



Title: 2027 Plan: Water Resource Priorities and Roles

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Purpose:

At the August 27, 2026 Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) Policy and Planning Committee (PPC) meeting, staff will provide an update on learnings to date through the engagement process for the 2027 Watershed Management Plan (Plan).

Background:

In December 2024, the Board adopted a framework for the 2027 Plan, which carries forward MCWD's Balanced Urban Ecology (BUE) vision and focus on integrated planning and partnership. The scope of work for the 2027 Plan is organized around four areas:

- *Subwatershed Planning:* developing tailored, actionable implementation plans for each subwatershed
- *Land and Water Partnership:* creating policy tools and best practices to support integrated planning
- *Flood Management Strategy:* assessing flood risk and mitigation strategies to establish a regional framework
- *Metrics of Success:* building an evaluation framework to measure and communicate progress

The 2027 Plan is being developed through a collaborative process involving the engagement of the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and Citizens Advisory Committee, as well as the broader public.

At the March 12, 2026, Board Meeting, staff outlined a plan for Board engagement in the 2027 Plan development process, including a series PPC meeting discussions to seek Board input on policy direction and provide updates on the engagement process and technical analyses as they unfold.

Summary:

At the June 25, 2026, PPC meeting, staff provided an update on the first joint TAC-PAC meeting in April and how feedback from this meeting brought into focus the importance of using this engagement process to establish clear shared priorities and roles for water resource management between MCWD and its communities.

The second TAC meeting on July 14 was used to dig deeper into this theme and included a pre-meeting survey to gather TAC input on local water resource priorities and management efforts. At the TAC meeting, staff presented the survey results (attached) and facilitated further discussion on these topics. The following key takeaways were drawn from the TAC survey and meeting discussion:

- Water resource management is a high priority for most communities, but may be under-resourced, with limited funding, staff capacity, space constraints, and competing priorities cited as the top challenges impacting implementation.
- Prioritizing where to focus water resource efforts is a common challenge, particularly in communities with many waterbodies, competing community interests, and funding constraints.

- In most communities across the watershed, water resource work is primarily oriented around meeting state MS4 requirements (e.g. regulation, education, maintenance) and responding to constituent concerns such as addressing drainage issues.
- Many communities seek opportunities to integrate stormwater BMPs with transportation or other public projects, but few are implementing large-scale water quality improvement projects, making it challenging for communities to make significant progress toward their required pollutant load reductions under TMDLs.
- Flood management priorities are variable across the watershed, with more built-out communities in the lower watershed noting higher levels of concern and more active implementation actions compared to the upper watershed, where communities are generally earlier in their flood risk reduction planning, focused on modeling and risk assessments.
- Across both water quality and flood risk reduction work, communities see MCWD's biggest value-add as a planning and funding partner, as well as a technical resource. MCWD could provide significant support by helping communities identify and prioritize largescale project opportunities, integrate these projects into their planning processes, and support implementation with funding contributions or help securing grants.

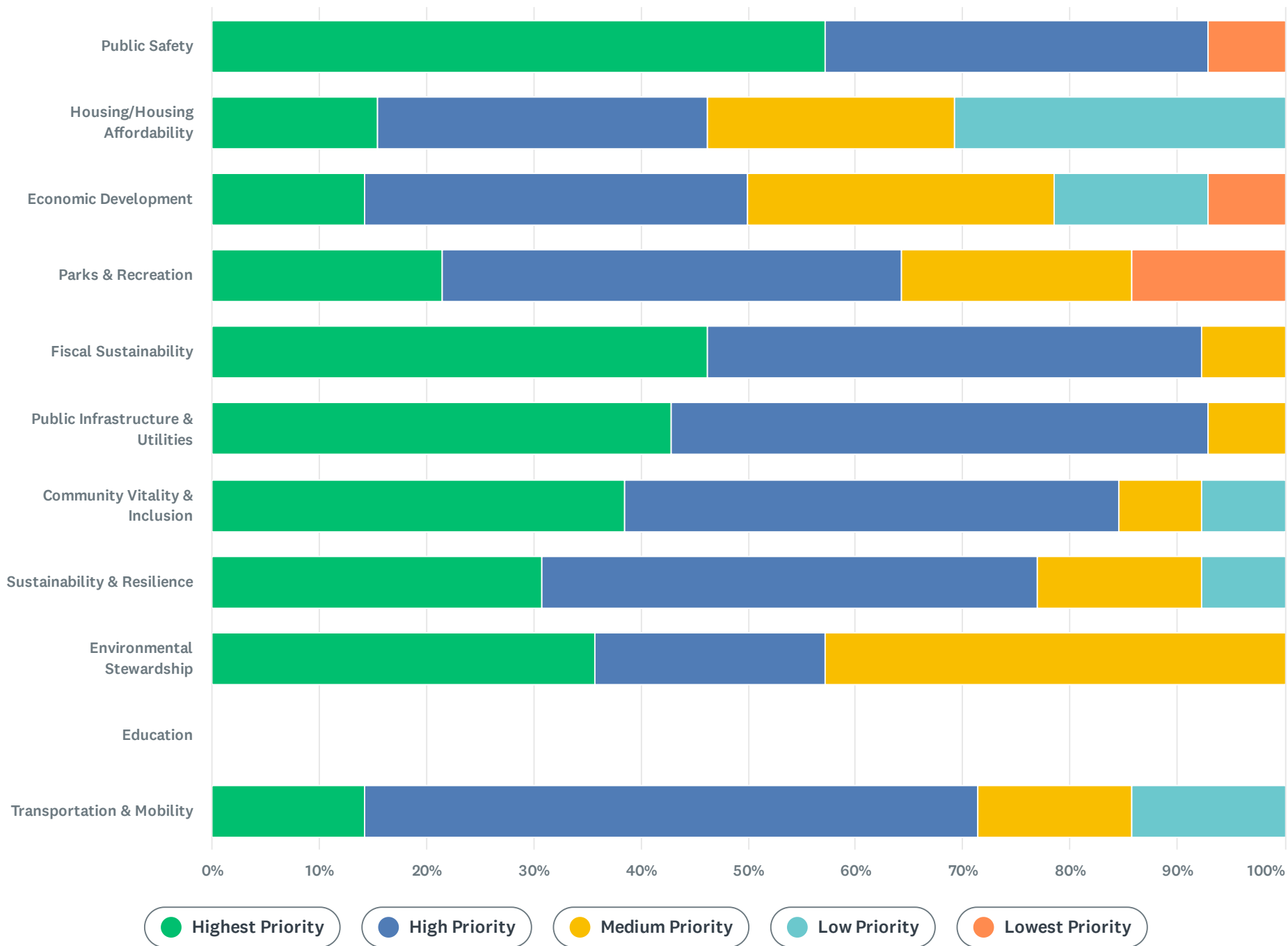
At the August 27, 2026 PPC meeting, staff will expand on these takeaways and discuss how they are informing the rest of the engagement process and Plan deliverables. Staff will seek the Board's perspectives on how the District can use this input to continue to refine its priorities, role, and approach to partnership under the 2027 Plan.

Supporting documents:

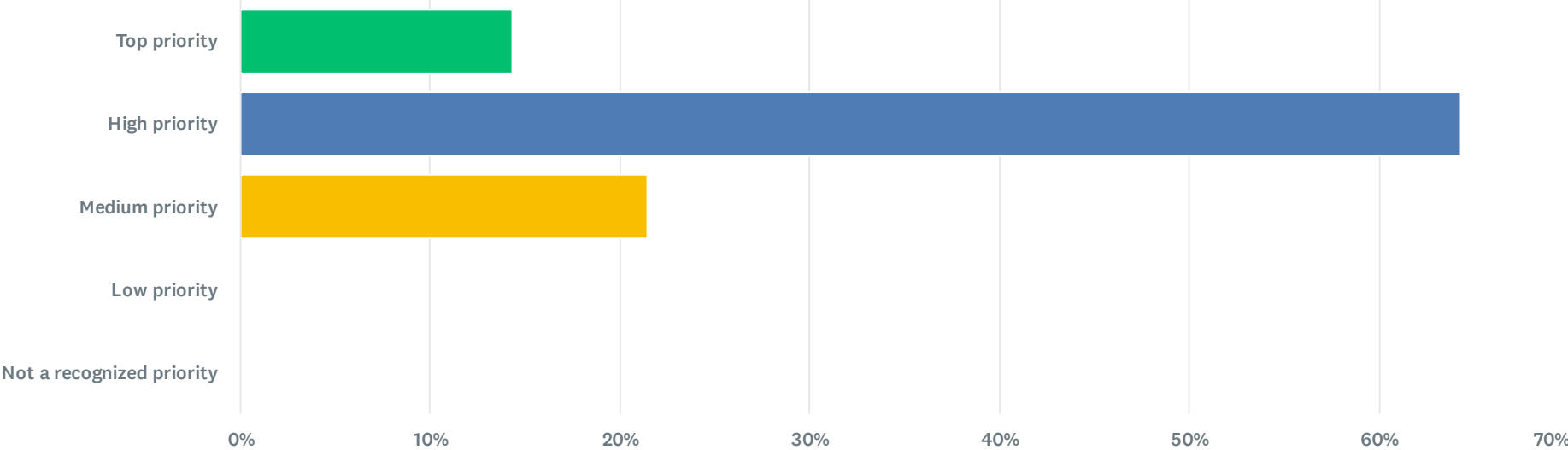
TAC Survey Results

2027 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN TAC #2 PRE-MEETING SURVEY

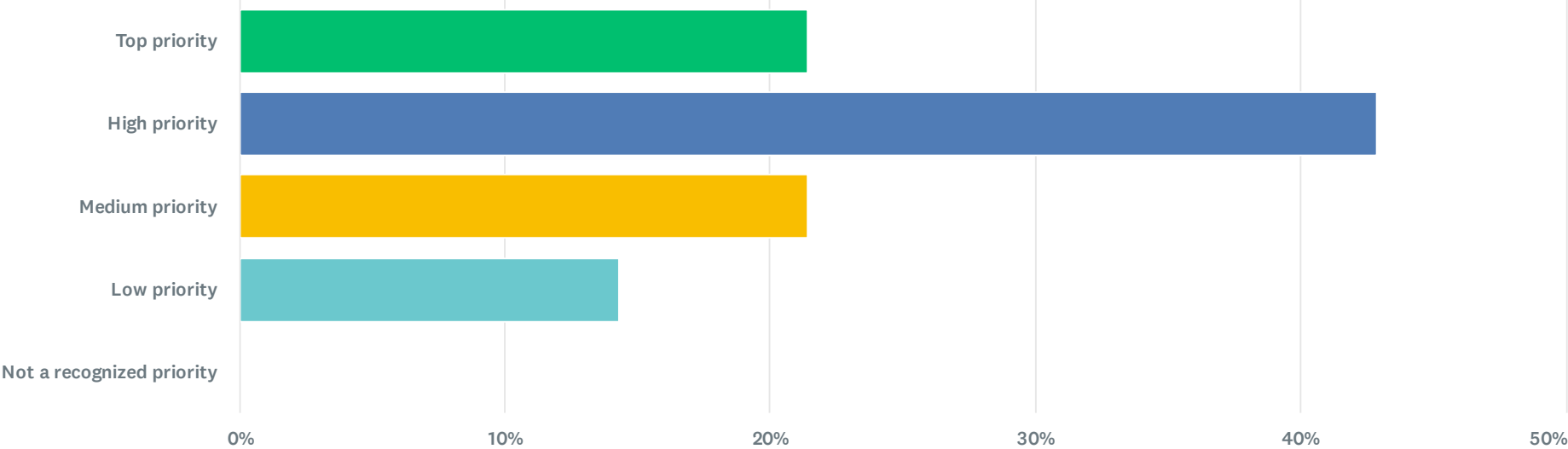
Please rate the level of priority your organization prescribes for the following planning and implementation areas.



Where does surface water quality rank among your organization's priorities?

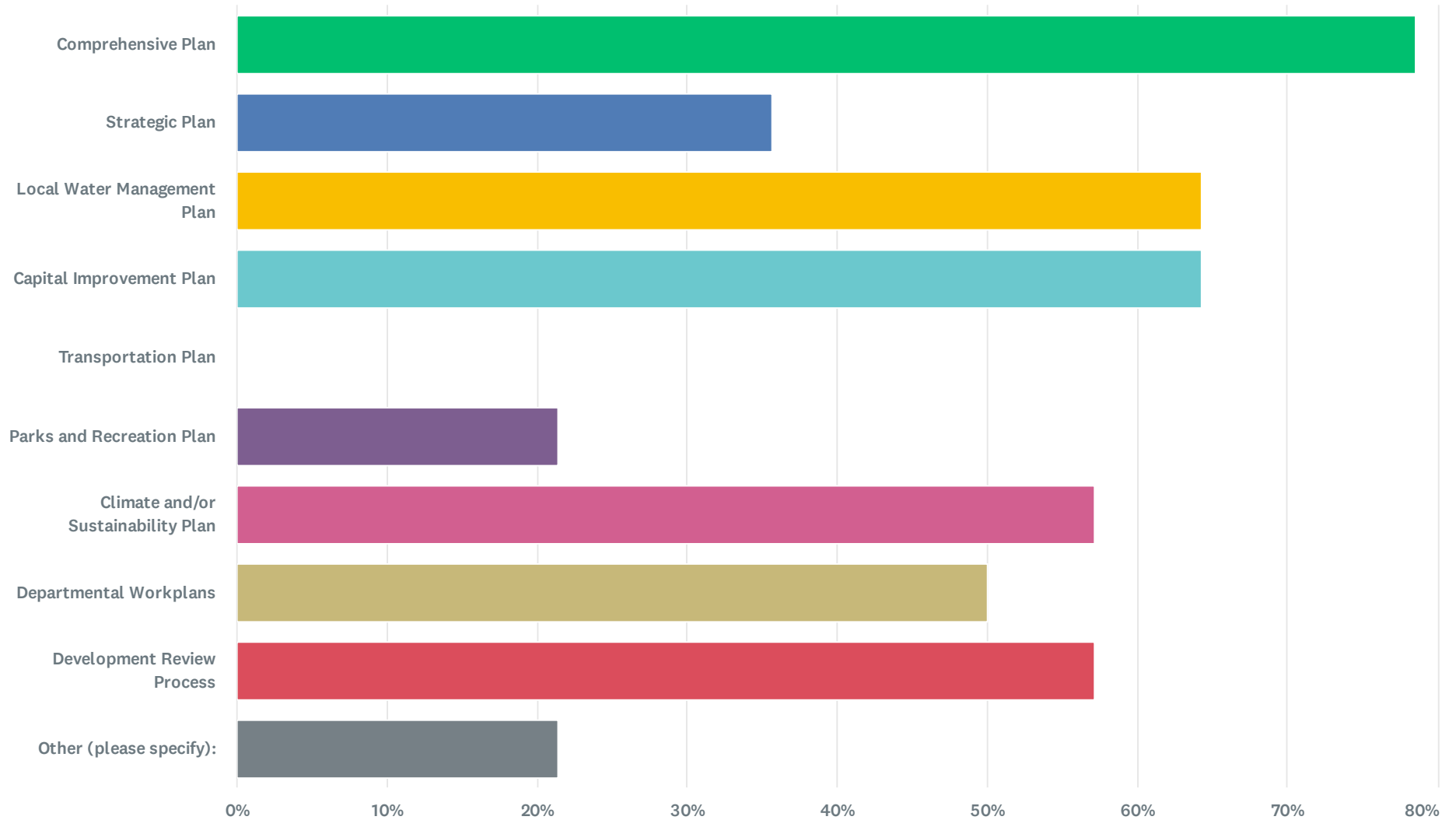


Where does flood risk reduction rank among your organization's priorities?

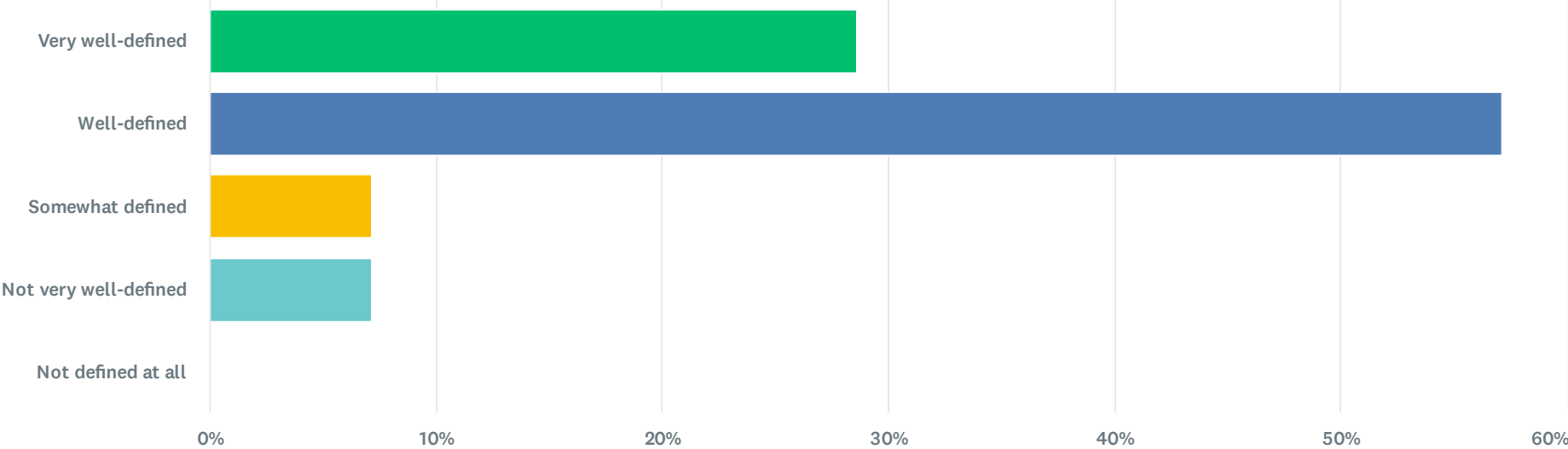


2027 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN TAC #2 PRE-MEETING SURVEY

Where are your organization's water resource goals and priorities memorialized today? Select all that apply.

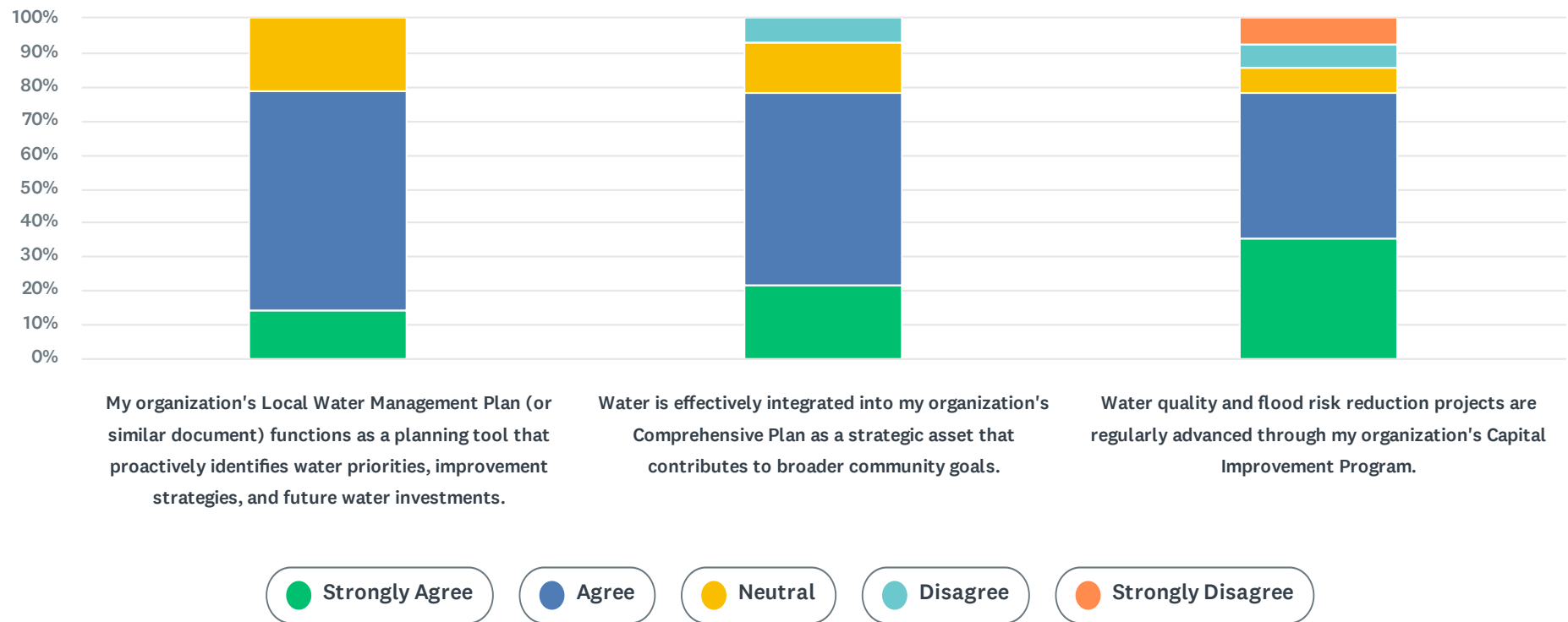


How defined are your organization's water resource goals and priorities?

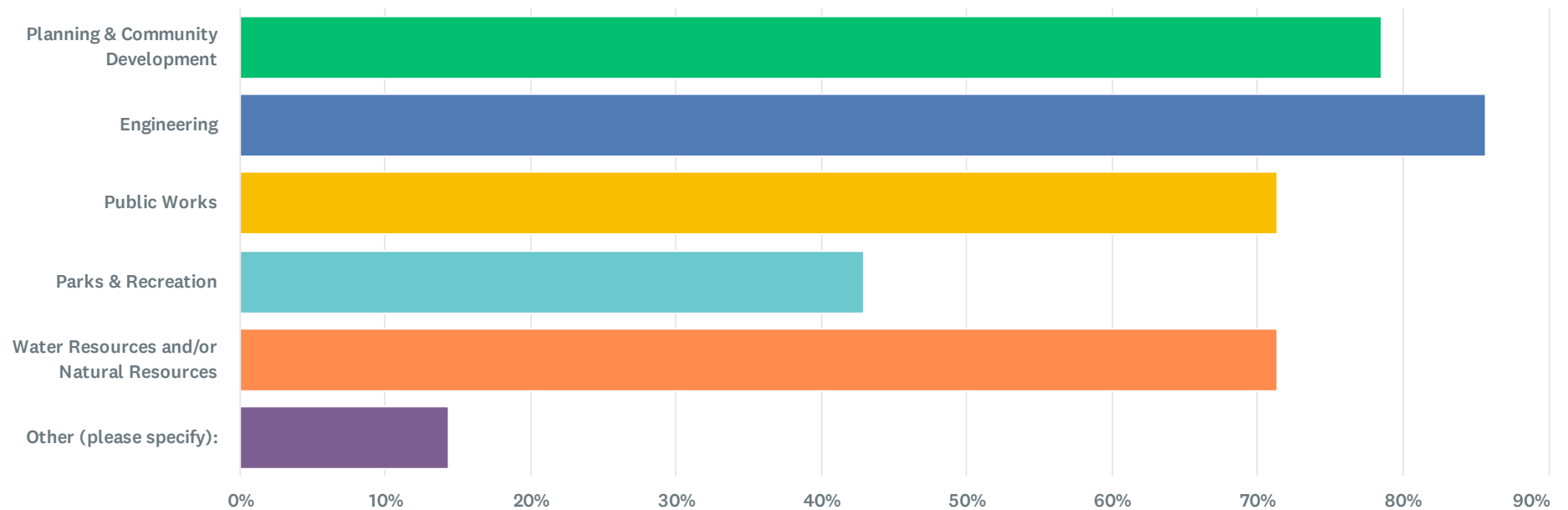


2027 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN TAC #2 PRE-MEETING SURVEY

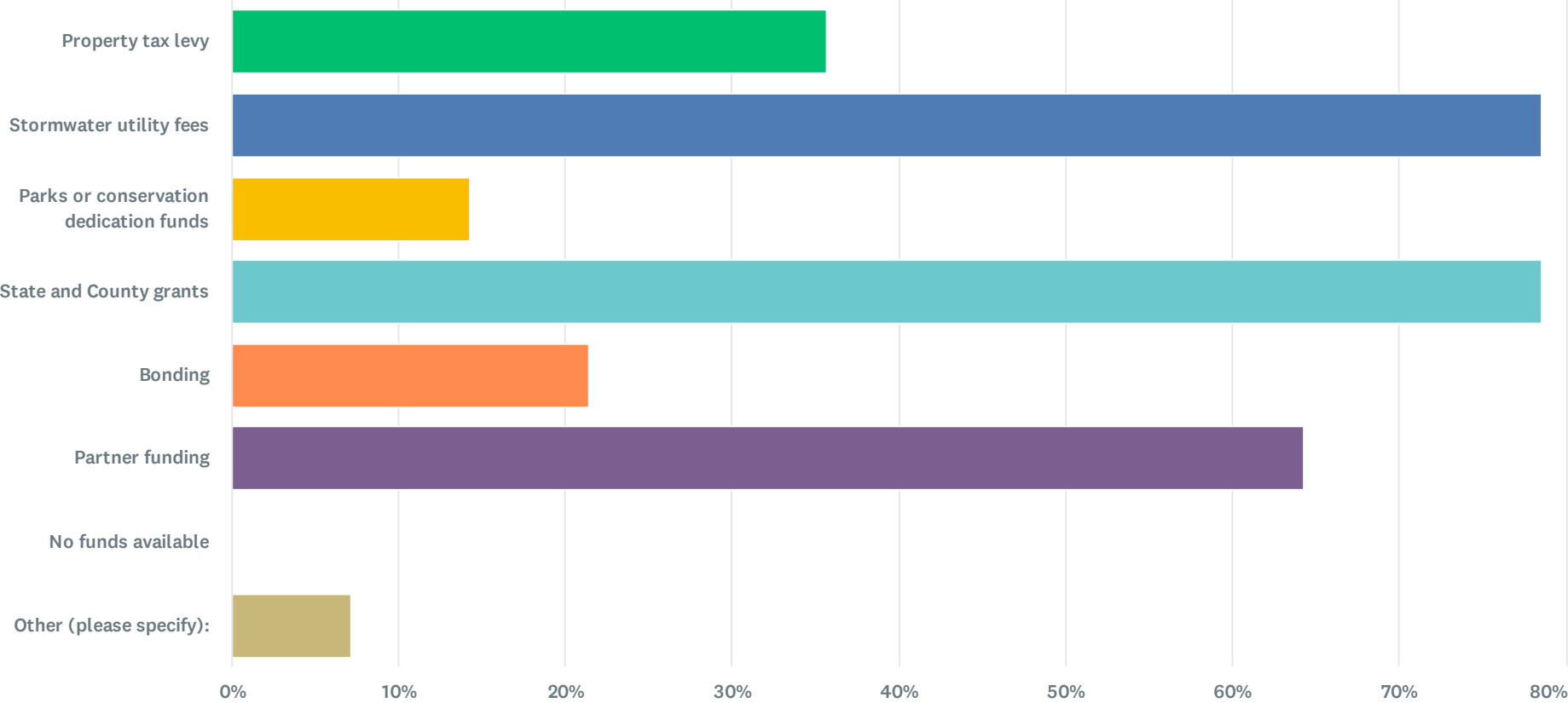
Please note your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.



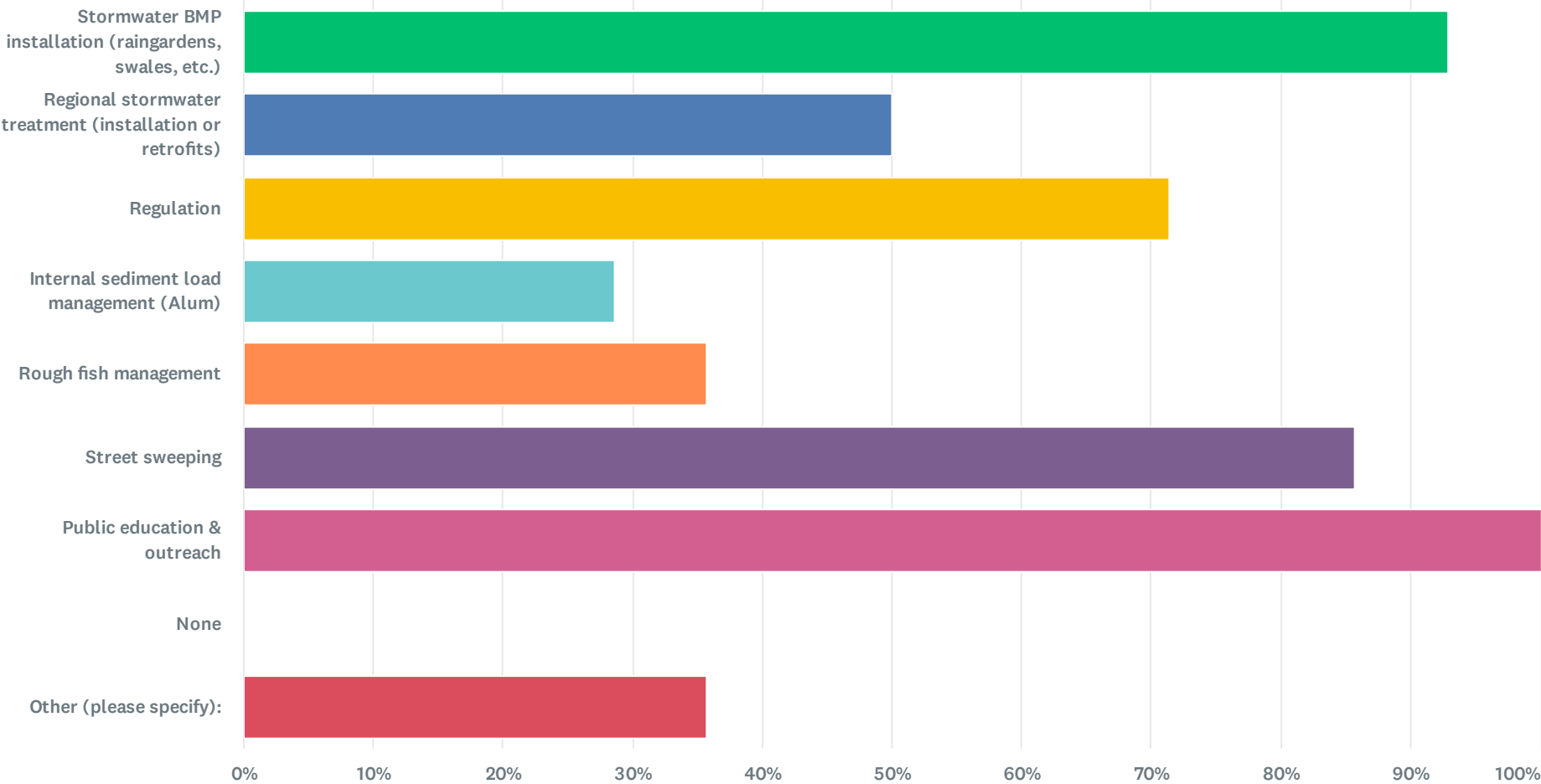
Which programs or departments are involved in water resource activities and programming in your organization?



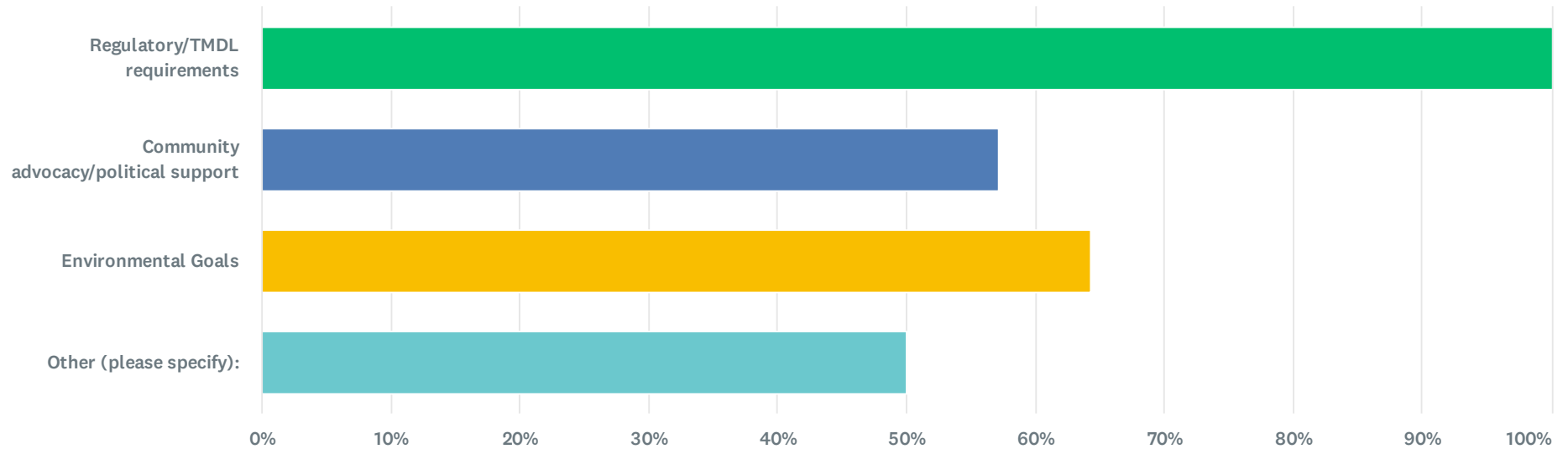
How are water resource projects and activities funded for your organization? Select all that apply.



What actions are being taken by your organization to make progress toward its water quality goals?

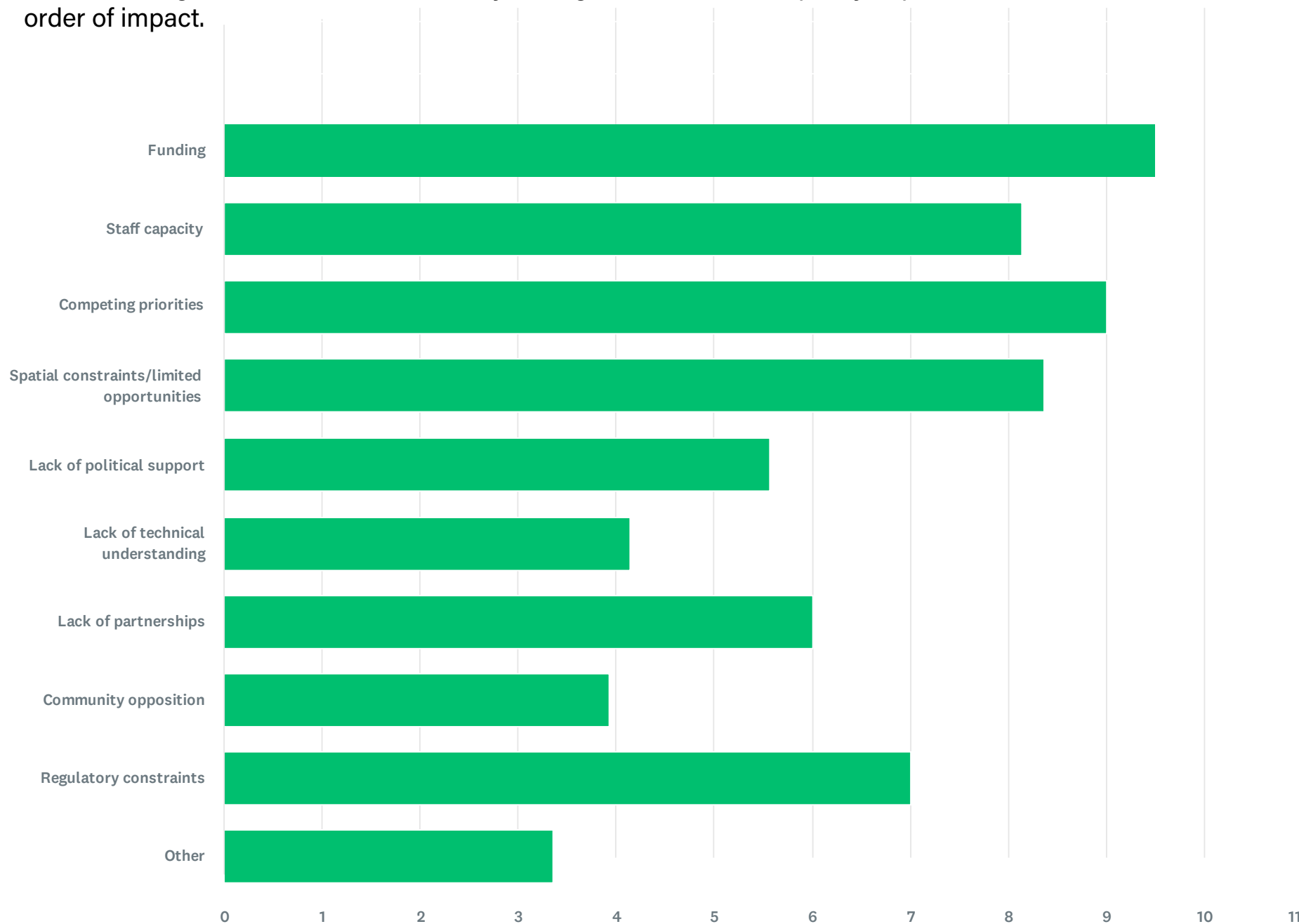


When water quality projects are implemented, what typically drives them?

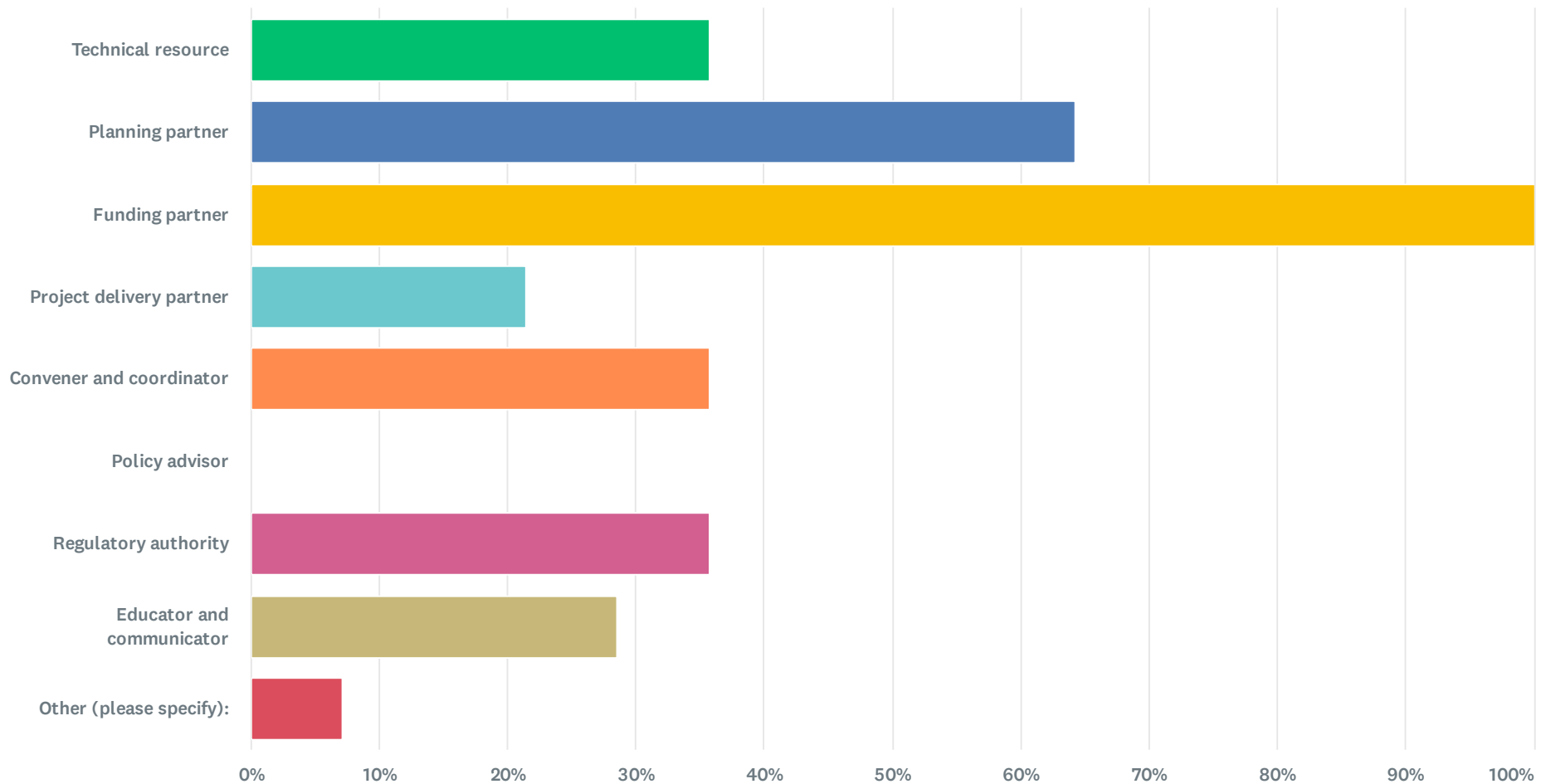


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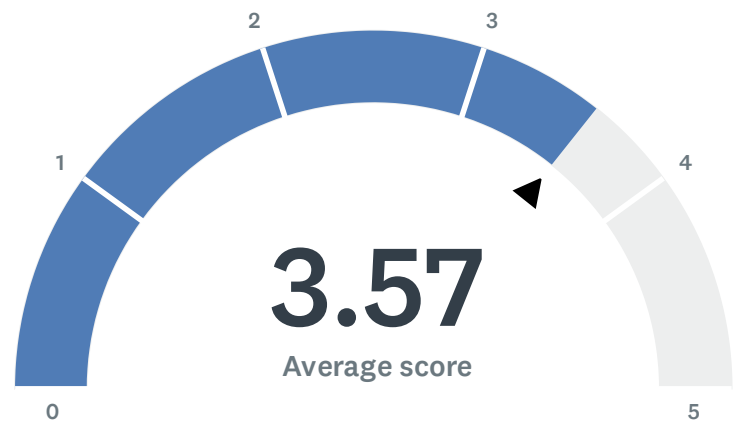
What challenges or limitations constrain your organization's water quality improvement actions? Rank them in order of impact.



What role should MCWD play to add the most value in supporting your organization in reaching its water quality goals? Please select up to three top roles for MCWD.

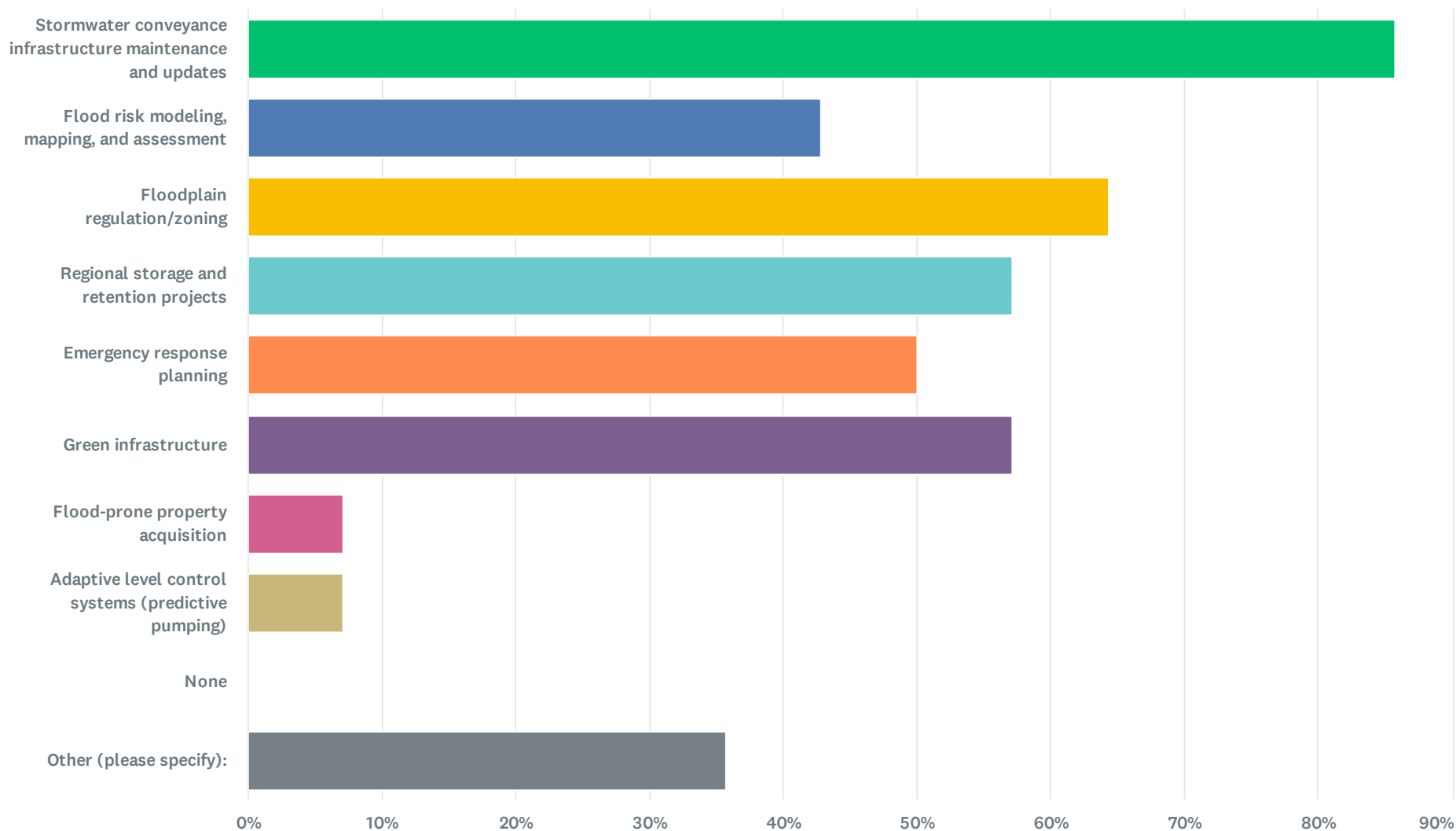


On the scale below, rank your organization's level of concern related to current and future flood risk?

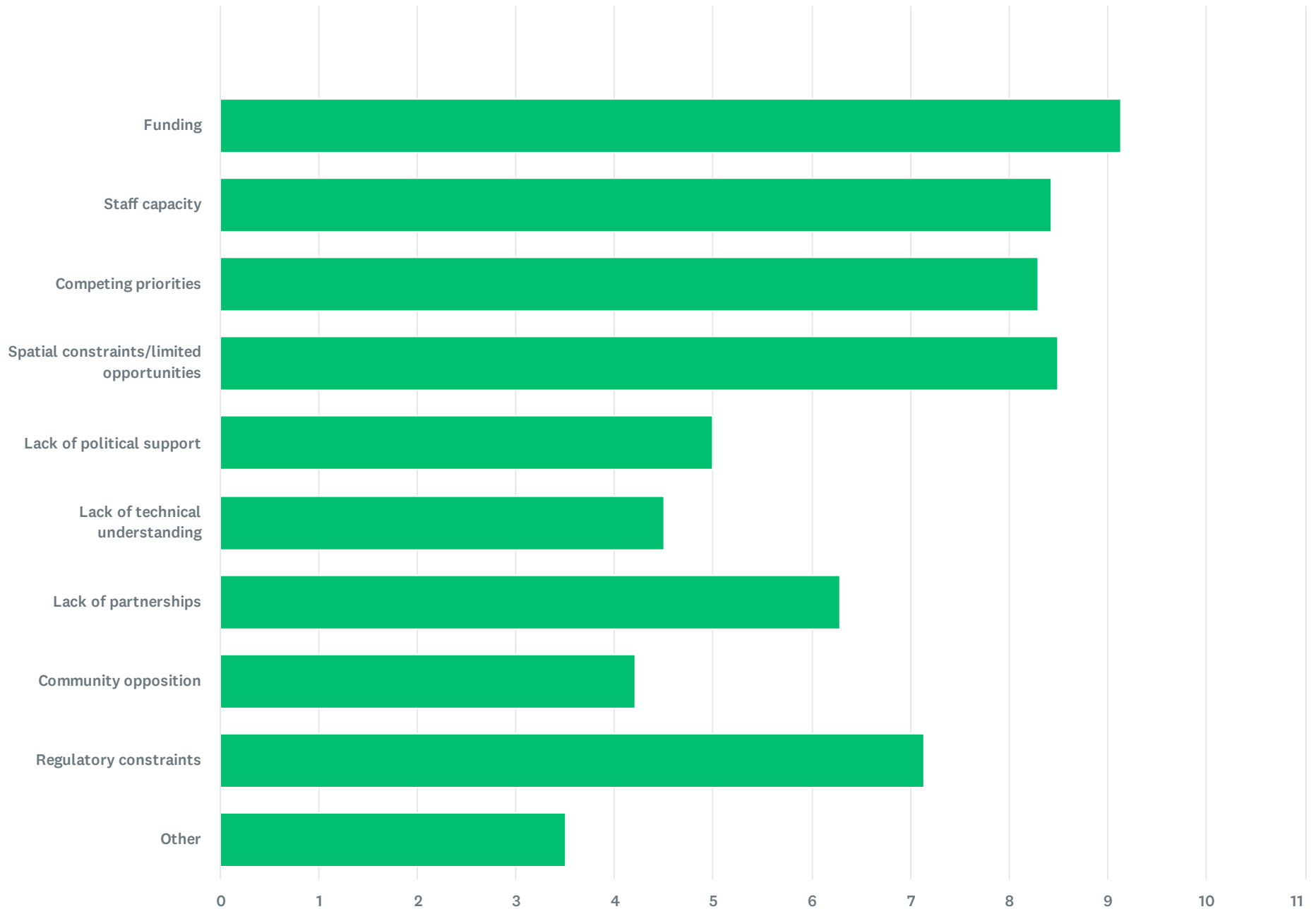


Basic statistics				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	5.00	4.00	3.57	1.12

What actions are being taken by your organization to make progress toward its flood risk reduction goals?



What challenges or limitations constrain your organization's actions on flood risk reduction goals? Rank them in order of impact.



2027 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN TAC #2 PRE-MEETING SURVEY

What role should MCWD play to add the most value in supporting your organization in reaching its flood risk reduction goals? Please select up to three top roles for MCWD.

