



College Station, Texas 2024 Community Recreation Center Needs Assessment Survey

Findings Report

Presented to the City of College Station

August 2024



ETC
INSTITUTE

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College Station Community Recreation Center Needs Assessment Survey Executive Summary

Overview

ETC Institute administered a community recreation center needs assessment survey for the City of College Station, Texas during the winter and spring of 2024. The purpose of the survey was to help determine parks and recreation priorities for the community.

Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random number of households in the City of College Station. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at collegestationparksurvey.org.

After the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute followed up with residents to encourage participation. To prevent people who were not residents of College Station from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting their survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses entered online with the addresses originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not included in the final database for this report.

The survey aimed to collect a minimum of 400 completed responses from residents, and this target was surpassed with 455 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 455 residents have a precision of at least +/-4.59% at the 95% level of confidence.

In addition to this executive summary the report contains the following:

- Charts showing the overall results of the survey (Section 1),
- Benchmarks comparing the City's results to national averages (Section 2),
- Priority Investment Ratings which highlight the facilities and programs most needed in the community (PIR) (Section 3),
- Tabular data showing the results for all questions on the survey (Section 4), and
- A copy of the cover letter and survey instrument (Section 5).

The major findings of the survey are summarized in the following pages.

Parks and Recreation Facilities/Programs/Trails Use

Most respondents (36%) indicated they have participated in programs/activities during the past year. Then, they were asked how many programs and activities they have participated in. 30% stated they have participated in one program or activity, 51% stated they have participated in 2-3 programs and activities, 10% stated they have participated in 4-6 programs and activities, and only 9% stated they have participated in 7 or more programs and activities. They also rated the programs and activities they participated in. 27% rated the programs “excellent,” 60% rated the programs “good,” 9% gave “fair” ratings, and 3% gave “poor” ratings. For the respondents that responded that they do not participate in programs, they were asked what the reasons that prevented them from participating more often. The top barriers that respondents selected were: I don’t know what is offered (53%), too busy/not interested (30%), and program times are not convenient (19%).

Outside Organizations

Respondents were asked to select all the organizations they used for programs and activities in the past year. The top organizations selected were: City of College Station (43%), places of worship (40%), and Texas A&M university (40%).

Communication

Respondents were asked about the ways they learned about the City’s programs/activities. The top resources used were: friends & neighbors (44%), Facebook (37%), and City website (34%). Then, they selected the methods of communication they most preferred the city to use to communicate with them about the programs/activities. The top methods selected were: email/eBlasts from City (46%), Facebook (44%), and City website (37%).

Benefits, Importance, and Improvements

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the potential benefits for the City of College Station’s indoor recreation services. The top benefits they agreed the most include: makes College Station a more desirable place to live (73%), provides volunteer opportunities for the community (68%), and provides jobs/professional development for youth (67%).

Indoor Recreation: Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the options (listed in the survey) when thinking about indoor recreation in the City. The options that were selected the most were: fees/costs to use (83%), classes and/or programs offered (83%), and fun features & amenities (78%). Then, they selected the items that the city should put the greatest emphasis on when planning for the future of indoor recreation centers. The items that respondents selected the most include: fees/costs to use (53%), classes and/or programs offered (38%), and operate to maximize cost recovery & minimize amount of subsidy from other financial sources (22%).

Statements: Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statements (listed in the survey). The statements that respondents agreed the most were: the community needs to create a regional attraction by having facilities for hosting tournaments & events in our community (55%), the community needs an indoor community recreation center (69%), and the community needs a new indoor community recreation center to serve growing needs of the community’s recreation desires (69%). Then, they selected the statements that they

thought were most important when considering a new indoor community recreation center. The statements that respondents thought were most important were: a new indoor community recreation center should be designed to include amenities & facilities that all residents can use regardless of age or ability (34%), the community needs a new aquatics/pool facility that includes lap lanes, therapy areas, & general play features for all ages (30%), and it is valuable to me to have an indoor community recreation center (26%).

Amenities Needs and Priorities

Amenity Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 29 amenities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. The three amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need:

1. Walking trails
2. Shade structures
3. Picnic areas

Amenity Importance: In addition to assessing the needs for each amenity, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each item. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, these were the four amenities that ranked most important to residents:

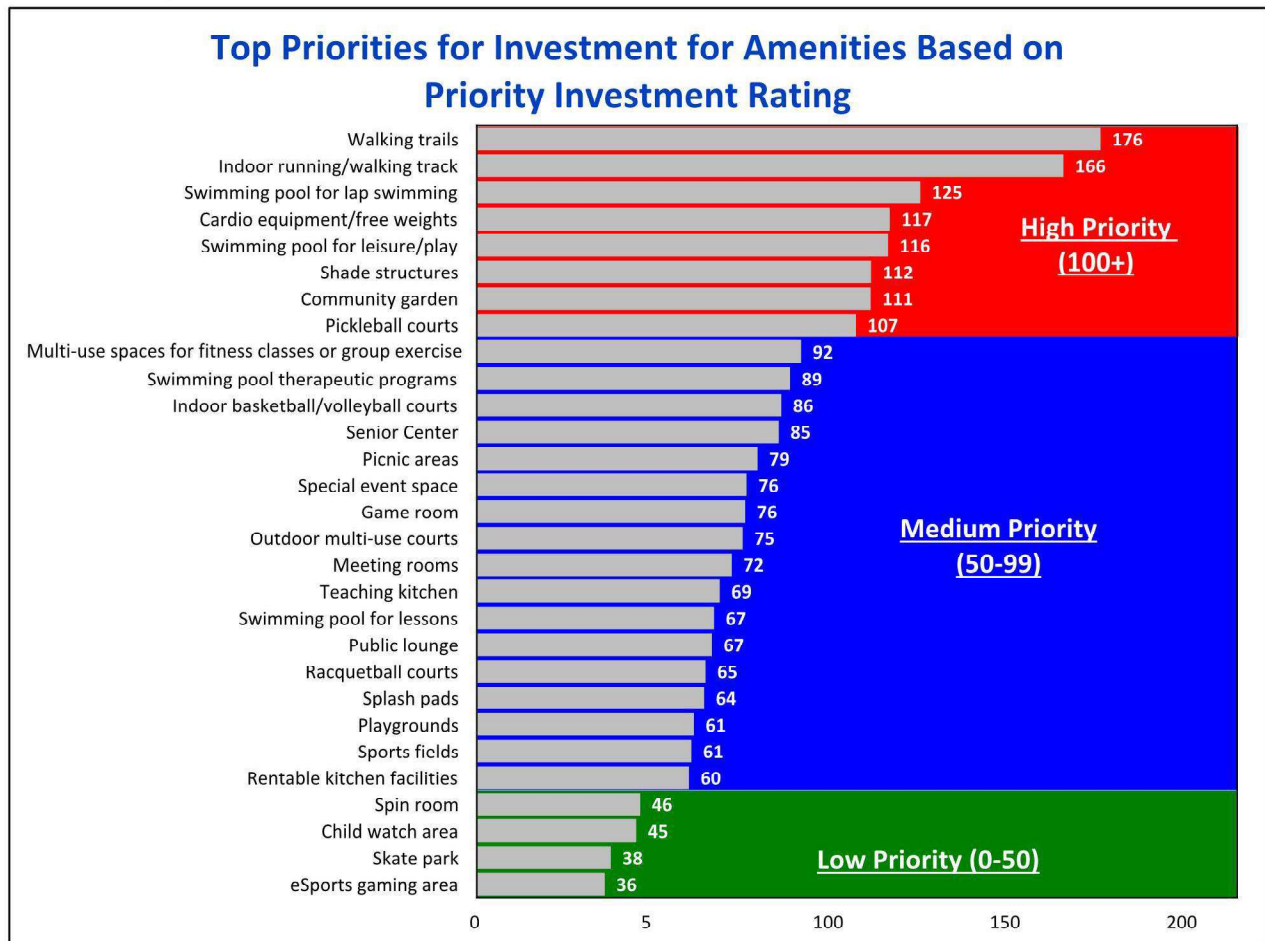
1. Walking trails
2. Indoor running/walking track
3. Swimming pool for lap swimming
4. Swimming pool for leisure/play

Priorities for Amenity Investments: The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on amenities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the amenities. [Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of this report.]

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Walking trails (PIR=176)
- Indoor running/walking track (PIR=166)
- Swimming pool for lap swimming (PIR=125)
- Cardio equipment/free weights (PIR=117)
- Swimming pool for leisure/play (PIR=116)
- Shade Structures (PIR=112)
- Community garden (PIR=111)
- Pickleball courts (PIR=107)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 29 amenities assessed in the survey.



Recreation Programs Needs and Priorities

Program Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 34 recreation programs and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, The three programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need:

1. Adult fitness & wellness programs
2. Community special events
3. Environmental education/nature programs

Program Importance: In addition to assessing the needs for each program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each item. Based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, these were the four programs that ranked most important to residents:

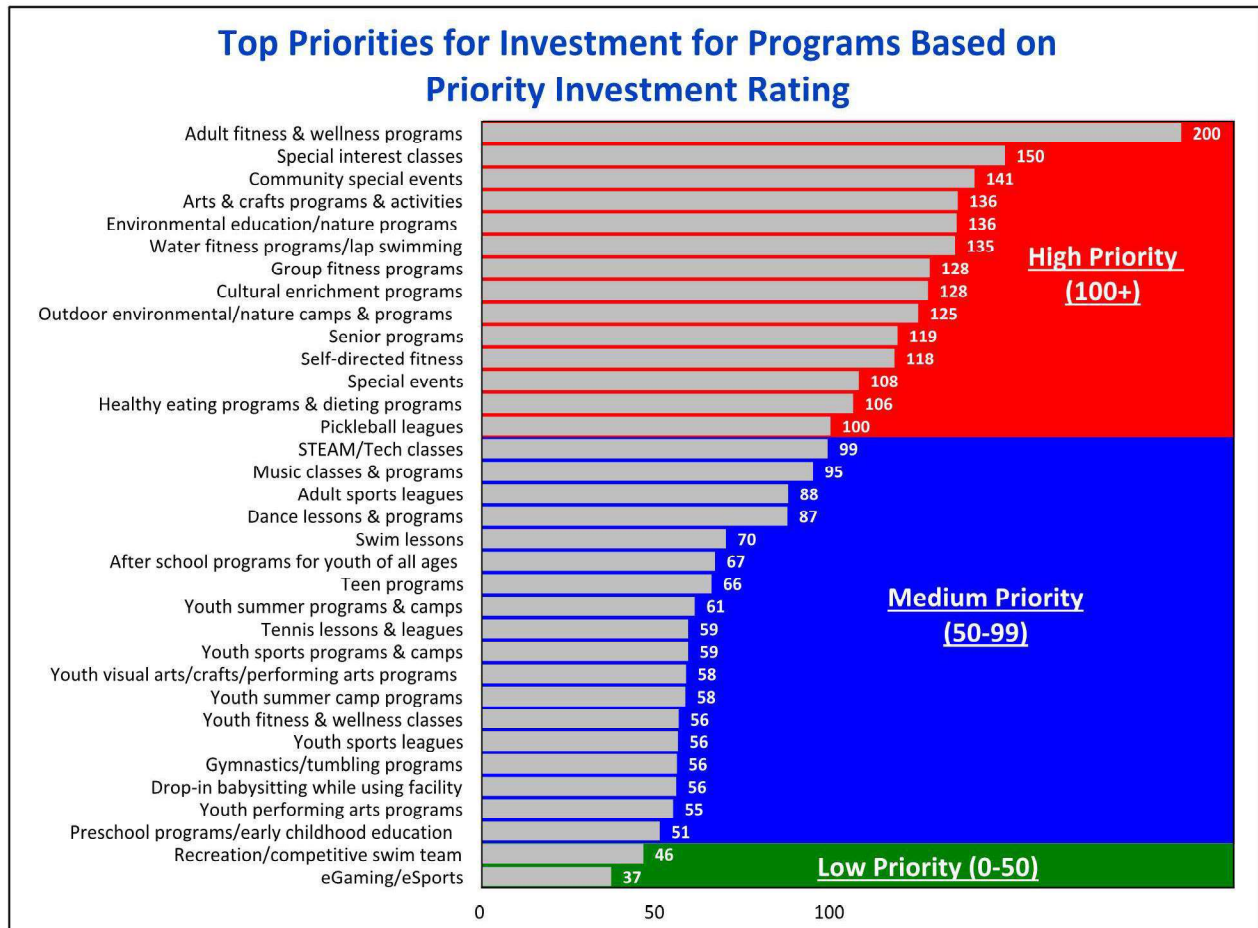
1. Adult fitness & wellness programs
2. Community special events
3. Water fitness programs/lap swimming
4. Senior programs

Priorities for Program Investments: The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on programs and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the programs. [Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of this report.]

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following amenities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Adult fitness & wellness programs (PIR= 200)
- Special interest classes (PIR= 150)
- Community special events (PIR= 141)
- Arts & crafts programs & activities (PIR= 136)
- Environmental education/nature programs (PIR= 136)
- Water fitness programs/lap swimming (PIR= 135)
- Group fitness programs (PIR= 128)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 34 programs assessed in the survey.

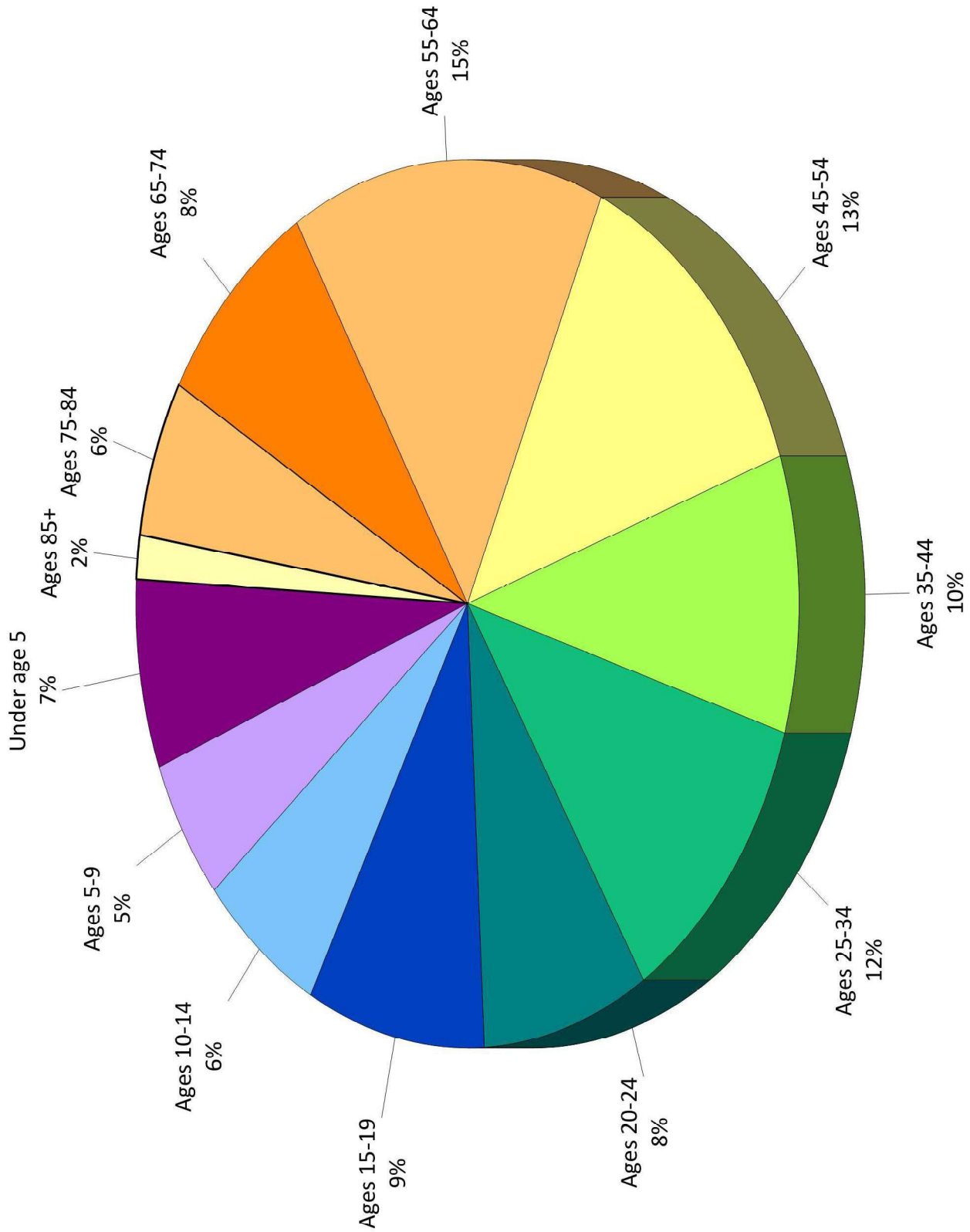




Charts and Graphs

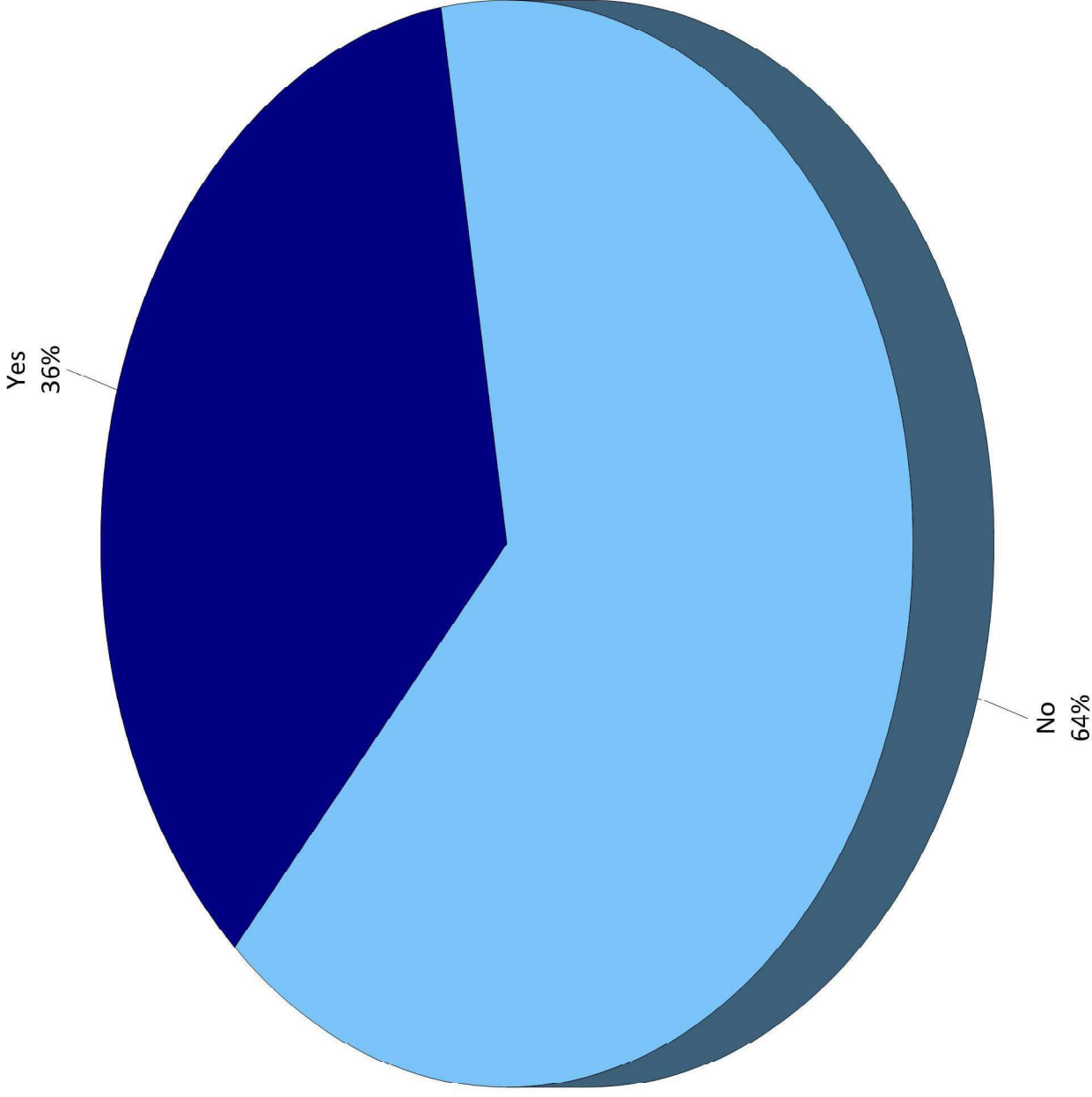
Q1. Including yourself, how many people in your household are...

by percentage of persons in household



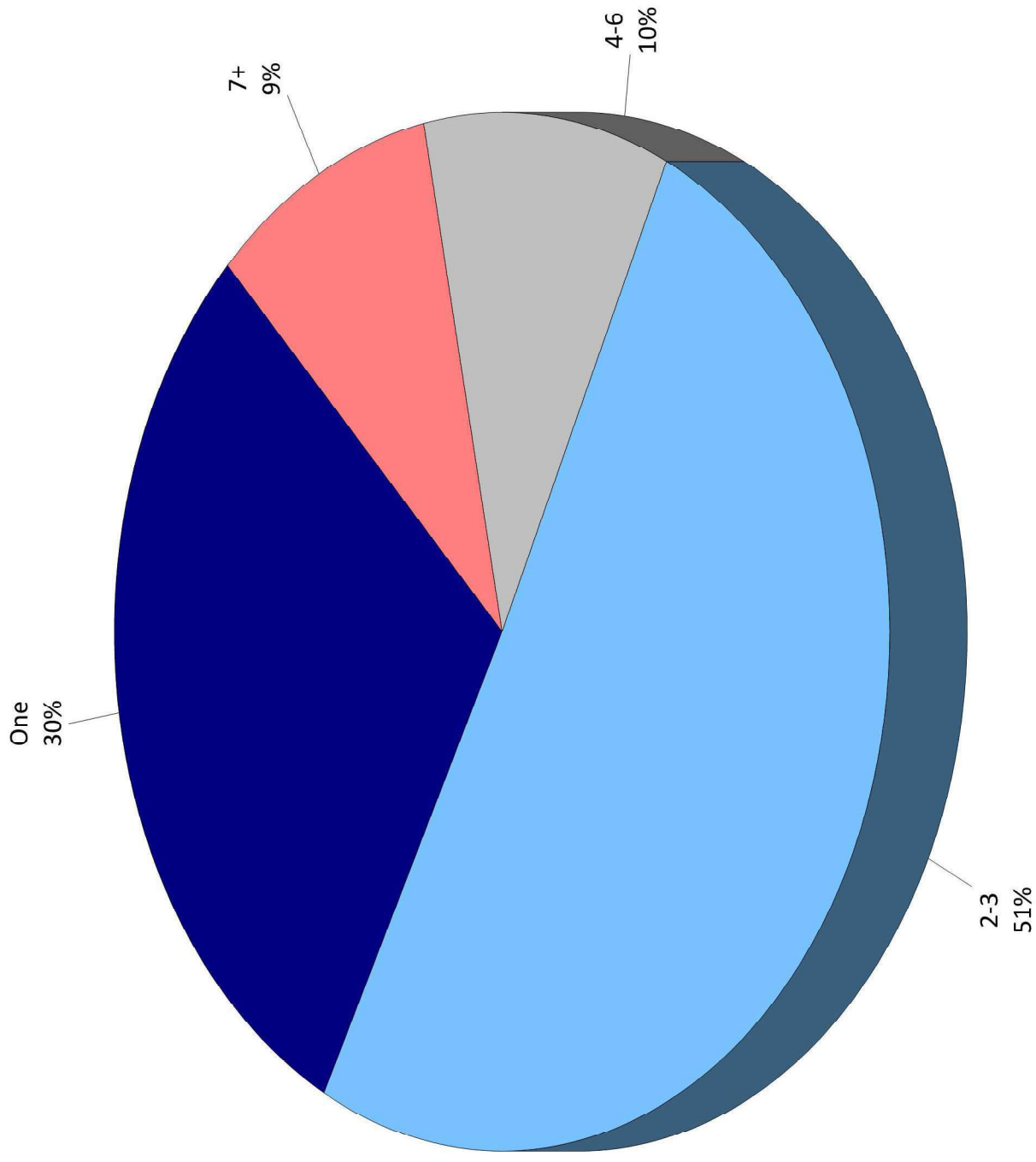
Q2. Has your household participated in any recreation programs/activities offered by the City of College Station in the past year?

by percentage of respondents



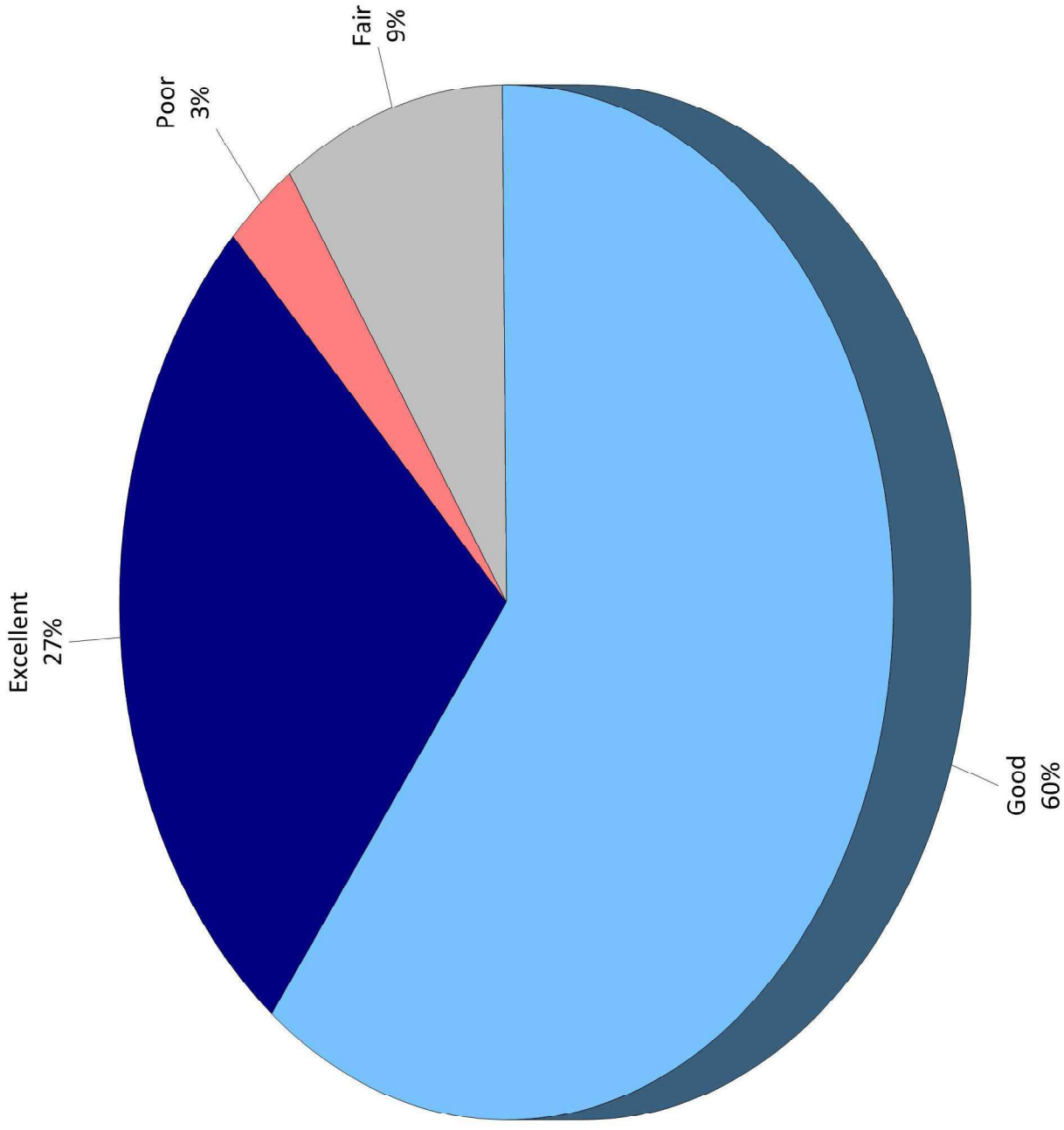
Q2a. How many programs and/or activities have you/your household participated in?

by percentage of respondents who responded "YES" to Q2 (excluding "not provided")



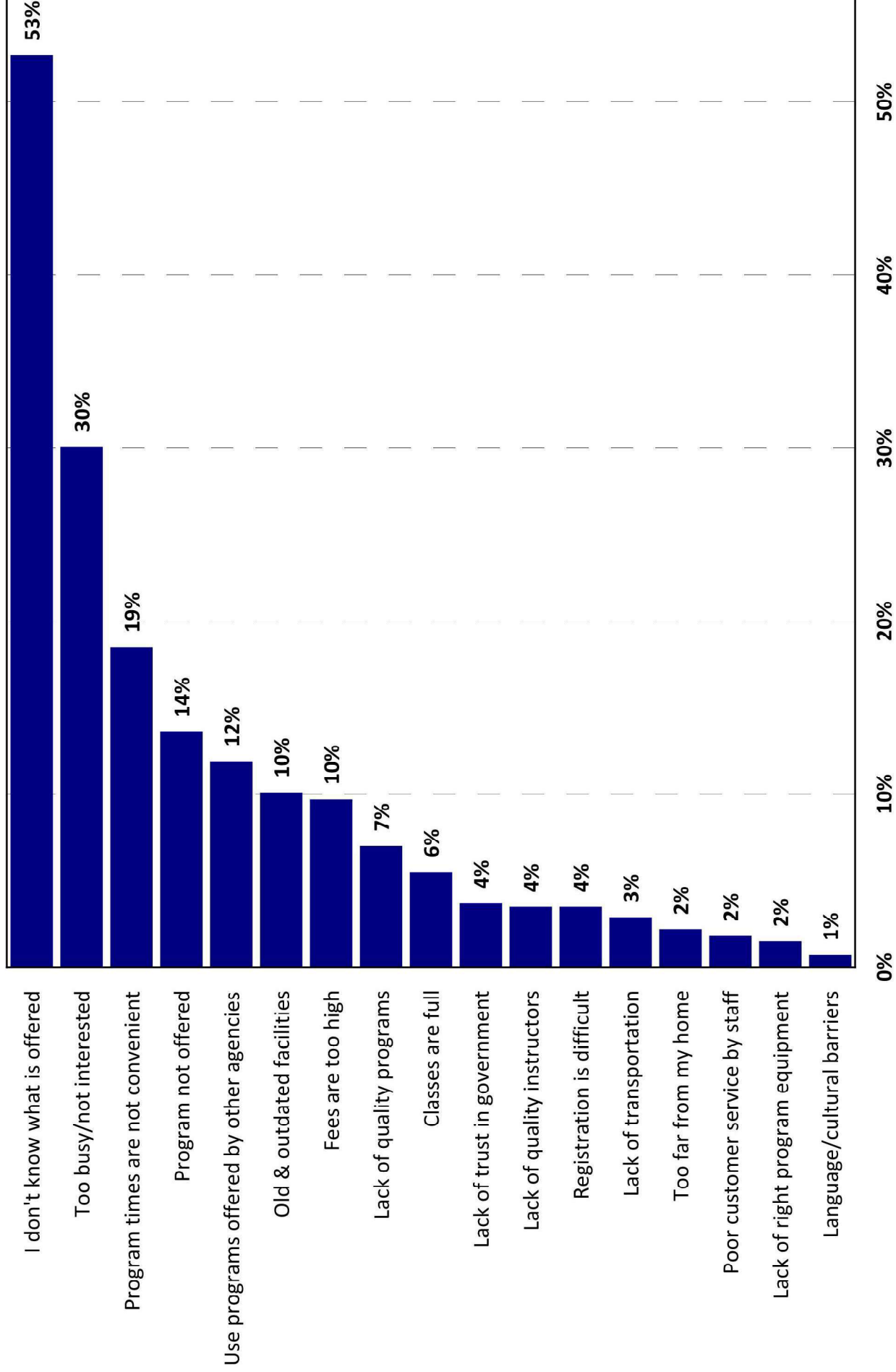
Q2b. How would you rate the overall quality of the City's recreation programs/activities that you/your household participated in?

by percentage of respondents who responded "YES" to Q2 (excluding "not provided")



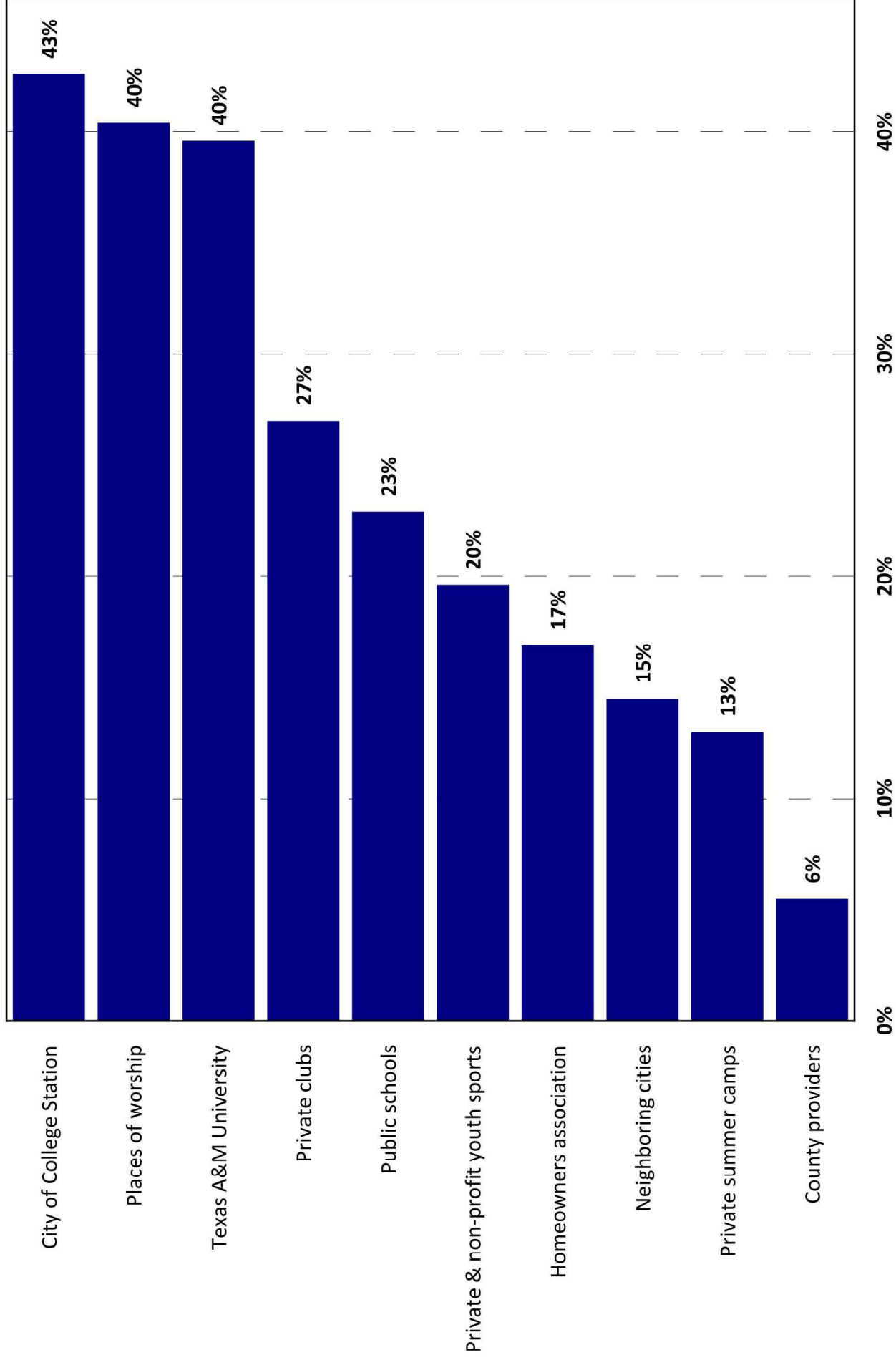
Q3. Please check all the reasons that prevent you/your household from participating in programs/activities more often.

by percentage of respondents who responded "NO" to Q2 (multiple selections could be made)

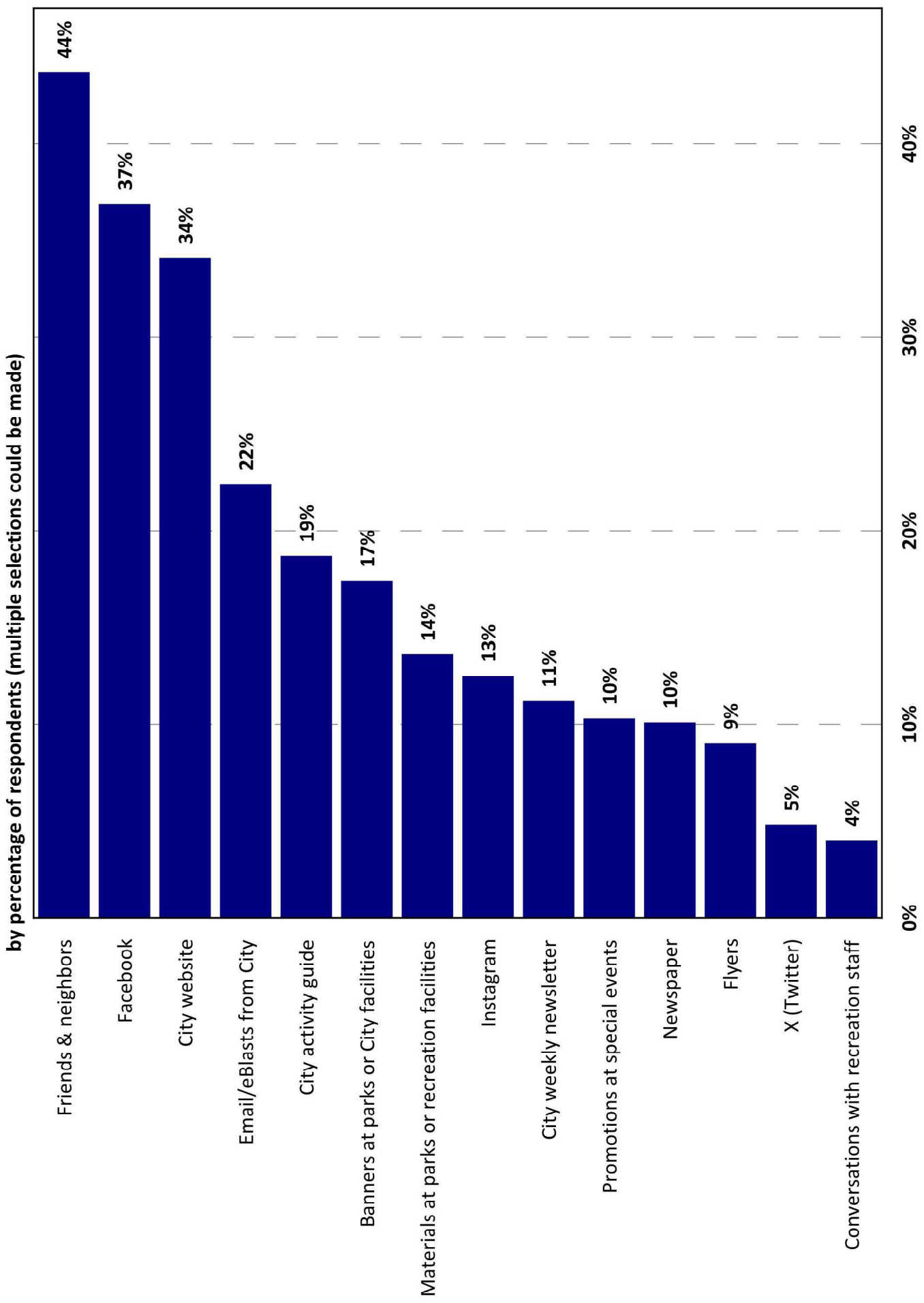


Q4. Please check all the organizations that you/your household have used for programs/activities in the past year.

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)

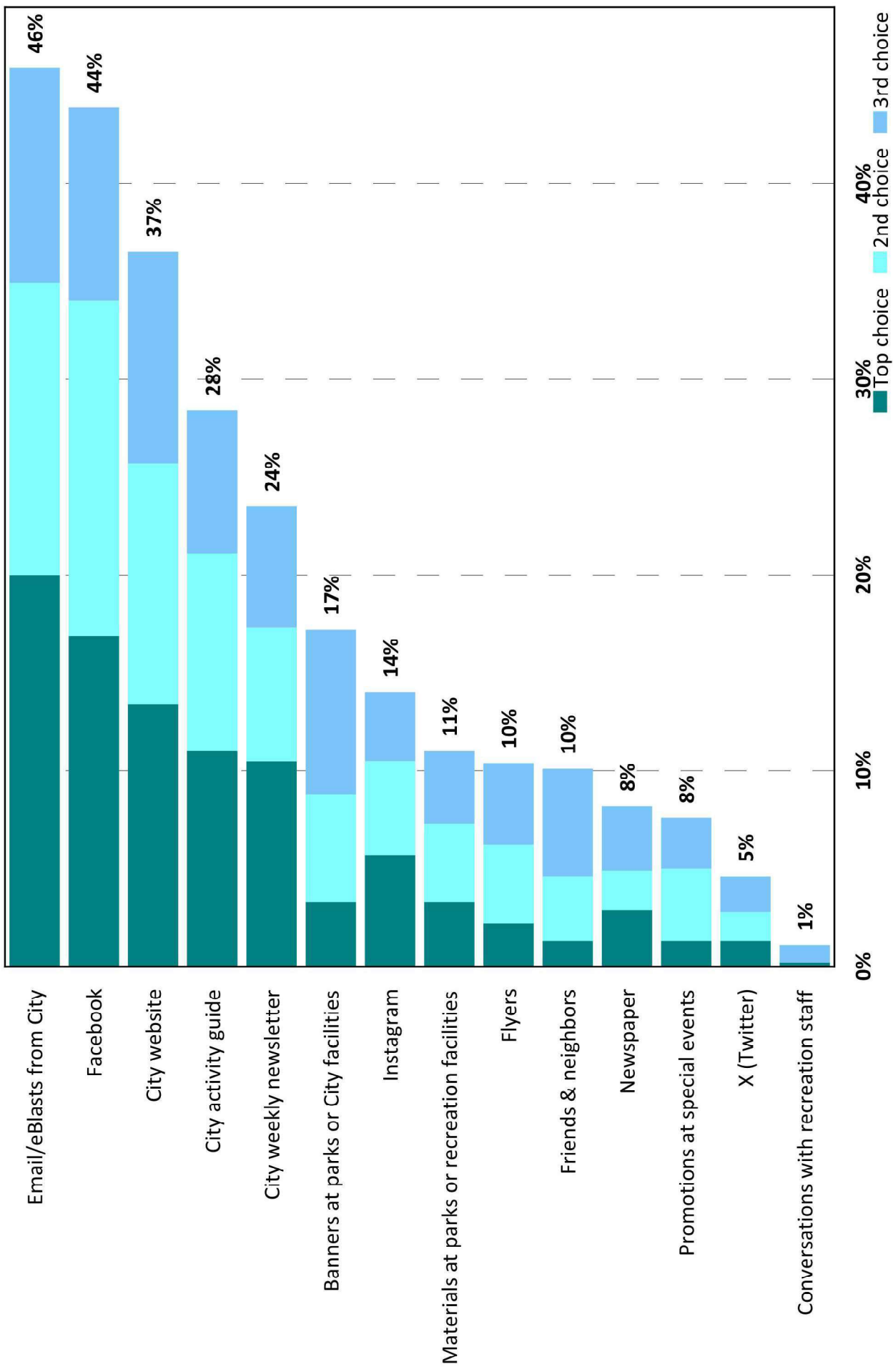


Q5. Please check all the ways you learn about the City's programs/activities.



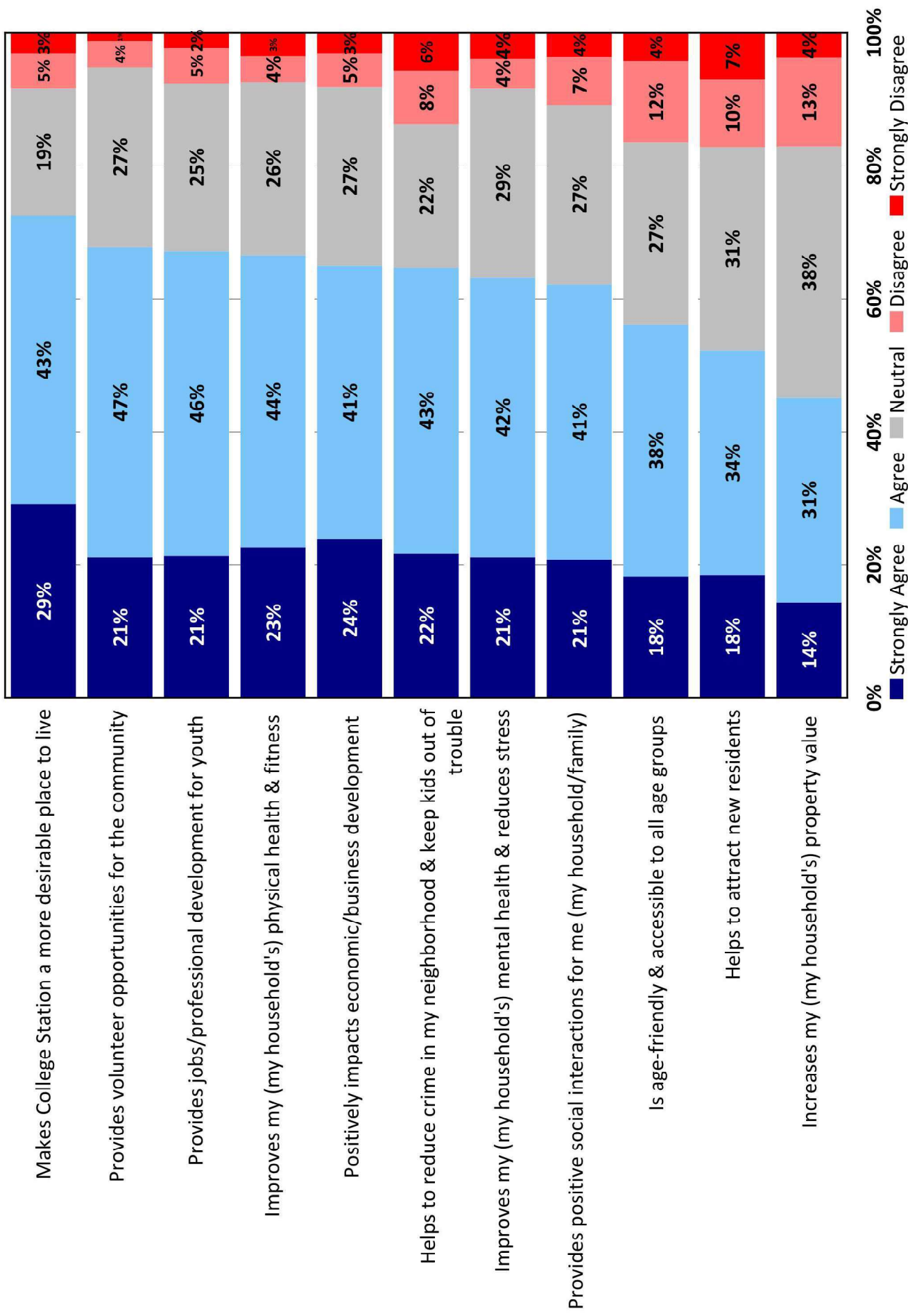
Q6. Which three methods of communication would you most prefer the City use to communicate with you about area recreation programs/activities?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



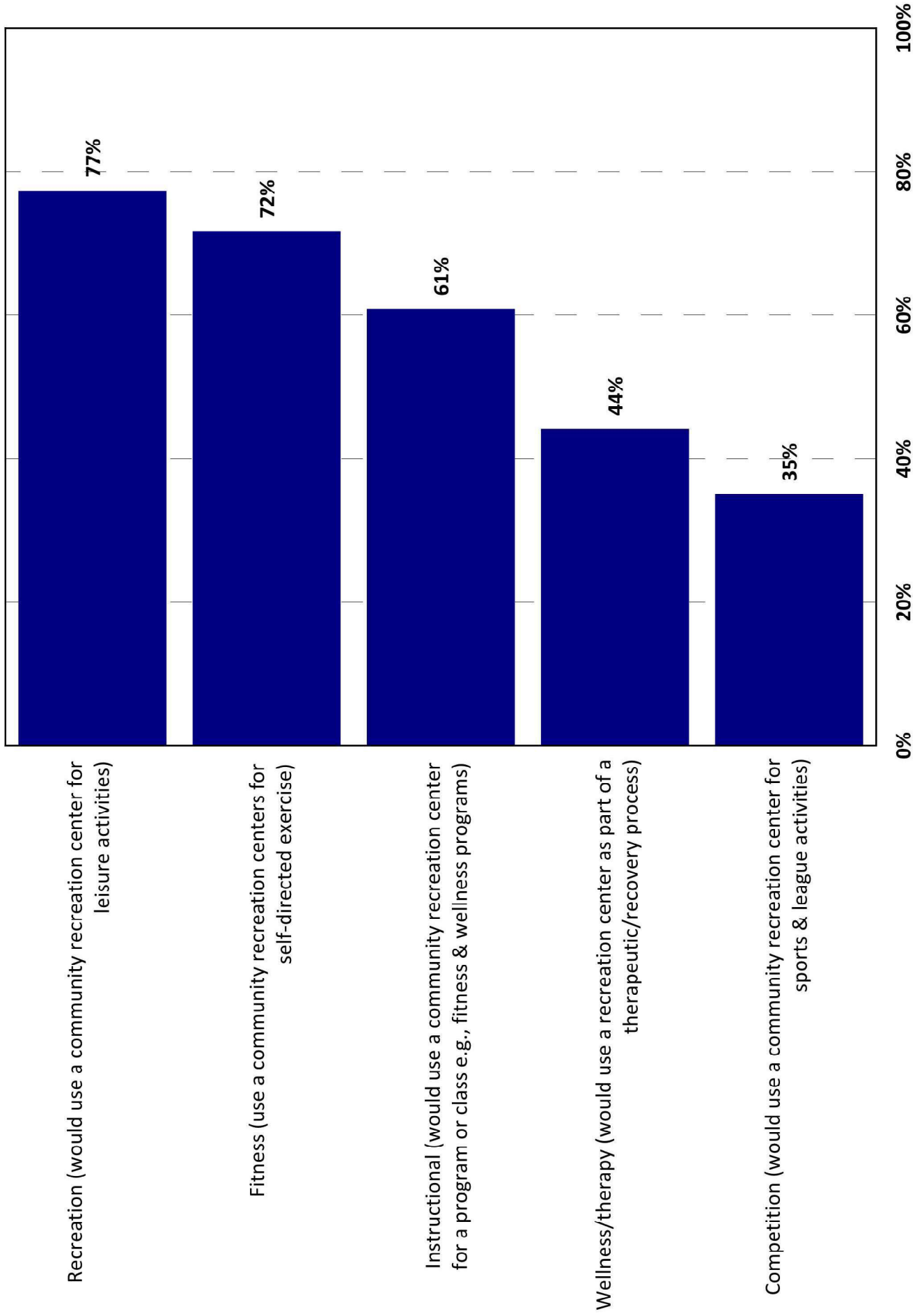
Q7. Please indicate your level of agreement with these potential benefits.

by percentage of respondents (excluding “don’t know”)



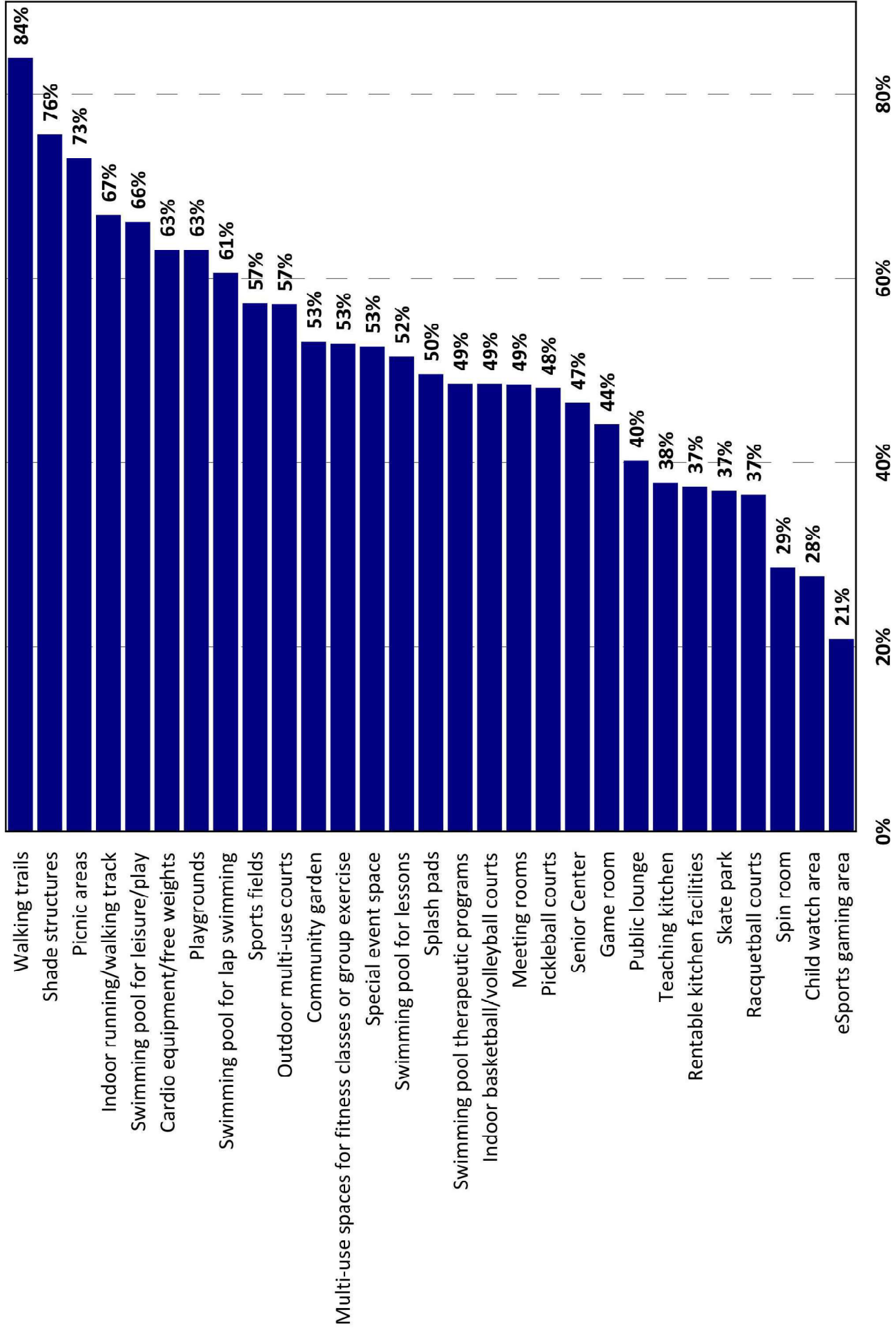
Q8. Please check all the groups you/your household fit into.

by percentage of respondents (excluding "none")



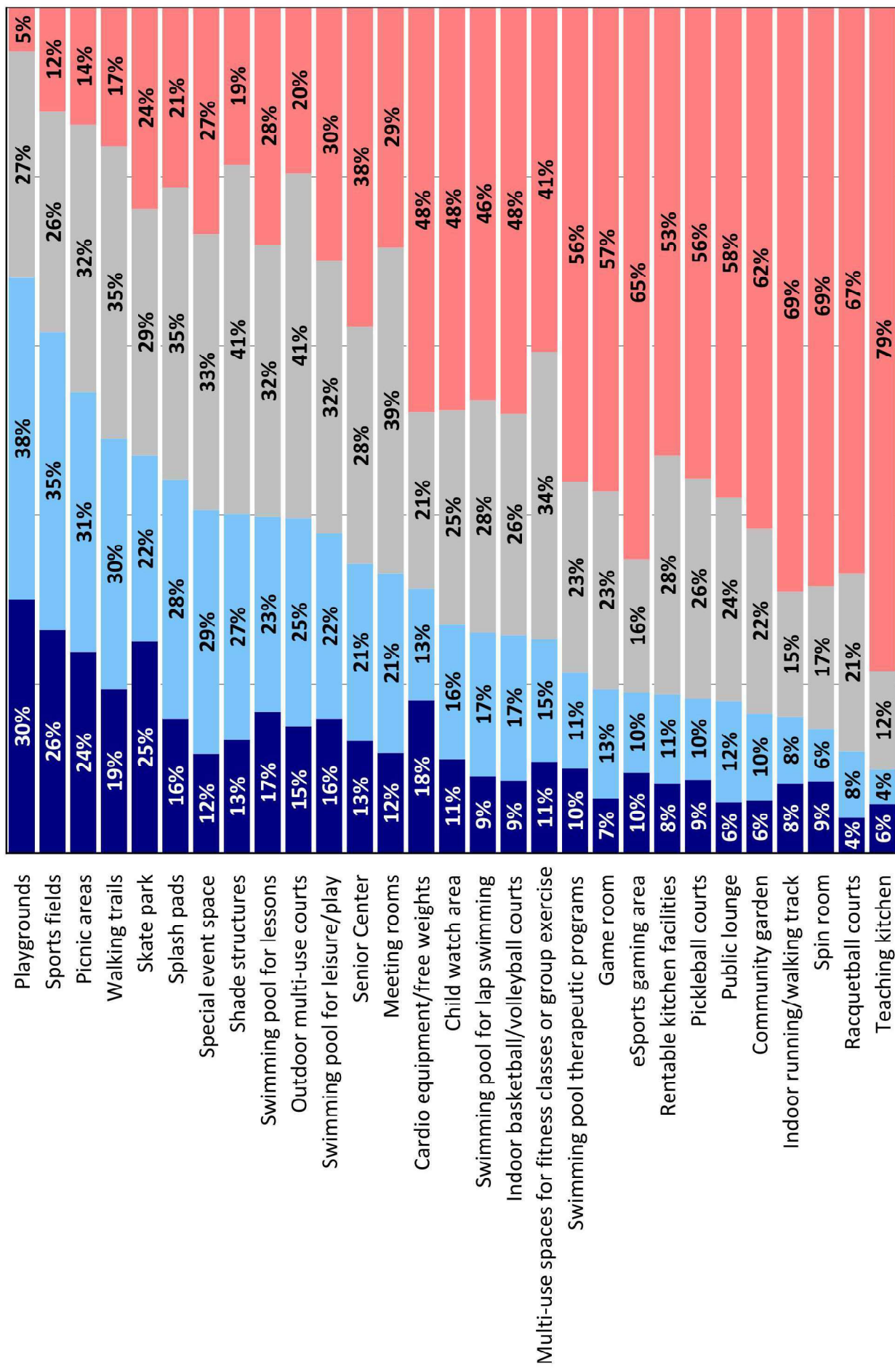
Q9. Need for spaces/amenities.

by percentage of respondents who indicated need



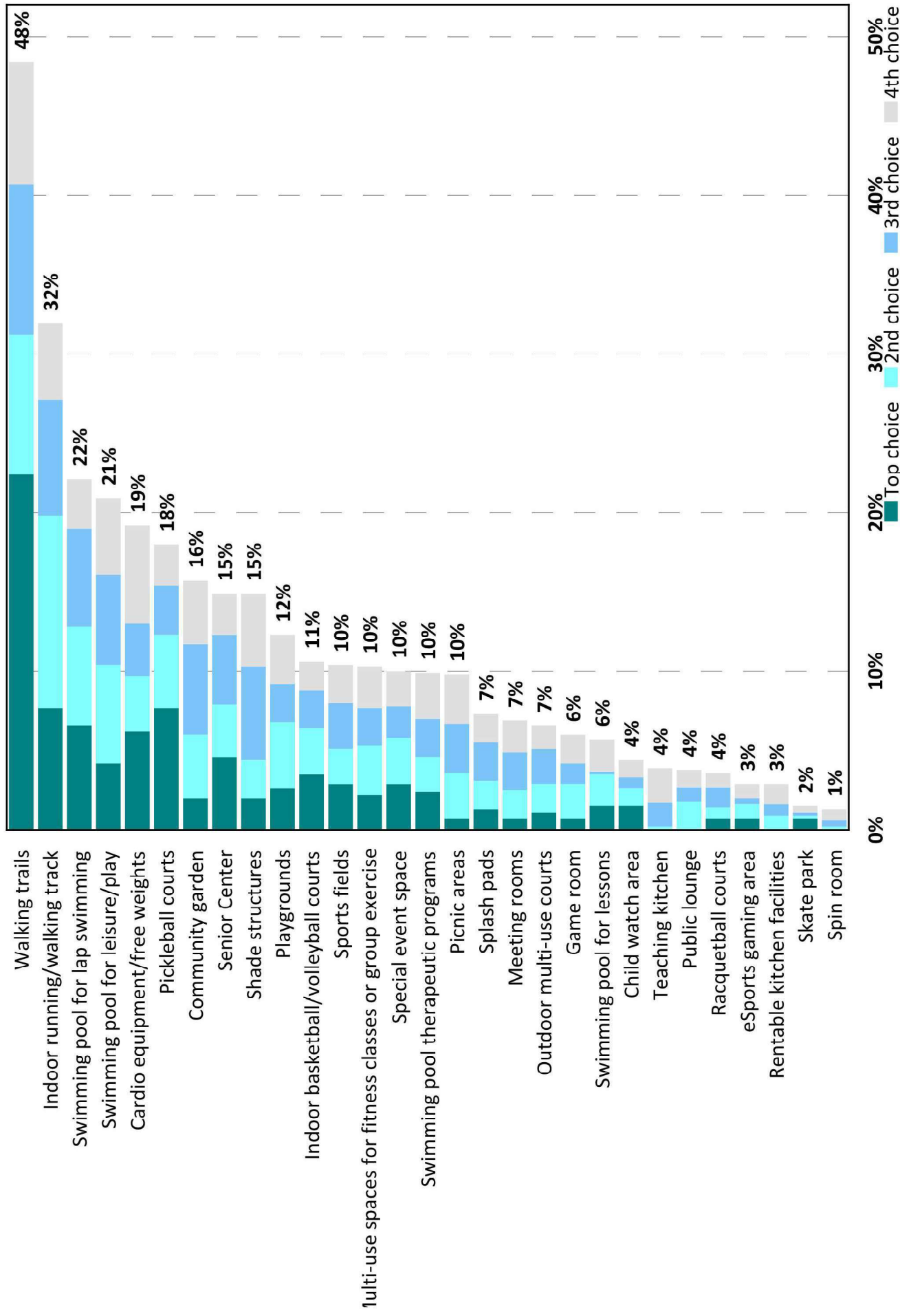
Q9. Please indicate how well your needs are met for spaces/amenities.

by percentage of respondents (excluding “no need”)



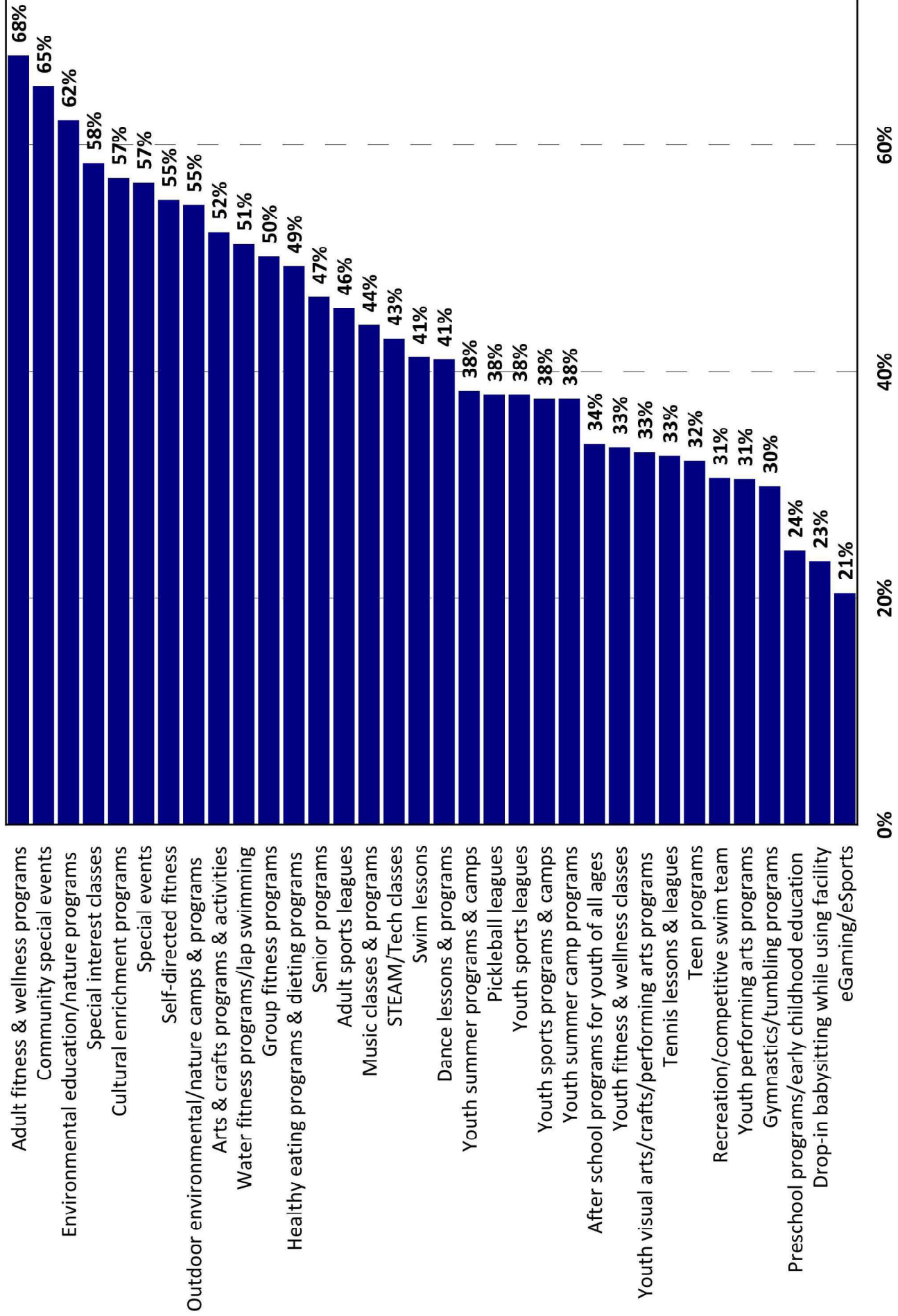
Q10. Which four spaces/amenities are most important to your household?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices



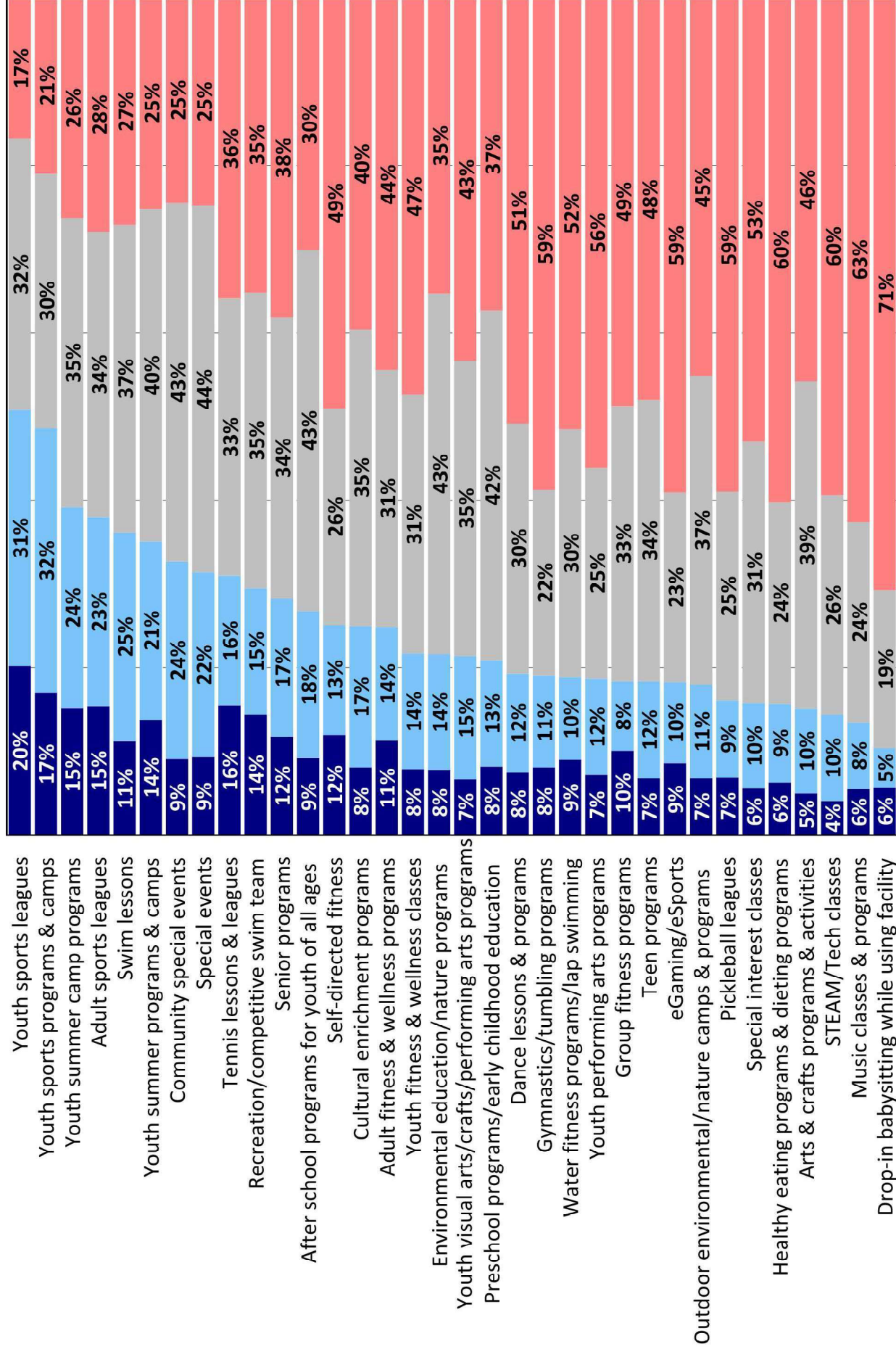
Q11. Need for programs/activities.

by percentage of respondents who indicated need



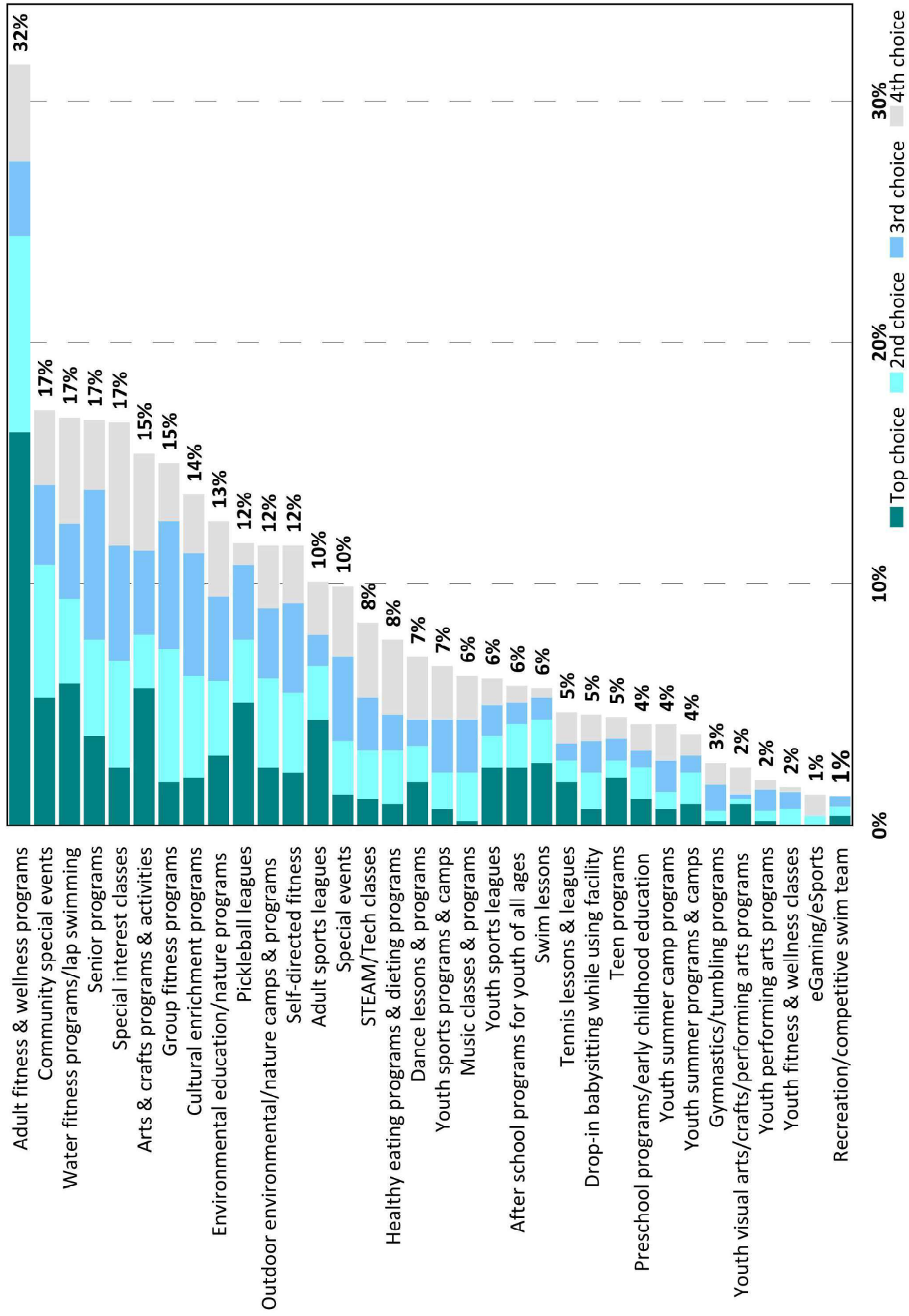
Q11. Please indicate how well your needs are met for programs/activities.

by percentage of respondents (excluding “no need”)



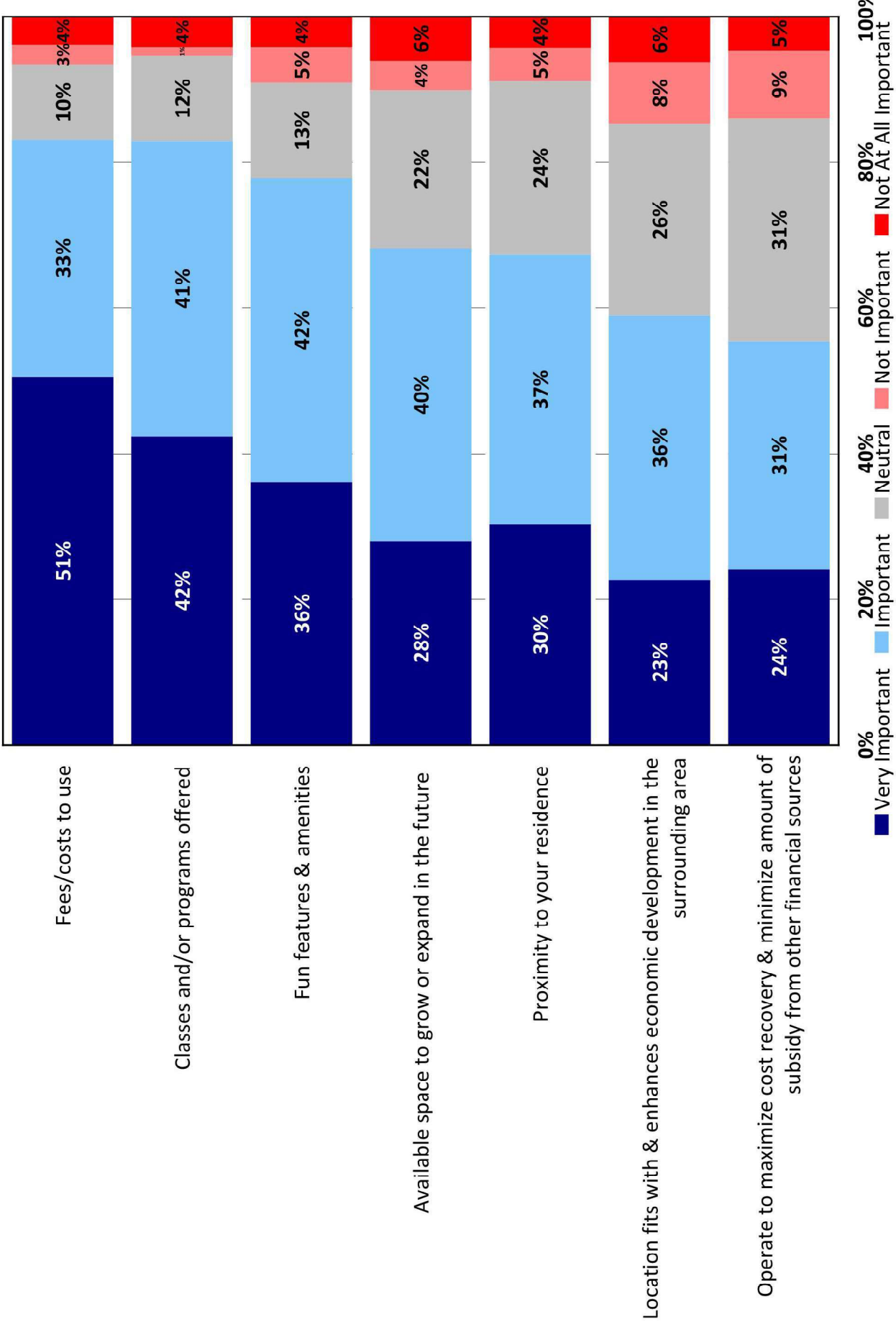
Q12. Which four programs/activities are most important to your household?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices



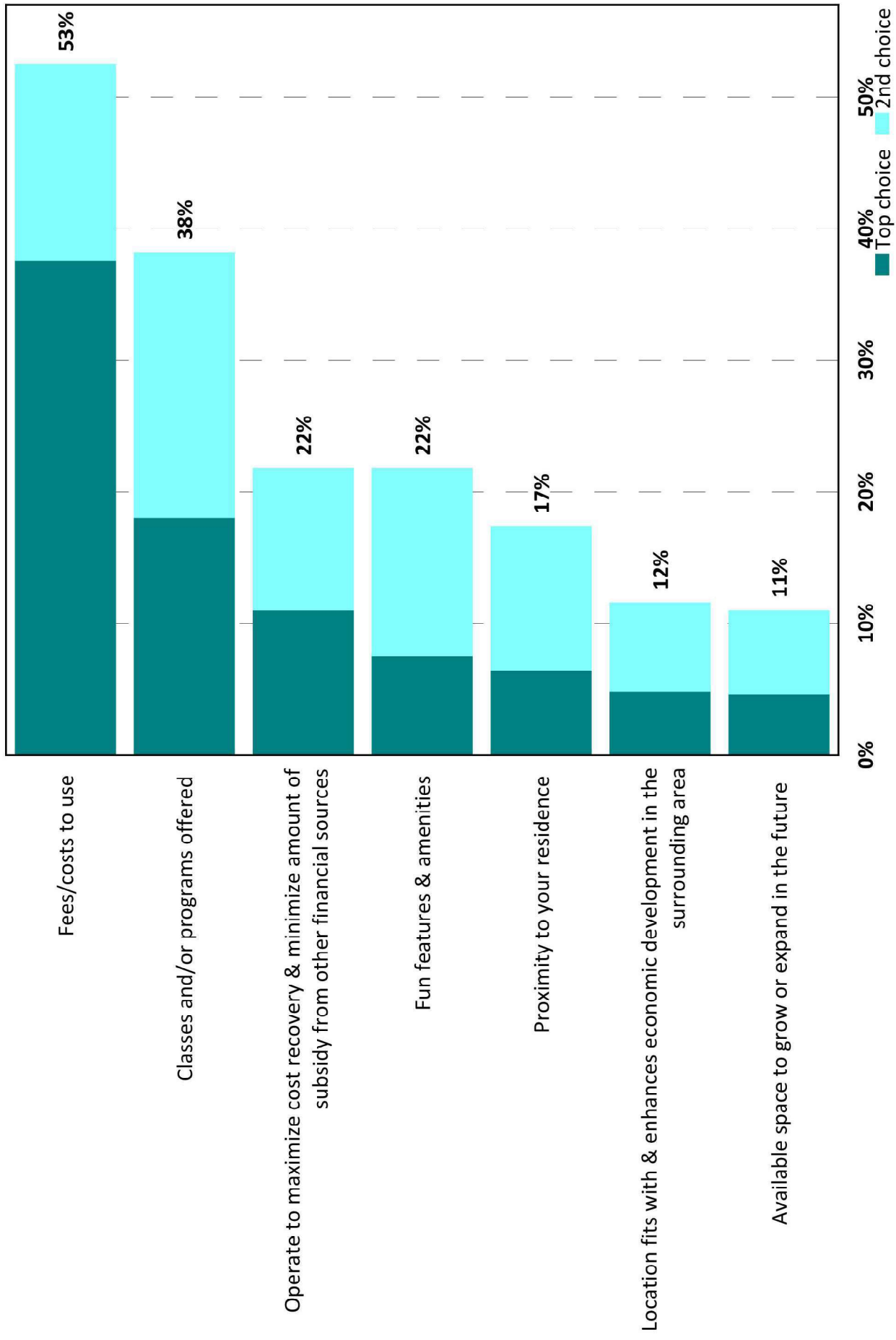
Q13. Please indicate how important each of the following are when thinking about indoor recreation.

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



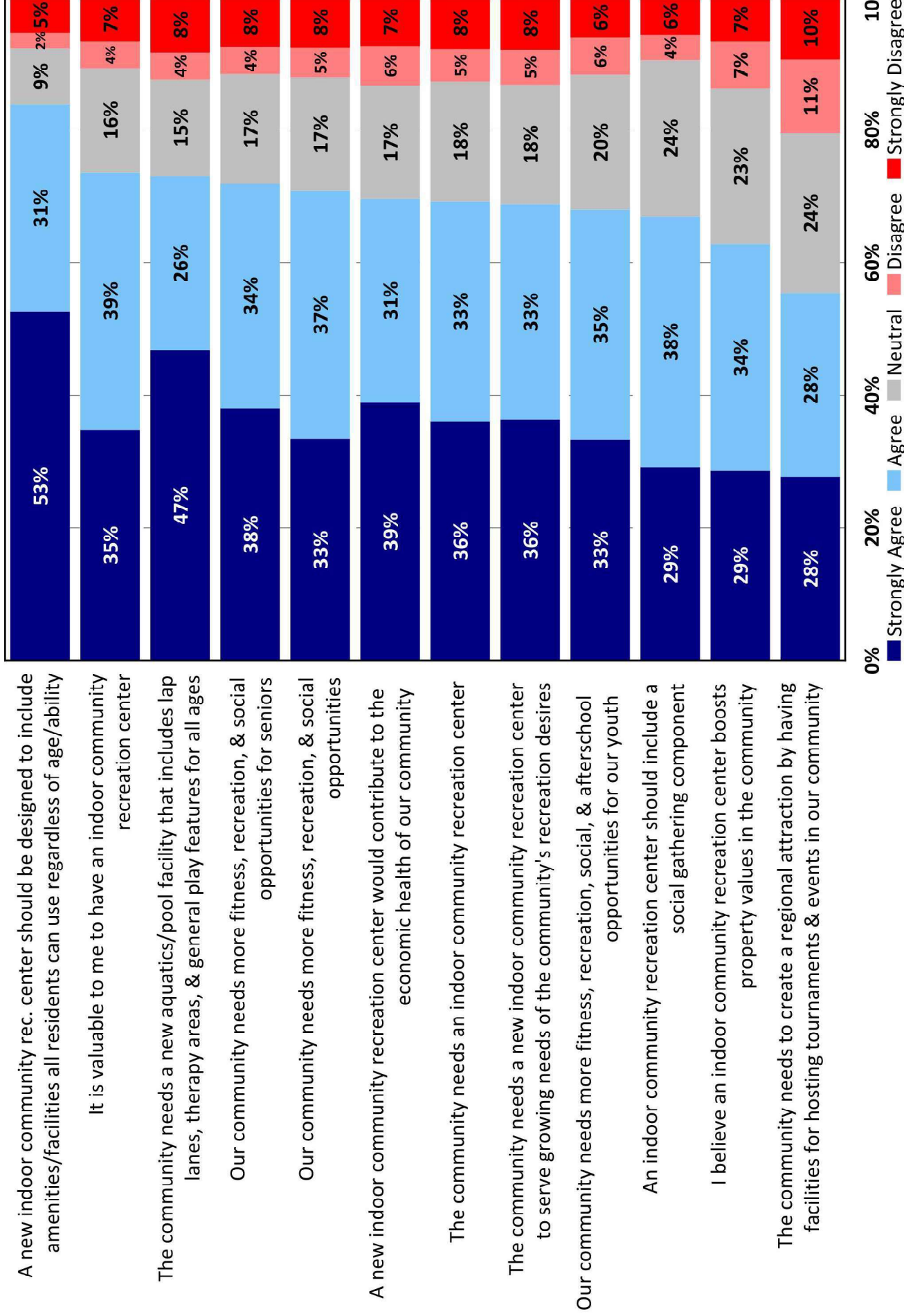
Q14. Which two of the items should the City place the greatest emphasis on when planning for the future of indoor recreation centers?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top two choices



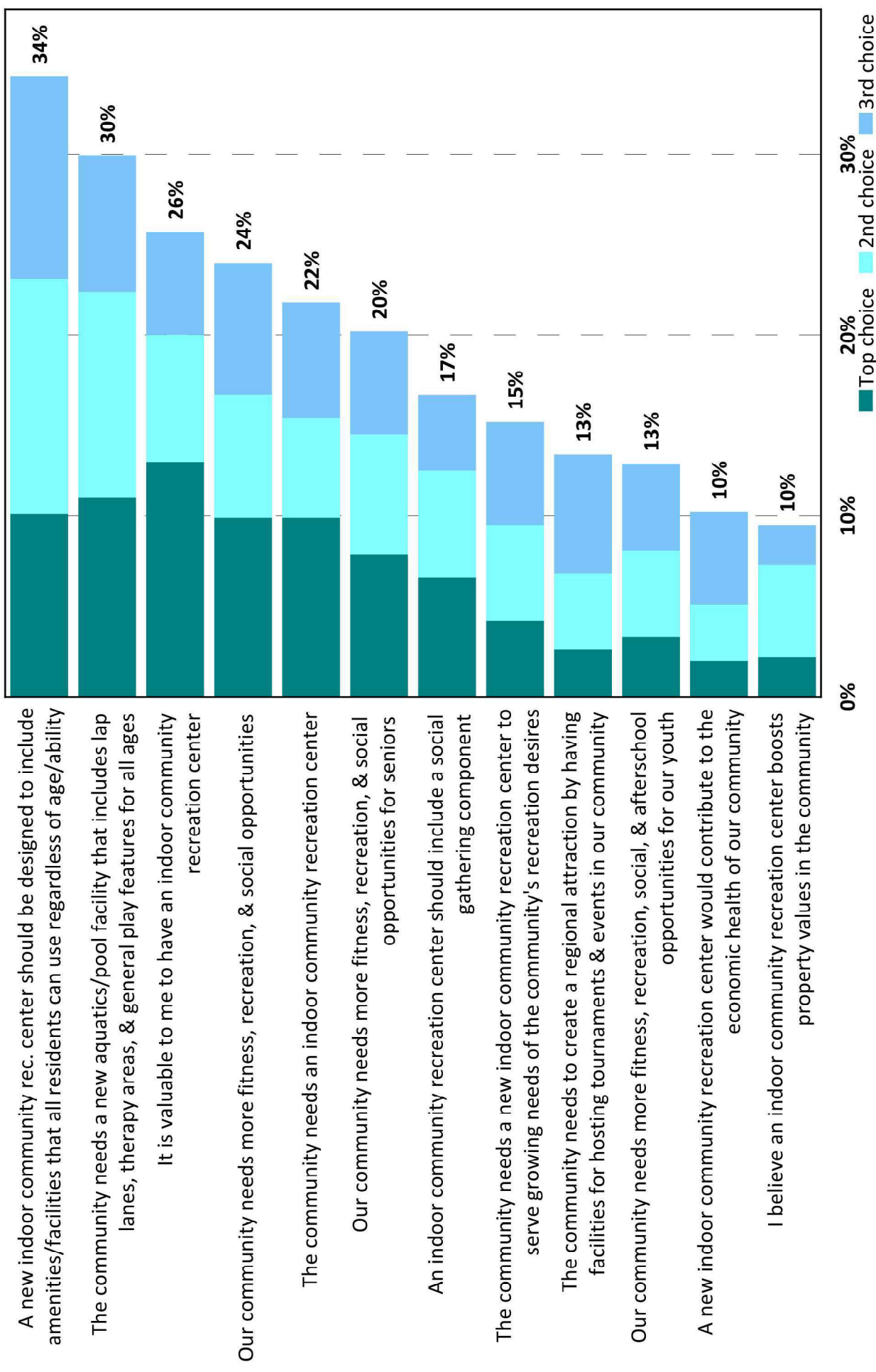
Q15. Please indicate your level of agreement with these statements.

by percentage of respondents (excluding “don’t know”)



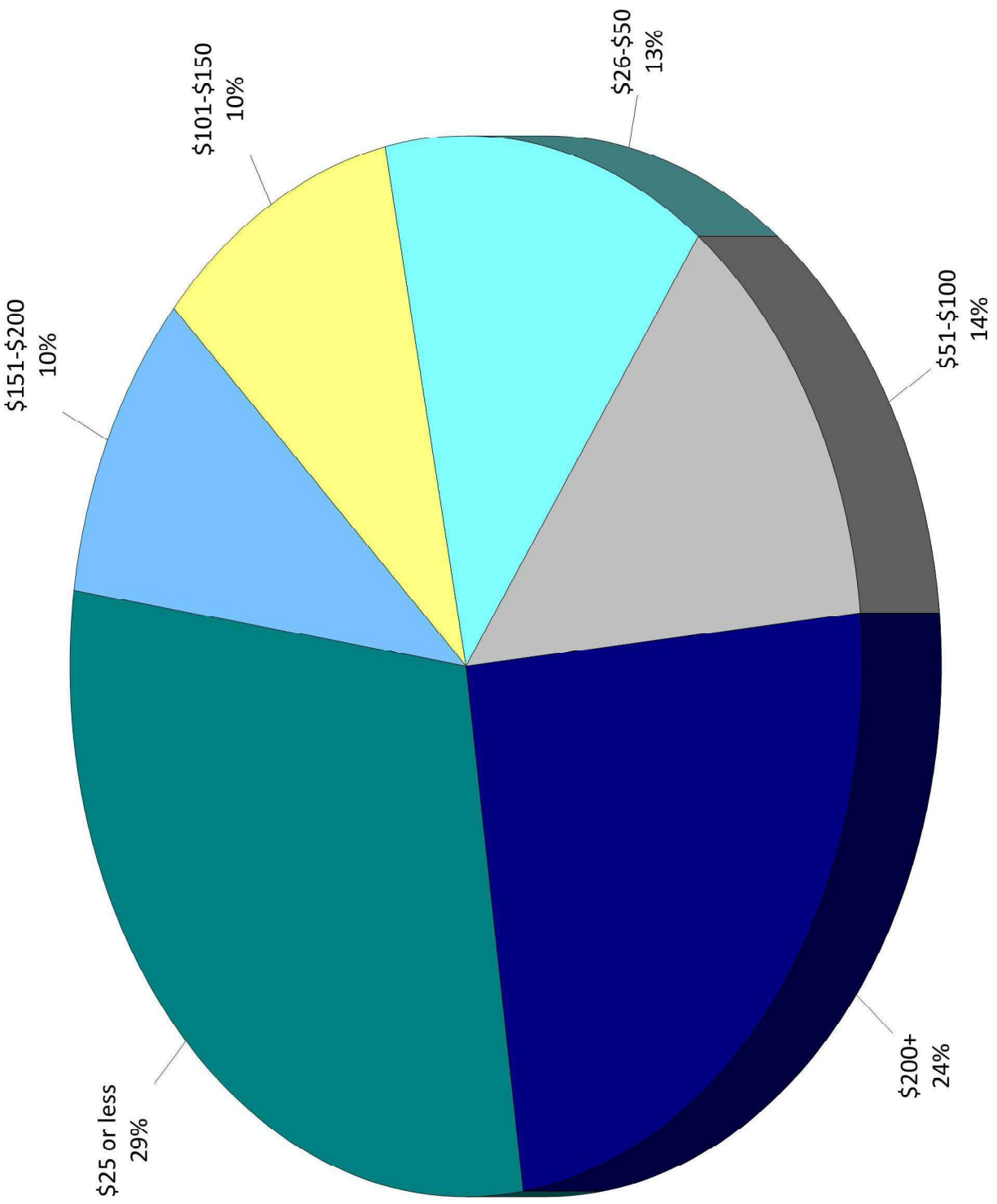
Q16. Which three of the items do you think are most important when thinking about a new indoor community recreation center?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



Q17. How much money does your household spend on recreation services on average in a typical year?

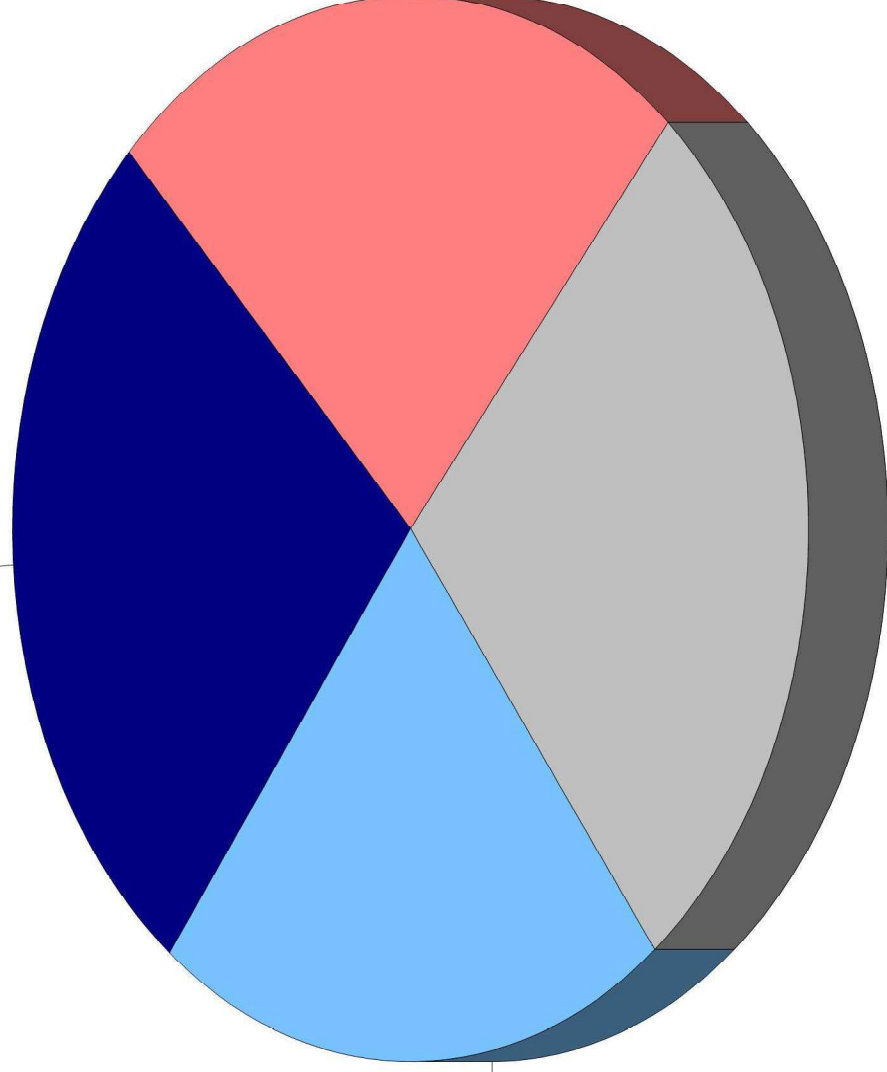
by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



Q18. If you had a budget of \$100 for indoor recreation services, how would you allocate the funds among these categories?

by percentage of respondents

Aquatics leisure swim, lap swim, learn to swim, water exercise, etc.
\$27.19



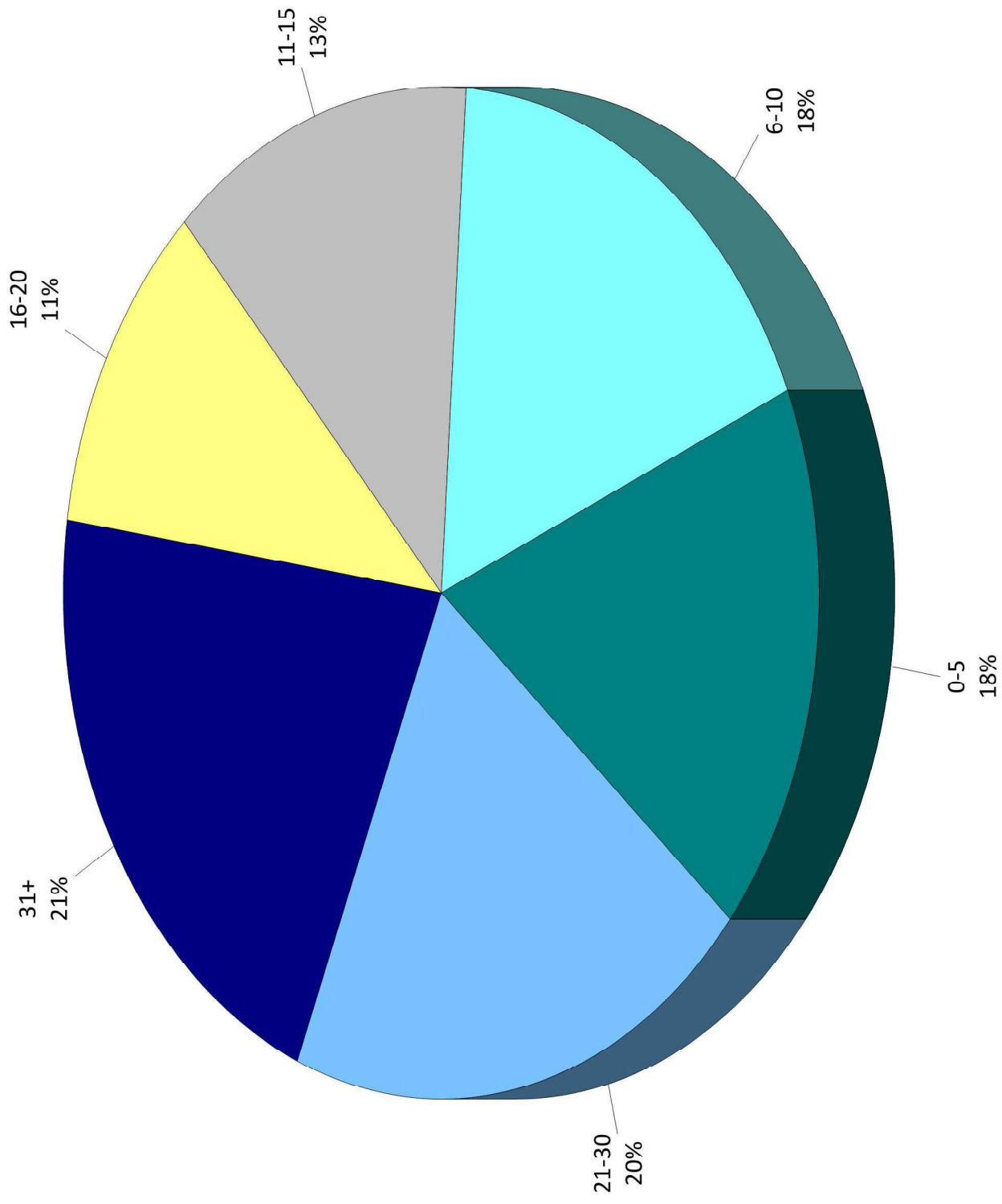
Fitness/wellness weight/cardio space, wellness, stretching, boot camp classes, etc.
\$20.77

Programs & activities group exercise, yoga, youth/adult sports, etc.
\$23.68

Recreation spaces court space, walking track, classrooms, multipurpose rooms, indoor playground, senior/youth space, rental spaces, etc.
\$28.37

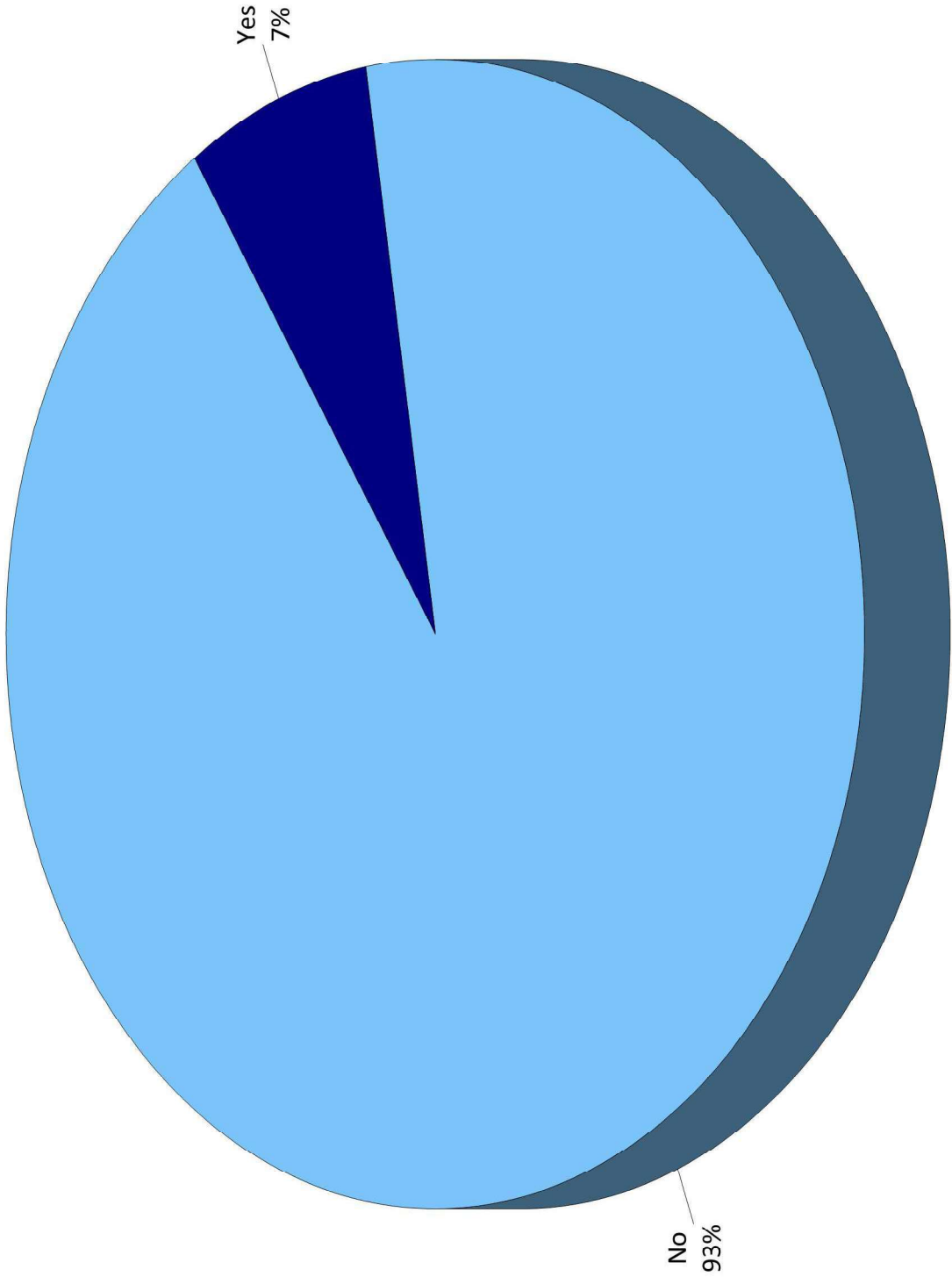
Q19. How many years have you lived in the City of College Station?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



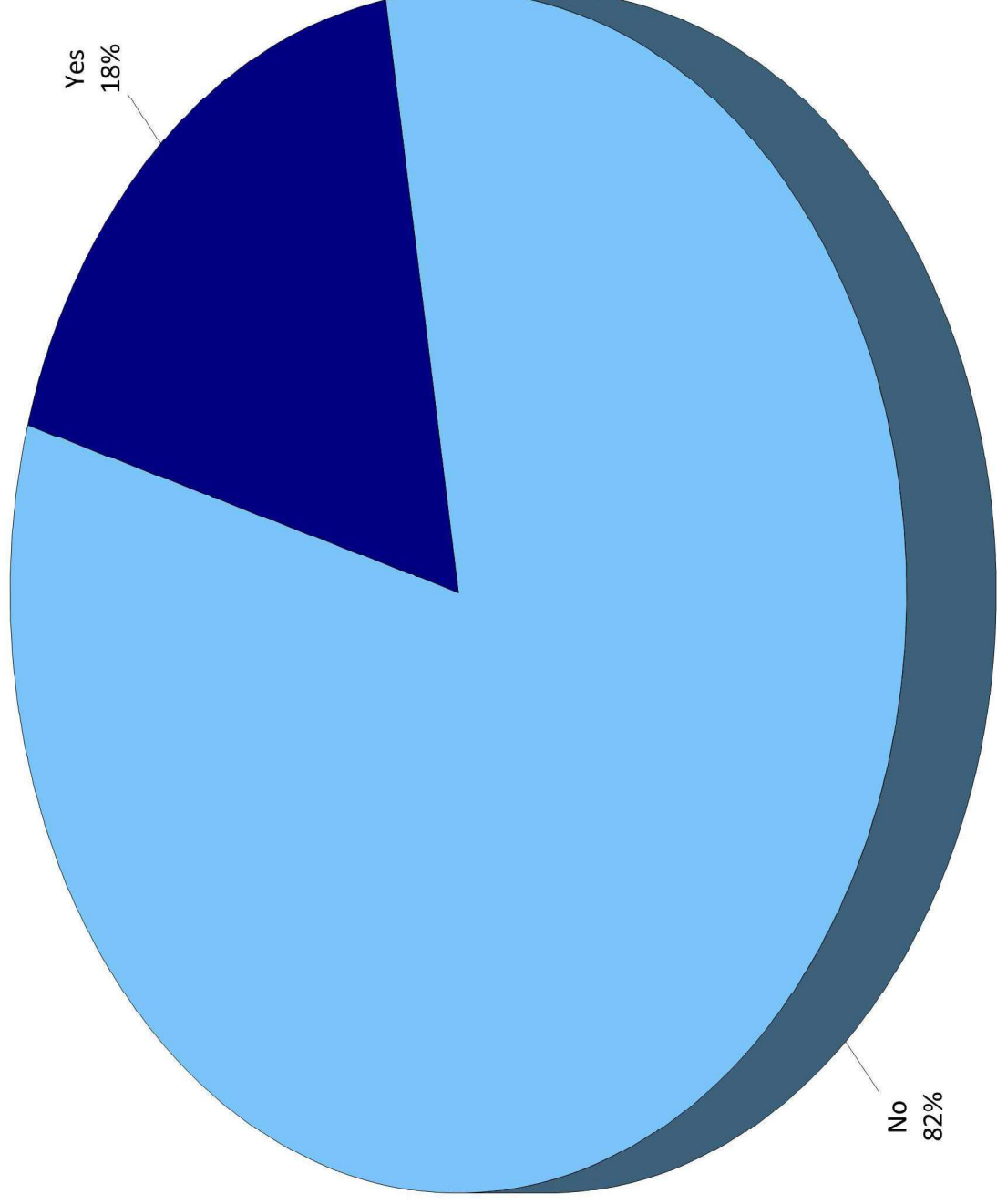
Q20. Are you a Texas A&M Student?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



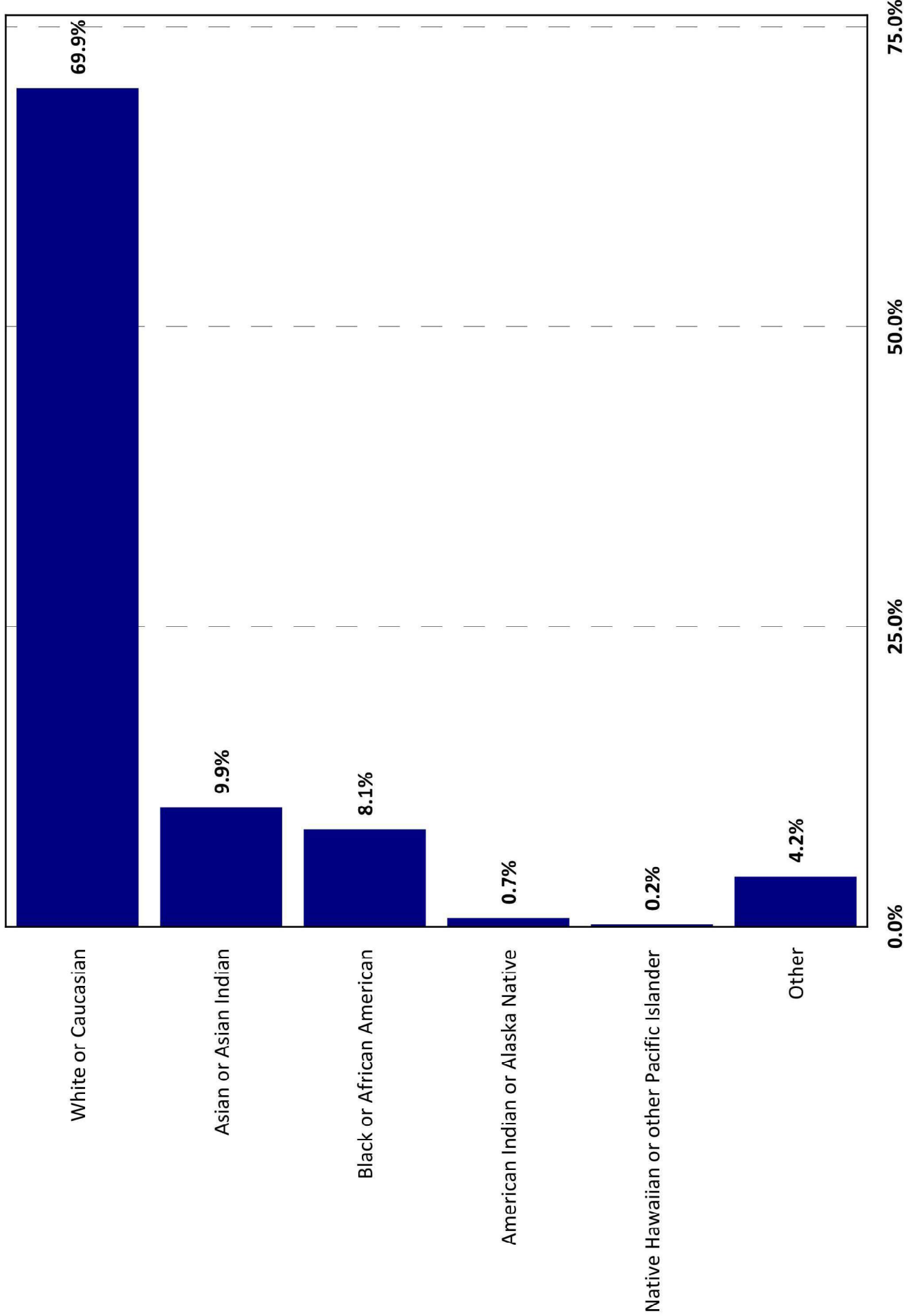
Q21. Are you/your household of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x ancestry?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



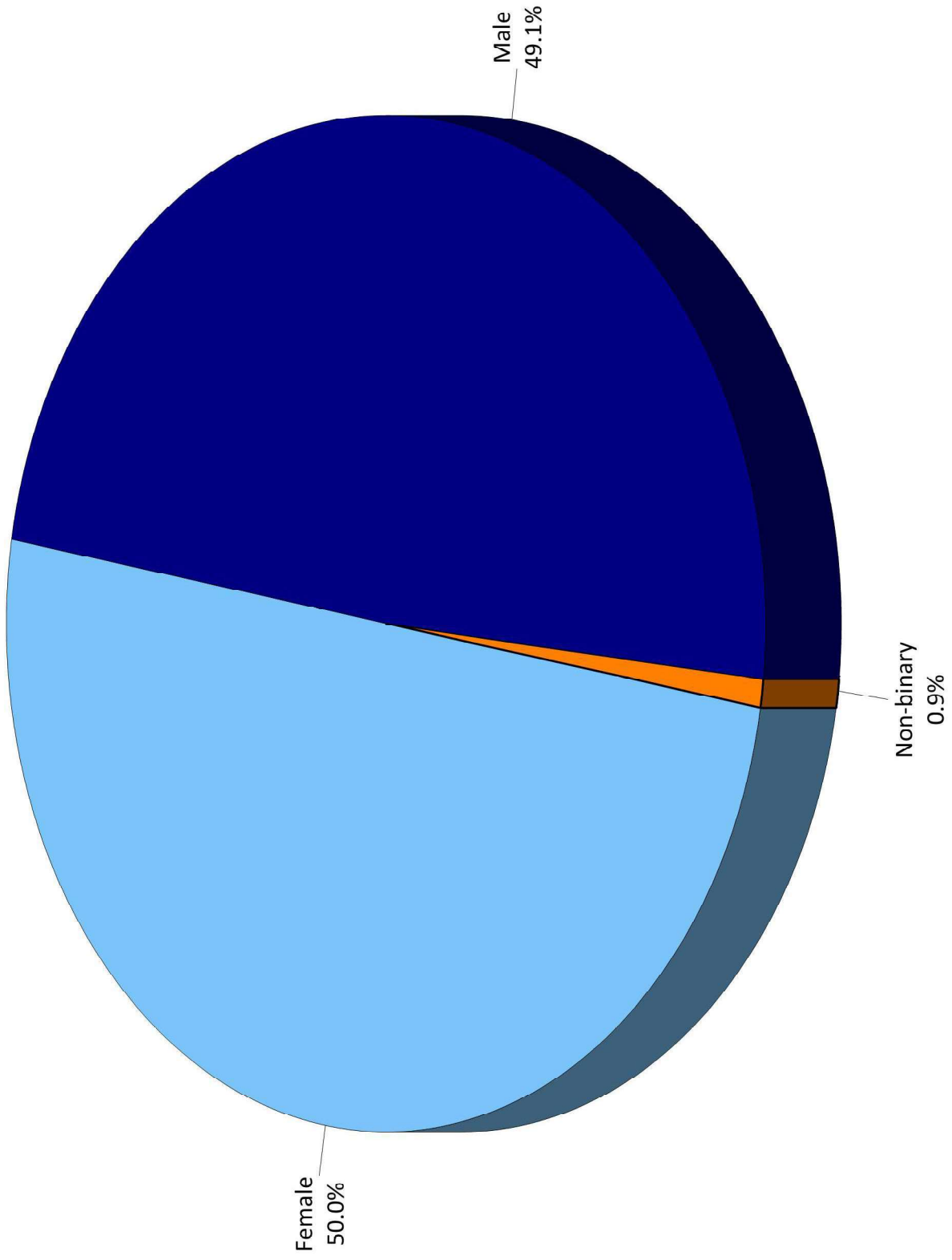
Q22. Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?

by percentage of respondents



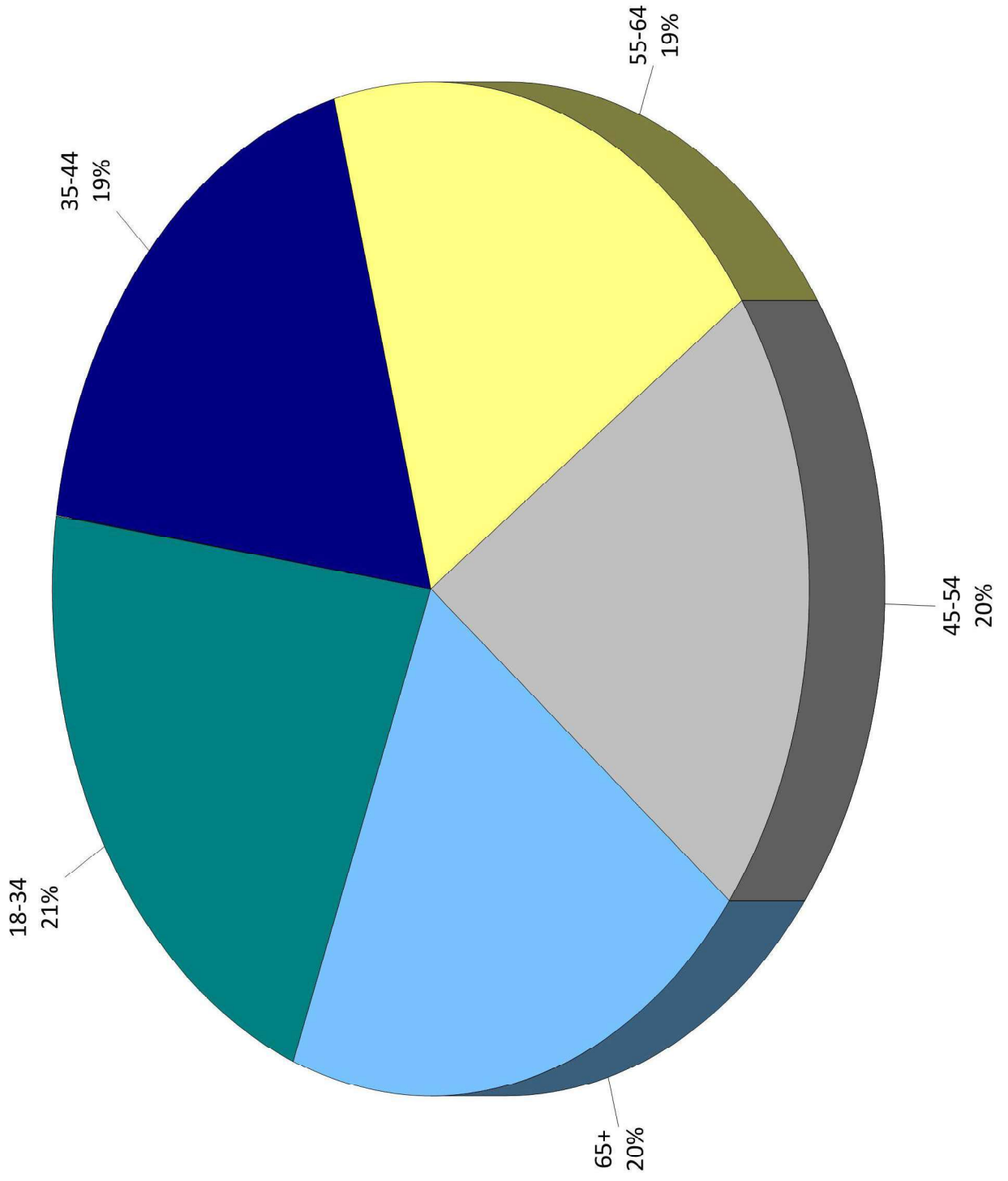
Q23. Your gender:

by percentage of respondents (excluding "prefer not to answer/not provided")



Q24. Your age:

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")





2

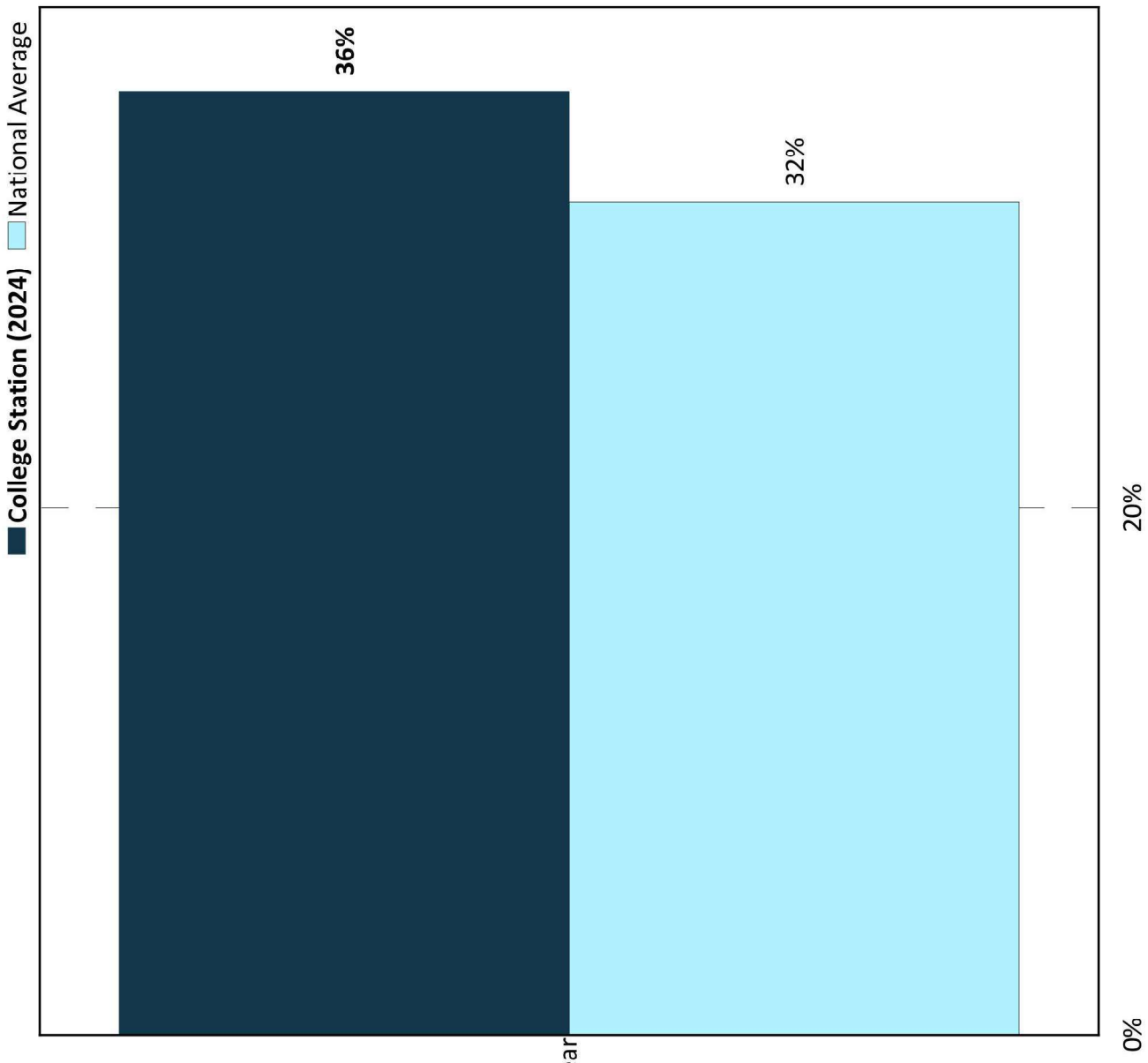
Benchmarks

National Benchmarks

Note: The benchmarking data contained in this report is protected intellectual property. Any reproduction of the benchmarking information in this report by persons or organizations not directly affiliated with College Station Parks and Recreation is not authorized without written consent from ETC Institute.

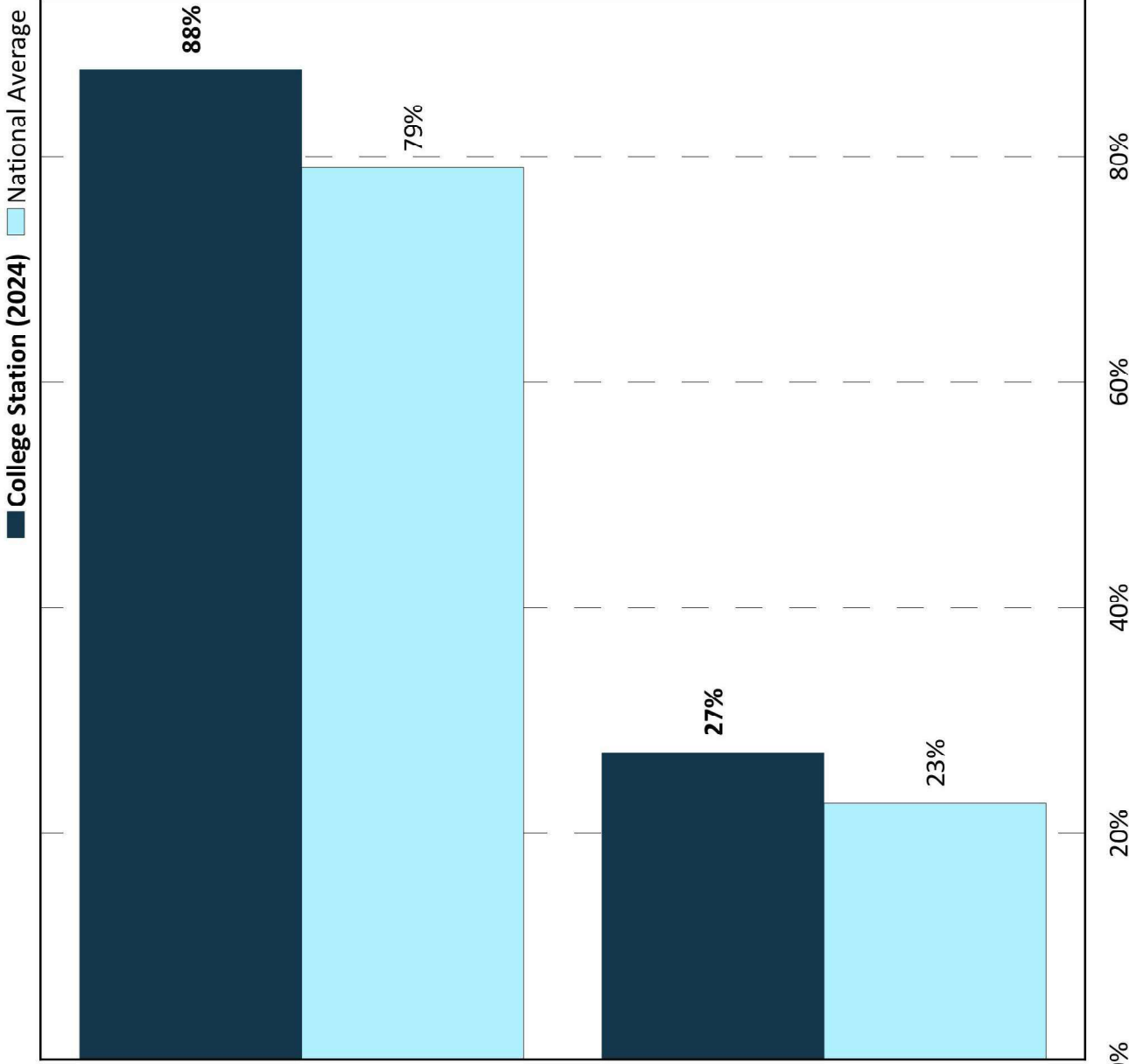
Usage of Programs

by % of respondents



Ratings

by % of respondents

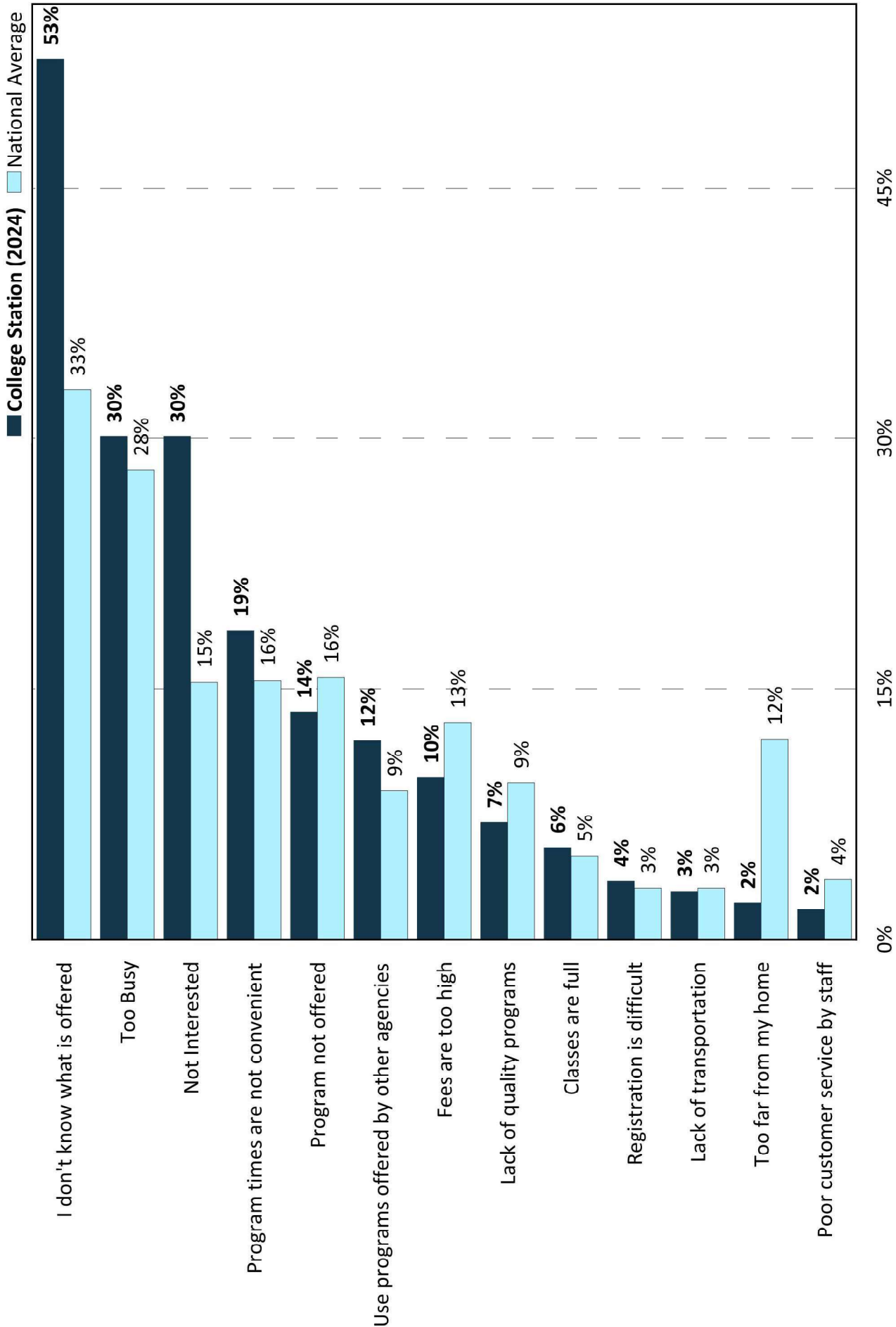


Rating the quality of programs "excellent"/"good"

Rating the quality of programs "excellent"

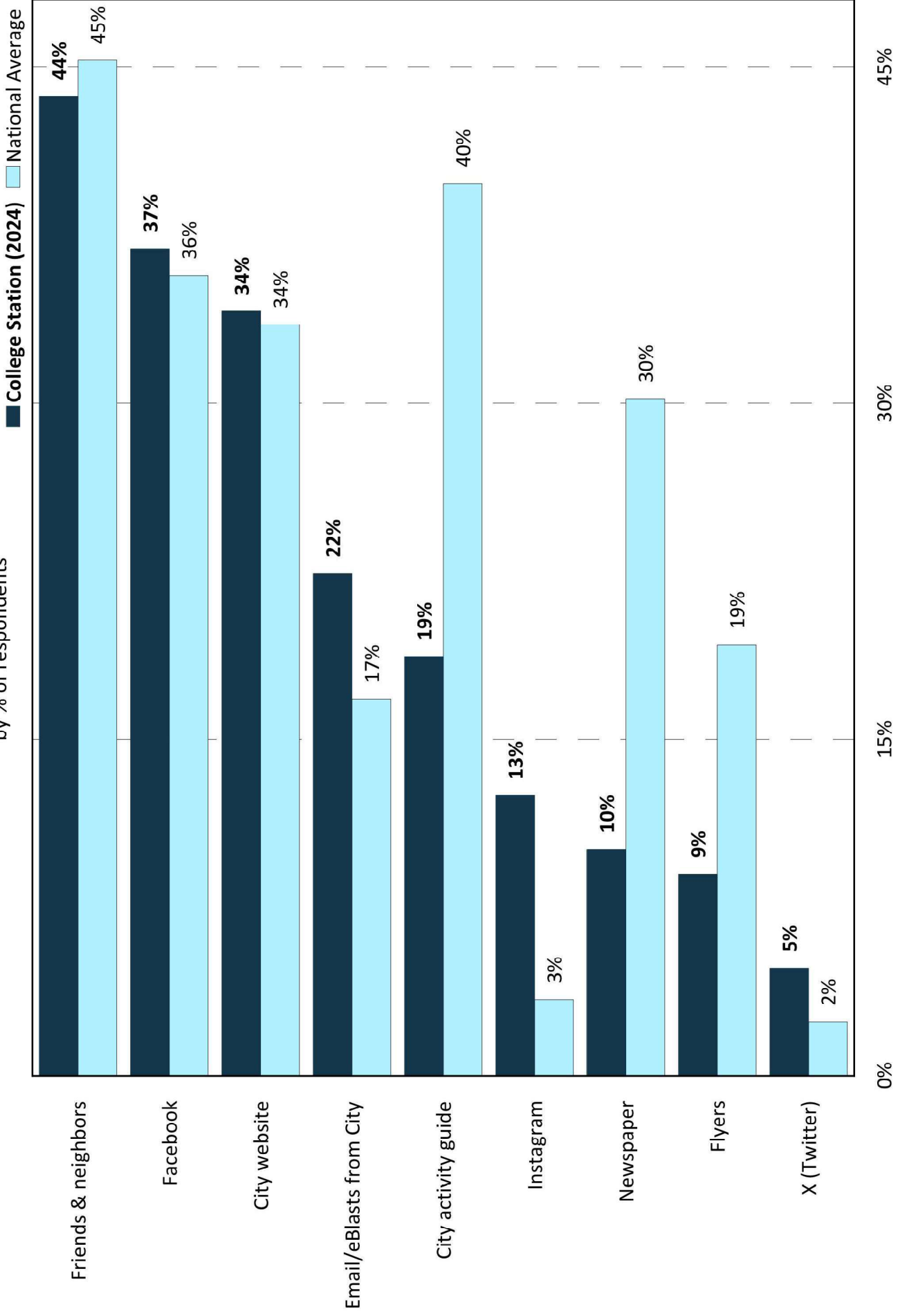
Barriers

by % of respondents

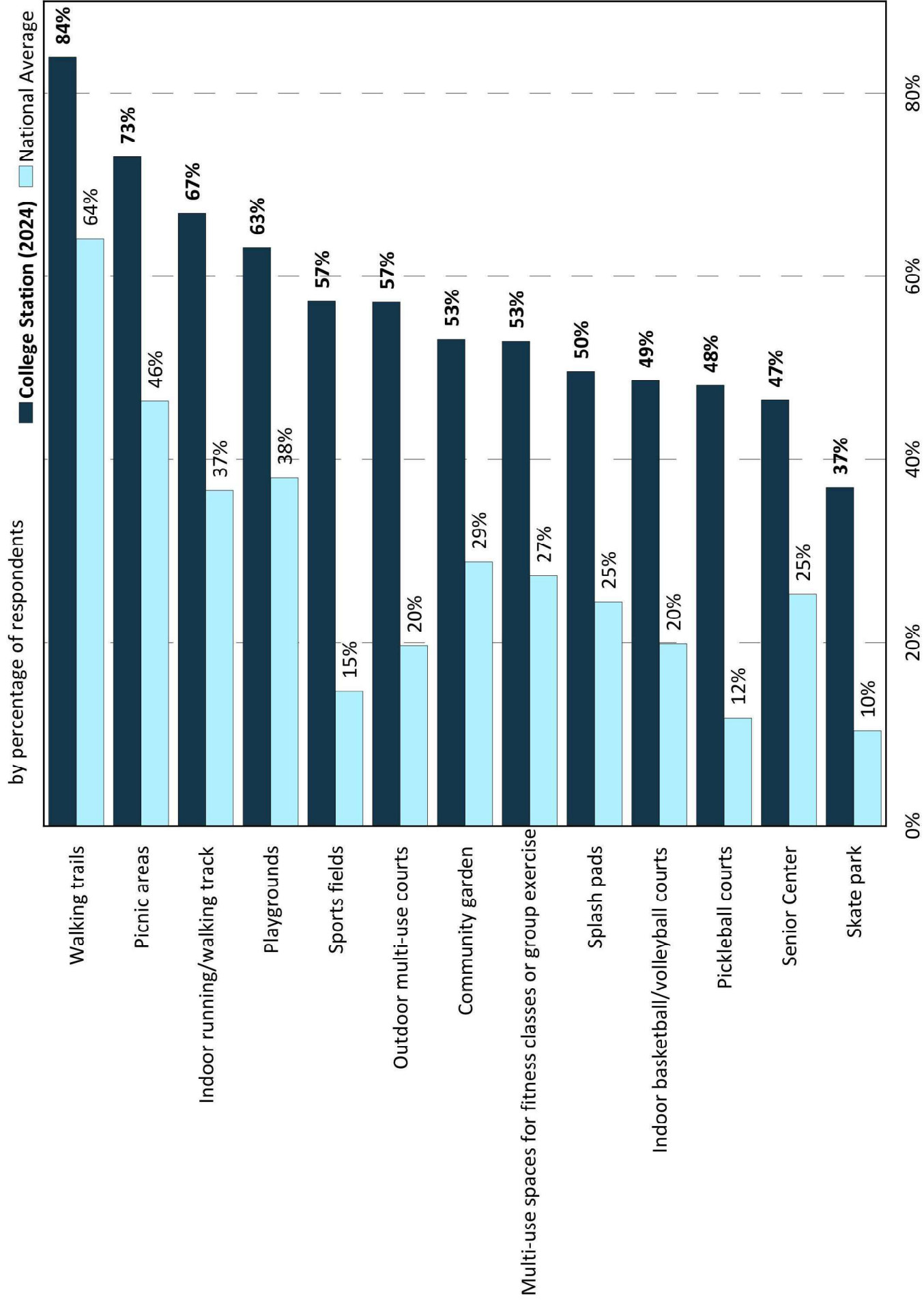


Sources Used for Information about Parks and Recreation

by % of respondents

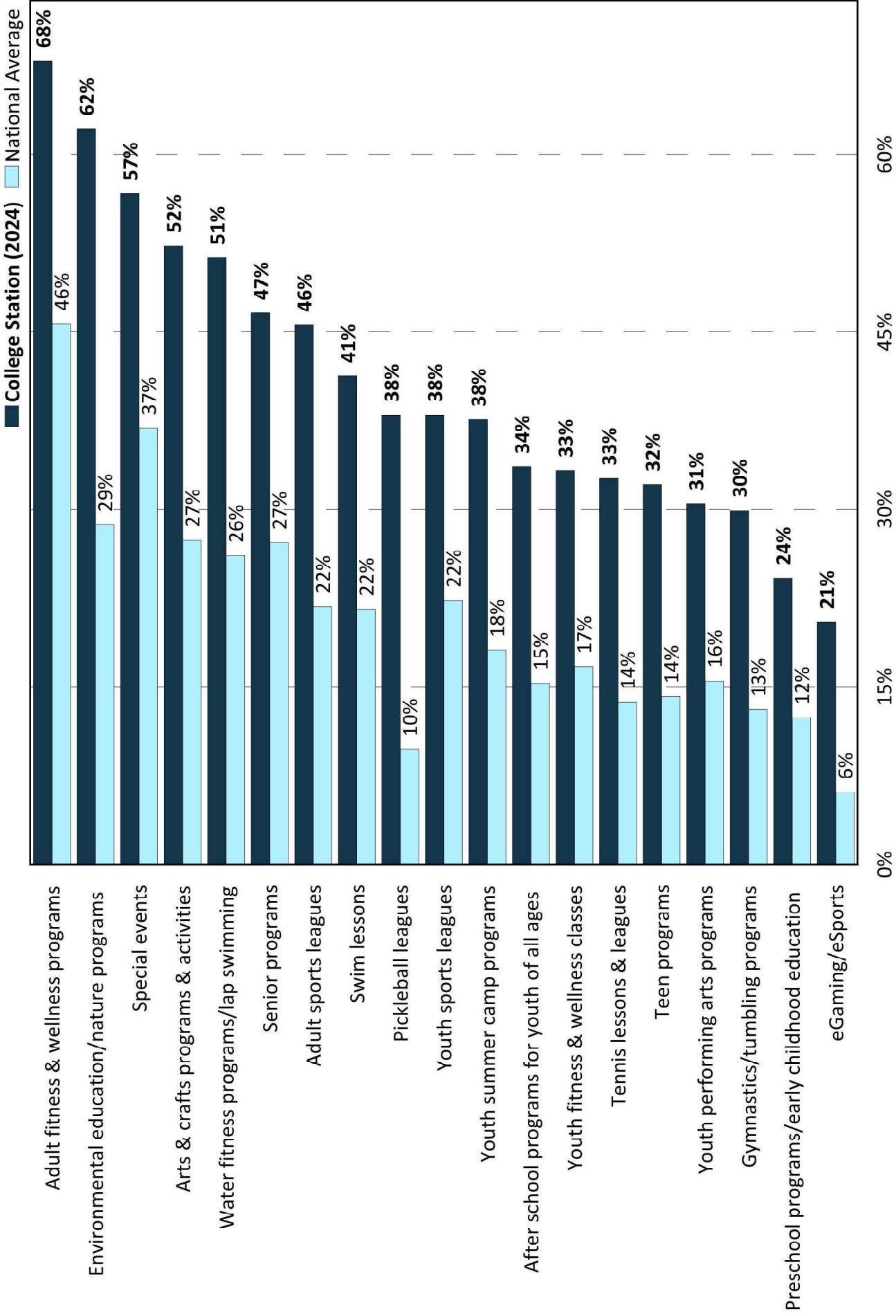


Respondents with Need for Facilities and Amenities

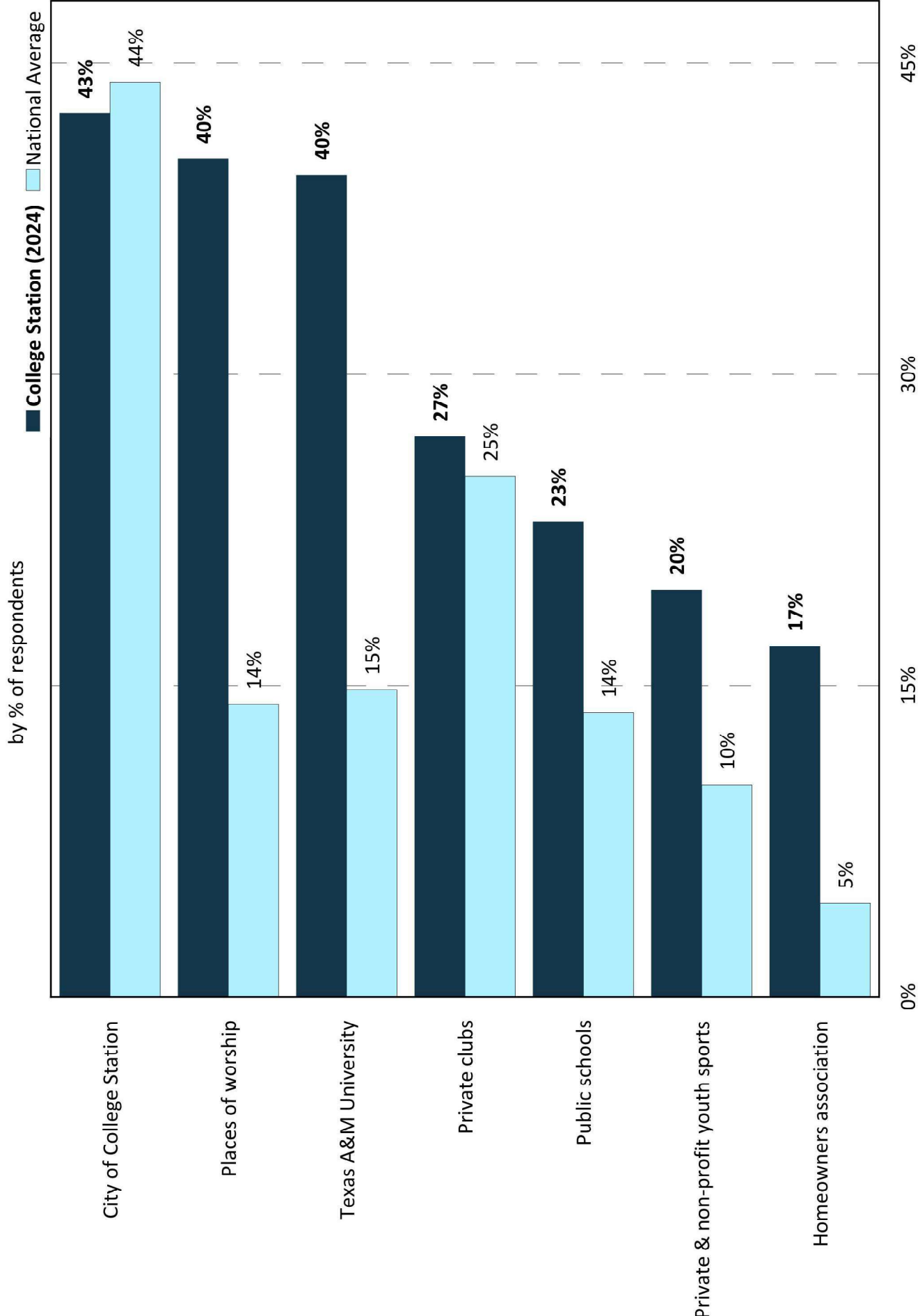


Respondents with Need for Recreation Programs

by percentage of respondents



Outside Organizations

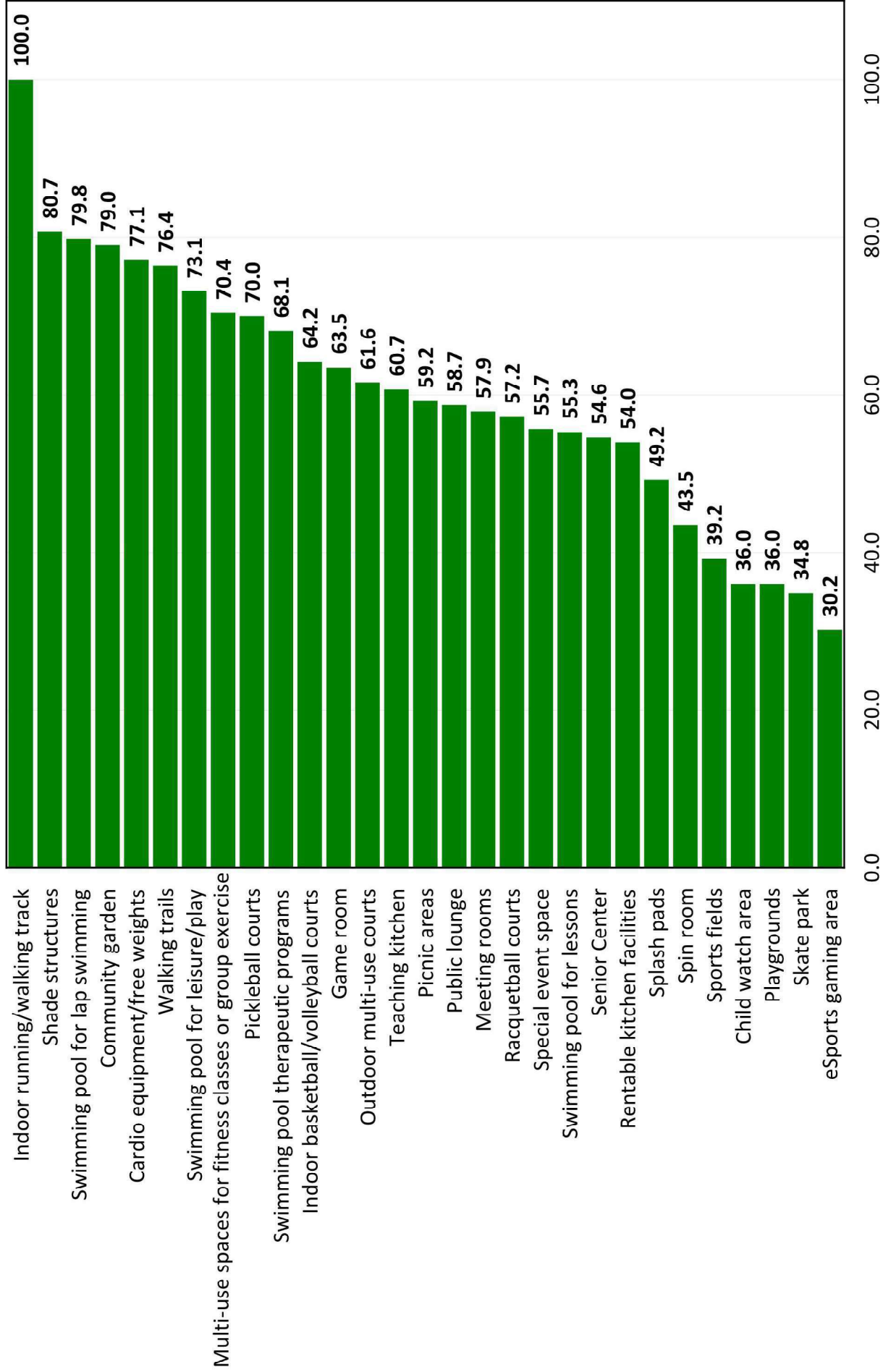




3 Priority Investment Rating

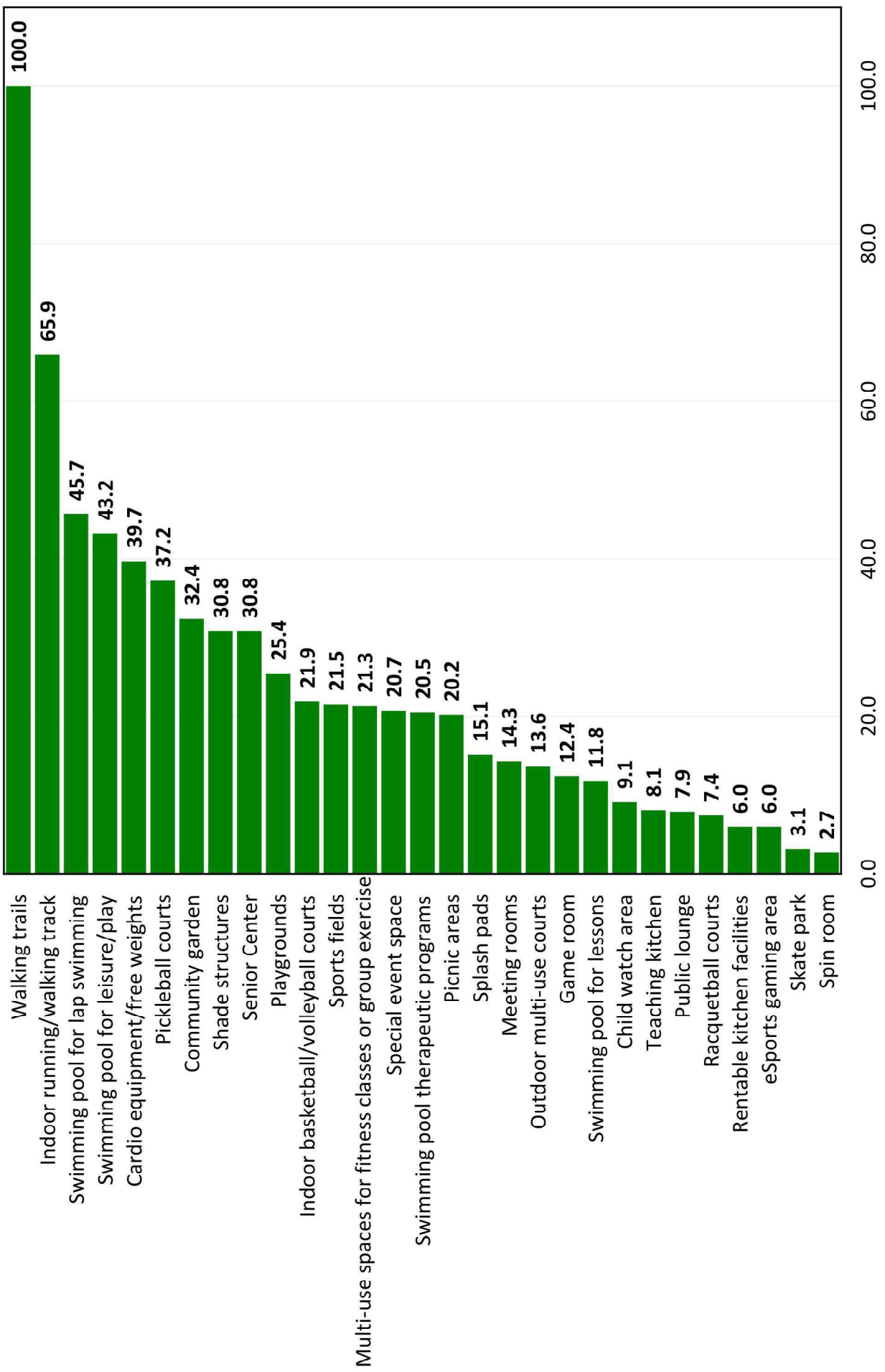
Unmet Needs Rating for Amenities

the rating for the item with the most unmet need=100
 the rating of all other items reflects the relative amount of unmet need for each item compared to the item with the most unmet need

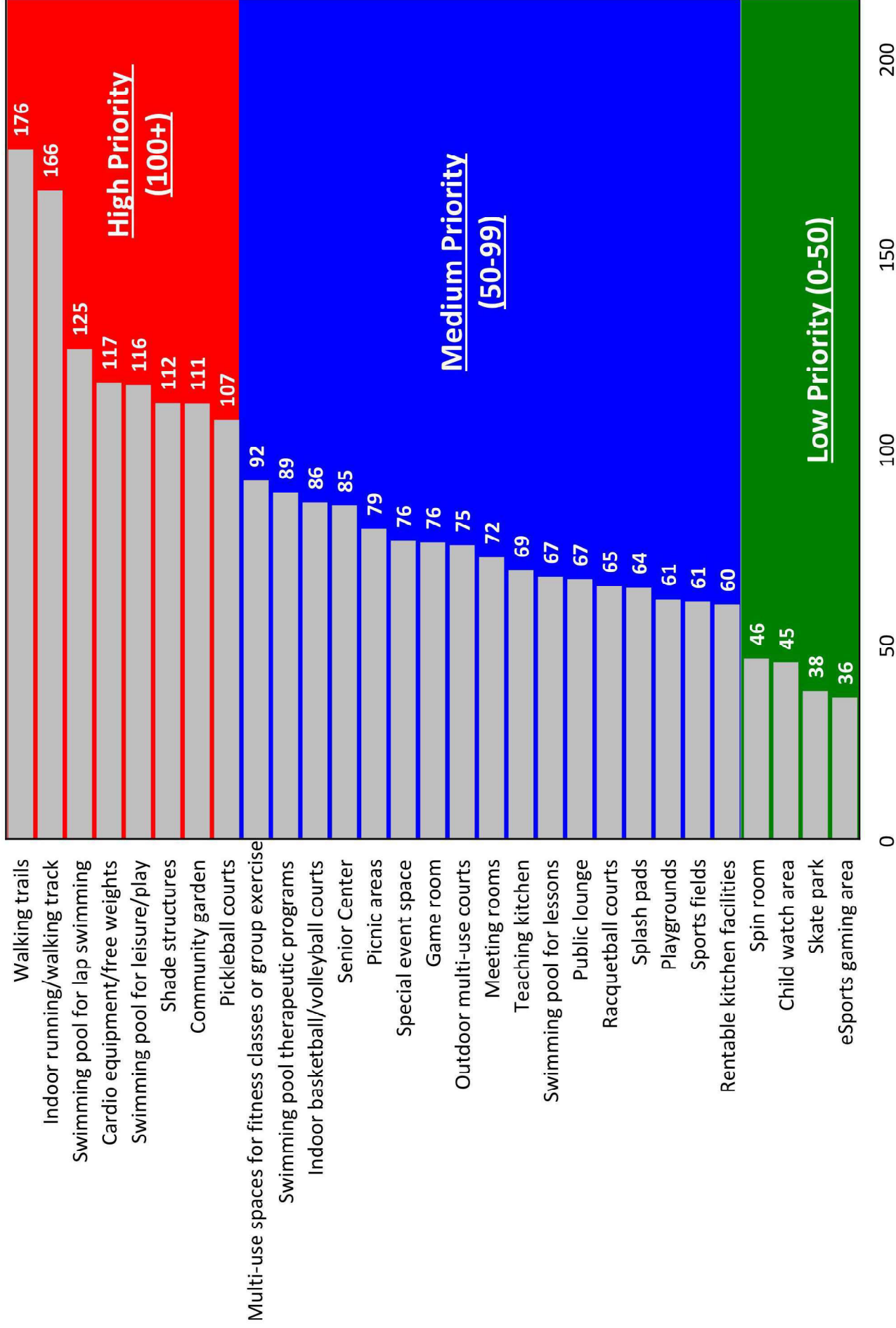


Importance Rating for Amenities

the rating for the item rated as the most important=100
 the rating of all other items reflects the relative level of importance for each item compared to the item rated as the most important



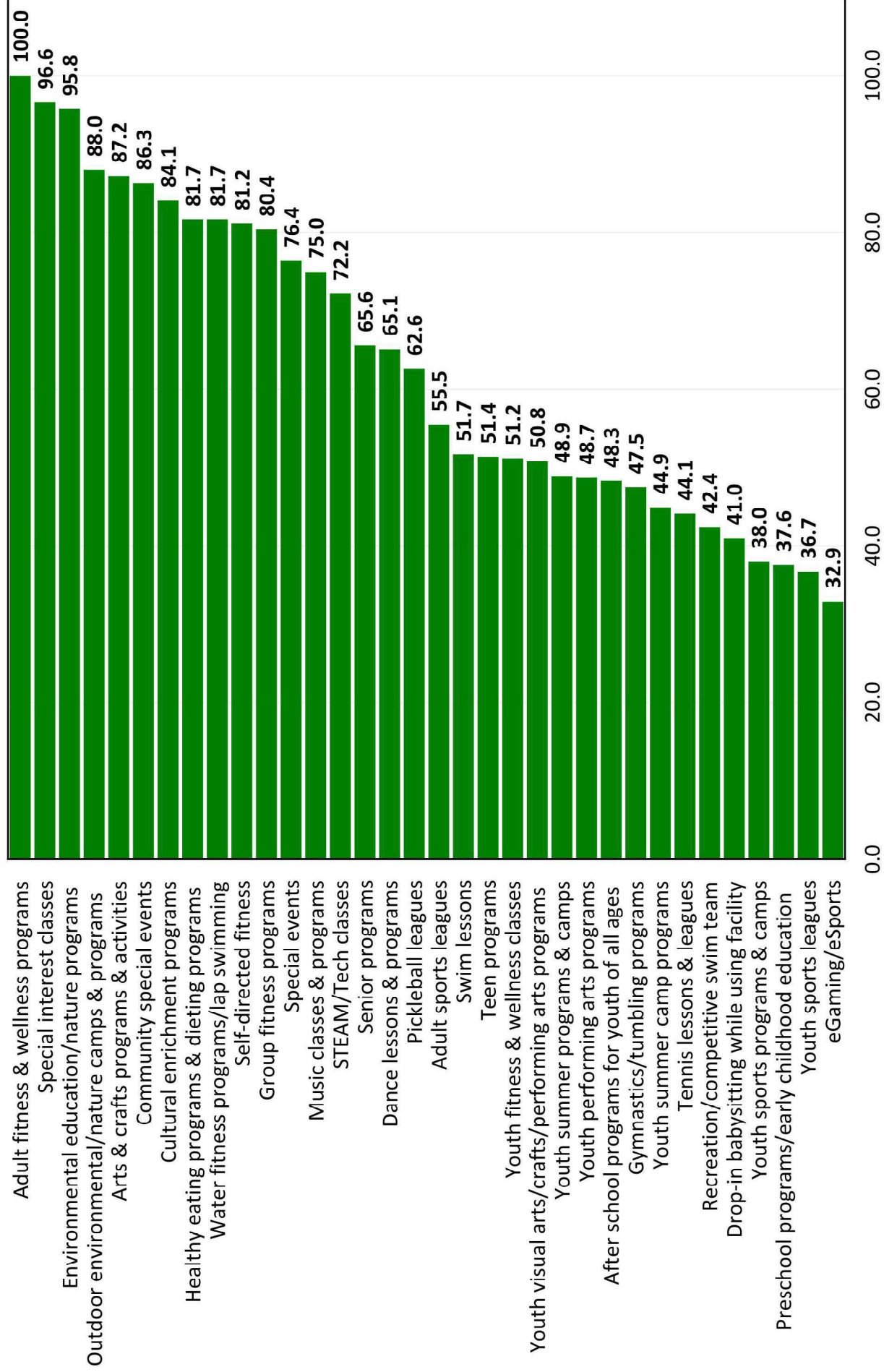
Top Priorities for Investment for Amenities Based on Priority Investment Rating



Unmet Needs Rating for Programs

the rating for the item with the most unmet need=100

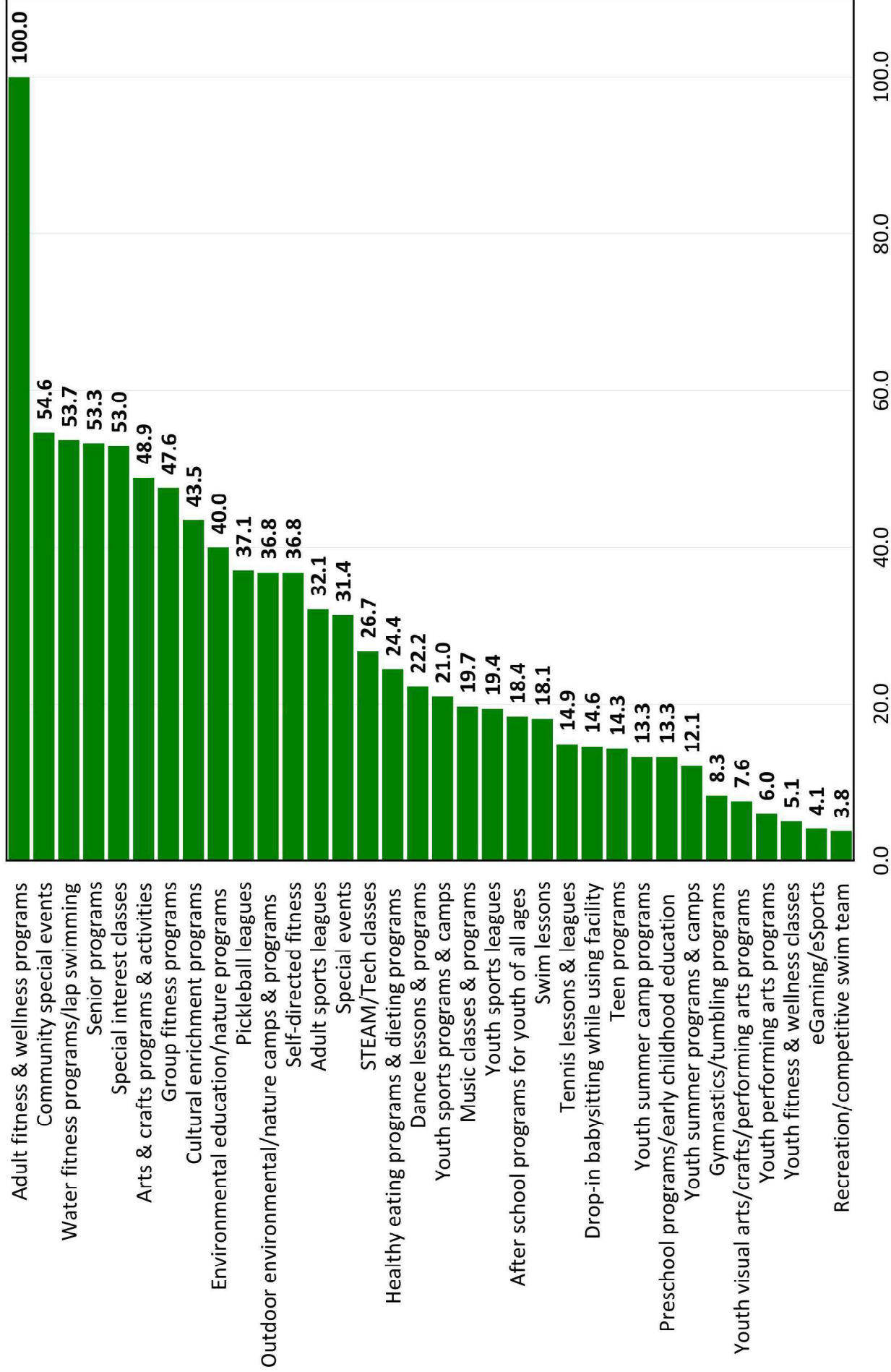
the rating of all other items reflects the relative amount of unmet need for each item compared to the item with the most unmet need



Importance Rating for Programs

the rating for the item rated as the most important=100

the rating of all other items reflects the relative level of importance for each item compared to the item rated as the most important



Top Priorities for Investment for Programs Based on Priority Investment Rating

