



Organizational Assessment : Thriving Communities

COMPLETE TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES

FALL 2023



Introduction to Assessment

The Organizational Assessment is a tool to document and understand your organization's existing capacity across a series of criteria to establish a baseline from which to measure and conduct capacity building over the course of the Thriving Communities Program. The assessment will provide a common understanding from which we can collectively move toward your goals. The assessment results will shape how we approach your Technical Assistance request and which actions will be critical to set you up for long term success.



How the assessment will inform next steps:

A key objective of the program is to build capacity. The assessment is an important tool to help us identify critical path items that will do so, enabling you to thrive long after the program ends. Results from your organizational assessment can also help identify training and capacity building workshops that might be beneficial across the Complete Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods Cohort through the Communities of Practice.

Assessment Instructions:



This assessment is really focused on the lead agency's organization; however, we see benefit in asking both the lead agency and all its partners to answer the questions.

1. Please answer honestly and openly to the best of your ability.
2. Read through each criterion statement and rank them on the scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.
3. Please skip any question you are not sure how to answer.



Assessment Instructions Continued:

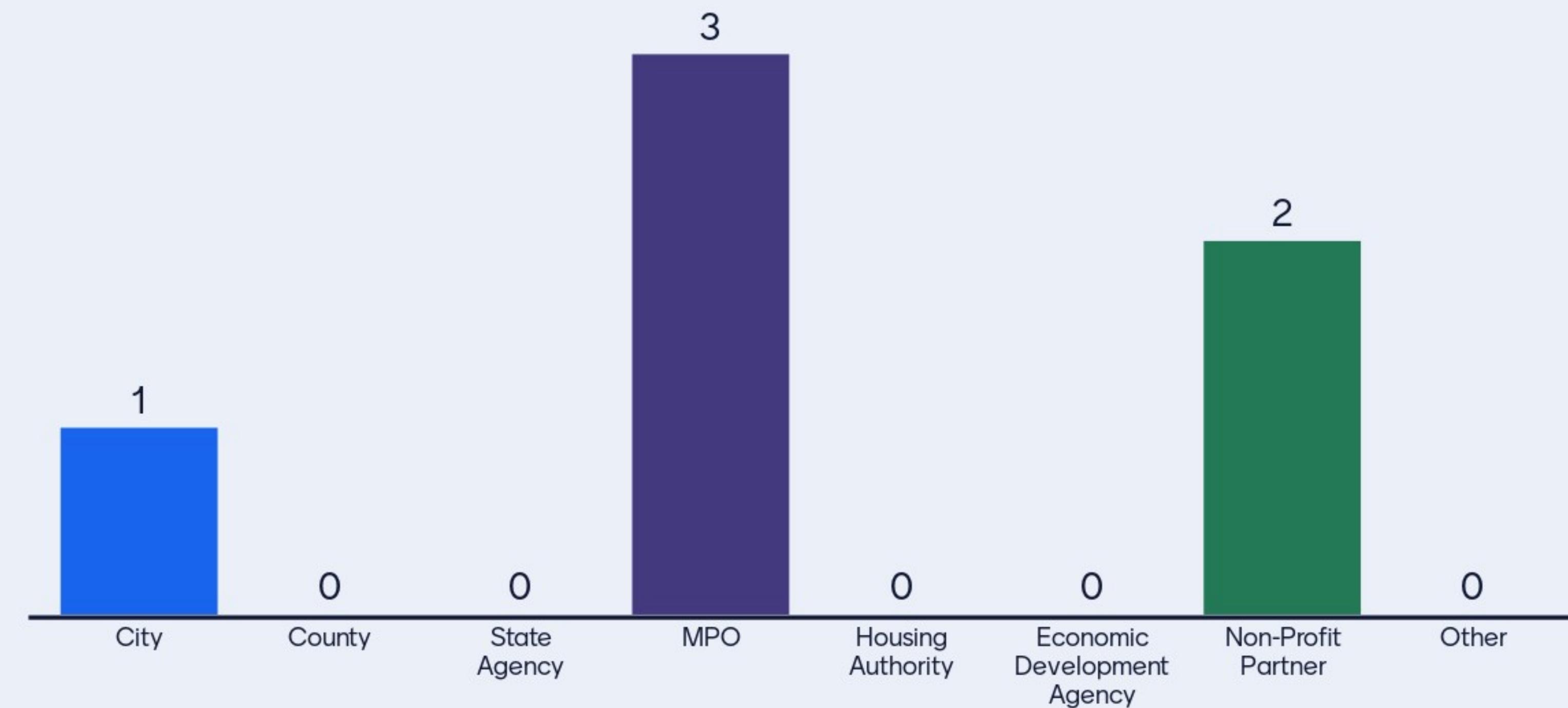
This assessment is really focused on the lead agency's organization; however, we see benefit in asking both the lead agency and all its partners to answer the questions.

4. The criterion statements are grouped into eight categories. At the end of each category, we provide an open-ended question for you to expand on your thoughts and feelings based on the criterion statements. We strongly encourage you to take time to provide input under the open-ended questions. The more time you spend with this, the more meaningful the outputs will be.

5. The responses are anonymous. All input will be compiled for a debrief with each community.

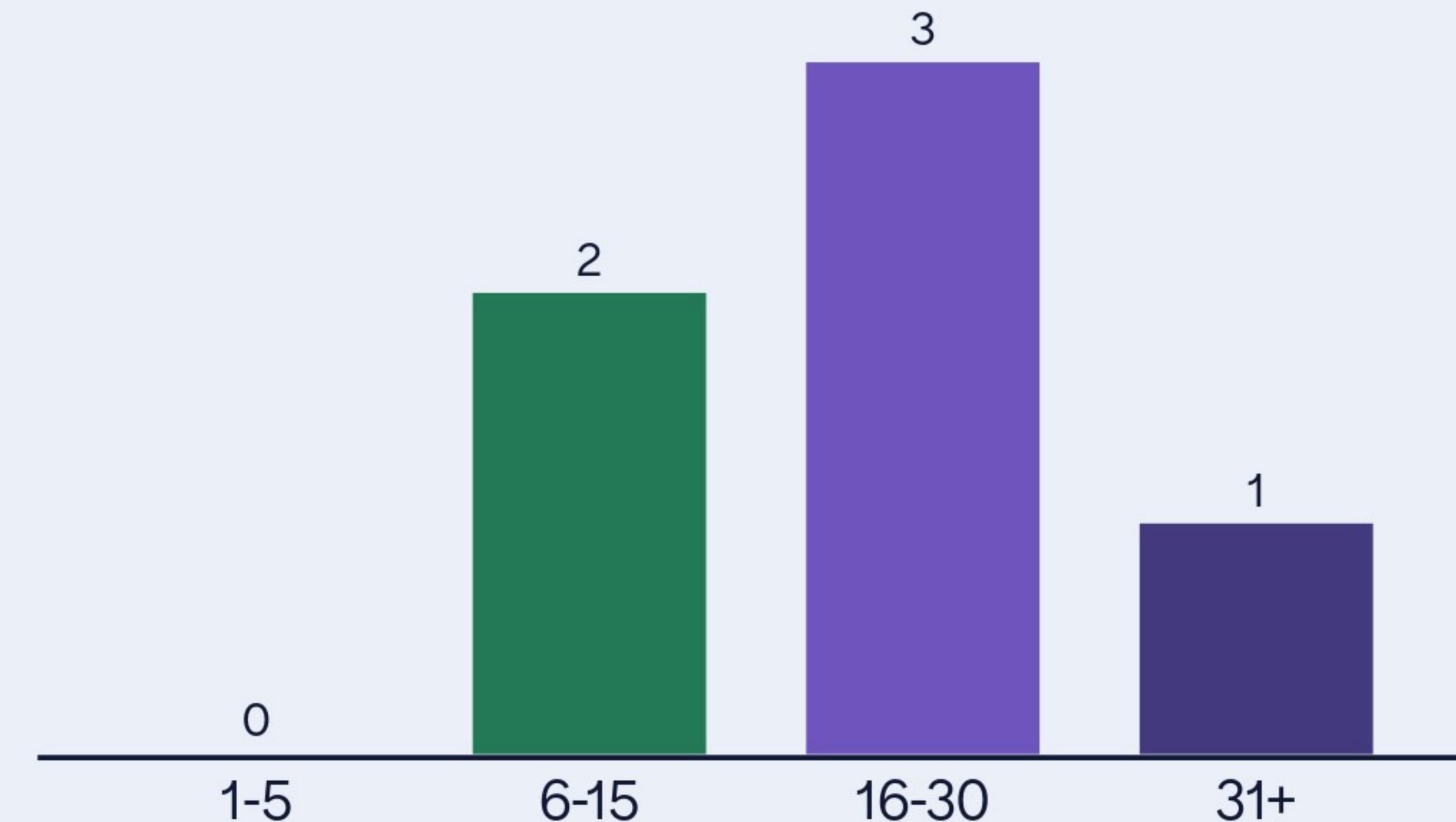


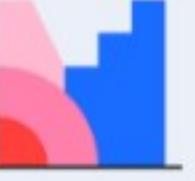
Which of the following responses best fits the organization you represent in this assessment?





How many people are in your organization?





The following are the Assessment criterion:

1. GOVERNANCE
2. ORGANIZATION AND WORKFORCE CAPACITY
3. PROCESSES, GOALS, AND TOOLS
4. SYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY
5. PARTNERSHIPS
6. FEDERAL COMPLIANCE
7. EQUITY CENTERED APPROACH
8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

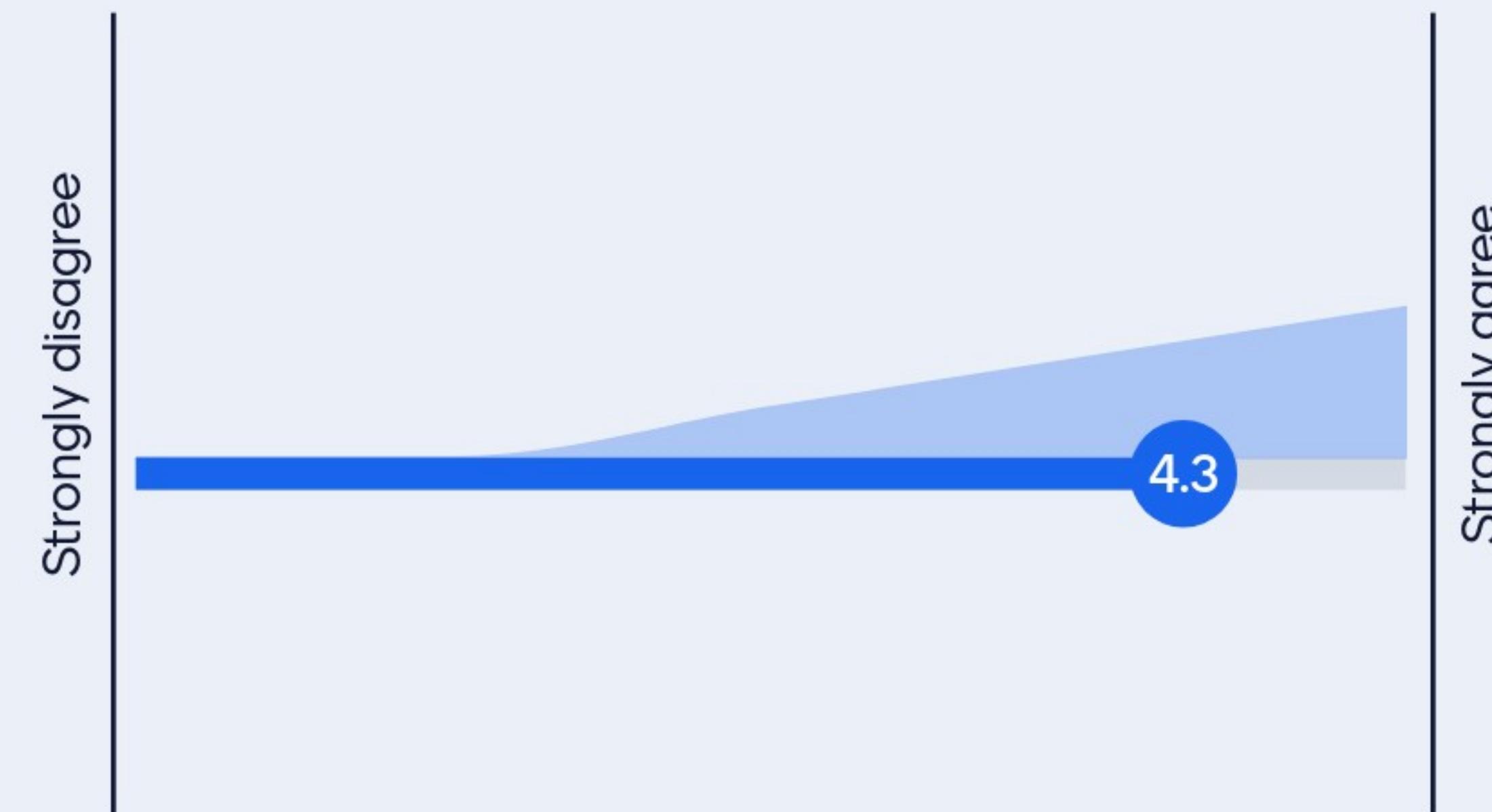


Criteria 1: GOVERNANCE

DECISION MAKING, AUTHORITY,
POLICIES, AND SYSTEMS

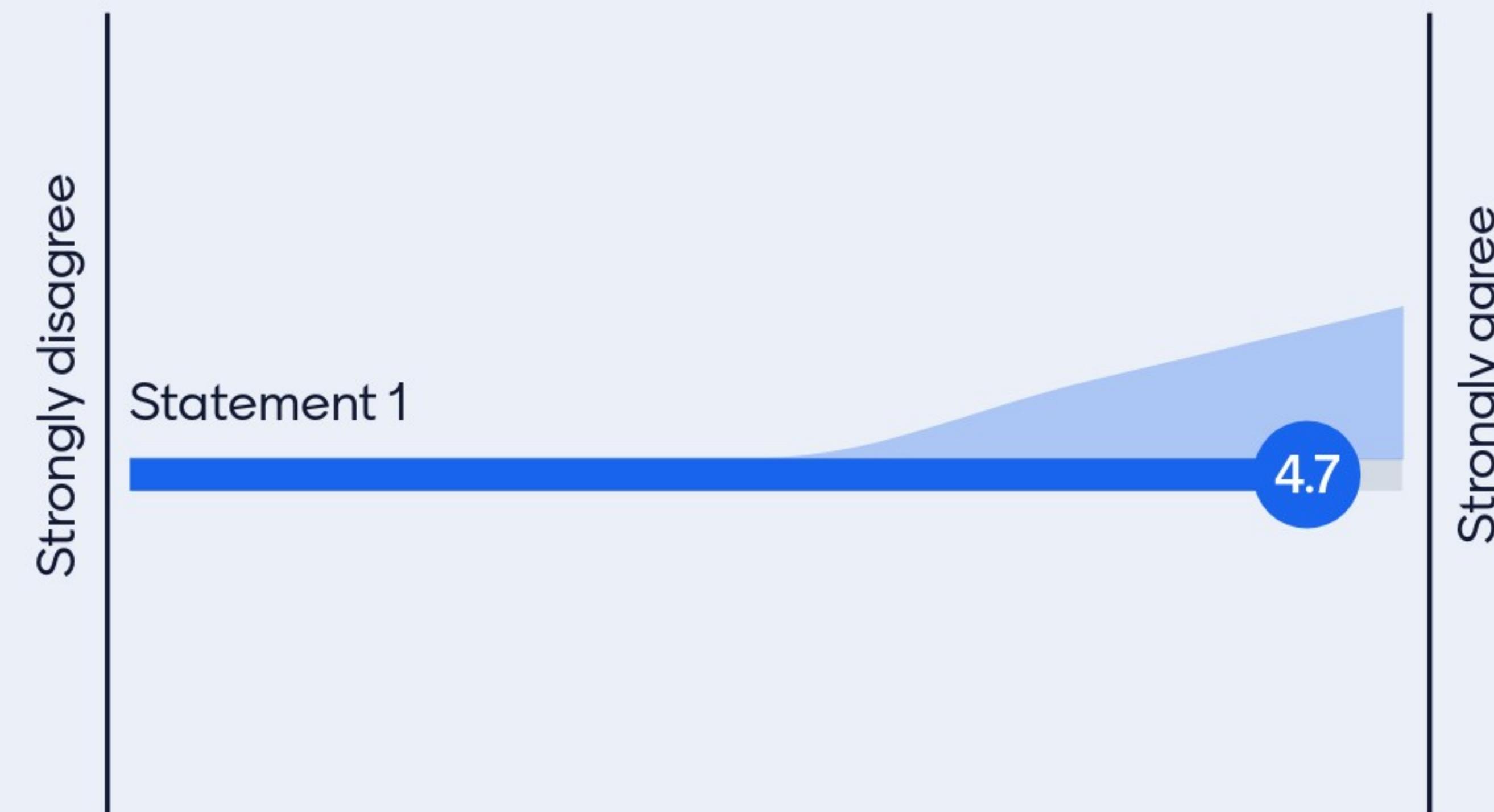


Lead agency decisions are formal and supported by clearly defined and communicated processes.



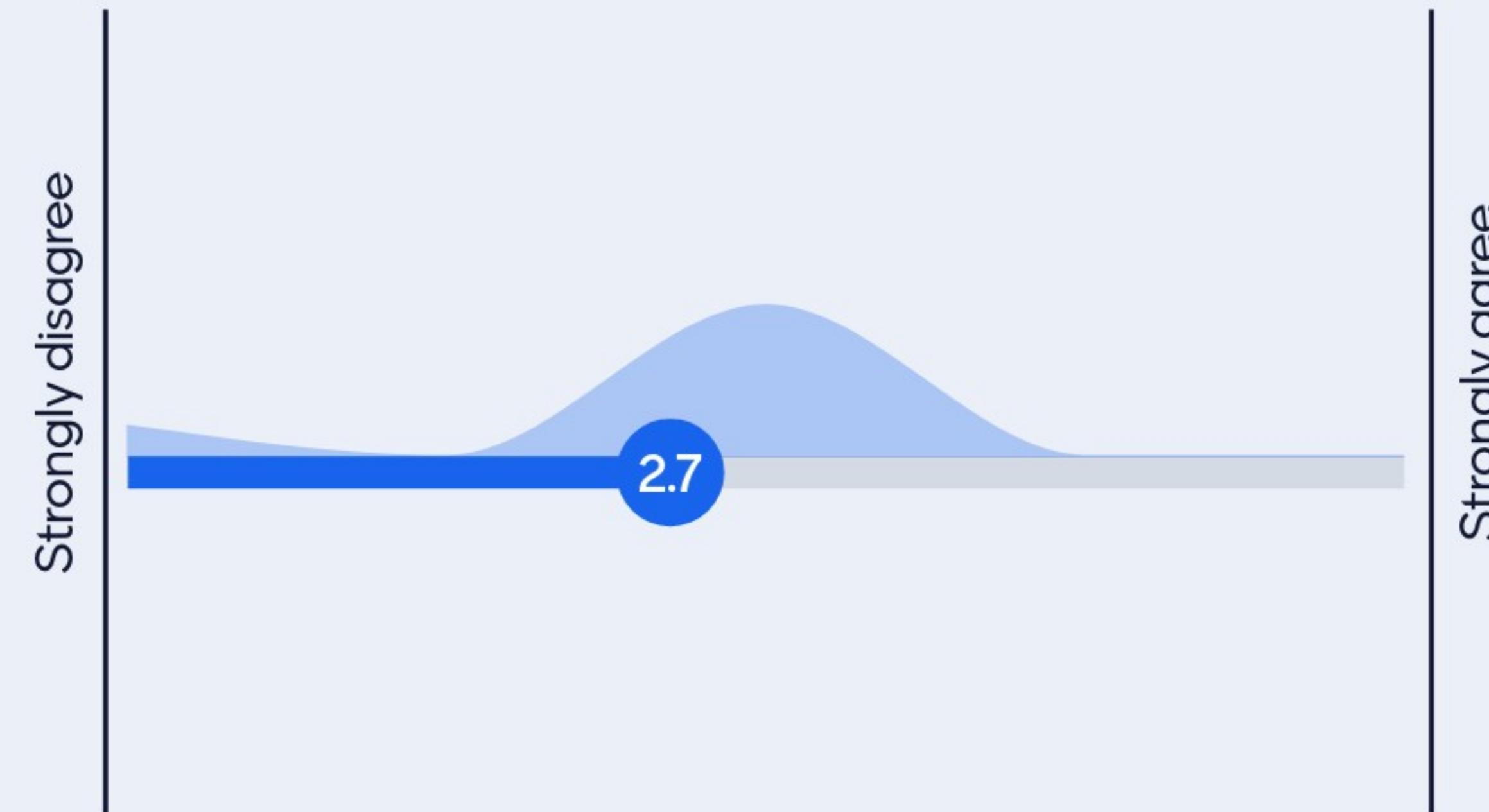


The lead agency's organizational structure has clearly defined lines of authority.



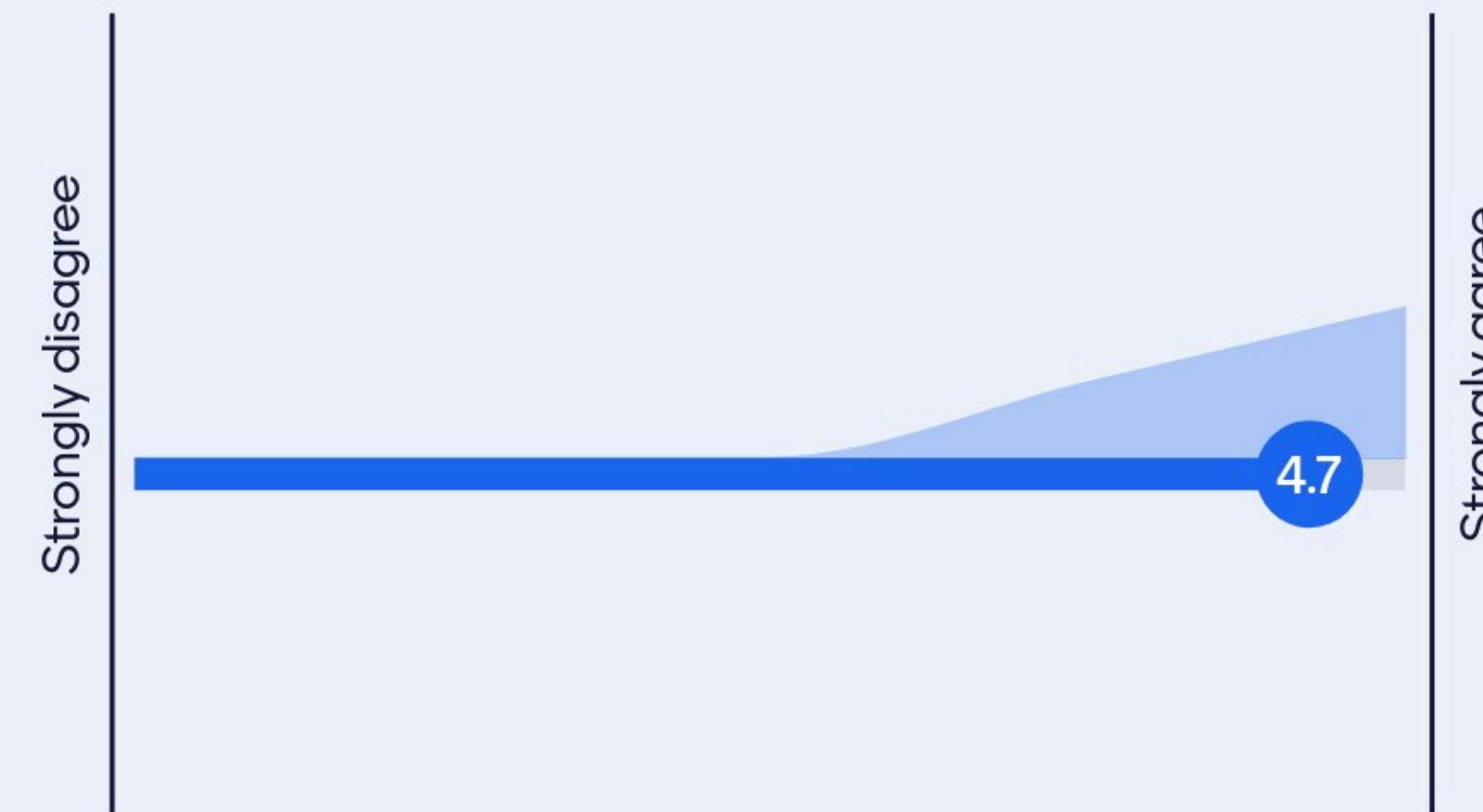


Cross-disciplinary and inter-agency roles and responsibilities are formally established and clearly defined.



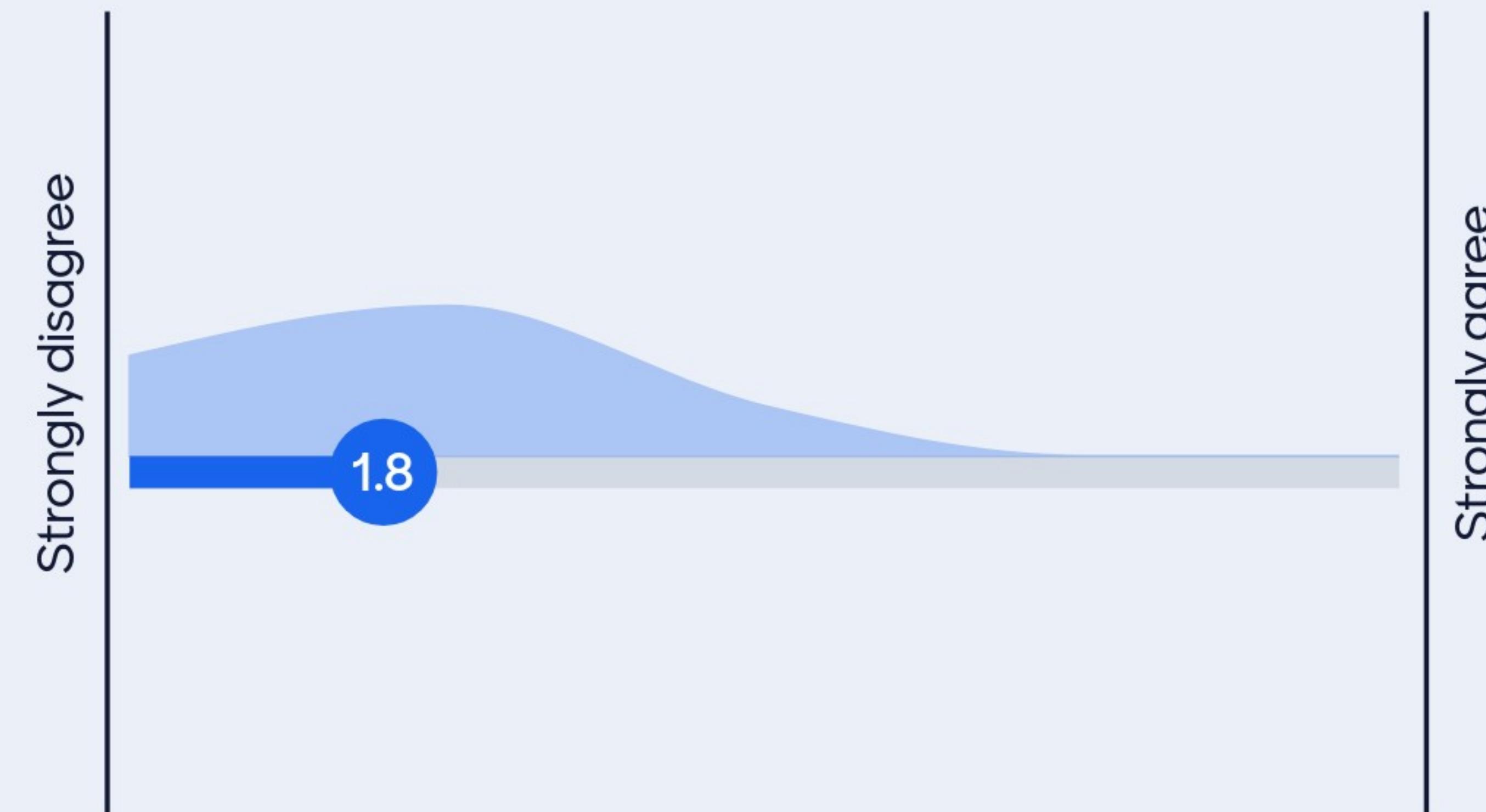


The lead agency's leadership and management structures, membership, and charters are clearly outlined.



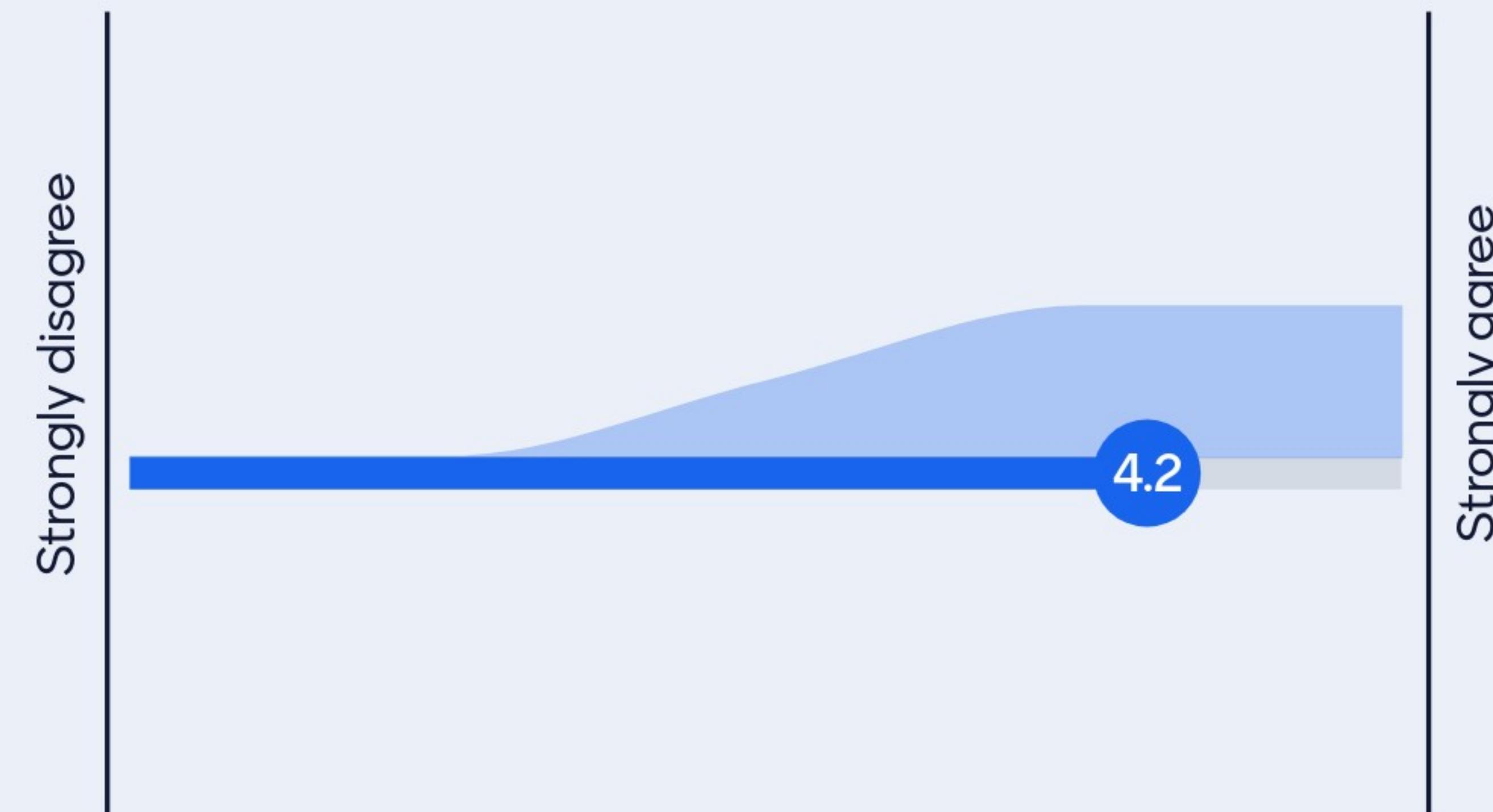


The lead agency has full *authority* and autonomy to implement policy and programming decisions.





Almost all decisions made by the lead agency are data-driven and transparent.



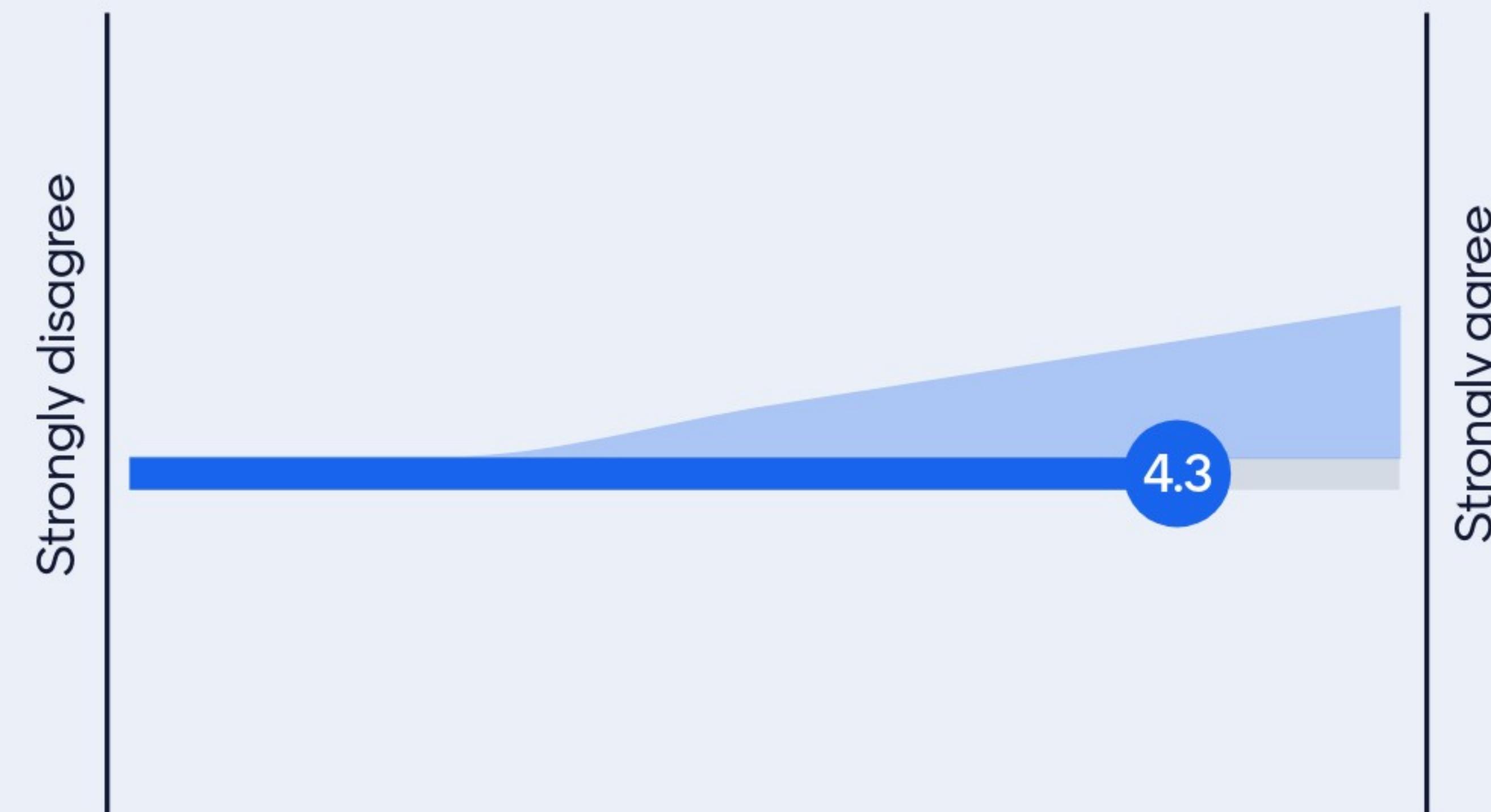


The lead agency's decisions are well-received by the public.





I am aware of the regulatory powers of the lead agency.





Is there anything regarding GOVERNANCE you would like to share?

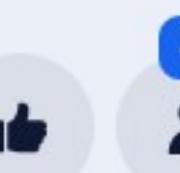
4 responses

While MAPA is an excellent convener, we do not have authority over anything other than the federal aid apportioned to the region. Policy in the case of this project is determined by the City of Omaha.

The lead agency has strong local government leadership, but it's not cross-sectoral. Work is underway diversifying the Boards and Technical Committees, but there have been challenges to that work

While MAPA is the MPO/TMA for the region, the ultimate implementation of projects rests on the local jurisdictions and the state actors. MAPA does not build or construct.

No



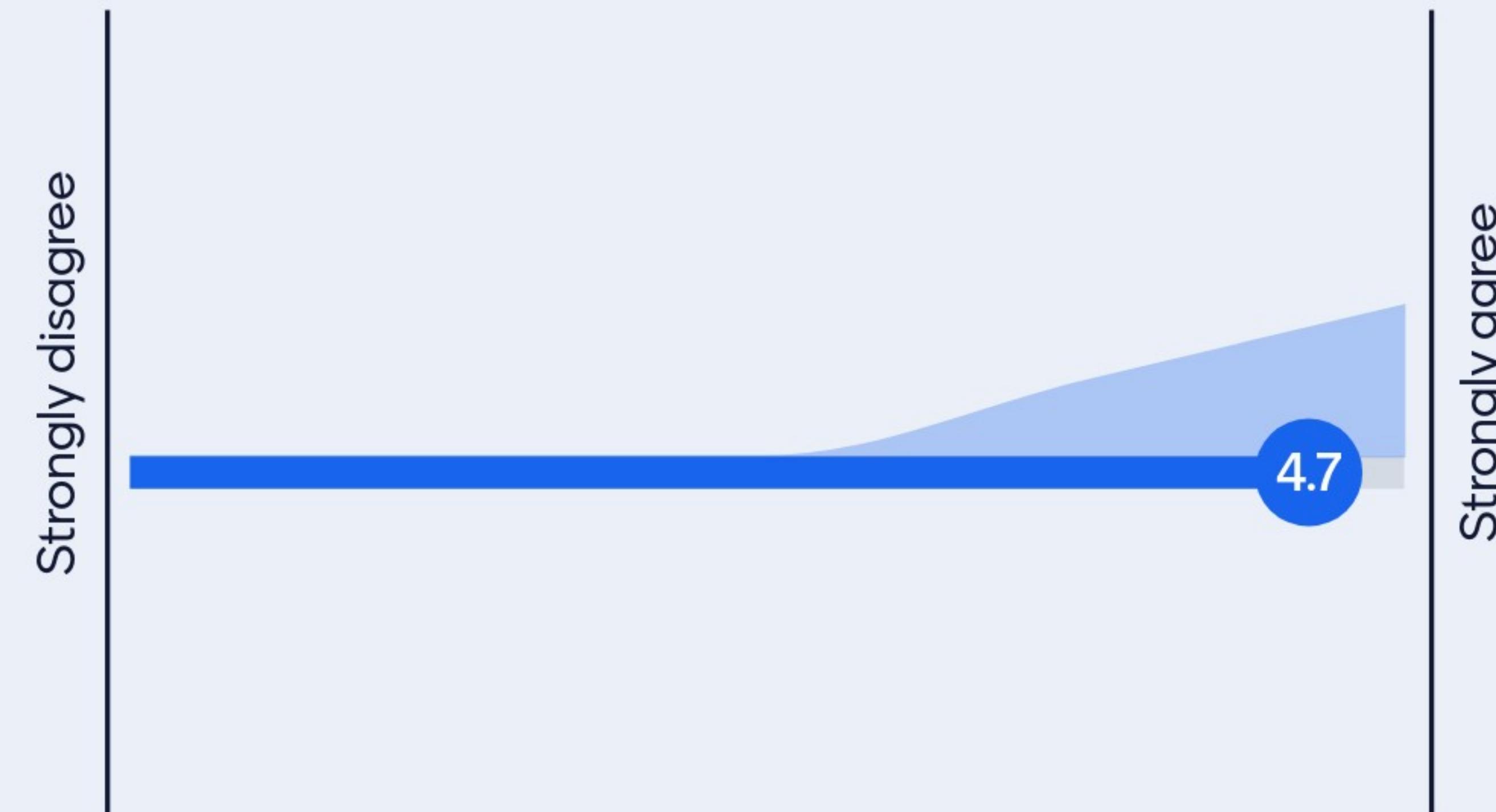


Criteria 2: ORGANIZATIONAL AND WORKFORCE CAPACITY

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE,
WORKFORCE CAPACITY, AND
DECISION MAKING, AUTHORITY,
POLICIES, AND SYSTEMS

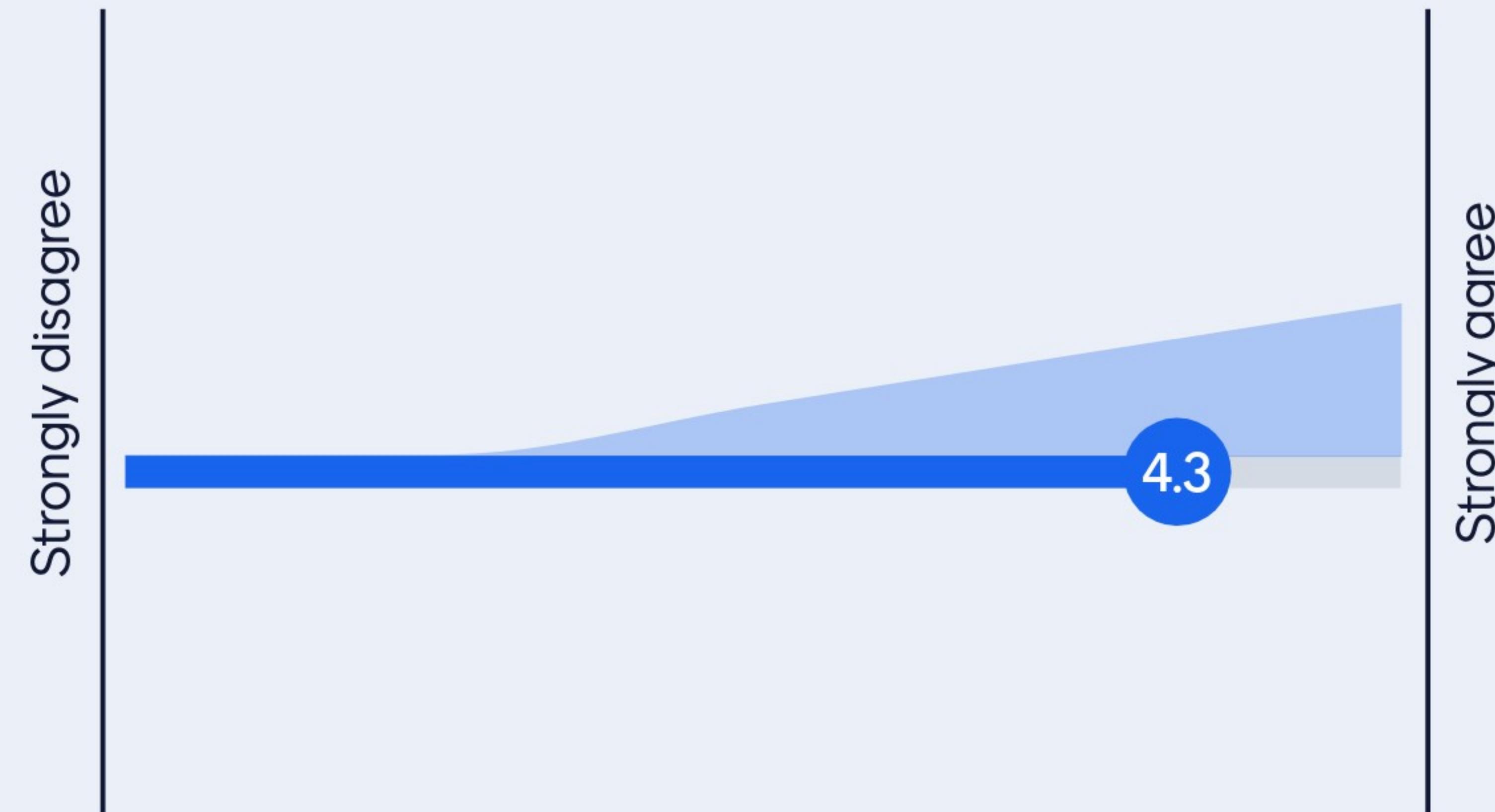


The lead agency has a clear organizational structure and roles.





The lead agency is well-staffed.





The lead agency has a diverse group of technical staff to support the project.



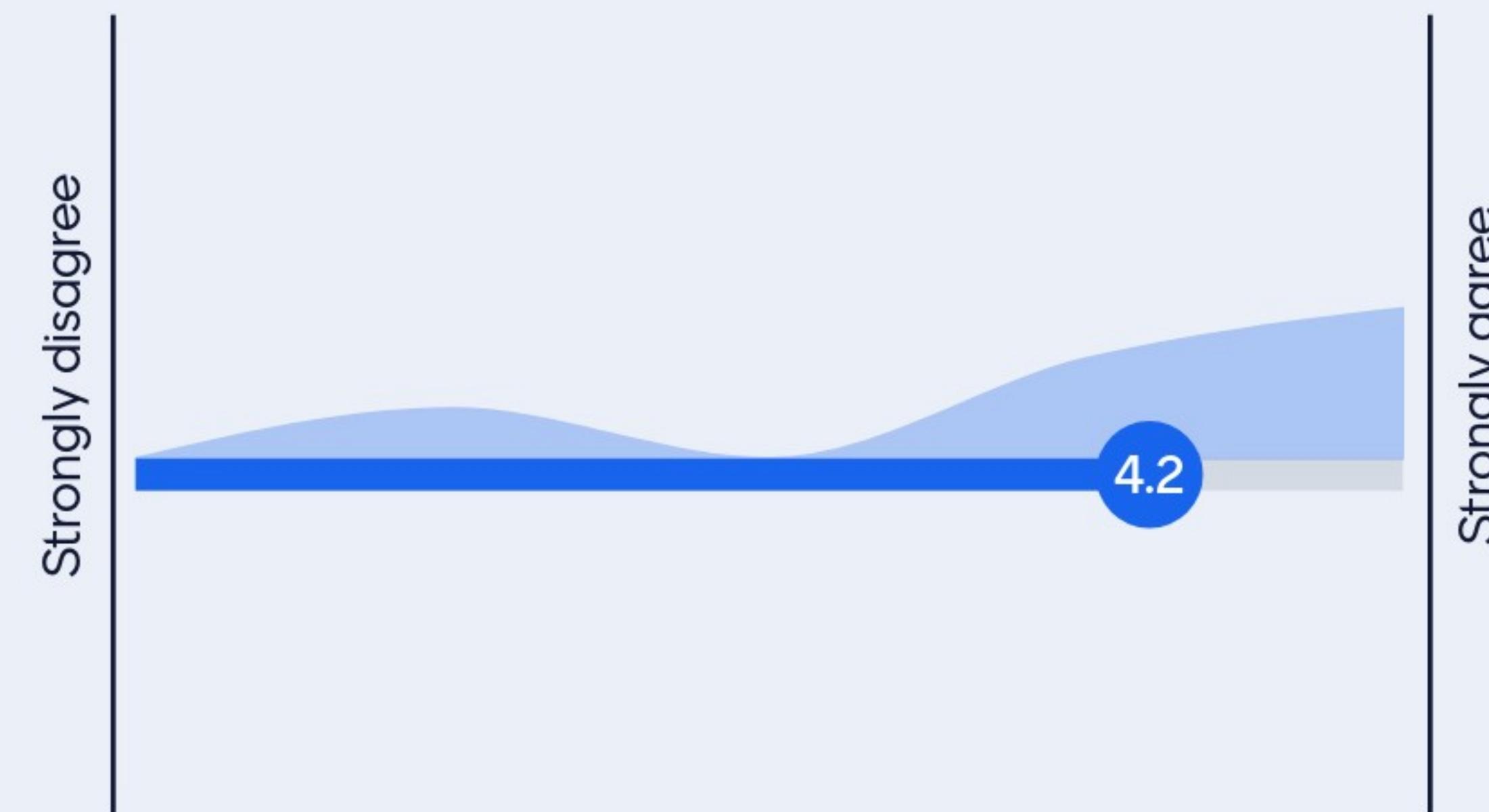


The lead agency and supporting partner agencies are prepared to conduct community engagement.





The lead agency and supporting agencies can lead transit oriented development and related programs.



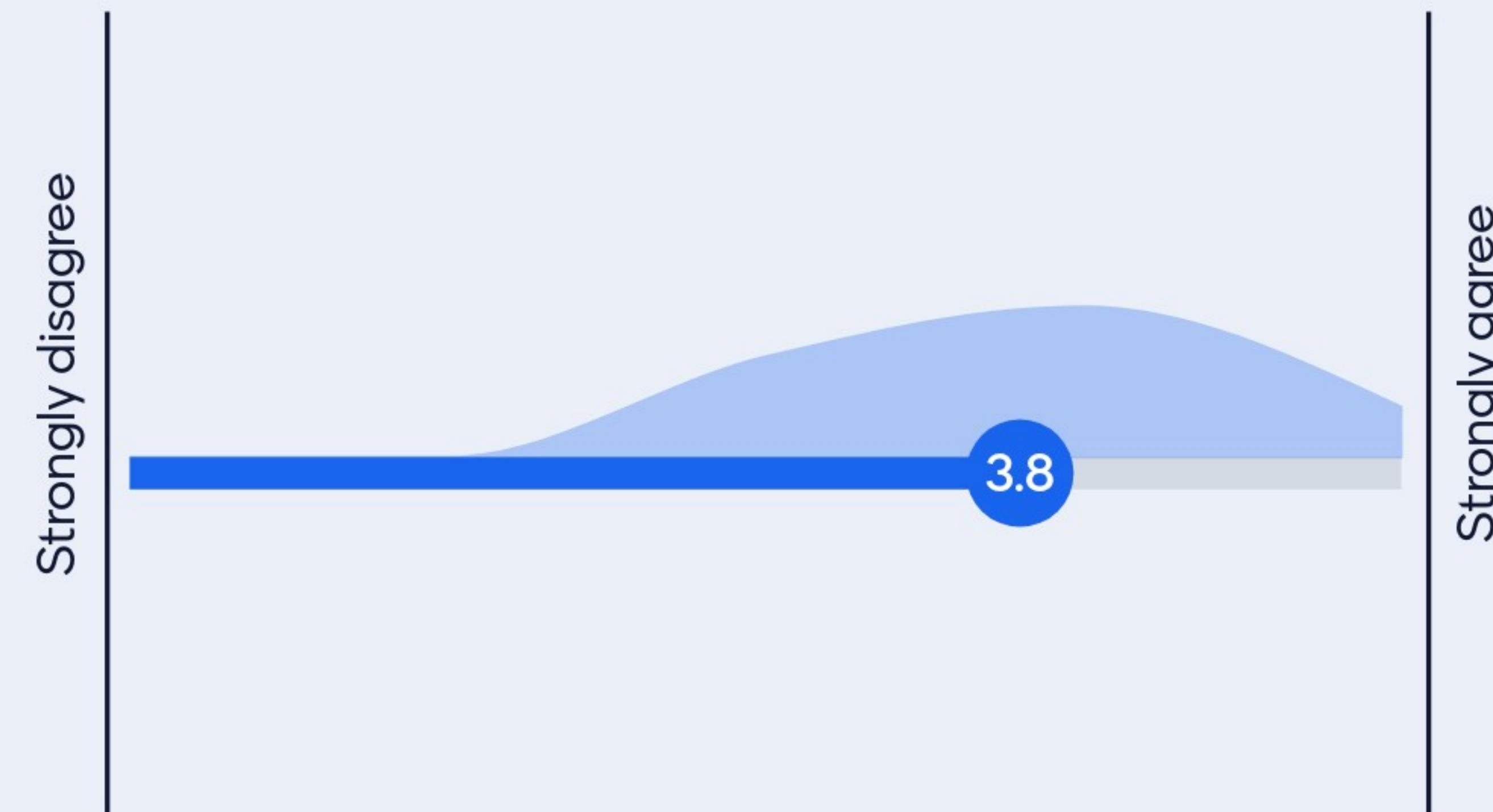


Workforce capabilities are continuously improved through professional development and certification of operations and core capacity positions.





The lead agency offers opportunities to grow capacity knowledge.





The lead agency's leadership succession, assessment, and development responsibilities are clearly outlined.





Is there anything regarding ORGANIZATION AND WORKFORCE CAPACITY you would like to share?

4 responses

As a non-profit partner I could benefit from professional development opportunities around Transportation, Development, and Mobility Justice.

no

Nothing specific to add

I think MAPA is currently well staffed but there is room for growth and improvement. Taking on these larger projects is emblematic of some of the hard work that will need added attention in the future



Criteria 3: PROCESSES, GOALS, AND TOOLS

PROCESSES & TOOLS IN PLACE;
A VISION AND GOALS AND OTHER
STEPS ARE DEFINED;
GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND
INITIATIVES ARE GIVEN
RESOURCES NEEDED

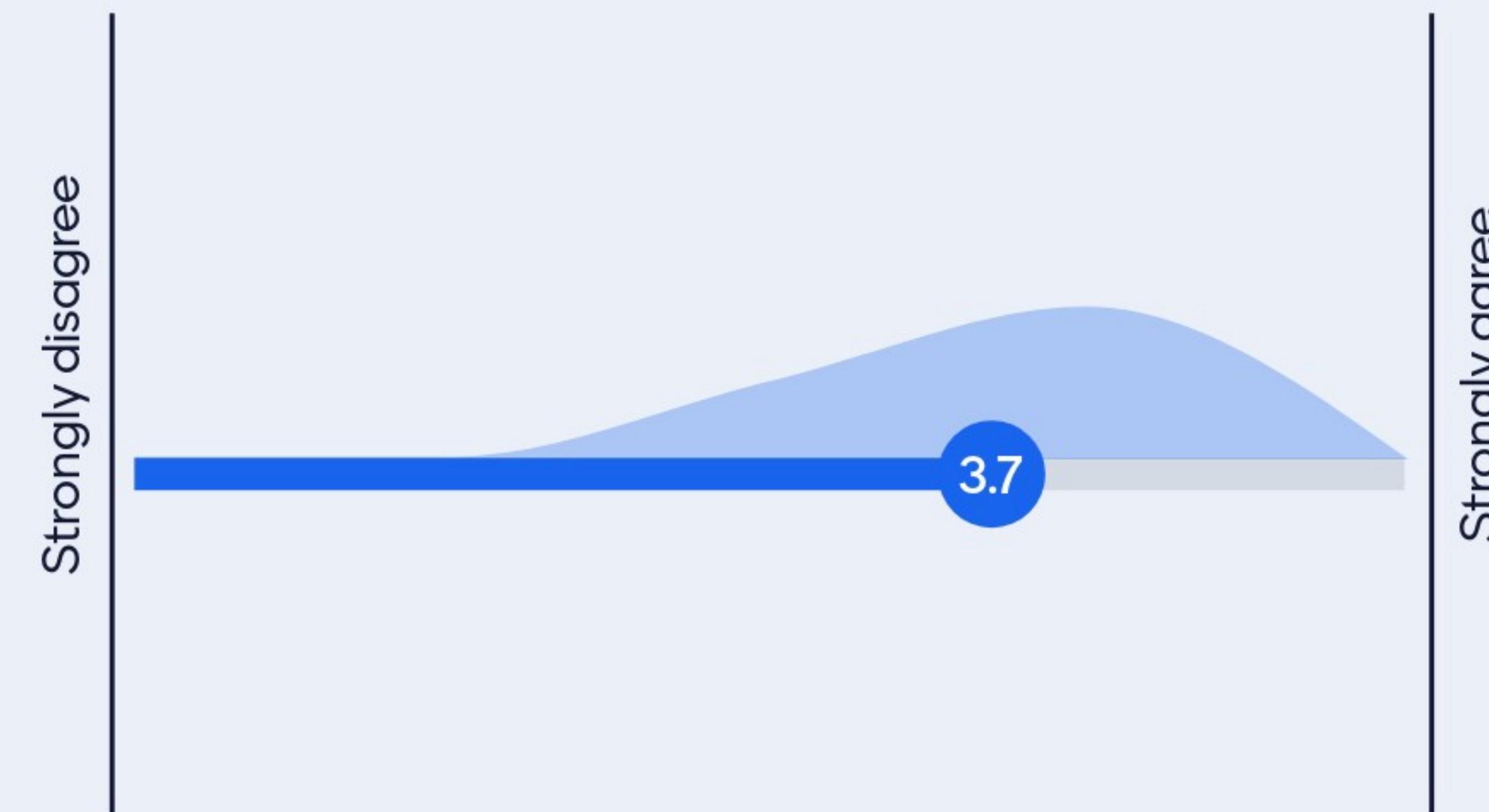


There is a clear vision for the lead agency's Thriving Communities project.



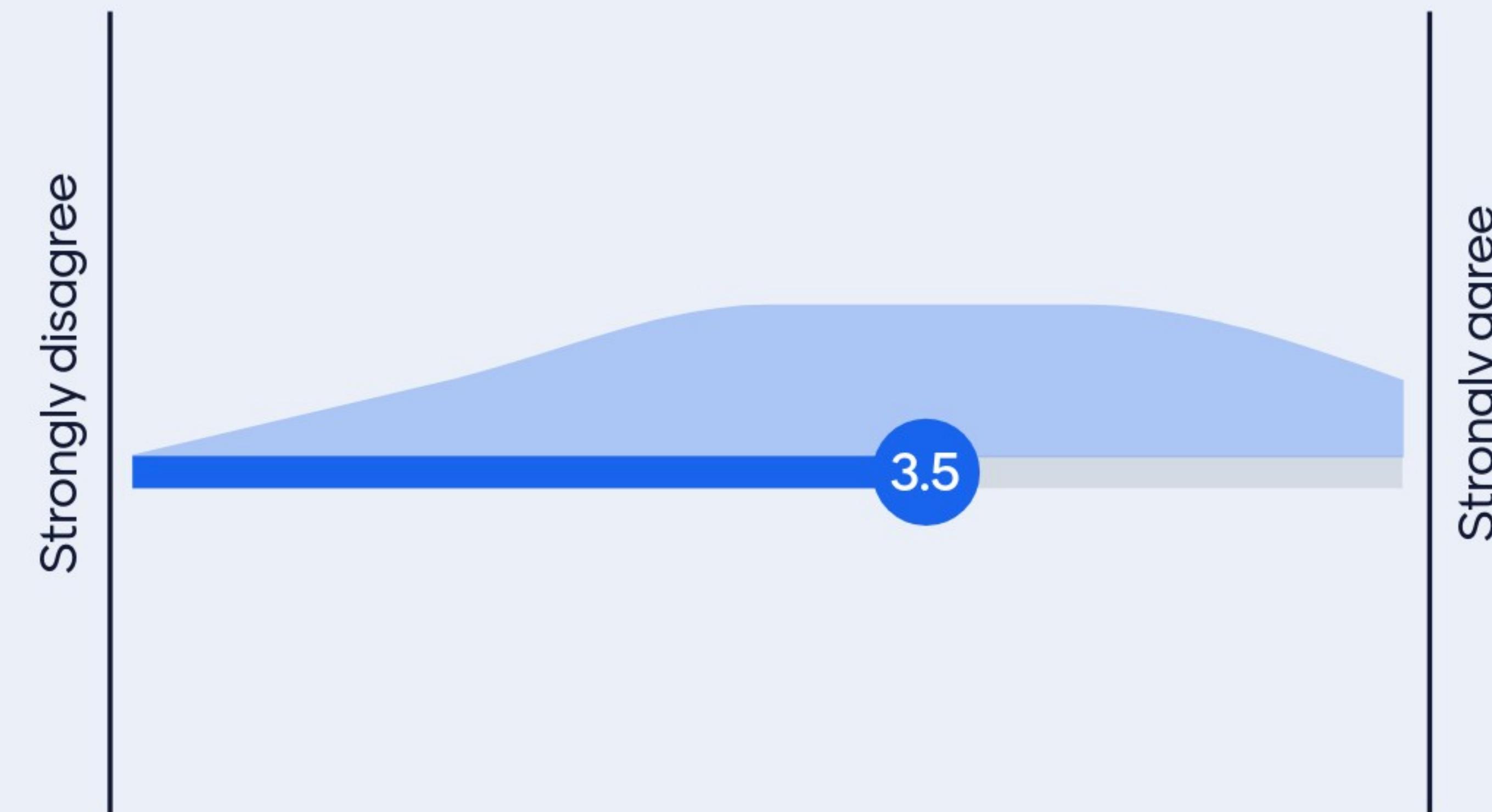


Desired outcomes for the Thriving Communities project are clearly aligned to larger lead agency vision and goals.





The lead agency teams and staff have the right tools and resources to realize the desired outcomes





Is there anything regarding PROCESSES, GOALS, AND TOOLS you would like to share?

4 responses

MAPA can bring people together and start a conversation, but not the power to implement. We encourage and assist, but another entity must take action. Our toolkit is insufficient to implement.

Nothing more to add

I think in closed door meetings there is consensus on the need to act but when it comes to actually accomplishing or moving forward there are a lot of hurdles to overcome.

We all share a want and need to enhance the community. However, instituting the structural and foundational changes for that improvement. This will take time.





Criteria 4: SYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

PERFORMANCE METRICS TO
EVALUATE AGENCY, EVALUATIONS
TO HOLD AGENCY ACCOUNTABLE

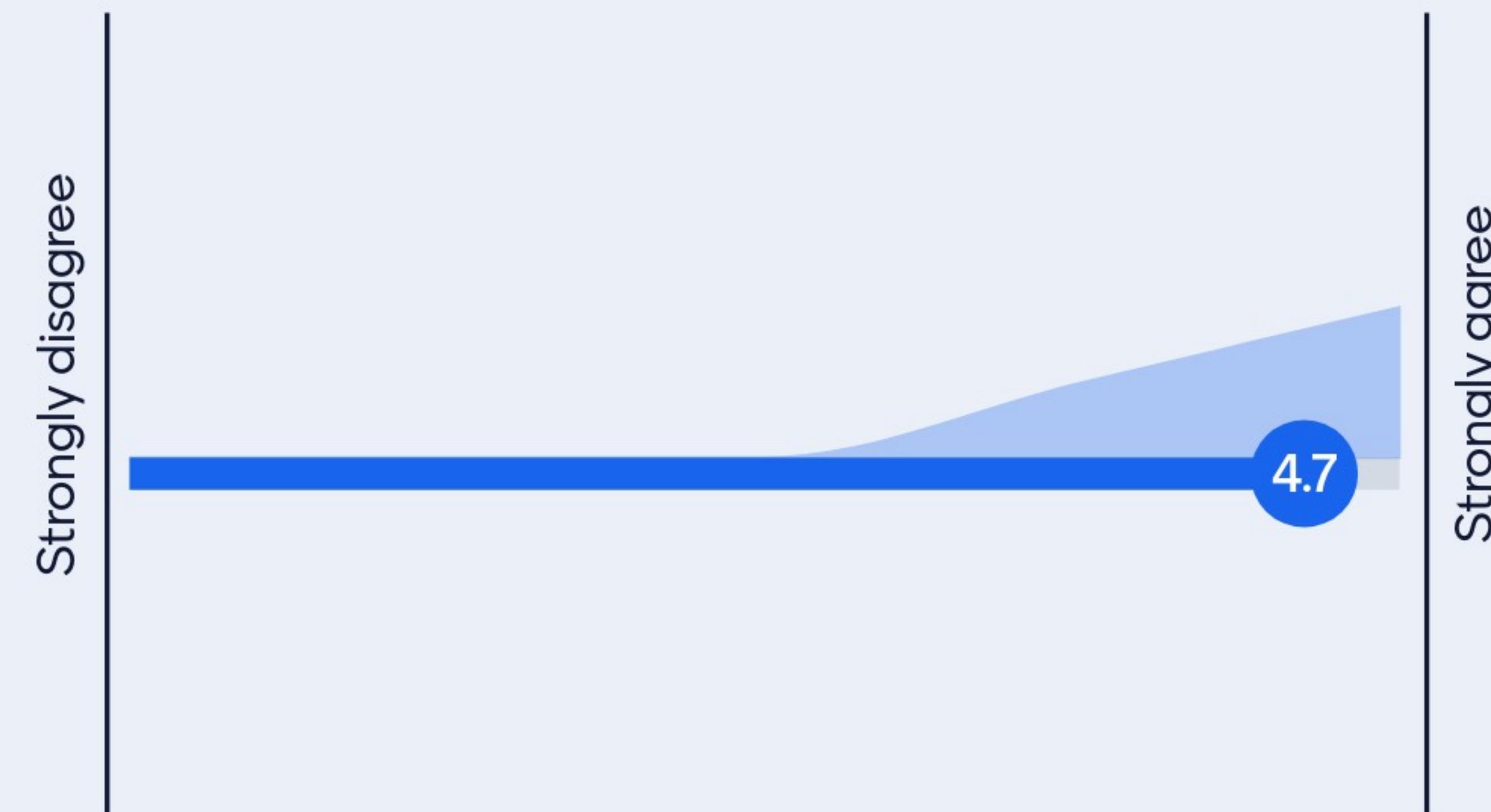


Data related to the lead agency's mission are routinely used for decision making



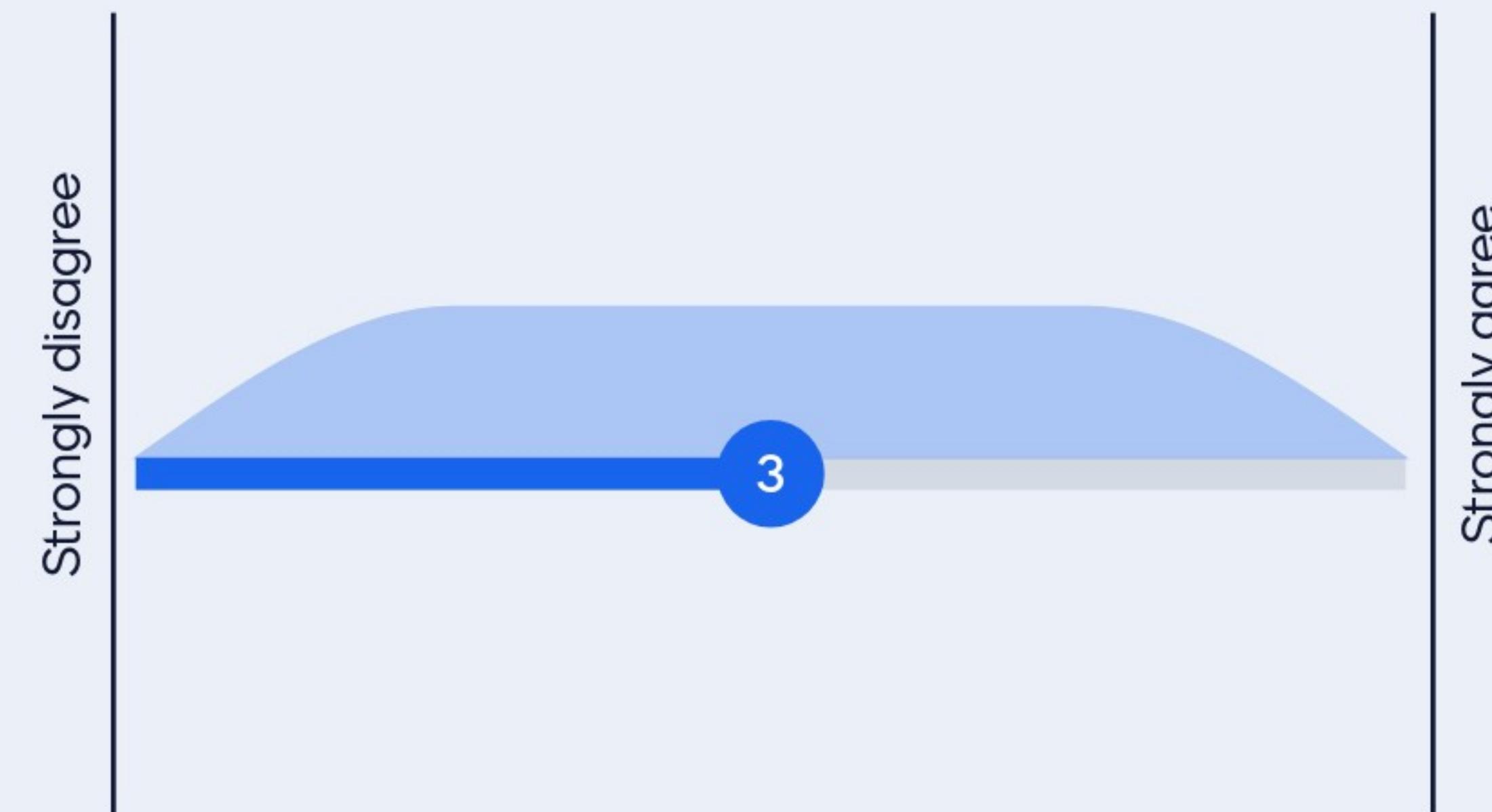


The lead agency's mission-oriented goals are regularly reported externally.



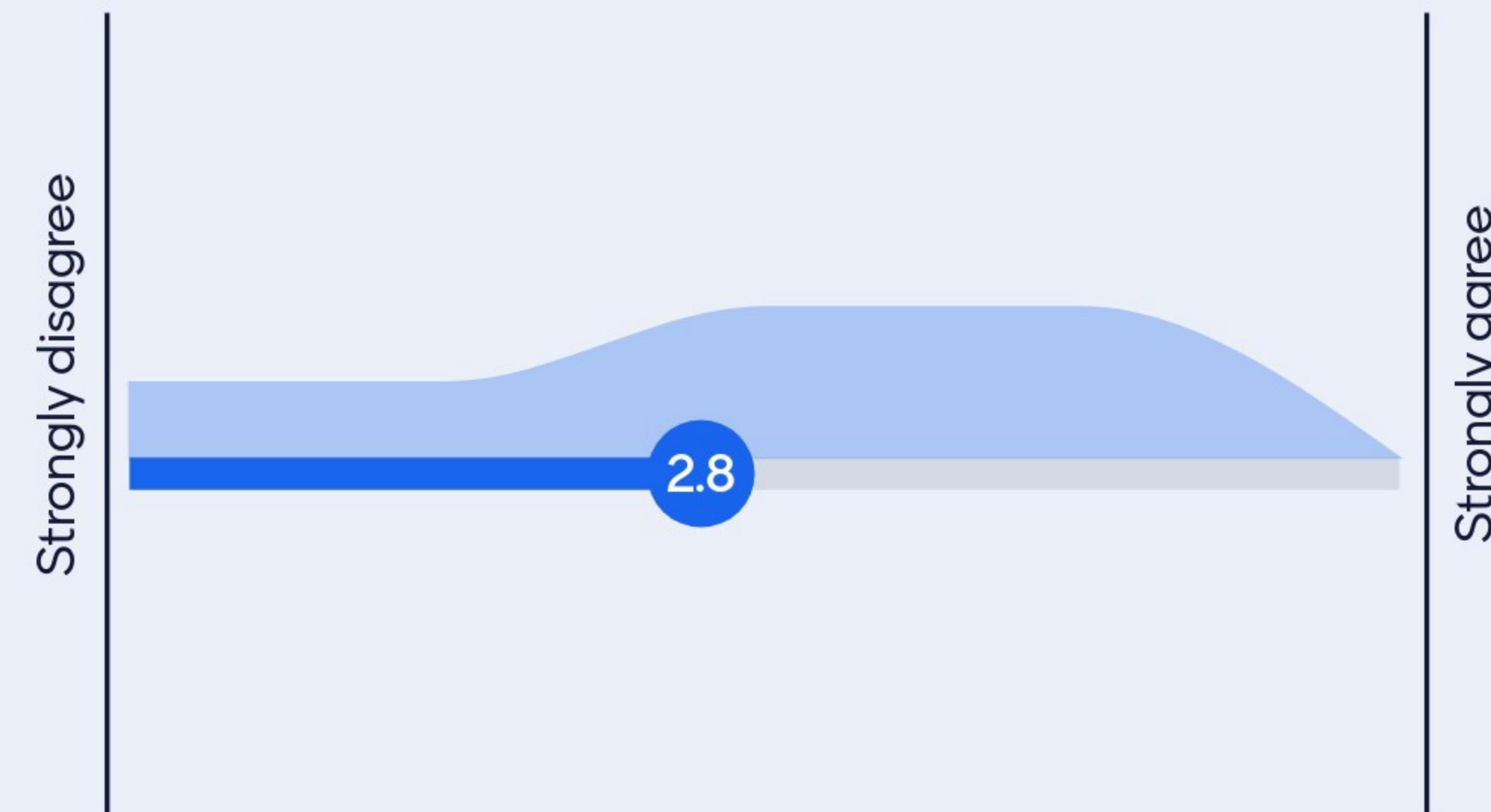


The public knows the lead agency's qualitative goals and how they measure progress toward them.



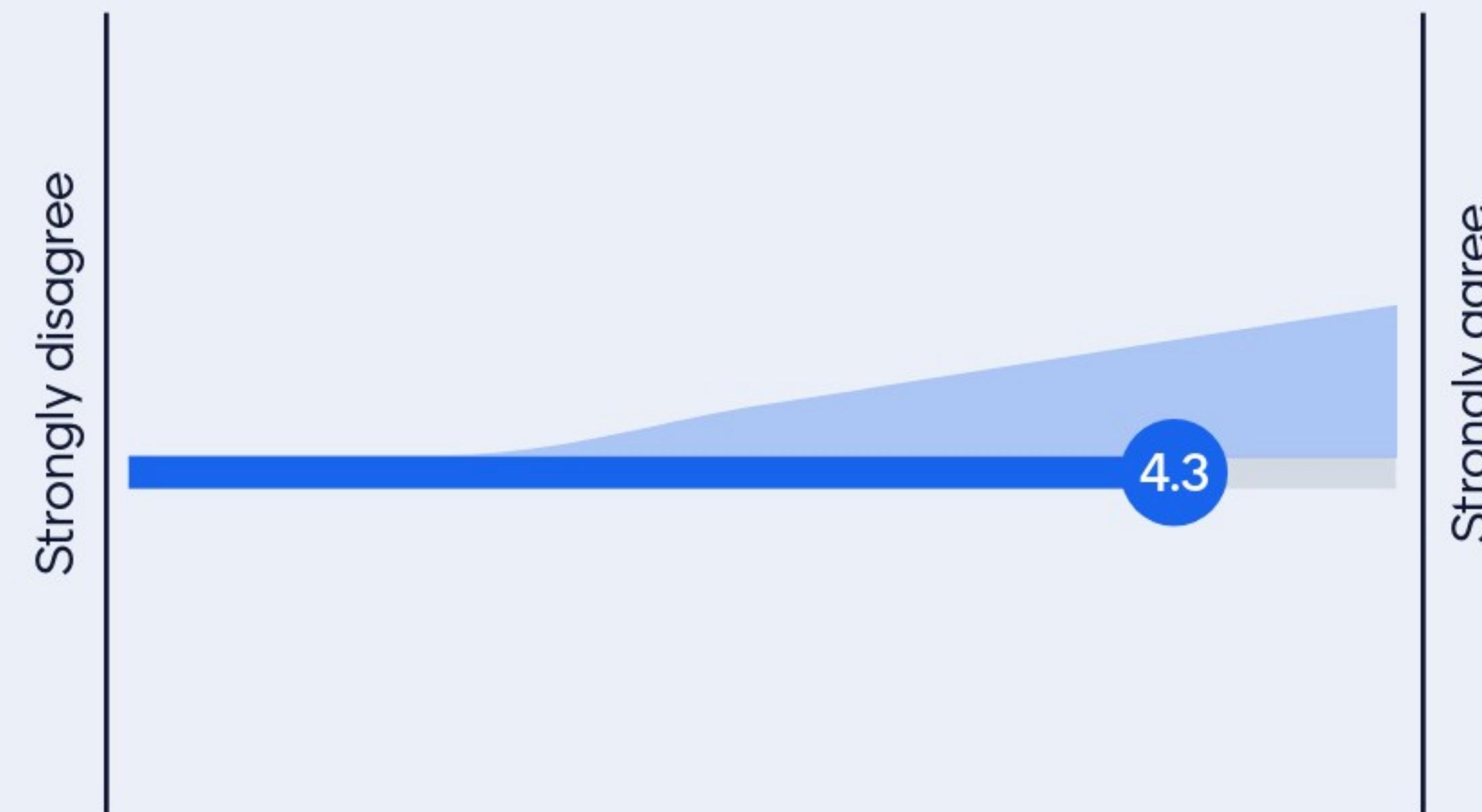


The public knows our quantitative goals and how they measure progress toward them.





Metrics and scorecards about lead agency performance are regularly made available to the public.





Providing feedback to the lead agency is easy and standardized.





The public knows how the lead agency uses their input to influence decision making.





The lead agency has defined performance measures.





The lead agency's performance metrics are continuously improved.





Is there anything regarding SYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY you would like to share?

4 responses

The public has access to MAPA's goals and performance metrics (they are all published), but most people do not know we exist. We are a background agency that relies on partners for deep engagement.

MAPA does provide opportunities for engagement, feedback, and reports however in my opinion these are not things that the general public are familiar with.

I think this is a strength of MAPA from a technical perspective. I believe there is considerable work to be done to bridge from technical audiences to the general public

MAPA and the City are sometimes interchangeable in people's mind. Thinking a call to MAPA is a call to the City and vice versa.





Criteria 5: PARTNERSHIPS

INTERAGENCY PARTNERSHIPS,
NONPROFIT PARTNERSHIPS,
BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS, OTHER
ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



High-level collaboration between the lead agency and the public is clearly defined.





The lead agency's collaboration with quasi-public agencies is clearly defined.





The lead agency's key partners are working towards achieving well-aligned goals and objectives.





Collaboration is integrated in the lead agency's planning and programmatic practices.



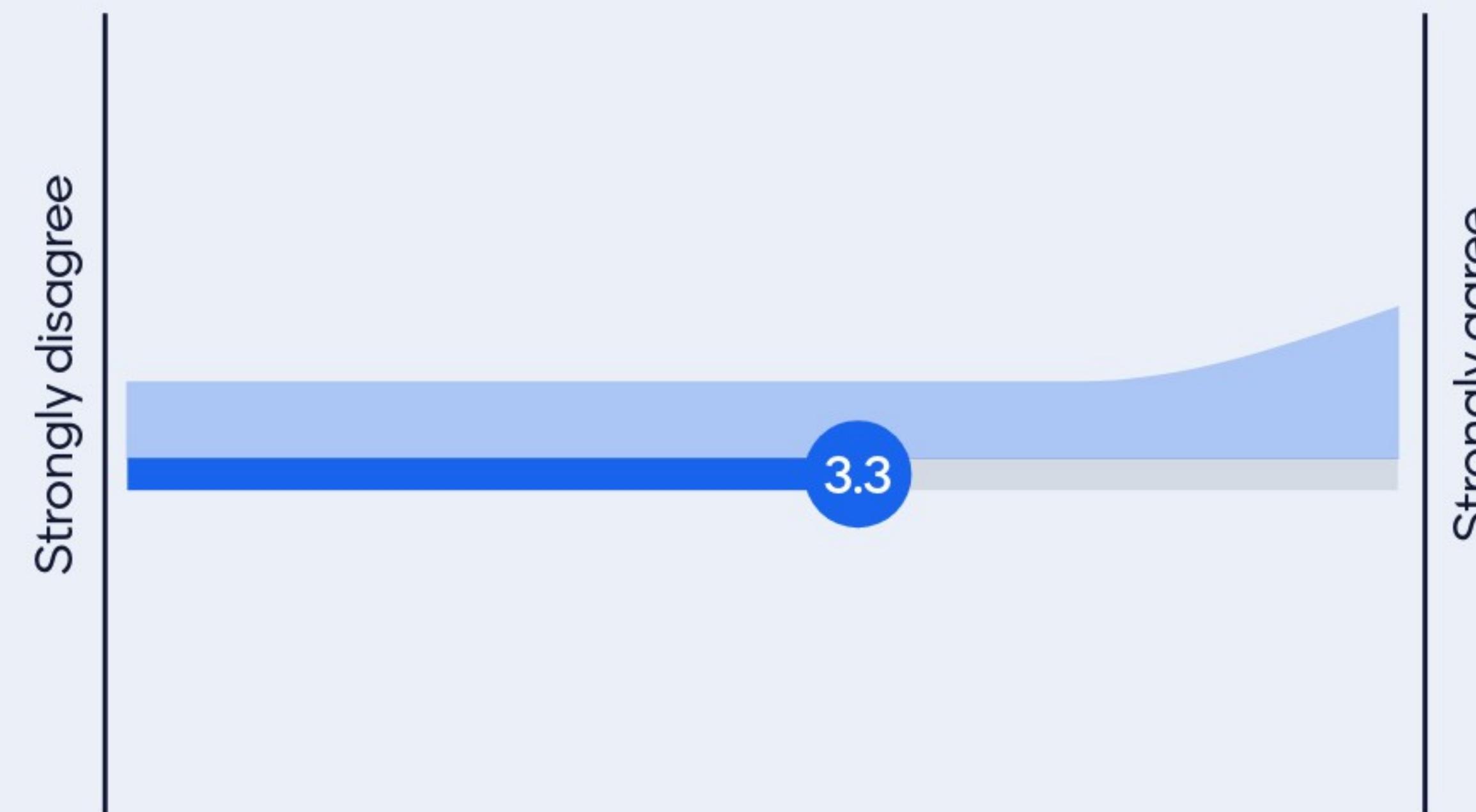


Formal interagency agreements exist within the lead agency.





Regular collaboration between the lead agency and partners towards goals, objectives and programs is formalized through initiatives.





Regular collaboration between the lead agency and regional partners is maintained.





Is there anything regarding PARTNERSHIPS you would like to share?

5 responses

Some partners are better aligned with MAPA's goals than others. MAPA's interest in equity is not shared by all partners and this presents challenges in meeting agency goals.

Our partnership with the lead agency is good however, I believe we could benefit from more clearly defined roles, individual, and collaborative goals.

MAPA's Heartland 2050 Committee structure and other boards and committees provide a formal, routine opportunity to keep this work moving forward

It is a small community and so there is a lot of cross pollination and interaction of lead agencies and partners. I think that we could work more closely together but never really formalized

I think at the high level agree and work closely with many partners but not always in a contractual or formal capacity



Criteria 6: FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

PURSUIT OF GRANTS,
KNOWLEDGE OF STATE, FEDERAL,
AND PHILANTHROPIC GRANT
PROCESSES



The lead agency regularly pursues grant opportunities.





The lead agency regularly wins grants for projects.



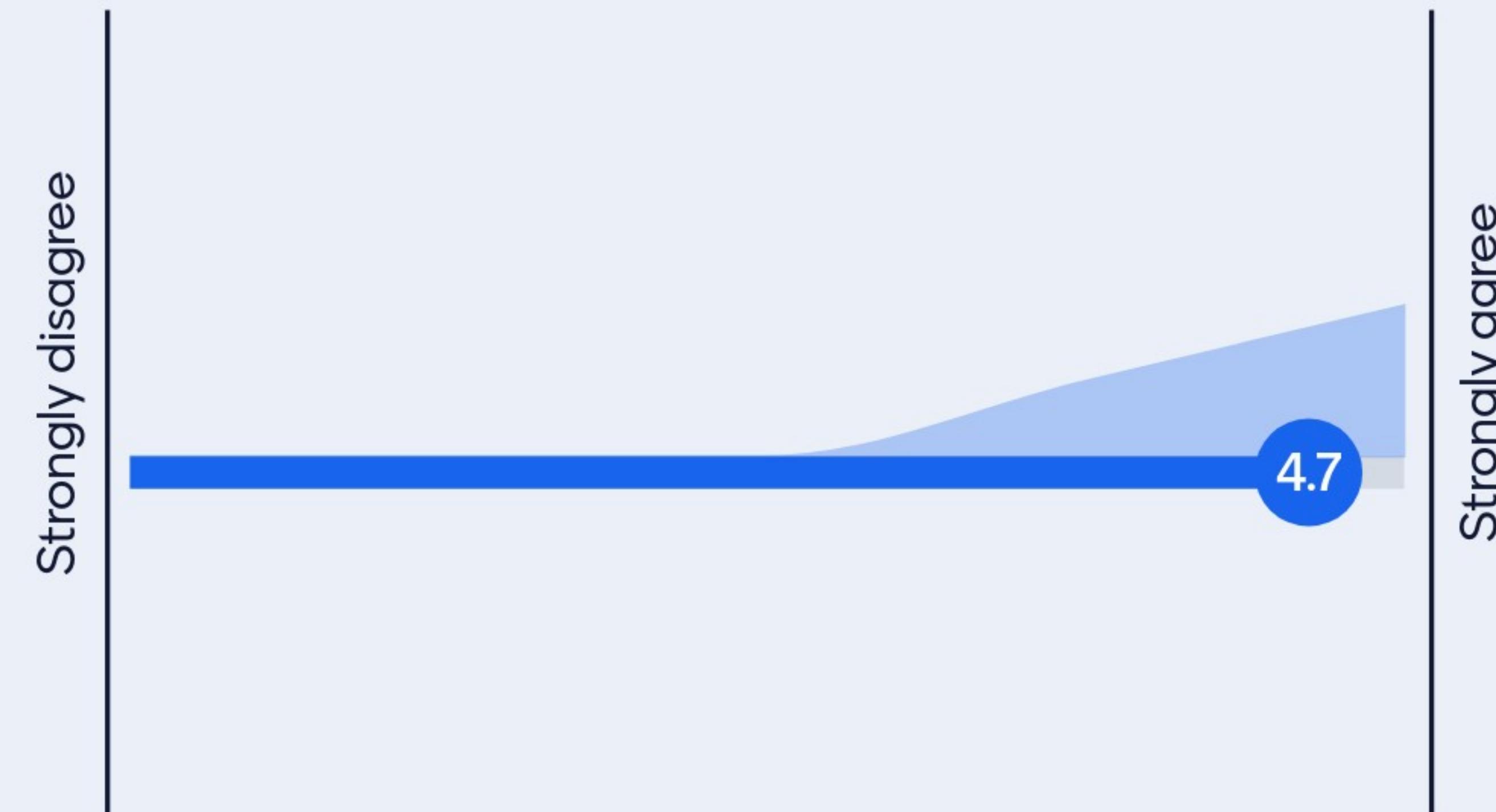


The lead agency has previously won state grants.



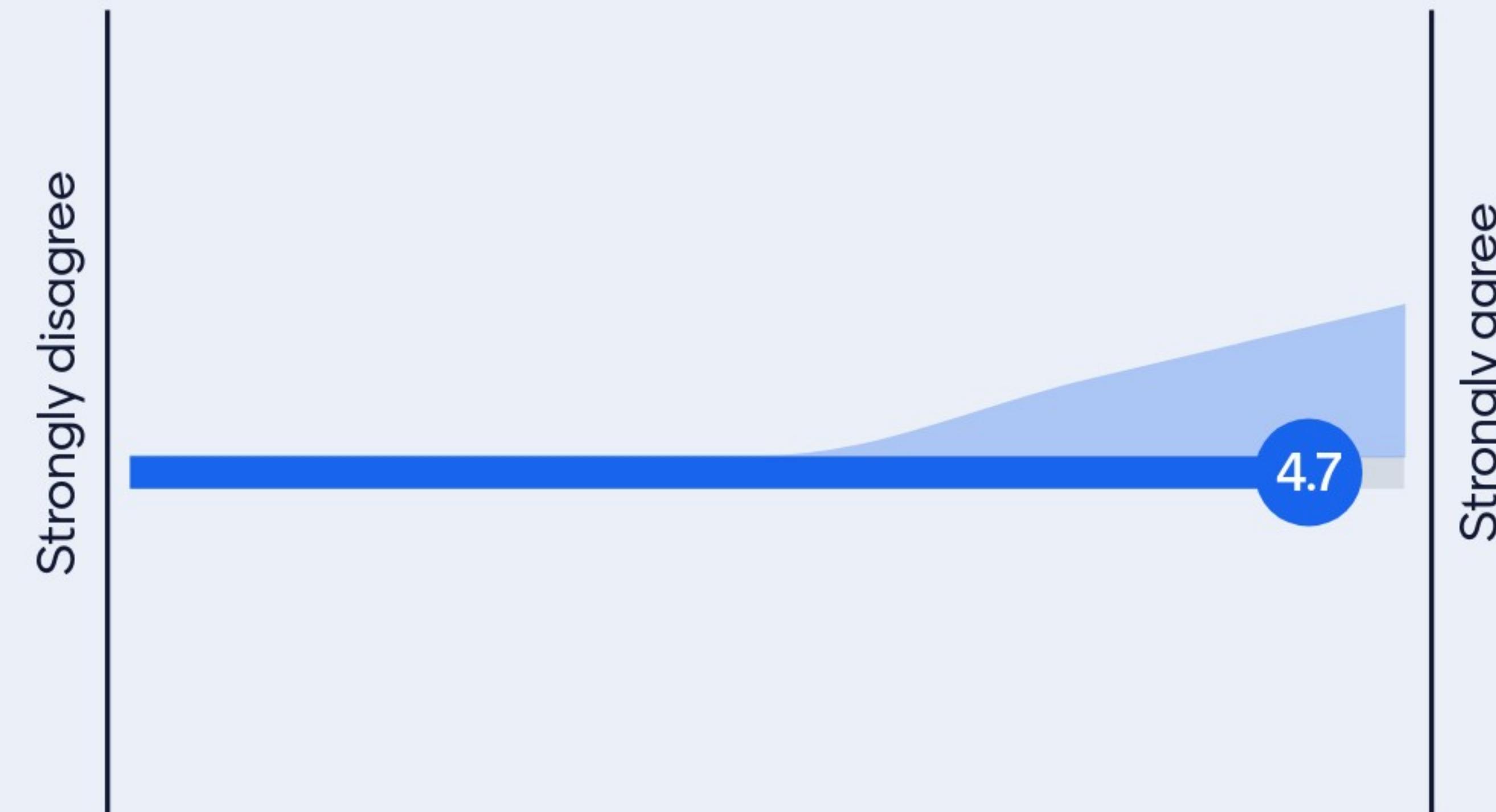


The lead agency has previously won federal grants.





The lead agency manages their awarded grants well.





The lead agency has a strong record and mechanism established to comply with federal requirements.



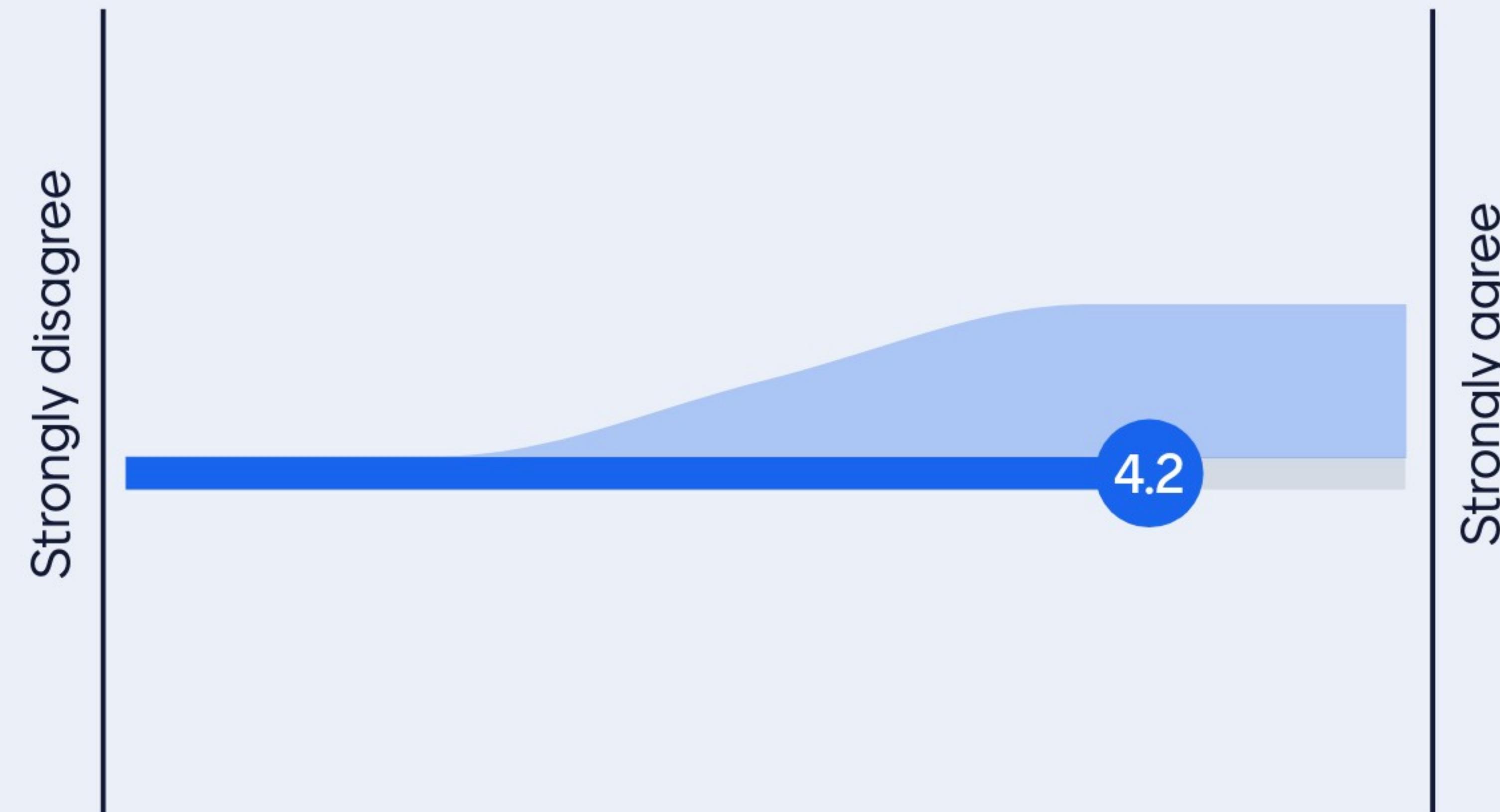


The lead agency regularly gets projects and initiatives on the TIP/STIP.





I know federal requirements for this grant.



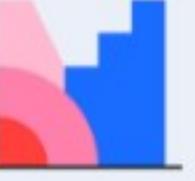


Is there anything regarding FEDERAL COMPLIANCE you would like to share?

2 responses

MAPA is the MPO and leads the transportation planning process. Federal-Aid administration is one of the core competencies and capacities of the agency

As the MPO/TMA have a lot of interaction and training with Federal Compliance



Criteria 7: EQUITY CENTERED APPROACH

EQUITY IS UNDERSTOOD, DEFINED,
AND INCORPORATED INTO
DECISION MAKING

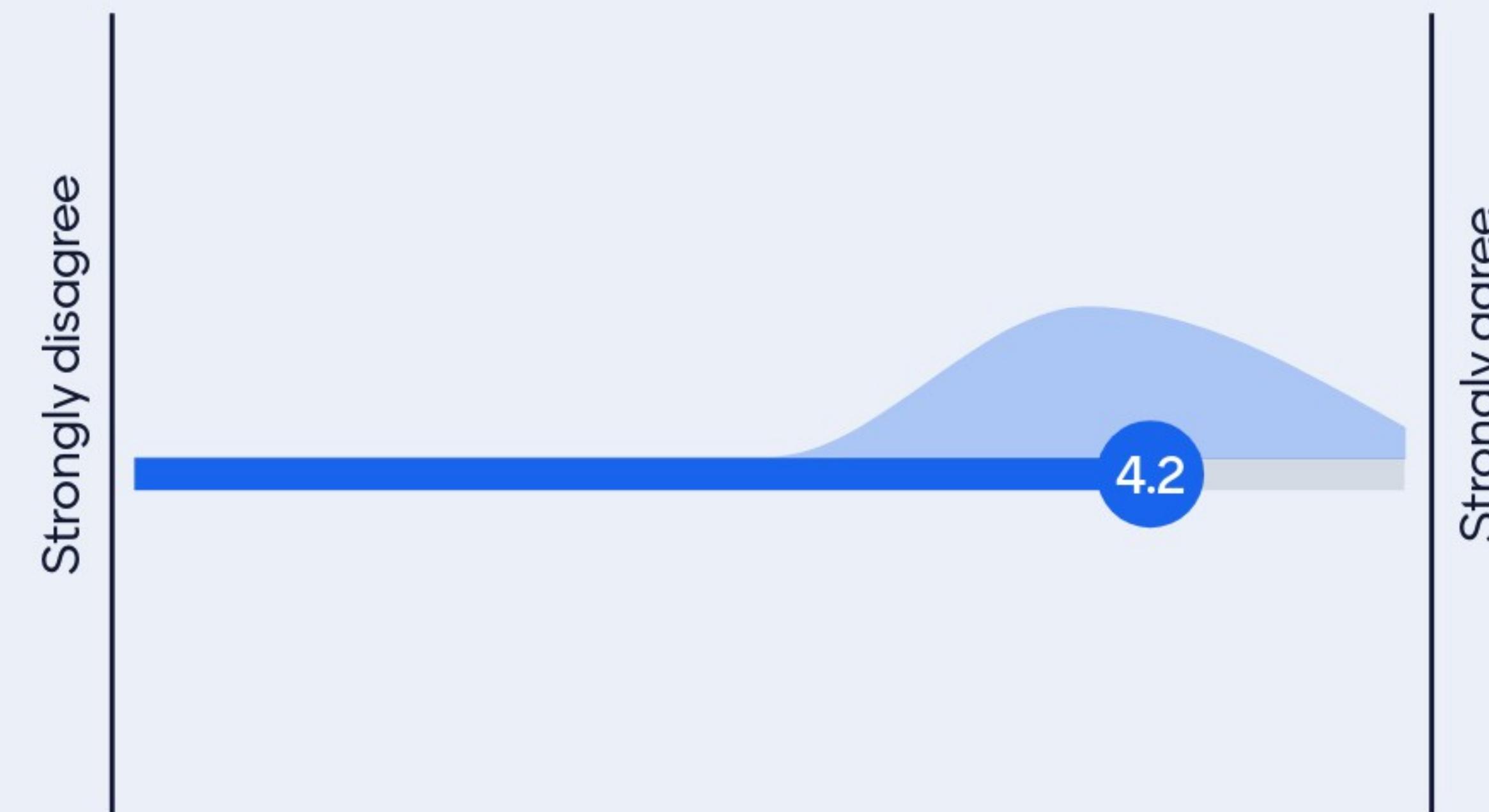


Equity is well understood across all staff levels of the lead agency.





Equity is clearly recognized and incorporated as a clear organizational goal or objective for the lead agency.





**Staff across the lead agency understand how
Equity is related to and actioned through their
work.**





Equity is explicitly and actively addressed through the lead agency's plans, programs, and policies.



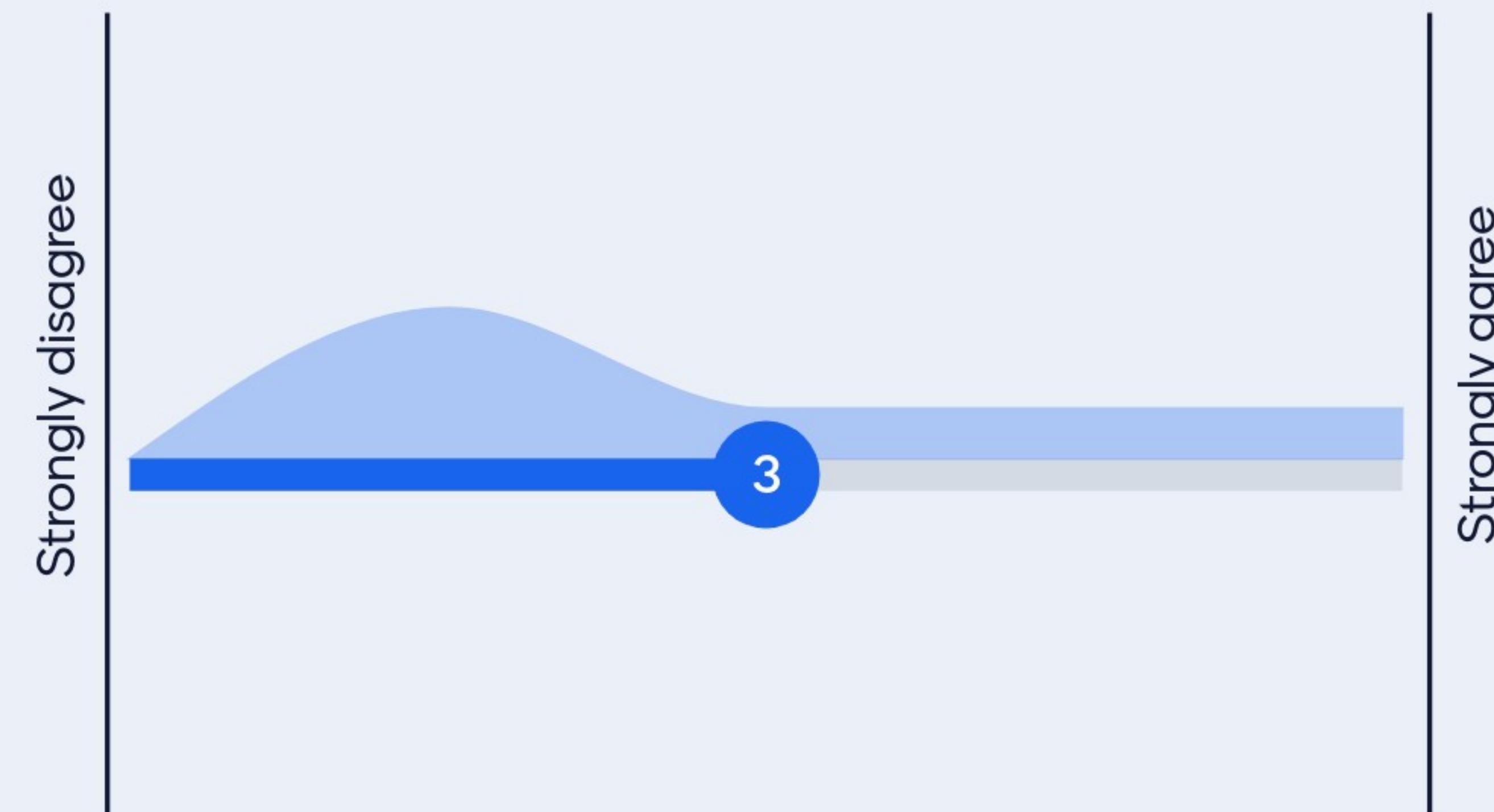


The lead agency has an equity-focused plan and equity assessment framework established and implemented across several programs or departments.





The lead agency actively addresses barriers to equitable development.





Is there anything regarding EQUITY CENTERED APPROACH you would like to share?

4 responses

MAPA has come a long way in trying to implement equity within the organization, but falls short when it comes to engaging on the topic with partners.

MAPA is a leader regionally on centering the planning process on equity

MAPA contains an equity resolution. However, the implementation is still a long way away. Although, we can agree that equity is an important issue change is often fraught with challenges.

Substantative changes to boards and funding opportunities are very difficult to change.



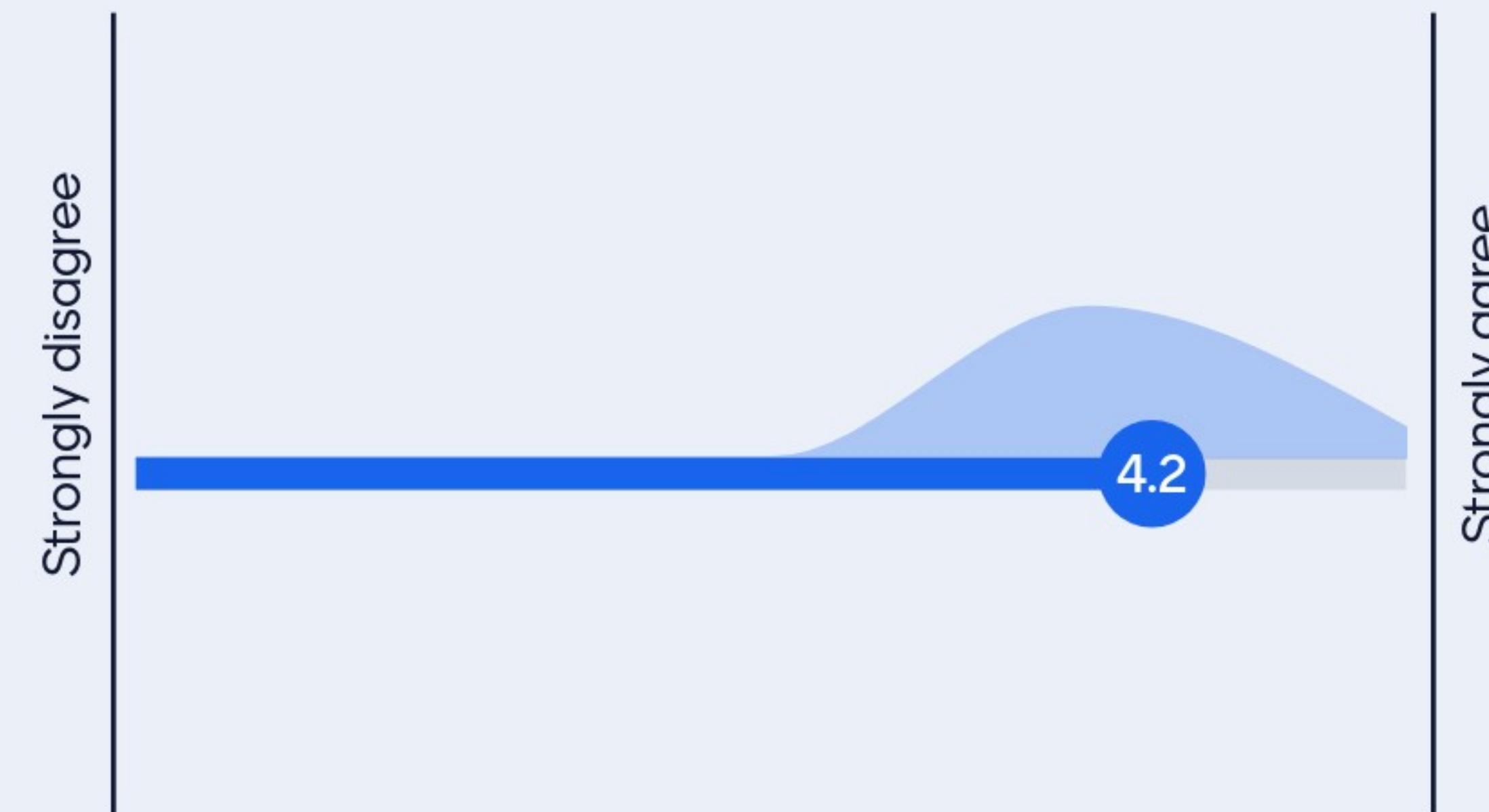


Criteria 8: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
INVOLVES TOOLS AND OUTCOMES
IN ALIGNMENT WITH DECISIONS
NEEDED [IAP2]



The lead agency usually informs the public through engagement about projects and processes.



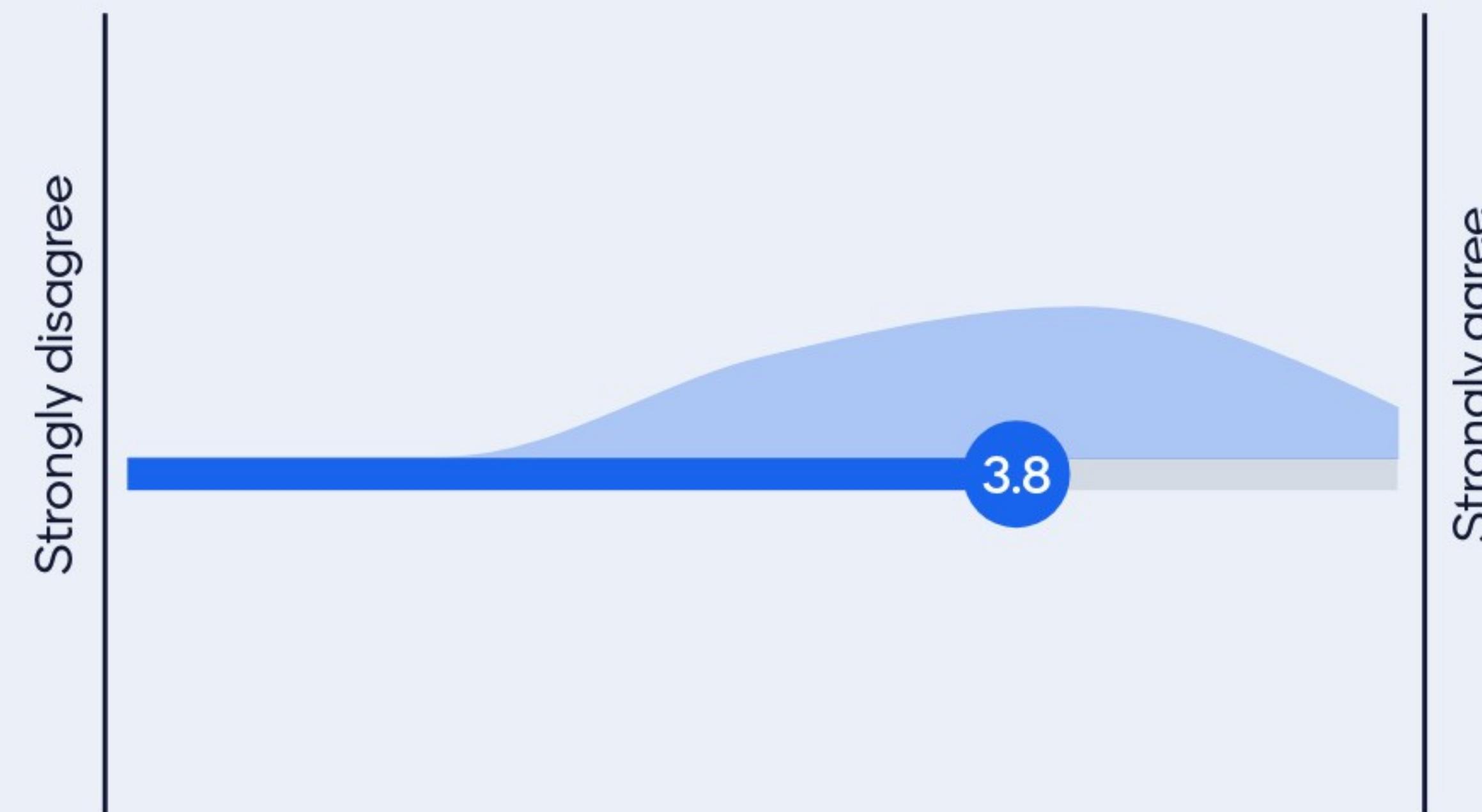


The lead agency consults the public through engagement to obtain public feedback on analyses, alternatives and/or decisions.





The lead agency involves the public directly throughout the process to ensure that public input is consistently understood and considered.





The lead agency collaborates with the public in the development of plans, alternatives, and policy making.





The lead agency empowers the public, placing final decision making in the public's hands and implementing what the public decides.





Is there anything regarding COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT you would like to share?

5 responses

The lead agency does provide opportunities for community engagement however, it's not always received by the community.

The IAP2 spectrum is a useful framework. MAPA has some challenges with empowering participants in the planning process with less formal authority to implement projects than our members

In the planning realm there is often confusion with the different planning context and authority. When MAPA conducts planning it is often to help identify options and look at the long term 20 yr plans

This is often confused as a zoning and authority that can be confusing like a general support for transit does not mean that transit/transit infrastructure will be implemented.

The public confuses the ultimate authority of implementation for infrastructure.



Thank you for your responses!

You have completed the Thriving Communities - Complete Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods Cohort Organizational Assessment. Your responses will be collected and summarized in the coming weeks and used to inform your community project scopes.