

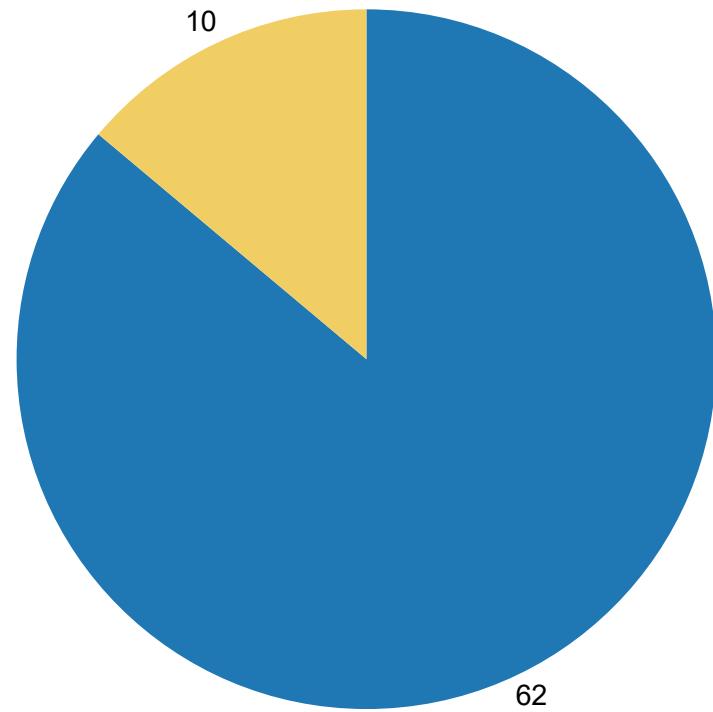
Sharon ARPA Advisory Committee

Sharon CT Covid Recovery Funds – Resident Survey

The Town of Sharon was awarded nearly \$800,000 in funds from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to provide residents and businesses serving the town with financial help to recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic. The Board of Selectmen supported the creation of the ARPA Advisory Committee to recommend how the funds should be spent, in accordance with U.S. Treasury guidelines.

This survey attempts to assess the community's needs and to hear your ideas for how best to allocate the funds.

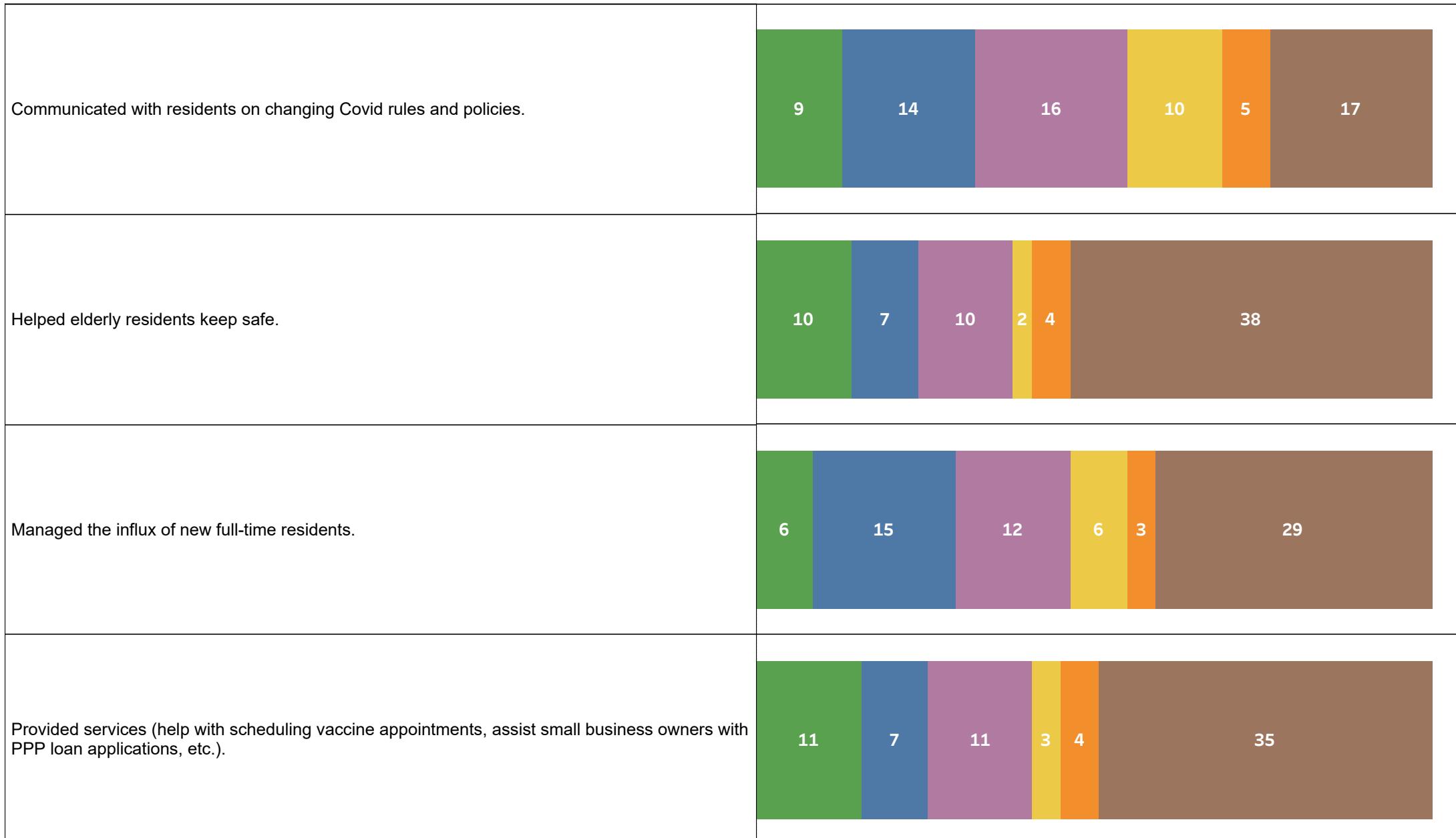
Total Responses



(72

Total Responses
Online
Paper

What has the Town done well during the Covid emergency? (choose all that apply)

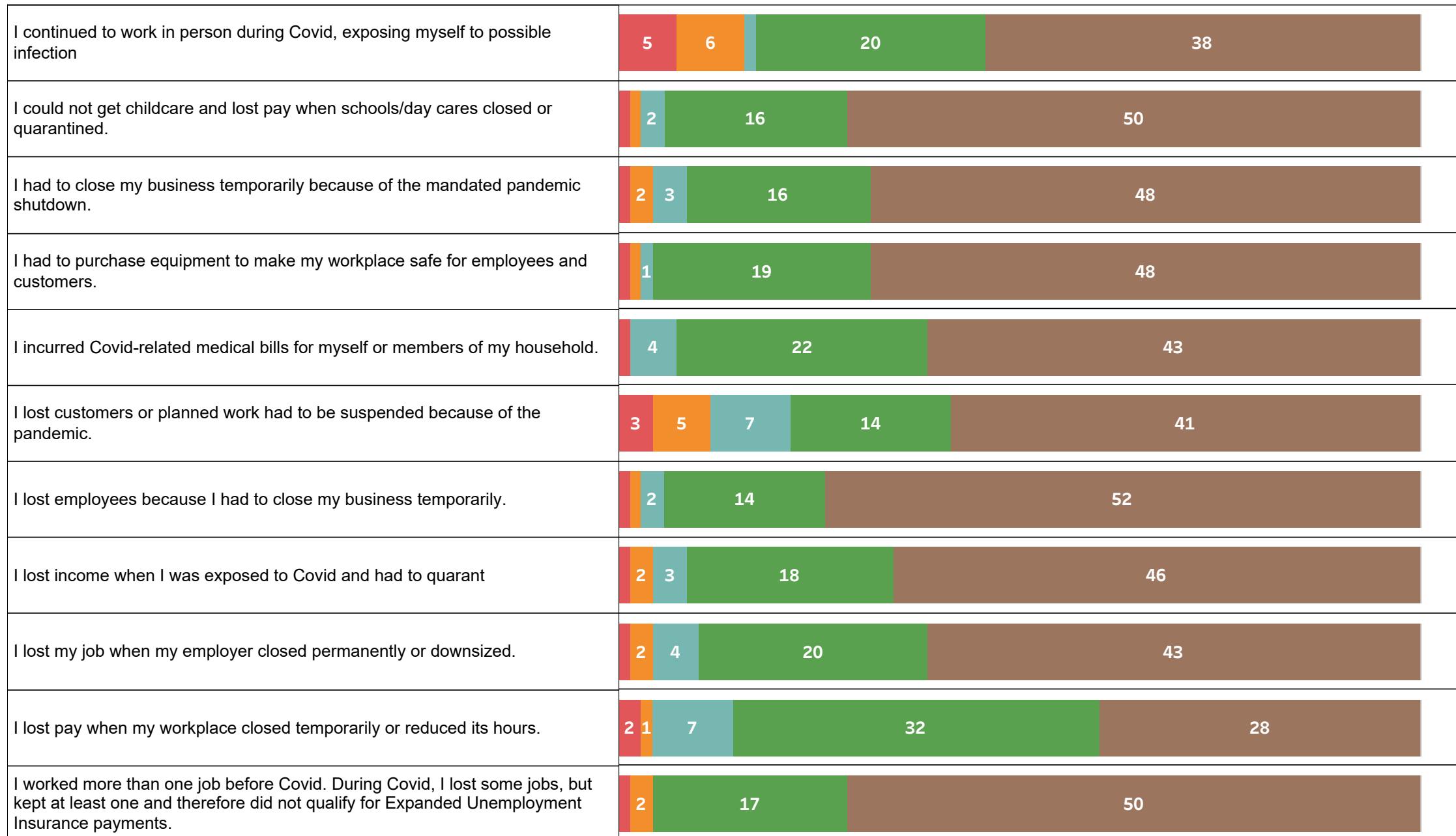

Options:

- Do Not Know
- Did Not Answer
- Poor
- Fair
- Well
- Very well
- Excellent

What could the Town have done better?

- I think the town could have done more to partner with Sharon Hospital for more testing and vaccine distribution
- Install high speed internet
- Needed better information and communication options. Town website fell way short of providing necessary information to residents especially elderly and veterans.
- Don't know
- Pay off all debt before using funds for anything else
- I think communication is key
- Make public how much the population has grown and provide regular updates, with specific data (numbers and dates) if it continues.
- Overall, I think the town did well and adapted quickly as things were happening. I don't think the town could have done anything about the influx of new residents. They will have to learn to be nice and that will take time.

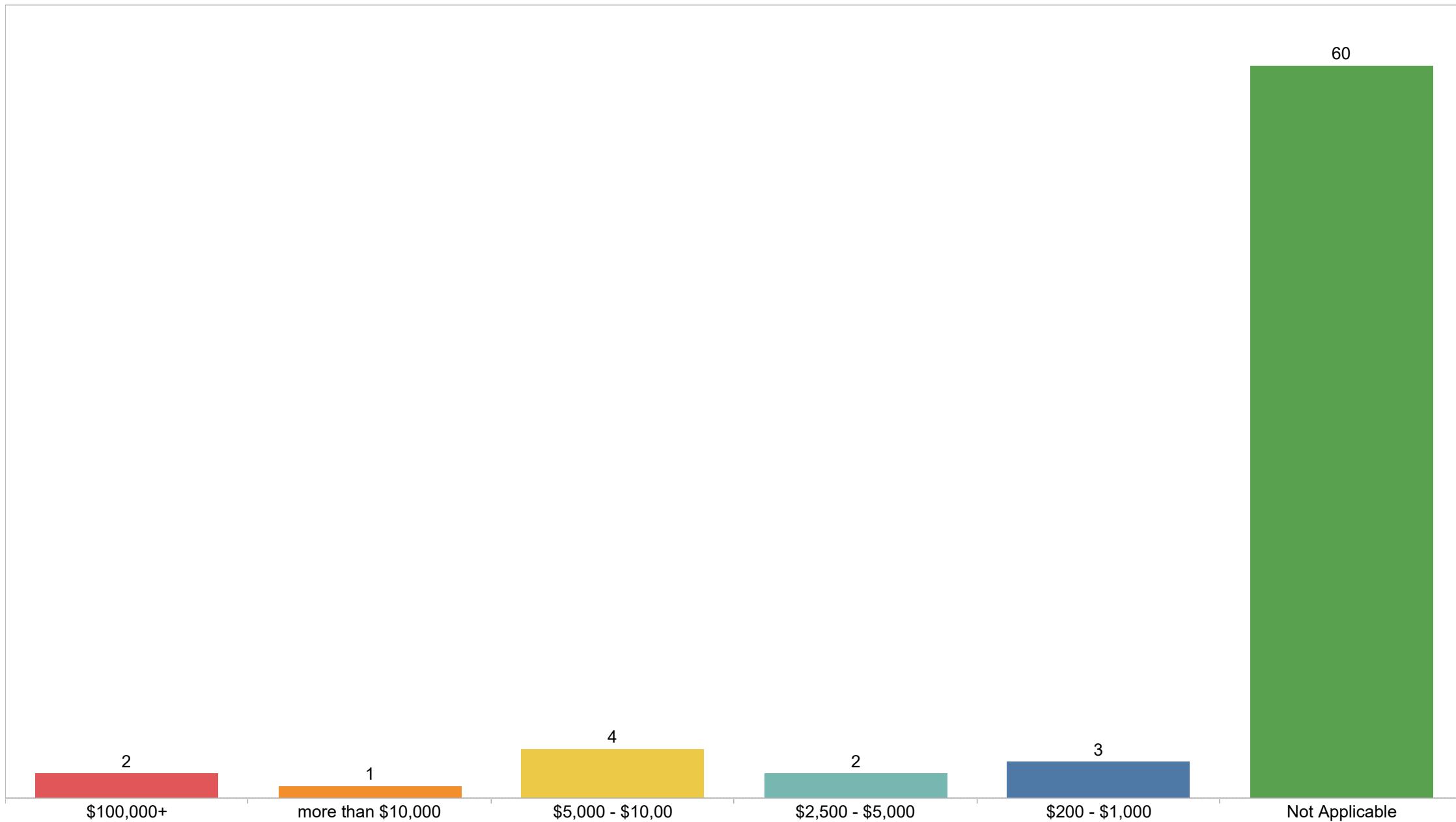
Did you experience economic hardship as a result of the pandemic? (choose all that apply)



Options:

- Did Not Answer
- Not Applicable
- No hardship
- Mild hardship
- Moderate hardship
- Severe hardship

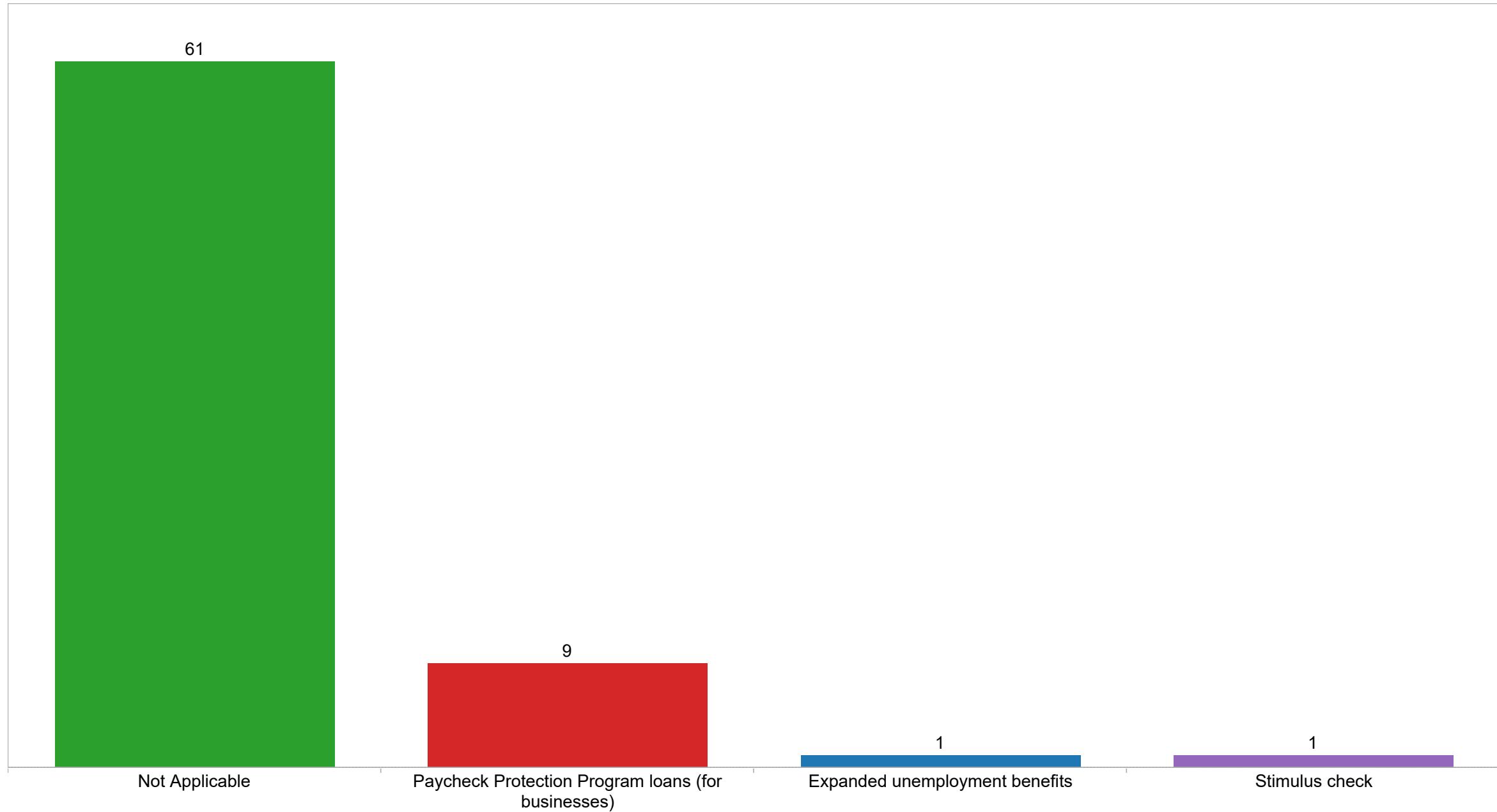
Please estimate the amount of loss you experienced.



Please estimate the amount of loss you experienced.

- \$100,000+
- more than \$10,000
- \$5,000 - \$10,00
- \$2,500 - \$5,000
- \$200 - \$1,000
- Not Applicable

Have any Covid-specific assistance programs helped you offset the income loss?



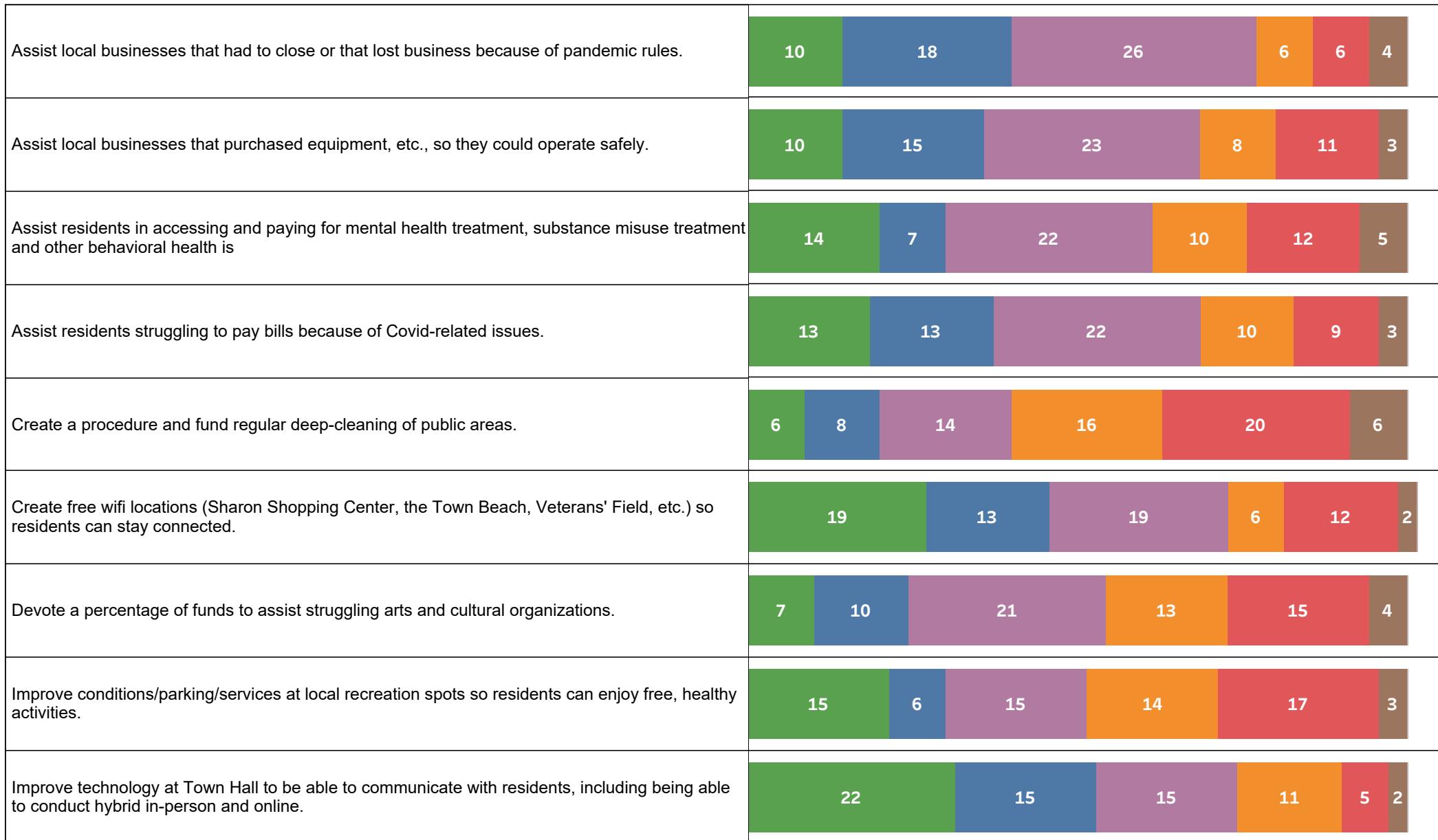
Have any Covid-specific assistance programs helped you offset the income loss?

- Not Applicable
- Paycheck Protection Program loans (for businesses)
- Expanded unemployment benefits
- Stimulus check

Did you experience economic benefit as a result of the pandemic?

- No. I experienced moderate hardship
- I felt very lucky to keep my job.
- yes
- Yes, slow down in work and income.
- Yes, busier with the influx of people BUT I lost workers that were afraid to come to work
- As I am retired, I did not experience any economic benefit nor hardship as a result of the pandemic.
- The pandemic had no economic impact on me; I am fully retired.
- Received a one-time \$1,400 check from US Gov in March or April 2020.
- I had to drive to work less, so saved on gas and wear and tear on my car
- don't think so but the stock market did go up
- Only the stimulus checks from the government
- In some ways yes, my usual yearly business and other expenses were greatly reduced.
- Yes. Rental income. Savings on travel and entertainment

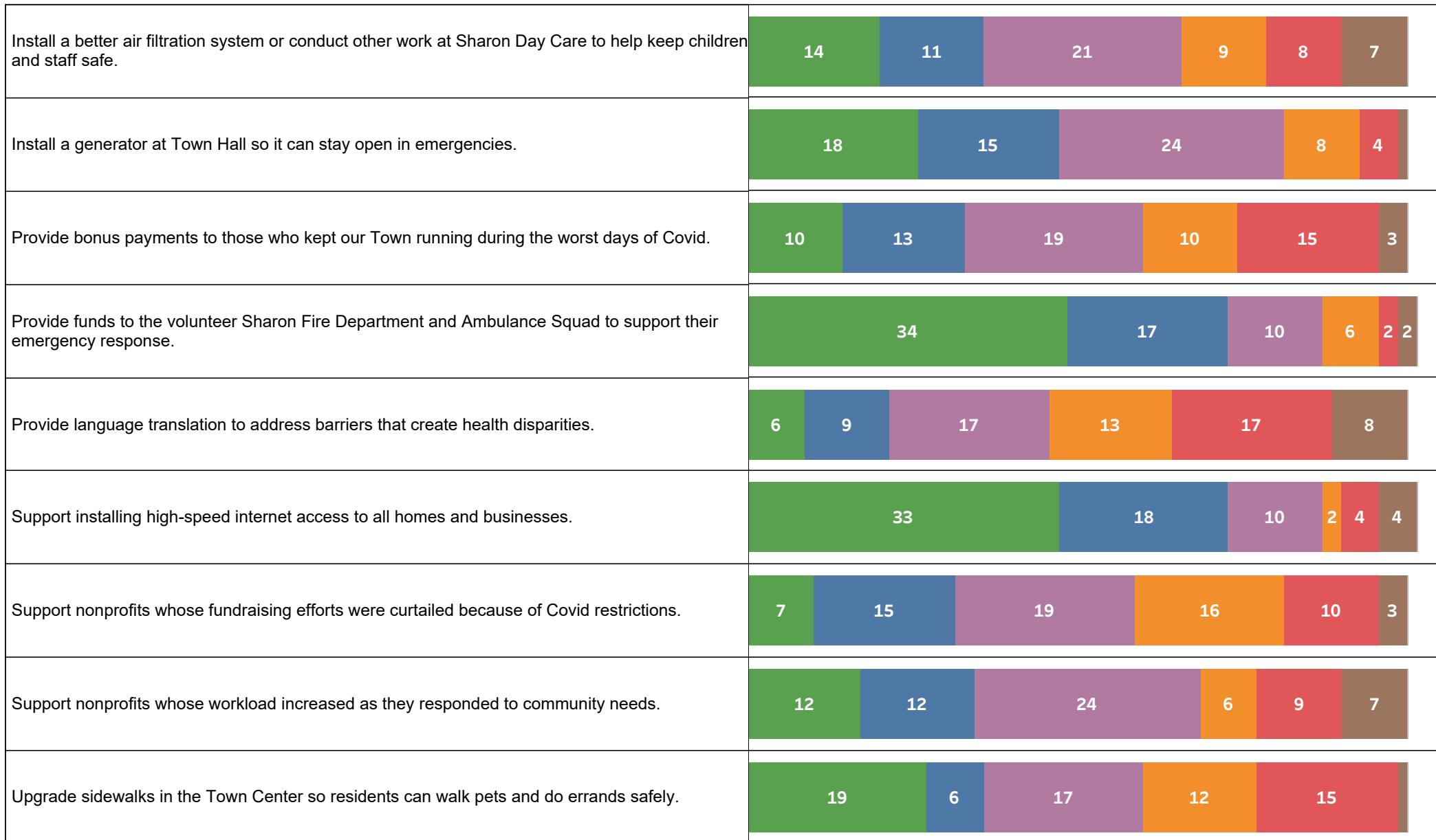
Some ideas have already been suggested as possible uses of the Sharon Covid Recovery Funds. Which would you support? (choose all that apply)



Options:

- Did Not Answer
- Do Not Know
- Do Not Support
- Weakly support
- Support
- Strongly support
- Absolutely support

Some ideas have already been suggested as possible uses of the Sharon Covid Recovery Funds. Which would you support? continued... (choose all that apply)



Options:

- Did Not Answer
- Do Not Know
- Do Not Support
- Weakly support
- Support
- Strongly support
- Absolutely support

Public Support for Suggested Projects

(Ranked by highest scores, calculated by assigning the following values to survey responses)

+5 - Absolutely Support, +4 - Strongly Support, +3 - Support, +2 - Weakly Support, +0 - Don't Know or Did Not Answer, -5 - Do Not Support

1. Support Fire and Ambulance Emergency Response - 270 points
2. Install High-Speed Internet Access to All Premises - 251 points
3. Install Town Hall Generator - 218 points
4. Upgrade Town Hall Technology - 212 points
5. Assist Businesses That Had to Close or Lost Business - 182 points
6. Help Residents Pay Bills - 158 points
7. Create Free Wifi Locations - 156 points
8. Help Sharon Daycare Keep Children and Staff Safe - 155 points
9. Help Nonprofits with Heavier Workloads - 147 points
10. Assist Local Businesses that had to Purchase Equipment - 140 points
11. Help Nonprofits that Lost Fundraising - 134 points
12. Support Resident Access to Mental Health Services - 129 points
13. Improve Sidewalks - 119 points
14. Provide Bonus Pay to Those Who Kept Town Running - 104 points
15. Support Local Arts and Cultural Organizations - 89 points
16. Improve Parking and Facilities at Local Recreation Spots - 87 points
17. Help with Language Translation - 58 points
18. Deep Clean Public Spaces - 13 points

Some ideas have already been suggested as possible uses of the Sharon Covid Recovery Funds. Other Ideas?

- EQUIPMENT FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT & AMBULANCE SERVICE
 - A new shed for Life Guards at the town beach paving around the town green, Assistance to Library, Assistance to our 4 churches
 - Replace the gloomy Christmas tree lights!!!
 - Keep some money set aside for rainy day fund. You don't have to spent it all just because it's there.
 - Provide passenger van to be used for town recreation department. When providing language translation, please remember that even though a form is available in Spanish, the user may not be able to read. Would Sharon churches be able to apply for funds to make up for shortfall in congregational giving?
 - Covid booster clinics for elderly and veterans
 - Give a percentage of funds to the Sharon Center School to help with school supplies for children or keeping open any electives open/more interesting for the kids.
 - Pay off all debt debt before using funds for anything else.
 - Now that so many people are working from home, we really need to get the wifi situation working. You can't even get a signal in the middle of town sometimes.
 - Reduce property taxes. Do not spend the money for one-time assistance to specific people/groups for the short-term one-time problem. Use it for permanent improvements or tax reductions that everyone will benefit from. Anything else just results in people jockeying to receive favors and creates the foundation for complaints of abuse and corruption.
 - There are many resources available for people to get help with food and or fuel. Affordable housing is another story and that is not even mentioned here.
- \$800,000 sounds like a lot of money but it isn't. It would be best to tackle a project that would be a one time expenditure and not cause ongoing expense (wifi hotspots for example)
- Improve acoustics in town hall.
 - Expanded sewage disposal infrastructure along Main Street
 - Would greatly support much better cell phone service--more important than wifi-- throughout town; awful when power goes out (safety & security issue); more access points (and easier) to Mudge Pond & NO separate kayak stickers; more fitness/wellness classes/opportunities for adults who no longer go to gyms;

Some ideas have already been suggested as possible uses of the Sharon Covid Recovery Funds. Other Ideas? (continued...)

- There must be a way to assist the Sharon Hospital and its employees to prevent ending of services and loss of jobs. Surely the Hospital spent money on the Covid tents they set up and other costly Covid related services and staff that could now be reimbursed--assuming, of course, that they agree now not to fire employees and curtail services upon receipt of funds.
- fuel assistance for senior or low income and/or medicine assistance for senior
- If "bonus" payments are being considered, I think that the employees at town hall should be included in the group of those who kept the town running. I would also like to see funds used for projects that are not just immediate, but that will be able to help for extended periods of time. I am very much in favor of supporting programs that deal with mental health and the health and well being of the children and families of our community. There are very few local resources. The HYSB proposal is one that should be seriously considered. I also think it is important to identify non-profits that have funds to assist individuals in our town. Do our citizens know of their existence? Supporting recreational opportunities for seniors is also important to me.
- a walking path along the Sharon Green from the clock tower to Herrick or further if possible
- Provide funding to private communities (i.e., Silver Lake Shores) to improve their infrastructure - roads and drainage
- Help the Sharon Land Trust
- Improve phone service by installing cell phone towers and improving the quality of the land lines. When the internet goes down many have no ability to communicate because cell service is so bad - even in the center of town. Land lines help but since the wires are above ground the quality of service isn't great. With improved phone service you may not need to install public wi-fi.
- To start a total assessment of the Town Halls computer systems, capabilities, vulnerabilities to maintain communication and services while a pandemic or other disaster is occurring. This should be done by an agency not currently associated with the town hall. In addition the Social Service agents, whose work load has tripled and will beyond the immediate effects of this pandemic should immediately seek updated equipment to maintain the ability to provide services.
- Seems a lot of thought went into preparing this questionnaire. Congrats!
- Broadband for all is key!
- 800,000 dollars is a lot of money if spent wisely, but can also disappear quickly without making much of an impact. I have read the committee's minutes and applaud the effort that is being made to best use the money for which it was originally appropriated. I feel projects like improving recreational areas and sidewalks are important but are the responsibility of our community. Being able to provide safe emergency services has been drastically challenged by covid and should be considered for receiving funds. I also feel the past 20 months has also demonstrated how important access to technology is for everyone. Spending some of the money towards widespread broadband access might be one of the most appropriate and best use of the money to respond to the impact covid has had on our community.
- Better cell phone signal

Some ideas have already been suggested as possible uses of the Sharon Covid Recovery Funds. Other Ideas? (continued...)

- Many of my "do not support" responses above are not because I don't feel these are good initiatives, but I just don't think covid funds should be used for them. I think the town should use some of the funds to bolster and expand outdoor recreation access and variety for all Sharon residents, not just playgrounds and ball fields. Expand the uses of Sharon Beach, get a food truck to the beach now and then, add a more accessible boat and kayak launch/ramp for town residents (the state boat launch on Mudge is terrible and over weedy), get a weed eating machine for Mudge Pond (it is choking on its own vegetation) to make it more swimmable and fishable. People want to enjoy the outdoors in Sharon during pandemics and nonpandemics. We shouldn't have to pay money to Lakeville. AND....IMPROVE CELL SERVICE IN SHARON!!!! It is terrible and dangerous. I don't understand how "wifi for all" helps this town or improves public safety. If the electricity goes out, so does WIFI. WE NEED BETTER CELL SERVICE SO WE CAN CALL OR REPORT OUTAGES, CALL AMBULANCES AND FIRE IF THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY. Thank you for asking these questions.

- Sustainable food, housing, energy infrastructure to protect from further disaster scenarios. We need to combat inflation and reduce the cost of living for our residents. Food housing and energy are all quickly becoming unaffordable. We need to be self sustaining Including jobs. Sharon is a uniquely privileged town, with limited investment we could be totally self sustaining and much more disaster resilient.

- Add sidewalks and improve public spaces to encourage a stronger downtown and walking community.

- Have a holiday parade for holidays like Christmas or Halloween

- Obtain and maintain several more speed radar signs/detectors.

- The weeds are overwhelming Mudge Pond; rent weed machine and operator from Salisbury paying careful attention to not disturb existing wildlife and nests. A second and multi year removal of weeds requires the services of pond/lake experts who can do this in an environmental way. "

- Give all full time residents a recovery check for a grand or 2 would be great, could that be done.

- Support our most impoverished community members with bill assistance and food / heat.

pay down existing bills to lower taxes

- Strongly support subsidized affordable housing.

- Support Sharon people/businesses/ non-profits and the Town first before other "local"/area wants.

- 1. Boost spending on public schools 2. (of lesser importance) Better sound recording of public meetings. Surely someone in town must know how to set up microphones so that the audio of meetings (that are later televised) can be understood. 3. A strategic plan to get younger middle class families to live in Sharon"

Extend sidewalk down entire Green so that the many residents that walk down South Main for exercise can do so safely. There's minimal shoulder on S Main.