

# Litchfield Town Facilities Review Committee

**Facilities Survey Results and Findings**

**Public Informational Meeting**

**June 23, 2021**

## Why now?

- **Several past committees have reviewed Town facilities but were unable to achieve consensus within the community on a path forward.**
- **The Town Facilities Review Committee was created by the Board of Selectmen in early 2020 to conduct a more comprehensive review of town facilities.**

# Litchfield Town Facilities Review Committee

**The mission of the Town Facilities Review Committee shall be to review and evaluate future town facility needs and to recommend the most efficient use of the current Town Hall Annex, the Litchfield Intermediate School and any other underutilized Town-owned property that could be repurposed within Litchfield and Bantam Borough Planning and Zoning regulations. The Committee shall consider municipal needs and shall work...through completion of the project mission as determined by the Town Facilities Review Committee. Upon completion the Committee shall deliver its recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.**

# Litchfield Town Facilities Review Committee

- Sam Olmstead - Chair
- Chris Casiello - Vice-Chair
- Anne Haas – Secretary
- Barbara Putnam – Recording Secretary
- Denise Raap *ex-officio*
- Jeff Zullo – BOS liaison
- Matt Blasavage – BOF liaison
- John Morosani – BOE liaison
- Nancy Latour – Bantam Borough liaison
- Dave Carroll
- Marc Moura
- Bill Deacon
- Burke Gibney

# Facilities Overview

# Principal Space-Use Programs

- **Schools**
- **Town Offices**

# Bantam Town Hall Annex



- **Built as Bantam School in 1954**
- **Renovated late 1980s & early 1990s**
- **Current use:**
  - **Park and Recreation Office/Gym**
  - **Land Use Offices**
  - **Bantam Post Office (leased)**
  - **Social Services & Food Pantry**
  - **Emergency Operations Center**
- **29,000 gsf**
- **Approximately 50% occupied**

# Litchfield Town Hall – 74 West Street



- **Built in 1961**
- **Minor renovations and maintenance over time including addition of AC to main floor**
- **Currently used as Town Offices, Probate Court and Resident Trooper**
- **8,000 gsf**
- **100% Occupied**



## Summary of Findings – Town Hall and Annex

- **Both buildings will require significant investment to extend useful life**
- **Current maintenance approach is to fix what breaks**
- **This approach is NOT SUSTAINABLE**
- **Public Works is doing excellent work keeping the buildings going**
- **The two buildings together are larger than is required for current Town Hall space program**

# Schools

- **LIS originally included in Mission of TFRC**
- **COVID has changed space use and precluded facility tours**
- **Potential regionalization may change space needs and requirements in the future**

# Town Office Program

- **Currently split between Town Hall and Bantam Town Hall Annex**
- **Prior studies indicate 12,000 – 16,000 gsf required**
- **Considerations:**
  - **Compatibility of program with existing spaces (size/location)**
  - **Cost effectiveness/efficiency of renovation vs. new construction**
  - **Town feedback on satisfaction with existing facilities and desired location**
  - **Potential use of technology to reduce space requirements**

# Town Facilities Survey

**The Committee felt strongly that prior efforts had been unsuccessful due to lack of early public input.**

## **Survey Structure:**

- **Use of and satisfaction with existing facilities**
- **Desired new facilities**
- **Areas of investment**
- **Town Hall and Bantam Annex specific questions**

# Town Facilities Survey

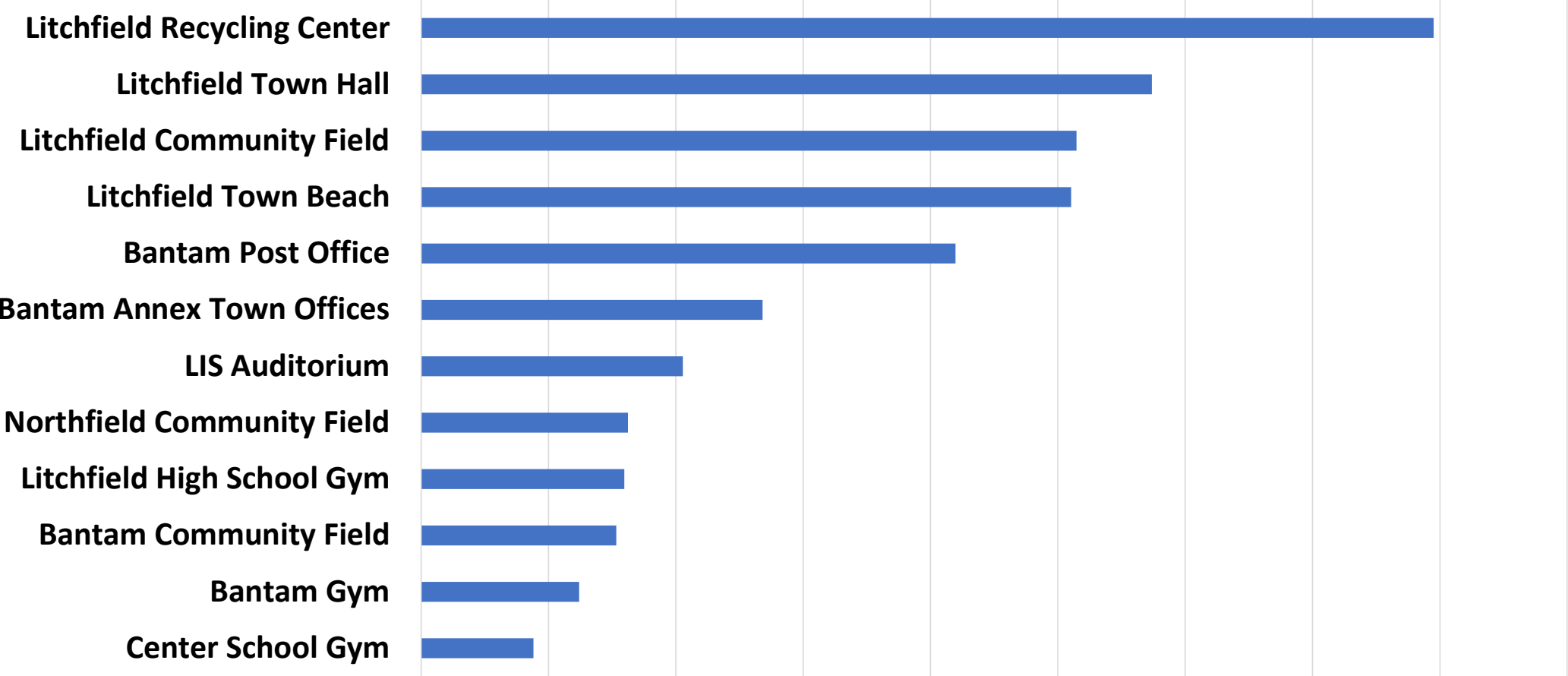
**Survey sought feedback across broad categories of town facilities and operations.**

- **4,700 surveys distributed**
- **Almost 1,000 responses – THANK YOU!**
  - **1/3 online**
  - **2/3 paper**
- **Thank you to Wamogo students for doing data entry on over 600 surveys**

## Most Used Facilities

- 1. Recycling Center**
- 2. Town Hall**
- 3. Litchfield Community Field**
- 4. Litchfield Town Beach**
- 5. Bantam Post Office**

# Town Facility Usage



# Satisfaction with Town Facilities

## **Highest Level of Satisfaction:**

- 1. Bantam Post Office**
- 2. Recycling Center**
- 3. Litchfield Community Field**
- 4. Town Hall**
- 5. LHS Gymnasium**



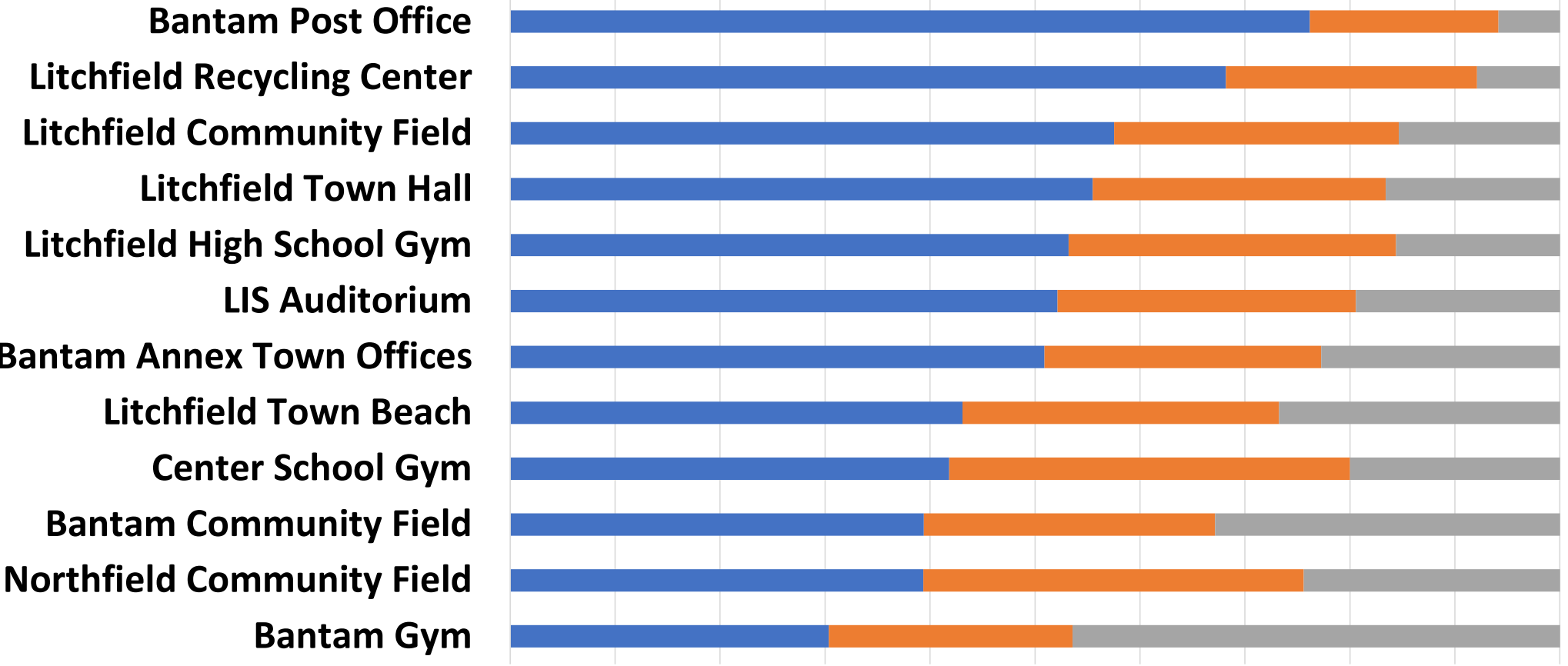
# Satisfaction with Town Facilities

## **Lowest Level of Satisfaction:**

- 1. Bantam Gym**
- 2. Bantam Community Field**
- 3. Litchfield Town Beach**

# Satisfaction with Town Facilities

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



■ Meets/Exceeds my needs   ■ Adequate   ■ Needs improvement/Does not meet my needs

## Town Interest in New Facilities – Top 5

- **Municipal Broadband**
- **Community Pool**
- **Starter Housing**
- **Senior Housing**
- **Dog Park**

## Areas Identified for Investment – Top 5

- **Community Pool**
- **Town Hall**
- **Sports Complex**
- **Municipal Broadband**
- **Town Beach**

# Town Hall Questions

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Town Hall in the center of Litchfield

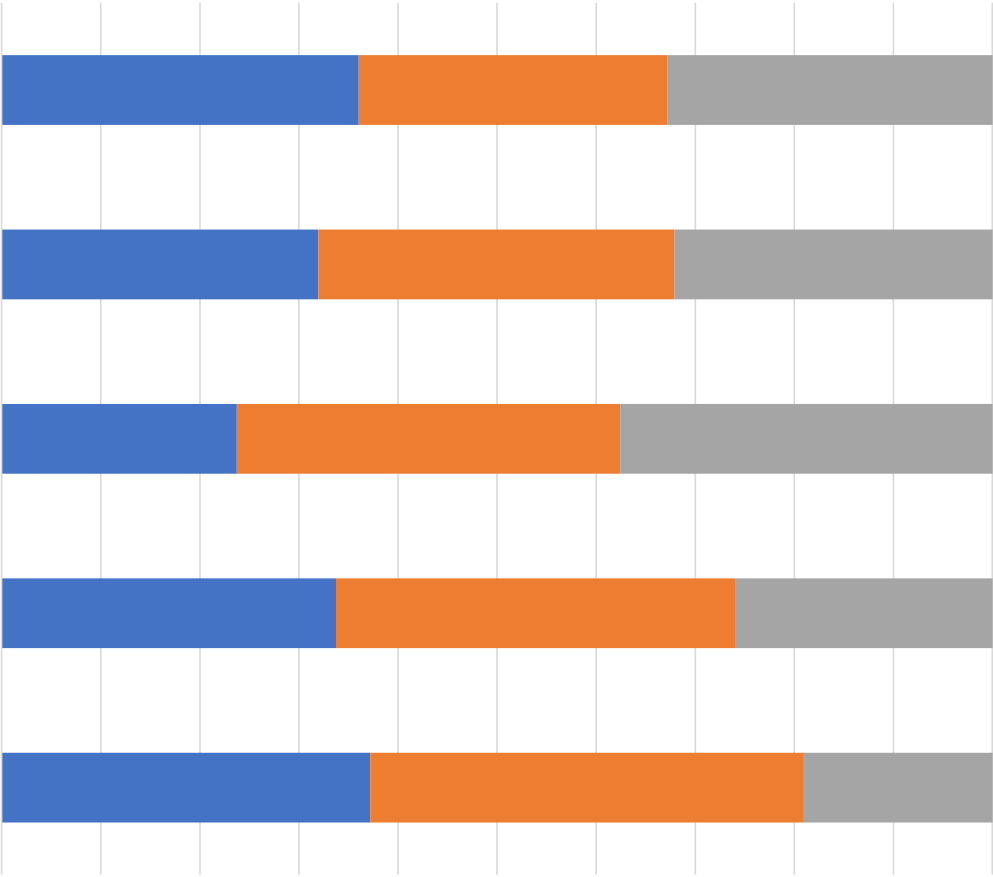
Town offices in one building

Having public meeting space in the Town Hall

Having Town services online instead of in person

Accessing archived Town records

Very important    Some what important    Not important



## Town Hall Questions

- **Support for Town Hall being in the center of town**
- **Desire to have all town offices in one building**
- **Strong Support for online services**

# Bantam Annex Questions

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**Keeping the existing Bantam Annex for municipal uses**



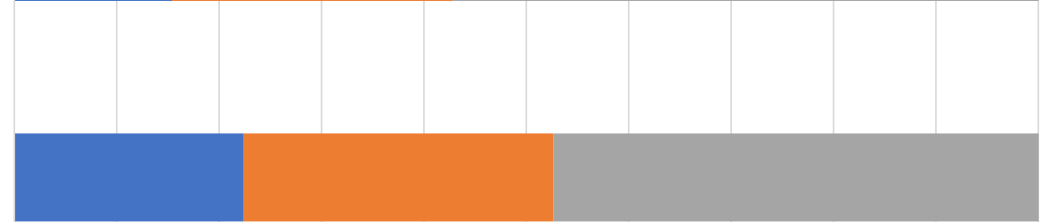
**Repurposing the Bantam Annex building for alternate uses**



**Keeping the Bantam Annex property under Town ownership, without the building**



**Sell the property for non-municipal use, putting it on the tax roll**



Very important   Somewhat important   Not important

## Bantam Town Hall Annex Questions

- **Highest support for repurposing for alternate use**
- **Roughly equal support for municipal use vs. sale**
  
- **Important Context:**
  - **Current zoning is single-family residential, limiting potential alternate use absent a zone change**



Questions?