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# Utilities Public Advisory Group

November 6, 2024 • 11 am–12:30 pm

Hybrid Meeting • MS Teams or Bend Utilities Department Deschutes Conference Room

Lori Faha, P.E., Environmental Resources Manager

Dan Denning, Water Conservation Program Manager

Aubrie Koenig, Facilitator



# Purpose & Agenda

*Share updates and gather feedback on water conservation program planning for 2025.*

1. Introduction
2. Turf Replacement Program
3. Communications Campaign
4. UPAG Discussion
5. Summary and Closing



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# October meeting reflections: stormwater focus

## Data Considerations

- Local precipitation data collection for microclimates in Central Oregon
- Map of infiltration rates (incentives or standards for residential development)

## Policy Considerations

- Evaluation interval (5 yrs etc) to reassess and adapt to changes in data
- Consider design storm standard (repeated short bursts vs 24 hr storm)
- Flood safety with shared public and individual responsibility (durable infrastructure vs management)

## Solution Sets

- Creative opportunities for capture and reuse, including plant selection
- Partnerships (school or community group) to help maintain green infrastructure
- Incentives and code considerations to enable using private property
- Adaptable design standards (higher intensity, lower frequency, lower amount of rainfall)





# UPAG feedback snapshot

## Timing & Format

- Hybrid is good! Timing great for most

## Thumbs up for...

- Snacks!
- Diverse group expertise
- Guest presenters, content flow/organization

## Could be more...

- Time for discussion
- Reporting how feedback is used

## Future Topics

- Regional collaboration, inter-relation of agricultural irrigation and municipal water source protection
- Irrigation practices and private property opportunities (densification, development and building codes)
- Urban forest compatibility with stormwater systems
- Stormwater capture (options for storage and use) and greywater (permits and infrastructure)
- Sewer capacity/development for future





# Water Conservation Program



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# Turf Replacement Program 2024 - Overview

- Launch date April 1, 2024
- Residential focus for retroactive water reductions to meet our WMCP goals
- \$3 per sqft. of cool season grass converted to low water use landscape per program requirements. Up to 1,000 sqft per account.
- Fiscal year funding \$75,000/yr



**Turf Removal Rebate**

Before After

**Save water, money and time by upgrading to a high desert landscape.**

Must be a City of Bend water customer to participate.

The City of Bend is offering a Turf Removal Rebate to convert thirsty lawns into a low-water use landscape which provides a colorful, biodiverse and waterwise alternative to traditional lawns. These alternatives can also lower your utility bills and reduce maintenance requirements.

\$3 sq/ft  
up to \$3,000  
maximum

**BYE LAWN... HIGH DESERT!**

WaterWiseTips.org

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WATER CONSERVATION

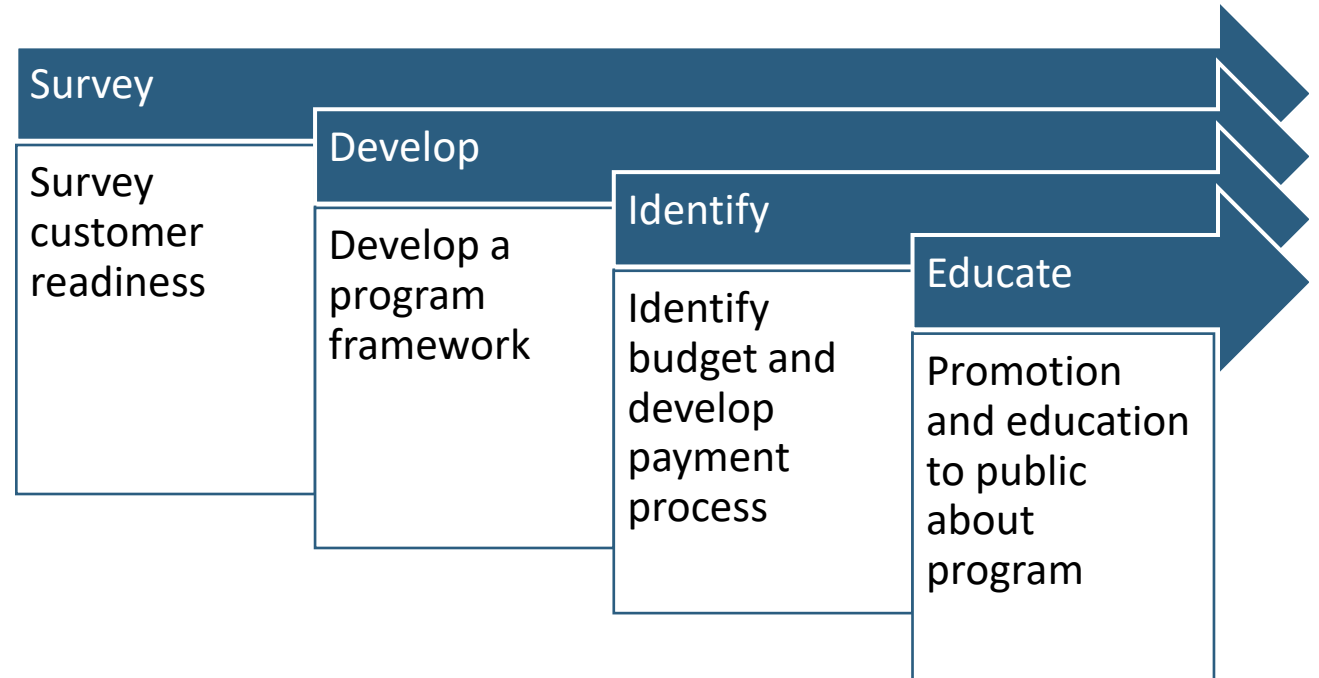
The flyer features a 'Before' and 'After' comparison of a residential landscape. The 'Before' image shows a traditional lawn, while the 'After' image shows a high desert landscape with various plants and flowers. A circular inset shows a close-up of colorful flowers. The bottom of the flyer has a dark teal background with the text 'BYE LAWN... HIGH DESERT!' and the City of Bend Water Conservation logo.



# Turf replacement planning

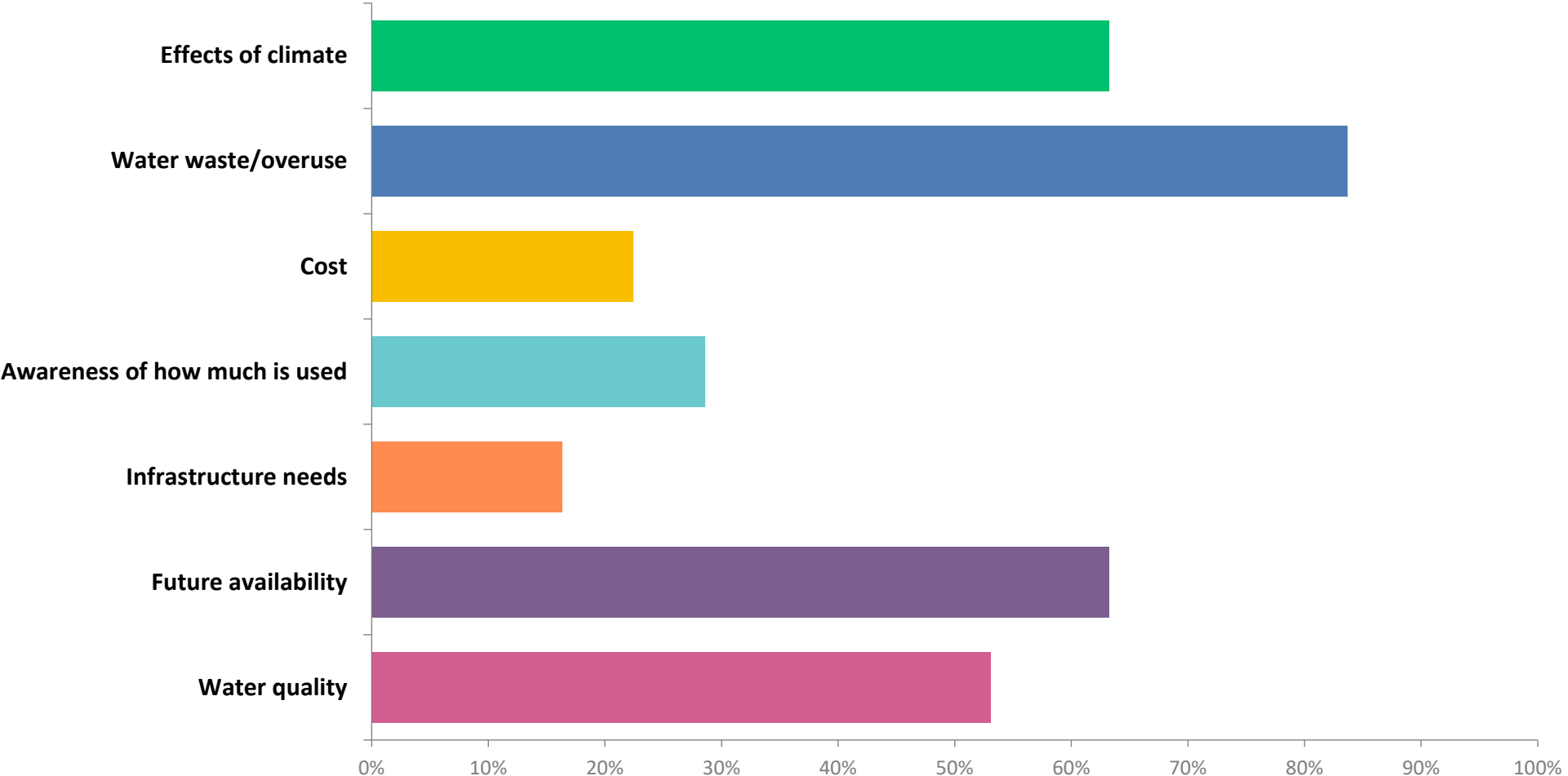
April 2023-April 2024

- Meetings with peer utilities
- Bend neighborhood data
- Bend neighborhood water use
- Project resource development





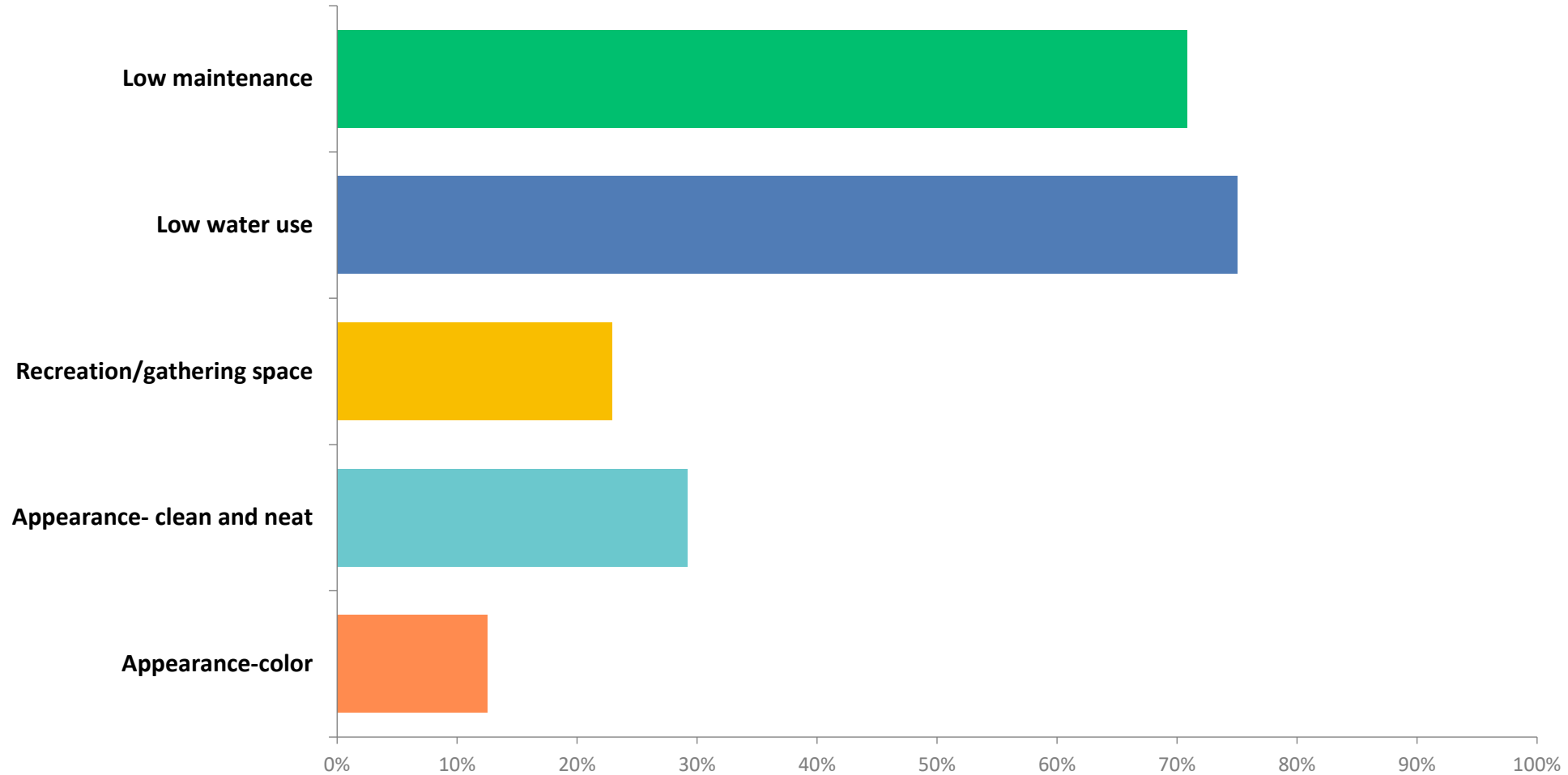
# Q3: What issues are a top priority for you in regards to Bend water?



Answered: 49 Skipped: 1



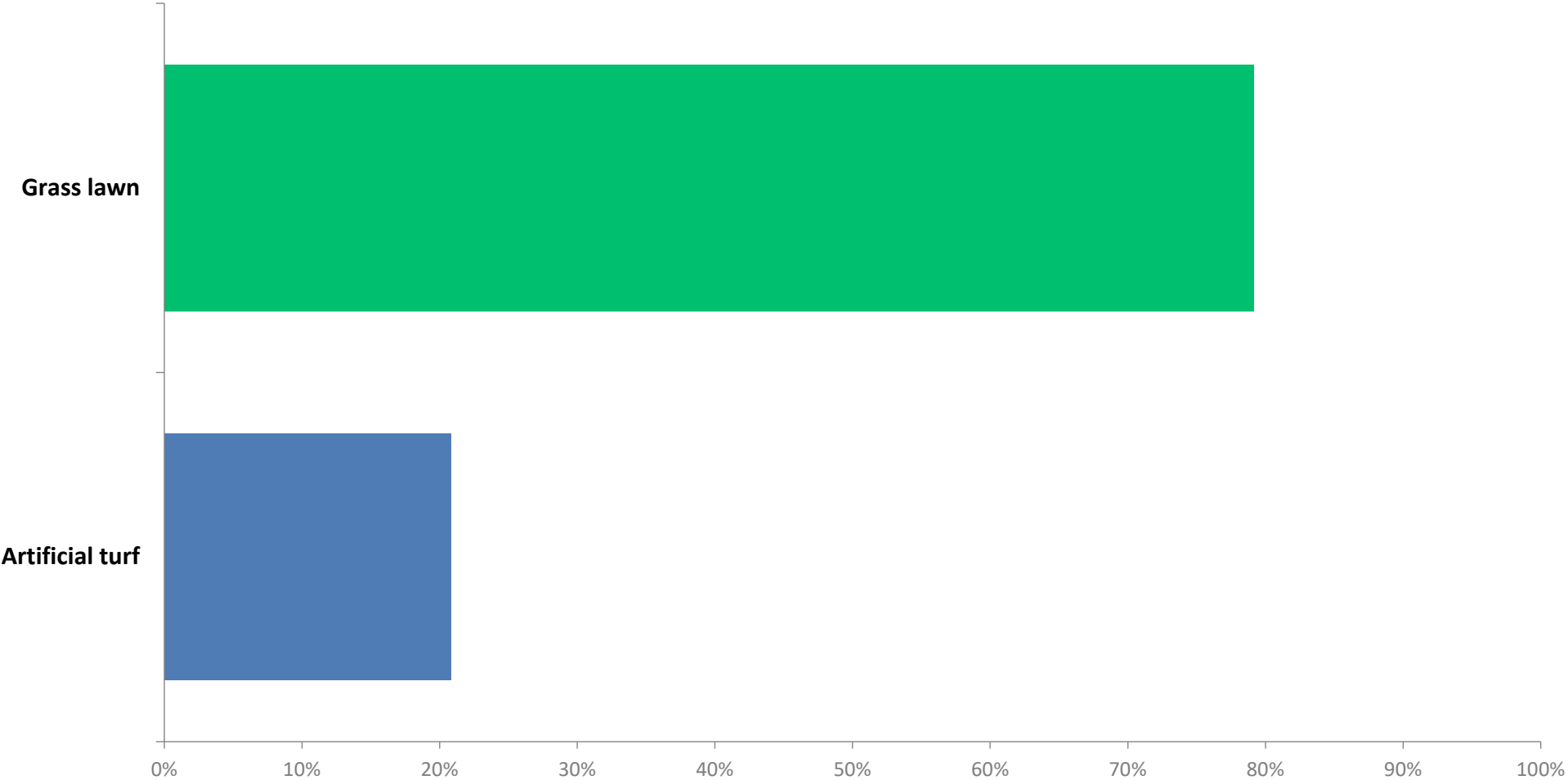
# Q4: What are the most important feature(s) of your landscape?



*Answered: 48 Skipped: 2*



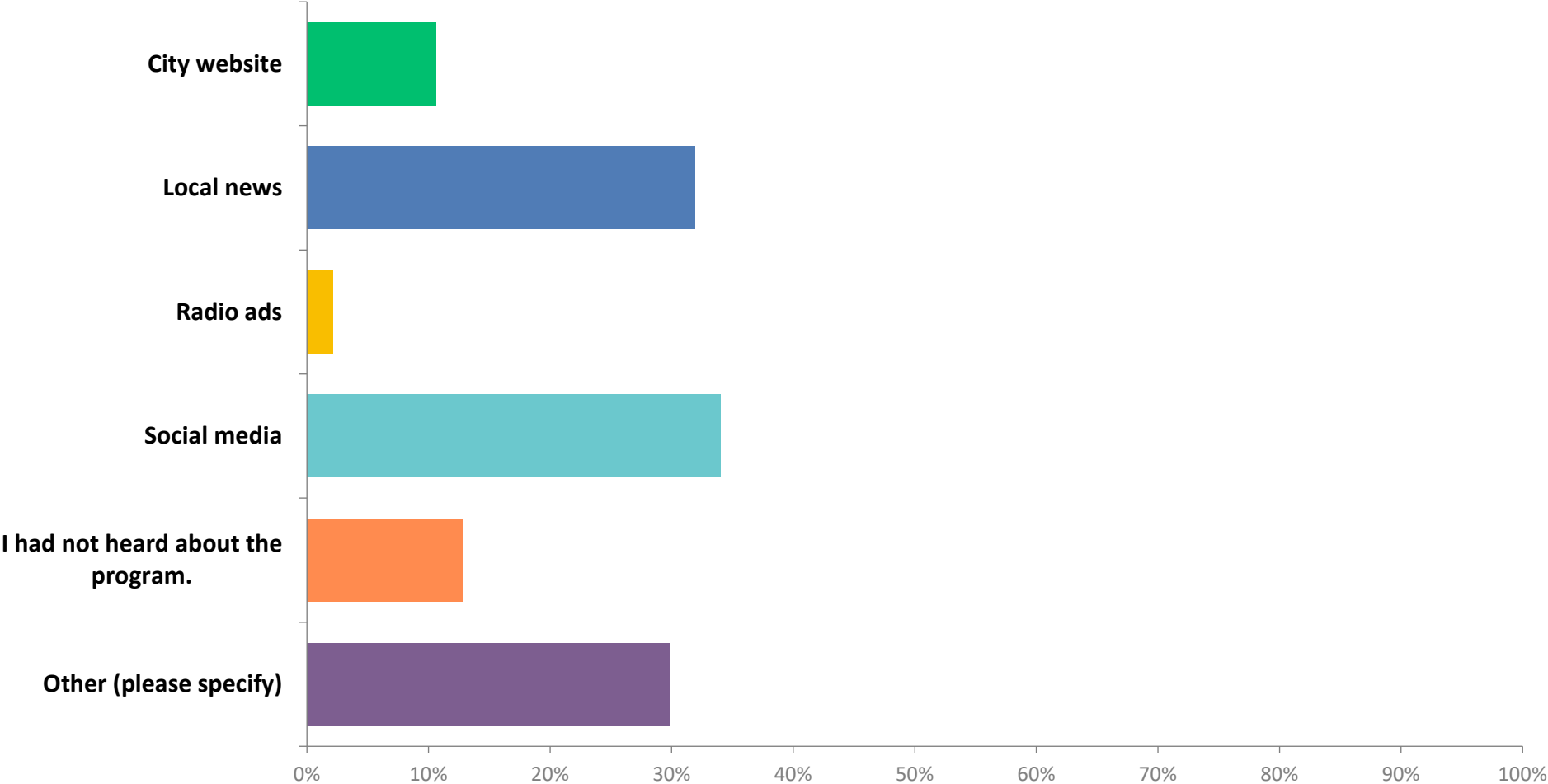
# Q5: When you think of turf, you think of...



Answered: 48 Skipped: 2



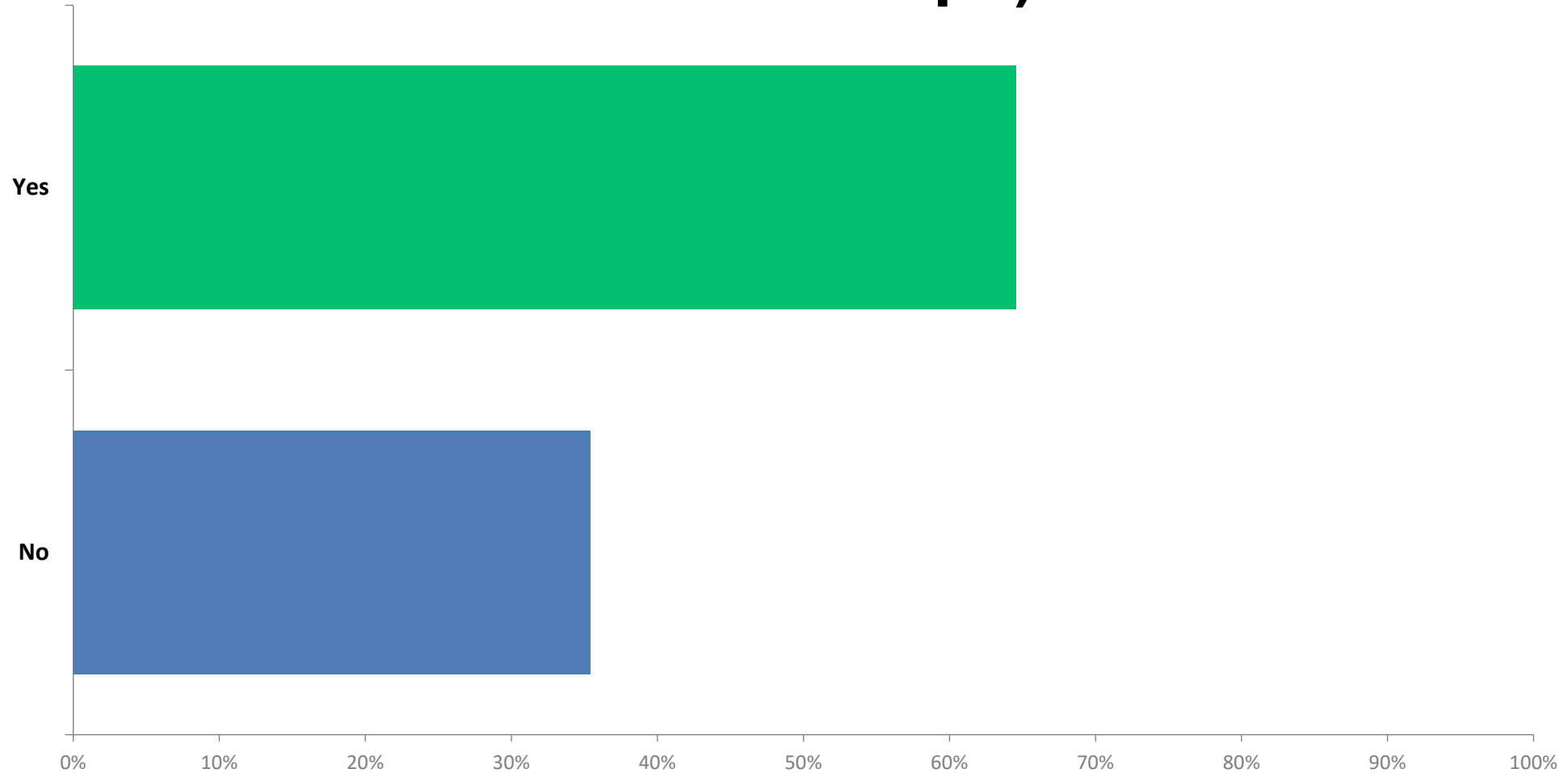
# Q6: Have you heard about the City of Bend turf removal program? If yes, from where?



Answered: 47 Skipped: 3



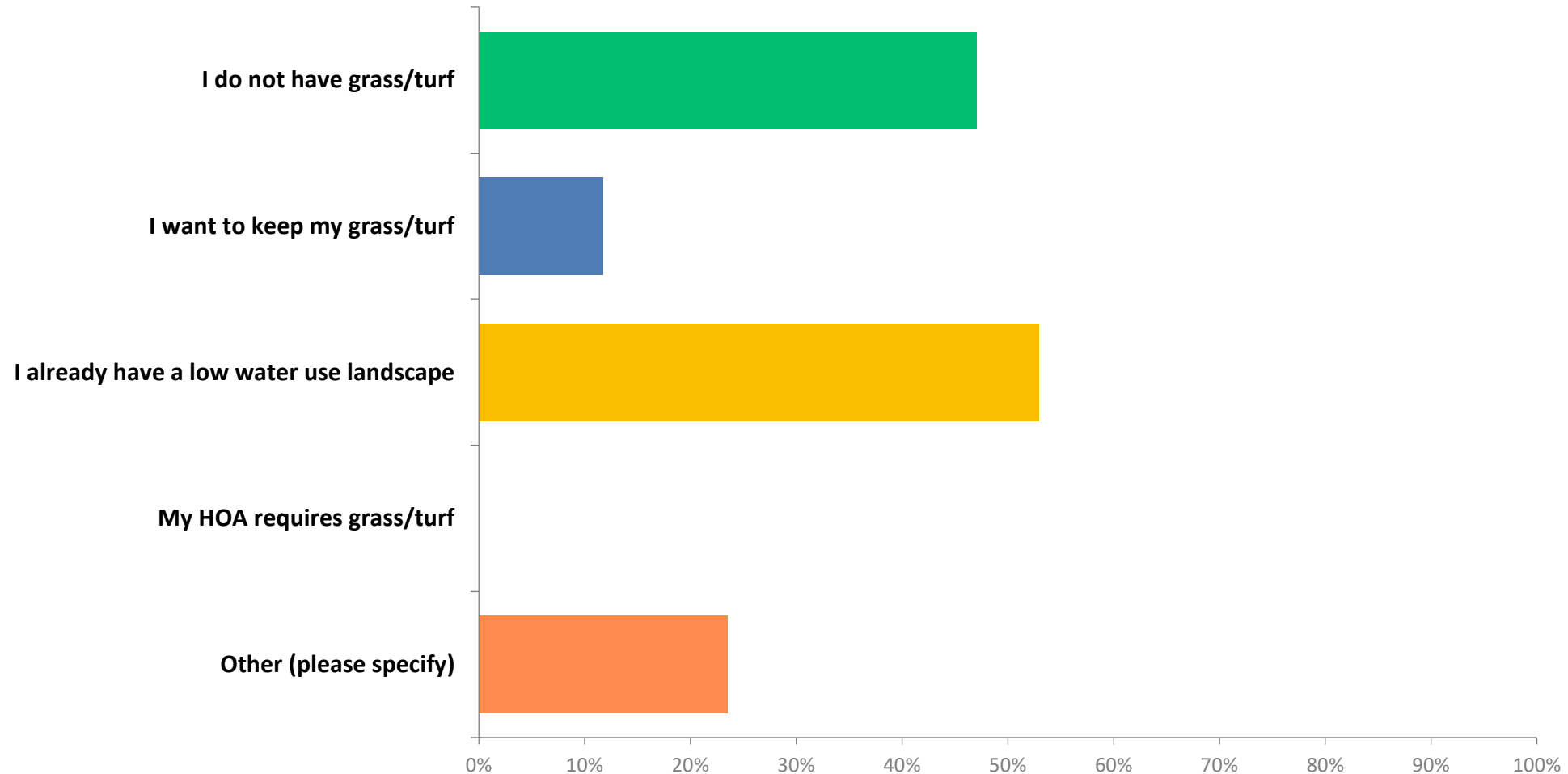
# Q7: Would you take advantage of a City of Bend grass/turf removal rebate (\$3 per square foot converted to low water landscape)?



Answered: 48 Skipped: 2



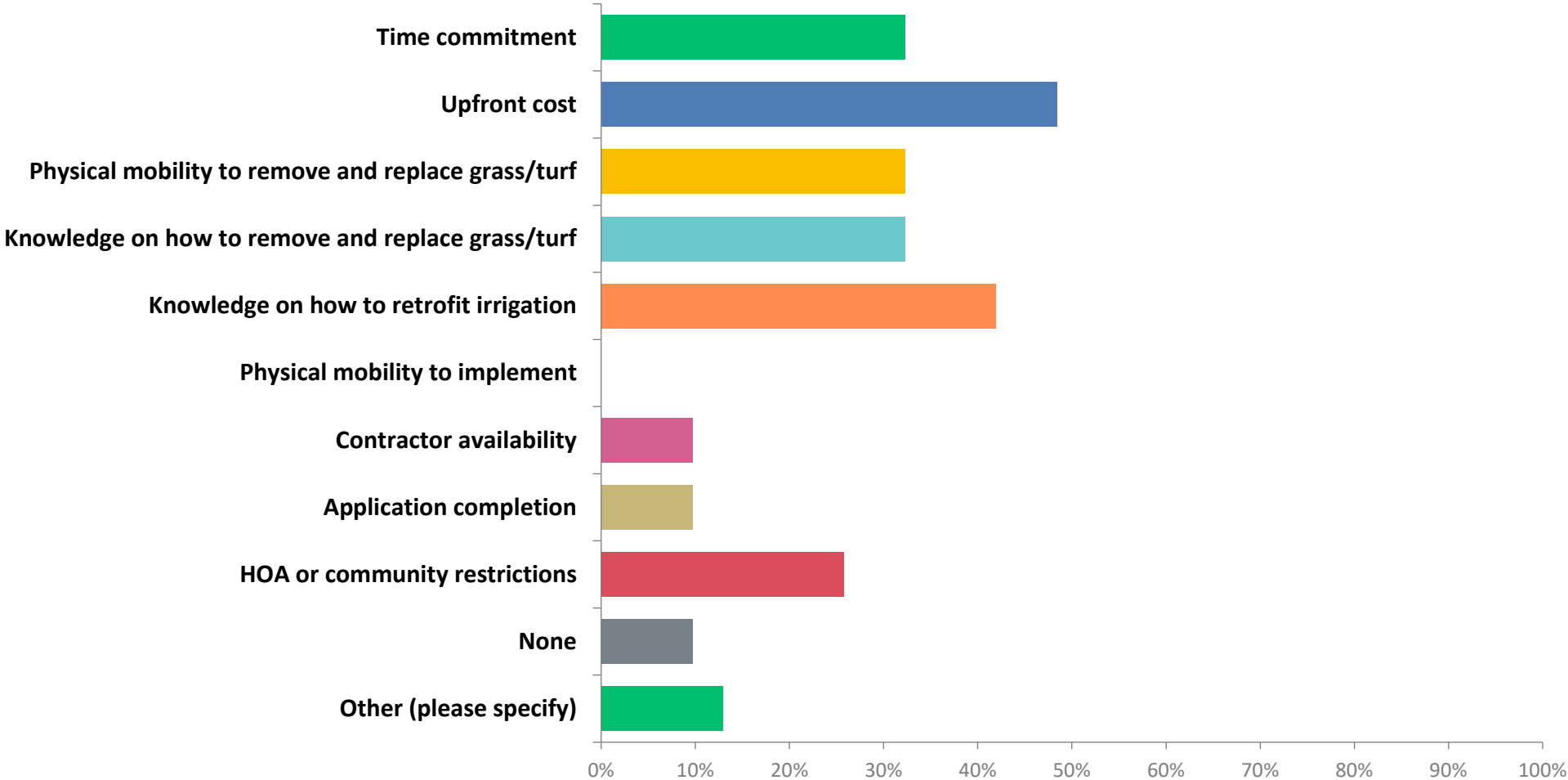
## Q8: Please elaborate on why you would not participate:



Answered: 17 Skipped: 33



# Q9: What challenges do you foresee for the grass/turf removal rebate?





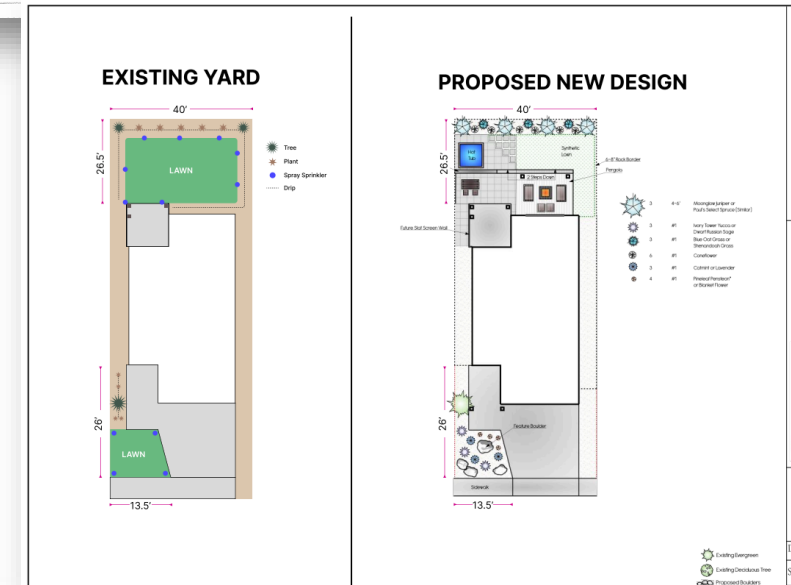
# Program Requirements

- Must have living turf grass
- May not have started removal
- Submit a plan that adheres to program req. and ROW code
- Convert to HE irrigation
- Must have a dedicated irrigation zone for project
- Meet plant density requirements
- Discourage herbicide for removal
- No weed barrier or plastic
- Tree protection/no removal
- Trees must have irrigation
- No synthetic turf



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CITY OF BEND WATER CONSERVATION			PROJECT PLAN	
<b>GENERAL</b>				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include existing sprinklers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include existing trees	• Number of Project Zone(s) <u>3 (?)</u>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include irrigation zone labels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Include directional arrow	• Project Size in Sq. Ft. <u>1400</u>		
<p>EXISTING TREES - SPRUCE</p> <p>Single irrigation zone (#6) plants {</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low growing/spreading</li> <li>- mid-height</li> <li>- larger (shrub)</li> <li>- rock/elevated</li> </ul>				
<b>IRRIGATION</b>				
• Current Irrigation Type:	• Proposed Irrigation Type:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Rotor - Overhead	<input type="checkbox"/> High-Efficiency Rotary			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spray - Overhead	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drip			
<input type="checkbox"/> Drip	*Width must be >8'			
<b>PLANTING</b>				
• Proposed Planting Layout				
*Approximately 10 plants per every 100 sq. ft.				
• Proposed Water Use: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium				
• Anticipated Species (shrub, grass, perennial)				
A desert sweet F candy tuft				





# Encouraged Elements

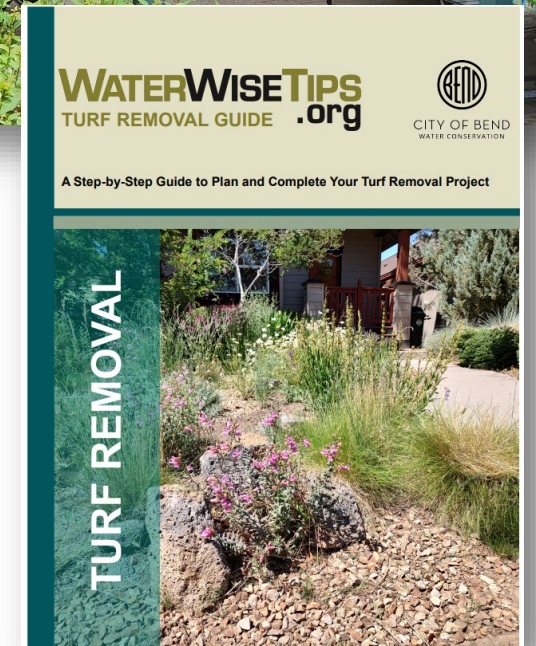
- Storm/Rain water capture
- Native plant material
- Avoid herbicide in demolition
- Incorporation of pollinator friendly species
- Drip vs. broadcast irrigation





# Program Highlights- Education

- In-person education
- 1:1 with designers
- Resource guidebook
- Webinars
- Resource page- irrigation vendors, OSU publications, nurseries, etc.





# Program Highlights- Participation/outcomes

	Average/Total	Contractor	Contractor, DIY	DIY
N (QUANTITY)	58	19	11	28
COST PER SQ/FT	\$8.44	\$17.48	\$6.51	\$3.39
PARTICIPANT SPENT	\$324,827.62	\$194,893.67	\$63,909.82	\$66,024.13
CITY FUNDED	\$125,313.00	\$42,468.00	\$27,333.00	\$55,512.00
RATIO (%)	39%	22%	43%	84%



42,165 sqft lawn replaced



801,135 gal/saved post establishment

85 approved applications/  
58 completed projects



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# Lessons learned

## Clear communication of requirements

- Clearly defined requirements in multiple places
- Required signatures on applications and inspections
- Consistency of decision making when questions arise

## Implementation challenges

- Irrigation/demolition still the most difficult
- Underestimation of scale of project even small projects





# Project scale-effort



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**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





**BEFORE**

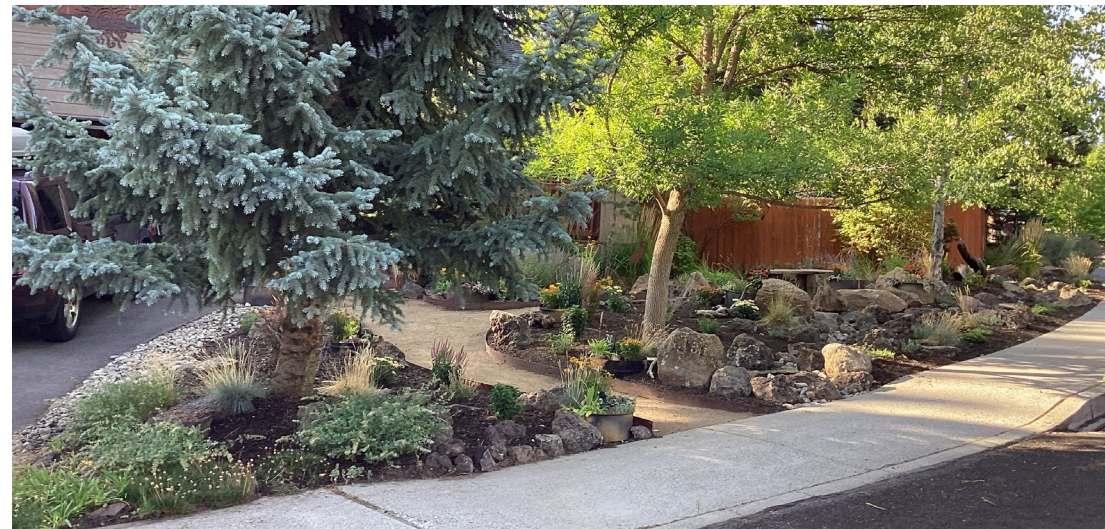


**DURING**



**AFTER**





**BEFORE**

**AFTER**





**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



# Next steps- 2025 program

## Application

- Interest list Nov- applications April

## Education

- Winter learning opportunities
- Webinar for homeowners
- In person open house for property managers and professionals

## Targeted outreach

- Focus on high water users/low income
- Interest list gets regular communication and updates

## No funding change

- May consider additional incentives for low income
- Free mulch

## Participation in national research project

- AWE (Alliance for Water Efficiency) market readiness





# Participant tracking



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# UPAG focus questions



- *In your view, should program resources be focused on those who use a lot of water or those with lower incomes?*
- *Are there additional requirements you think would be beneficial? Or do you feel reducing requirements and barriers to participate would provide greater benefit?*





# Discussion & Feedback



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# Look ahead



## **December 4, 2024: Stormwater Master Plan & UPAG Annual Review**

11am-12:30pm Hybrid Meeting (Boyd Acres or MS Teams)

***Outcome:*** *Welcome new members and refine meeting roadmap for 2025!*

## **January 8, 2025: Stormwater Master Plan**

11am-12:30pm Hybrid Meeting (Boyd Acres or MS Teams)



# Thank you!



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# Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities



To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc. please contact Lori Faha at [lfaha@bendoregon.gov](mailto:lfaha@bendoregon.gov) or (541) 317-3025; Relay Users Dial 7-1-1.