



City of San Jose 2008 Budget Priorities Survey

**Survey Conducted:
January 7-13, 2008**

320-342

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates
Opinion Research & Public Policy Analysis

Santa Monica, CA – Oakland, CA – Madison, WI – Mexico City

2008 Community Budget Priorities Survey



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Methodology

- **502 telephone interviews with likely voters**
- **503 telephone interviews with adult residents of San Jose**
- **Interviews conducted between January 7-13, 2008**
- **Margin of sampling error of +/- 4.9% for residential and voter samples**
- **Comparisons to January 2007 baseline survey of 450 adult residents**

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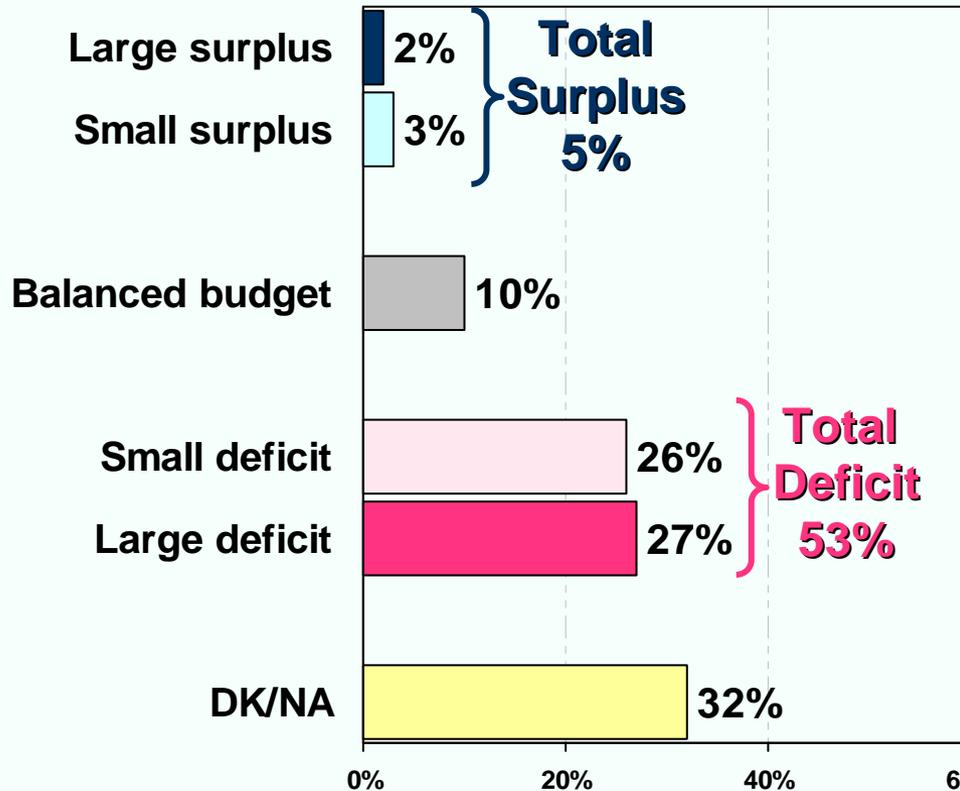
General Attitudes Toward City Government

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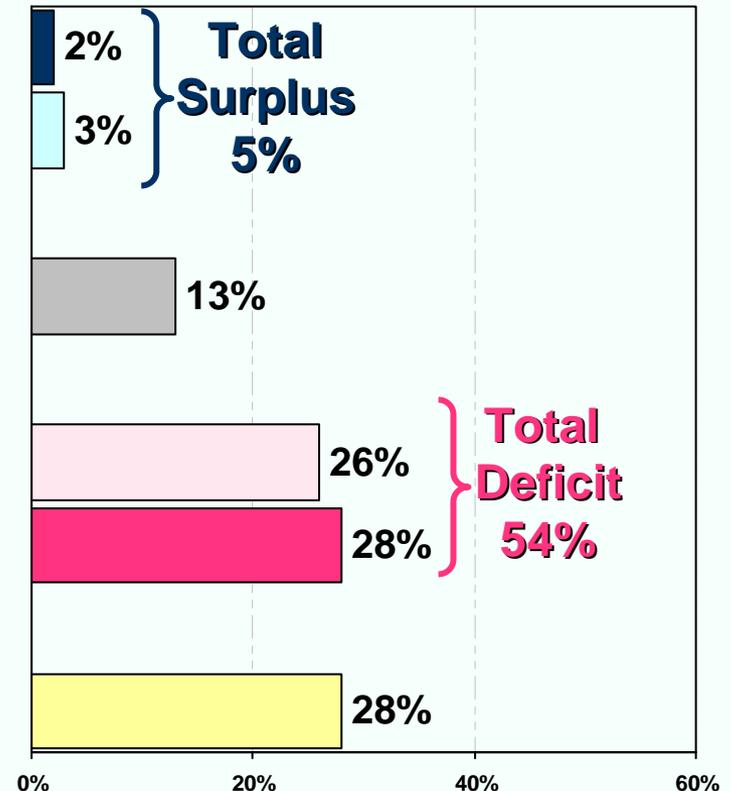
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Most respondents believe that the City has started its recent budgets with a deficit, and will again this year.

Last Several Years



This Year



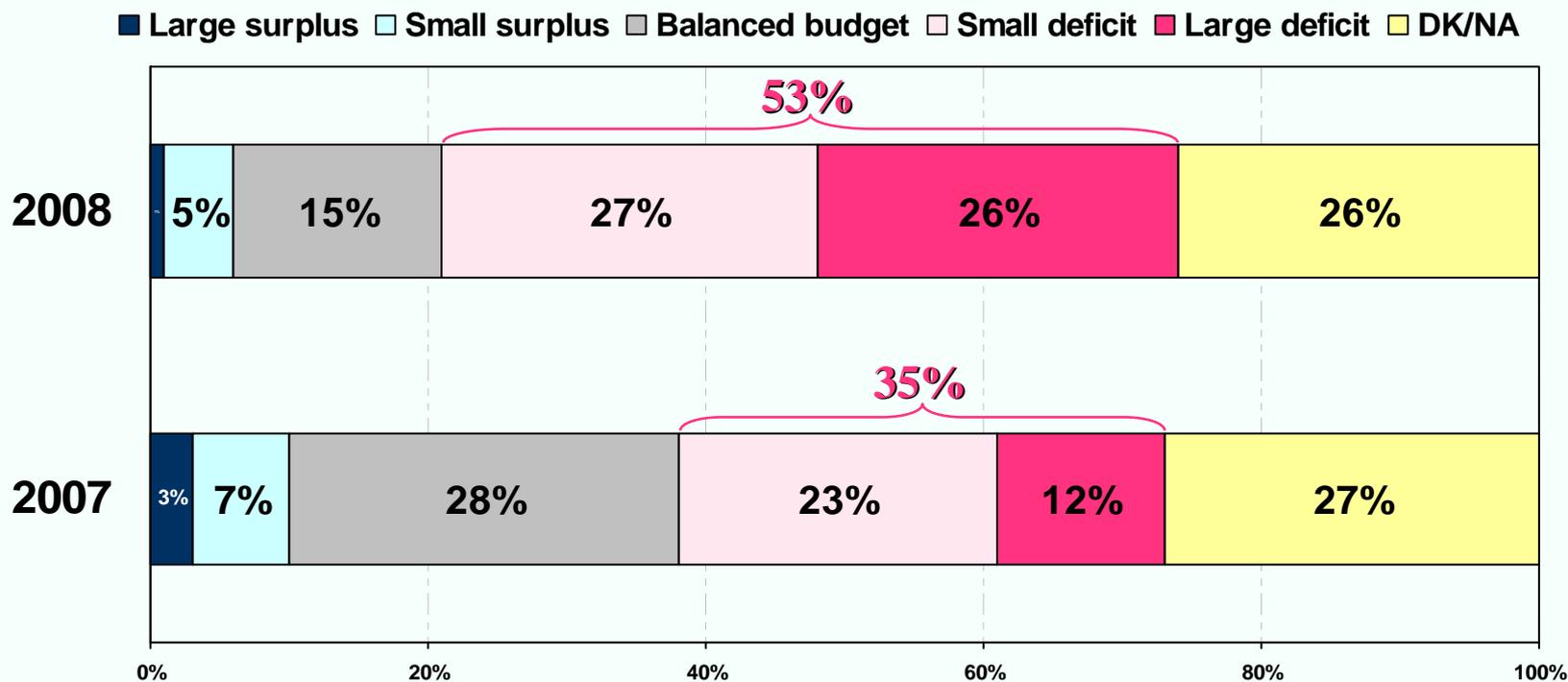
3. Thinking about the last couple of years, do you think that the City of San Jose started its budget process with a budget surplus, a balanced budget, or a budget deficit?

4. Thinking about this upcoming year, 2008, do you think that the City of San Jose will start its budget process with a budget surplus, a balanced budget, or a budget deficit?

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Compared to last year, residents are more likely to believe that the City starts this year with a large deficit.

Thinking about this upcoming year, 2008, do you think that the City of San Jose will start its budget process with a budget surplus, a balanced budget, or a budget deficit?

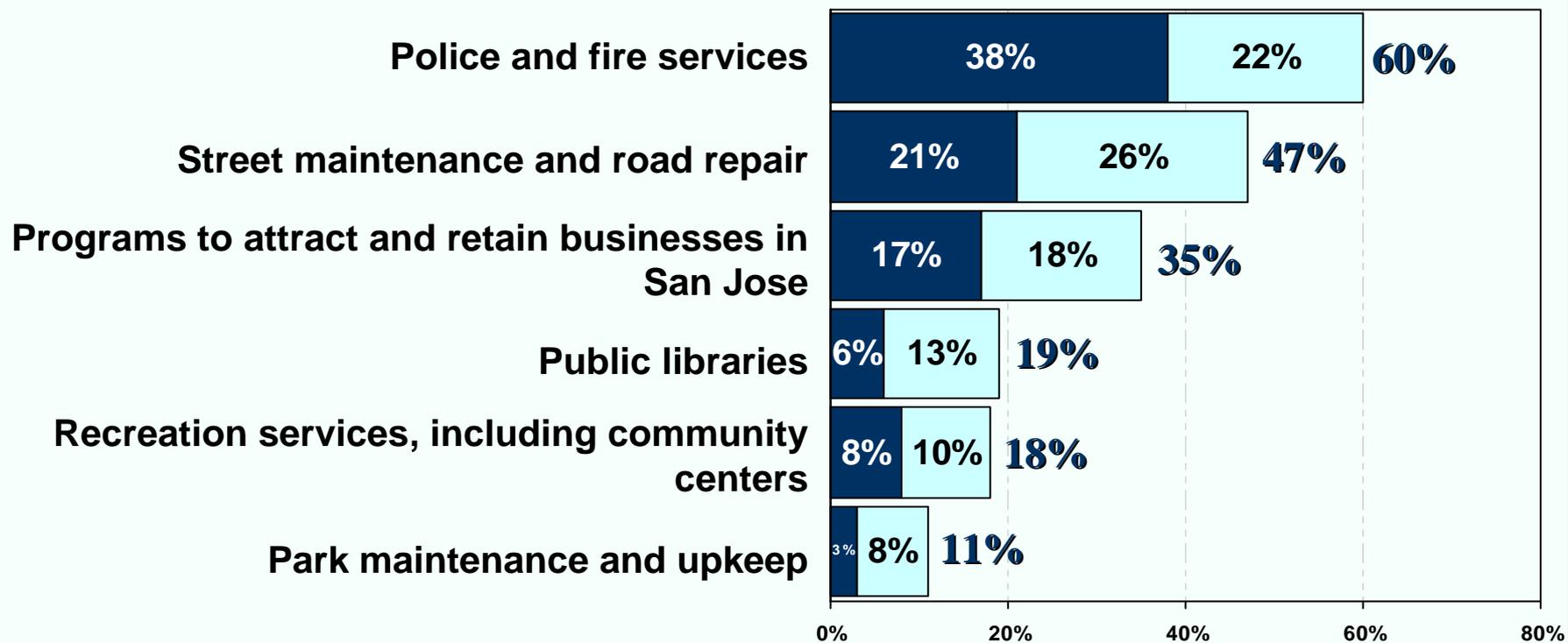


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Among the major categories of City services, respondents prioritize street repairs and public safety.

(Ranked by Total 1st and 2nd Priority)

■ 1st Priority □ 2nd Priority



7. I am going to read you some of the main categories of spending in the San Jose City budget. Please tell me which of these six categories you think should be the highest priority for funding from City government in next year's budget. And which should be the second-highest priority?

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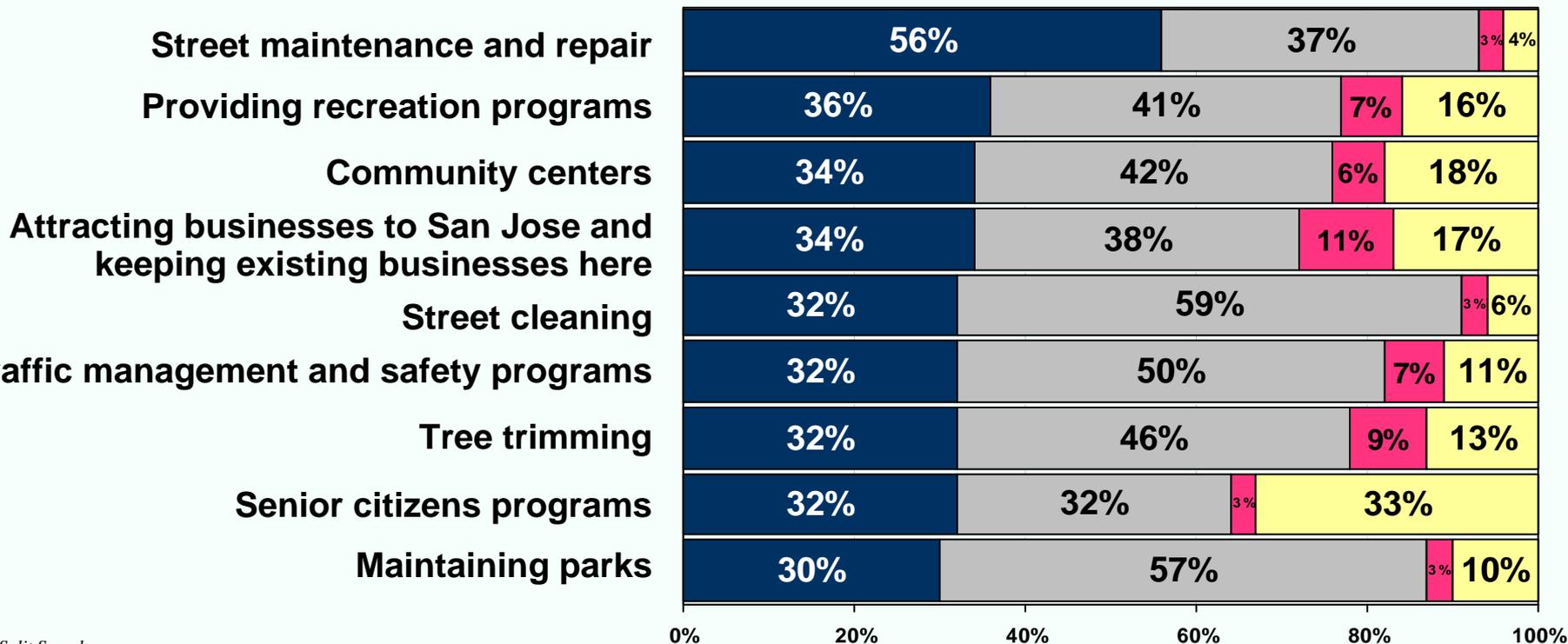


Respondents generally see street maintenance as under-funded.

(Ranked by % Too Little)

I am going to mention some of the major departments and activities of San Jose's City government. After you hear each one, please tell me whether you think the City spends too much, about the right amount, or too little on that department or activity. If you really have no idea or simply don't have an opinion, you can tell me that too.

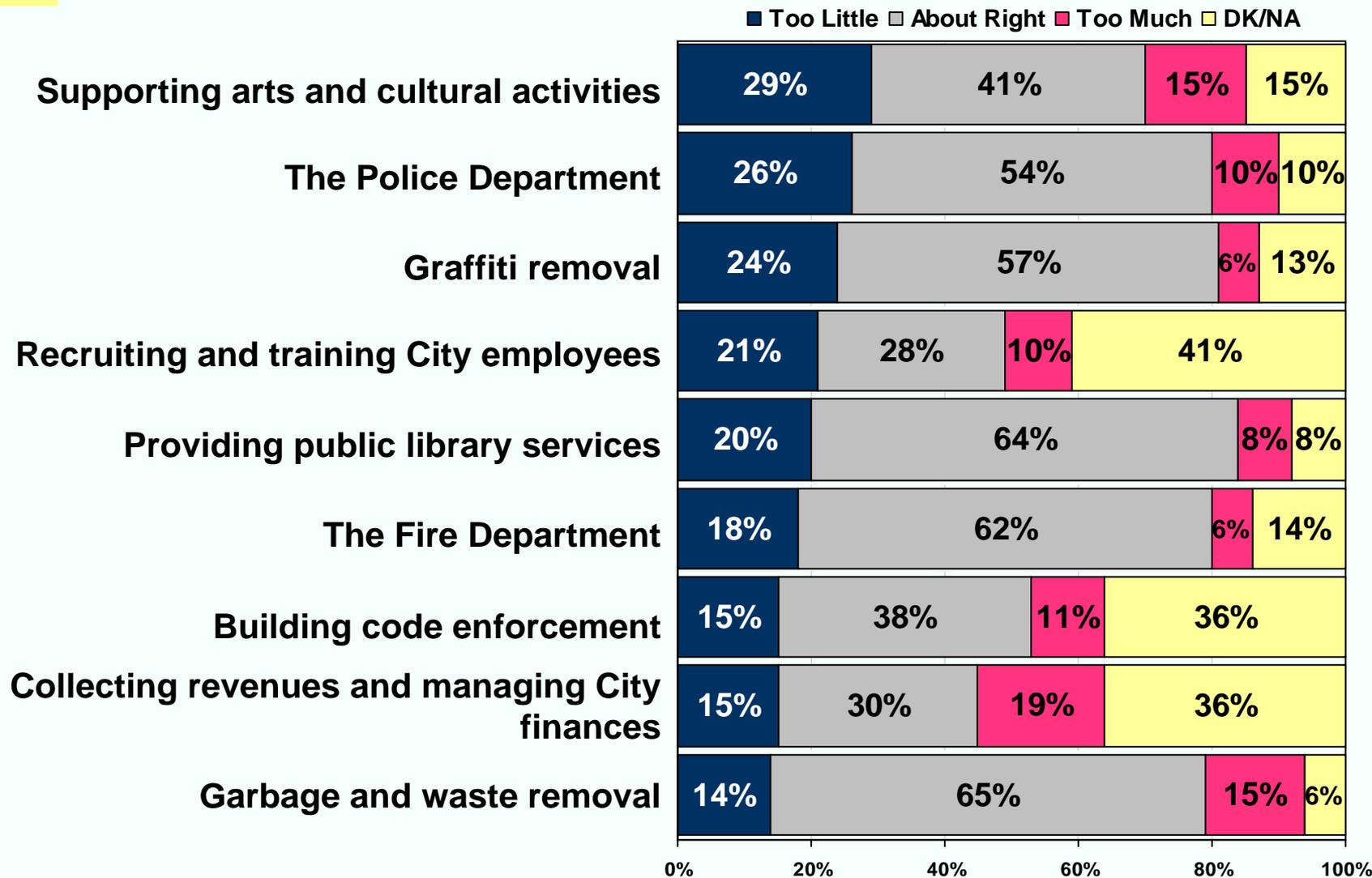
■ Too Little □ About Right ■ Too Much □ DK/NA



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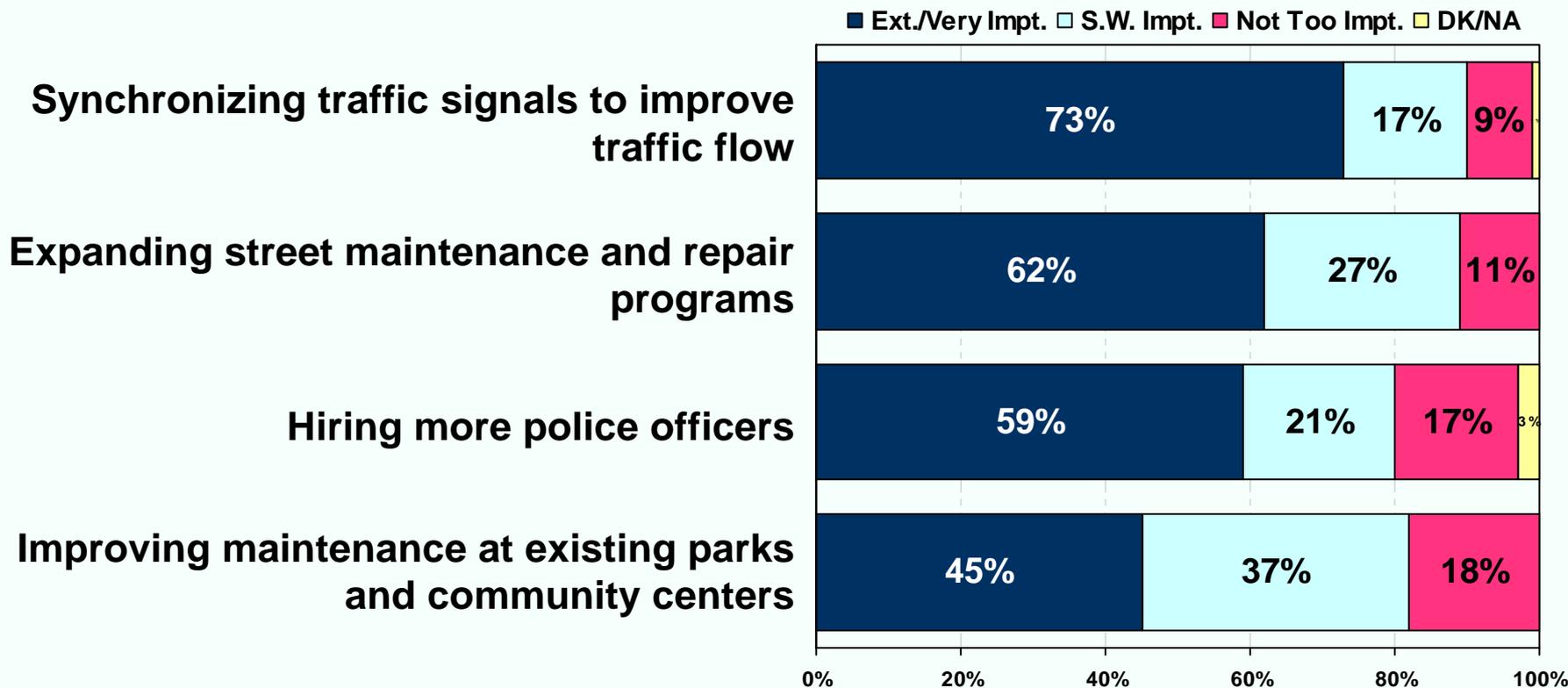
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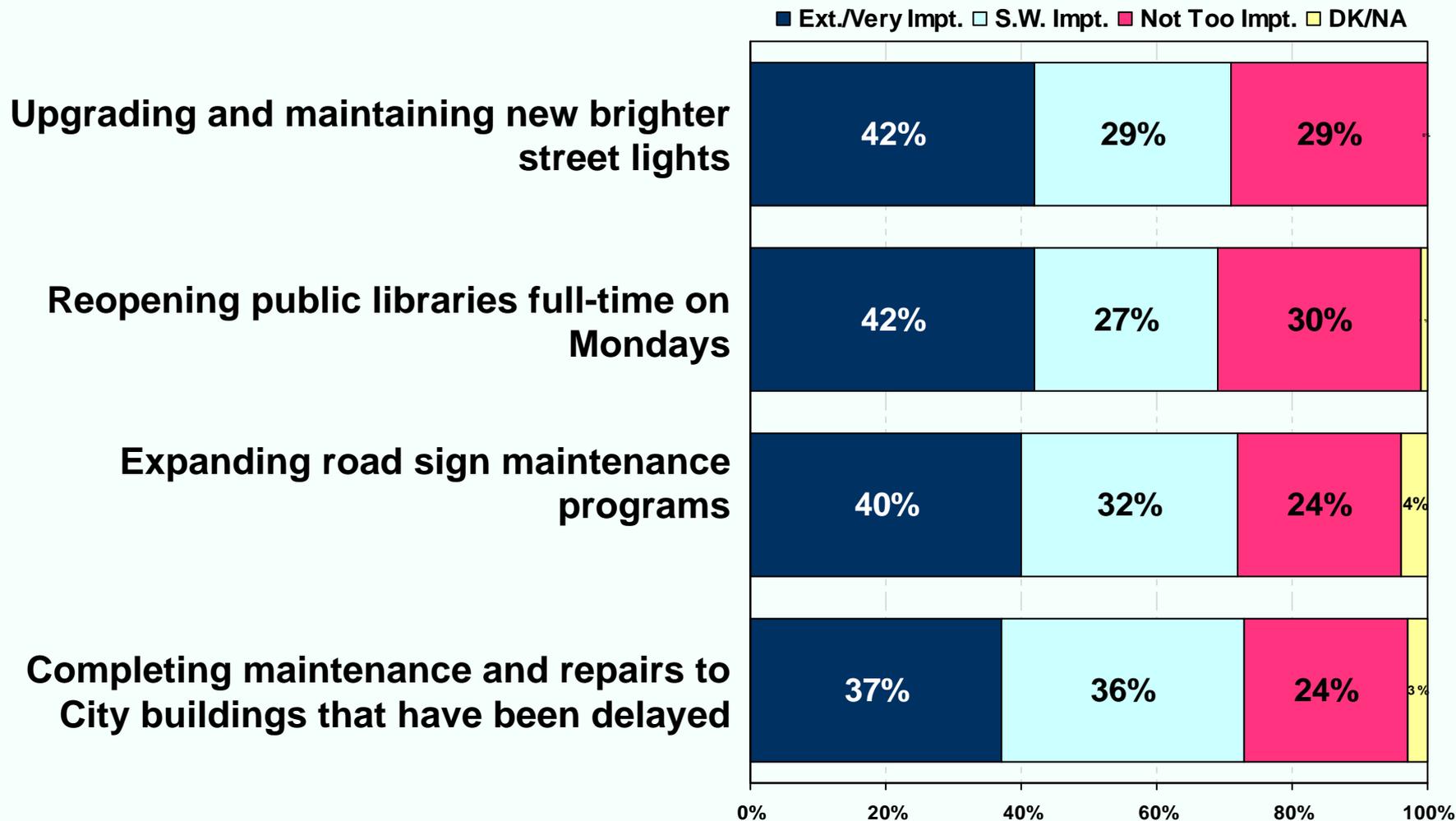
**Among a list of more specific possibilities,
residents label synchronized traffic lights, street
repairs and additional police as important.**

(Ranked by Extremely/Very Important)



2008 Community Budget Priorities Survey

Continued



8. Now I am going to read you a list of specific enhancements that could be made to City programs or services if funding were available in next year's budget. Recognizing that funding for additional City services will be extremely limited, please tell me how important it is to you personally that the program be funded: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important. Split Sample

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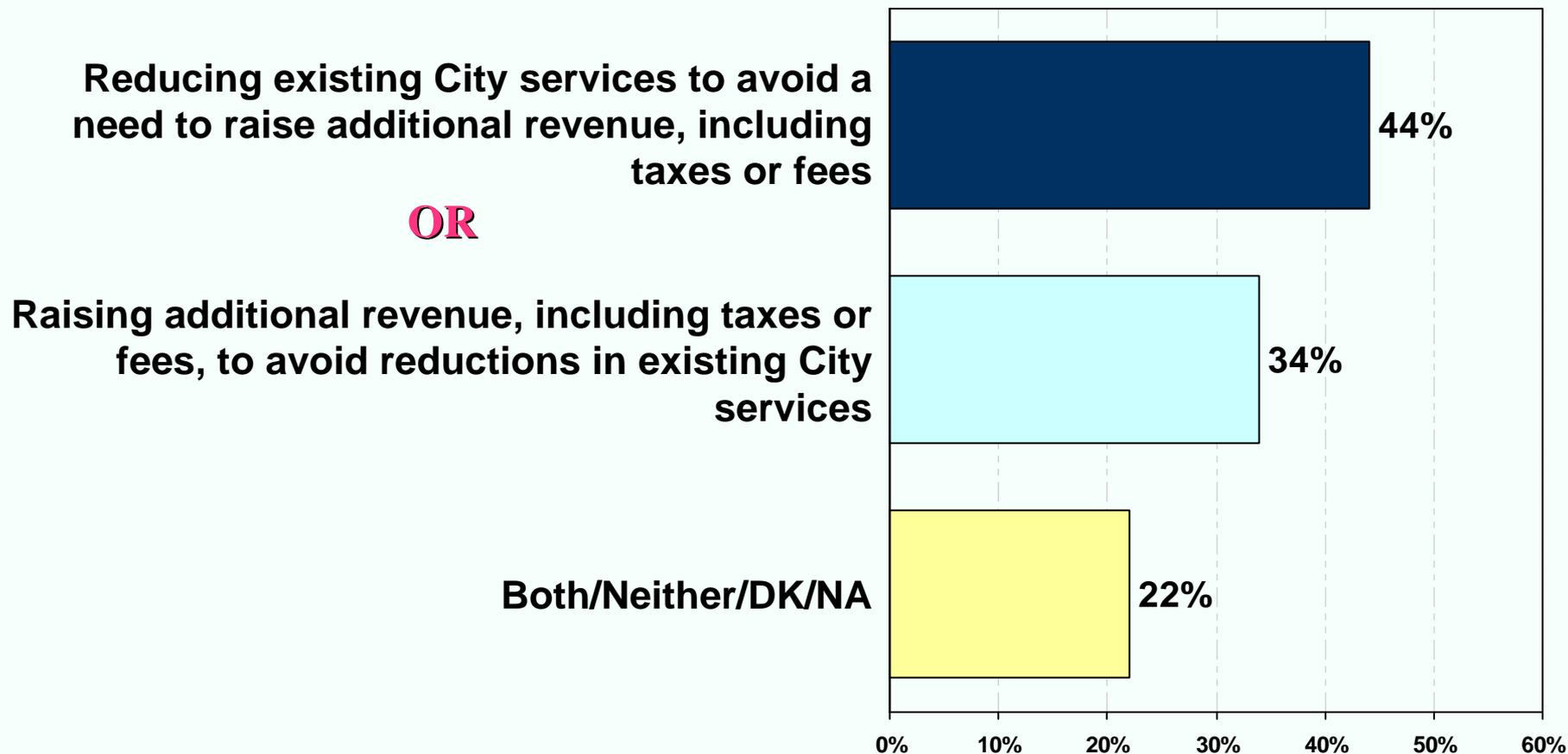
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Alternatives for Addressing the Budget Deficit

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A plurality of respondents would prefer service cuts to tax or fee increases.

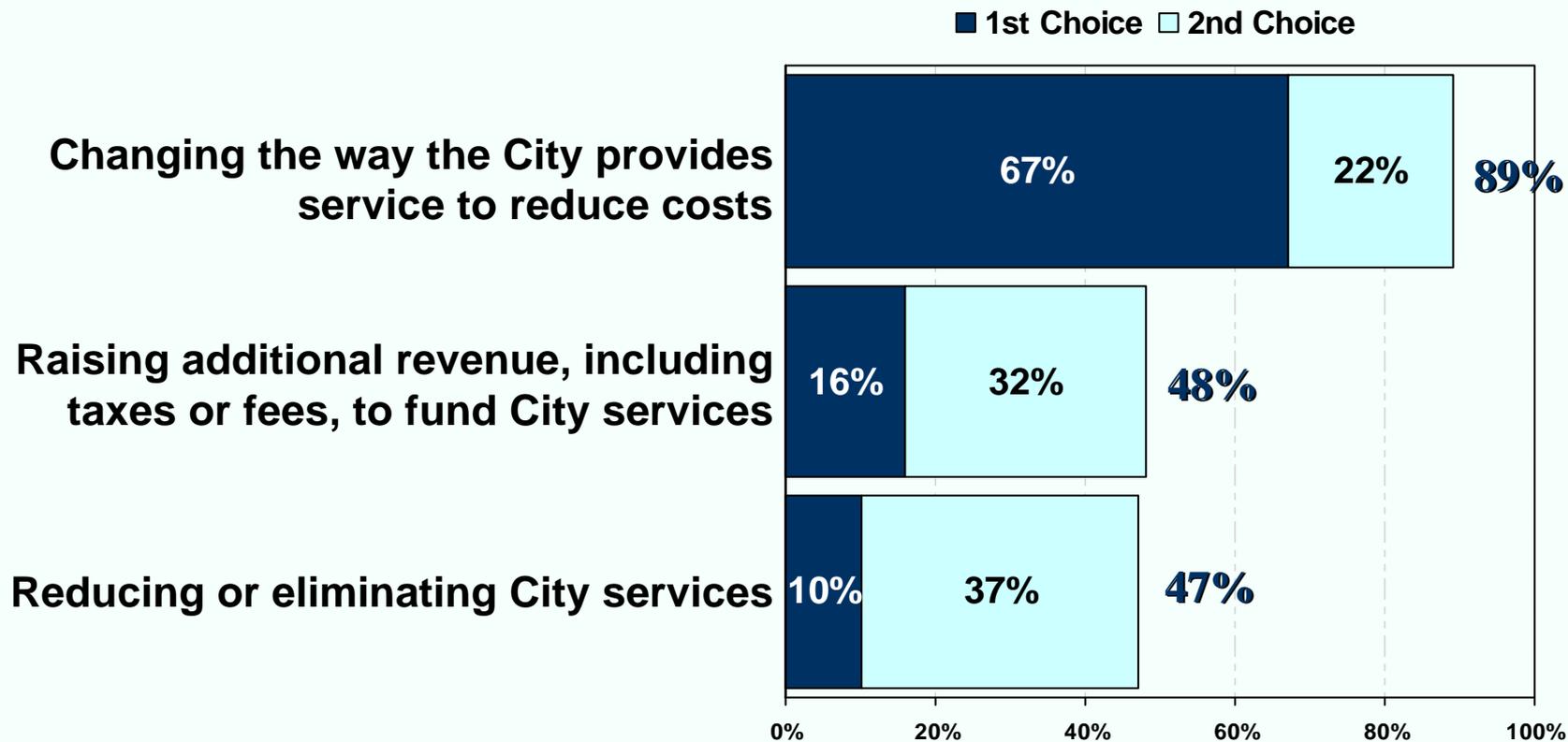


6. Let me give you some more information. The City currently provides many services to its residents, but will not likely generate enough revenue to continue providing services at current levels in the future. In making decisions about the budget, should the City of San Jose place a higher priority on:

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Respondents prefer changing modes of service delivery as an approach to the deficit.

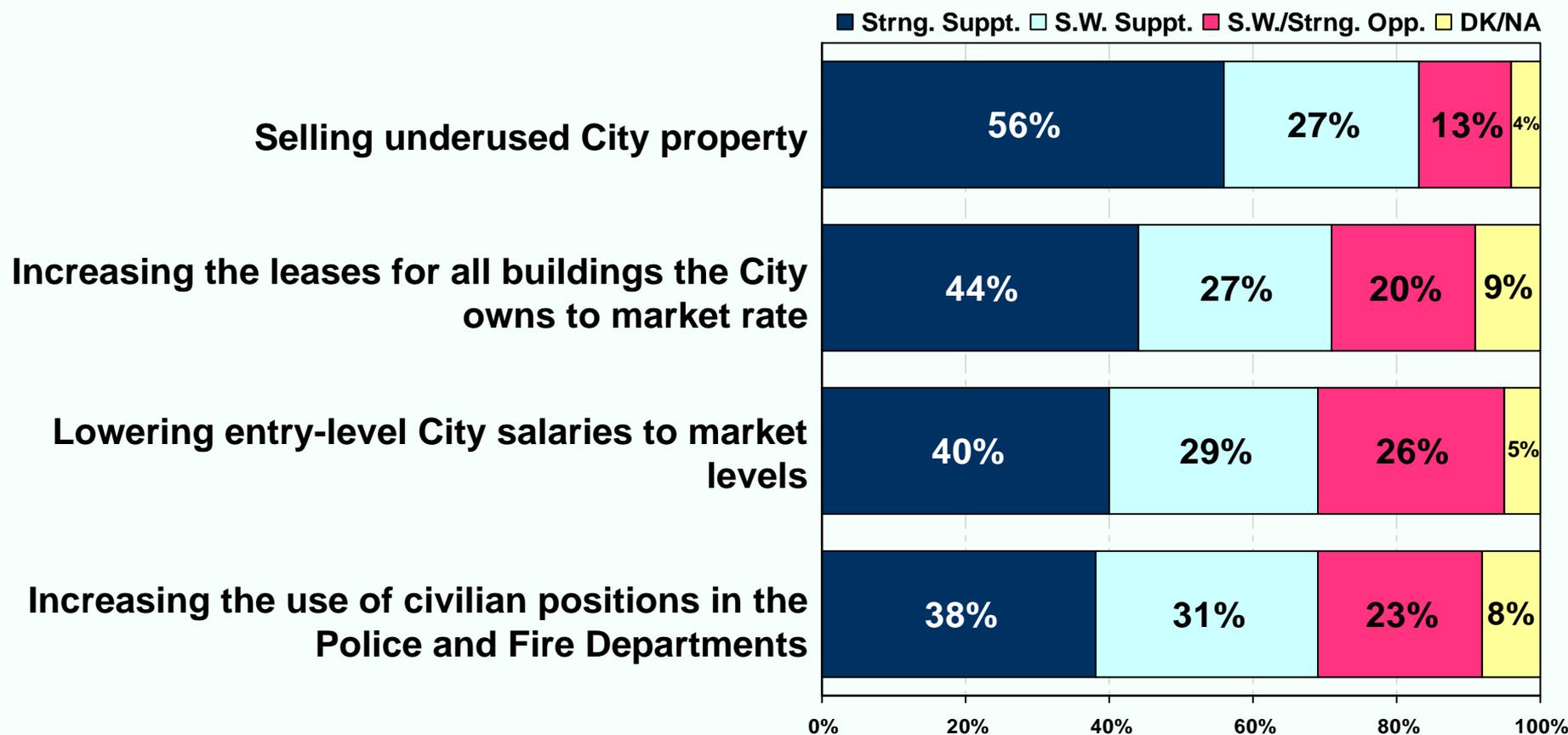
(Ranked by Total 1st and 2nd Choice)



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Selling underused city property stands out among potential service delivery changes.

(Ranked by Strongly Support)



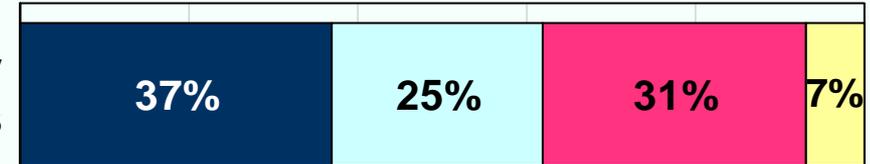
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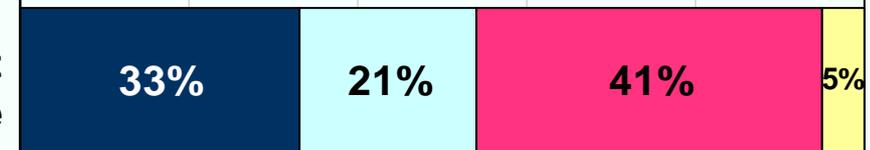
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■ Strng. Suppt. □ S.W. Suppt. ■ S.W./Strng. Opp. □ DK/NA

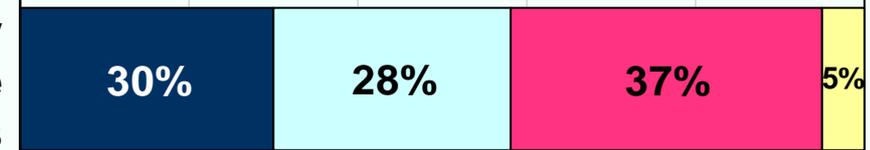
Reducing the size of pay increases for City employees



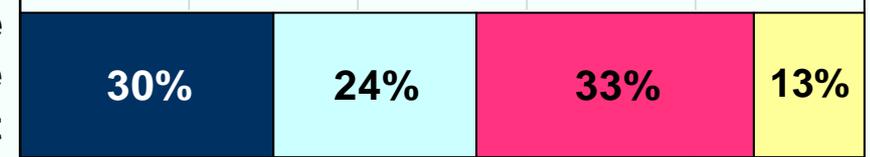
Reducing the amount of unused sick leave that is paid out in cash when employees retire



Contracting out more services currently performed by City employees to private companies



Eliminating the process by which an outside third party, known as an arbitrator, decides the pay and benefits for Police and Fire Department employees



Modifying City employees' health plans to reduce costs to the City



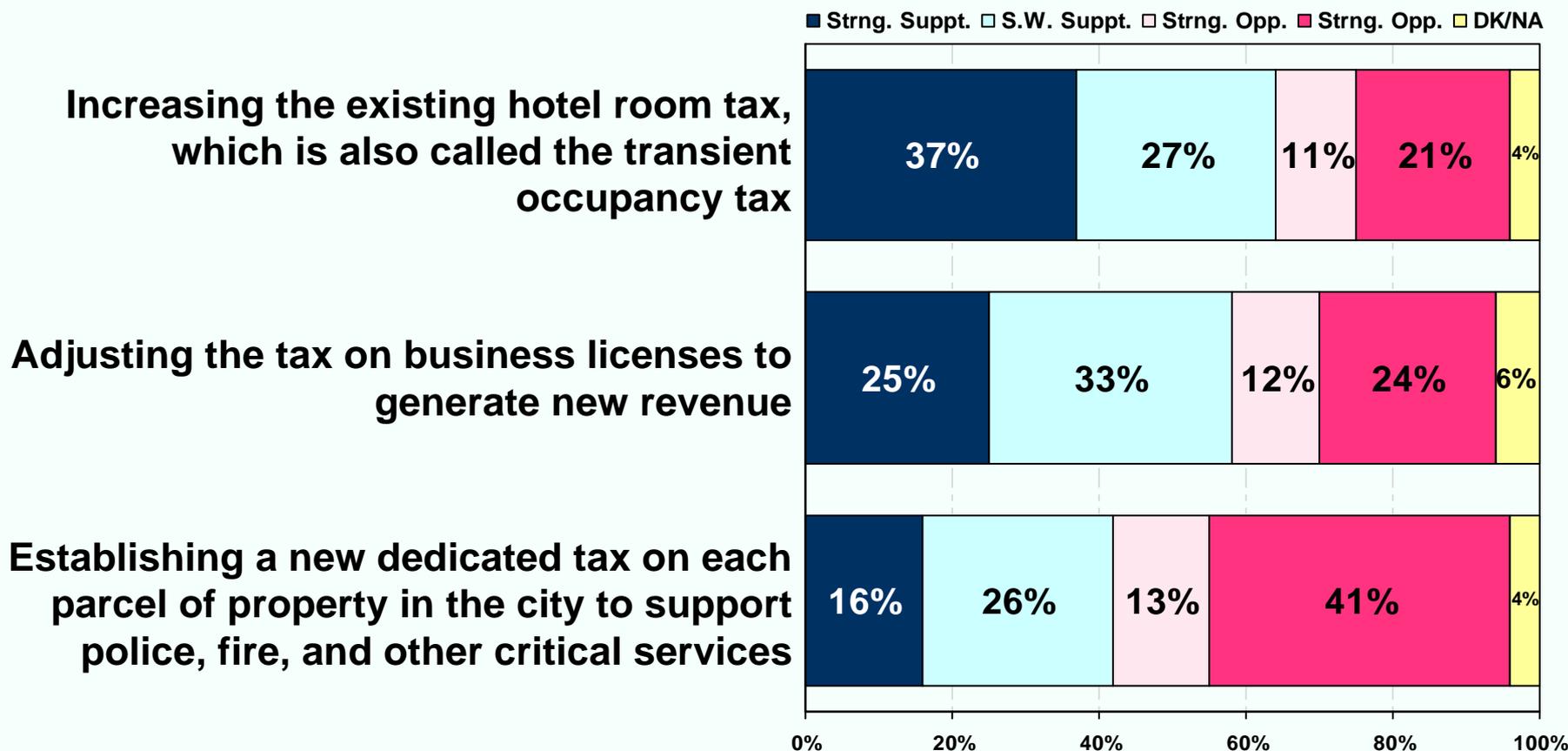
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

11. ONE/ANOTHER/A FINAL category of budget deficit solutions is to make significant, cost-saving changes in the way the City provides services. I'm going to mention several examples of this approach to you. After each one, please tell me whether it sounds like something you would support or oppose. Split Sample

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Among revenue increases, respondents see a transient occupancy tax increase as most appealing.

(Ranked by Strongly Support)

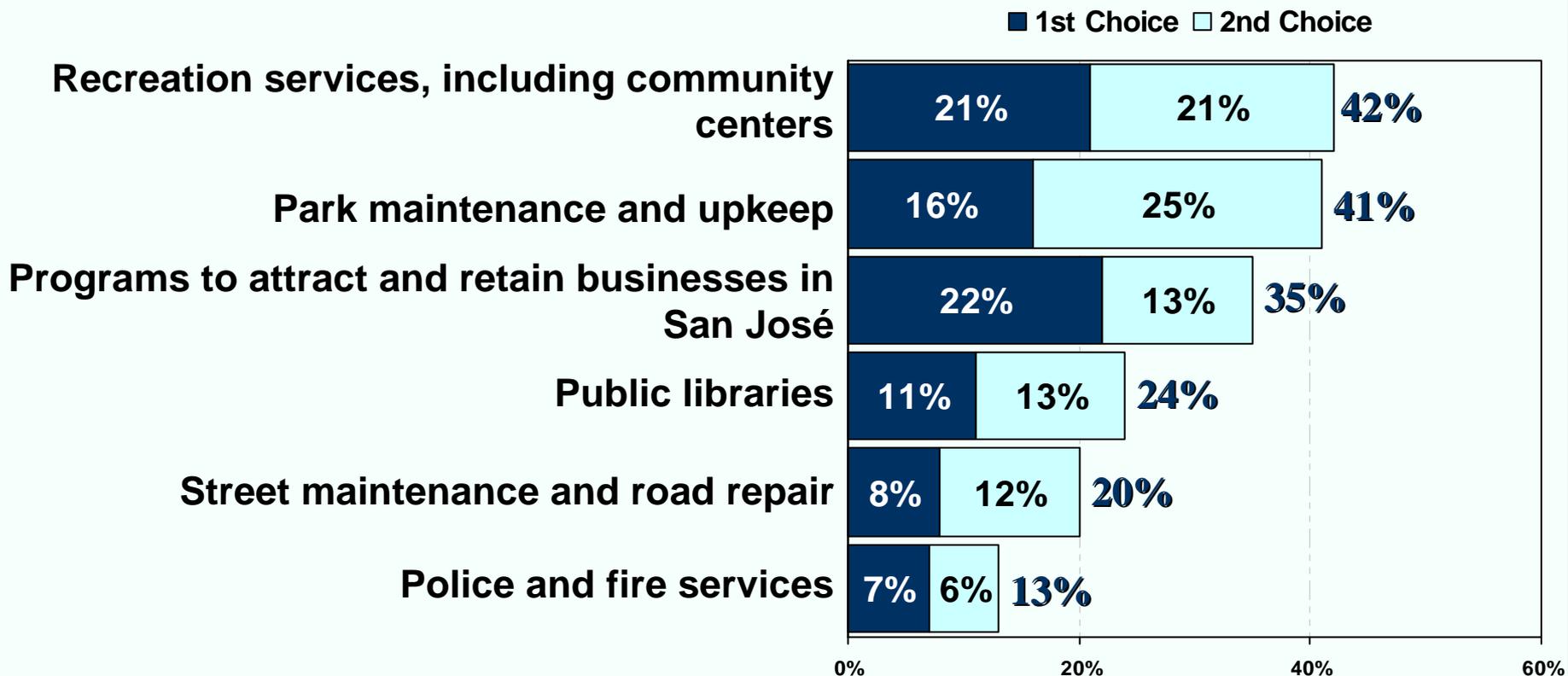


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When asked to prioritize service cuts, respondents are most willing to trim park and recreation services.

(Ranked by Total 1st and 2nd Choice)

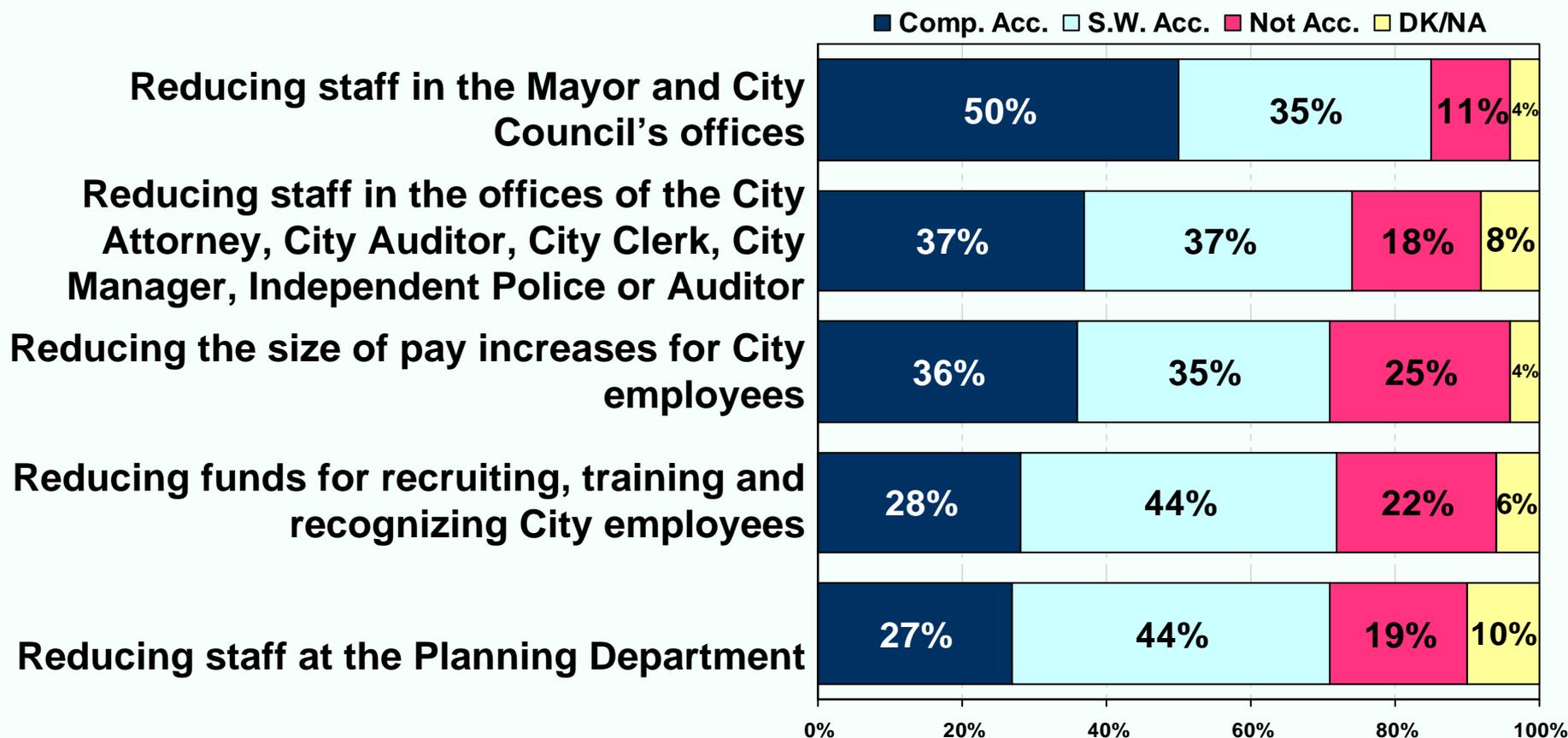


12. ONE/ANOTHER/A FINAL category of budget deficit solutions is to cut City services. I am now going to read you some of the main types of spending in the San Jose City budget one more time. Please tell me which of these six types of services you would be most willing to see cut back in next year's budget. And which should be the second choice?

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That said, voters rank few specific cuts as “completely acceptable.”

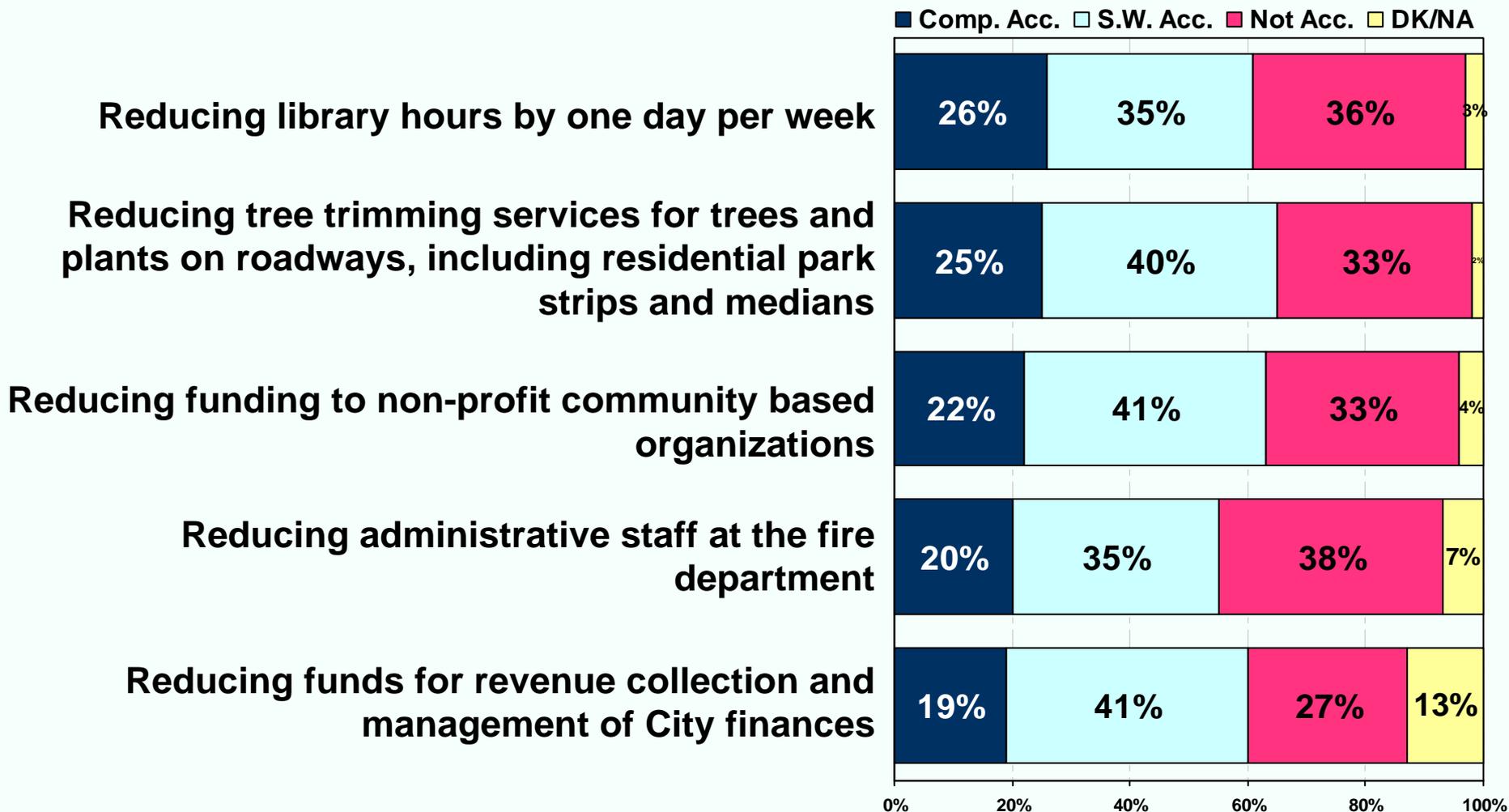
(Ranked by Completely Acceptable)



13. Now I am going to read you a list of potential cuts to City services. Understanding that \$25 million has to be cut from the City budget this year, please tell me whether you would find each of the following potential budget cuts to be completely acceptable, somewhat acceptable, or not acceptable as a way of helping to balance the City budget. *Split Sample*

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Continued



13. Now I am going to read you a list of potential cuts to City services. Understanding that \$25 million has to be cut from the City budget this year, please tell me whether you would find each of the following potential budget cuts to be completely acceptable, somewhat acceptable, or not acceptable as a way of helping to balance the City budget. **Split Sample**

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Conclusions

- **Awareness of the City's budget deficit has increased significantly over the past year.**
- **Residents are divided when asked to choose between tax increases and service cuts, and prefer improvements to service delivery to either approach.**
- **In particular, residents are supportive of selling underused City property and ensuring that leases of City buildings are at market rates.**
- **Public safety and street maintenance stand out as priorities for additional investment if more funding is available.**



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