



2015 City of Oakland Budget Priorities Survey

Key findings from a survey of
Oakland resident conducted on
January 27-31, 2015

320-639

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates - FM3

Public Opinion Research & Strategy

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Methodology

- 701 telephone interviews with registered Oakland voters, including 61% who make all or most of their phone calls on cell phones
 - *Interviews conducted between January 27-31, 2015, before the City's budget projections were released in early February*
 - *Interviews conducted in English, Spanish and Cantonese*
- Margin of sampling error of +/- 3.7% at the 95% confidence interval
 - *Margins of error for subgroups will be higher*
 - *Due to rounding, not all percentages sum to 100%*

Methodology (Continued)

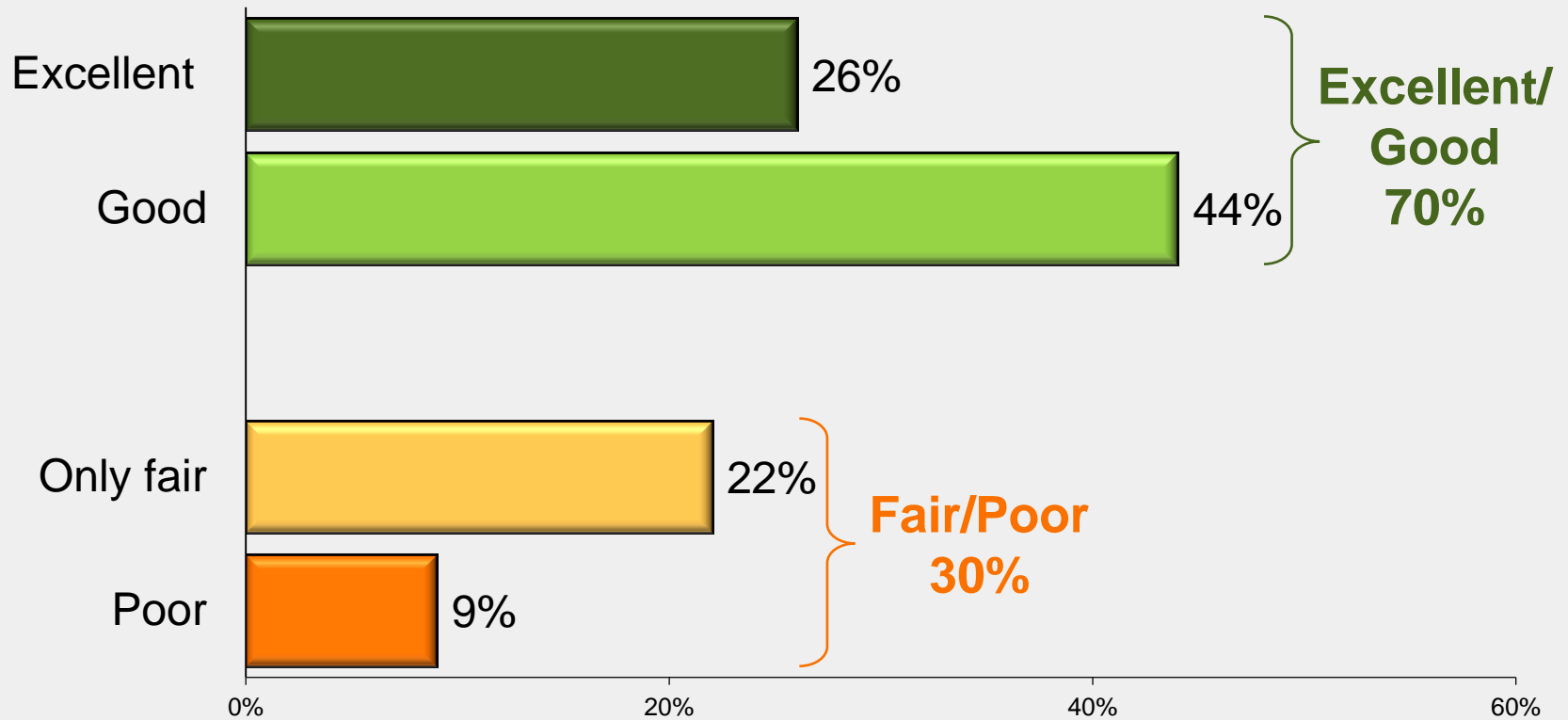
- Comparisons were made to prior surveys conducted in 2005, 2002 and 2000.
- Prior survey samples were drawn by a random digit dialing (RDD) methodology from the entire adult population of Oakland residents.
- In order to maximize the number of respondents – and in recognition of the rising costs and practical difficulties of using RDD sampling methodology – this survey used a sample drawn from voter registration lists.
- Statistical weighting of the current survey's results to reflect Census demographics for the full adult population reveals no meaningful difference in results.

Category	Voters	Census
Male	48	48
Female	52	52
18-29	16	23
30-39	22	21
40-49	18	18
50-64	24	23
65-74	12	8
75+	8	6
Latino	16	22
African American	29	27
Asian/Pacific Islander	12	18
White	35	29
Other/Mixed/Refused	8	3

Overall Impression of Life in Oakland

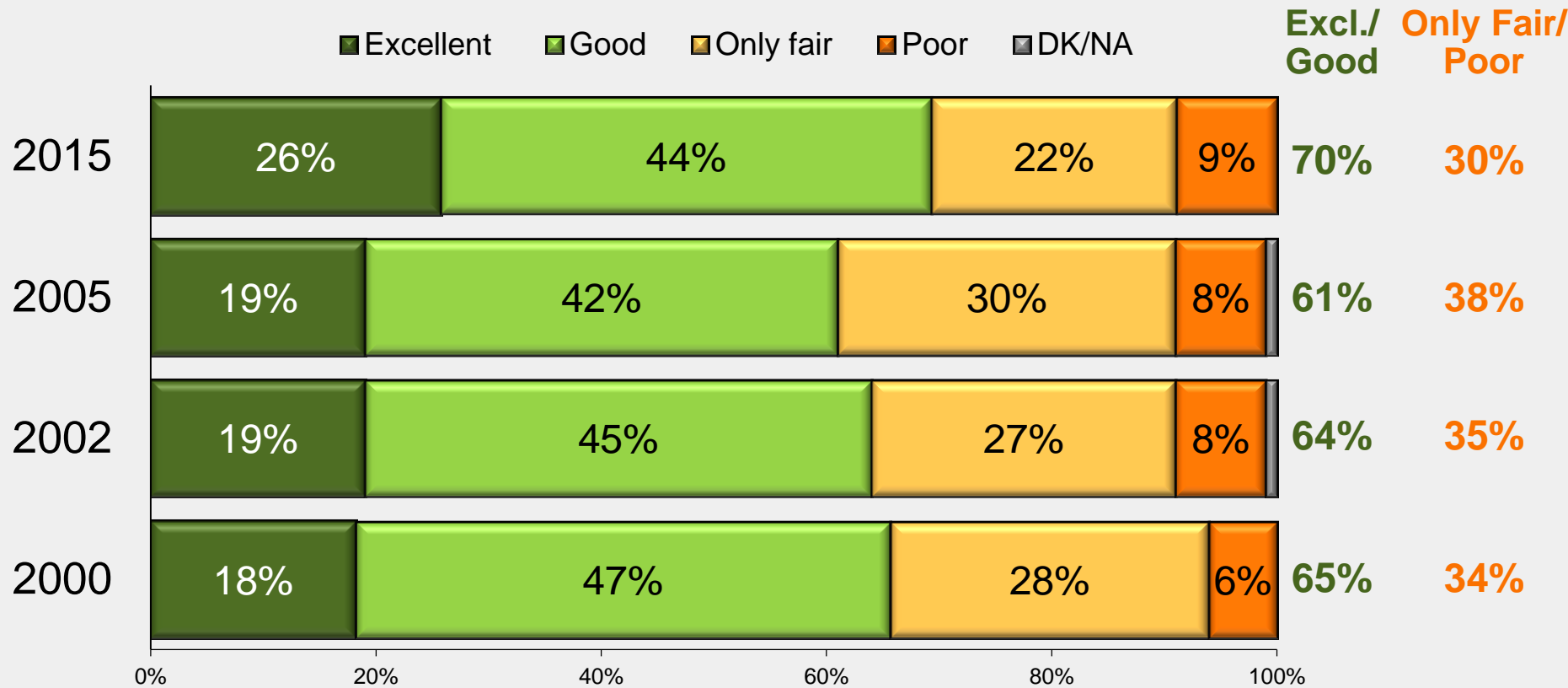
The vast majority of survey respondents enjoy living in Oakland.

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?



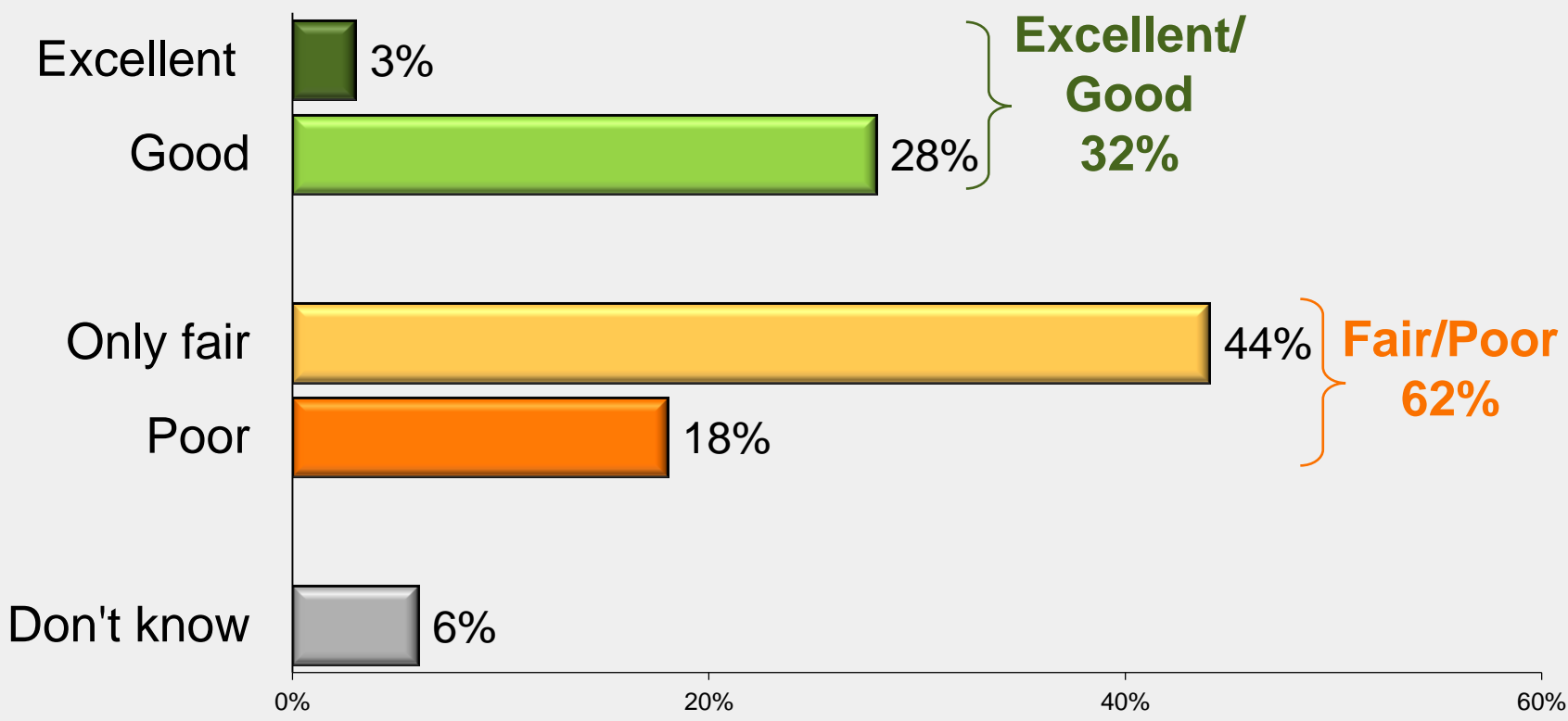
Opinions about living in Oakland are more positive than they were a decade ago.

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?



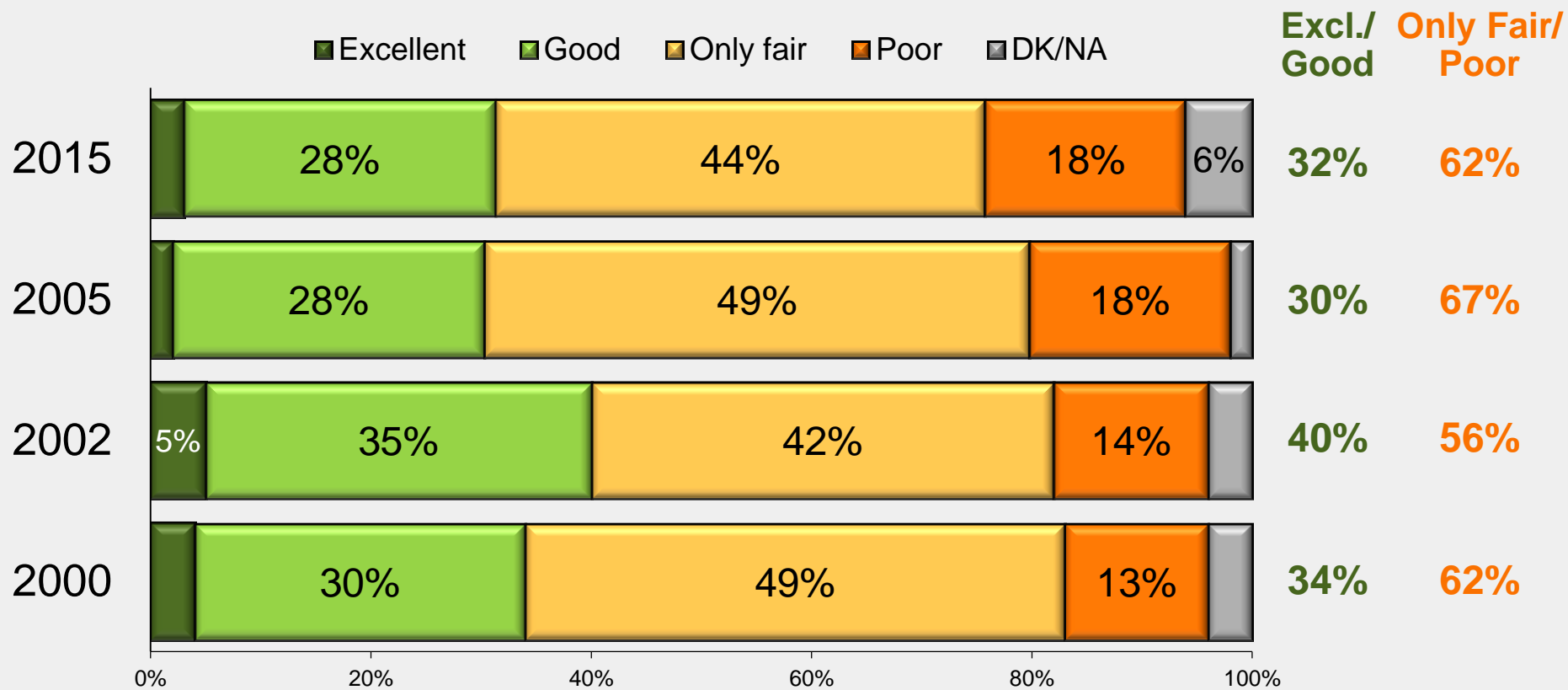
A plurality feels that City government is doing an “only fair” job providing services.

How would you rate the overall job being done by Oakland city government in providing services to the people who live here: excellent, good, only fair or poor?



Opinions of the City's provision of services have not changed appreciably since 2000.

How would you rate the overall job being done by Oakland city government in providing services to the people who live here: excellent, good, only fair or poor?



Nearly two in five enjoy life in Oakland, but are less enthusiastic about City government.

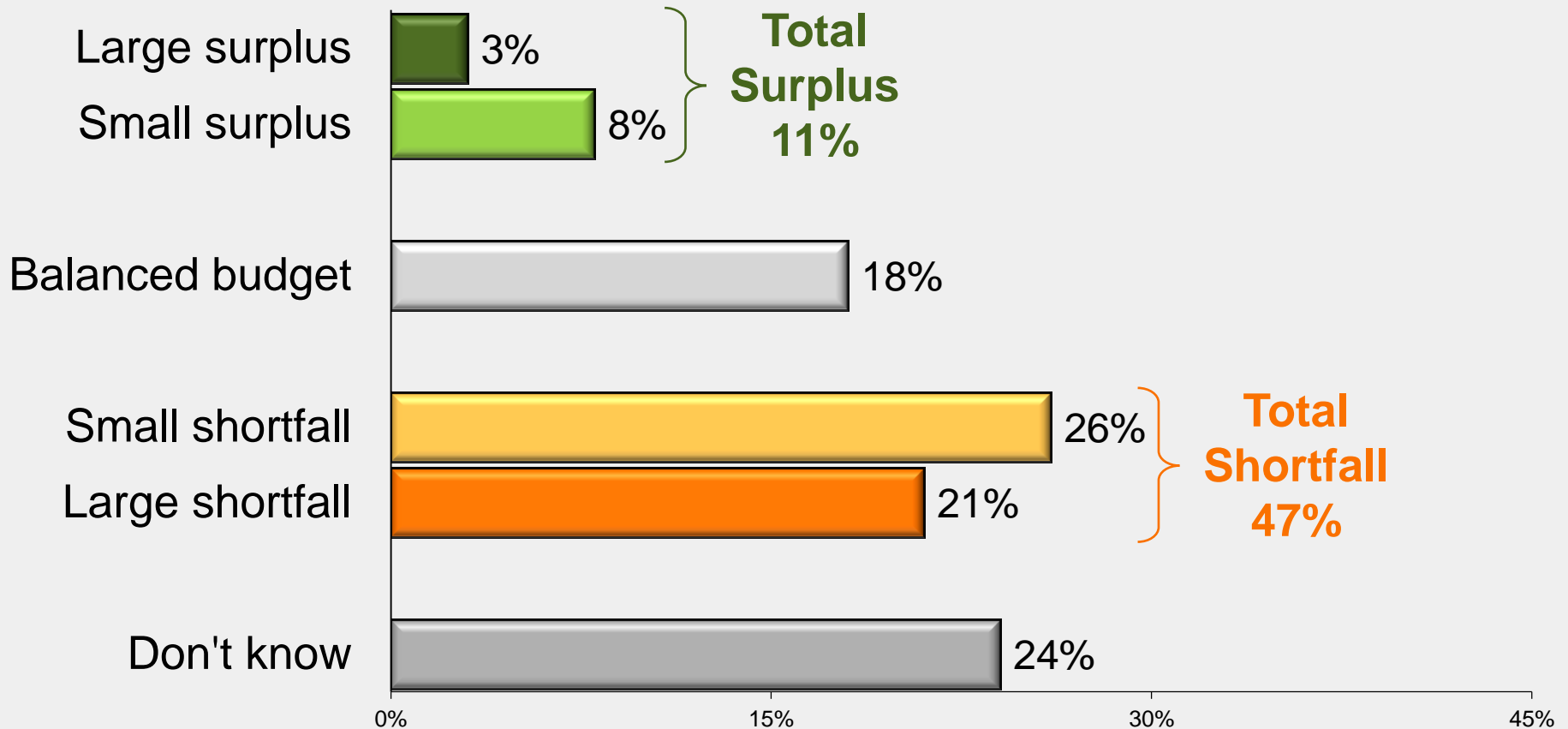
- 38% of respondents indicated that Oakland is an “excellent” or “good” place to live, but feel that City government does an “only fair” or “poor” job providing services.
- The subgroups on the right were disproportionately likely to fall into this category.

Quality of Life-Positive/ City Government-Negative
HH Income \$150,000+
Live with a Partner
Ages 30-39
Lived in Oakland 2-5 Years
Don't Work in Oakland
City Council District 1
Four-year College or More
Whites
Born in the U.S.
Employed Full-Time

General Impressions of Oakland's City Budget

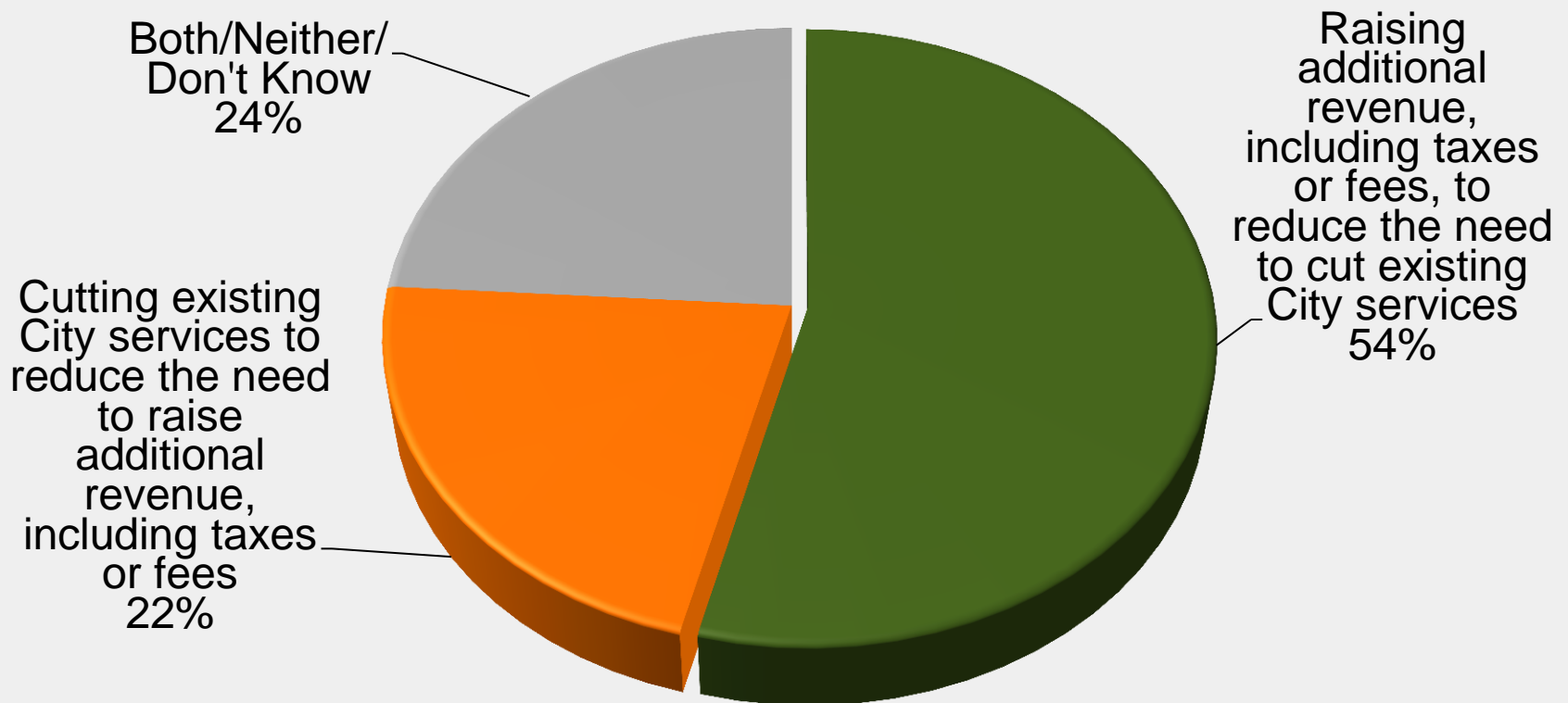
Nearly half believe the City is facing a budget shortfall.

Thinking about this upcoming year, 2015, do you think that the City of Oakland will start its budget process with a budget surplus, a balanced budget, or a budget shortfall?



More than half would rather see a shortfall addressed by raising revenue rather than cutting services.

There is a possibility that the City of Oakland may face a significant budget shortfall in the coming year. With that in mind, in making decisions about the budget, should the City of Oakland place a higher priority on:



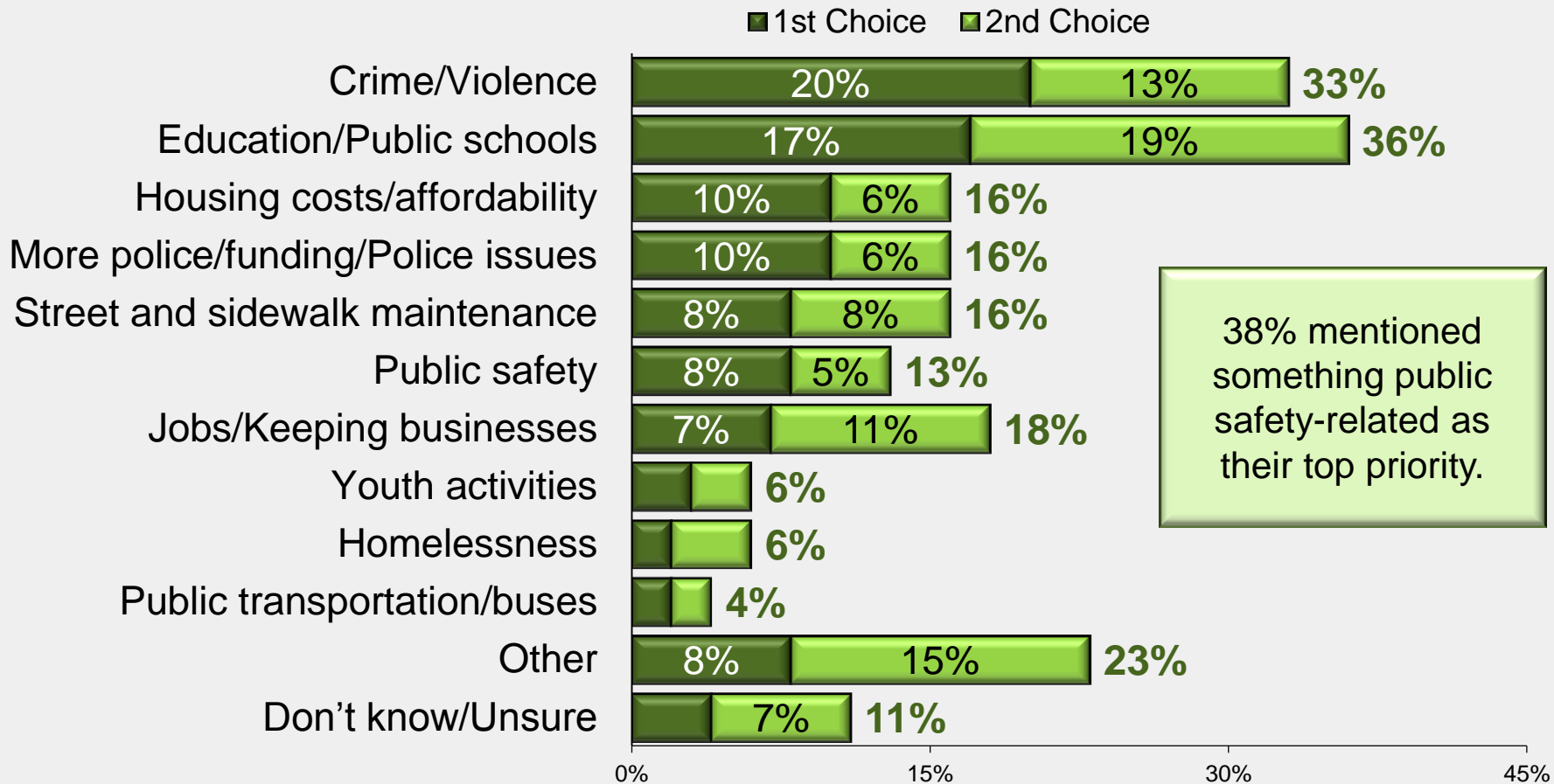
Specific Budget Priorities

Respondents were asked to help prioritize specific budget spending categories in three different ways:

- 1. Asking respondents to identify, in their own words, the two most important issues facing Oakland residents that they would like to see prioritized in the City government budget.*
- 2. Rating a list of budget goals on a 5-point scale, ranging from “extremely important” to “not at all important.”*
- 3. Reacting to a list of different City services and indicating whether they thought cuts should be made to that service to address a potential budget shortfall, or whether they would pay more to maintain – or improve – each service.*

Without prompting, respondents suggested that public safety and education should be top budget priorities.

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?



Crime, education and housing costs have generally been the top priorities over time.

(1st Choice)

Issues	2000	2002	2005	2015
Crime/Violence*	19%	26%	22%	20%
Education/Public schools	33%	14%	35%	17%
Housing costs/affordability	8%	12%	5%	10%
More police/funding/Police issues*	NA	2%	2%	10%
Street and sidewalk maintenance*	3%	4%	4%	8%
Public safety*	NA	1%	0%	8%
Jobs/Keeping businesses	5%	3%	4%	7%
Youth activities*	NA	1%	1%	3%
Homelessness	3%	4%	2%	2%
Public transportation/buses	1%	0%	1%	2%
Revitalizing neighborhoods	2%	1%	1%	0%
Traffic congestion/Traffic flow	1%	2%	1%	0%
Drug abuse*	8%	11%	4%	0%
Gangs/Violence*	3%	4%	3%	NA

Keeping crime and violence low is the clear top budget priority.

Mean Scale from 1 to 5: Where 1 means it is **NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT** and 5 means it is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT**. A rating of 3 is **NEUTRAL**, neither "important" or "unimportant."

■ 5 (Extremely Impt.) ■ 4 ■ 3 (Neutral) ■ 2 ■ 1 (Not At All Impt.) ■ Don't Know

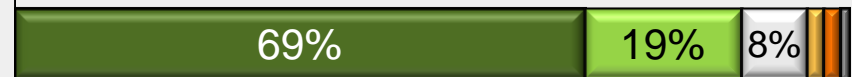
**Mean
Score**

Crime and violence are low



4.7

There is good job availability in the local area



4.5

There is speedy access to quality emergency medical services



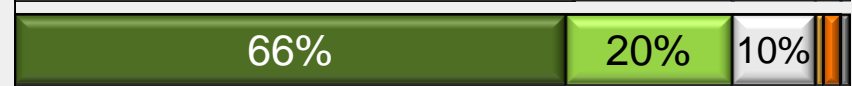
4.5

The City promotes literacy and educational opportunities



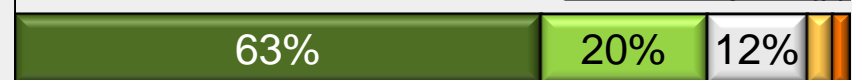
4.5

There are activities and safe spaces for youth and children



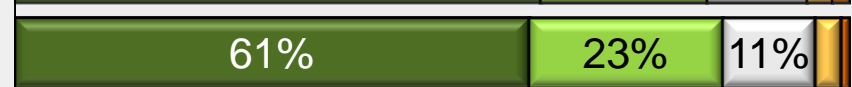
4.5

Residents have access to affordable housing



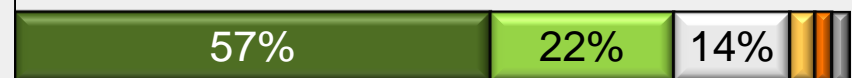
4.4

The City is prepared for fires, earthquakes, and other disasters



4.4

City government is open and transparent



4.3

City infrastructure and roads are well maintained



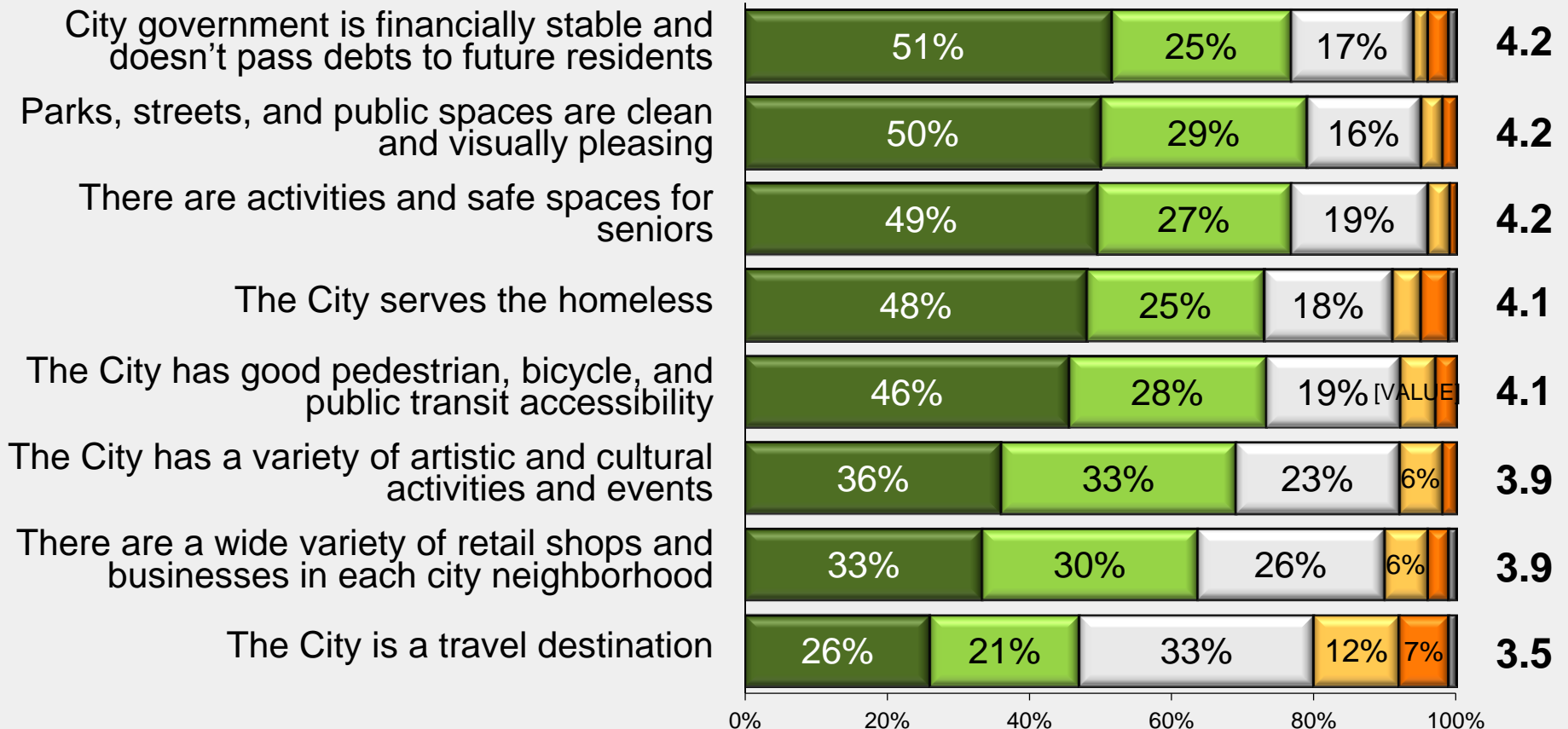
4.3

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Ensuring that Oakland is a travel destination is seen as the least important priority.

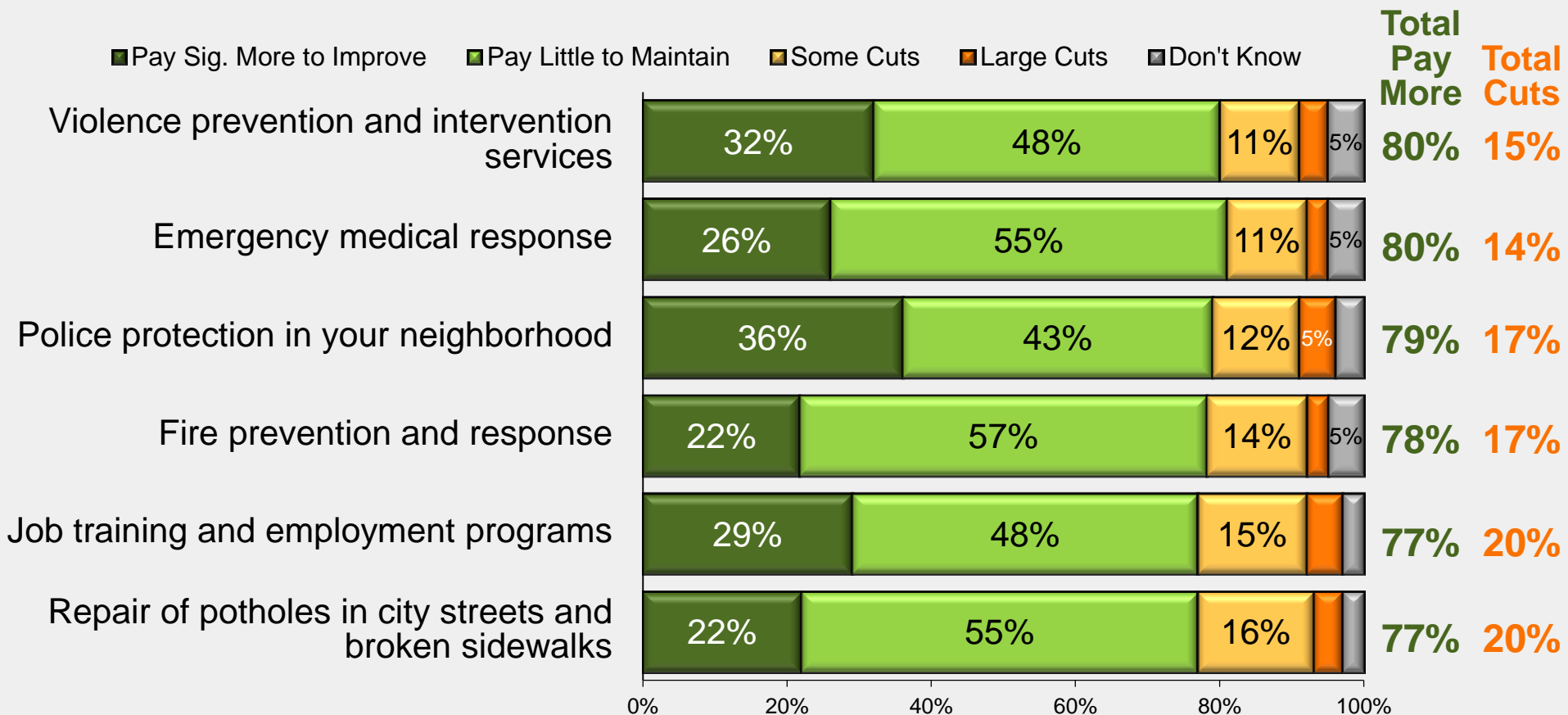
Mean Scale from 1 to 5: Where 1 means it is **NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT** and 5 means it is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT**. A rating of 3 is **NEUTRAL**, neither "important" or "unimportant."

■ 5 (Extremely Impt.) ■ 4 ■ 3 (Neutral) ■ 2 ■ 1 (Not At All Impt.) ■ Don't Know **Mean Score**

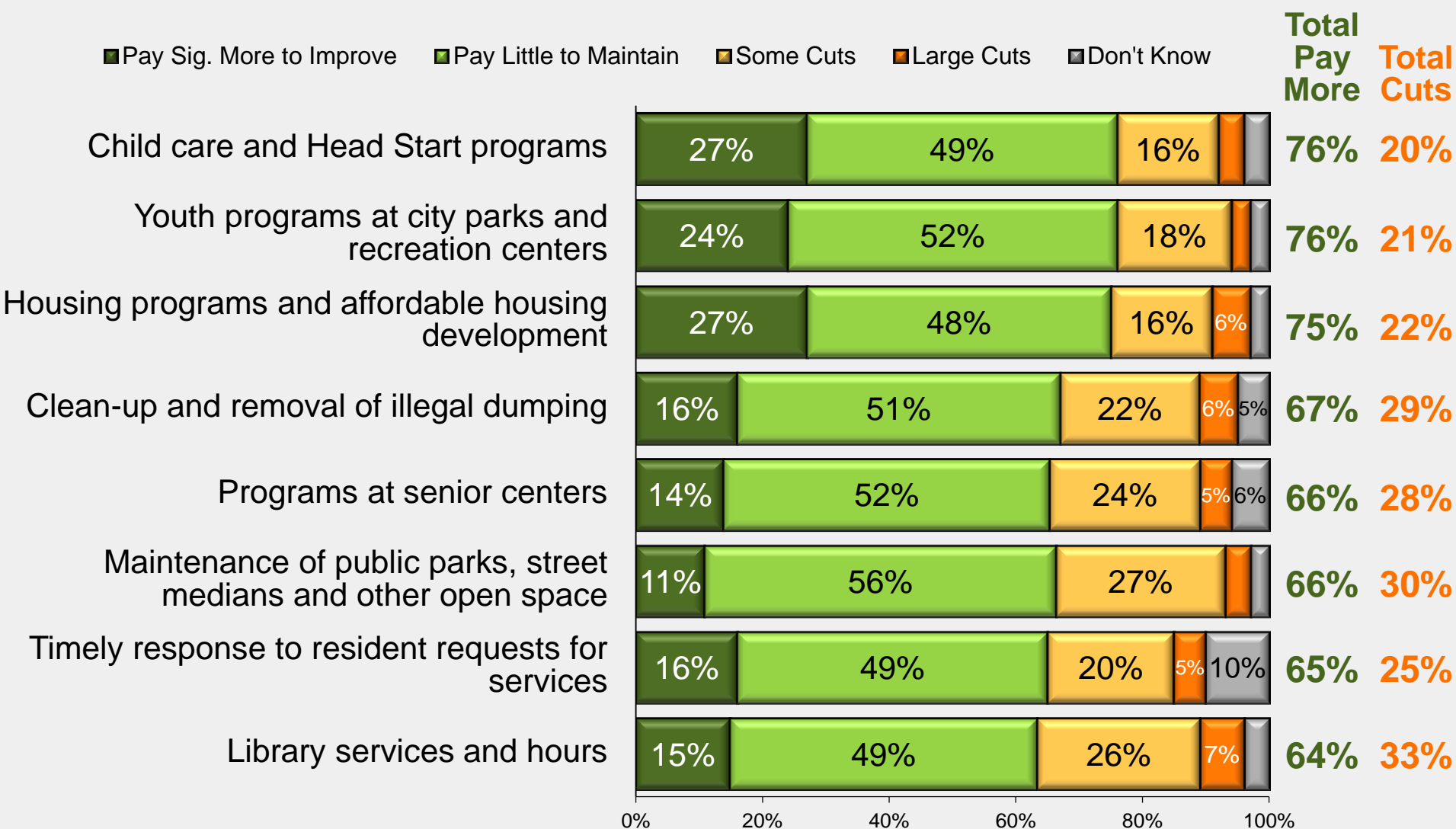


Over one-third said they would pay significantly more to improve police protection.

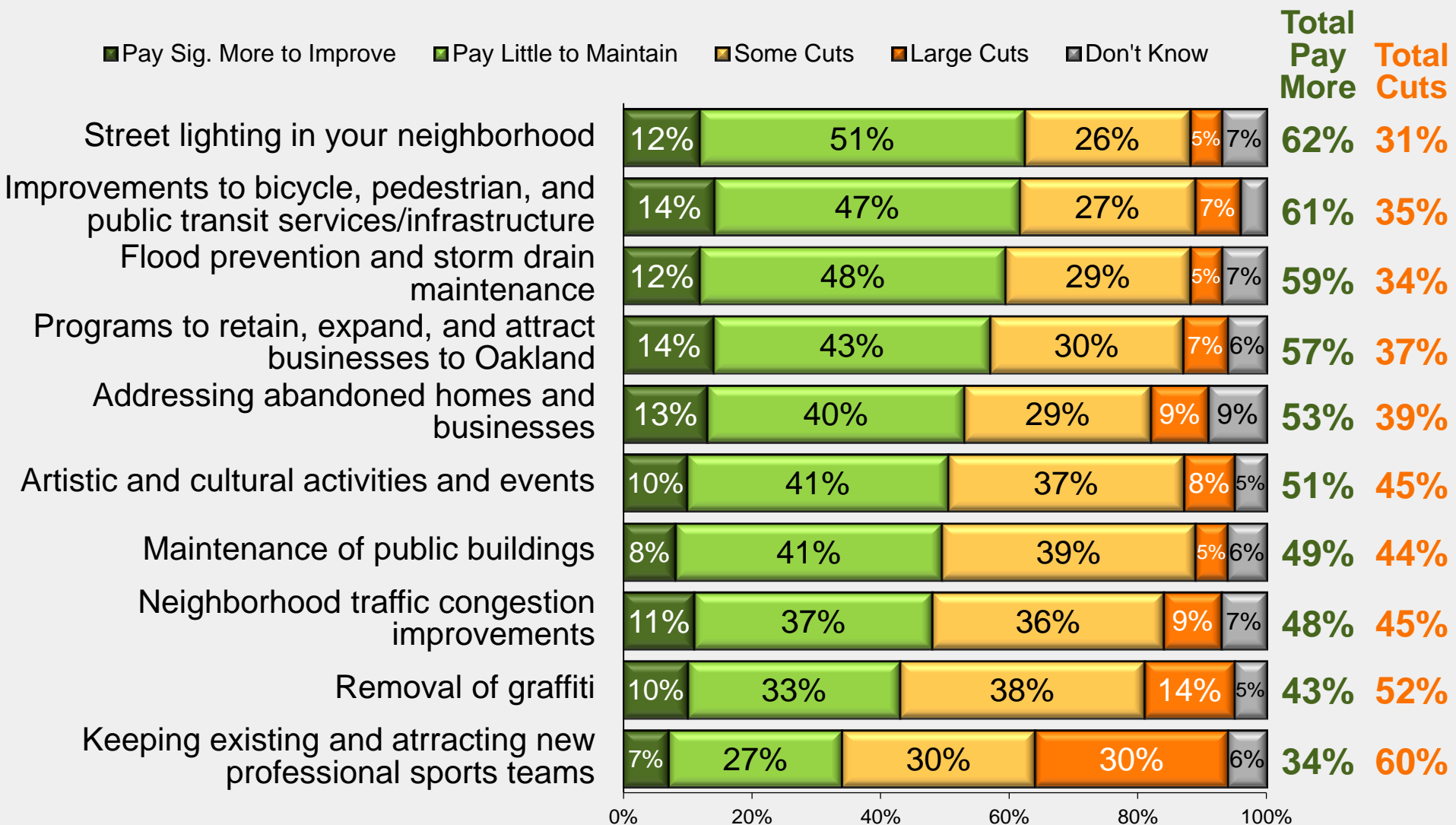
I am going to mention some of the services the City provides its residents that may need to be changed in order to address a potential budget shortfall. Please tell me whether you think cuts should be made to that service in order to balance the budget, or whether you would be willing to pay additional taxes or fees to maintain or improve that service.



Roughly one-quarter would pay significantly more to improve youth and housing programs.



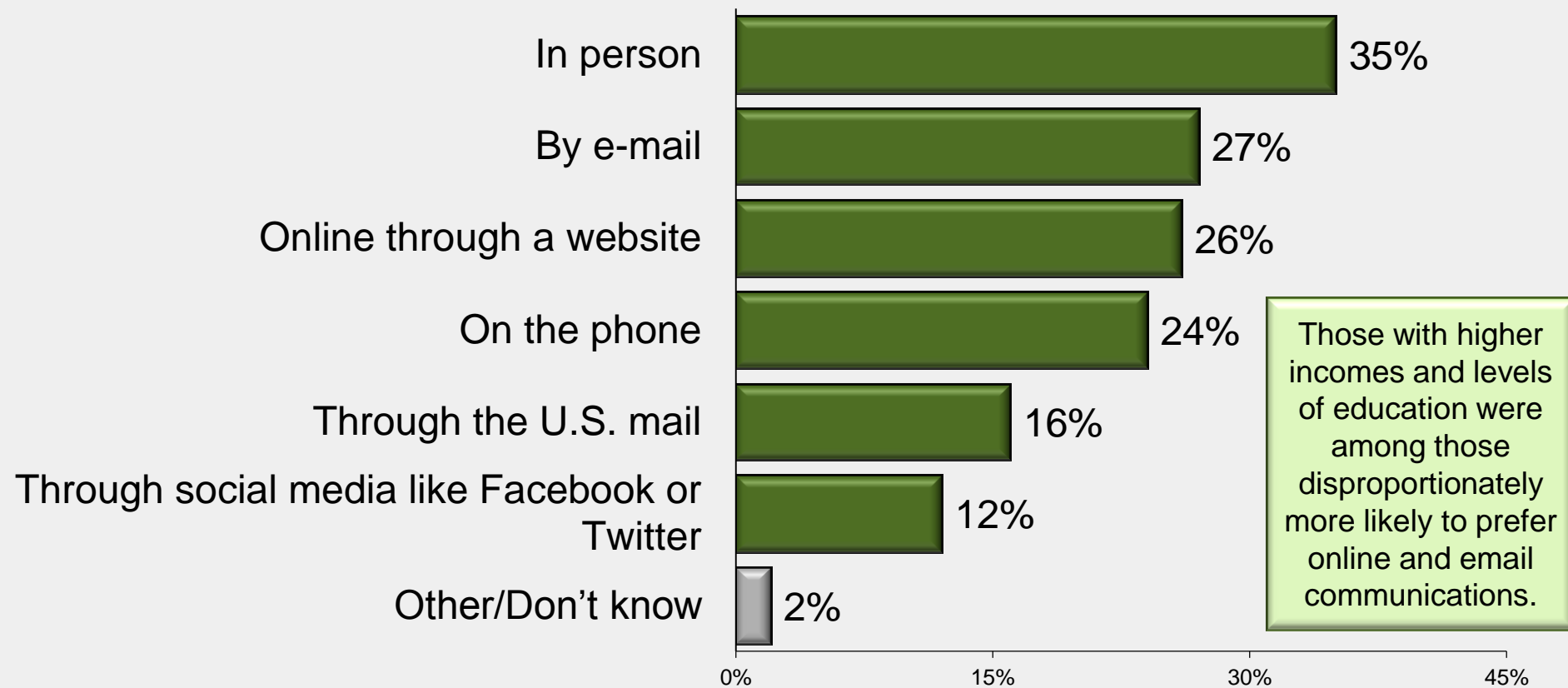
Majorities would prefer cutting graffiti removal and sports team expenditures.



Interactions with City Government

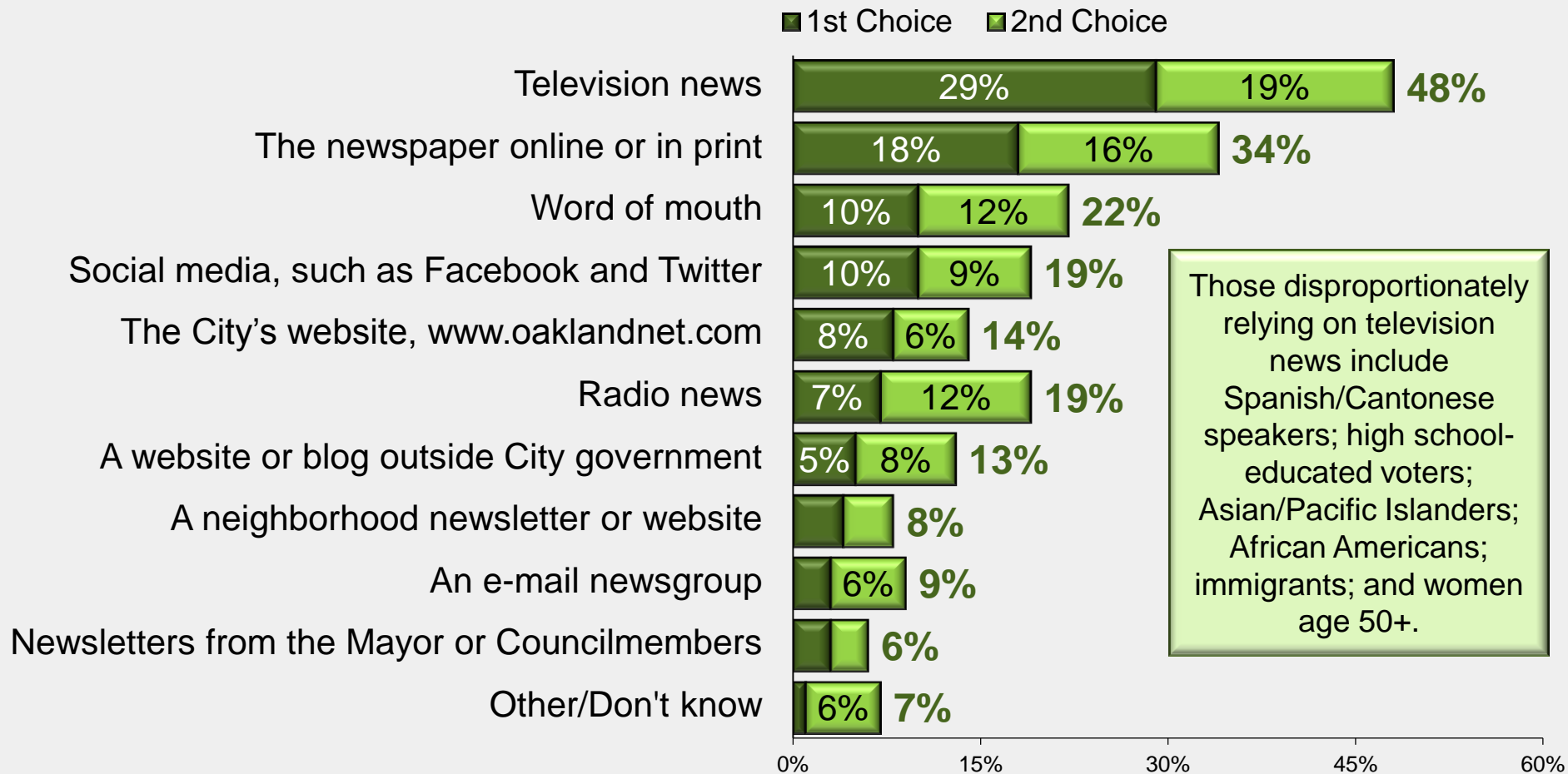
Though many would interact with the City in real-time, many would also use digital modes.

If you were to interact with the City in the future, in which of the following ways would you most like to have contact with them:



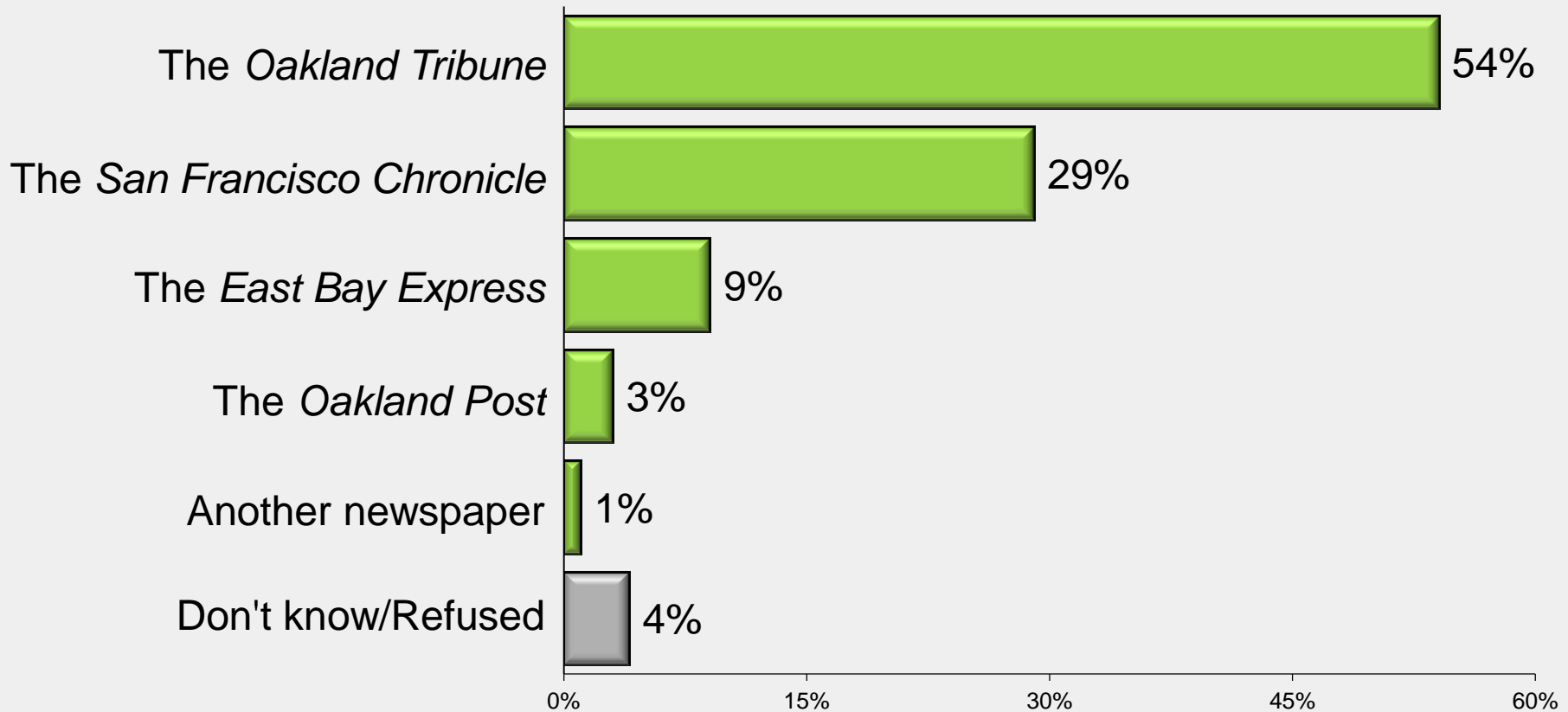
Television news remains the top source of information about City government.

Which of the following sources of information do you use most often to find out what Oakland City government is doing?



Of the 34% who use newspapers as a source of information about City government, half read the *Oakland Tribune*; one in three the *SF Chronicle*.

Which of the following newspapers do you use most often to get information about City government:



Conclusions

Conclusions

- The survey results show a continuing disconnect between how Oaklanders think about life in the City and their impressions of City government's effectiveness. The vast majority of Oaklanders see the City as a good place to live; however, a plurality feels the City is only doing a "fair" job providing services.
- These findings suggest that residents see many other aspects of life in Oakland beyond the City's control as important to the City's high quality of life.
- Public safety is clearly a top concern and thus the top budget priority. More than three-quarters of respondents to this survey indicated they would rather pay a little more to maintain or improve police, fire and emergency response services than to see those services cut.
- Additionally, large majorities would rather pay more to protect other services – such as job training, street/sidewalk repair, youth program, housing programs, senior programs, park maintenance, library services, and others – rather than see them cut.
- While a slim majority (54%) supports the general approach of raising revenue to reduce the need to cut services, much larger majorities are willing to pay more for specific services they deem as higher priorities. Thus, were the City to ask residents to pay more to maintain or improve existing services, the specific mix of services would be critically important to garnering broad support.

For more information, contact:

Dave Metz

Dave@FM3research.com

Curtis Below

Curt@FM3research.com

1999 Harrison St., Suite 2020

Oakland, CA 94612

Phone (510) 451-9521

Fax (510) 451-0384

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Appendix

Select Results by Demographic Group

Respondents Most and Least Happy with Life in Oakland

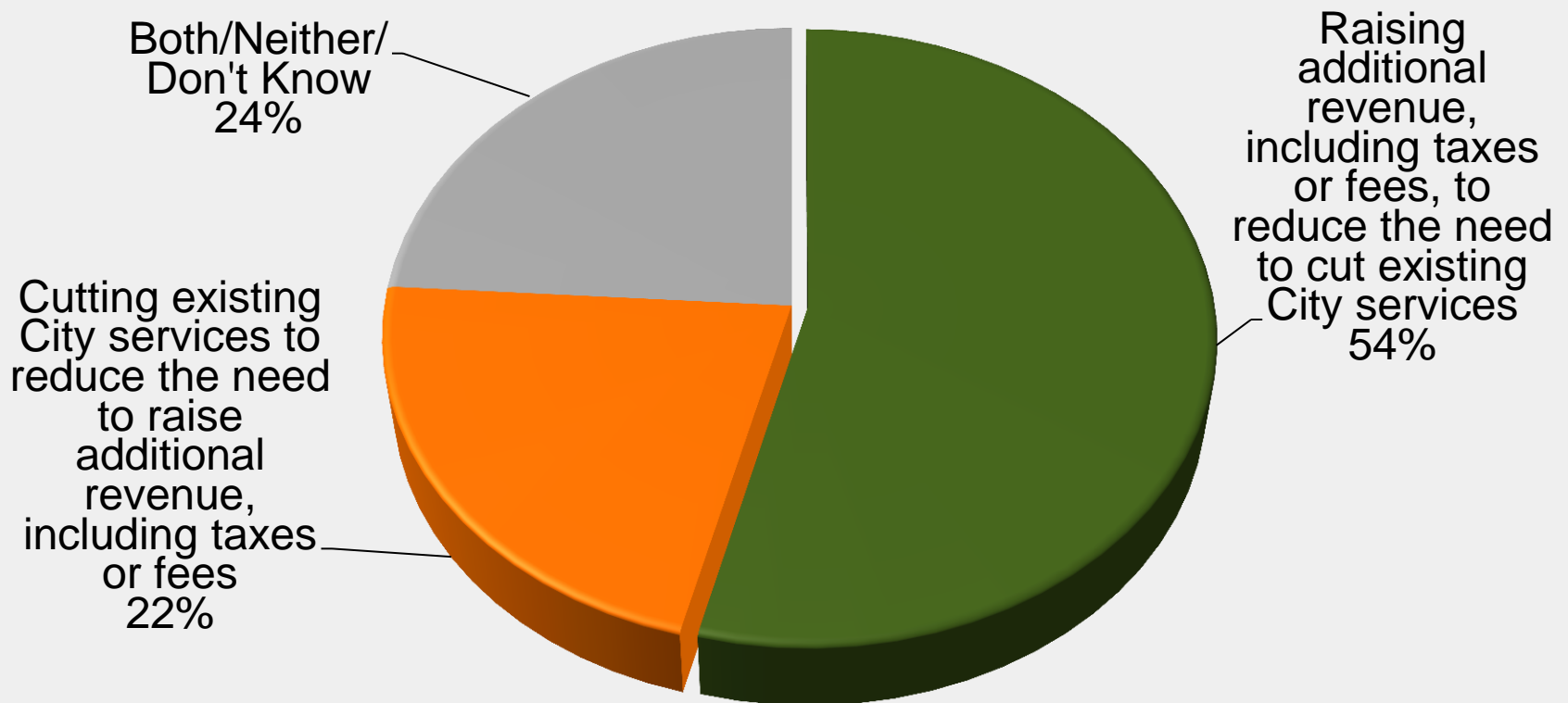
Excellent	Poor
Whites	Interviewed in Spanish/Cantonese
City Council District 1	Immigrated to the U.S.
HH Income \$75,000-\$100,000	Chinese
Post-Graduate Educated	Retired from Employment
Lived in Oakland 0-10 Years	High School Educated
Men Ages 18-49	Latinos
Ages 30-39	City Council District 7
HH Income \$100,000-\$150,000	Women Ages 50+
Four-year College or More	HH Income <\$30,000
City Council District 3	Independents Ages 50+
Self-employed/Work from Home	Non-College Educated Women
Democrats Ages 18-49	Ages 75+

Respondents Most and Least Happy with City Government

Excellent/Good	Poor
Ages 75+	Lived in Oakland 41+ Years
HH Income \$75,000-\$100,000	City Council District 7
Ages 18-29	Ages 50-64
Lived in Oakland <2 Years	African-Americans
Whites	Ages 40-49
City Council District 4	Widowed/Divorced
	HH Income \$150,000+
	Have Children at Home
	Age 65-74
	City Council District 5

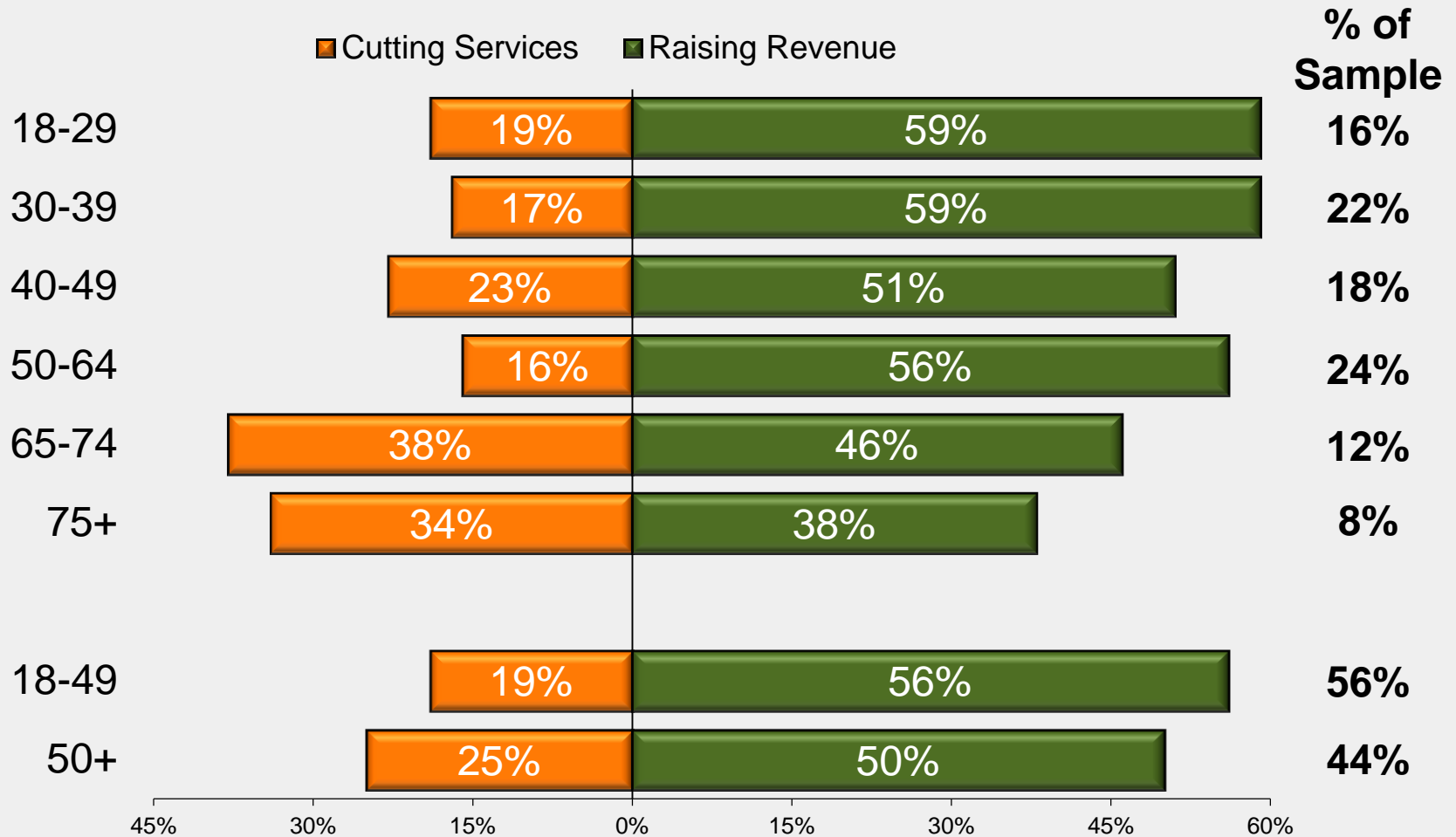
More than half would rather see a shortfall addressed by raising revenue rather than cutting services.

There is a possibility that the City of Oakland may face a significant budget shortfall in the coming year. With that in mind, in making decisions about the budget, should the City of Oakland place a higher priority on:



Seniors were more evenly divided between raising revenue or cutting services.

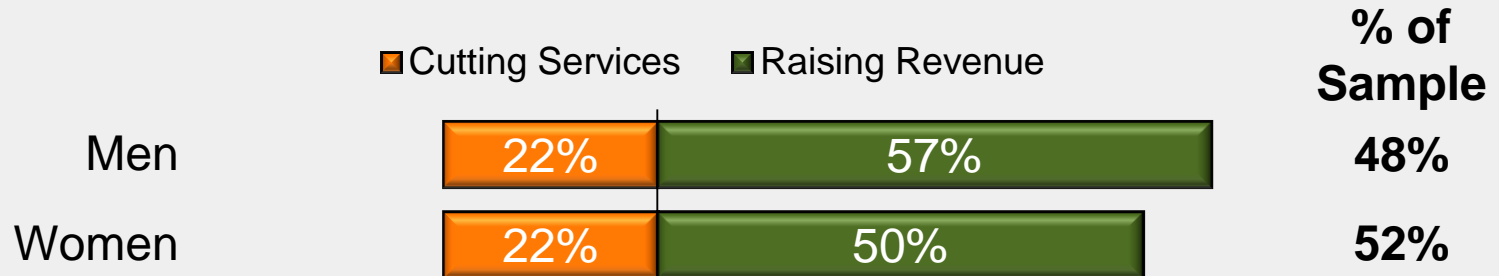
Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Age:



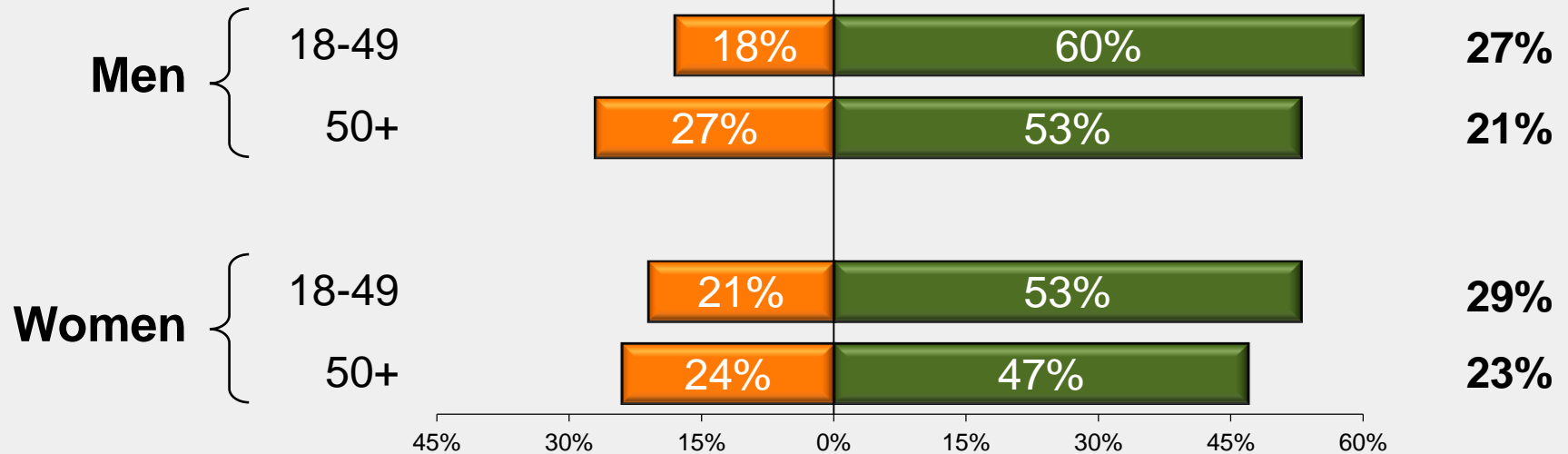
There was little gender gap in preferences.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Gender and Gender by Age:

Gender

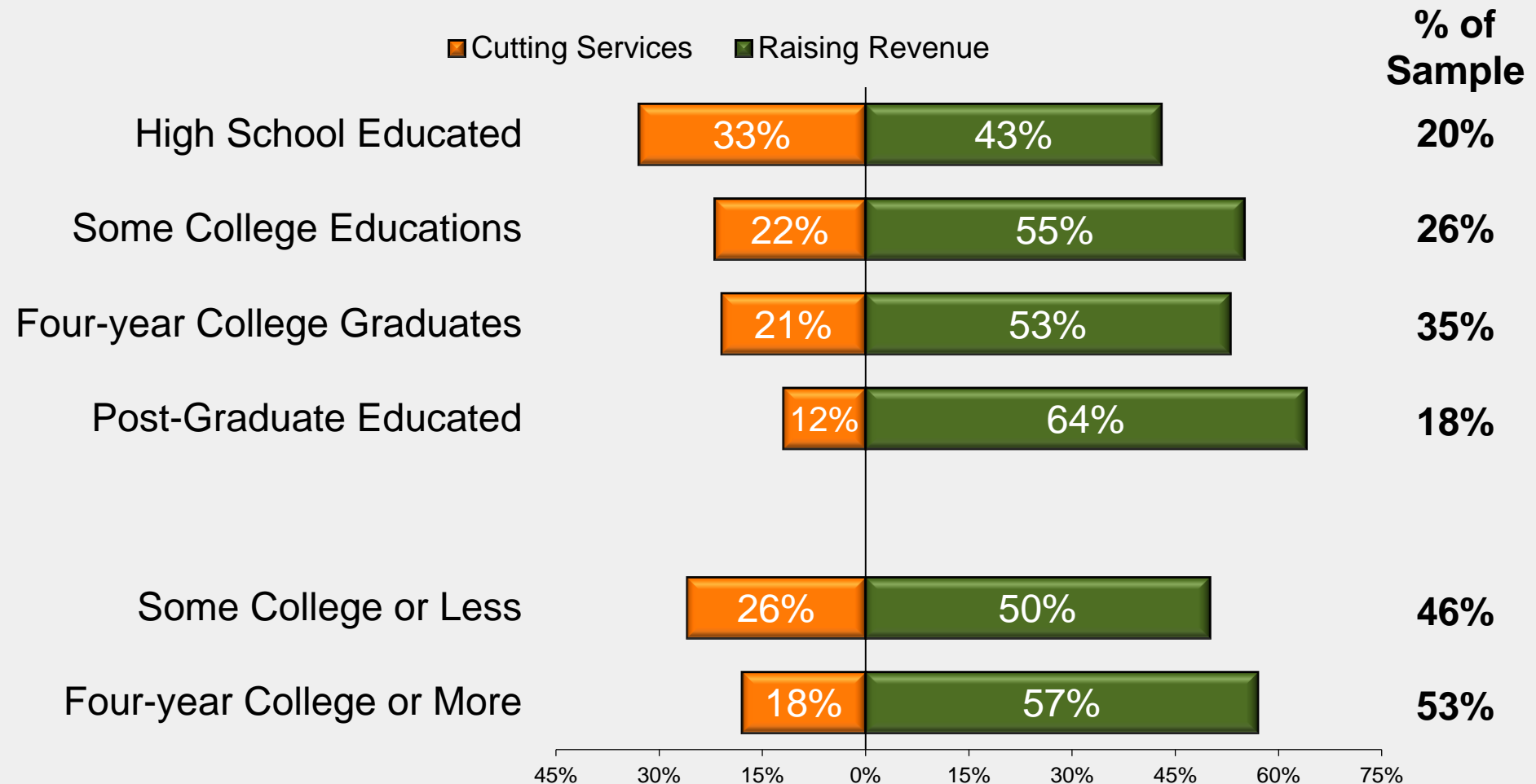


Gender by Age:



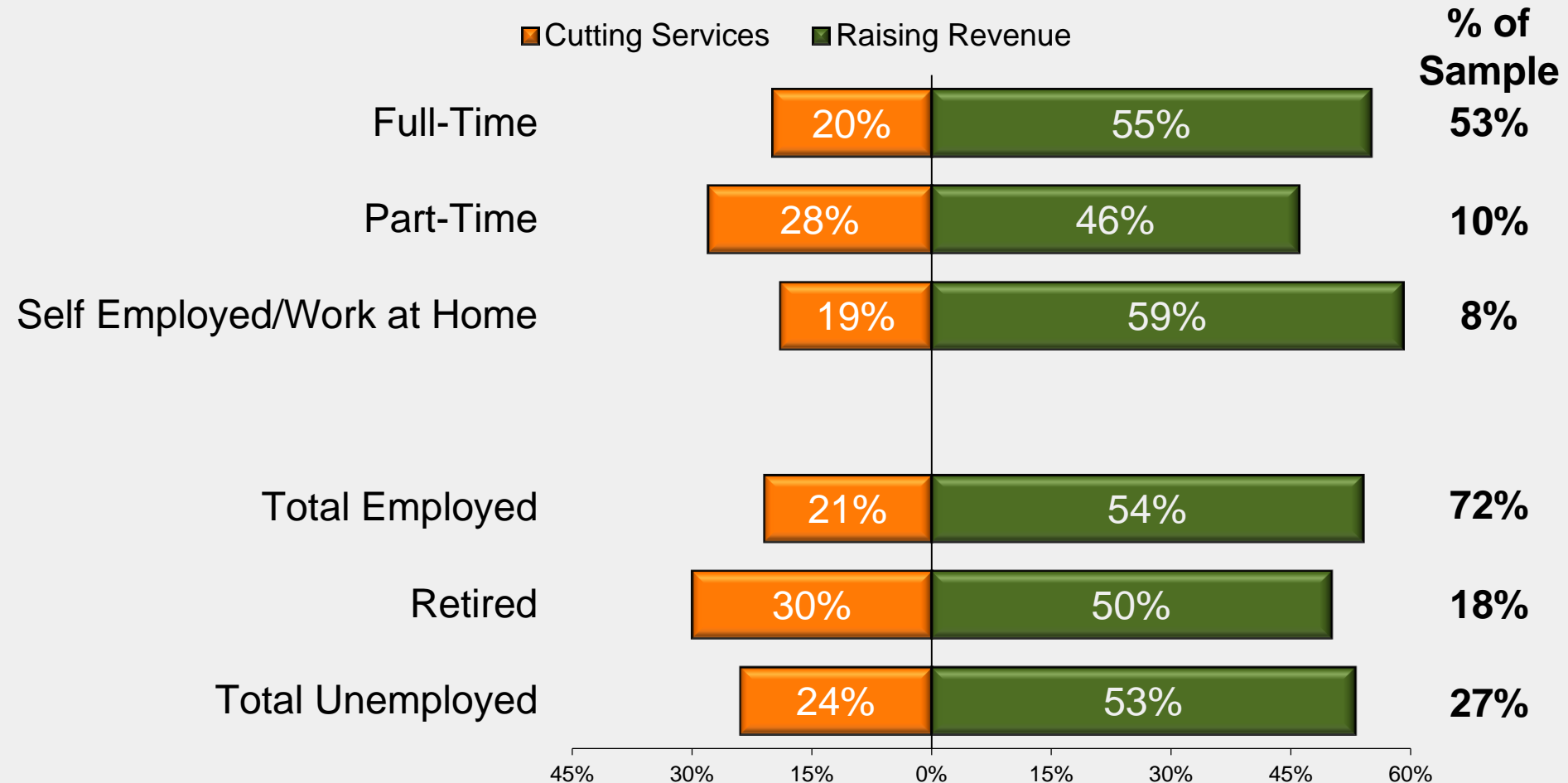
One-third of those with only high school degrees prefer cutting services.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Education:



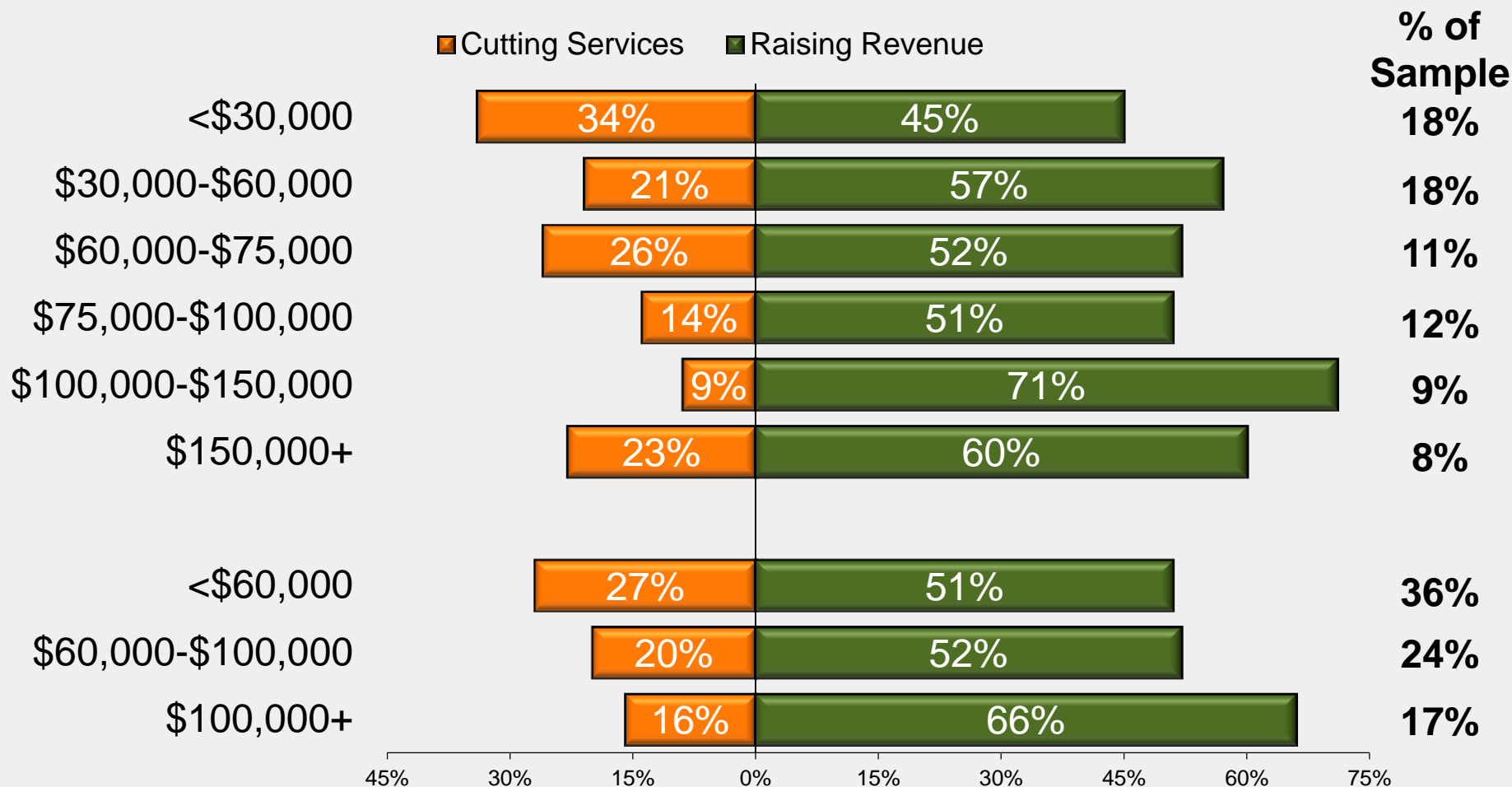
The difference between employed and unemployed respondents varied minimally.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Employment Status:



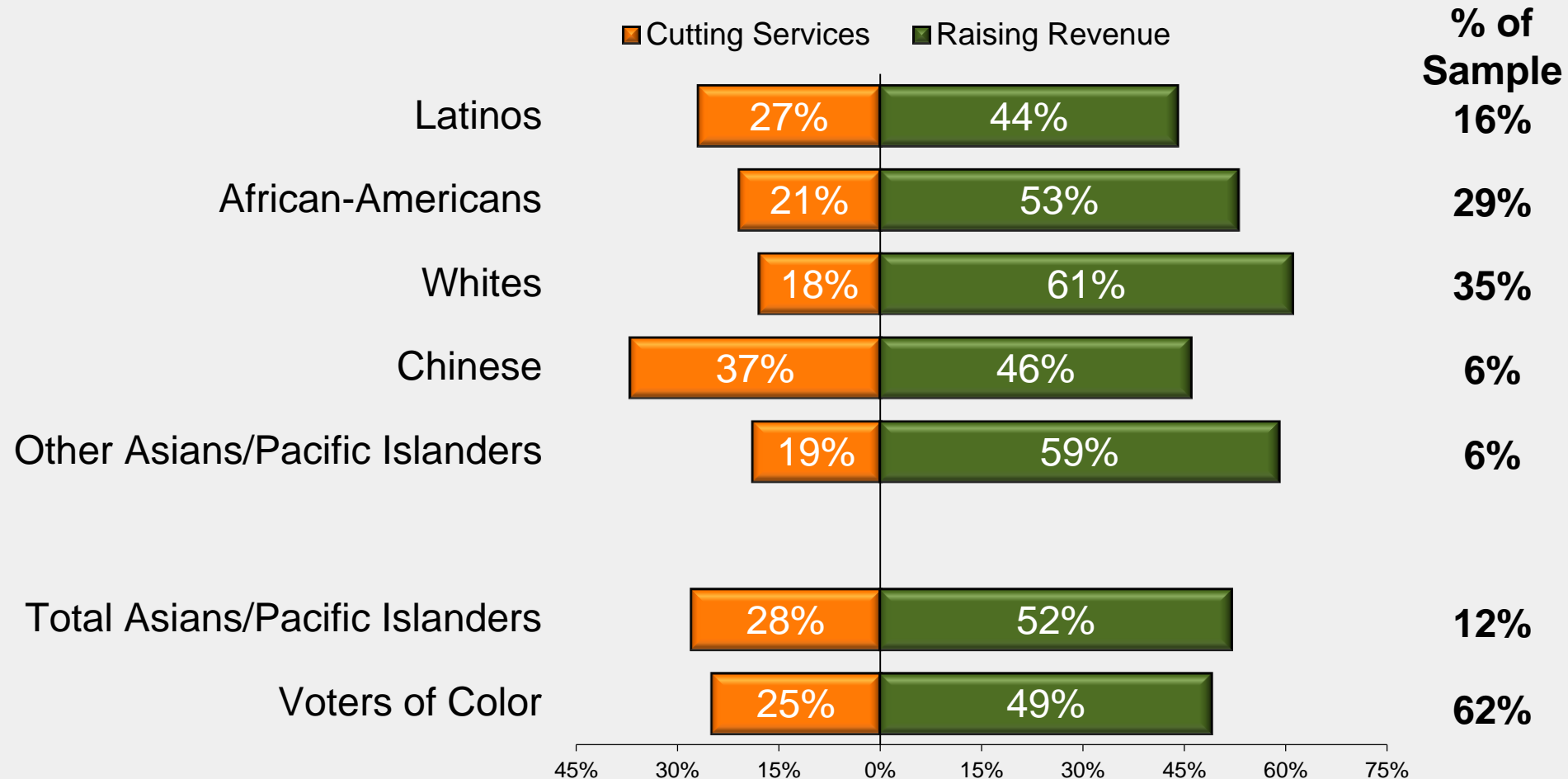
Higher income respondents tended to favor raising taxes more strongly.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Household Income:



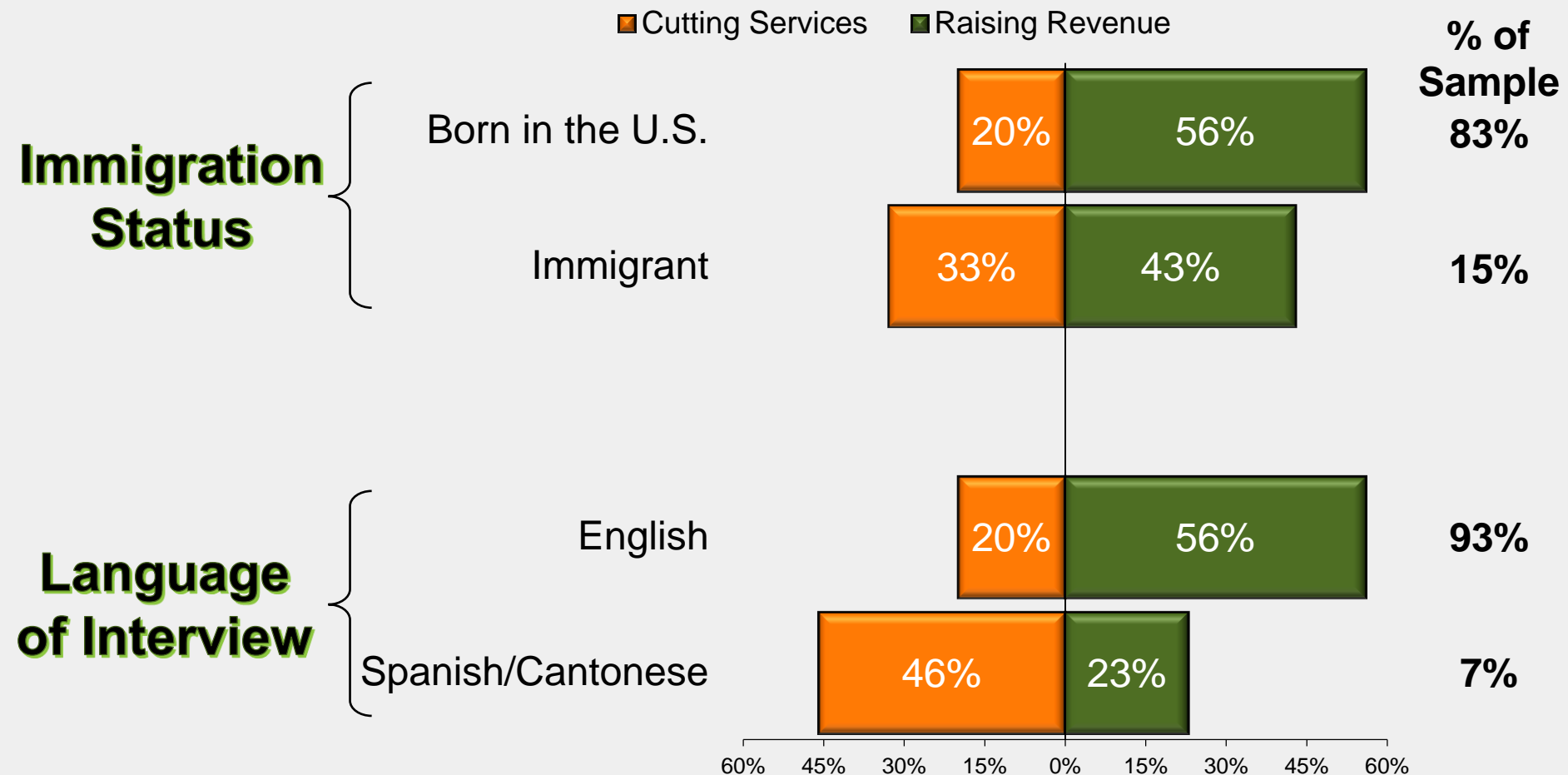
Chinese respondents were somewhat more mixed in their preferences.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Ethnicity:



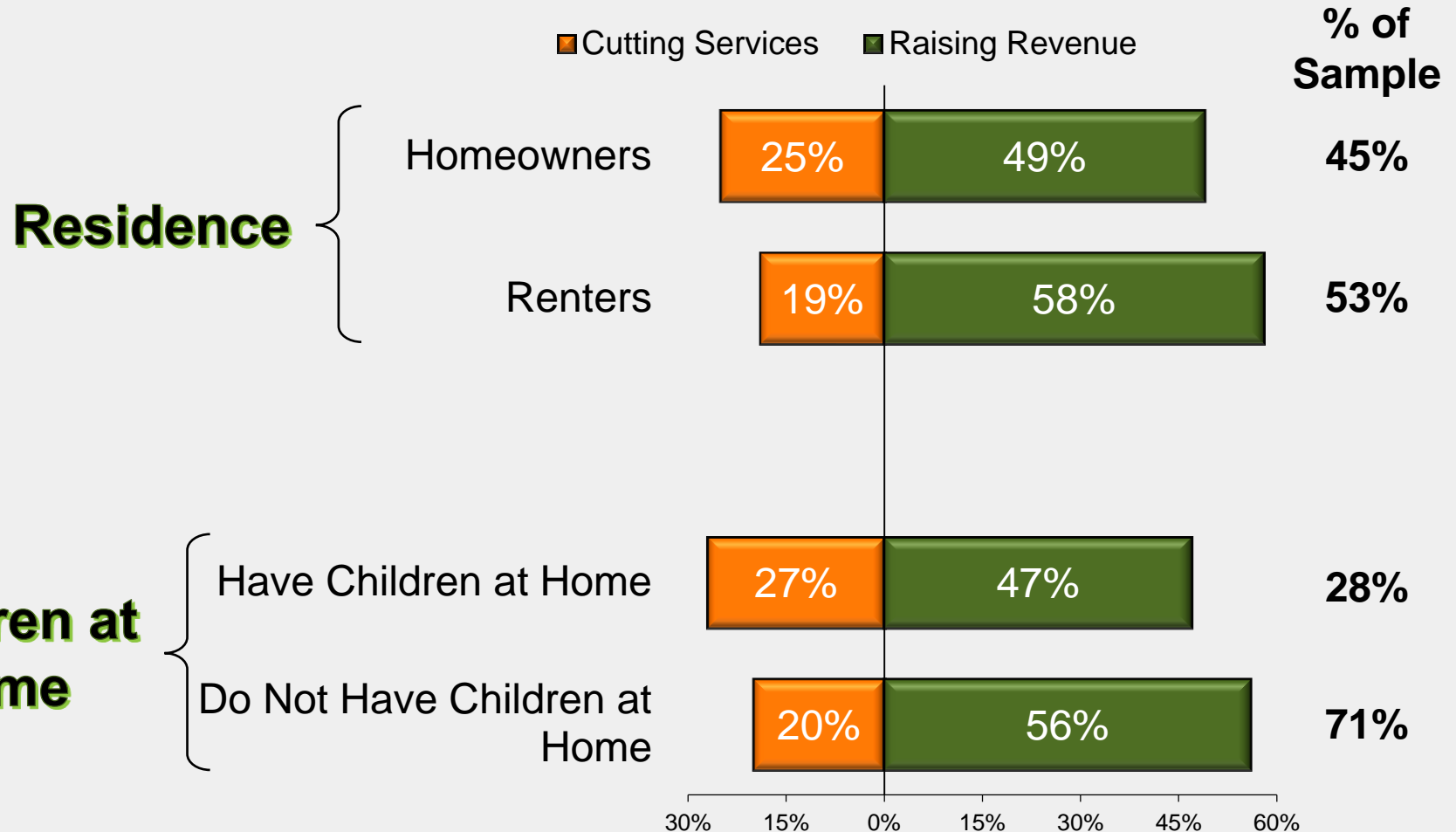
Those who took the interview in Spanish or Cantonese were the only subgroup to prefer cutting services to raising taxes.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Immigration Status and Language of Interview:



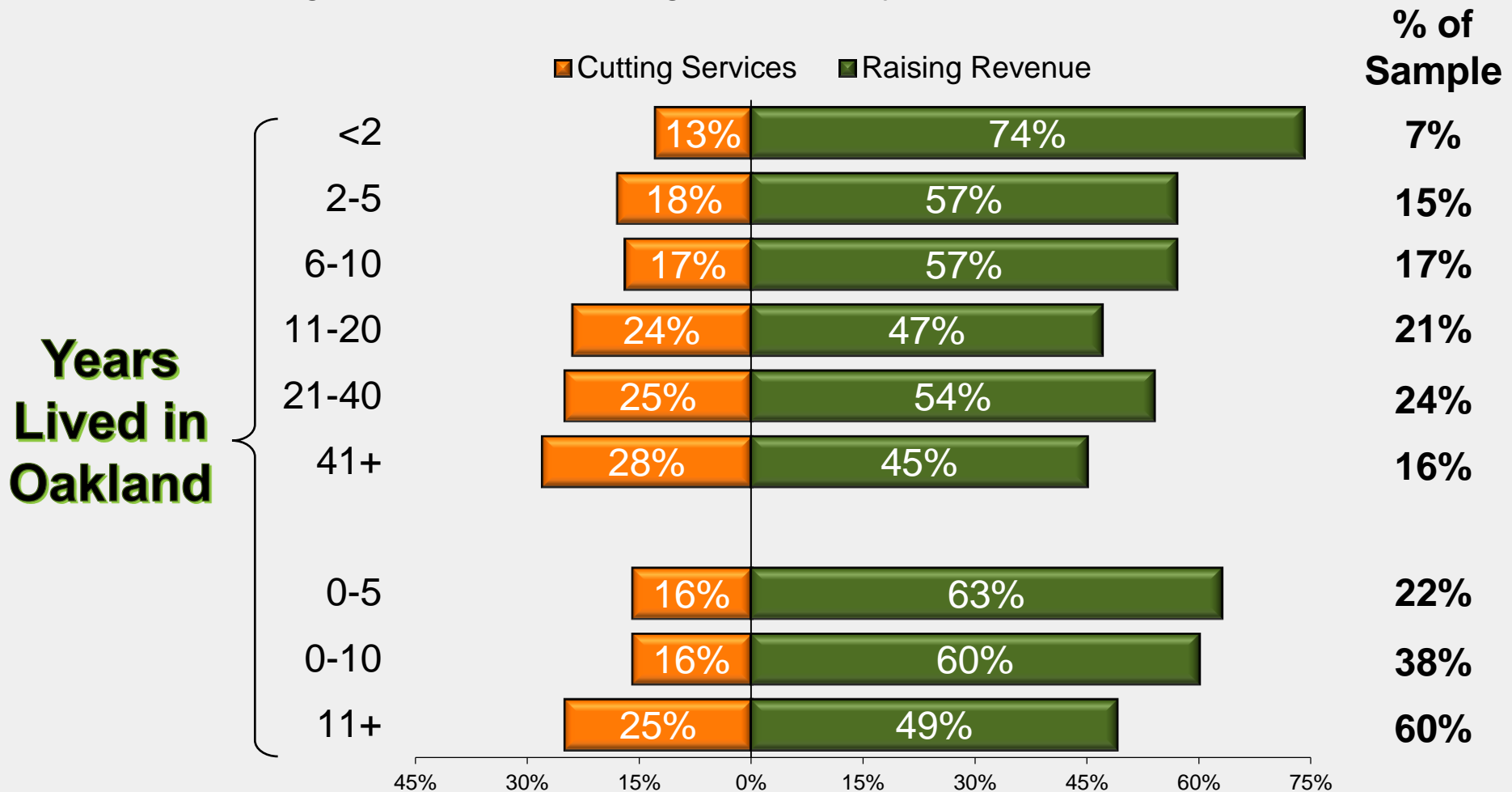
Renters and those without children at home more strongly prefer raising revenue.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Residence and Children at Home:



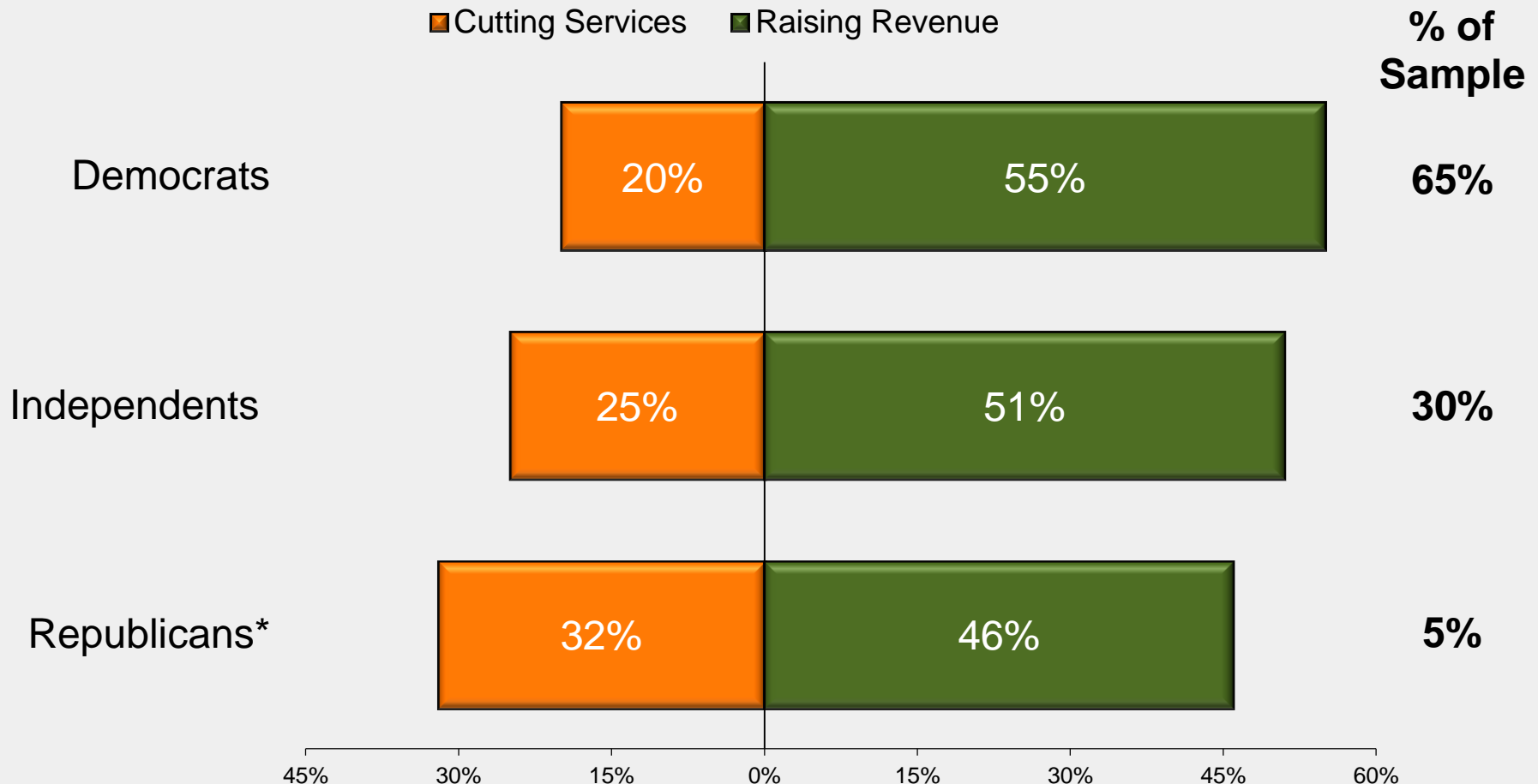
Recent Oakland residents also more strongly favor raising revenue.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Years Lived in Oakland:



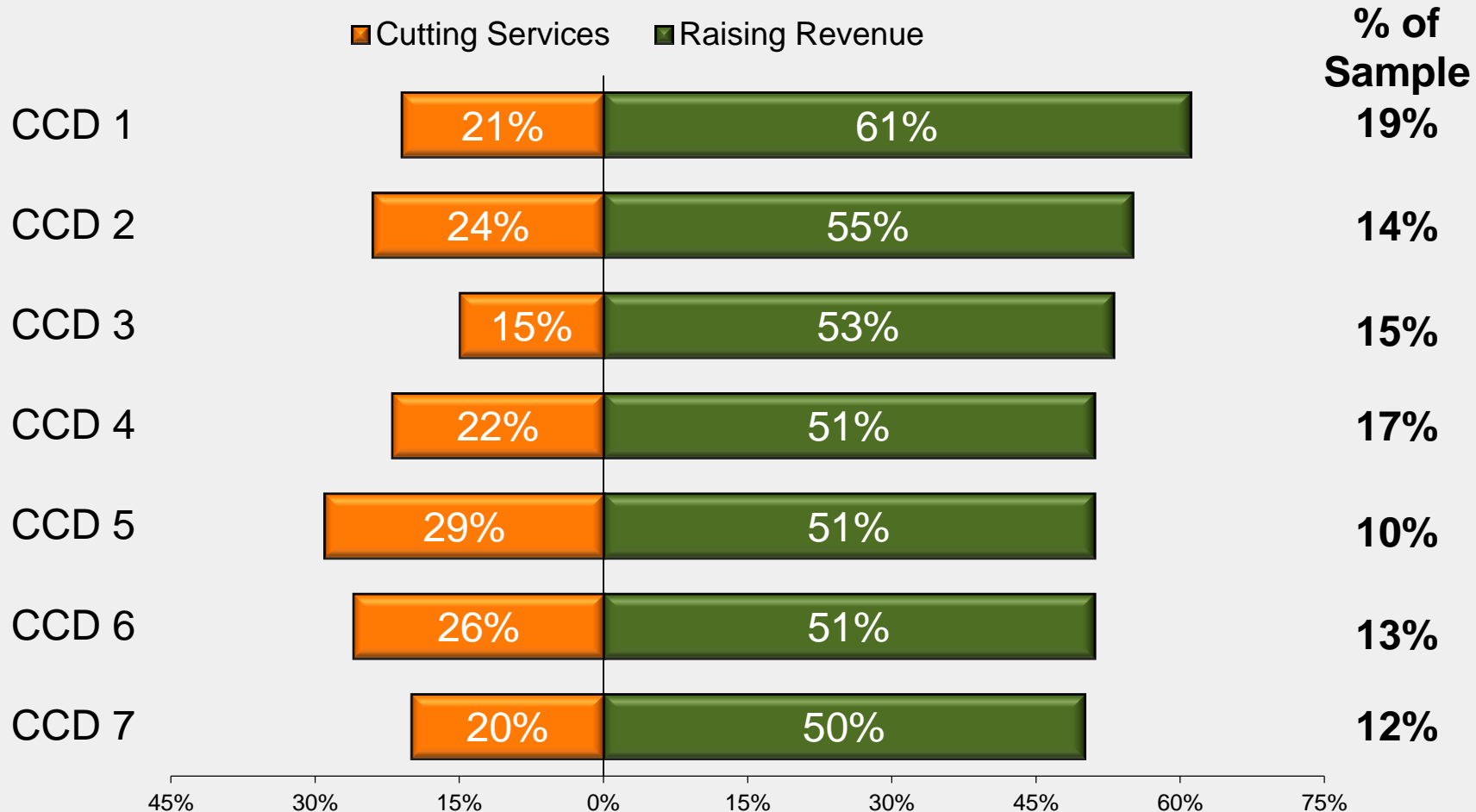
Though they are more likely to prefer cutting services, a plurality of Republicans* still favor raising revenue.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Party Registration:



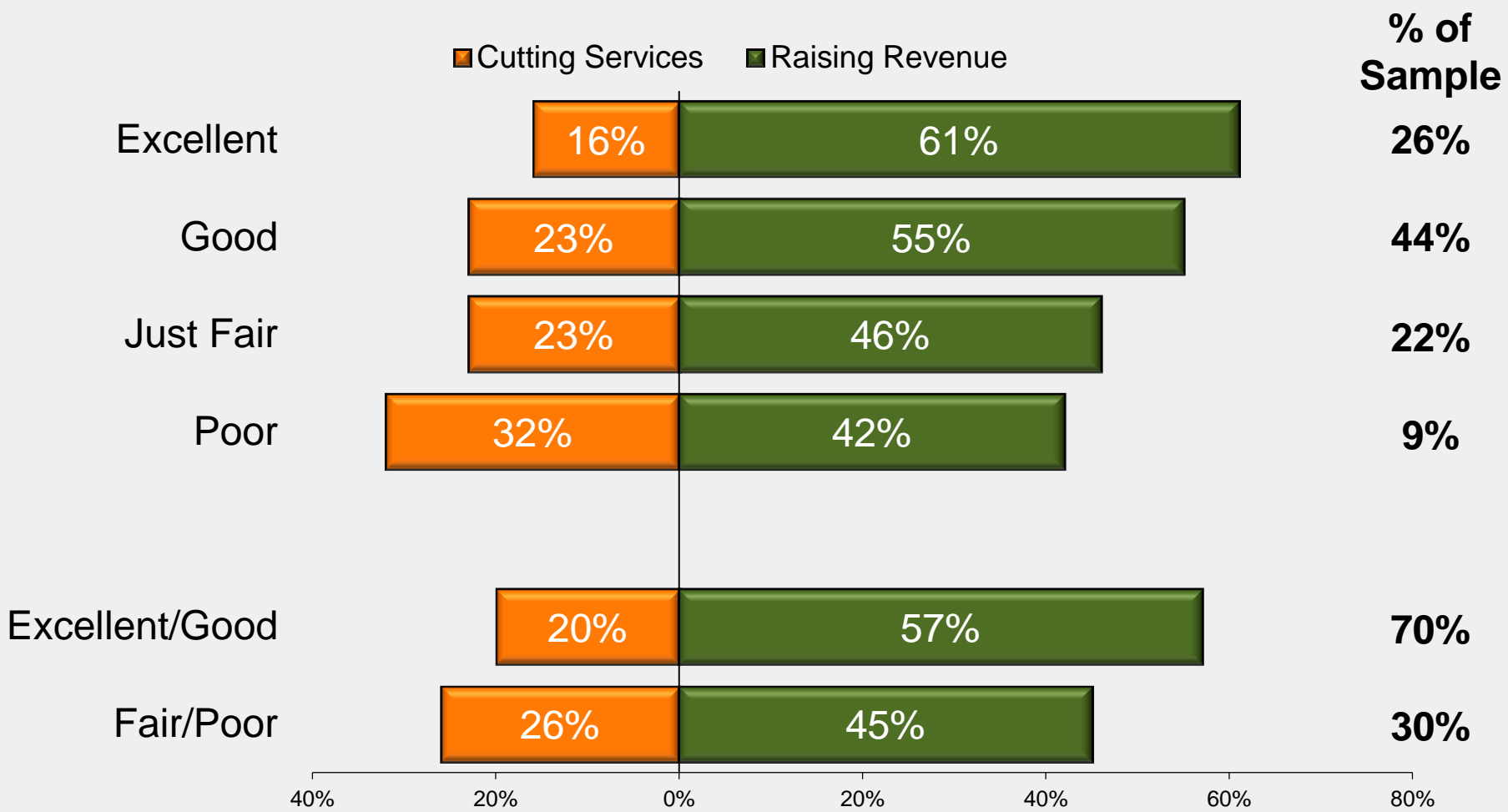
Three in five from CCD 1 would prefer raising revenue to cutting services.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by City Council District:



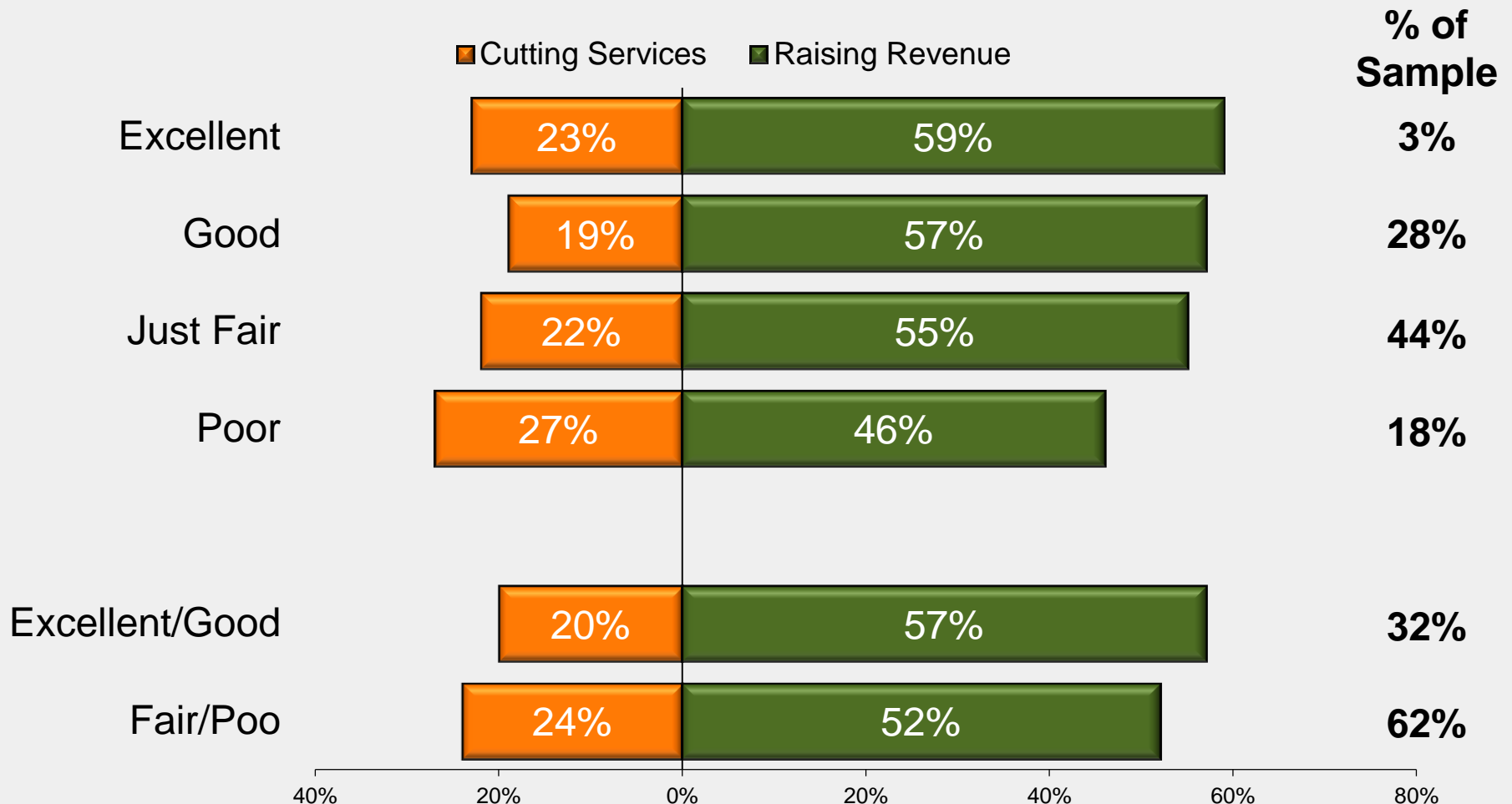
Those who feel best about live in Oakland are more likely to support raising revenue.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by Oakland as a Place to Live:

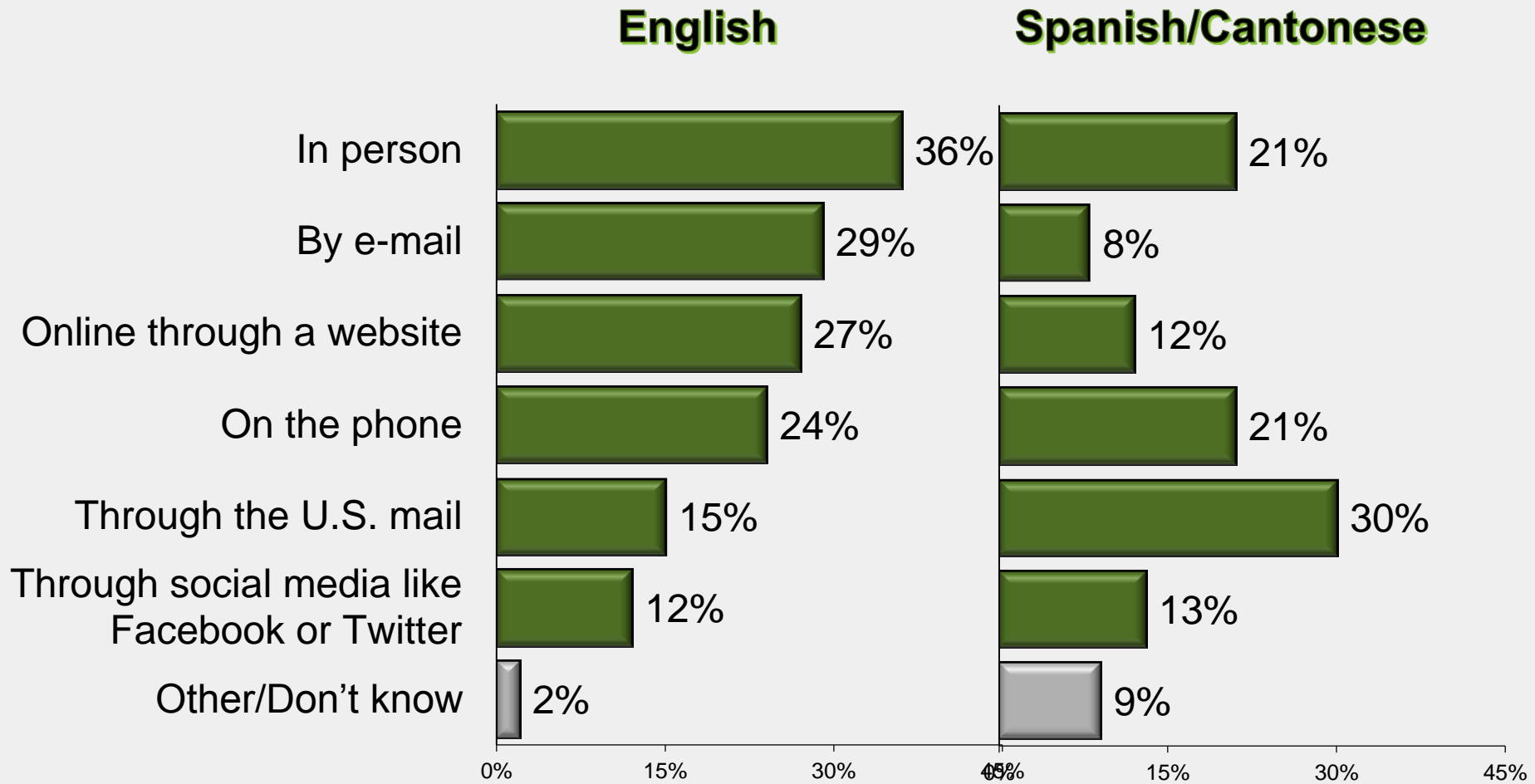


Interestingly, impression of the City's provision of services was less impactful.

Cutting Services vs. Raising Revenue by City Government Job Rating:



Non-English speakers prefer to interact with the City through mail and not e-mail or websites.



Non-English speakers are much more likely to get information about the City from TV news.

