

October 2024

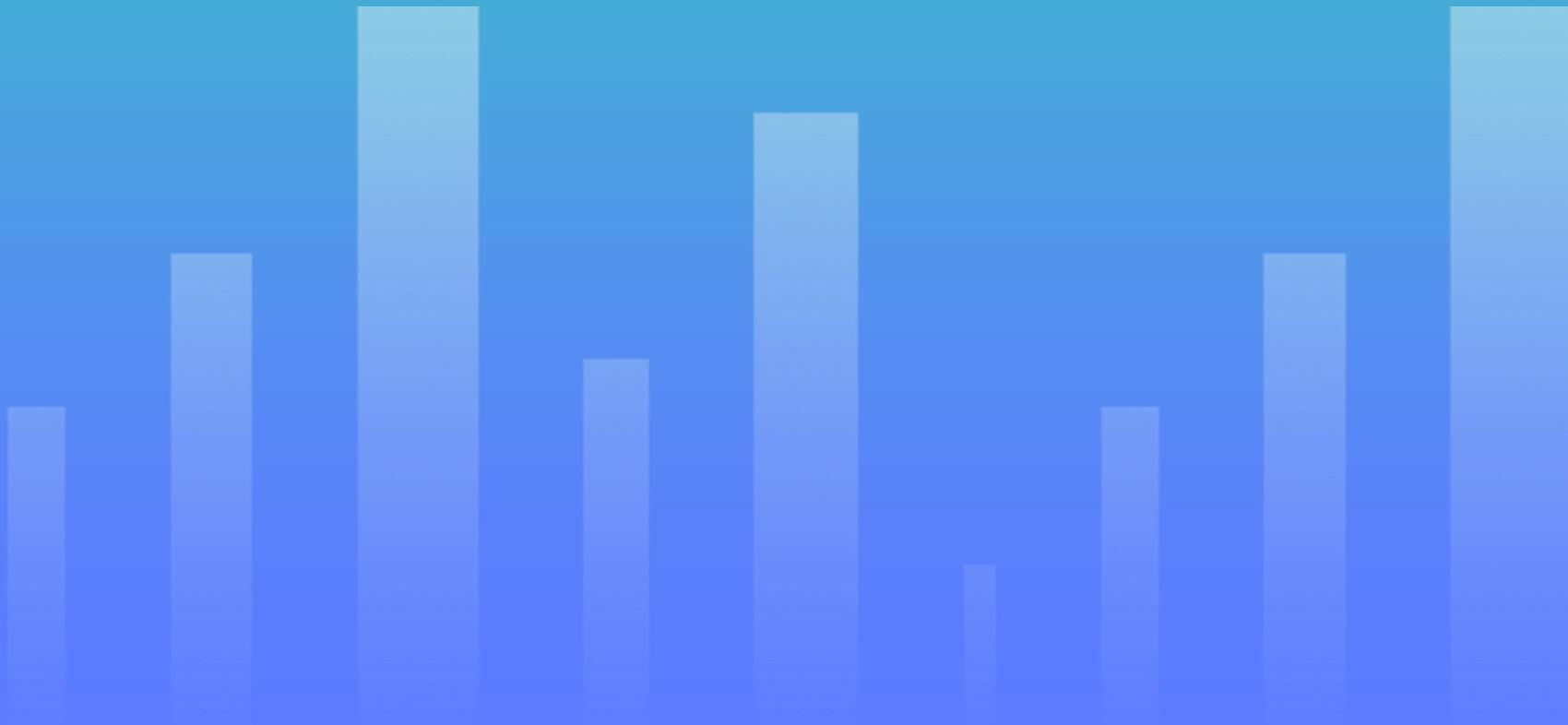
# Evanston Citywide Assessment

Findings and Recommendations from a Multi-Modal Poll of Registered Voters in Evanston, IL

**IMPACT**  
RESEARCH



# SURVEY METHODOLOGY



**IMPACT**  
RESEARCH

# Methodology



Impact Research conducted a survey of N=400 registered voters in Evanston, Illinois.



79% of interviews were conducted via cell phones (30% live interviews / 49% text-to-web) and 21% were conducted via landlines.



Interviews were conducted between October 18 – 21, 2024.



The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 4.9 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

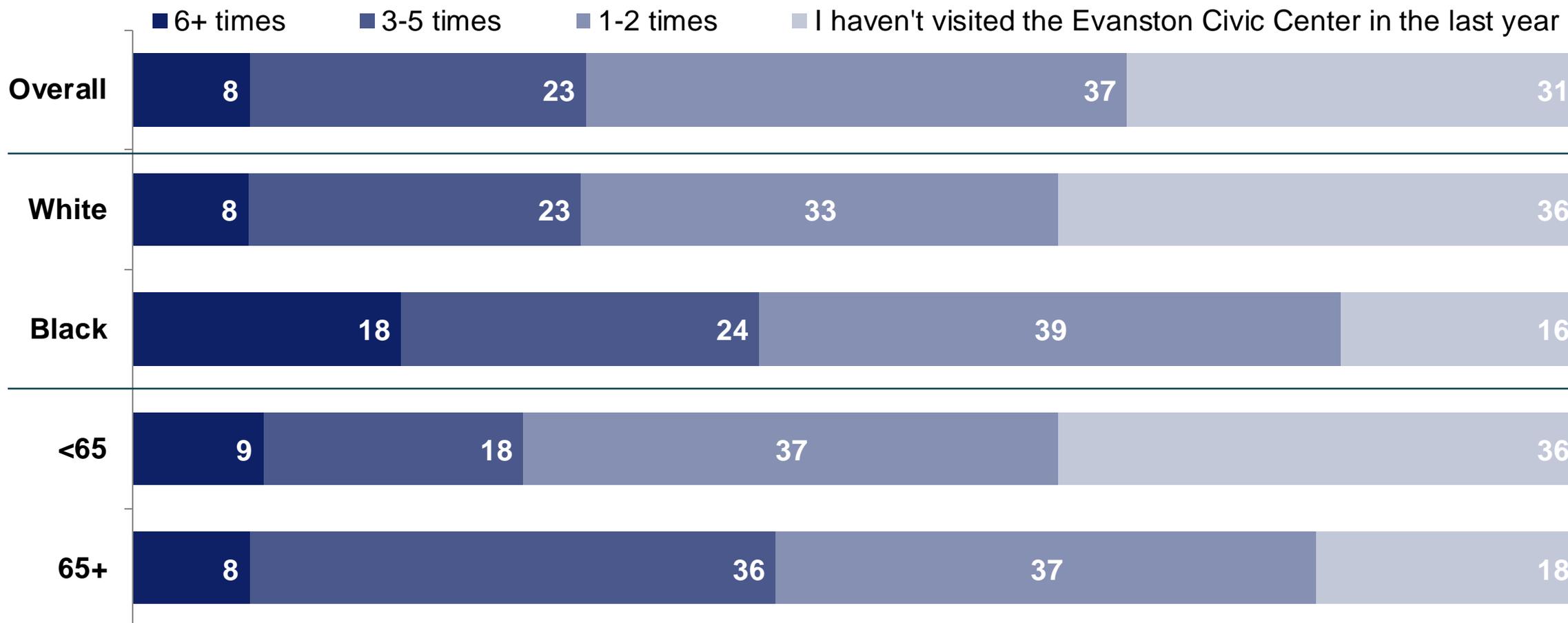
# Key Findings

- **Most aren't hearing a lot about the Civic Center project or visiting the Civic Center very often.** Just 13% have heard a lot about the project. Two-thirds have visited fewer than 3 times in the past year, and 75% would usually or always prefer to take care of city business online.
- **Evanston residents want a lower-cost option for the Civic Center.** 47% said “low cost to taxpayers” is extremely important for the project, and just 2% selected Civic Center improvements as the most important issue the City of Evanston should make a budget priority. 13% want to pay more for a high-quality Civic Center, compared with 35% who want to spend as little as possible and 49% who want to find a middle ground.
- **Residents want Civic Center to have basic services, free Wi-Fi, and nearby parking and transit.** After “low cost to taxpayers,” the next top priorities are nearby public parking and nearby public transit. Top-ranking features and services include free Wi-Fi, vehicle registration and sticker services, and parking ticket and moving violation adjudication services.
- **While residents are split between a multi-purpose and single-use space, none of the amenities ranked as particularly important.** Just 5% said it's extremely important for the Civic Center to be located in the same building as businesses, and very few ranked amenities like rental space for private events, events and entertainment, and outdoor community green space, as extremely important.

# Two-thirds have visited the Evanston Civic Center fewer than 3 times in the last year.

Black residents and seniors are more frequent visitors than White residents and residents under 65.

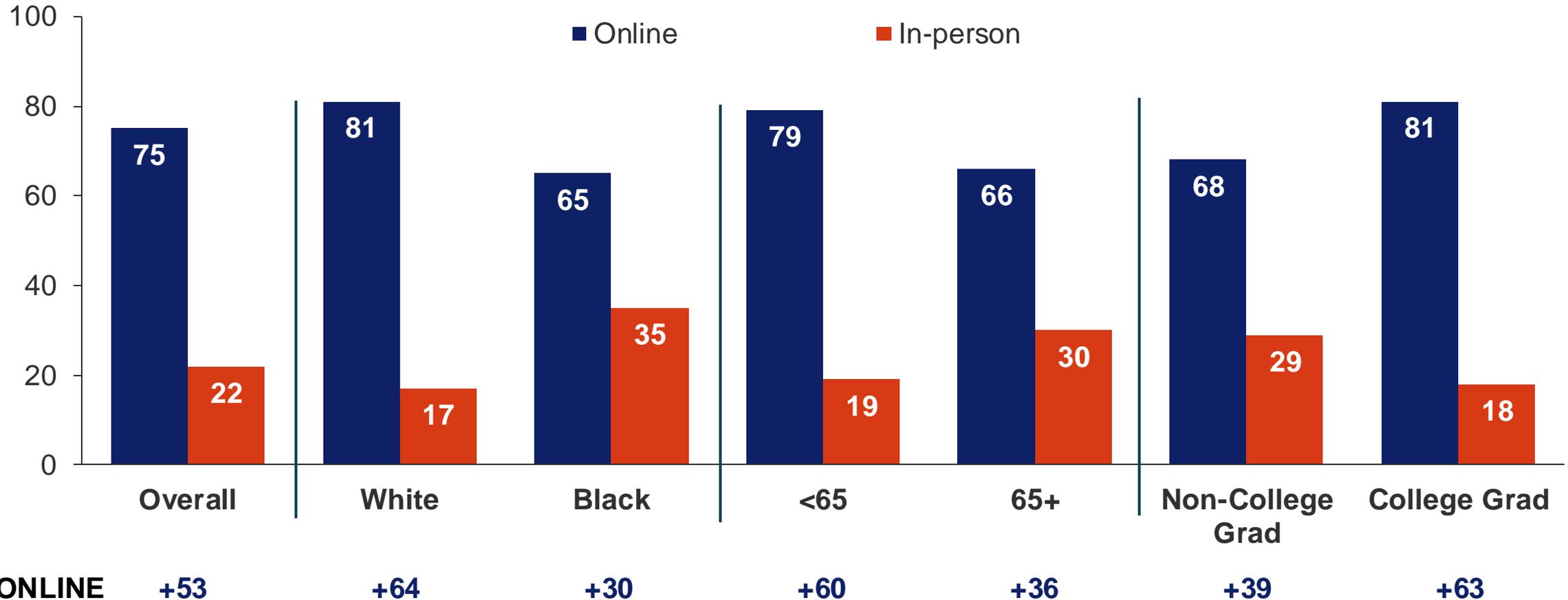
*Approximately how many times have you visited the Evanston Civic Center in the last year?*



# Three-quarters would prefer to take care of city business online.

White residents, residents under 65, and college-educated residents are especially likely to prefer online.

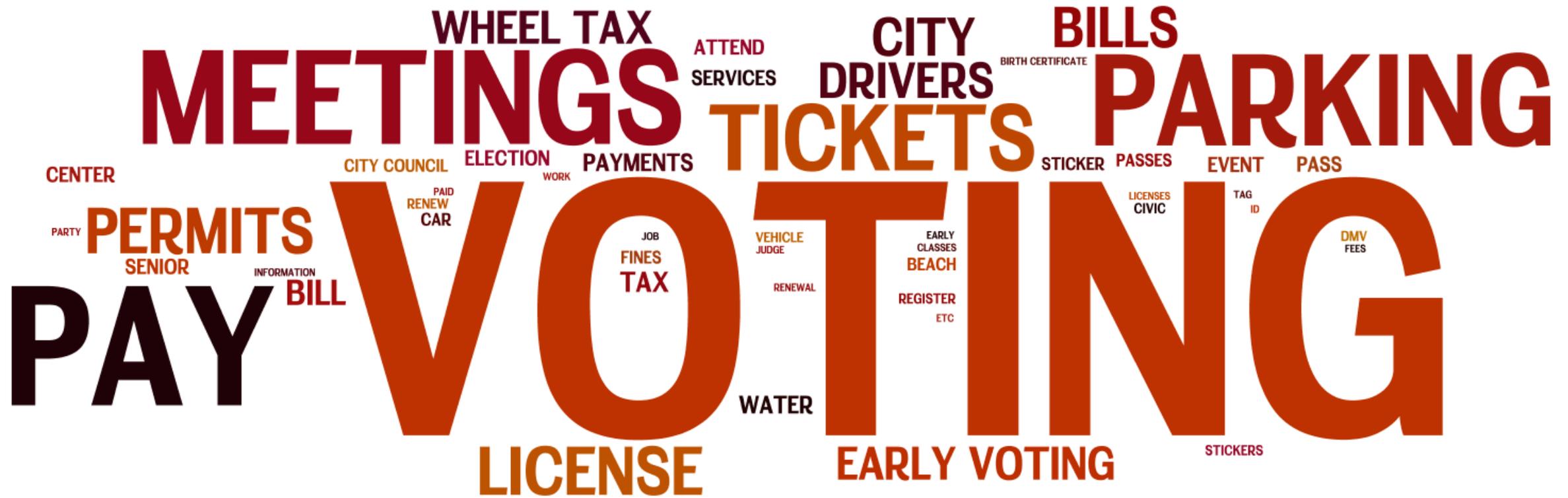
*Would you prefer to take care of city business online or in-person at the Evanston Civic Center?*



# Voting is the most common reason residents cite visiting the Civic Center in the last year.

Residents also cite meetings and vehicle-related errands related to parking, licensing, and ticketing.

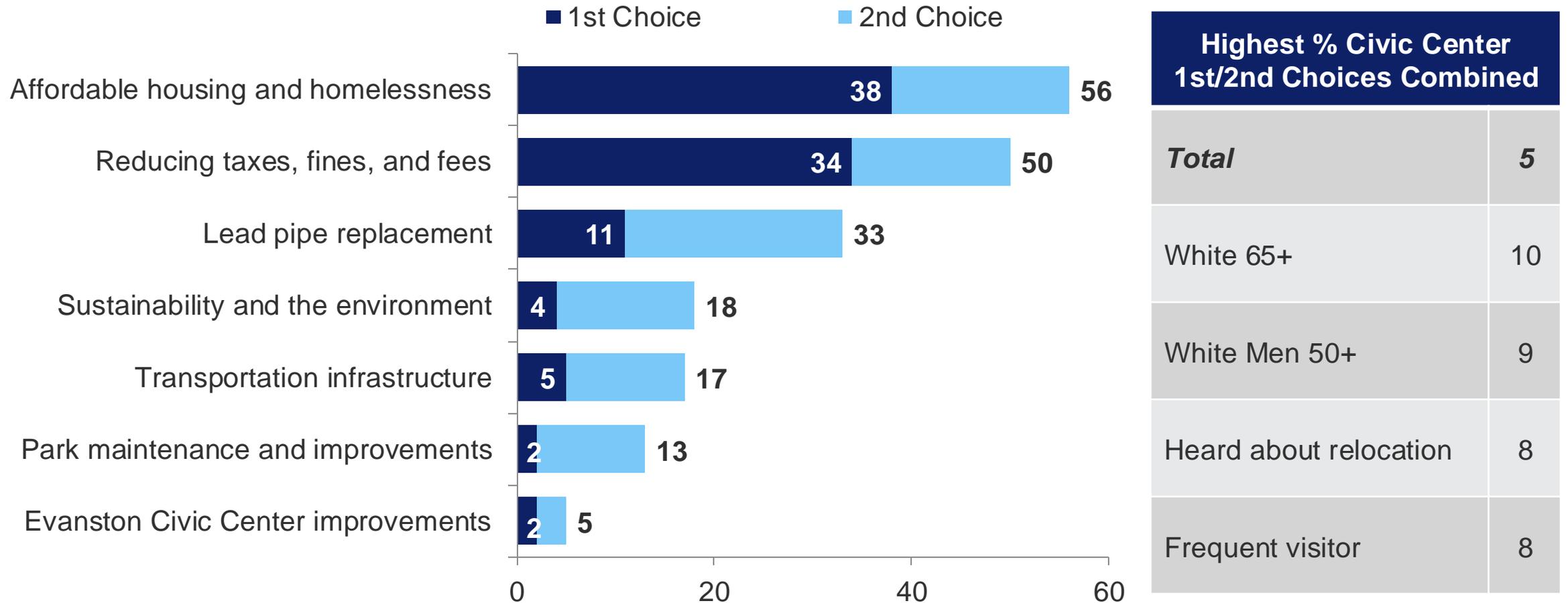
*What are some reasons you have visited Evanston Civic Center in the last year? [OPEN-ENDED]*



# Civic Center improvements are the lowest priority among the budget issues listed.

Issues like housing and reducing taxes, fines, and fees are much higher priorities.

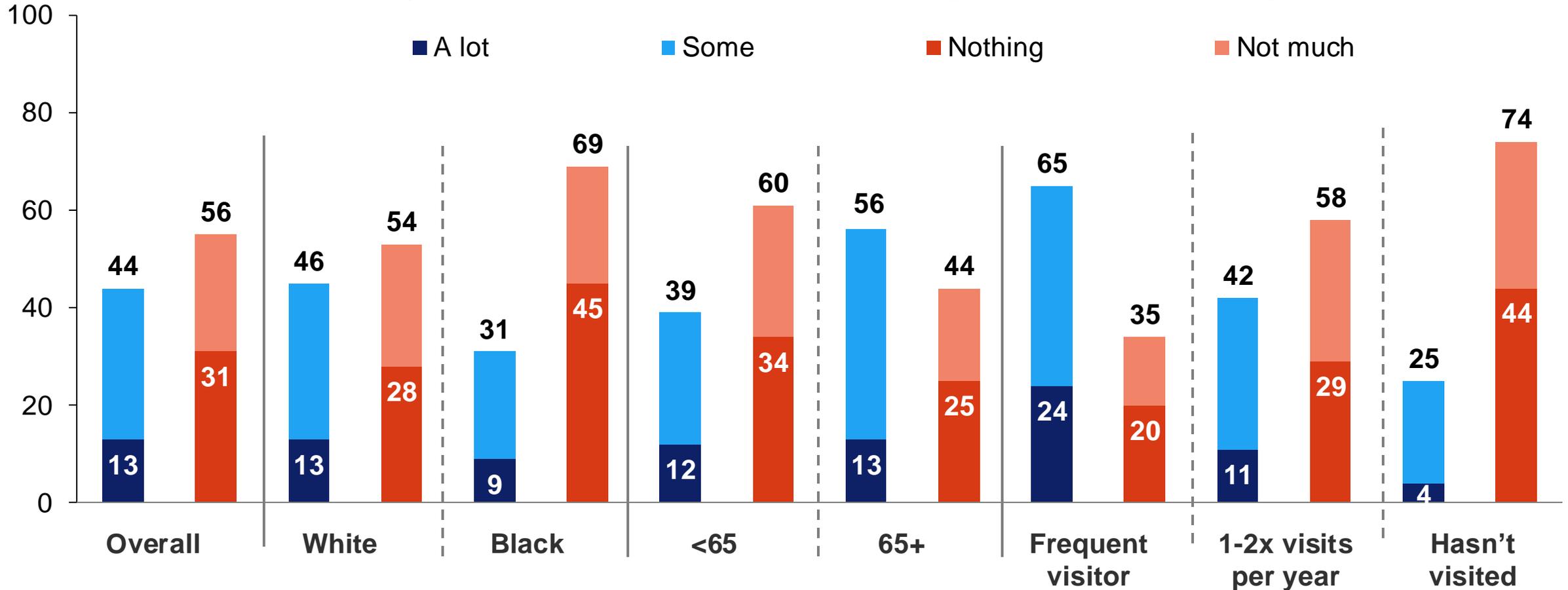
*Which would you say is the most important issue the City of Evanston should make a budget priority?*



# Very few residents have heard a lot about relocating the Civic Center.

White residents, seniors, and frequent Civic Center visitors are most likely to have heard about it.

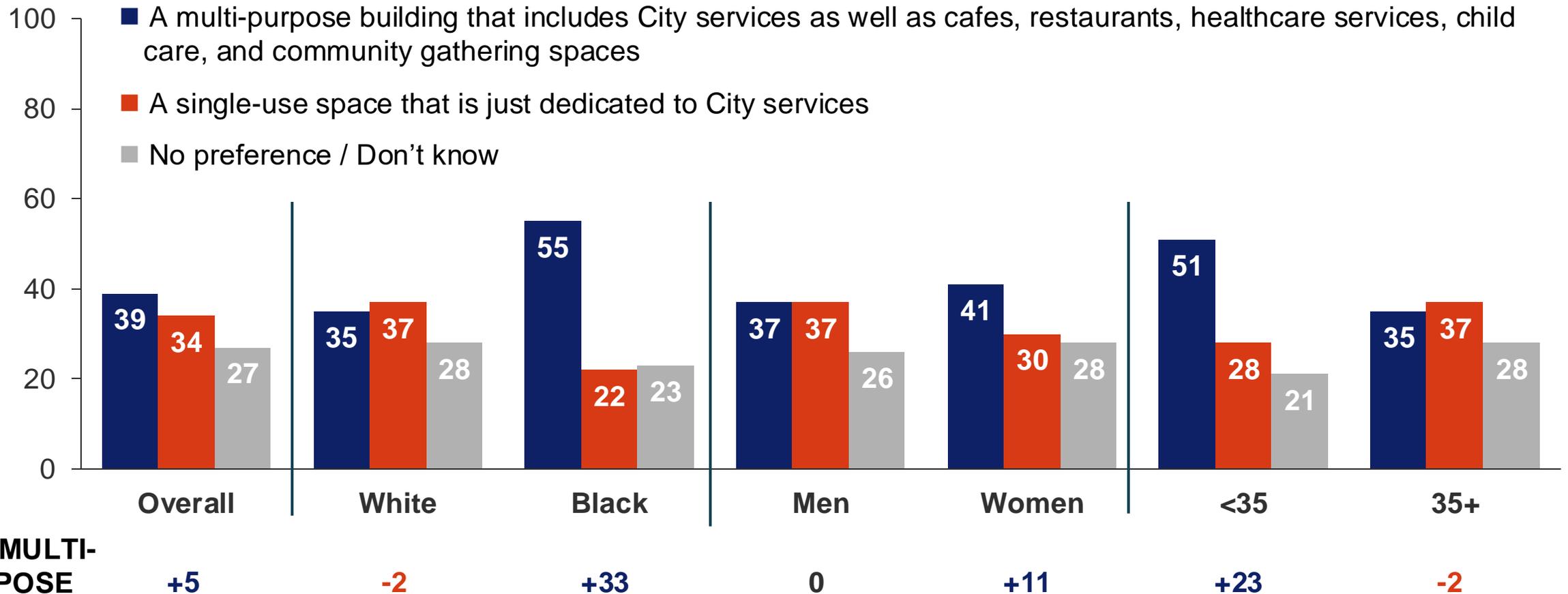
*How much have you seen, heard, or read about the relocating Evanston Civic Center operations?*



# Residents narrowly prefer a multi-purpose building over a single-use space for the Evanston Civic Center.

White residents, men, and residents 35 and over are more divided.

*Which of the following options would you prefer for an Evanston Civic Center?*

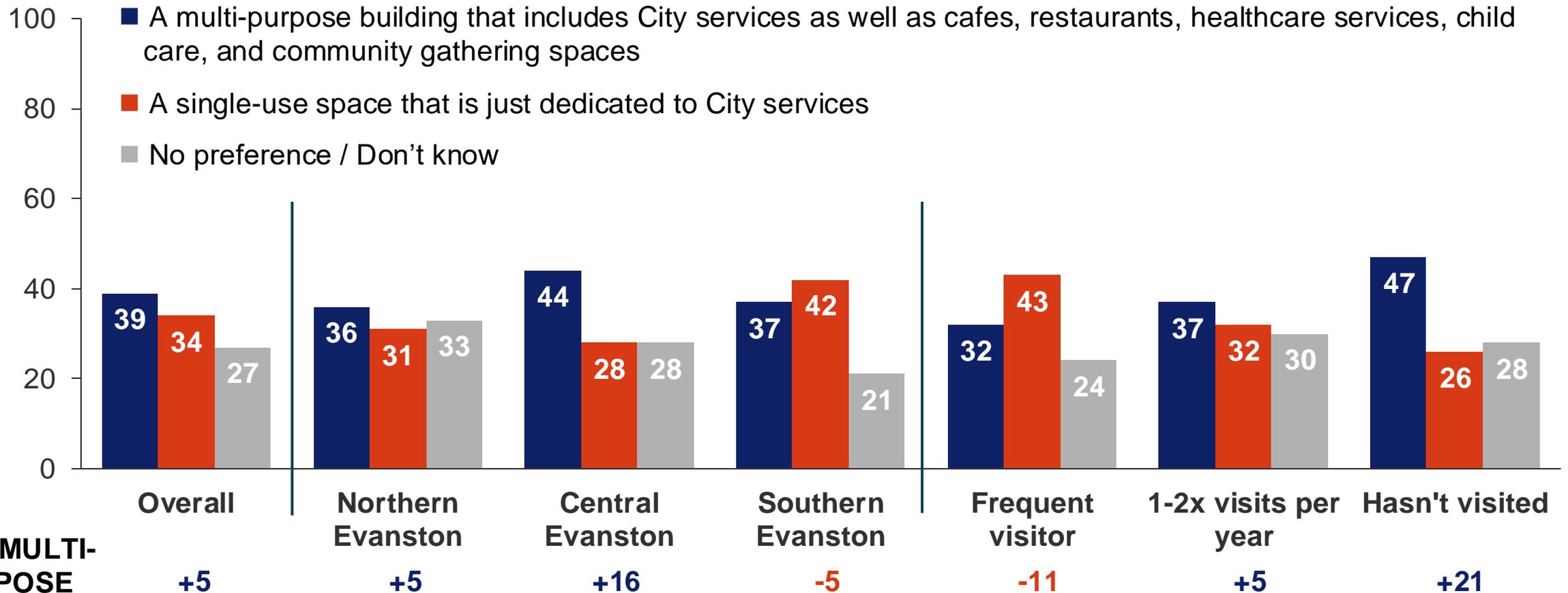


NET MULTI-PURPOSE

# Residents who don't visit the Civic Center are more likely to want a multi-purpose building. Frequent visitors prefer single use.

Residents in Central Evanston are especially likely to prefer a multi-purpose building.

*Which of the following options would you prefer for an Evanston Civic Center?*

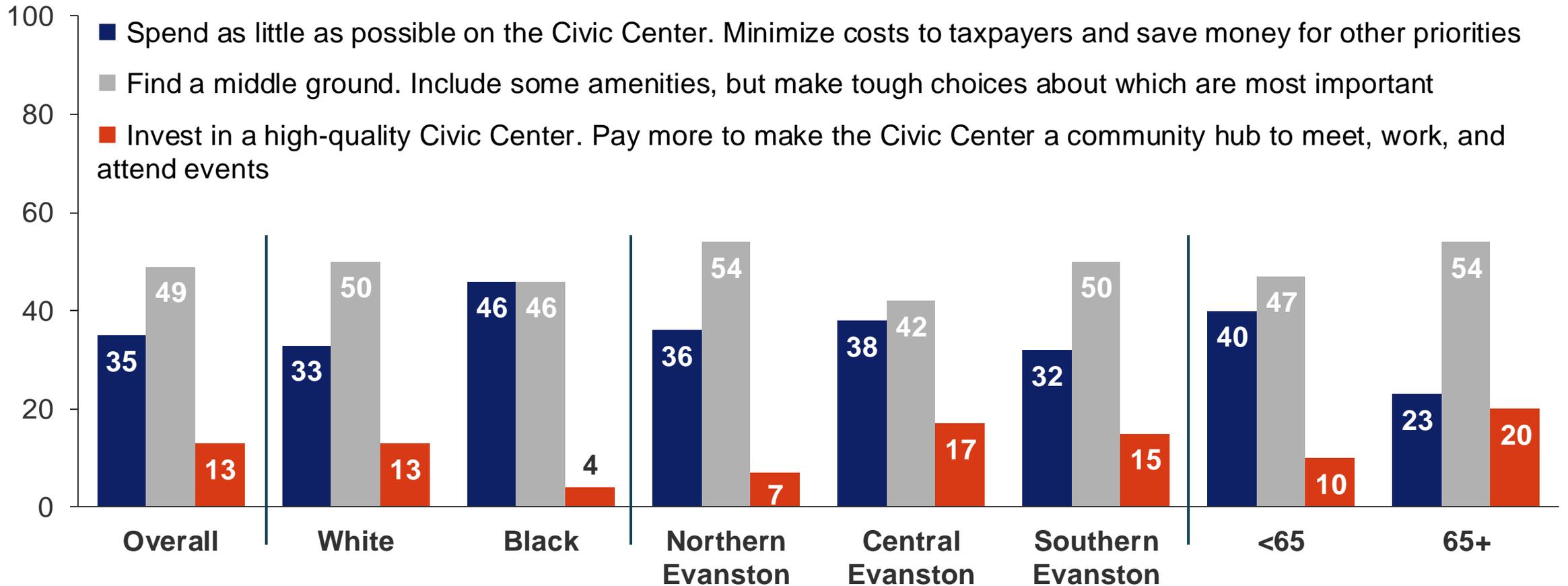


NET MULTI-PURPOSE

# Almost no one wants to spend extra money on a high-quality Civic Center.

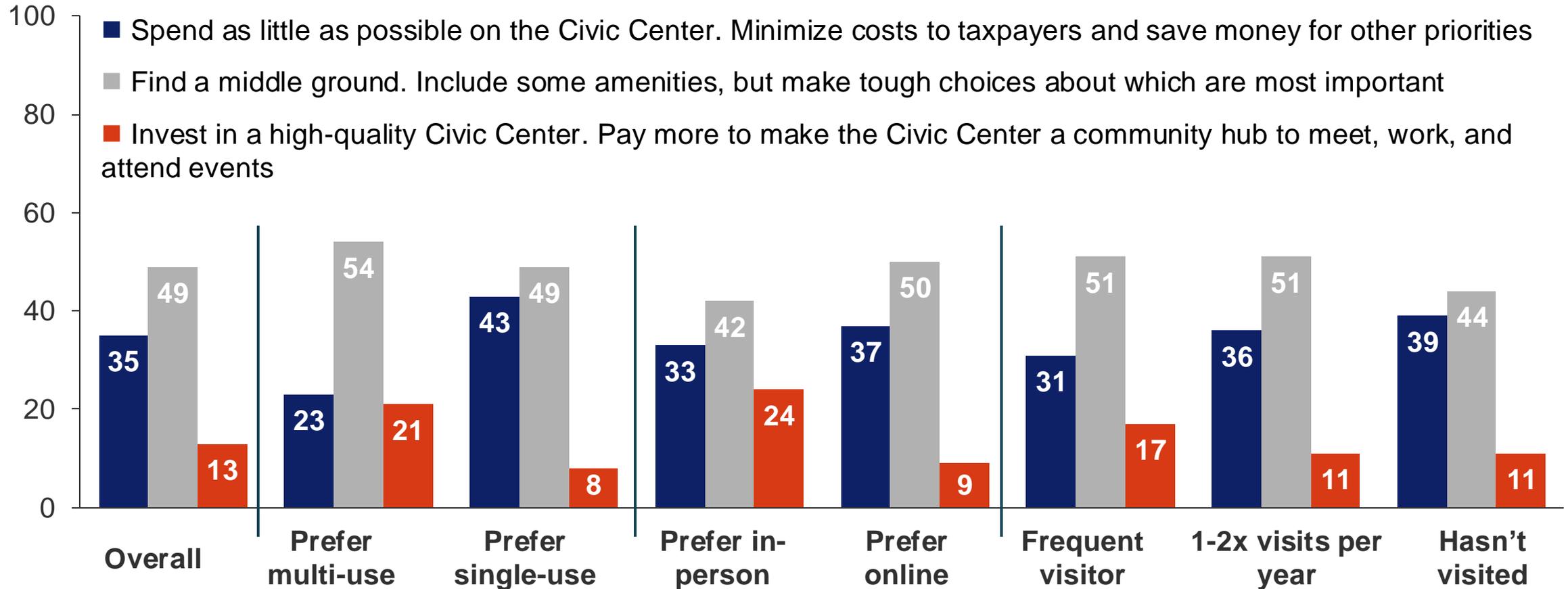
Residents prefer making tough choices or spending as little as possible.

*Some options for the Evanston Civic Center may be more expensive than others. How should the City of Evanston balance these costs and benefits?*



# Residents who visit more often and prefer in-person services are more likely to want to invest in a high-quality space—though pluralities want to find a middle ground.

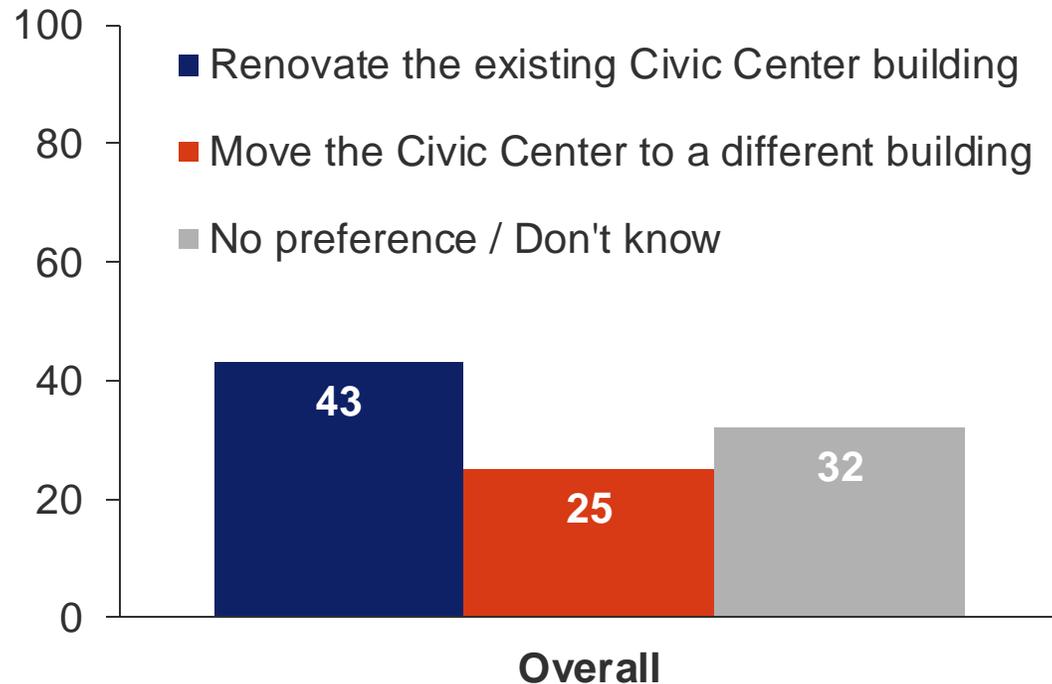
*Some options for the Evanston Civic Center may be more expensive than others. How should the City of Evanston balance these costs and benefits?*



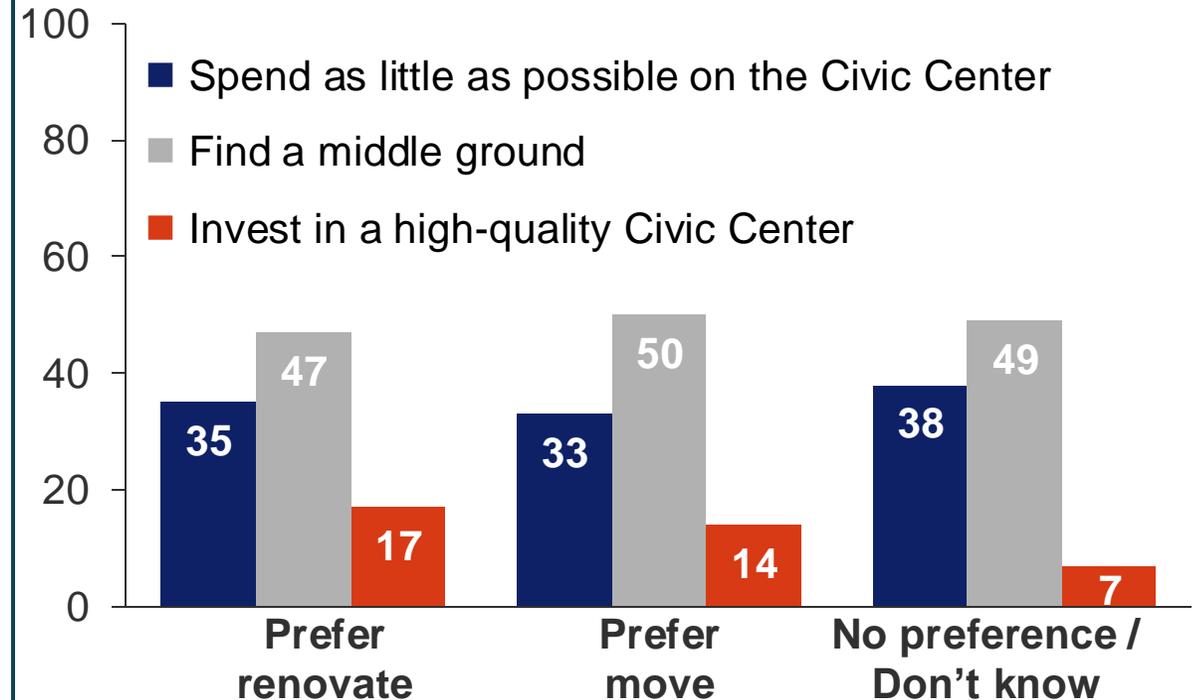
# Residents who prefer to renovate versus move the Civic Center have the same overall priorities: keeping costs low.

Residents who prefer renovating are just as likely to want to spend as little as possible or find a middle ground as residents who prefer moving.

*As you may know, the Evanston Civic Center is an old building that would need expensive renovations to continue serving the needs of City government. Would you rather the City of Evanston renovate the existing Civic Center building or move the Civic Center to a different building?*



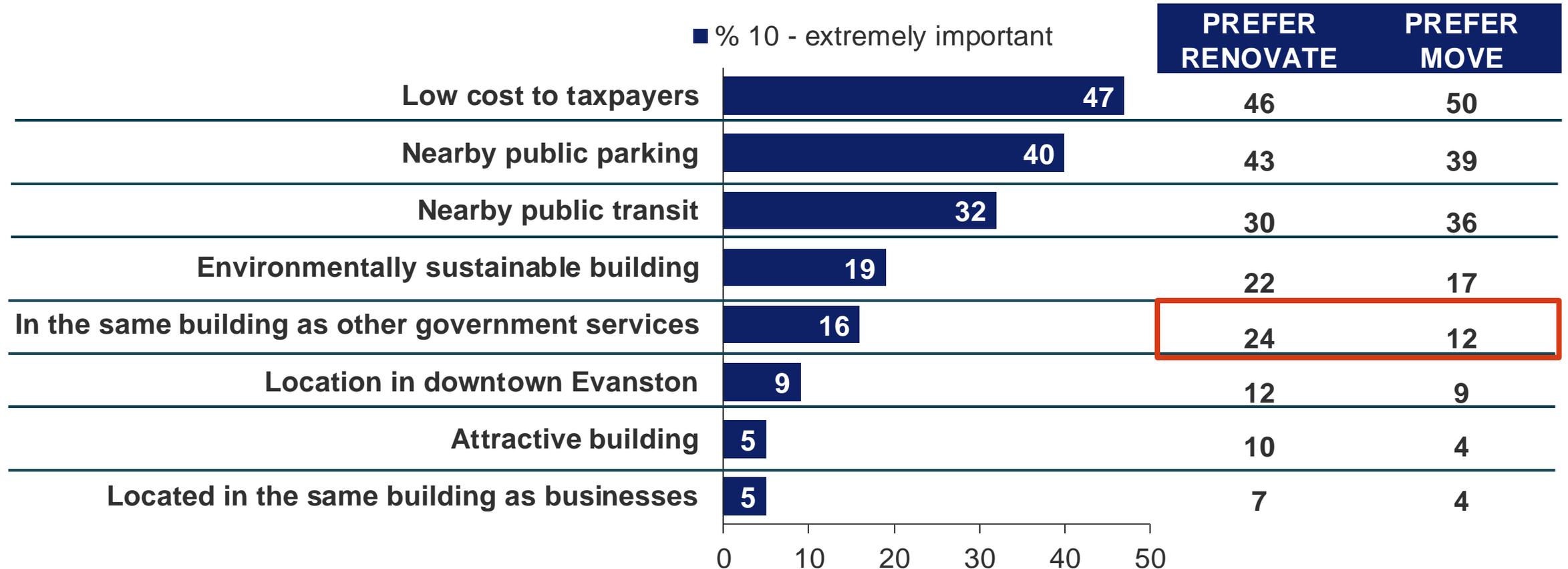
*Some options for the Evanston Civic Center may be more expensive than others. How should the City of Evanston balance these costs and benefits?*



# Residents' top priorities for relocating the Civic Center are low cost to taxpayers and nearby parking and transit.

Residents who prefer renovation are especially concerned with the Civic Center being in the same building as other government services.

Here are some things people might consider when it comes to relocating the Evanston Civic Center. Please rate each one on a scale of 1-10, where 10 means it is extremely important for the Evanston Civic Center and 1 means it is not important at all.

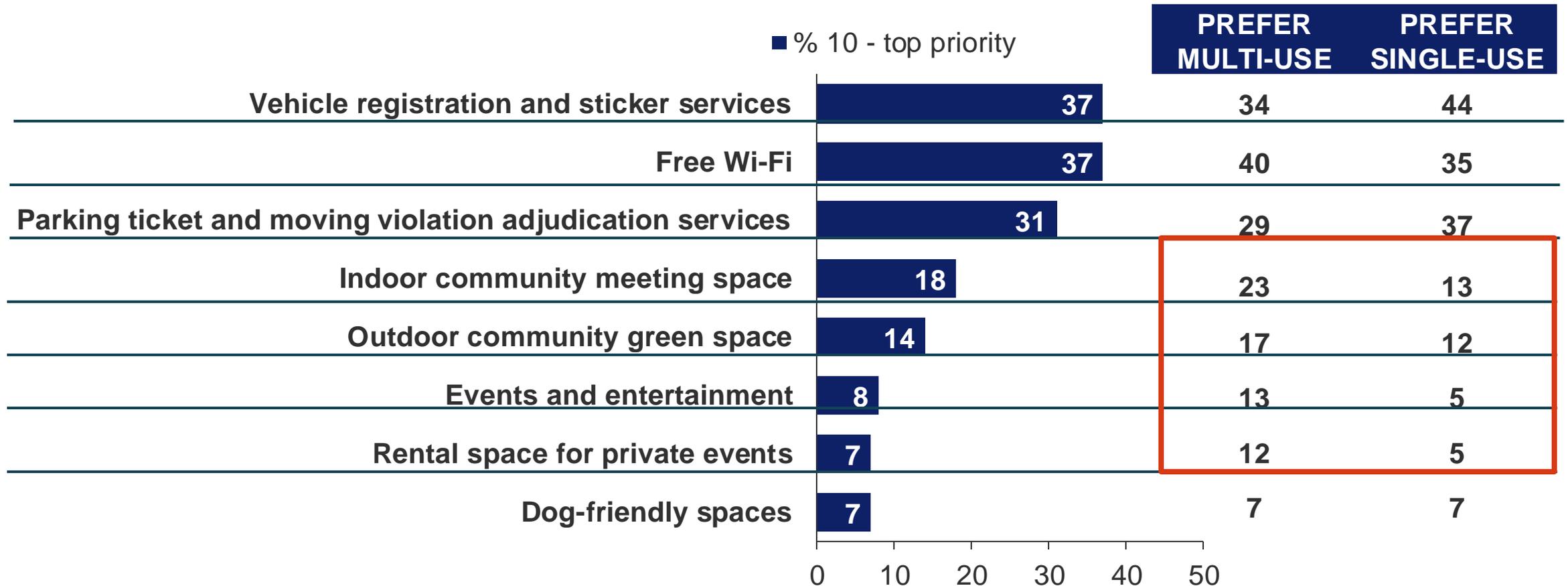




# Residents want free Wi-Fi as well as basics like vehicle registration and parking ticket services.

While residents who prefer multi- and single-use spaces have the same overall preferences, residents who prefer a multi-use space are more likely to want community spaces.

*Here are some services and amenities people might want in an Evanston Civic Center. Please rate each one on a scale of 1-10, where 10 means it should be a top priority for an Evanston Civic Center and 1 means it should not be a priority.*



# Recommendations

- **Focus on the basics.** Residents know the Civic Center as a place where they go to access government services—especially those related to voting, parking, permitting, and ticketing. While they narrowly prefer a multi-purpose building over a single-use space, none of the individual amenities that might be offered in a multi-purpose building—such as community and event spaces—stand out as especially important. Residents want the basics, including standard services related to parking tickets, moving violations, and vehicle registration and stickers as well as free Wi-Fi.
- **Do not overspend.** Very few residents want to spend big on amenities, and we would expect them to reject a high price tag if given a dollar figure. They don't want the Civic Center to seem cheaply made or lack the services they need, but they want high-quality government services without too many frills.
- **Emphasize other budget priorities.** 5% want Evanston Civic Center improvements to be the most important budget priority. Much larger numbers are concerned with affordable housing and homelessness and reducing taxes, fines, and fees.