STAR Certification Results for Village of Park Forest, IL

Certified 3-STAR Community
April 2015

The STAR Community Rating System is the first framework and certification for local sustainability, built by and for local governments. STAR provides a clear data-driven approach to assessing social, economic, and environmental progress.

Park Forest, IL was awarded a Certified 3-STAR Community Rating on April 16, 2015.

THE STAR COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

Goal Areas & Objectives are rated and evaluated in the online system, helping local leaders set goals and measure progress across all areas.

Built Environment	Climate & Energy	Economy & Jobs	Education, Arts & Community	Equity & Empowerment	Health & Safety	Natural Systems
Ambient Noise & Light	Climate Adaptation	Business Retention & Development	Arts & Culture	Civic Engagement	Active Living	Green Infrastructure
Community Water Systems	Greenhouse Gas Mitigation	Green Market Development	Community Cohesion	Civil & Human Rights	Community Health & Health System	Invasive Species
Compact & Complete Communities	Greening the Energy Supply	Local Economy	Educational Opportunity & Attainment	Environmental Justice	Emergency Prevention & Response	Natural Resource Protection
Housing Affordability	Industrial Sector Resource Efficiency	Quality Jobs & Living Wages	Historic Preservation	Equitable Services & Access	Food Access & Nutrition	Outdoor Air Quality
Infill & Redevelopment	Resource Efficient Buildings	Targeted Industry Development	Social & Cultural Diversity	Human Services	Indoor Air Quality	Water in the Environment
Public Spaces	Resource Efficient Public Infrastructure	Workforce Readiness		Poverty Prevention & Alleviation	Natural & Human Hazards	Working Lands
Transportation Choices	Waste Minimization				Safe Communities	

SPRING 2014 LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

- Park Forest started on the track to STAR certification as part of the Spring 2014 Leadership Program cohort with 19 other communities

- First Leadership Program, based off of successful STAR Pilot Program

- Orientation held in January 2014 in Fort Lauderdale, FL

- Communities received trainings on tracking sustainability measures and resources and materials to help throughout the one-year program

- Program includes extensive support through regular webinars and check-in calls with a dedicated STAR coordinator

- Program goal is to support communities as they pursue STAR Certification

Spring 2014 Leadership Communities gather in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

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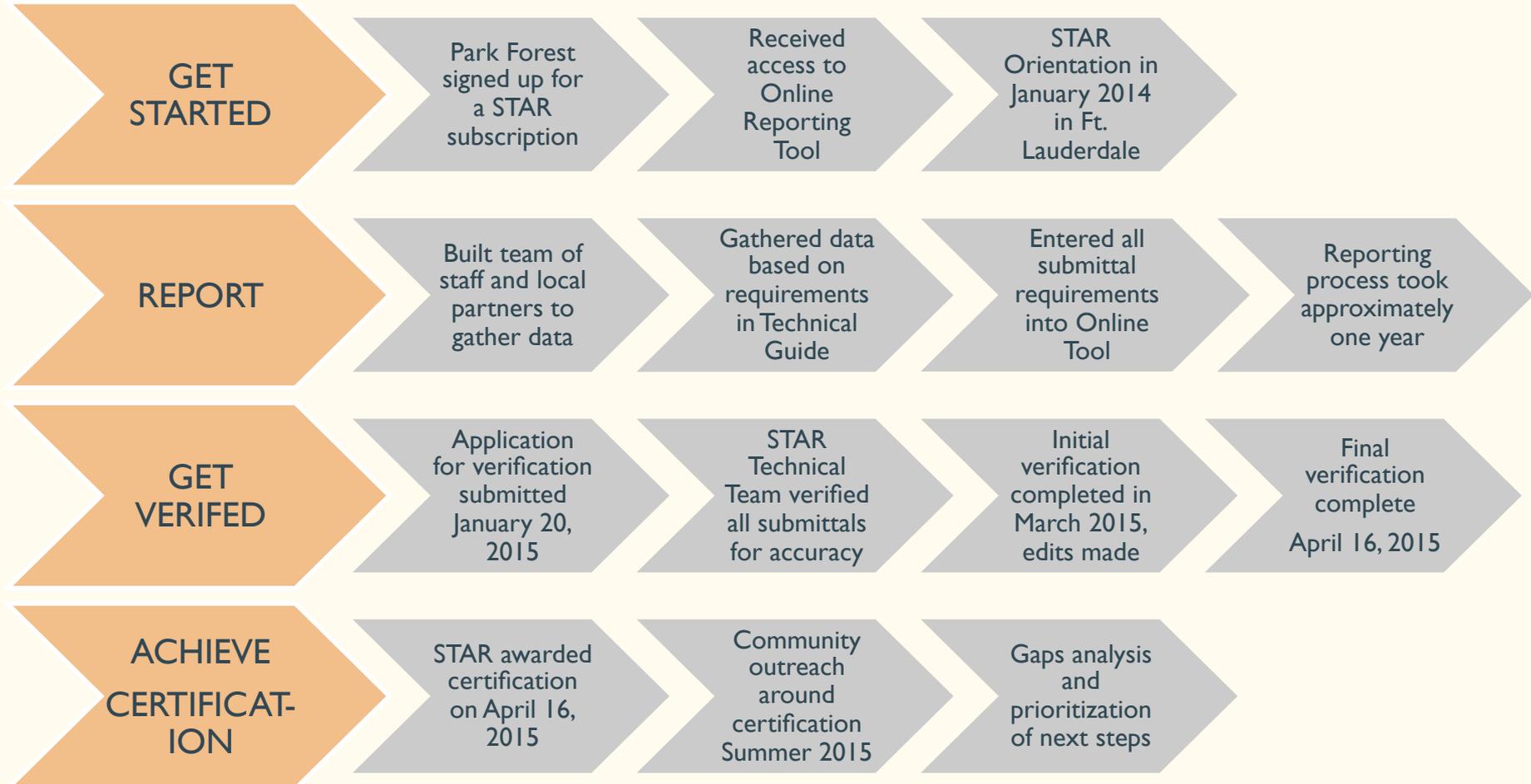Sustainability Tools for Assessing & Rating Communities

REASONS PARK FOREST JOINED STAR

- Align local plans and priorities with a national sustainability framework

- Strengthen local metrics

- Demonstrate a commitment to data-driven performance management

- Increase transparency and accountability through public-facing reporting

- Identify gaps and prioritize future investment

- Gain competitive advantage and attract funding

- Catalyze action in implementing solutions and best practices for sustainability

- Communicate resilience and risk management to municipal bond agencies

- Integrate health and equity into existing sustainability or environmental efforts

- Strengthen civic, university, and governmental partnerships throughout the community

- Build and brand a culture of local sustainability

- Improve sustainability communication and education

- Celebrate local progress and achieve national recognition

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SPRING 2014 LEADERSHIP COMMUNITIES

- Baltimore, MD
- Birmingham, AL
- Burlington, VT
- Charles City, IA
- Denton, TX
- Dubuque, IA
- Fayetteville, AR
- Frederick, MD
- Houston, TX
- Louisville, KY

- Memphis, TN
- Nederland, CO
- Palm Bay, FL
- Park Forest, IL
- Phoenix, AZ
- Plano, TX
- Portland, ME
- Raleigh, NC
- Redlands, CA
- Rosemount, MN

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CERTIFICATION PROCESS

GET STARTED
- Park Forest signed up for a STAR subscription
- Received access to Online Reporting Tool
- STAR Orientation in January 2014 in Ft. Lauderdale

REPORT
- Built team of staff and local partners to gather data
- Gathered data based on requirements in Technical Guide
- Entered all submittal requirements into Online Tool
- Reporting process took approximately one year

GET VERIFED
- Application for verification submitted January 20, 2015
- STAR Technical Team verified all submittals for accuracy
- Initial verification completed in March 2015, edits made
- Final verification complete April 16, 2015

ACHIEVE CERTIFICAT-ION
- STAR awarded certification on April 16, 2015
- Community outreach around certification Summer 2015
- Gaps analysis and prioritization of next steps

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STAR CERTIFICATION LEVELS

Certified 5-STAR Community (600+ points)
Recognized as top tier achiever in national sustainability

Certified 4-STAR Community (400-599 points)
Recognized for national excellence

Certified 3-STAR Community (200-399 points)
Recognized for sustainability leadership

Reporting STAR Community
Currently pursuing certification

Member STAR Community
A community that has expressed a commitment to the STAR Communities' mission and is using the STAR Community Rating System informally

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WHO IS STAR CERTIFIED?

Thirty-seven communities have received a verified STAR Community Rating since November 2013.

5-STAR Community

- Baltimore, MD
- Northampton, MA
- Seattle, WA

4-STAR Community

- Austin, TX
- Broward County, FL
- Burlington, VT
- Davenport, IA
- Dubuque, IA
- Evanston, IL
- Louisville, KY
- Memphis, TN
- Plano, TX
- Portland, OR
- Raleigh, NC
- Tacoma, WA
- Tucson, AZ
- Washington, DC

3-STAR Community

- Albany, NY
- Atlanta, GA
- Birmingham, AL
- Chandler, AZ
- Cleveland, OH
- Des Moines, IA
- El Cerrito, CA
- Fayetteville, AR
- Fort Collins, CO
- Houston, TX
- Indianapolis, IN
- Lee County, FL
- Monroe County, FL
- Palm Bay, FL
- Park Forest, IL
- Reading, PA
- Riverside, CA
- Rosemount, MN
- Saint Louis, MO
- Woodbridge, NJ

THE STAR FRAMEWORK

7 GOALS
Example: Built Environment

BROAD SUSTAINABILITY THEMES WITH COMMUNITY-LEVEL ASPIRATIONS

44 OBJECTIVES
Example: Housing Affordability

SUBCATEGORIES THAT MOVE THE COMMUNITY TOWARD THE GOAL

108 OUTCOME MEASURES
Example: Demonstrate that 10% of units built are dedicated as subsidized affordable housing

408 ACTION MEASURES
Example: Require, incentivize, or subsidize creation of affordable housing

516 EVALUATION MEASURES USED TO ASSIGN POINTS

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COMMUNITY LEVEL OUTCOMES

Outcomes are community-scale results:
the measureable aim or purpose of each Objective

- Each Objective has between 1 and 4 Outcomes
- Outcomes are the quantitative measurement of an Objective
- An Outcome may have multiple parts or options

Measured using:

- Trend Lines that capture progress over time
- Thresholds that establish a specific limit above or below which the community would receive full credit

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LOCAL ACTIONS

Actions are the *steps you take* to achieve the Outcomes. STAR has 9 Action Types:

PREPARATORY ACTIONS

- Education and Outreach
- Plan Development
- Policy and Code Adjustment
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Practice Improvements
- Inventory, Assessment or Survey

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Programs and Services
- Facility and Infrastructure Improvement
- Enforcement and Incentives

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INNOVATION & PROCESS

Communities can receive additional credit in STAR for demonstrating *innovation and best practices* outside of the traditional 7 goal areas. Sections include:
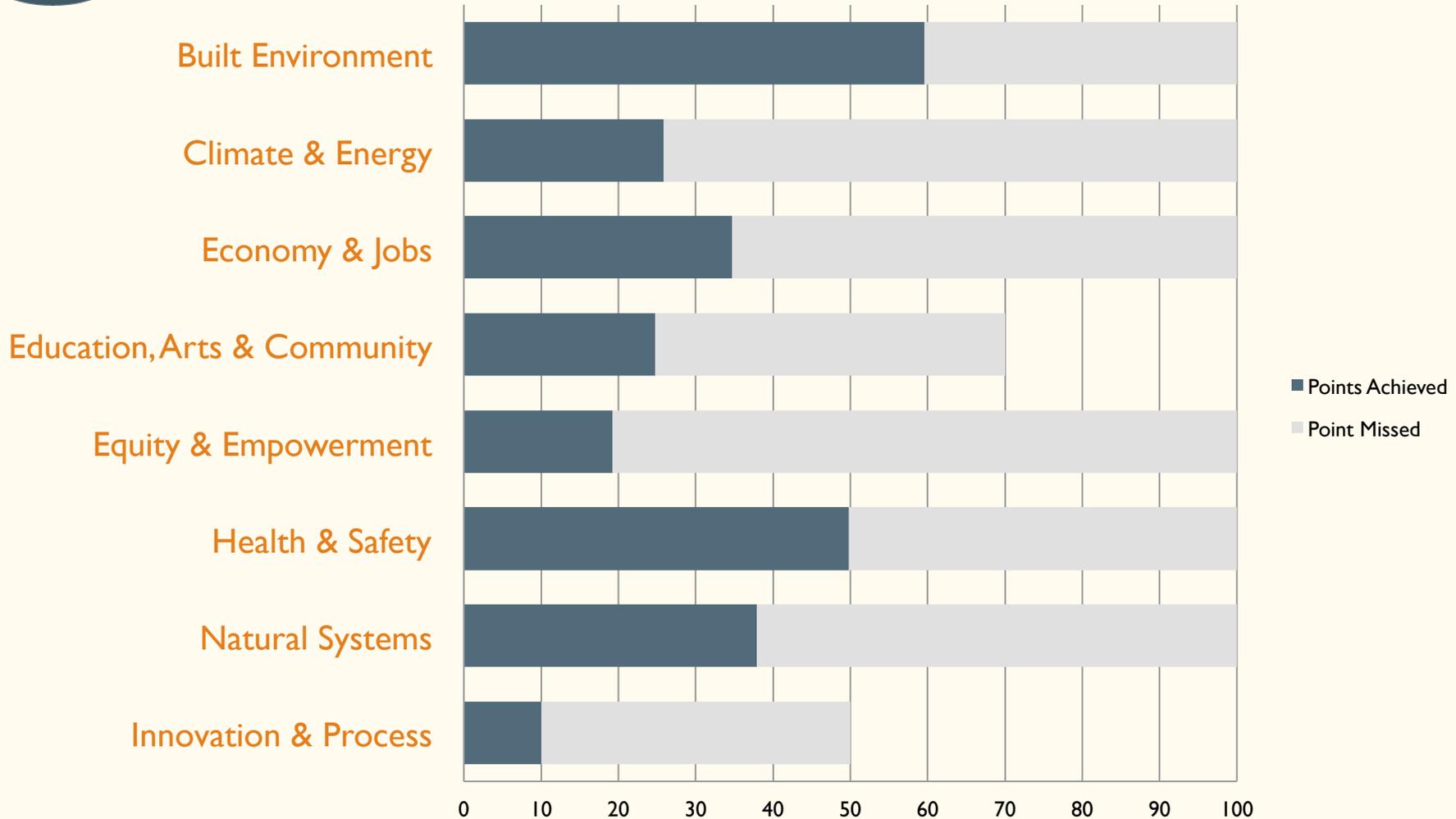
- **IP-1: Best Practices & Processes**
  - Comprehensive Planning
  - Public Engagement
  - Codes and Ordinances
- **IP-2: Exemplary Performance**
- **IP-3: Local Innovation**
- **IP-4: Regional Priorities**
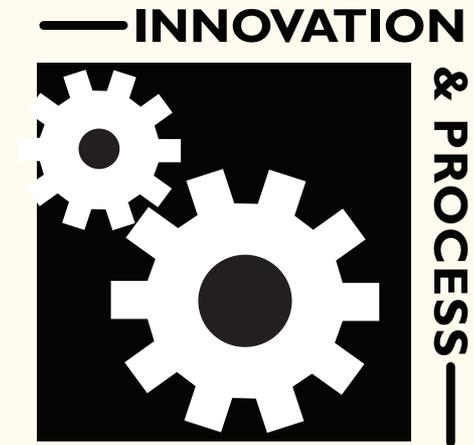
Park Forest STAR Analysis:
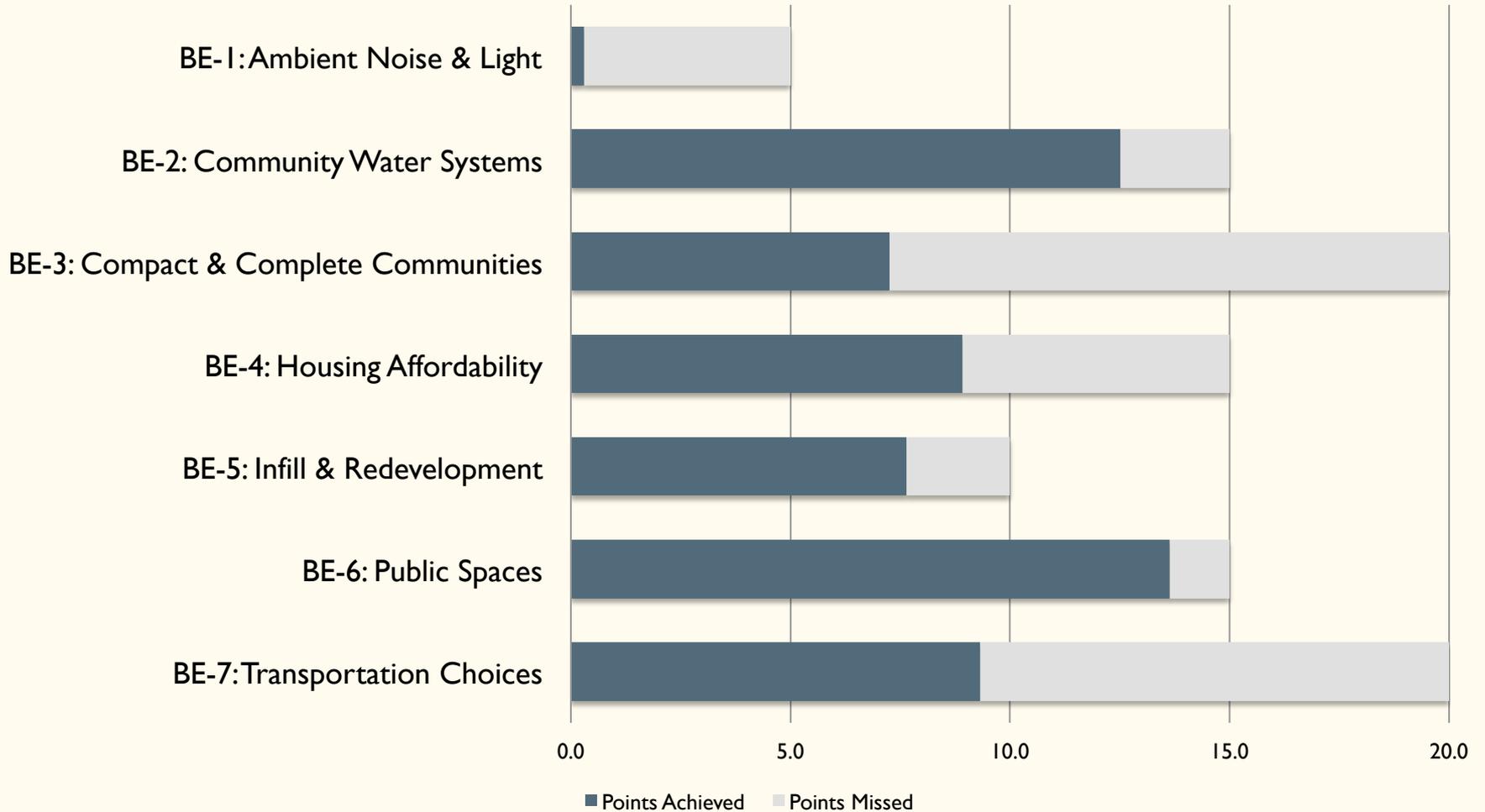# Points Achieved and Missed by Goal Area

Legend:
- Points Achieved
- Point Missed

Goal Areas (top to bottom):
- Built Environment
- Climate & Energy
- Economy & Jobs
- Education, Arts & Community
- Equity & Empowerment
- Health & Safety
- Natural Systems
- Innovation & Process

Goal Area	Points Achieved	Points Available	Point Missed	Percentage
Built Environment	59.61	100	40.39	**60%**
Climate & Energy	25.82	100	74.18	**26%**
Economy & Jobs	34.7	100	65.3	**35%**
Education, Arts & Community	24.79	70	45.21	**35%**
Equity & Empowerment	19.28	100	80.72	**19%**
Health & Safety	49.8	100	50.2	**50%**
Natural Systems	37.88	100	62.12	**38%**
Innovation & Process	10	50	40	**20%**
Totals	261.88	720	458.12	**36%**

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TOP PERFORMING OBJECTIVES

1) EAC-2: Community Cohesion

2) BE-6: Public Spaces

3) EE-2: Civil & Human Rights

4) NS-1: Green Infrastructure

5) BE-2: Community Water Systems

Park Forest STAR Analysis: Built Environment

BE-1: Ambient Noise & Light
BE-2: Community Water Systems
BE-3: Compact & Complete Communities
BE-4: Housing Affordability
BE-5: Infill & Redevelopment
BE-6: Public Spaces
BE-7: Transportation Choices

0.0   5.0   10.0   15.0   20.0

■ Points Achieved   ■ Points Missed

BUILT ENVIRONMENT: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

General takeaway:

- Highest performing objective – achieved 60% of points

Strengths and highlights:

- 90% of residents live within a half-mile walk distance of a park or public space and 100% live within 3 miles of an off-road trail
- Received credit for 6 transportation actions, including for increasing the mileage of sidewalks and bike lanes and passing a complete streets policy
- Met the Affordable Housing Preservation Outcome

Opportunities for improvement:

- Pass Unified Development Code to get points in multiple objectives
- Do Compact & Complete Communities spatial analysis
- Track transportation choices outcomes

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Park Forest STAR Analysis: Climate & Energy

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Category	
CE-1: Climate Adaptation	
CE-2: Greenhouse Gas Mitigation	
CE-3: Greening the Energy Supply	
CE-4: Industrial Sector Resource Efficiency	
CE-5: Resource Efficient Buildings	
CE-6: Resource Efficient Public Infrastructure	
CE-7: Waste Minimization	

0.0   5.0   10.0   15.0   20.0

■ Points Achieved   ■ Points Missed

CLIMATE & ENERGY: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

General takeaway:

- One of the lower scoring goals, room for improvement, start with actions

Strengths and highlights:

- Progress in CE-5 Resource Efficient Buildings - Upgraded building codes, inspector trainings to enforce water and energy efficiency standards, and renovation of 7 municipal buildings

- Working with residents and businesses to recycle and reduce waste footprint

Opportunities for improvement:

- Track GHG emissions

- Perform a vulnerability assessment to assess potential climate change threats

- Create an outreach campaign to educate citizens and businesses on threats

- Consider a comprehensive programmatic and policy shift towards alternative fuels and renewable energy sources.

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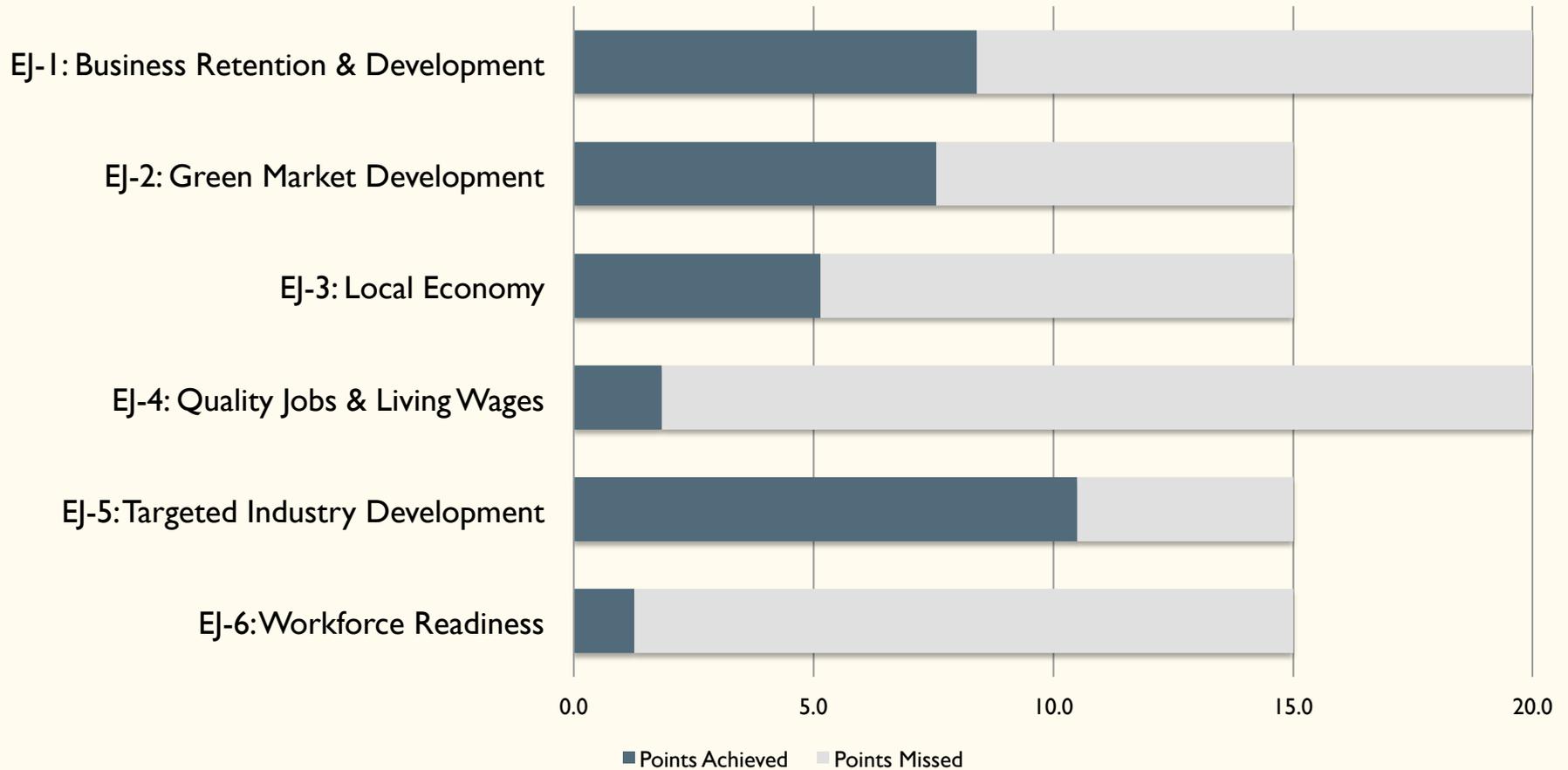
ECONOMY & JOBS: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

General takeaway:

- Good job working with business community, could focus more on workforce dev
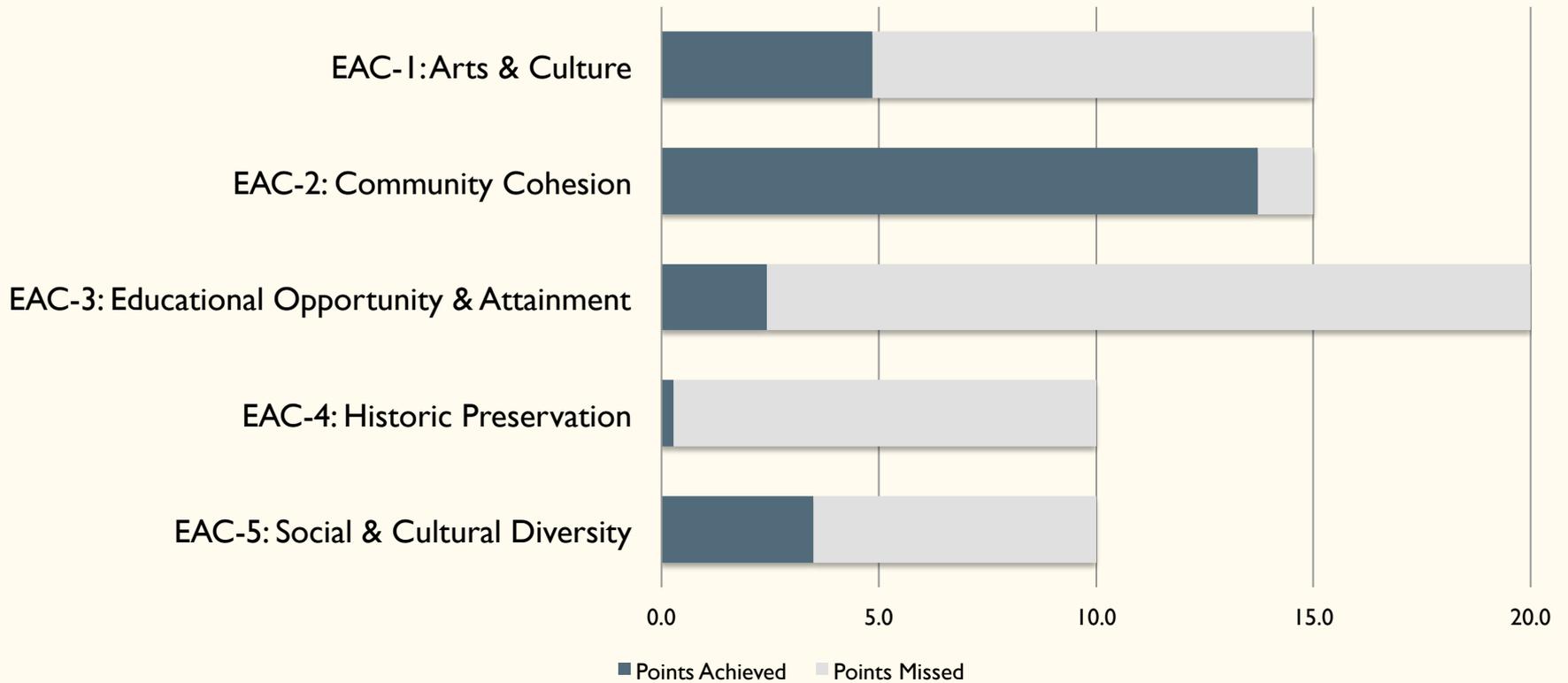
Strengths and highlights:

- Work locally and with regional partners to support and improve local businesses and grow the local economy

- Won a Small Business Association Growth Accelerator award to create the SouthWorks MakerLab business incubator

- Demonstrated increase in funds deposited in locally owned financial institutions

- Achieved points for all 8 actions in the targeted industries of Manufacturing, Retail, and Food & Accommodation

Opportunities for improvement:

- Look into actions to support citizens through the actions in EJ-4 Quality Jobs & Living Wages and EJ-6 Workforce Development

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EDUCATION, ARTS & COMMUNITY: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

General takeaway:

- Scored well in Community Cohesion, could work on other objectives
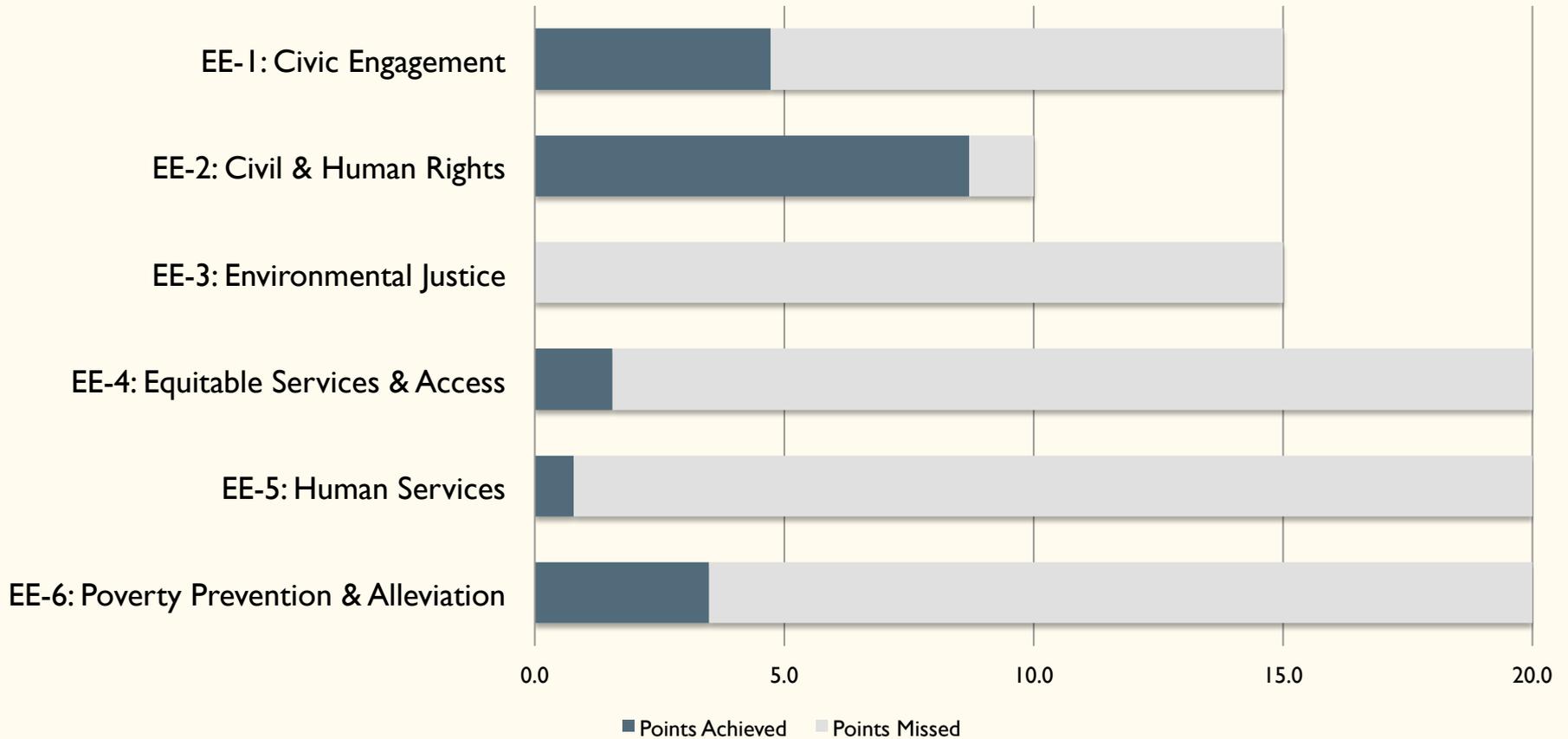
Strengths and highlights:

- 88% of residents live within one mile of a community venue with free events and programming
- Provide financial support for the arts through the Park Forest Art Fair and the Tall Grass Arts Association
- Equity and diversity training for local government staff and through programming around events like Black History Month

Opportunities for improvement:

- Develop an inventory of designated and eligible historic structures and sites
- Adopt a diversity policy for local boards and associations
- Focus on Educational Opportunity & Attainment

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EQUITY & EMPOWERMENT: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

General takeaway:

- Lowest scoring goal area, not uncommon

Strengths and highlights:

- Provide regular opportunities to meet with local gov staff and elected officials
- Developed a volunteer program to help residents get involved with the local gov
- Achieved 8.7 of the 10 available points in EE-2 Civil & Human Rights by demonstrating that all civil and human rights complaints in the past 3 years have been investigated and violations redressed in a timely manner

Opportunities for improvement:

- Investigate whether there are polluted and/or toxic environments that cause disproportionate health hazards to low-income residents and persons of color
- Conduct a community needs assessment to identify priority service needs and resources in the community

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Park Forest STAR Analysis: Health & Safety
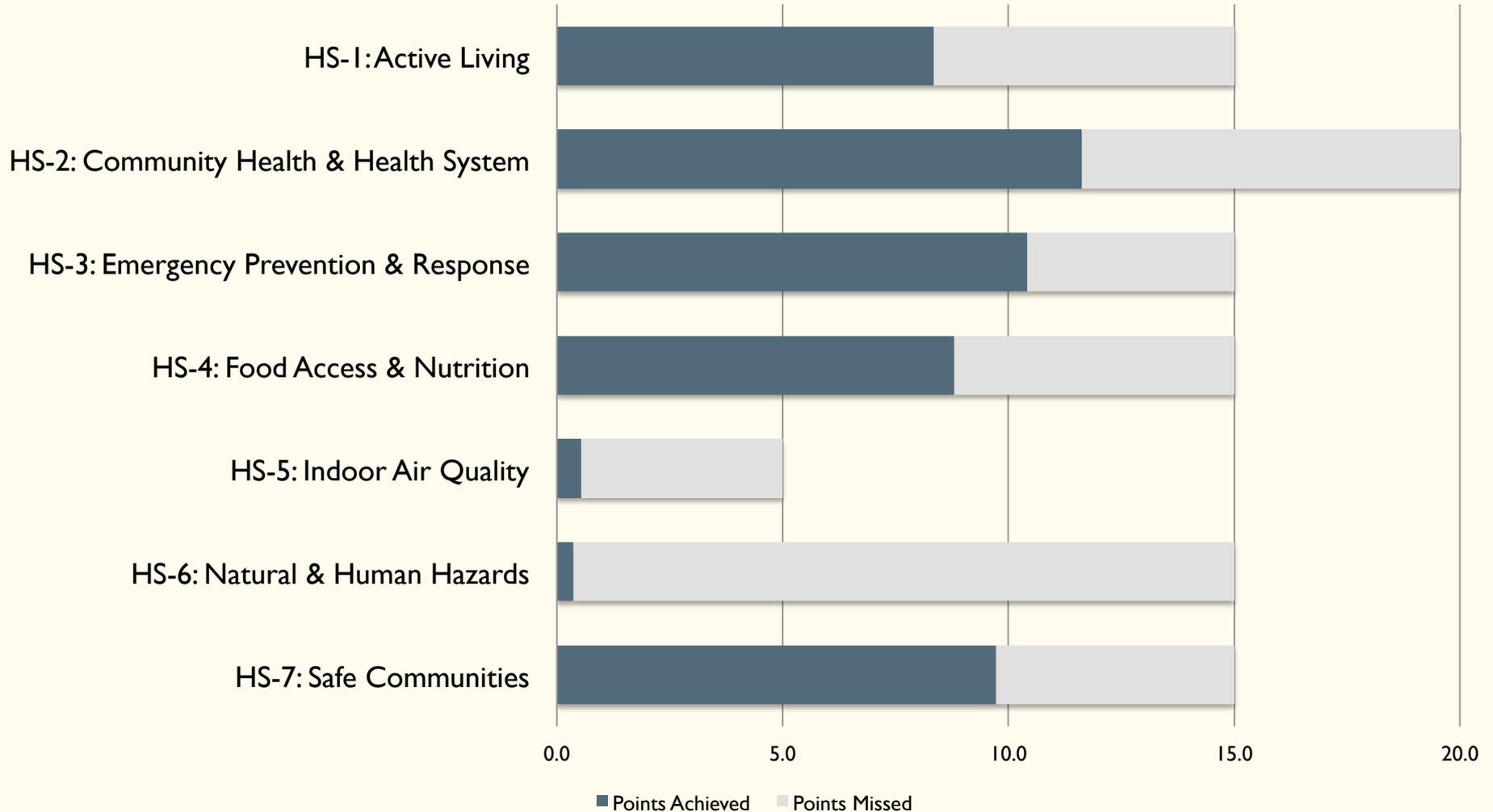
HEALTH & SAFETY: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

General takeaway:

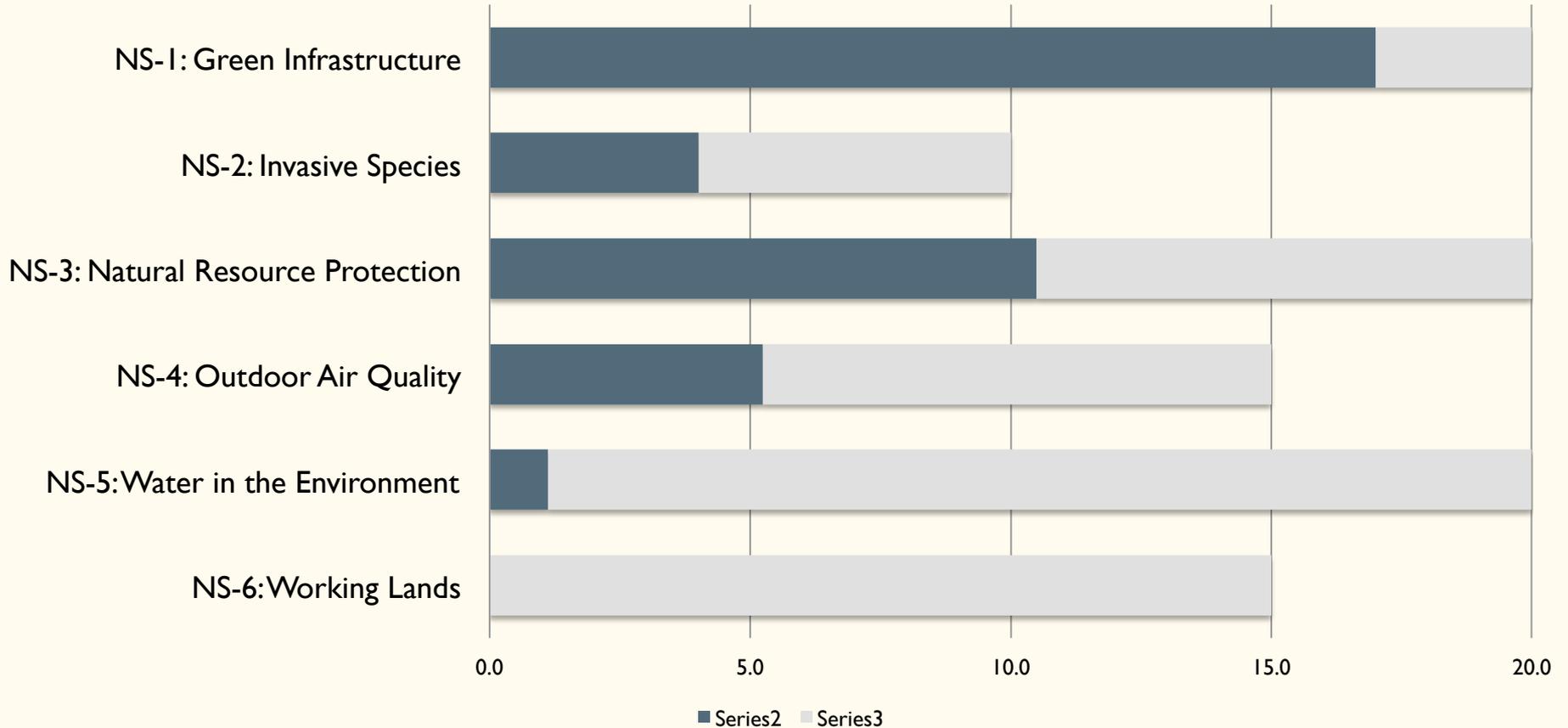- Second highest scoring goal area – 50% of all points achieved

Strengths and highlights:

- Received credit in HS-1 Active Living for a complete streets policy, upgrades to the Aqua Center, and improved bicycle amenities
- Local public health department was accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board in 2014
- Received a Class 4 ISO rating for superior fire protection
- Demonstrated an increase in the ability of low-income families to access low-cost, healthful food, as well as a decrease in the % of residents living in a food desert

Opportunities for improvement:

- Consider adopting a health-in-all policy for local decision-making
- Look into actions in HS-6 Natural & Human Hazards

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Park Forest STAR Analysis: Natural Systems

	Series2	Series3
NS-1: Green Infrastructure	17.0	20.0
NS-2: Invasive Species	4.0	10.0
NS-3: Natural Resource Protection	10.5	20.0
NS-4: Outdoor Air Quality	5.2	15.0
NS-5: Water in the Environment	1.2	20.0
NS-6: Working Lands	0.0	15.0

■ Series2 ■ Series3

NATURAL SYSTEMS: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

General takeaway:

- Third highest scoring goal area, scored highly in NS-1 Green Infrastructure

Strengths and highlights:

- 57% of the jurisdiction's land area has protected vegetated surfaces
- 95% live within a 1/2 mile walk distance from a green infrastructure feature
- Three Year Ecosystem Enhancement Plan helped to regain control of invasive and exotic species such as cattail and reed canary grass in the Central Park Wetlands
- Received credit for Rail Fan Park prairie establishment, the Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve, and the Old Plank Road Trail

## Opportunities for improvement:

- Use wetland projects for credit in NS-5 Water in the Environment
- Adopt advanced parking strategies in the Unified Development Code to improve NS-4 Outdoor Air Quality

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POTENTIAL IDEAS STEPS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Gaps Analysis – what was missed and why?
  - No available data?
  - Didn't hit threshold?
  - Not a priority?
- Community prioritization of Objectives
- Look into Innovation & Process
- Identify best practices and potential actions from Tech Guide and other sources, USDN, etc.
- Community/local government workshop
- Incorporate measures into local plans and programs

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WHAT'S NEXT FOR PARK FOREST?

- Plaque Presentation
- Community Outreach
  – Main Street Nights
  – Fourth of July Parade
- Village staff Lunch & Learns
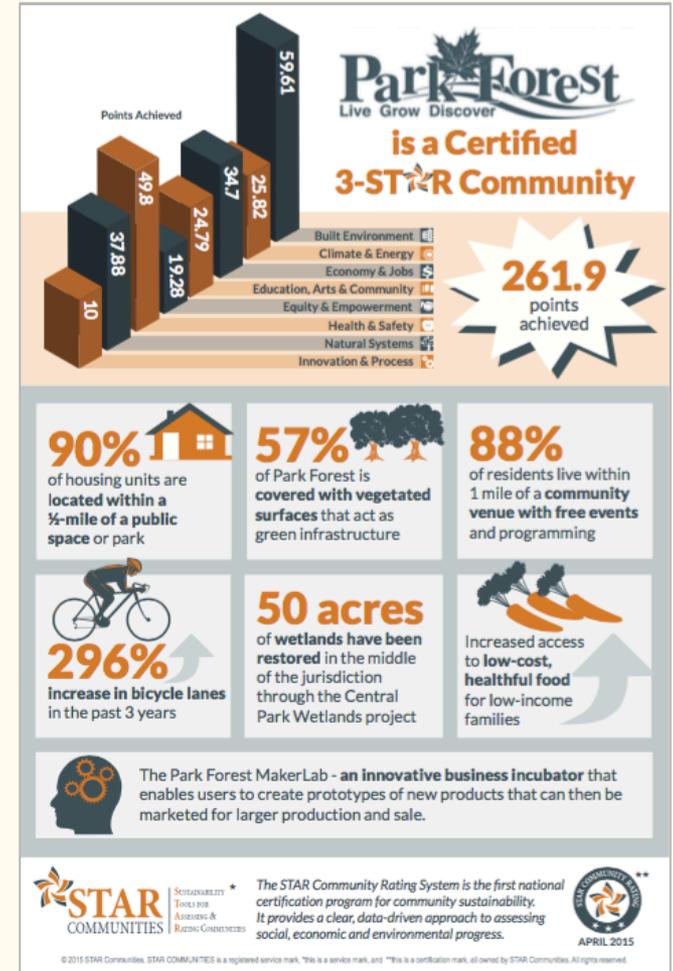
Park Forest
Live Grow Discover

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