



SPR Golf Course User Research June 2024

Research conducted to support 2024 Golf Course Management RFP

Survey Demographics

48 total people responded to the survey as users of the golf courses

85% (41 respondents) are “frequent golfers”– they golfed 7 or more times in the last 12 months at a City of Seattle-owned facility

- 6% golfed 1-2 times in the last 12 months
- 8% golfed 3-6 times in the last 12 months

Survey respondents were fairly evenly split among users of all four courses

- Some respondents regularly used more than one course

96% of survey respondents access their golf course by car, most travel six miles or less to reach a course

- 23% traveled 7 miles or more to reach a course
- 38% traveled 3-6 miles; 33% traveled 1-2 miles
- 6% traveled less than a mile

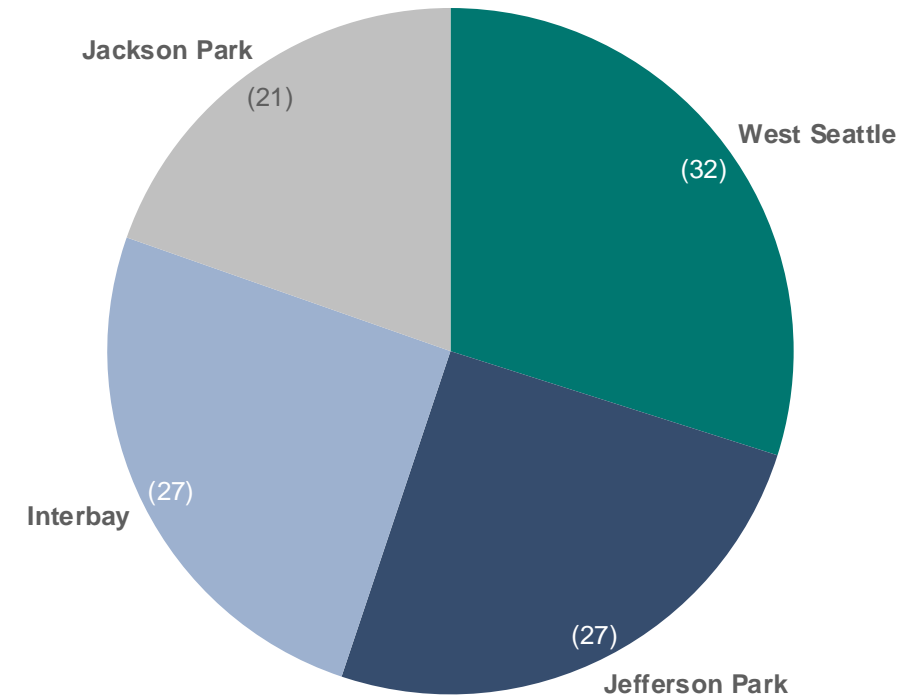
49 total respondents, 1 respondent reported not ever using the golf courses and feedback was to eliminate city-owned golf courses, particularly at Interbay. This responses is not reflected in analysis totals

Question: Which of the city-owned golf facilities do you regularly use, check all that apply

Percentage response values are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number (e.g. 37.5% is reported as 38%; 22.4% is reported as 22%)

Most frequent golf course(s) used by survey respondents

(n) Number of respondents selecting this option; Respondents could select more than one option



Why do respondents say they value municipal golf courses in Seattle?



Affordable

- “It is important to have public golf courses to increase access to the sport. I come here at 6 in the morning because I am an avid golfer. The majority of people come here after work to socialize, and that’s great. The city-owned quality of the course helps make the environment more accessible and casual.”



Access to outdoors in the City

- “With some of the interior holes at Jefferson Park, you can really feel like you are out of the city. Six AM and sunset in Jefferson Park provides great scenery.”



Preserves green spaces

- “Having “open space” in a property-hungry, densifying area is important.”
- “Keeping trees and green spaces because when they are removed, they do not return.”

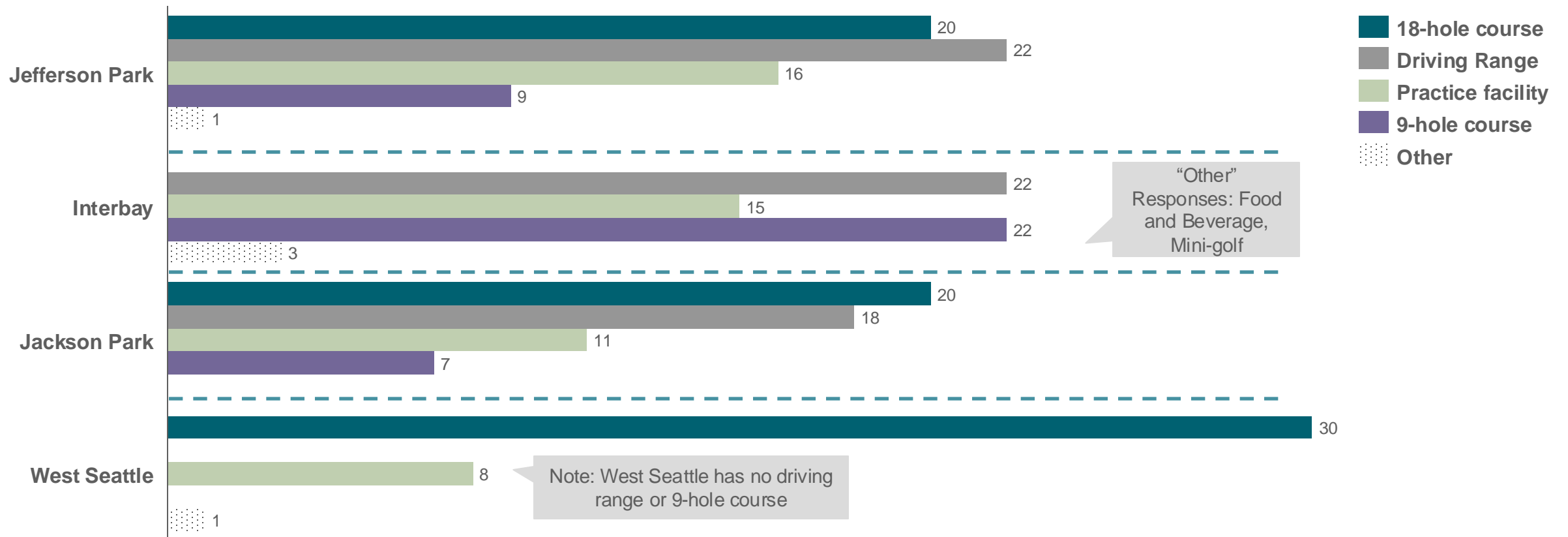


Family and community friendly

- “We come for the mini golf. Love being outdoors in the “natural” environment. A great, multi-generational family-friendly activity.”
- “The Seattle courses provide great and well used opportunities for families and important open space. I practice and play with family, friends and leagues.”

Driving ranges, 18-hole courses are the most used facilities according to survey respondents

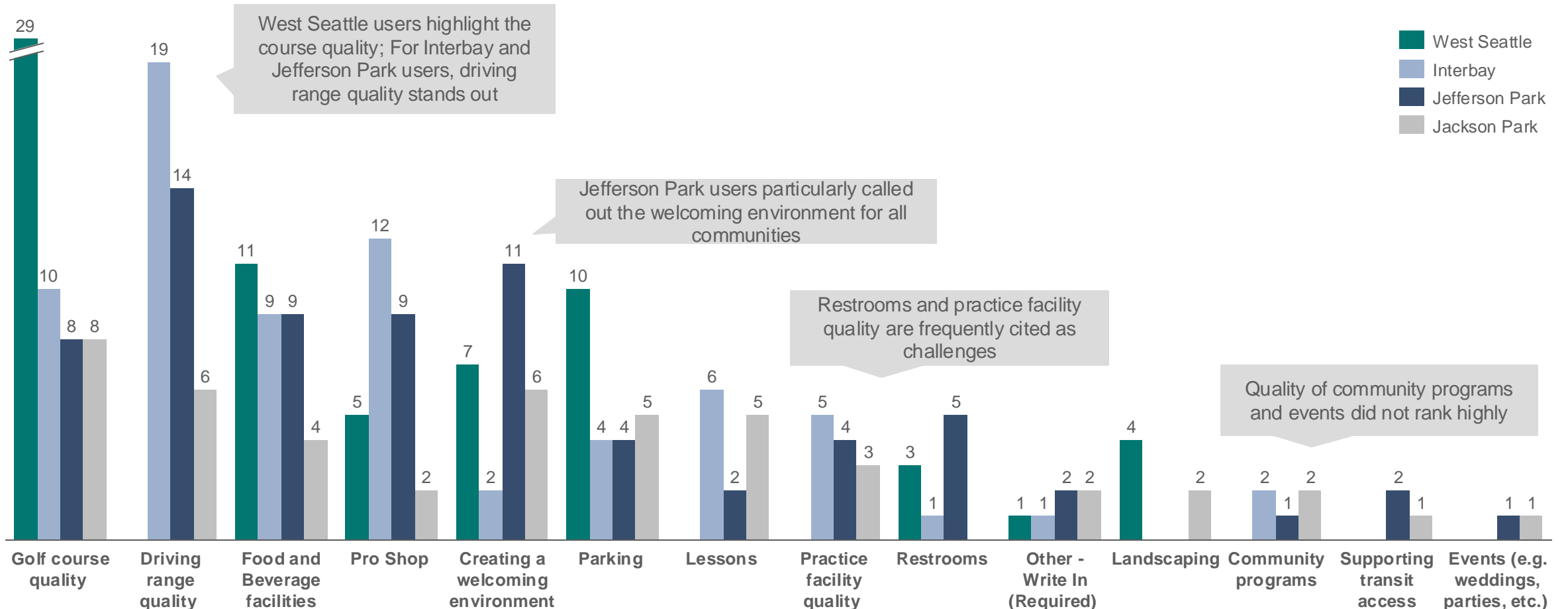
What facilities do you usually use when you visit a city-owned golf course? (Check all that apply)



Question: What facilities do you usually use when you visit Jefferson Park/Jackson Park/Interbay/West Seattle.
 Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

Courses are currently rated well on driving range & course quality, but room to improve with lessons, events, restrooms

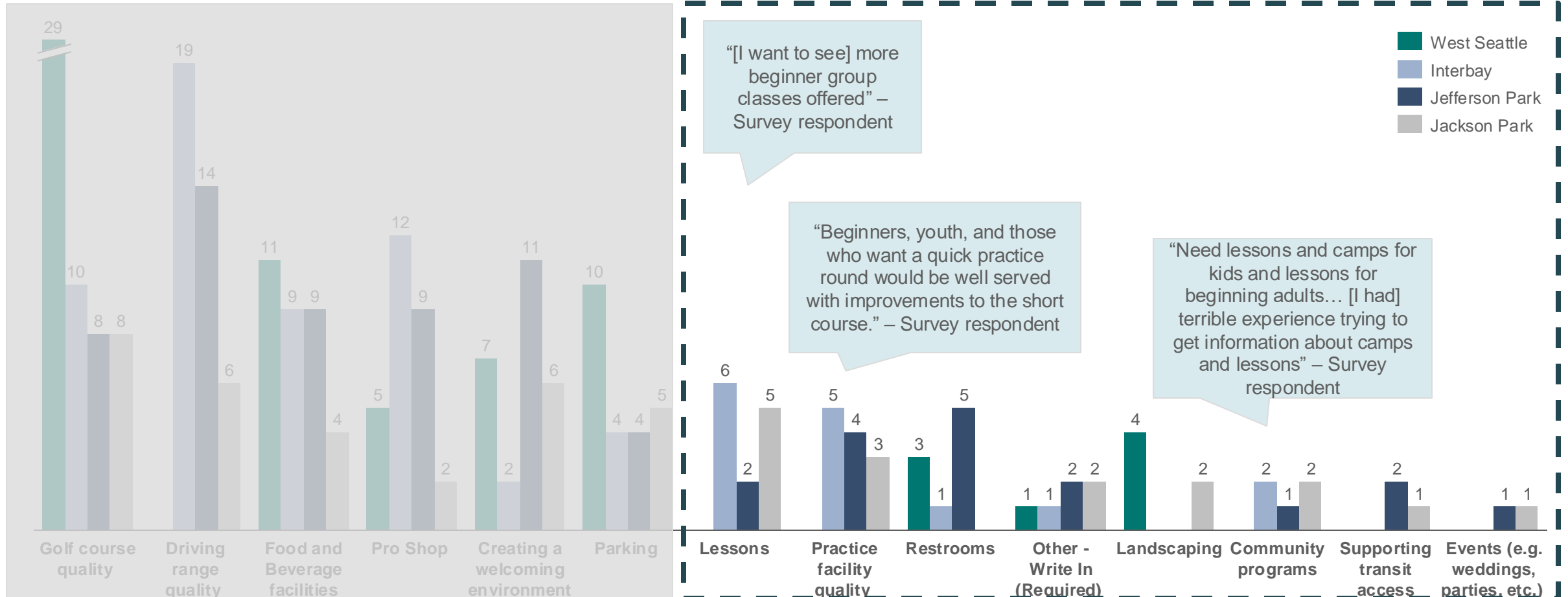
What are the top-3 things you think the city-owned golf facilities do particularly well?



Question: What do you think this golf course facility does particularly well right now, choose up to 3 responses; Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Events (e.g. weddings, parties), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; parking, landscaping, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other. Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

Lower quality rankings for lessons, programs, could point to significant opportunity for next manager

What are the top-3 things you think the city-owned golf facilities do particularly well?



“[I want to see] more beginner group classes offered” – Survey respondent

“Beginners, youth, and those who want a quick practice round would be well served with improvements to the short course.” – Survey respondent

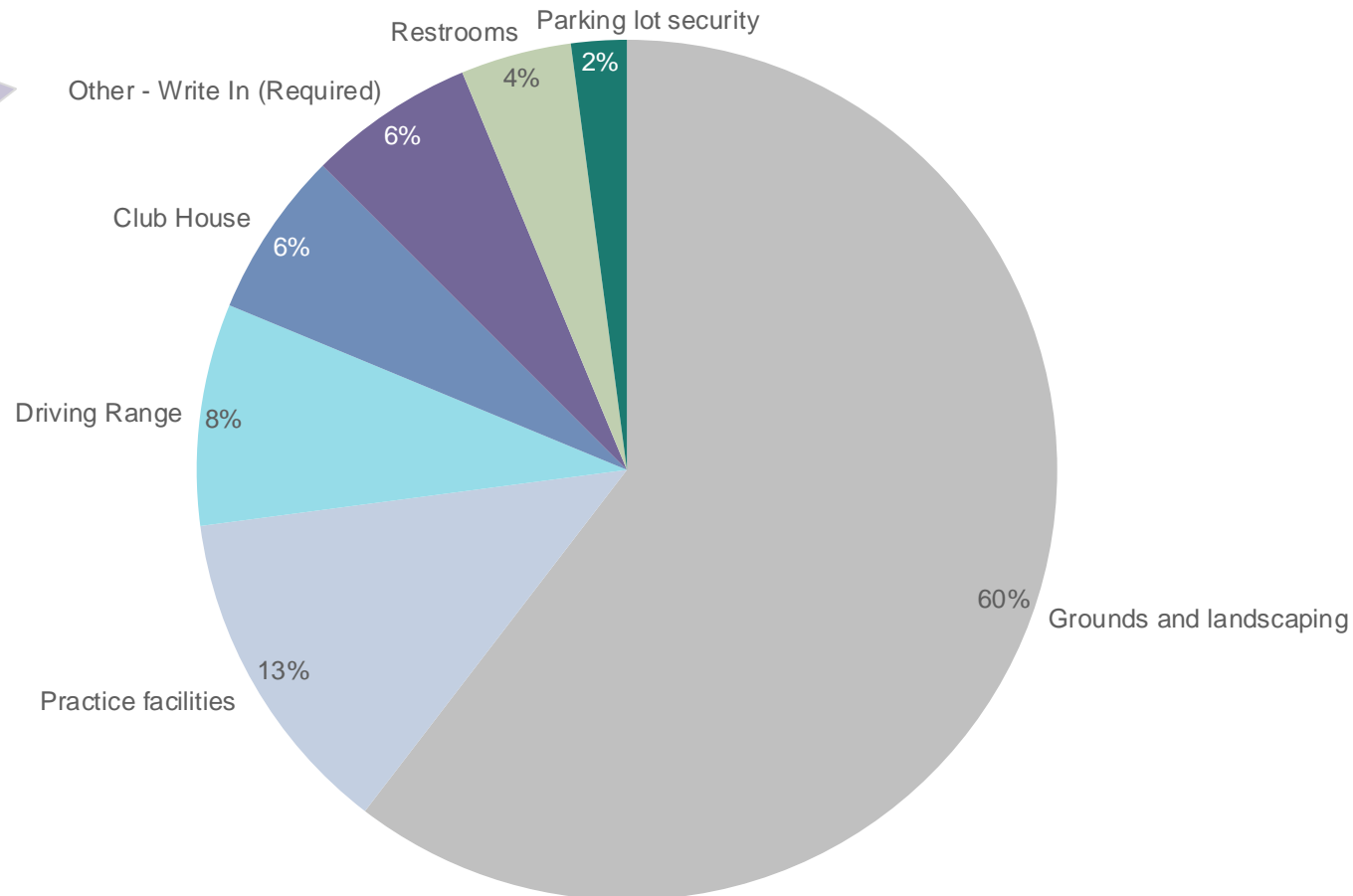
“Need lessons and camps for kids and lessons for beginning adults... [I had] terrible experience trying to get information about camps and lessons” – Survey respondent

Question: What do you think this golf course facility does particularly well right now, choose up to 3 responses; Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Events (e.g. weddings, parties), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; parking, landscaping, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other. Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

Survey respondents want to see new management prioritize improving grounds and practice facilities at SPR facilities

If you could direct financial investments in the golf courses and facilities, what would be your top priority/first investment?

“Other” Responses: Golf courses infrastructure (bunkers, irrigation, cart paths, etc.); Golf course quality; “Lessons and camps!”



N = 48

Question: Imagine you are in charge of directing financial investments in the municipal golf courses and facilities. This is money that can be used to construct new facilities or improve and update existing facilities. You can use it to buy equipment, or hire staff to focus on specific services. What would you want to invest in first? What would be your top priority for the Parks department and the new golf course management partner?

Survey respondents want the new management team to keep golf affordable, accessible and at current quality level or higher

If you could pick one thing you absolutely do not want to see changed under new management, what would it be?

“No increase to green fees”

“Do not change this affordable and accessible golf through the city”

“I do not want the prices to go up”

“No staff changes – the staff at the courses are great”

“[Keep the] quality of the course at Interbay and Jefferson”

“Keep golf affordable!”

“Do not increase the prices”

“Keep Seattle Parks crews maintaining the courses”

“[Keep the] overall quality of the courses. I would not play there if quality went down”

“Keep [golf courses] community focused, inclusive to all, and affordable”

“[Keep the] open access to the practice facilities”

“[I do not want] costs to skyrocket to out price public golfers”

“I want to see the current staff remain in place at the West Seattle facility”

“The ranges at the courses have been upgraded and are so good now”

“Don’t over promise and under deliver on any new service you implement...Consistently service and welcome everyone to golf”

“Seattle Parks Department staff operate the best municipal facility in the city. Please keep them in place”

“Keep a good reward system, make sure to have good quality, working online website or app”

Respondents want new management to focus on well-maintained, fun, beginner-accessible courses

If you could pick one thing you absolutely do want to see changed under new management, what would it be?

“More beginning group classes offered”

“Friendly outreach to those who want to learn golf ”

“Add more “Top Golf”-type fun”

“More focus on getting people to spend extended periods of time at the course”

“Making the clubhouses a more inviting place to come before and stay after a round”

“The Par 3 course at Jefferson Park is not well-maintained. To bring in more first-time golfers, the Par 3 course is a critical resource”

“Improved upkeep of par 3 courses. It gives beginners a place to start”

“Better short game practice at Interbay”

“I’d like to see less variation in course landscaping conditions between the courses. For example, West Seattle is largely well-maintained, while Jackson is choked with weeds... blackberry, ivy, and other invasive plants”

“Maintenance [is what I want to see changed]: Condition of driving range astroturf and foxholes, fixing bathrooms, keeping computers running; and add more ladies clothes in the pro shop!”

“General increase in course maintenance and upkeep”

“Jackson Park needs some love. Conditions need to be improved”

“Turf and golf course quality”

“Well-maintained course and grounds”

“Later first tee times to give maintenance staff adequate time to prepare the course for play”

“Replace Astroturf at Interbay”

“Better maintenance”

“High quality course maintenance as see in the West Seattle Golf Course”

Respondents are mostly frequent golfers, and they want to see more attention to pace of play, booking policies

If you could pick one thing you absolutely *do want* to see changed under new management, what would it be?

“Easier to book tee times for single players”

“Better pace of play”

“Improve pace of play by not squishing so many tee times together”

“Enforce pace of play”

“More transparency on the best way to get desirable tee times”

“High quality greens and quicker pace of play”

“Allow frequent players to pay for priority booking or early booking windows”

“Spread out tee times more so every round doesn’t take 6 hours”

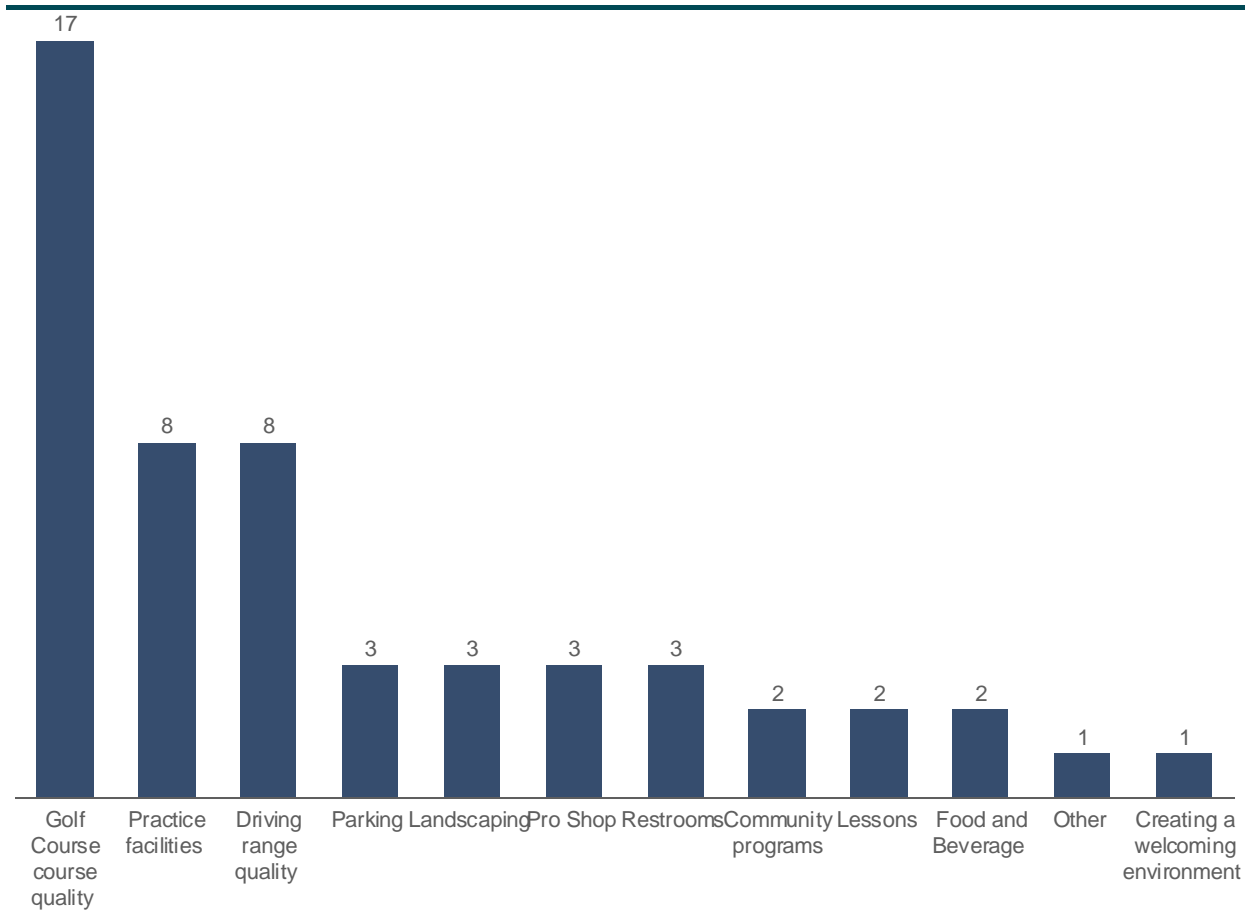
“More availability of tee times at West Seattle. I am not able to plan two weeks in advance”

“City of Seattle resident card with appropriate benefits, like in City of San Francisco ”

“Bring a rewards points program to golfers. Every purchase at the course/pro shop/merchandise/food and beverage should be tied to the rewards program ”

Jefferson Park users would most like to see quality of playing facilities improve – especially quality on the main course

What would you most like to see improved at Jefferson Park?



Specific feedback on course quality concerns

“[Jefferson] feels like it’s the last priority”

“Would like to see Hole 11 back to par 4”

“[It] gets so much play... [S]hould upgrade the mats at the driving range, get new balls, and maintain the course better”

“Holes 11 and 12 need to be restored to their full length”

“Course... is in POOR condition.”

“Holes 11 and 12 need to be restored to their full length”

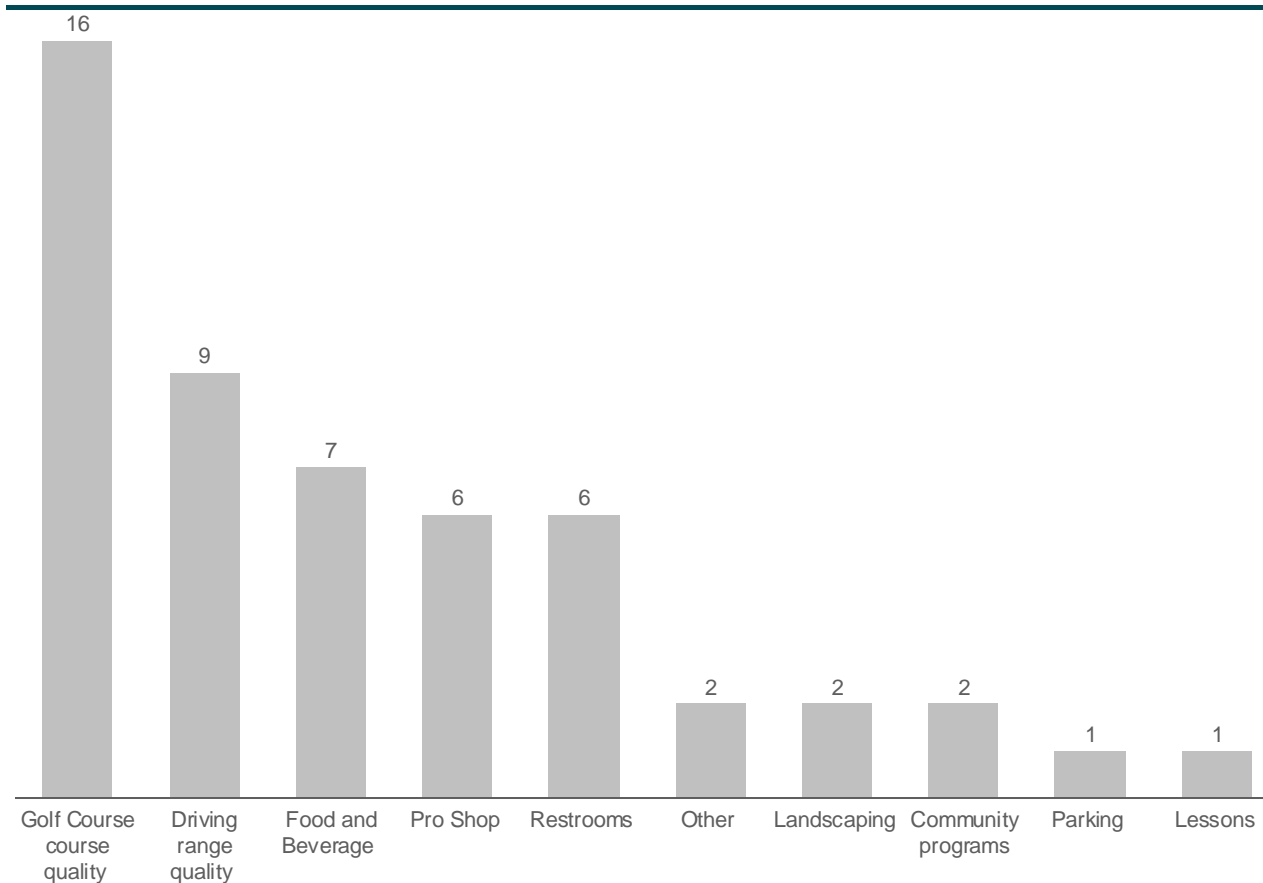
“The course is often shabby. Improving fairway quality while keeping the lower fees the same should be the goal”

“Holes 10-12 haven’t been improved in 3 years”

Question: What would you most like to see improved at Jefferson Park? (Choose up to 3 responses; Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; landscaping, parking, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other. Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

Jackson Park users speak highly of the course, but given heavy usage would like to see maintenance, improvements

What would you most like to see improved at Jackson Park?



Why did you choose these responses?

“I think Jackson has the potential to create a really interesting short game practice facility for pitching (similar to what exists at Newcastle) either near the auxiliary putting green or on the executive course. This would be a game changer.”

“Unfortunately really degrades as the golf season progresses. In my opinion, the best course in the municipal system and one of my favorite golf courses anywhere, but really only playable between March and July.”

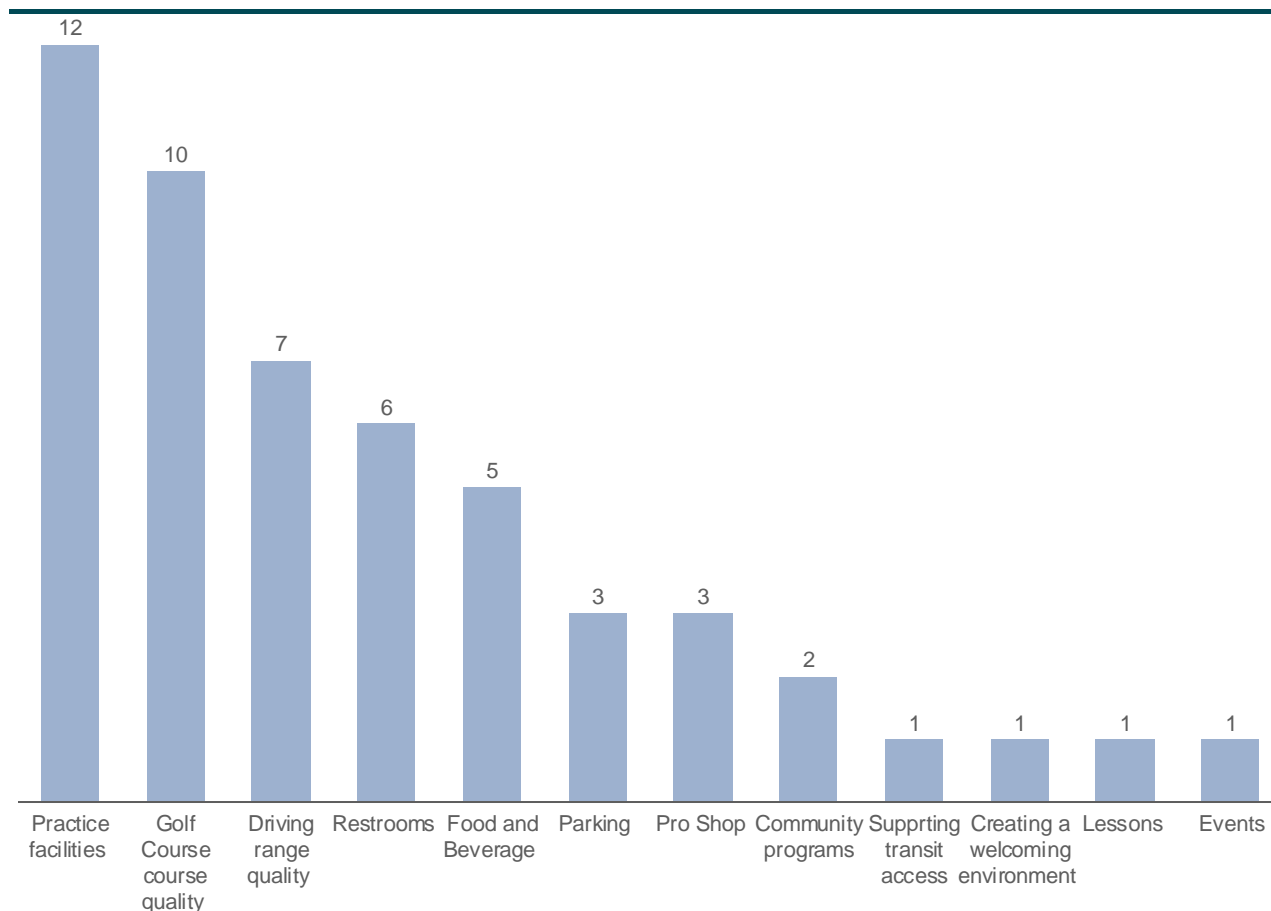
“Generally in good shape but really needs some updated drainage on a number of holes that get extremely wet”

“9-hole course needs a lot of work.”

Question: What would you most like to see improved at Jackson Park? (Choose up to 3 responses; Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; landscaping, parking, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other. Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

Interbay users wanted to see improved women's restrooms, updated turf, and investment in the short game facilities

What would you most like to see improved at Interbay?



Why did you choose these responses?

“Restrooms are broken ...How can you promote girls and women’s sport without working toilets?”

“The short game and putting facilities are really poor. I drive to Jackson to putt.”

“1-2 women’s toilets are always not working”

“Would be great to see a revamp of the short game areas, specifically the bunker/green”

“Lack of women’s clothing in the pro shop”

“Could use some newer mats and balls. 2nd floor heaters would be a nice addition”

“Astroturf...needs to be replaced”

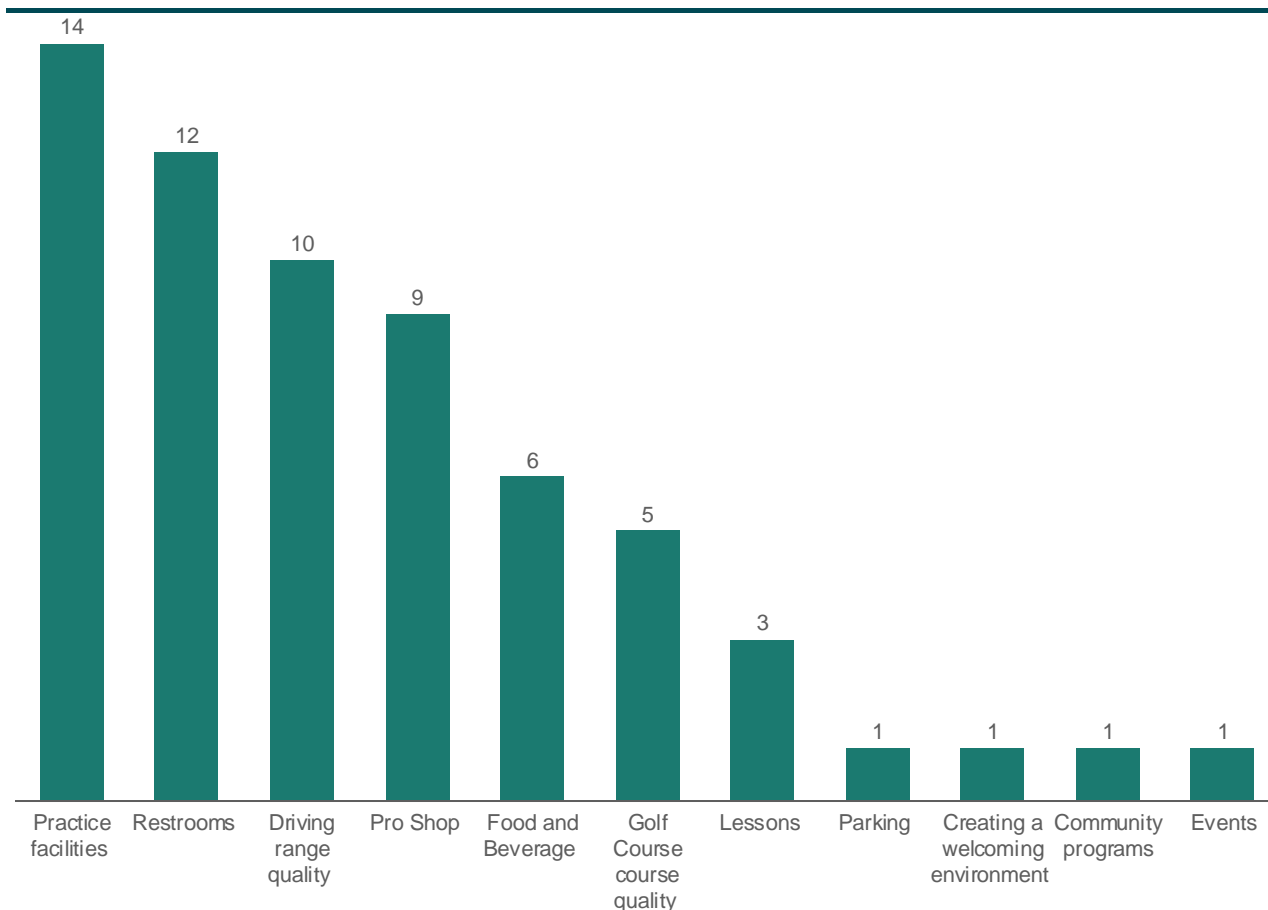
“I would like to see the tee boxes cleaned up of broken tees and litter”

“Fix the turf!”

Question: What would you most like to see improved at Interbay? (Choose up to 3 responses; Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; landscaping, parking, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other. Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

West Seattle users would love a driving range, but with limited space focus on practice facilities, clubhouse improvements

What would you most like to see improved at West Seattle?



Why did you choose these responses?

“I’d like to see a bigger practice facility, including a chipping/putting area and driving range”

“Fixing the practice net areas so it’s actually flat and rebuilding them a little bigger would be a big help since there’s no range”

“There isn’t a bunker in the practice area, so this could use some work”

“Practice nets are awkwardly positioned”

“Replace those old gas-powered carts with electric ones.”

“Give the pro shop a little makeover”

“The whole facility needs an update”

“Course is good, so not a big deal that the clubhouse is ancient”

“Men’s room needs upgrade”

Question: What would you most like to see improved at West Seattle? (Choose up to 3 responses; Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; landscaping, parking, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other. Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages)

While respondents see definite room for improvement, over all they truly value Seattle “muni golf”

“The Seattle munis are a great publicly accessible resource. We should keep them in good shape for all to use and keep prices reasonable for the community.”

“We use these courses all the time, keep it going Seattle.”

“Course quality is much better than it was 6 years ago.”

“Thank you for providing and maintaining public golf for the community!”

“While I want to playing conditions to improve, overall affordability for the public is probably the most important thing.”

“The facilities are generally good, but there is definitely room for improvement. Thanks for seeking input on that!”

“Overall, we are lucky to have these courses. Please keep maintaining them”

“We come for the mini-golf. Love being outdoors in the “natural” environment. A great multi-generational family-friendly activity”



Appendix

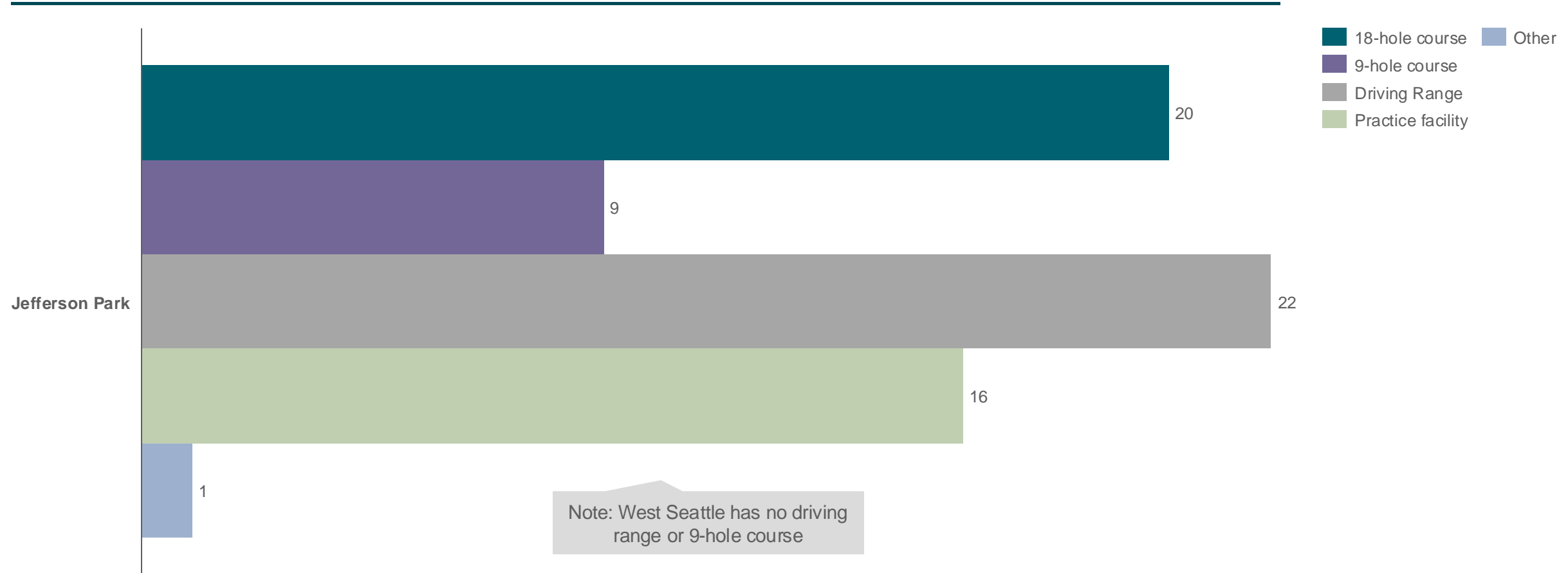
The most important attributes of a golf facility to the survey takers were...

- 1 Well maintained course and grounds
- 2 Affordable to play and/or use the driving range
- 3 Well-maintained driving range
- 4 Welcoming and well-trained staff
- 5 Good quality food and beverage
- 6 Available parking
- 7 Clean and well-maintained restrooms
- 8 Variety of events for golfers
- 9 Programs to bring in first-time golfers
- 10 Access to public transportation

Question: Rank the following attributes of Seattle's golf facilities based on how important they are to you overall, with #1 being the most important, and #10 being the least important. Note: Select one attribute per rank. Response options: Well-maintained course and grounds, affordable to play and/or use the driving range, well-maintained driving range, welcoming and well-trained staff, good-quality food and beverage, available parking, clean and well-maintained restrooms, variety of events for golfers, programs to bring in fist-time golfers, access to public transportation

What facilities do Jefferson Park respondents use the most?

What facilities do you usually use when you visit a city-owned golf course? (Check all that apply)

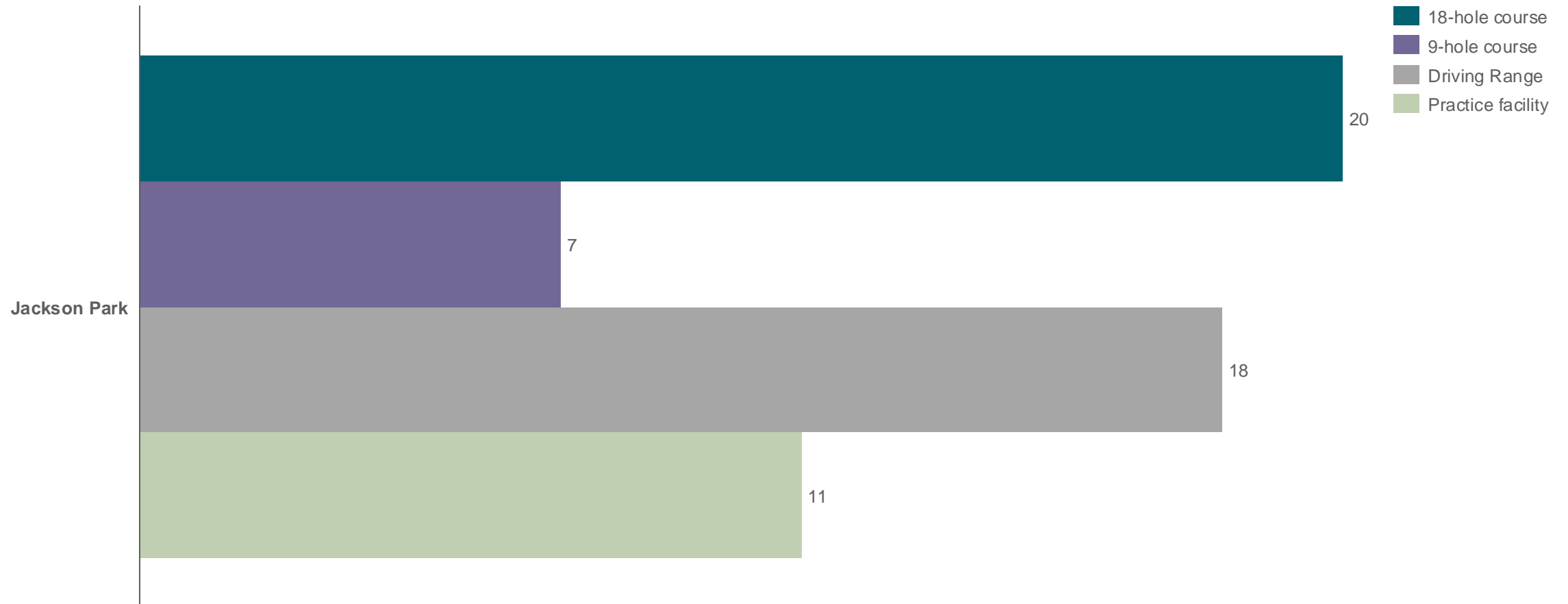


Question: What facilities do you usually use when you visit Jefferson Park/Jackson Park/Interbay/West Seattle? Response options: 18-hole course, 9-hole course, Driving range, Practice facility, Other– write in required. “Other” response: Want lessons for child

Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

What facilities do Jackson Park respondents use the most?

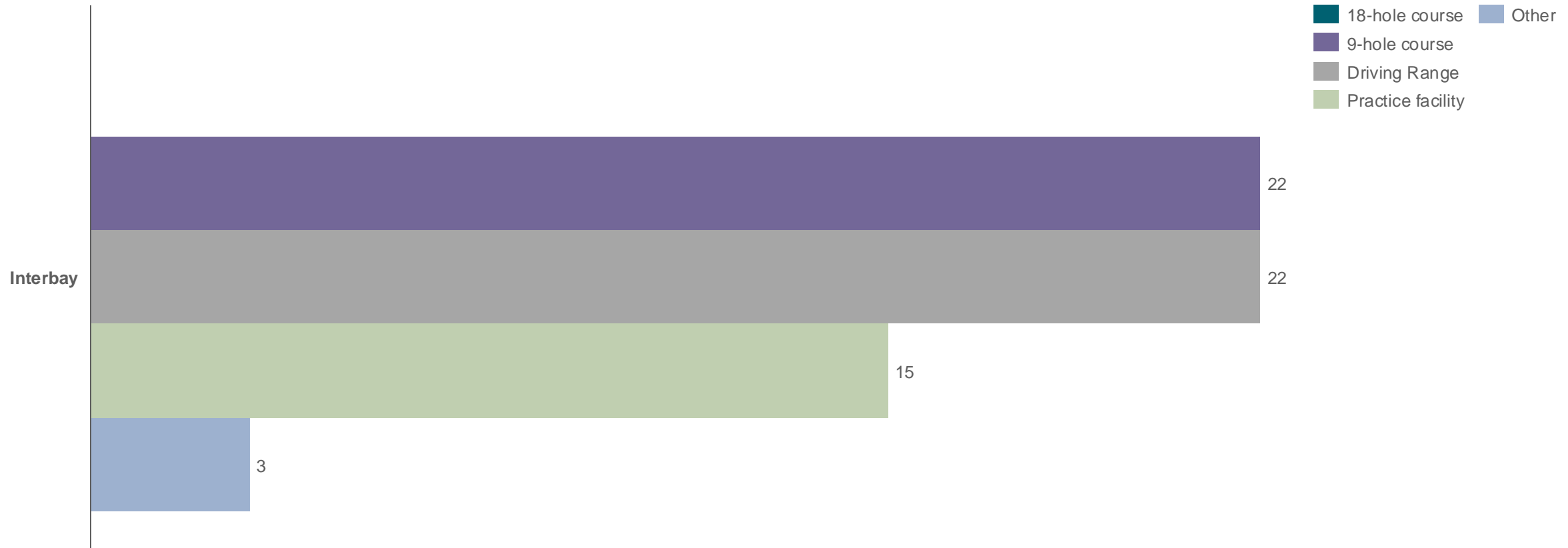
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What facilities do Interbay respondents use the most?

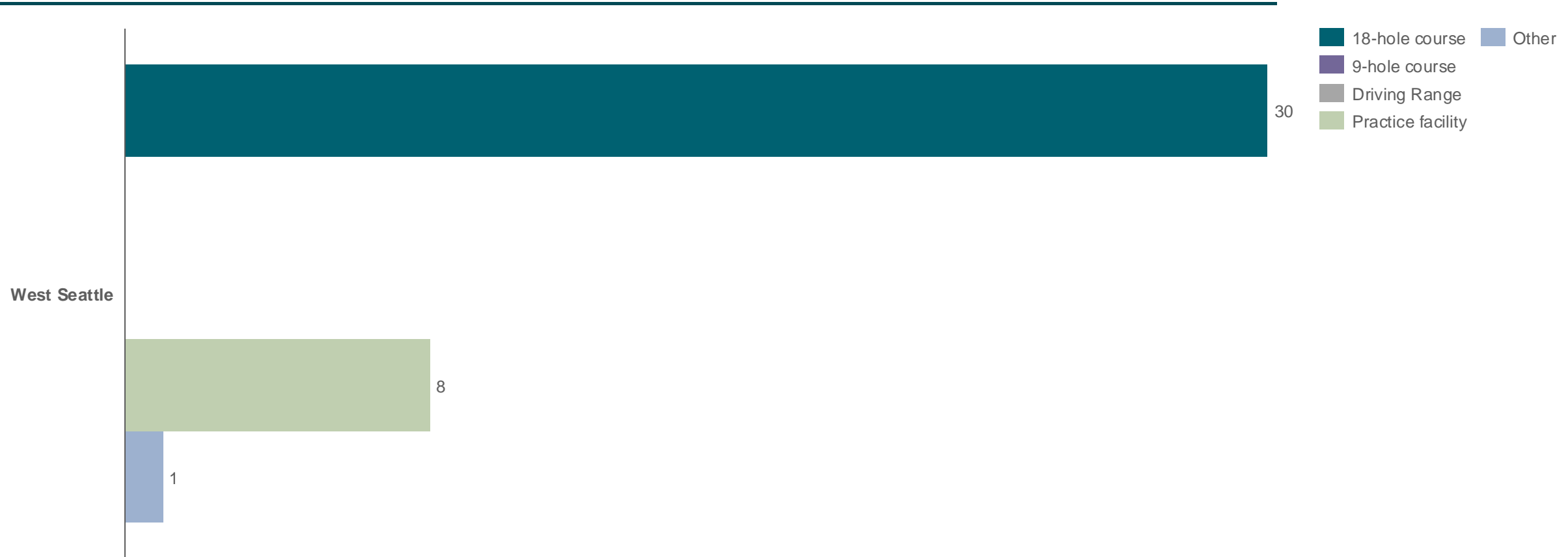
What facilities do you usually use when you visit a city-owned golf course? (Check all that apply)



Question: What facilities do you usually use when you visit Jefferson Park/Jackson Park/Interbay/West Seattle? Response options: 18-hole course, 9-hole course, Driving range, Practice facility, Other– write in required. “Other” responses: Food & beverage, Food and beverage, Mini golf; Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

What facilities do West Seattle respondents use the most?

What facilities do you usually use when you visit a city-owned golf course? (Check all that apply)

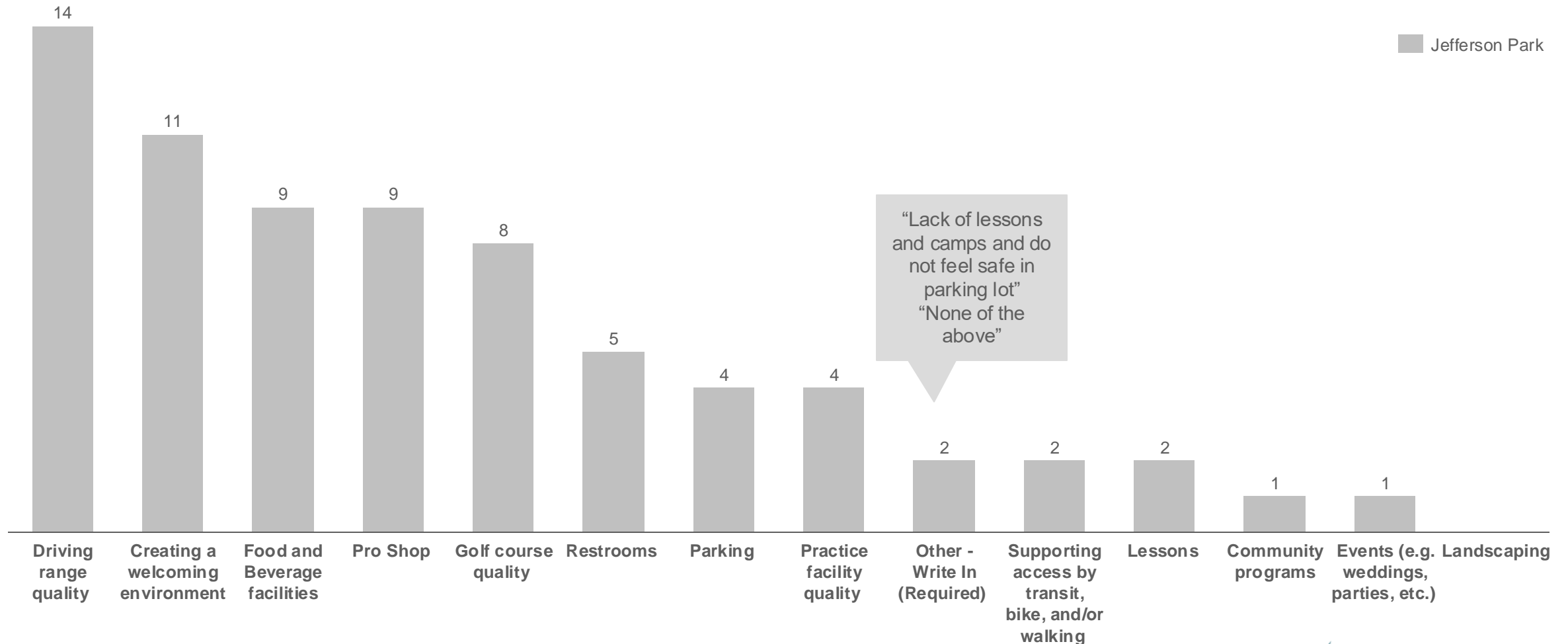


Question: What facilities do you usually use when you visit Jefferson Park/Jackson Park/Interbay/West Seattle? ? Response options: 18-hole course, 9-hole course, Driving range, Practice facility, Other– write in required. “Other” Response: ZERO lessons or camps.

Numbers are absolute numbers of respondents, not percentages

What do respondents think Jefferson Park is doing particularly well right now?

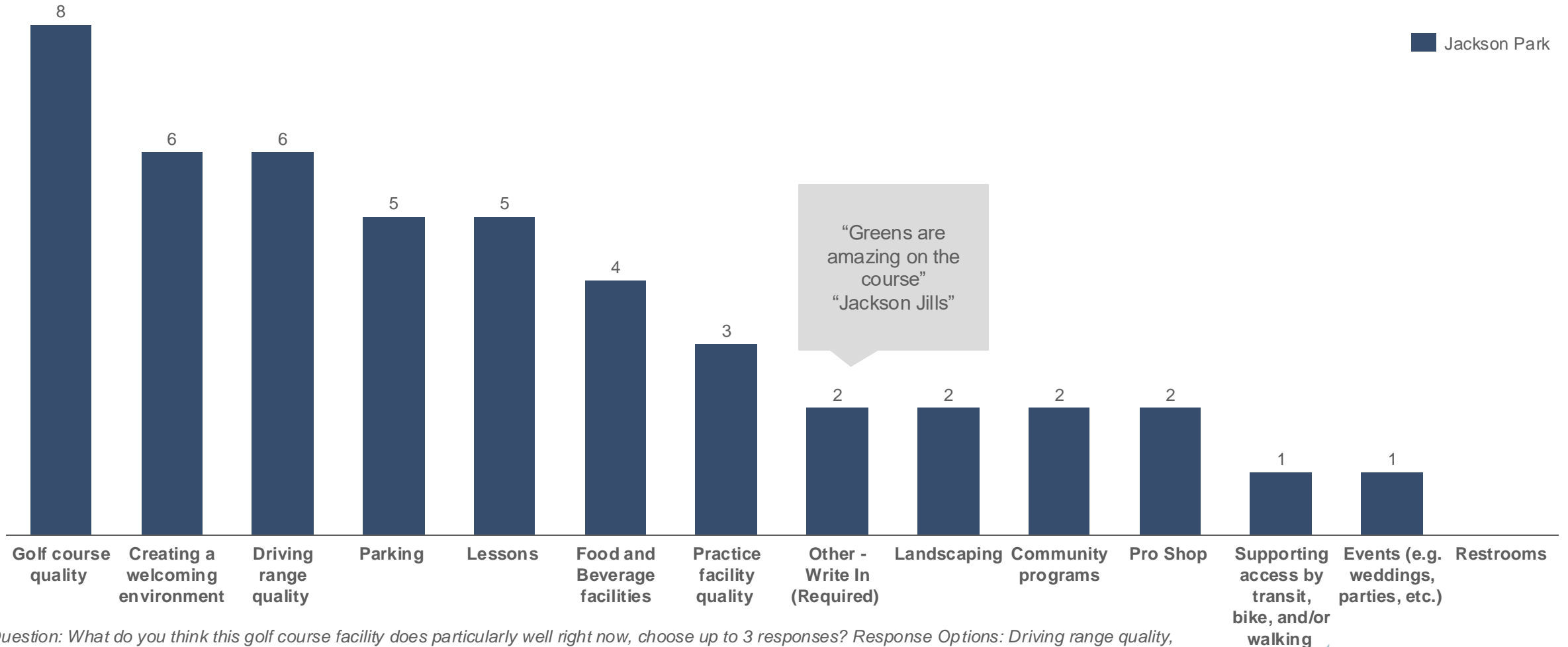
What are the top-3 things you think the city-owned golf facilities do particularly well?



Question: What do you think this golf course facility does particularly well right now, choose up to 3 responses? Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Events (e.g. weddings, parties), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; parking, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other

What do respondents think Jackson Park is doing particularly well right now?

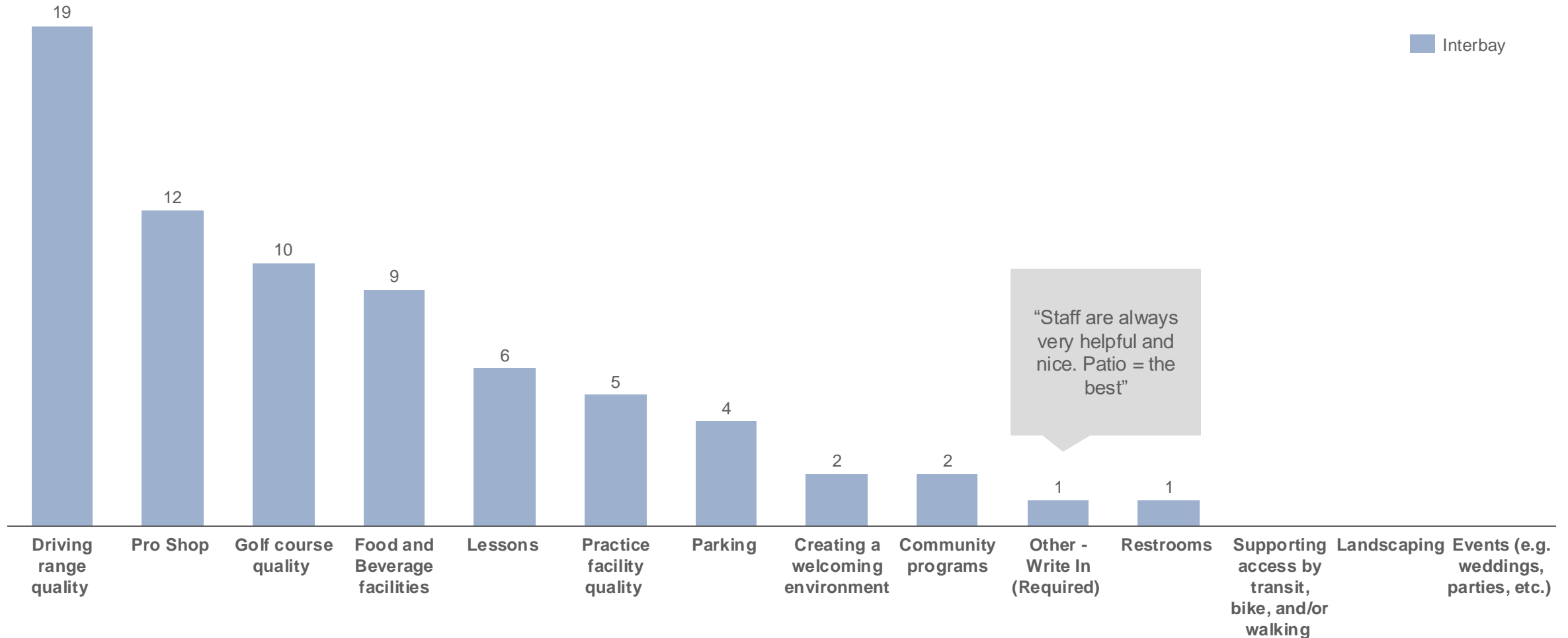
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What do respondents think Interbay is doing particularly well right now?

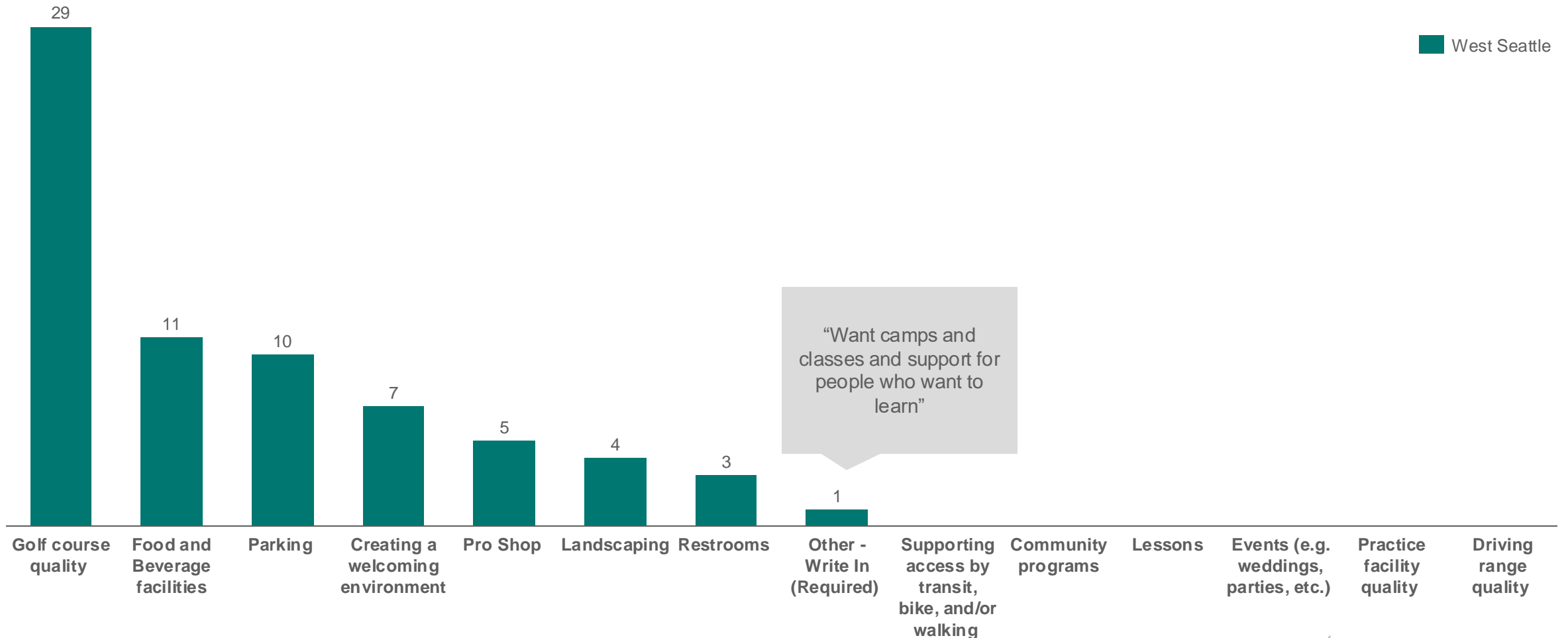
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What do respondents think West Seattle is doing particularly well right now?

What are the top-3 things you think the city-owned golf facilities do particularly well?



Question: What do you think this golf course facility does particularly well right now, choose up to 3 responses? Response Options: Driving range quality, golf course quality, pro shop, food and beverage facilities (e.g. restaurants, snack bars), Events (e.g. weddings, parties), Lessons, Community programs (e.g. senior events and mixers), Creating a welcoming environment for people of different races, gender, backgrounds, and abilities; parking, supporting access by transit, bike and/or walking; Other

Listening Session Notes from Jefferson Park and Interbay Sessions (I/III)

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) conducted 4 public listening sessions, one at each of the city-owned golf facilities, the week of June 17, 2024. Sessions were advertised at the Pro Shops and electronically, and golfers on site were invited to participate

In total, 4 community members chose to participate in the listening sessions (3 at Interbay and 1 at Jefferson Park), this a condensed summary of their feedback

Why do city-owned golf courses matter to you?

- Affordability of golf rounds, lessons, driving range facilities.
- Accessible to many people.
- The quality of maintenance that is provided.
- It is important to have public golf courses to increase access to the sport. I come here at 6 in the morning because I am and avid golfer. The majority of people come here after work to socialize, and that's great. The city-owned quality of the course helps make the environment more accessible and casual. Jefferson, in particular, is more casual and obtainable. My home course is Jefferson Park because I live 5 miles away. I visit private courses when I receive the invitation.

What do you think city-owned golf courses contribute to the City?

- Having “open space” in a property-hungry, densifying area is important.
- Keeping trees and green spaces because when they are removed, they do not return.
- Variety of uses is family-inclusive and invites diversity.
- Especially, with some of the interior holes, you can really feel like you are out of the city. 6am and sunset in Jefferson provides great scenery.

Listening Session Notes from Jefferson Park and Interbay Sessions (II/III)

Where do you experience the most pain points when using the course or driving range?

- Lack of women's clothing/merchandise in Pro shop
- Slow play
- Lack of etiquette enforcement
- Sign-up/tee time reservation process is cumbersome
- The perception of "standing" tee times for the same groups
- Pace of play – continue blocking short intervals of tee times on busy times
- Using the restroom – update/renovate at West Seattle
- I choose not to come around this time of day (after work, 6pm) because it is always packed. Tee time reservation is always reserved 2 weeks ahead. Bellevue, West Seattle, and Legion are the courses that often get booked up. Since I play early in the morning, I do not experience difficulty parking. During the peak times, I find myself having to park far away. At West Seattle, during a 10AM T-time start, there was also a track meeting, and those two combined resulted in difficulty finding parking.

Parking lot safety

- For the most part, I feel like I know what to watch out for. The parking lot at Jackson Park, especially at night, can get precarious. This can perhaps be attributed to poor lighting conditions. Additionally, I have observed encampment activity.
- My friend's car got broken into at Jackson Park and he vowed never to bike there again.

Pace of Play issues

- Luckily, I have not experienced anything major. I have observed that there are more people golfing than before.

Listening Session Notes from Jefferson Park and Interbay Sessions (III/III)

Have you taken lessons before? Was that an easy process?

- I have before. You have to remember that it is a different booking system. (pain point)

How do you receive information about golf related events?

- I find out about events through flyers and I am subscribed to emails. During the winter, it would be nice to know if the course is “going to temps”. Its helpful to know if there will be frost on the ground.

What would entice you to spend more time at the course?

- If I don't have to do something after my morning round, I will grab a beer and maybe a bite to eat at the restaurant. Occasionally, I will come here and hangout without the intention to golf. Sometimes, my wife and I will meet others for a drink here. It would be nice if the restaurant's menu could be on the website.

If you had a magic wand and an unlimited budget, what improvements would you add to our existing facilities?

- Restore the original back-holes at Jefferson—I know that there is already a plan there and I understand that it takes time.
- Jackson could use improvements to the restrooms.
- The air hose can be inconsistent—at Jefferson, Jackson, and West Seattle.
- Update restrooms and facilities; make more modern
- Improved maintenance in areas that are not the fairways and greens
- More holes at Interbay – not necessarily an extra 9; 12 would be ideal

General feedback

- Premier has been performing this role since 2004, previously named “Municipal Golf of Seattle.” If a new contractor comes in, how big of a disruption would that be? I am mostly concerned with booking tee times and don't want that disrupted. Also, I don't want the pricing to be increased too much.