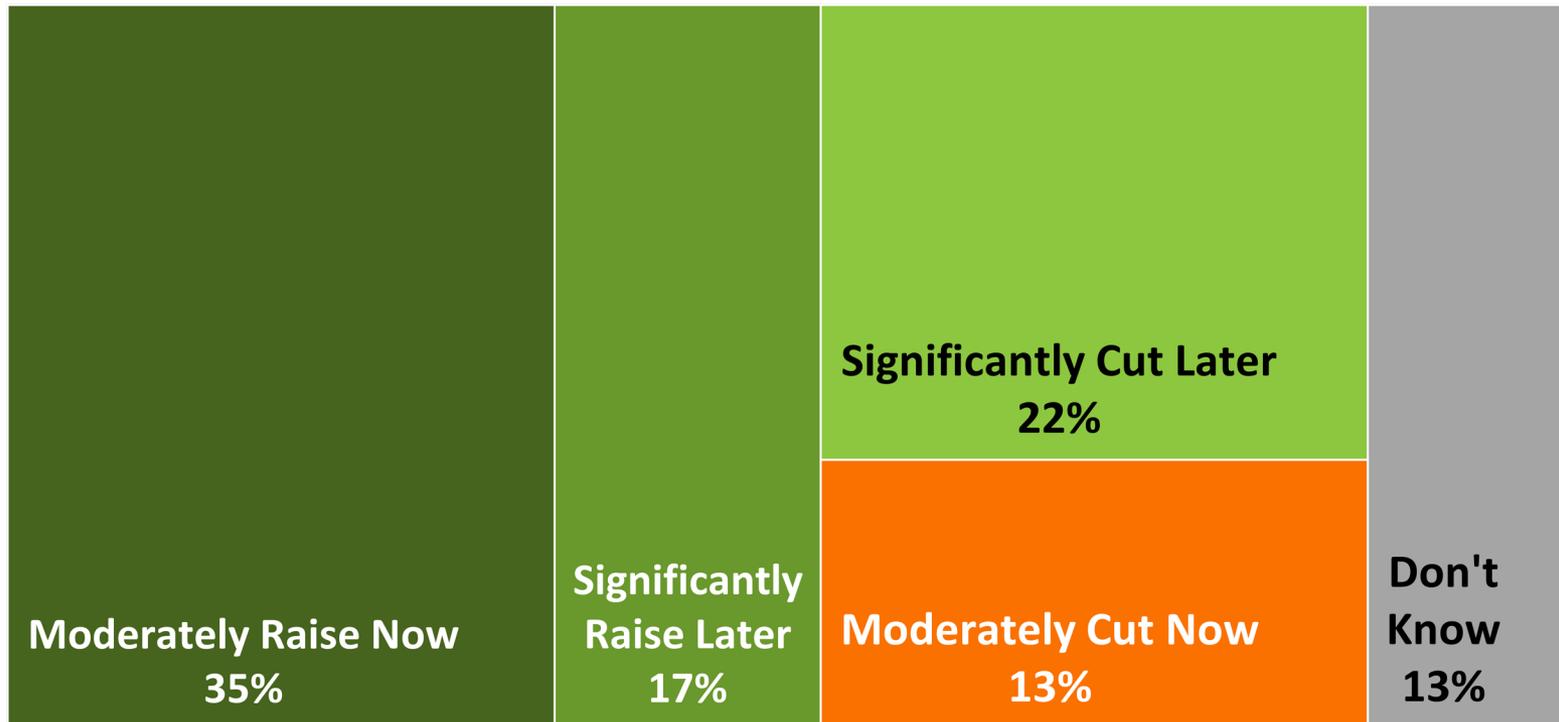
# By 17 points, Oakland residents would rather the City raise taxes and fees.

Raise

52%

Cut

35%



# **Race and Equity**

# Next, residents were given a brief bit of context about the City's equity efforts, and asked to prioritize selected outcomes.

Through its budget, the City can invest more in equity for communities of color, that is, people who are African-American, Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Native American, or some other identity that is not white. I am going to read you a list of different categories of City programs and services, and I would like you to tell me whether you think it is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important to invest in improving equity for each one.

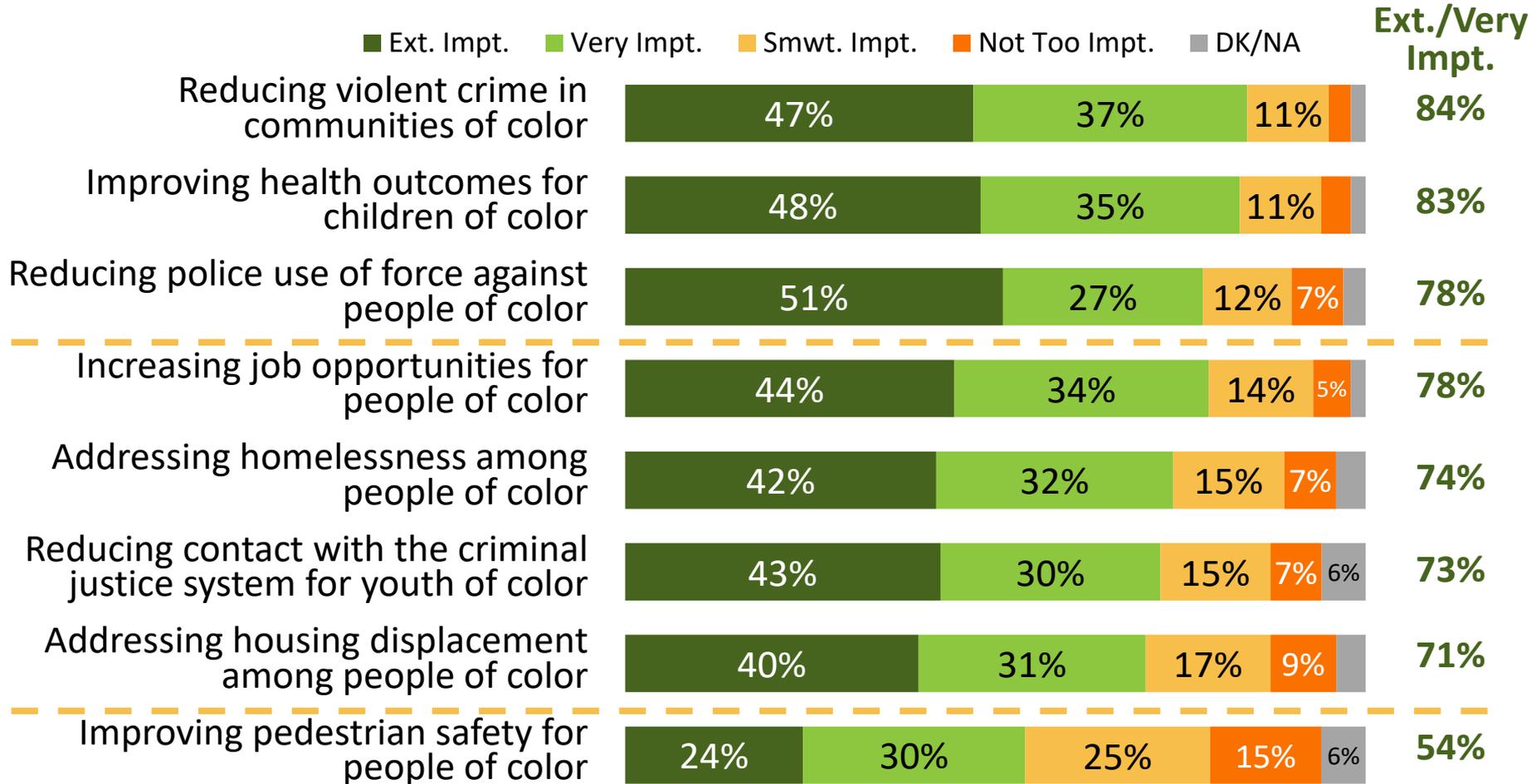


EQUALITY



EQUITY

# Reducing violent crime and police use of force, and improving health outcomes for children, were the most important priorities.



# For more information, contact:



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