

City of Lone Tree 2019-2024 Strategic Plan



Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
Purpose and Process.....	6
Assets and Liabilities	7
Action Matrix.....	11
Community Survey Results.....	18

Executive Summary

Communities in Iowa today are faced with the challenging task of allocating the limited resources available to them to a variety of needs and demands for public services. In many instances, local officials must make hard decisions when comparing the merits of determining one project over another. This could result in a misjudgment and further limit the community's ability to act on project and budget allocation decisions.

The City of Lone Tree has taken steps in defining itself as an economically stable, viable and sustainable community. A Strategic Plan, built through a proven process, will help attain the City Council's goal of improving Lone Tree and attracting additional growth across the community. Lone Tree's leaders are being proactive rather than reactive when addressing issues in the city.

The strategic planning process began with a citywide community survey. A majority of the surveys were completed online, linked to the City's website, but hard copies were also made available and tabulated. An online survey is a low cost way to reach out to the entire community to engage as many stakeholders as possible. Additionally, a public workshop for the community that was held in October of 2018 to assist in gathering more information for the development of the City's Strategic Plan.

The information gathered through the survey and the workshop was organized and presented to the Council during a workshop in January 2019. Public feedback helped the City Council identify the community's issues, opportunities, priorities, goals and actions to be included in this Strategic Plan. During this open workshop, the Council spent the evening discussing the assets and liabilities of the community with assistance from the public input gathered. From these assets and liabilities, City Council formed long term goals for the community and identified actions to achieve those goals.

The strategic planning process assisted the City Council in better defining their long and short-term goals. Once that was completed, the goals were prioritized and action steps were created. The outcome of this process is to provide clear direction on how to reach the community's goals. The City Council should review the plan at least twice a year to celebrate the community's successes and identify new priorities as they arise .

Purpose and Process

Purpose

The City Council of Lone Tree started the process of creating their Strategic Plan in October of 2018. An up-to-date strategic Plan for the City was determined to be a critical step in guiding the City Council's efforts. The goal of the process and the Strategic Plan is to answer these three key questions:

- ⇒ Where are we going?
- ⇒ What will we accomplish?
- ⇒ How will we get there?

Process

A Strategic Plan is a city's internal action plan. It is a useful tool that communities utilize to assist in defining their strategy and direction. It is also a useful tool when the City has to make important decisions about their financial and human resources. It follows a process that identifies issues, leverages opportunities, establishes goals, considers the future, identifies actions to achieve goals, and provides continuous monitoring to ensure that set goals are achieved. Strategic planning allows communities to control their future and align their resources with their top priorities.

The Strategic Plan will help the City:

- Involve the community in directing the future and making strategic decisions
- Provide clear guidance for established City goals
- Focus efforts over a five year period with an annual review/reporting
- Continually assess City services and operations and address deficiencies
- Establish priorities for City services, operations, departments, and projects
- Guide tough decisions related to City resources and finances and integrate budgeting decisions with established goals

The Strategic Plan is expected to result in:

- Initial steps in the creation of a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
- Creation of a Comprehensive Plan
- Long-range planning efforts and focused planning projects
- Economic development efforts and new partners/strategies
- Changes to city operations, services, departments, budgets, etc.

The Strategic Plan focuses on four priorities:

- Priority 1 – Health and Safety
- Priority 2 – Economic Development and Growth

- Priority 3 – Quality of Life
- Priority 4 – Community Support

Assets and Liabilities

The City Council and community have worked to define the opportunities and liabilities important to them through the citywide community survey, community workshop with SWOT analysis, and City Staff input. The community survey results are summarized in the last section of this Strategic Plan. The SWOT analysis is broken down into three categories: Development, Mobility, and Beautification. The following section summarizes the feedback received during this process. The number of responses follows each item in parenthesis. Items bolded represent the greatest number of responses in each category.

Development

Opportunities (+)

- Removal of dilapidated buildings on Main Street
- **Available lots downtown (2)**
- Brining in MSA
- Proximity to Iowa City for commuters
- Larger city limits to add in more types of housing

Strengths (+)

- Competition with businesses (Casey's and Dollar General)
- **Lone Tree Fire Department (2)**
- **New multi-family complexes (2)**
- New lagoon
- New businesses appear successful
- Wellness Center
- New houses

Weaknesses/Issues/Threats (-)

- Cannot compete with neighboring communities (2)
- Cost to develop housing areas (2)
- **Lack of lots for single family homes (5)**
- Low support of incoming developers (2)
- Availability of existing single family homes
- Lack of rental standards for upkeep
- Enforcement of building codes
- Not enough businesses

- Limited support of local businesses (2)
- Lack of bike paths to connect housing areas and businesses
- Not enough concern about losing the school
- Placement of parking lot across from school
- Daycare center
- Generation gap
- Need better street lighting
- Poor roads and sidewalks (2)
- Losing the grocery store
- Lack of involvement in the community by younger adults

Mobility Category

Opportunities (+)

- Shoulders for bikers
- **Proximity to Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Muscatine and Davenport (2)**
- Proximity to Highway 22

Strengths (+)

- **S.E.A.T.S. public transportation for elderly and low income (3)**
- Golf cart use
- Highway 22

Weaknesses/Issues/Threats (-)

- Awareness of S.E.A.T.S
- No commuter bus to surrounding larger cities
- Lack of general public transportation
- Poor access and connection from the subdivision (Finely) to town (3)
- Lack of curbs
- **Sidewalks are in need of repair (6)**
- Limited bike and walking paths (2)
- Need more stop/yield signs (2)
- Lack of transportation for children from daycare to school
- Need reduced speed or turning lane
- Not enough street lights
- Not enough crosswalks and signage

Beautification Category

Opportunities (+)

- Vacant lot downtown with development potential
- Plant more trees
- Park cleanup day
- Park potential
- Splash Pad project
- Flag projects in collaboration with the American Legion and Lions Club

Strengths (+)

- **Nice welcoming signs (3)**
- Landscaping/flowers downtown (2)
- Three parks
- School grounds (2)
- **Wellness center (3)**
- Bike and walking trail

Weaknesses/Threats/Issues (-)

- **Abandoned buildings (3)**
- **Outdated downtown (3)**
- Unmaintained properties (junk in yards, overgrown grass)
- Storm water runoff
- Streets need repaving to look more uniform (2)
- Park facilities
- Visibility of town from the main road
- Visibility of buildings when cars are parked downtown

Action Matrix

The responsibility for implementing this Action Matrix is primarily with the City Council and City Staff. The Action Matrix is designed as a guide to help City officials and community leaders prioritize opportunities and address issues within the City of Lone Tree and the surrounding area. The desired vision for Lone Tree cannot be achieved overnight. However incremental implementation of the matrix is and Lone Tree can achieve the desired outcomes set forth in this Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan focuses on the following four priorities which have been used to group current issues and opportunities that have been uncovered during the strategic planning process. They are broken into:

Council/Staff Driven	Priority 1 – Public Safety and Health
	Public safety and health has the most immediate impact to residents, businesses and visitors. Working toward actions to address issues in this category should be a higher priority focus over others. This should also be flexible in case of emergencies.
	Priority 2 – Development and Growth
	Development is vital as Lone Tree continues to grow and prosper. Actions for this priority are very important to attract and retain both commercial and industrial organizations as well as residents. Economic development requires the collaborative efforts of public and private entities, and the support of the community overall.
	Priority 3 - Quality of Life
	Quality of life is the most important factor to retain current residents and attract future residents. It also key to economic vitality. Every aspect of the community from city services ranging from waste water treatment to available park space within walking distance from a home, is a determining factor in the overall perception of the quality of life in the city. Parks and public beautification are also important factors in determining quality of life.
Council/Staff Directed	Priority 4 – Community
	There are actions in this Strategic Plan that require the responsibility of an affiliated organization to take action and implement steps to address these issues and opportunities. The Council should direct these organizations to address the action steps and follow up with the council as needed to support the activity and implementation moving forward.

Public Safety and Health

Identified Issue/Opportunity	Target Completion			Action	Responsible Party	Complete
	2019-2021	2021-2023	2023-2024			
1 Budget time and resources for National Incident Management System	X			Budget time and resources for National Incident Management System Training Courses that are Available Online	Council/City Staff	
2 Evaluate the Communitywide Need for Traffic and Speed Signage	X			Use GIS to Locate the Current Signage and Determine Areas of Need	Council, Staff/City Engineer	
3 More Visible Crosswalks and Slower Speeds Near School		X		Consider Adding Posted Speed Limit Signs and Police Radar of this Street at High Traffic Volume Times	Council, Staff/City Engineer	
4 Add More Street Lights		X		GIS/GPS Current Locations to Understand Existing and Future Needs	Council, Staff/City Engineer	
5 Repair Sidewalks		X		Complete a Sidewalk Assessment and Determine Areas of Need and Plan to Address Issues in the CIP	Council, Staff/City Engineer/Consultant	
6 Enforcement on dog ordinance	***on-going***			Assess Current Need and Establish Probable Solutions for Enforcement	Council and City Staff	
7 Improve Ordinance Communication	***on-going***			Assess Current Ordinance and How it is Communicated and Determine the Best Solution for Improvement	Council and City Staff	

8	Improve Golf Cart Ordinance and Enforcement	***on-going***			Review Current Gold Cart Ordinance and Determine Improvements, and How to Better Enforce it	Council and City Staff	
9	Investigate the Need for a Reduced Speed, Turing Lane	X			Assess the Current Traffic Patterns at the Intersection and Determine if the Need	Council, Staff/Engineer/Consultant	
10	If Needed, Add the Reduced Speed Turning Lane			X	If Feasible, Budget in CIP and Consider Working with DOT to Lower Speed Limit and Add the Lane	Council/Staff/City Engineer	
11	Create Better Connection to Access the Subdivision (Finely) from Town		X		Look into Potential Locations and Funding Options for a New Trail or Road into Town	Council and City Staff	
12	Lack of General Public Transportation	X			Consider Working with a Consultant to Determine the Existing Transportation Availabilities in the Area to Improve on	Council/Staff and Consultant	

Development and Growth

	Identified Issue/Opportunity	Target Completion			Action	Responsible Party	Complete
		2019-2021	2021-2023	2023-2024			
1	Buildings in Town are in Poor Condition and There are Rundown Properties		X		Get an Assessment of the Buildings in Town to Determine if the Next Step Should be Rehab or Demo	Consultant	
2	Lack of Development Due to Codes and Ordinances	X			Work with City Inspector and Address any Ordinance/Codes that Need to be Updated	City Inspector/P&Z	
3	Limited Neighborhood Watch Areas	***on-going***			Once Started, Make Sure They Continue for the Benefit of the Community.	Residents	
4	Need to Make Changes for Senior Dining	X			Assess the Current Situation and Determine what is Going Well and What is Not	Council/Staff	
5	Shortage of Available Land to Develop	X			Reach Out to Property Owners and Develop an Investment Opportunities Plan	Council/Staff/P&Z	
6	Not Enough Street Lights		X		Contact Alliant to See if There is an Opportunity to Add Lighting Where Applicable	Council/Staff/ Alliant Energy	
7	Promote and Find Volunteers	***on-going***			Promote Boards and Commissions for Volunteers as Well as Other City Activities Such as Neighborhood Watch, and Clean-up Days	Neighborhood/Law Enforcement/City Staff	

8	Stream Council Meetings	***on-going***			Continue to Work with City Staff and Determine the Best Solution	City Council	
9	Need for a Comprehensive Development Plan	X			Consider Updating/Creating Comprehensive Plan	City Council/Staff/P&Z	

Quality of Life

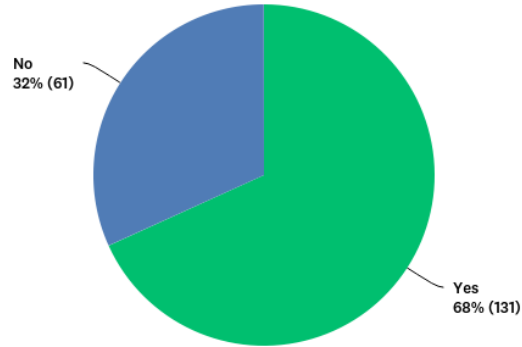
Target Completion							
Identified Issue/Opportunity	2019-2021	2021-2023	2023-2024	Action	Responsible Party	Complete	
1 Find An Opportunity for the Development of a New Biking and Walking Trail with Possible Connection to Regional Trails	X			Through Comprehensive Planning Process Develop an Future Trails Plan	P&Z/Park Commission		
2 Make More Opportunities for Community to Come Together (Events and Activities)		X		Establish an Event Champion to Help Push More of This in the Future	Community Member and or Groups with Council Support		
6 Add Public WIFI	X			Save for this in the Budget and Identify Key Areas Where it Would Get the most Use	Council		
7 Address Pavilions	*** On Going***			Consistent Maintenance of These Areas - Replace as Needed	Parks Commission, Council, and Staff		
8 Park Facilities Need Improvement		X		Allocate Money for this in the City Budge	Council and Parks Commission		

Community Support

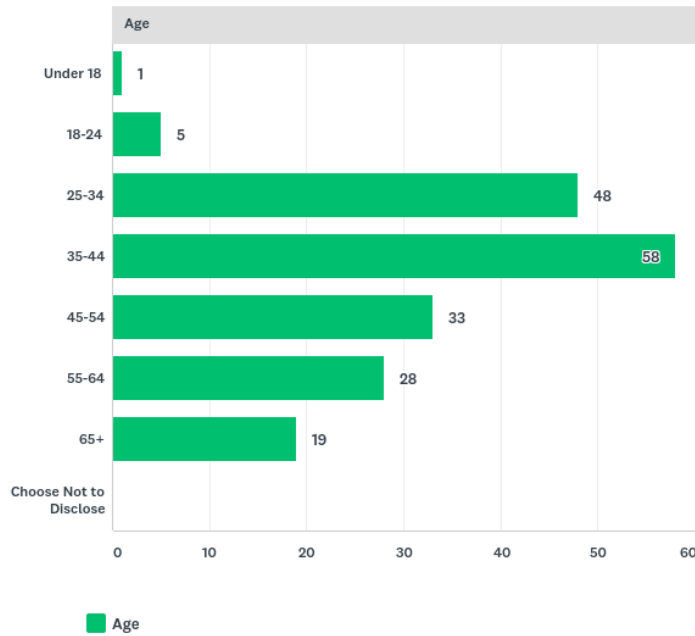
	Identified Issue/Opportunity	Target Completion			Action	Responsible Party	Complete
		2019-2021	2021-2023	2023-2024			
1	Buildings in Town are in Poor Condition and There are Rundown Properties		X		Get an Assessment of the Buildings in Town to Determine if the Next Step Should be Rehab or Demo	Consultant	
2	Lack of Development Due to Codes and Ordinances	X			Work with City Inspector and Address any Ordinance/Codes that Need to be Updated	City Inspector/P&Z	
3	Limited Neighborhood Watch Areas	***on-going***			Once Started Up, Keep them Going	Library Board	
4	Need to Make Changes for Senior Dining	X			Assess the Current Situation and Determine what is Going Well and What is Not – Create Follow-Up Activities	Council/Staff	
5	Shortage of Available Land to Develop	X			Reach Out to Property Owners and Develop an Investment Opportunities Plan	Council/Staff/P&Z	
6	Not Enough Street Lights		X		Contact MidAmerican to See if There is an Opportunity to Add Lighting Where Applicable	Council/Staff/MidAmerican Energy	
7	Promote and Find Volunteers	***on-going***			Get Information to Neighborhoods on How to Form a Watch Area	Neighborhood/Law Enforcement	

Community Survey Results

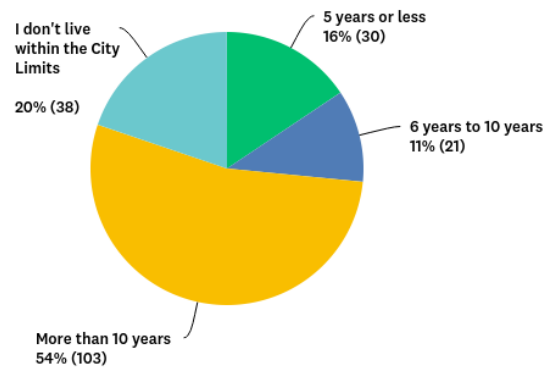
Q1 Do you live within the Lone Tree City limits?



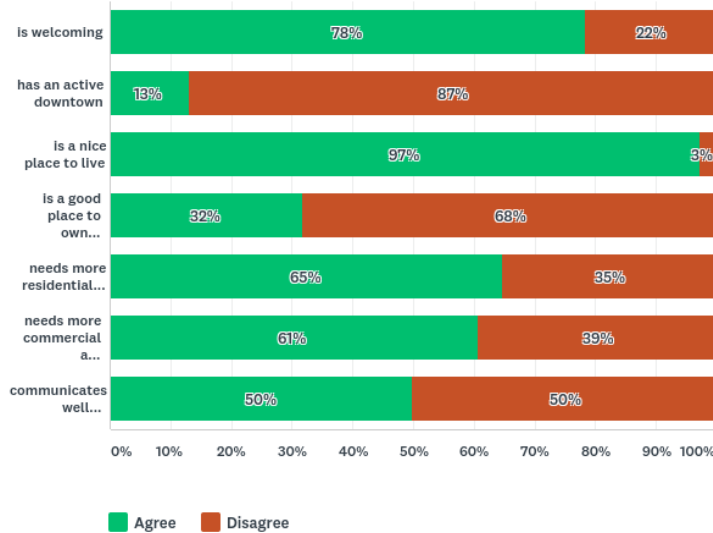
Q2 What is your age?



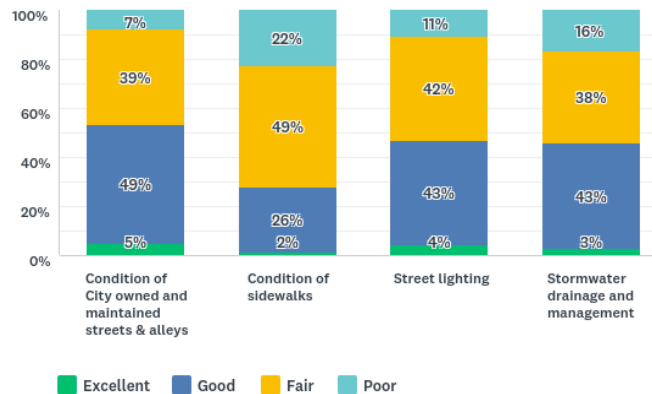
Q3 How long have you lived in Lone Tree?



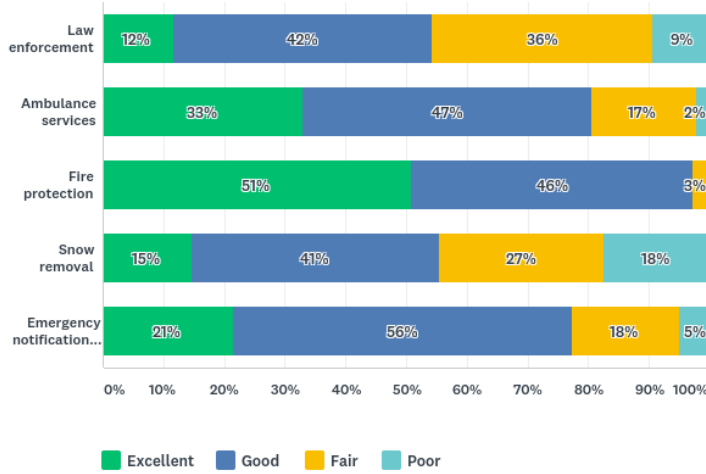
Q4 Tell us how you feel about the following statements. Lone Tree...



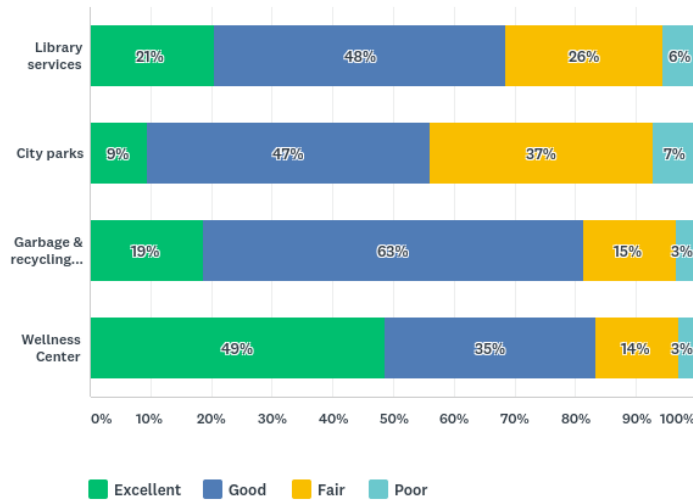
Q5 Rate the following Lone Tree infrastructure.



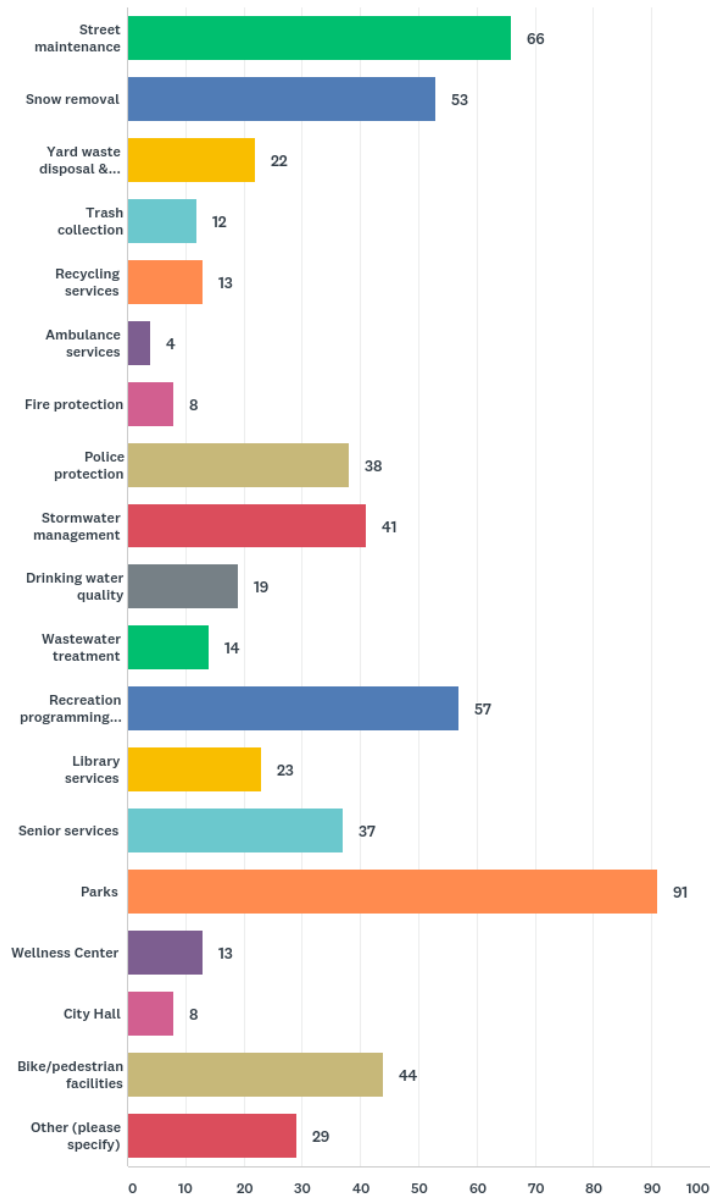
Q6 Rate the following Lone Tree safety services.



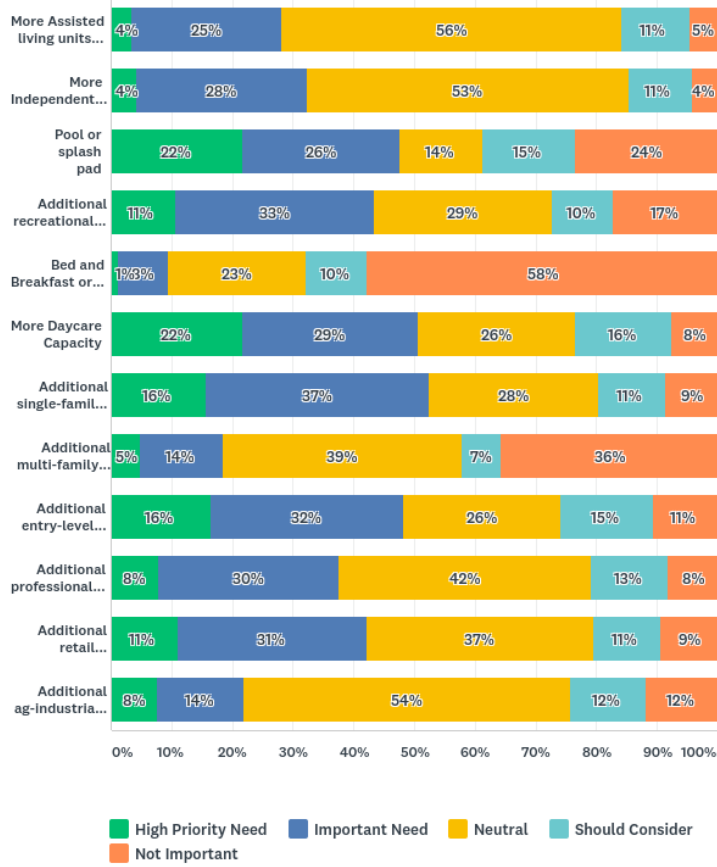
Q7 Rate the following Lone Tree services/amenities.



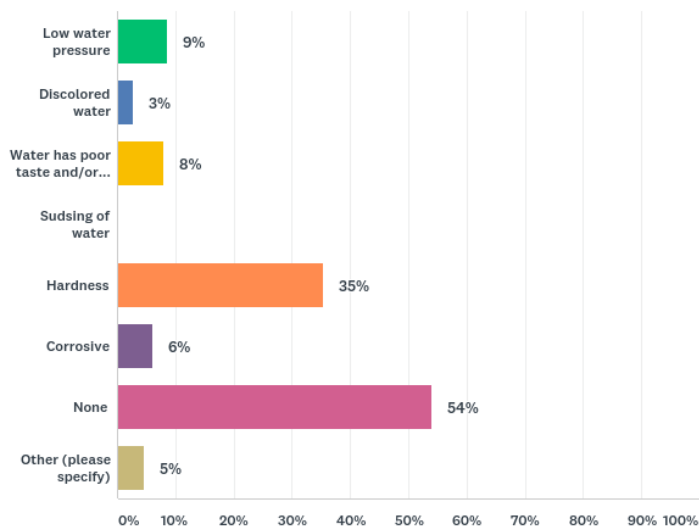
Q8 Should the City invest more tax dollars to improve the quality of any of the following public facilities or services? (Select up to 5)



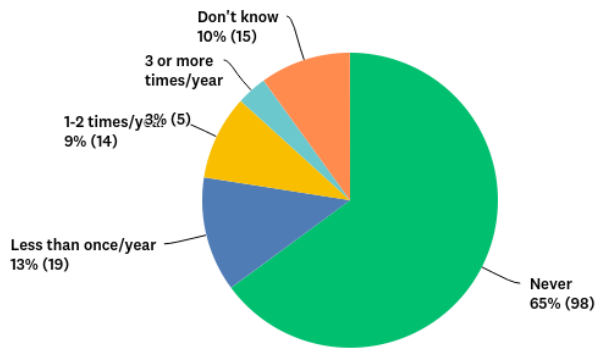
Q9 Rate the following in terms of importance for Lone Tree's future.



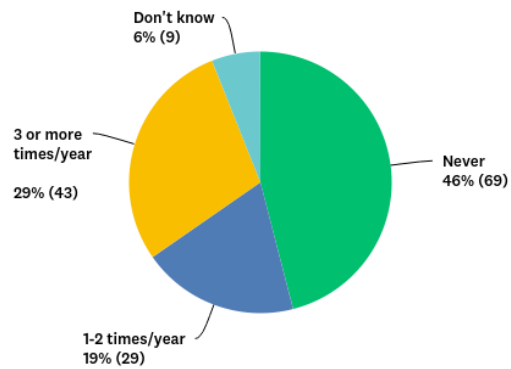
Q10 Do you have any of the following drinking water issues?



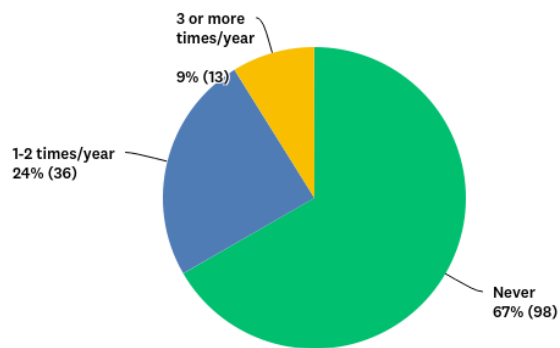
Q11 Does your sewer ever back up?



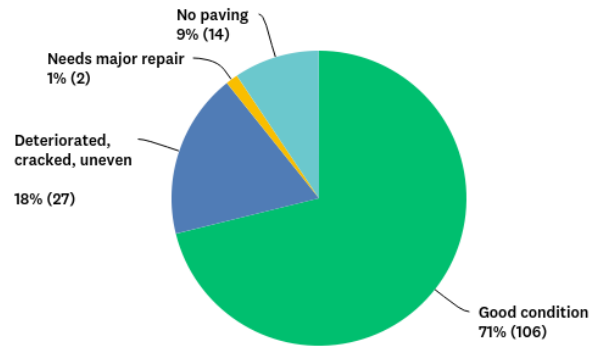
Q12 How often does the street or yard in your area flood?



Q13 How often does your basement flood?



Q14 Please describe the condition of the street paving in front of your home.



Q15 Please describe the condition of the sidewalk in front of your home.

