


MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council
FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager 
DATE: November 5, 2021
SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report

The following information includes follow up from general items that were discussed at previous Council meetings as well as updates of a general nature from the departments. The items are organized by department and are intended to provide information on activities currently being undertaken by the Town's departments and those matters that are upcoming. Not all departments will be represented in each Report.

Finance

- The Town's financial management software, MUNIS, has been updated to the newest version after several weeks of preparation. Currently, various staff users are testing the system, which handles accounts payable and receivable, payroll and personnel tracking, financial tracking and reporting, budget tracking and reporting along with a number of other services. It is expected to be fully in service by the end of the calendar year.
- On-site audit work is expected to commence next week, and that independent review is expected to be issued later this calendar year.

Library

- The Library has extended a conditional offer of employment to a candidate for the position of Children's Librarian. The candidate is undergoing a final background and reference check, fingerprinting and a pre-employment physical including drug and alcohol test before starting. Staff anticipates announcing the new Children's Librarian later this month.
- Painting of the ceiling in the adult reading room rotunda area is scheduled to start on Monday, November 29 and is expected to take 8 to 10 days. The public should anticipate some disruption in services during this period, but the library will remain open.
- The Library participated in the annual Trunk or Treat Event. Over 900 free Halloween books were distributed to trick-or-treaters.
- The Friends of the Library partnered with Po's Rice and Spice for a fundraiser to benefit the Library. On Thursday, October 28, Po's donated 20% of all sales to the Friends of the Library resulting in a \$893 donation. The Library sincerely thanks the Friends of the Library, Po's Rice and Spice and the East Hampton community for their support.
- The Library Director's monthly report to the Library Advisory Board for October is attached to this Report.

Parks and Recreation

- Staff has met with Butler Construction to review the Sears Park Boat Launch Replacement Project in detail and the project is slated to start the first week of December. The lake level continues to drop at a rate of about 2 inches per day and staff estimates that the lake should reach the goal level of 36 inches below the top of the dam by Saturday, November 13 (notwithstanding rain). As of the date of this Report, the lake was 29 inches down. Once started, the project should be completed within two weeks.
- The High School Athletic Fields project is moving along with concentration on completing the regrading, drainage, irrigation and sodding of the baseball field. The track has received asphalt and the project is slated to be completed in the Spring with installation of the rubber surface. Tennis Courts will be fine graded on Monday, November 8 and paving will occur on either Friday, November 12 or Wednesday, November 17. Surface finishing will occur in the spring. Baseball field regrading should be done by Tuesday, November 9, Irrigation installation will start on Wednesday the 10th and Sod will be put down the week of Thanksgiving.
- The Department has contracted with an outside vendor to complete the aeration, seeding and fertilizing of all sports fields for the fall. Department staff will complete necessary repair work to the west soccer field at the High School starting mid-November, which will include regrading of the field.
- The water has been turned off for the winter season at Sears Park and the restrooms have been closed for the remainder of the year.
- The recreation side of the Department is in full swing with preparations for fall and winter programming. Demand for additional programming has been high and staff has worked hard to rise to the challenge. The additional staff over the summer helped and the Department is evaluating options for expanding the programming staff on a permanent basis. October saw a 47% increase in program registrations from the prior year and 32% above the six year average. This is partially attributed to the addition of three programs in the month above the average number of programs normally run. Typically, October, November and December are the lowest months for registrations and revenue. However, October's gross revenues were \$33,281 compared to the six-year average of \$19,575; 70% above the average. The October figure is similar to the busiest times of the year during the summer months. These figures represent strong resident participation in programs and outside recreation and sports as seems to show demand for more programming and recreation options in the community.
- During the first week of November, the Department and its consultant, GreenPlay, LLC, completed a series of three Focus Groups provided to the community. Attached to this Report are the findings from those Focus Groups, which 45 people attended over a two day period. The next step in the Needs Analysis process is to produce a survey specific to Parks and Recreation that will come in front of the Town Council for approval in the next few weeks before distribution to the public.

- EverBlue Lakes will be shutting down the in lake Aeration system the week of November 8th. The system will remain off until March of next year.
- The Lake Commission has started to look into the next phase of grant funded projects in the Lake Pocotopaug watershed and will organize these projects in conjunction with the current projects that are slated to begin in the spring of 2022.

Police

- The Department is completing its current recruitment process and hopes to have a hiring recommendation to the Town Manager by November 12. If the individual needs full training, the next Police Academy session begins in January. The Town has recently been able to hire officers from other organizations that have already received their academy training, which allows for a shorter, in-Town training period.
- During the month of October, the Department did not use Narcan on any drug overdose patients.
- Ardo, the Town's K-9 officer, has been in physical therapy for an apparent injury to his left rear leg. Physical therapy did not resolve the issue and it has been determined that he will need surgery to repair his ACL. Surgery is tentatively scheduled for the week of December 20 and he is expected to make a full recovery but will probably be out of work for several weeks for recovery. Doctors have indicated he can continue to work until his surgery date without further damaging the ACL. The Town's insurance is participating in the cost of the surgery and treatment.

Public Works

- The Edgerton Street Drainage Project is nearing completion and should be complete by mid-November. Once the pipe and catch basin installation wraps up, crews will shift their efforts to stabilize the site for winter. This will include a temporary pavement patch on the entirety of the excavated trench to prevent erosion and allow for winter maintenance and temporary patching of sidewalk that have been removed as part of the project to allow for snow removal and safe pedestrian travel during the winter months. Over the winter, a sidewalk project will be put together to replace the temporary sections with concrete and to address other areas of the existing sidewalk that are in poor or failed condition. This sidewalk project would take place in the early spring prior to the road being paved during the upcoming spring or summer.
- The dug well at 13 Watrous street has been abandoned by the Public Works Department under the direction of a licensed professional well contractor in accordance with DPH and Chatham Health Department guidelines. Abandoning this well is one of the last items required to close out the current phase of remediation and the related grant for this site.

- The Department has also begun its fall maintenance activities such as cemetery cleanup prior to Veterans Day, leaf clean up on Town owned properties and in the Village Center and touch up of gravel roads in preparation for winter. The Department has also scheduled our catch basin cleaning contractor to clean the catch basins within the Lake Pocotopaug Watershed. This is a scheduled maintenance item that takes place twice each year in the spring and late fall.

Senior Center

- The Commission on Aging (COA) survey has been completed. The COA received 436 essentially complete survey responses plus another 42 with at least one section completed for a grand total of 478 responses. That response rate represents about 95% of the Commission's "stretch" goal for survey returns, over 22% of the Town's 65 and over population and more than triple the number survey responses received in 2017. The Commission is compiling and analyzing the results and plans to discuss them at the upcoming COA meeting and is planning to present them along with initial recommendations to the Council at its December meeting.
- The Senior Center will be sponsoring three Micro Holiday Parties at Po's Rice and Spice in December. The parties plan to serve 90 people in total. Staff is adding a bit of ingenuity and sparkle to the annual holiday parties by changing the venue and how attendees are celebrating.
- As a reminder, Community Renewal Team (CRT) will offer its traditional Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, November 18 at the Senior Center. Interested older adults should contact the Senior Center. At the present time, there are 35 people registered.
- The Senior Center and Chatham Health District are sponsoring a Booster Clinic aimed at older adults at the Town Hall on Monday, November 29. Participants need to call the Center to make an appointment.
- Staff is working with the Food Bank for delivery of holiday baskets.
- Energy assistance applications continue to be processed and assistance with Medicare Open Enrollment continues as well. Open Enrollment runs through December and currently ten people are registered for the first information event on November 8.
- Senior Center attendance for the month of October 2021 was 112 people.

Youth and Family Services

- Social Services continues to partner with East Hampton schools to provide additional emotional and therapeutic support at the High School. Youth and Family Services staff have been able to implement mental health interventions directed at reducing self-harm and volatile behaviors.

This work will continue as long as resources will allow. The Department is temporarily unable to accommodate additional case load until additional student interns can be brought in and cases can be reassigned.

- Staff continues to work with the community for access to the various energy, food, rental and other assistance programs for which the Department provides intake services.
- Phase 2 of the art project with Epoch Arts will be hung in the Department's Town Hall Suite in the upcoming weeks. Phase two of the project consisted of youth-produced work that explored the various ways kids can use art to express feelings of anxiety, anger, and sadness.

Town Manager/Other

- The Town's COVID rate continues to slowly drop but the Town remains in the "Orange Alert" level under the State's framework. In the recent reporting, the Town saw an average of about 1.4 new cases each day or 10.6 cases per 100,000 population. All who are eligible are being encouraged to receive the COVID vaccine, which is available through Chatham Health District and other locations. About 66% of the Town's residents are fully vaccinated.
- East Hampton was featured on WFSB Channel 3 as one of the towns in the station's "20 Towns in 20 Days" story. The piece, which aired in a few segments, featured the Trunk or Treat event and segment about fall in Town. The piece can be seen on the station's website here: https://www.wfsb.com/news/20-towns-channel-3-heads-to-east-hampton/article_4e32ec90-37fa-11ec-8ad7-a3e764d2cd3c.html.

DC

cc: Management Staff

October 2021 Monthly Report

At a glance:

This section contains a brief summary of the most important information.

- The Library has extended a conditional offer of employment to a candidate for the position of Children’s Librarian. This individual will undergo a background check, reference check, fingerprinting and a pre-employment physical including drug and alcohol test before starting.
- The Russell Library in Middletown will be migrating from the Libraries Online (LION) consortium to Library Connection, INC (LCI) in late 2021. As of November 1st, East Hampton will not borrow or lend items from Middletown through intra-LION delivery.
- Painting of the adult reading room rotunda is scheduled to start on November 29th.

Strategic Plan Actions Update

This section contains information about new programs, services, collections or initiatives directly relating to the Strategic Plan.

- The Library participated in the Parks and Recreation’s annual Trunk or Treat Event. The Library gave away approximately 900 Halloween books to children. Each book contained a special scratch off ticket. Children scratched the ticket off at home and won either a small, medium, or large prize. 95 tickets have been returned as of November 1st. *(Informative and Collaborative)*
- The Library was featured on WFSB Channel 3 for their work at Trunk or Treat. The segment can be seen here: https://www.wfsb.com/news/20-towns-channel-3-heads-to-east-hampton/article_4e32ec90-37fa-11ec-8ad7-a3e764d2cd3c.html *(Welcoming and Vibrant)*
- The Friends of the Library partnered with Po’s Rice and Spice for a fundraising effort. On Thursday, October 28, Po’s donated 20% of all sales to the Friends. Po’s announced after the event that they will be donating \$893 to the Friends of the Library. *(Responsible and Sustainable)*
- Adult and Young Adult Librarian Stephanie Smith visited the Middle and High School to connect with teens and promote programs. These visits resulted in more teens attending Teen Advisory Board in October (TAB) also got a boost as a result from the class visits. Last month’s TAB meeting had 3 members attend. The Library plans to continue school visits on a monthly basis throughout the school year. *(Informative and Collaborative)*

Department Reports

Administration:

This section contains general updates and news about library administration.

- The Library conducted second round interviews for both the Children's Librarian position as well as the Public Service Associate position. The Library has extended conditional offers of employment to two individuals for the positions of Children's Librarian and Public Service Associate. The two individuals will undergo a background check, reference check, pre-employment physical including drug and alcohol testing and fingerprinting before starting at the Library.
- The Library has posted for a part time public service associate to serve in either the children's or teen department. A full job posting and job description can be found on the Town's website. Applications will be accepted through October 29th or until filled.
- The staff lounge has been refitted with a new lounge chair and new microwave cart as a morale boost to staff. Thank you to facilities staff for assembling the furniture. Items were not purchased with tax dollars.
- Staff visited the Robert H. Lord furniture showroom with space planner Deanna Dewey to discuss furniture options for a reworked layout. Options will be presented during the November Library Advisory Board meeting.
- The Library worked with the East Hampton Police Department to resolve two patron disputes over wearing masks in the building. Generally, the Library has noticed an increase in patron frustration over the mask requirement.

Children's Department:

This section contains general updates and news about the Children's Department.

- Over 60 people attended the Library's annual Halloween happening event for pre-schoolers. The event was modified for COVID-19 and held outdoors on the Library's front patio. Once again, the Senior Center offered volunteers and provided a craft for the children to complete after the Story Time.
- The children's department hosted three class visits. Mrs. Benigni brought her two fifth grade classes to complete research for their project. Mr. Frost brought his third graders for a tour and library literacy class. Both groups received library cards and were able to check out materials.
- Denison Pequotsepos presented three well-attended Saturday afternoon animal programs. The programs, which garnered between 30 to 50 people at each session, were held outdoors in front of the library.
- Outdoor story times continued at Sears Park and at the Congregational Church. On average 40 people attend Stories and Songs and 20 attend Baby Rhyme Time. These outdoor story times will continue through November or the first snowfall, whichever comes first.

Adult / Young Adult Department:

This section contains general updates and news about the Adult / Young Adult Department.

- Staff has begun to display more fiction books in a front-facing bookstore model. Patrons have had positive responses to this addition and staff find themselves restocking displays often.

- The first Middle School Advisory Board meeting was October 26, 5 teens attended. They had a lot of ideas and feedback to give. This program has been renamed to Pre-Teen Advisory Board and will still be for individuals in grades 6 - 8. Staff anticipate that this will be a popular and productive program.
- The Library offered a program on investigating paranormal activity. 24 adults attended the program and had positive feedback. One patron commented on Instagram asking if the library could have the presenter back next year.
- The Take and Makes for the month of October was the same for all ages, a pumpkin painting kit. Pumpkins were generously donated by Paul's and Sandy's Too. 101 kits were given out and 37 were returned to help decorate the library.

Circulation and Technical Services Department:

This section contains general updates and news about the Circulation and Technical Services Department.

- Over a year ago, East Hampton resident Val Greco donated a number of fun and festive cake pans that had belonged to her mother with the intention of making this cake pans available to borrow. The cake pans have been cataloged and processed and will be debuted in early November.
- A new adult graphic literature section has been created. This involved re-cataloging and processing all graphic novels that were previously housed in adult non-fiction and creating space at the beginning of fiction to house the new section.

Strategic Plan Indicators of Success

Circulation

Borrowers (*Accessible and Inclusive*)

	+/- Last Month	October Borrowers	September Borrowers	August Borrowers
Adults (borrowing physical items)	-55	1,059	1,114	1,145
Children (borrowing physical items)	-4	228	232	305
Corporate (borrowing physical items)	+4	14	10	8
Staff (borrowing physical items)	-1	16	17	20
TOTAL		1,317	1,373	1,473
Digital Borrowers	-24	380	404	424

Borrowing *(Welcoming and Vibrant, Informative and Collaborative)*

	2021			2020	2019	2018
	October	September	August	October	October	October
Adult Collection	3,170	3,533	3,877	4,436	4,530	3,615
Children's Collection	3,238	3,564	3,880	3,415	2,969	2,073
Young Adult	275	312	376	192	167	114
SUBTOTAL	6,683	7,409	8,133	7,773	7,666	5,802
eBooks – RB Digital	0*	0*	0*	62	180	199
eBooks – Overdrive	989	1056	990	620	485	379
eBooks - Hoopla	470	520	656	470	359	n/a
SUBTOTAL	1,459	1,576	1,646	1,152	1,024	578
TOTAL	8,124	8,985	9,779	8,925	8,690	6,380

*RB Digital has been discontinued.

Visits
Door Counter *(Welcoming and Vibrant)*

July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
5,109	4,388	3,476	3,684								

Programs and Partners
Events, Workshops, Programs and Outreach *(Accessible and Inclusive)*

	Programs			Attendance		
	October	September	August	October	September	August
Adult Events	5	6	3	78	78	29
Children's Events	17	8	16	496	142	347
Young Adult Events	10	4	5	90	28	31
Intergenerational	1	1	6	1,268	60	418
TOTAL	33	19	30	1,932	308	825

Promotion
Website *(Welcoming and Vibrant)*

	+/- last month	October	September	August
Users	7	1,667	1,660	1,613
New Users	3	1,423	1,420	1,357
Sessions	-231	2,827	3,058	3,185
Page Views	-1,100	9,092	10,192	10,600

5 Most Popular Pages: Hours and Contact Info, Library Staff, ebooks and eaudio, Museum Passes, Candyland.

Facebook *(Welcoming and Vibrant)*

	+/- last month		September	August
Likes	+12	1,991	1,979	1,970
Post Reach	+3,768	6,369	2,601	4,837
Post Engagement	+396	1,372	976	1,714

Donations and Fundraising

Donations

Organization	Donation	Restrictions
Po's Rice and Spice	\$893.00	Friends of the Library
Paul and Sandy's	100 pumpkins	Take and Makes

Stop and Shop has once again chosen the Library as the recipient of the October Community Bag program.



Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Focus Group - Engagement Meetings

Key Elements of a Community Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment



Strategic Kick-Off

- Critical success factors
- Key focus areas
- Meeting schedule
- Identification of Key stakeholders
- Gathering of all relevant documents
- Briefing with decision makers



Stages of Needs Assessment Process

Information Gathering

- Key leadership and staff interviews
- Community engagement
 - Focus group meetings
 - Public meetings
 - Stakeholder interviews
 - Citizen survey
 - SWOT analysis
- Research
 - Community profile
 - Trends
 - Best practices



Inventory and Analysis

- Parks & facilities assessment
- Recreation program assessment
- Gaps analysis
- Market position and saturation
- Service provision strategies
- Operational assessment
 - Operations and maintenance
 - Marketing and customer service
- Financial assessment
 - Budget
 - Revenue
 - Traditional and alternative funding sources
- Partnerships
- Economic impact



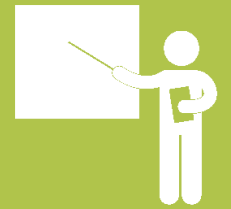
Needs Assessment And Comprehensive Action Plan

- Review and adjust departmental vision, mission and goals/objectives
- Key issues triangulation
- Findings and visioning sessions
- Recommendations
- Prioritized needs
- Funding and revenue strategies



Draft And Final Report

- Draft report
- Final report and deliverables
- Presentation



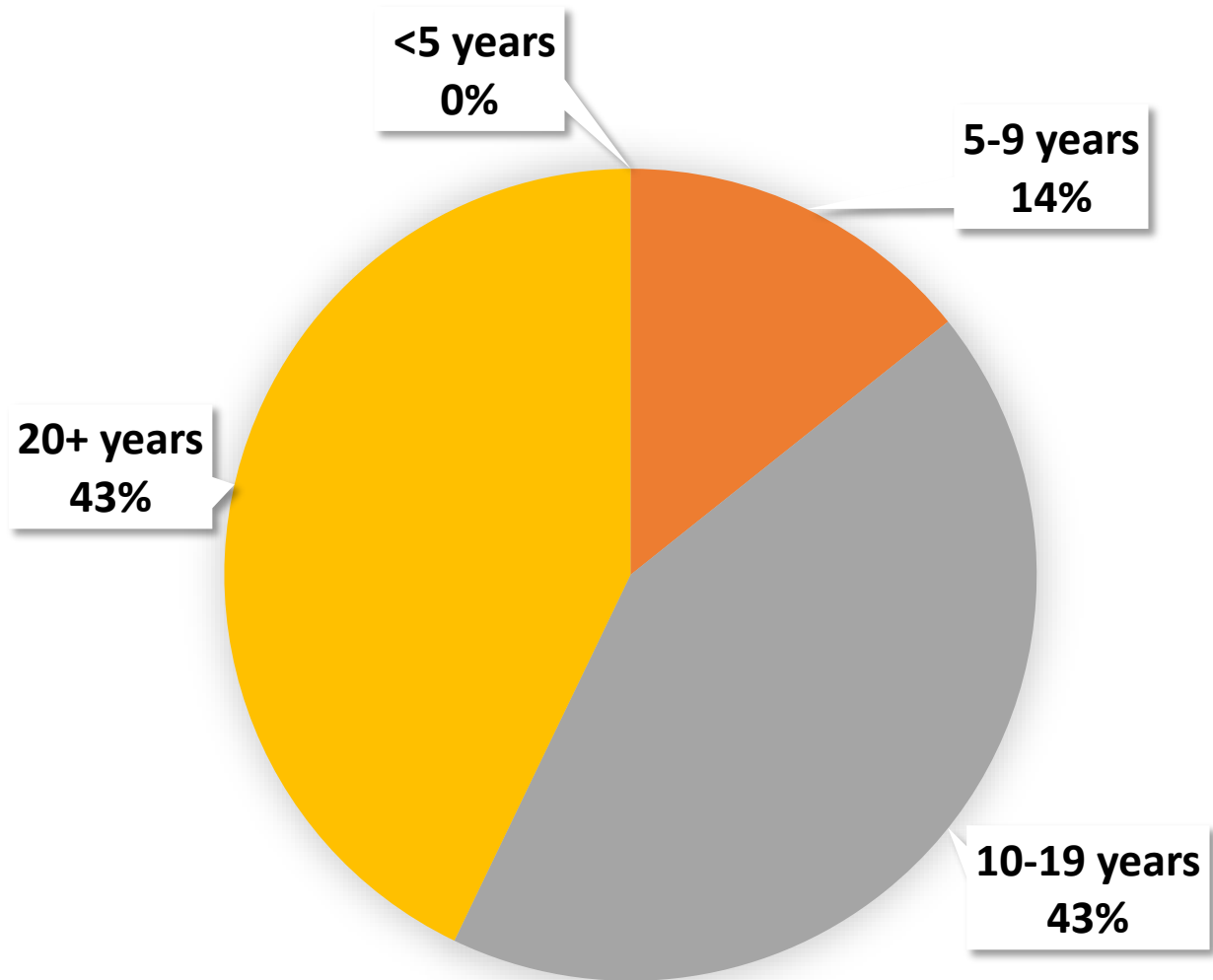


This is one part of the engagement process

We have a survey coming, and we hosted focus groups,
stakeholder interviews and public meetings.

We want your input!

How long have you been a **resident** of the Town of East Hampton?



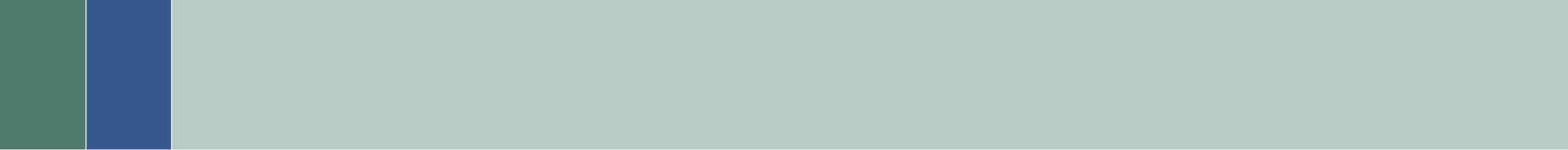
Years of Residency

- <5 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-19 years
- 20+ years

Years of Residency	Total
<5 years	3
5-9 years	5
10-19 years	13
20+ years	14

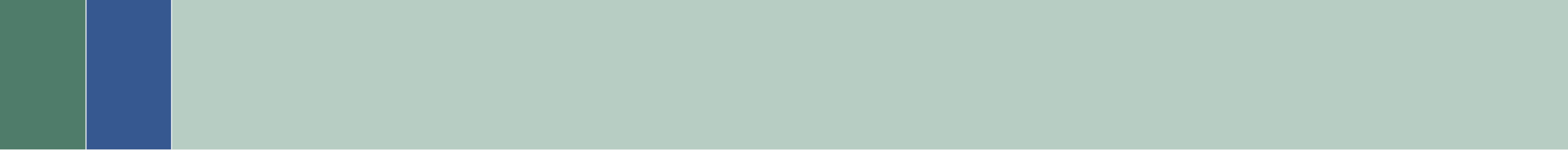


What are the strengths of the East Hampton
Parks and Recreation Department?



Strengths





Conversely, what are the weaknesses that need to be addressed through the Needs Assessment?

Weakness/Area of Improvement

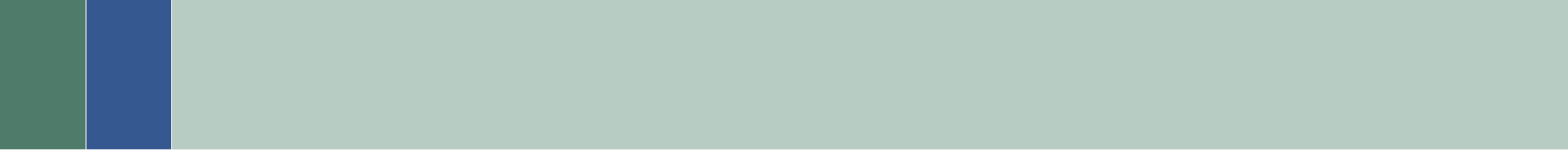




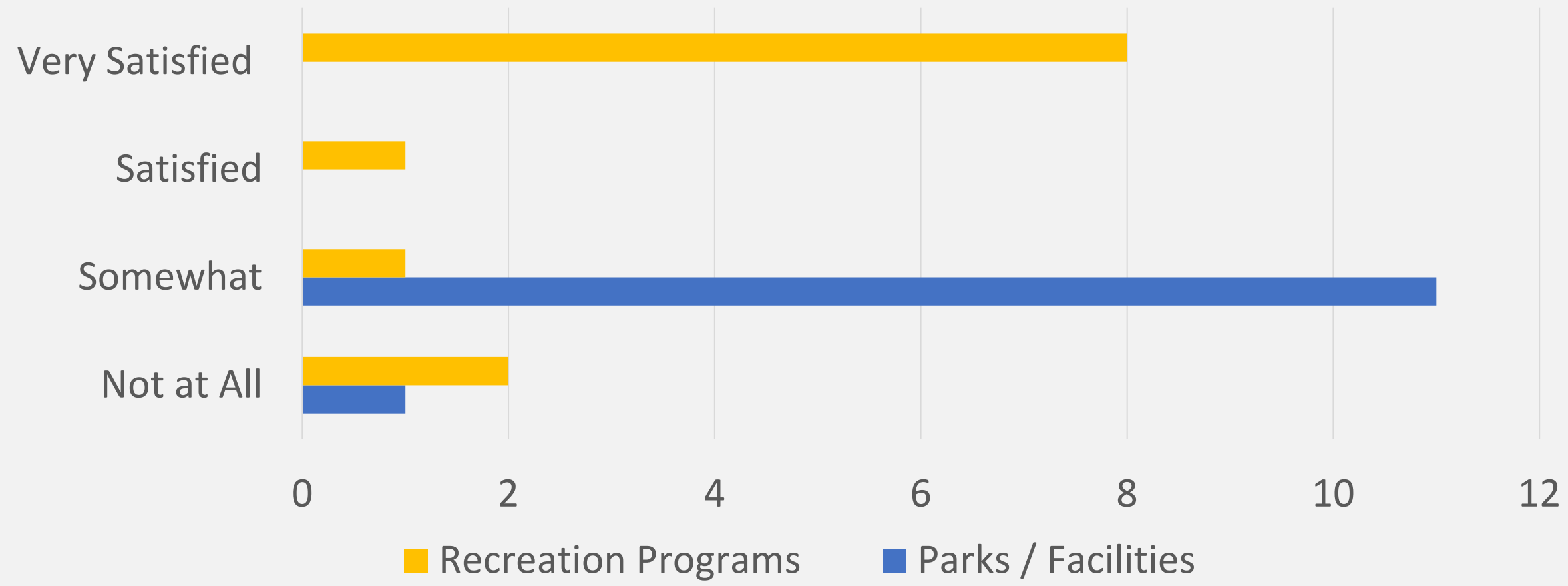
How satisfied are you with the quality of current programs offered?

How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the existing park and recreation facilities provided by the East Hampton Parks and Recreation Department?

4 Very Satisfied – 3 Satisfied – 2 Somewhat Satisfied – 1 Not at all Satisfied

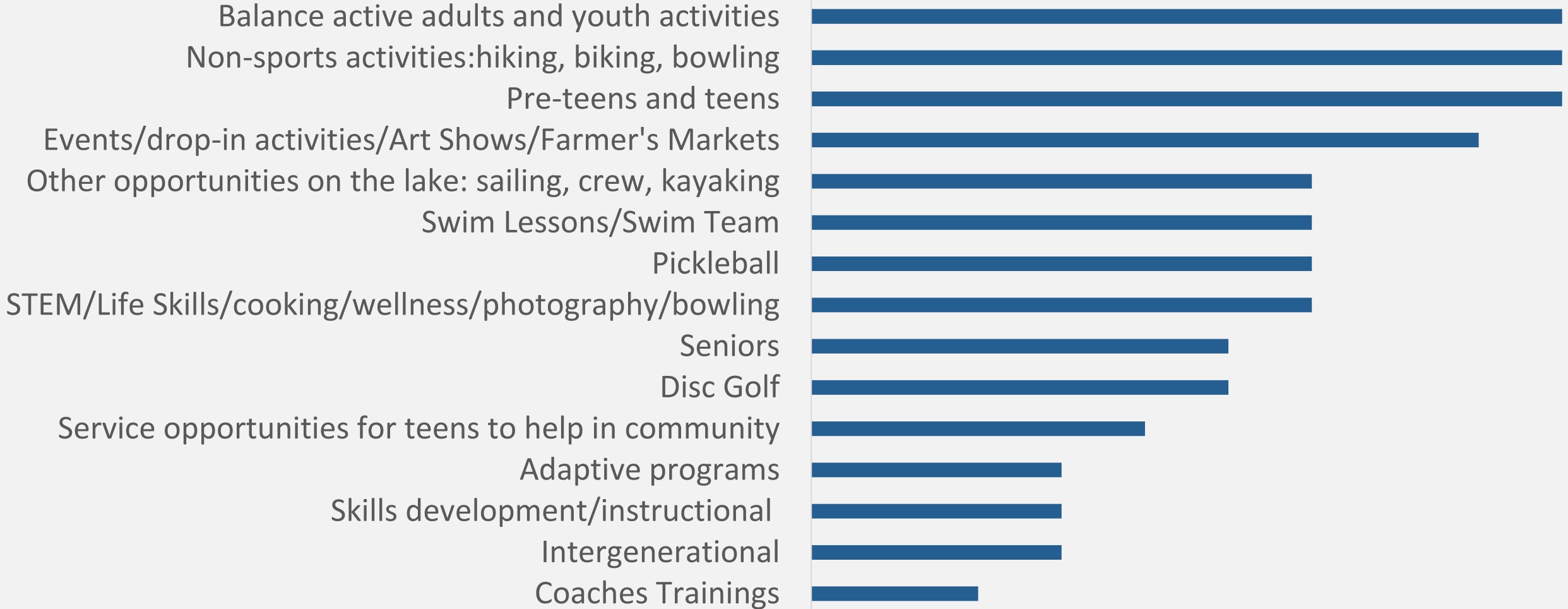


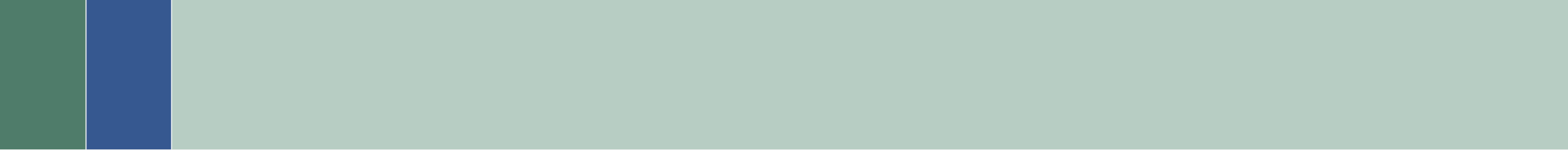
Satisfaction



What additional recreational programs/activities do you feel should be offered by the Town that are currently are not available?

Additional Activities



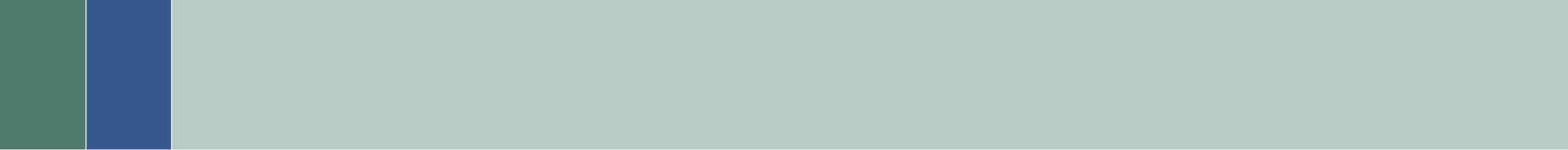


How would you rate the overall level of maintenance at the parks and facilities owned or operated by the Department?

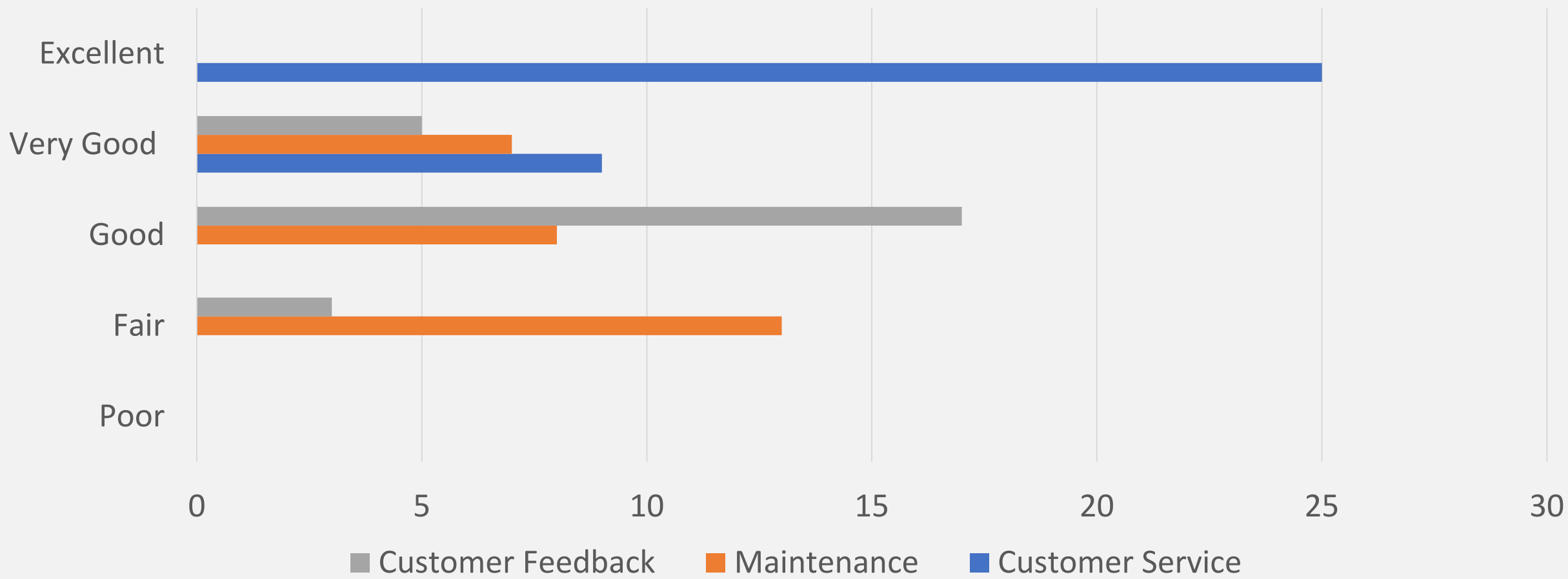
How would you rate the quality of customer service provided by the Parks and Recreation staff?

How effective is the Department in seeking feedback from the community and users on improving its performance?

5 Excellent - 4 Very Good – 3 Good – 2 Fair – 1 Poor

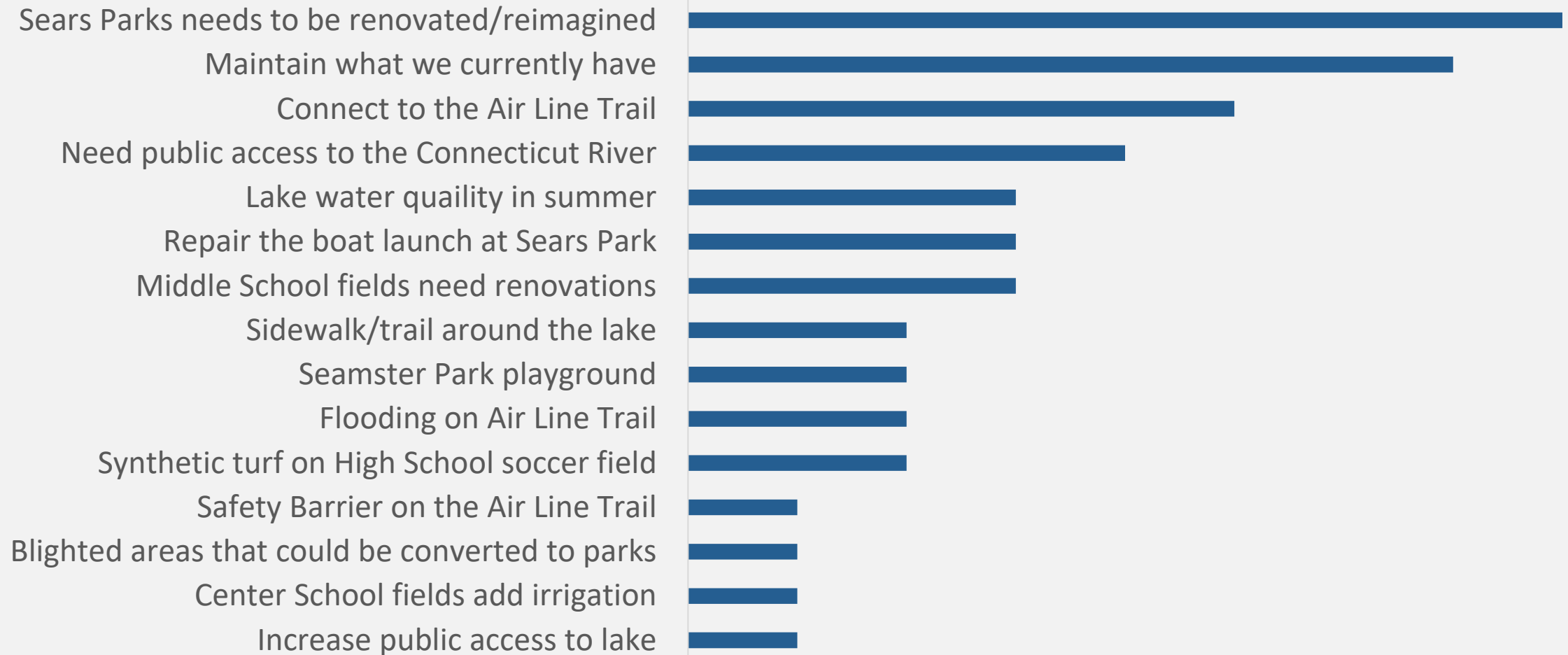


Performance Ratings



What improvements are
needed at existing facilities?

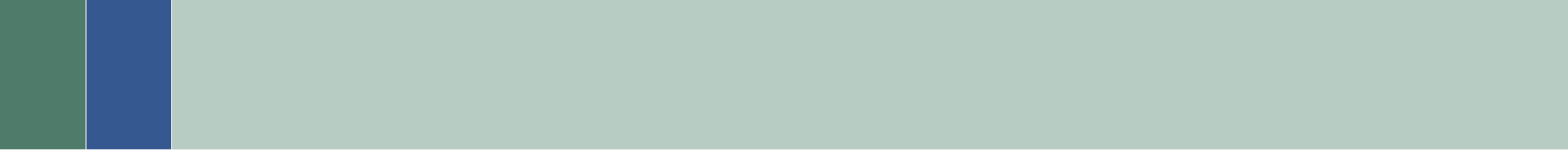
Improvement to Existing Facilities



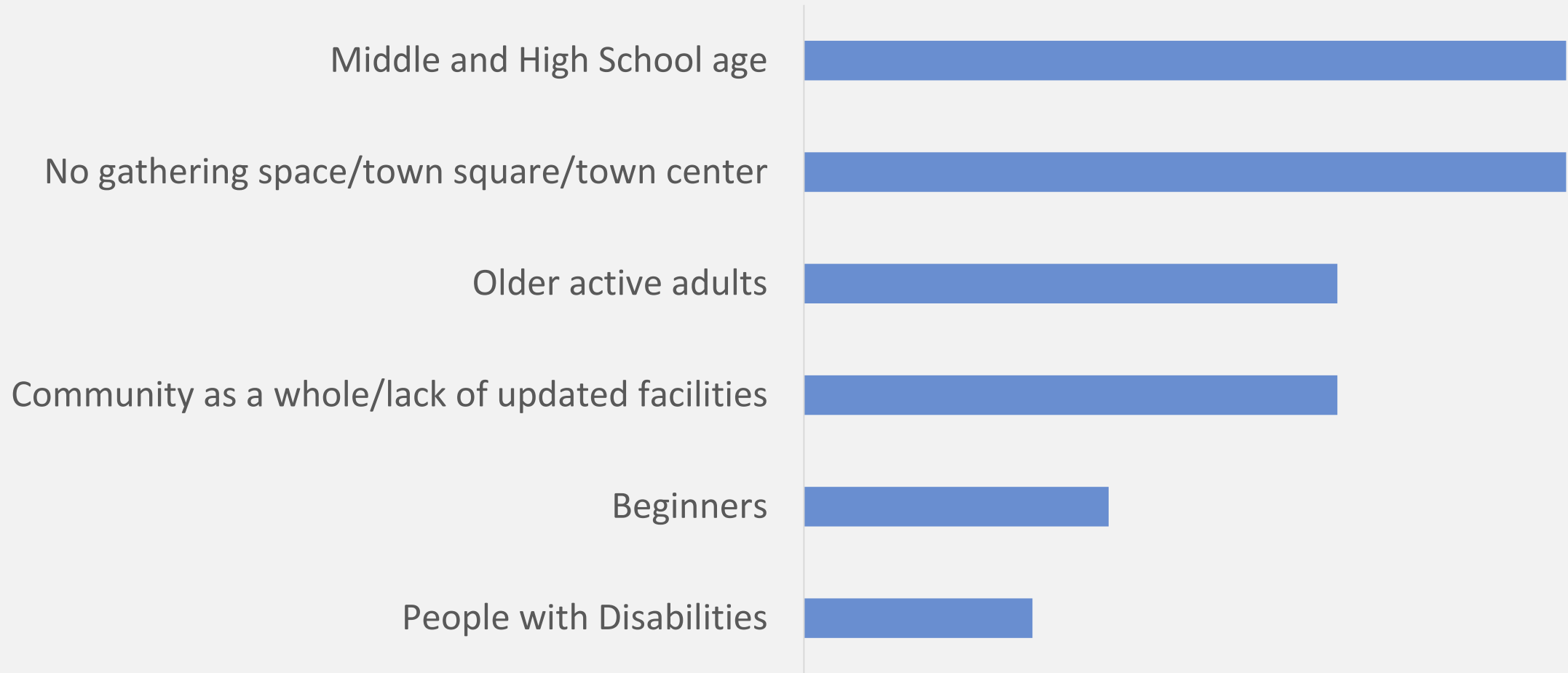


Are there any portions of the community that are underserved?

Where facilities don't meet the community's expectation?

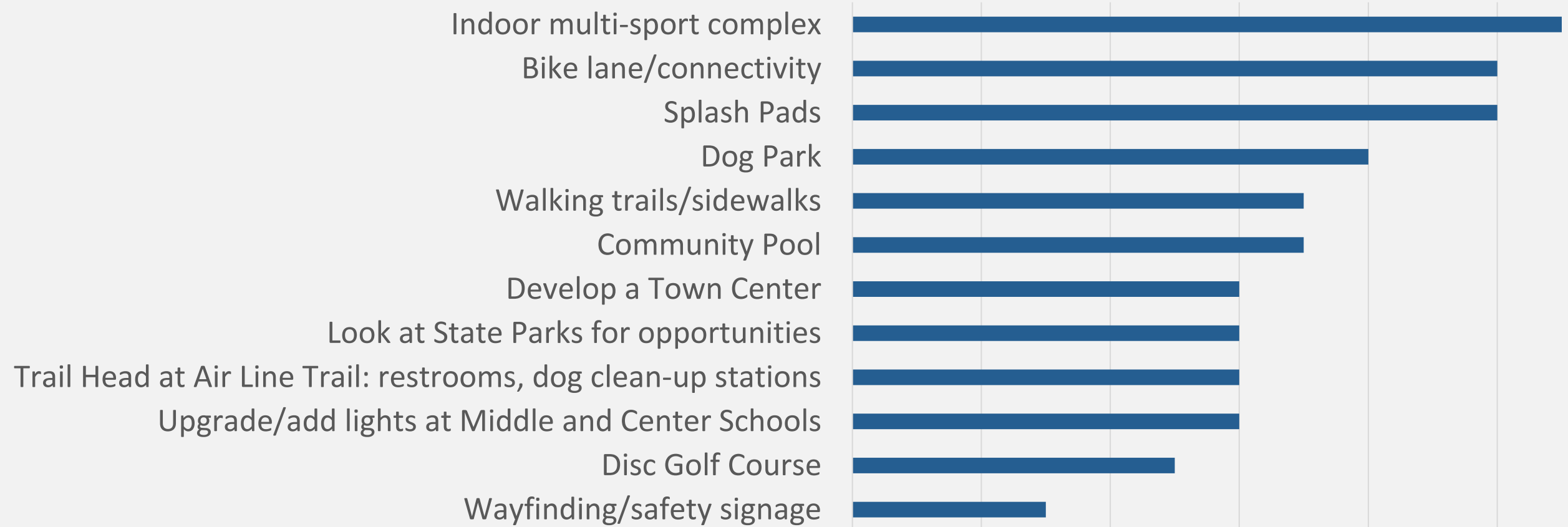


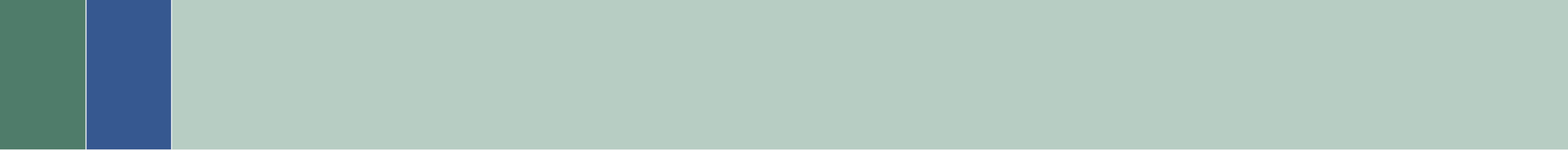
Underserved



What new recreational facilities or amenities would you like to see available?

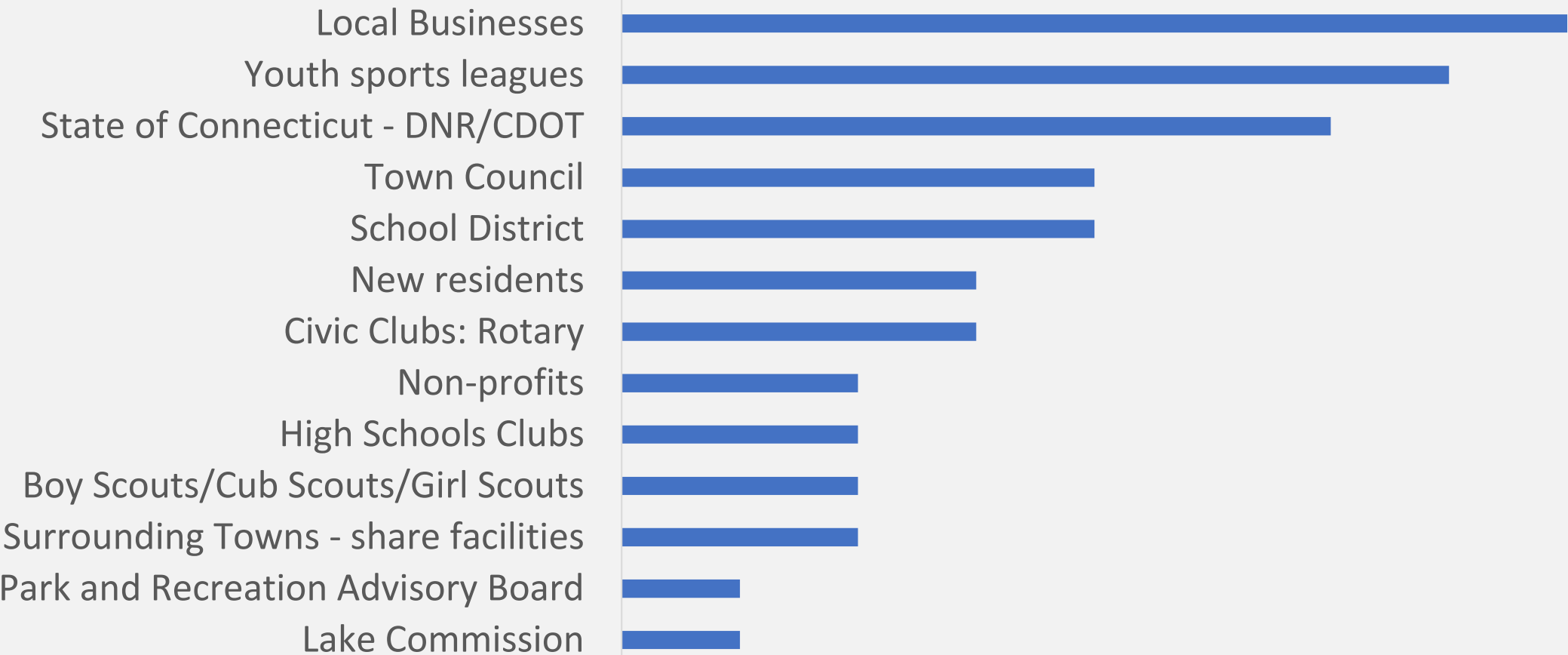
Additional Facilities/Amenities





Who are the key partners and stakeholders in the community with regards to assisting with implementation of the Needs Assessment?

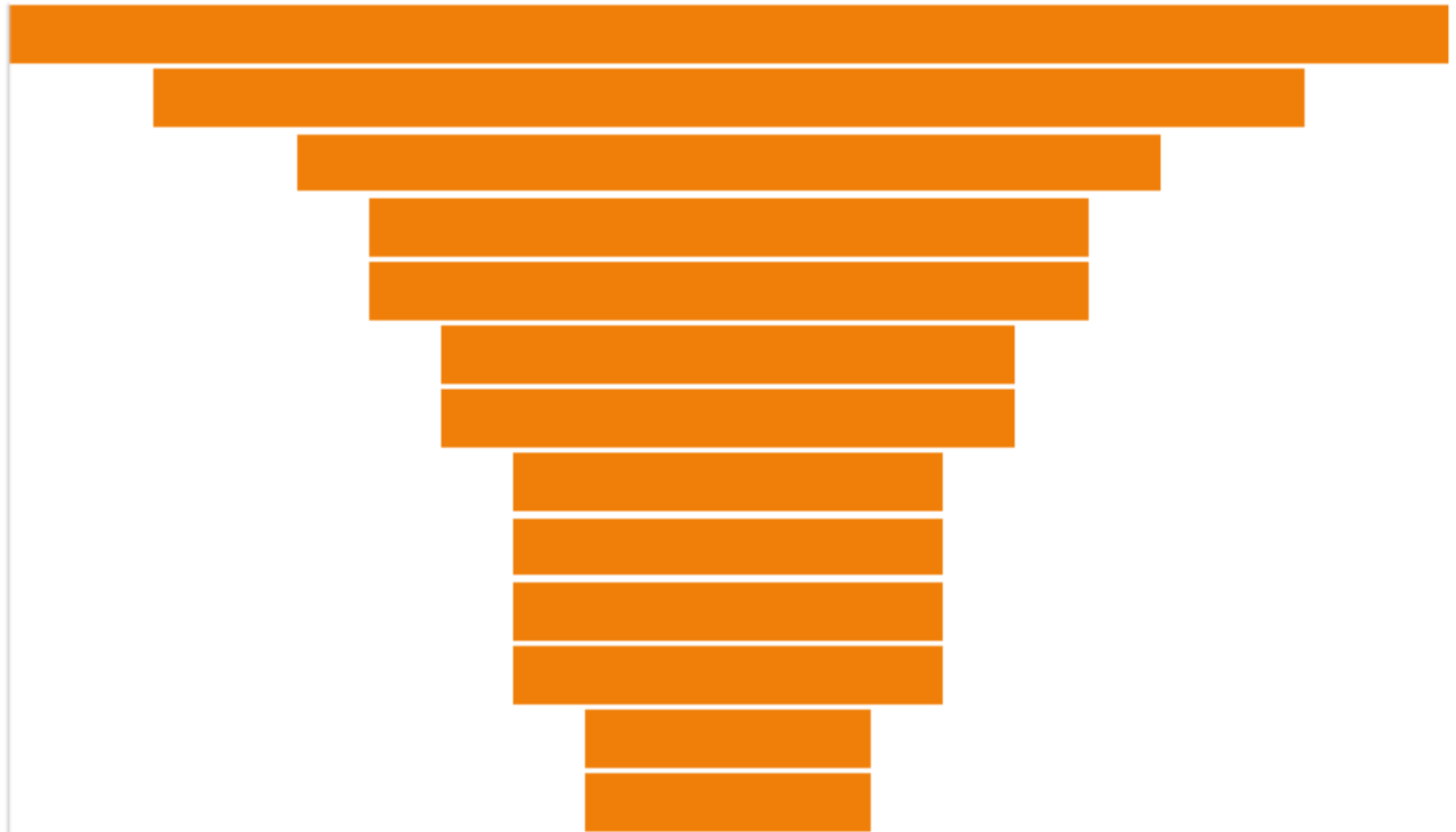
Key Partners and Stakeholders



What are the priorities that we should consider from everything we've discussed?

Priorities

- Improve what we currently have
- Long term facility planning/be proactive
- Intentional programming for all ages
- Recreation Center
- Improve/renovate athletic fields
- Increase staff to improve level of service
- Year round pool
- Lake quality and access
- Land acquisition/preservation
- Optimize the relationship with partners
- Create/Develop a Town Center gathering space
- Concentrate on state and federal grants
- Marketing/Communication



Comments/suggestions/feedback?

Thank You For Your Time & Consideration!

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