

City of Silver Lake, Kansas
Strategic Planning and Survey Report
April 2023



Created for:
City of Silver Lake, KS

Created by:
The Center of Community Supports at Greenbush



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About the Project

The City of Silver Lake (also referred to as the City) was founded in 1868 and incorporated in 1871. The City is governed by a five person City Council and has a city hall, a public works department, and a police department. Looking toward the future, the City Council conducted strategic planning activities from December 2022 through April 2023.

The Board contracted with the Center of Community Supports at Greenbush (CCS) to conduct the following:

- Facilitate a “speed planning” strategic planning process for staff, the community, and City Council members
- Design and administer two surveys: one for residents and one for stakeholders
- Complete an action plan for 2023 and 2024.

The results from the speed planning process, both surveys, and the action plan are included in this report.

Strategic Planning

On March 6, 2023, two members of the CCS team conducted the following listening sessions, which gathered input from participants electronically and are included in this report. (See Appendices A, B, and C for staff; and Appendices D, E, and F for residents/stakeholders.)

- One session for staff
- Two sessions for residents/stakeholders

Following are the top five priorities from staff as gathered through the planning process, with the first priority at the top and the fifth priority at the bottom:

- Clean up town/Code enforcement
- Focus on Human Resources- more staff, better pay, and better equipment
- Transparency in government/Quicker Council decisions
- Beautification of Downtown
- Consider Recreation Commission (ex. park enhancement)

Following are the top five priorities from residents/stakeholders as gathered through the planning process, with the first priority at the top and the fifth priority at the bottom:

- Transparency in government/Quicker Council decisions
- Review feasibility of sidewalks
- Consider Recreation Commission (ex. park enhancement)
- Clean up town/Code enforcement
- Make the lake a usable attraction

On April 4, 2023, the CCS team met with the City Council to work through a “speed” strategic planning process to 1) Calibrate the Council and 2) Report input from staff, residents, and stakeholders, and 3) Identify priorities and next steps.

To accomplish this, the CCS staff provided the Board with a brief history of the City, operational and financial statistics, community data, and survey results.

To see individual responses from the Council’s Strategic Planning Process, please see Appendix G: What Do We Believe; Appendix H: What Do We Want; and Appendix I: Prioritization of Board “Wants.”

The priorities of the staff, community, and Council were discussed, and specific action items were laid out in four categories, all of which integrate the priorities of all three groups. The four overarching action item categories are:

- Investigate a potential special election for city sales tax to fund infrastructure projects
- Promote the City of Silver Lake and Silver Lake School District (USD 372) collaboration

- Implement a coordinated effort to update and enforce city codes regarding commercial and residential properties
- Improve shared community places and spaces for recreation and leisure time

All data was considered and a draft action plan (Appendix L) was completed for Council consideration.

Resident Survey Results

To identify ways to improve services to area residents, a survey was developed and administered. From January 13, 2023 to February 16, 2023, **424 responses were received.**

Resident Demographics

Nearly 60.0% (59.4%) of respondents live inside the city limits of Silver Lake, while 40.6% live outside the city limits.

Most respondents reported they were female (55.8%), while 40.1% were male and 4.1% preferred not to answer.

Residents reported being in the following age ranges:

- 9.4% were over 65
- 14.9% were 56-65
- 18.0% were 46-55
- 34.1% were 36-45
- 16.1% were 26-35
- 3.1% were 18-25
- 1.0% were under 18
- 3.6% preferred not to answer

Following are the survey results.

Question One: What do you think should be Silver Lake’s top three priorities?

When respondents were asked to choose three “top” priorities from a list, respondents chose Economic Development, Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake, and Recreation-Parks as their top three priorities.

Following are the priorities chosen, with the highest priority listed first and the lowest priority listed last. A full list of “other” responses is located in Appendix J.

Priority	Percentage
Economic Development	38.3%
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	37.9%
Recreation- Parks	32.6%
Recreation- Walking Trails	29.3%
Public Safety	25.0%

School Collaboration	24.5%
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	24.3%
Sidewalks	24.3%
Drainage/Ditches	18.1%
Community Partnerships	14.5%
Other - Write In (Required)	12.1%
Streets	9.0%
Tourism	1.2%

Question Two: Which of the following do you feel the City of Silver Lake should be investing in financially?

When asked which of the following items the City should invest in financially, respondents reported their top three items were Economic Development, Recreation- Parks, and Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake. Respondents were able to choose any or all of the items listed.

Following are the priorities chosen, with the highest priority listed first and the lowest priority listed last. A full list of “other” responses is located in Appendix J.

Priority	Percentage
Economic Development	44.3%
Recreation- Parks	38.8%
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	36.4%
Sidewalks	32.3%
Recreation- Walking Trails	32.1%
Drainage/Ditches	29.7%
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	28.2%
Public Safety	27.8%
School Collaboration	27.0%
Streets	21.3%
Community Partnerships	17.5%
Other - Write In (Required)	8.6%
Tourism	4.1%

Question Three: Would you support increased funding to the City in order to pay for items you’ve identified as most important to you?

The majority (79.0%) of respondents indicated they would support increased funding while 21.0% would not.

Question Four: In your opinion, what is the best thing about the City of Silver Lake?

Several themes emerged among responses and those are:

- Small town pride/living
- Community atmosphere/quiet life
- Great school system

A comprehensive list of responses is available in Appendix J.

Question Five: What concerns you the most about the City of Silver Lake?

Several themes emerged among responses and those are:

- Lack of Curb Appeal- Physical Appearance
- No Code Enforcement
- Lack of public safety- law enforcement/sidewalks/visibility on roads
- Lack of Income Generated in City Limits/Innovation
- Stagnant/Decreasing Younger Population
- Lack of Activities and Infrastructure

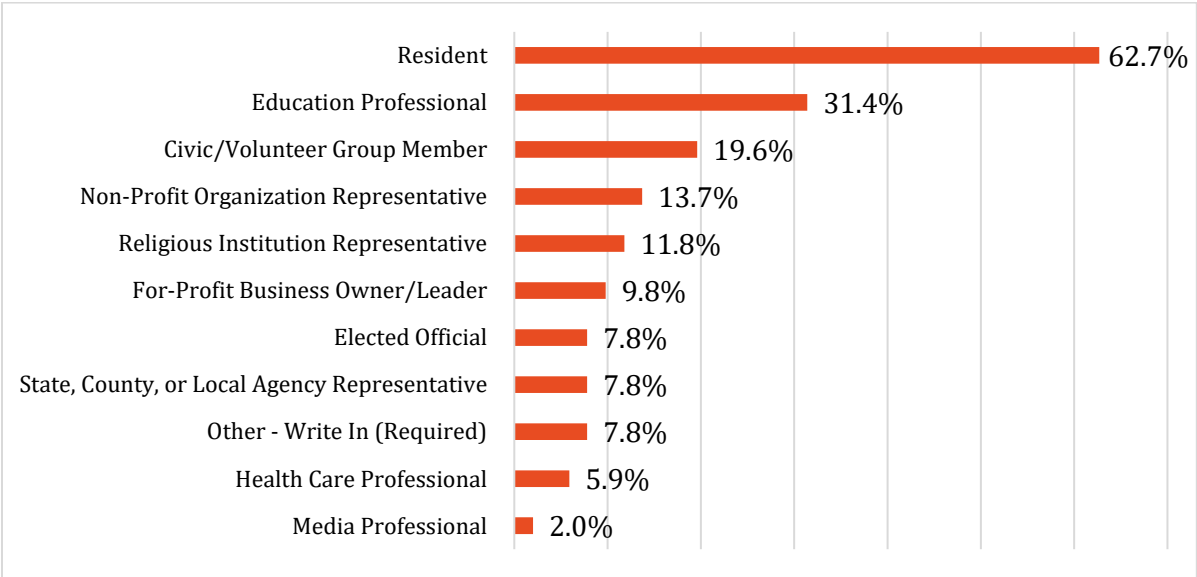
A comprehensive list of responses is available in Appendix J.

Stakeholder Survey Results

To glean information about current stakeholders, such as municipalities, businesses, and other interested parties, a survey was designed for stakeholders. From January 13, 2023 to February 16, 2023, **52 responses were received.**

Stakeholder Demographics

Respondents were asked to report which sector(s) they represent, and the percentages are below. (Respondents were encouraged to select all that apply.)



*Other- Write In Responses are available in Appendix K.

Forty-eight percent (48.0%) of respondents live inside the city limits of Silver Lake, while 52.0% live outside the city limits.

Most respondents reported they were female (58.8%), while 37.3% were male and 3.9% preferred not to answer.

Residents reported being in the following age ranges:

- 15.7% were over 65
- 25.5% were 56-65
- 15.7% were 46-55
- 21.6% were 36-45
- 17.6% were 26-35

- 0.0% were under 25
- 3.9% preferred not to answer

Following are the survey results.

Question One: What do you think should be Silver Lake’s top three priorities?

When respondents were asked to choose three “top” priorities from a list, respondents chose Sidewalks, Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake, Public Safety, and Recreation-Parks as their top four priorities.

Following are the priorities chosen, with the highest priority listed first and the lowest priority listed last. A full list of “other” responses is located in Appendix K.

Priority	Percentage
Sidewalks	38.5%
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	34.6%
Public Safety	30.8%
Recreation- Parks	30.8%
Economic Development	28.8%
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	26.9%
Drainage/Ditches	23.1%
Recreation- Walking Trails	21.2%
School Collaboration	21.2%
Community Partnerships	15.4%
Streets	11.5%
Other - Write In (Required)	9.6%

Question Two: Which of the following do you feel the City of Silver Lake should be investing in financially?

When asked which of the following items the City should invest in financially, respondents reported their top four items worthy of investment were: Recreation- Parks, Sidewalks, Drainage/Ditches, and Public Safety. Respondents were able to choose any or all of the items listed.

Following are the priorities chosen, with the highest priority listed first and the lowest priority listed last. A full list of “other” responses is located in Appendix K.

Priority	Percentage
Recreation- Parks	50.00%
Sidewalks	48.10%
Drainage/Ditches	42.30%

Public Safety	42.30%
Economic Development	38.50%
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	36.50%
School Collaboration	36.50%
Recreation- Walking Trails	34.60%
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	34.60%
Streets	30.80%
Community Partnerships	25.00%
Tourism	5.80%
Other - Write In (Required)	3.80%

Question Three: Would you support increased funding to the City in order to pay for items you've identified as most important to you?

The majority (90.2%) of respondents indicated they would support increased funding while 9.8% would not.

Question Four: Please explain any initiatives/investments/collaborations that should be explored (or further explored) in the City of Silver Lake.

Several themes emerged among responses and those were:

- Explore recreation opportunities (Begin committee/research potential partnerships)
- Bring groups together (avoid duplication/inspire change)
- Increased city and school collaboration for youth activities
- Invest in updated city amenities, such as sidewalks and the lake
- Consider annexation (add to tax base/provide additional land for houses)

Question Five: In your opinion, what is the best thing about the City of Silver Lake?

Several themes emerged among responses and those are:

- Sense of community/Great people
- Leaders of Public Safety/Low Crime Rate
- Great schools

A comprehensive list of responses is available in Appendix K.

Question Six: What concerns you the most about the City of Silver Lake?

Several themes emerged among responses and those are:

- Lack of Curb Appeal- Physical Appearance

- City lacks a focus/vision
- Lack of economic development/progress
- City investments needed in infrastructure (roads, lake, police department)

A comprehensive list of responses is available in Appendix K.

Staff: What Do We Believe (Appendix A)

The “What Do We Believe” portion of the strategic planning process included seven questions and the results are in this Appendix. All staff who attended participated in the process.

Note: All responses in this Appendix, and in the Appendices following, are unedited.

What is the purpose of the City of Silver Lake?

Place to live
Provide a safe and welcoming community, supporting the needs of residents.
To provide safety, utilities, education and other opportunities for those choosing to live in the city limits.
To make our community run smoothly and keep things running.
To take care of a group of people
To live in a smaller community
Provide services to the citizens of Silver Lake.

What problem are we trying to fix?

Problems
Collaboration, diversity and inclusion
What the citizens want, like updated parks, sidewalks, pool/splash pad and cleaning up the junk along the highway
Trying to understand what the citizens of silver lake want.
To have a usable lake for the community
More transparency to public on how City system works.

What would happen if the City of Silver Lake didn't exist?

Living somewhere else
People would not have a place to call home.
Streets, water, crime, general welfare of the inhabitants would be at great risk of collapse.
I would be devastated and our community would suffer tremendously with the loss of revenue.
No group cooperation to achieve goals
It would go down hill with no local investment
No clean water or sewer services. No adequate streets.

What do we want to get done in 2023?

Make a plan and get started fixing situations
Establish ways to prioritize goals, and discover what City Council is willing to do to accomplish the priorities.
Clean up the general appearance of the town.
Getting rid of the ugly junk making our town look trashy
24 cleaned up

What should be "our cause" in 2023?

To make our community better
Our cause should be "the people of Silver Lake" and finding out what priorities are.
To clean up the town.
Cleaning up the town
Clean up 24 in town

What can we reasonably accomplish in 2023?

A plan to move forward
Goal-setting, and delegation of responsibility.
Enhance City Code violations.
Making plans for all of these things
Clean up the town
More public awareness. Keep water quality a primary job.

How can I contribute?

To be there and be willing

I support whatever Council decides are the priorities. I am flexible in my job responsibilities and willing to collaborate with all staff to facilitate an inclusive work environment.

By working with other City employees/citizens.

I already contribute with some groups in town trying to make it better for our kids and the community. I would like to be more involved with the city improvements

Work

Have a investment in my city

Staff: What Do We Want (Appendix B)

The “What Do We Want” portion of the strategic planning process asked each staff member to identify three “wants” or desires for the organization, and the results are in this Appendix. All staff who attended participated in the process.

Want #1

Transparency
Better Parks
Cleaner town
Beautify the City
Clean up town
Enforcing of businesses to hide/get rid of their junk.
More full time employees.
Work on getting the lake usable

Want #2

Diversity & Inclusion
Keep Streets Maintained
Safe town
Community involvement
Making downtown more festive throughout the year
Quicker council decisions.
24 highway cleaned up in town






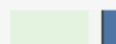

Want #3


Positive Work Culture
Good schools
Community involvement with schools
Raises
Appropriate equipment.
Try to bring downtown back

Staff: Prioritization of “Wants” (Appendix C)

The “Prioritization of Board Wants” portion of the strategic planning process asked each staff member to prioritize the “wants” or desires that were collectively shared. The results can be found in this Appendix. All staff who attended participated in the process.

2. Please review the list of "wants" expressed by the Board in today's meeting. Once you've identified your priorities, rank the items by placing the choice that's most important to you at the top and the item that's least important to you at the bottom.

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Clean Up Town/Code Enforcement	1		42	7
Focus on Human Resources- More staff, better pay, and better equipment	2		33	7
Transparency In Gov't/Quicker Council Decisions	3		31	7
Beautification of downtown	4		30	7
Consider Recreation Commission (ex. park enhancement)	5		28	7
Make the lake a usable attraction	6		16	7
Increase diversity and community involvement	7		16	7



Lowest Rank Highest Rank

Resident/Stakeholder: What Do We Believe (Appendix D)

The “What Do We Believe” portion of the strategic planning process included seven questions and the results are in this Appendix. All residents/stakeholders who attended participated in the process.

Note: Two sessions were held for residents/stakeholders. Eleven responses are from participants in the first session and four responses are from participants in the second session. Responses were combined and are contained in this, and the two following, Appendices.

What is the purpose of the City of Silver Lake?

To maintain a good/safe housing area provided with needed services.
Community link to help each other
Basic services for the community to exist
The purpose of the city of Silver Lake is to encompass the total life span of families and their needs and qualifications to be able to live their lives comfortably in a safe and reasonable area.
Providing a small town experience just outside of the capital city.
Provide a safe community- water/sewer
Provide safe favorable living and education for its citizens
To have a safe place to live.
To provide services to its residents.
Maintain city services.
Maintain water, sewer, safety, and cleanliness of the city.
To better our City and support the community members in achieving common goals
To provide services to its residents.
To run the town and maintain order
Provide, protect, and code enforcement.

What problem are we trying to fix?

Getting a handle on how to maintain.
The state of the lake
Updating the services and communication
We are trying to work with members of the community to provide more opportunities for the residents who live here and within the rural community surrounding the town. We need to make Silver Lake a great place with wonderful options and having areas to utilize freely and safely at all ages!
Becoming a more unified town and group. To make our town a place that people want to live and STAY!
Communicate ongoing events. Perhaps bring in safe neighbor programs and groups. Sidewalks. Removal or adjudication of unsightly areas- increase public areas- parks- walking paths- pool.
Cleaner city with better recreational facilities

Installing sidewalks to make it safer for kids to walk to school.
For our city to be more inclusive to all residents.
Clean up town.
How to best spend city budget.
Transparency of city government.
To make SL a better place to live
Provide service within budget.

What would happen if the City of Silver Lake didn't exist?

Go to pot.
It would not be as good for our children
The school district would combine with other schools and opportunities for our children would decrease. The support and morale and pride within the community would force outside residents to go elsewhere.
We would dissolve into other towns in the area (Rossville, St Marys, Topeka, etc)
N/A
We would lose some services.
It would be each to his own for services.
No services.
Life would be chaotic
No services.

What do we want to get done in 2023?

Continue to maintain facilities.
Preliminary design of lake development
Create a plan & Budget to begin the improvements
I think we need to start developing Silver Lake!
Becoming a community that works together rather than a bunch of groups working towards their own goals.
A plan to move forward with improving the quality of recreation and economic development

Start installing sidewalks
A sports recreation commission.
Clean up the town.
Beautification. Hide the junkyard. Keep streets safe.
Recreation Commission.
Better lifestyle for our community - sidewalks, family activities, local support

What should be "our cause" in 2023?

Making the lake vibrant for all residents to enjoy.
Communicate with the citizens to get them involved
Community involvement!
Unification
Including more people in the decision-making processes. Not just the council.
Clean things up.
Transparency
Inclusion, improvement and a safer community
Provide protection and code enforcement.

What can we reasonably accomplish in 2023?

To maintain and upgrade where possible and necessary.
Preliminary Design of developing the lake
A plan
The start of new collaboration with city groups and school districts to encourage all members of the community to be involved and get things moving!
Becoming more transparent and beginning a unification process. Forming a parks and recreation board
Doing sections of sidewalks per year.
Forming of committees to make decisions.
Clean up or hide the junkyard.
Recreation Commission & Transparency

Improvements of any kind, starting small is still a step.

How can I contribute?

Be a good citizen- maintain properties.

I am willing pay more taxes and do all I can to help with lake development.

I can help to spread the word and help to attend and donate my time and labor to the cause.

Volunteering to assist

I would serve on a community development committee.

Volunteering and spreading the word about things happening in the city.

Keep my property clean.

Volunteer, pay more taxes.

Volunteer, spread the word, share my experience. Life long resident of the community

Pay taxes. Sit on committee.

Resident/Stakeholder: What Do We Want (Appendix E)

The “What Do We Want” portion of the strategic planning process asked each Resident/Stakeholder to identify three “wants” or desires for the organization, and the results are in this Appendix. All Residents/Stakeholders who attended participated in the process.

Want #1

Improved recreational facilities
Lake development
Sidewalks/parks/public pool
Parks and Recreation Board
Sidewalks
Develop recreational facilities to attract and retain citizens
Make a plan and share it with citizens.
Communication
Town cleaned up (Bahms)
Want a detailed plan of action prepared with steps to achieve by council and check points to revise and update.
Recreation Commission
Increase in community programs and safe, innovative and public areas- Pool, Splash Pad
Improvement of Parks & Rec
Pool
Recreation Commission
Code enforcement

Want #2

Cleanup downtown
Sidewalks
Downtown/storefront
Community cleanup
Better law enforcement presence
Cleanup downtown
Clean up the junkyard and lake.

Sidewalks
Clean up trash on thru town.
Sidewalks
Less industrial piles when entering and exiting town- code enforcement.
Improve Downtown
Recreation Commission
Sidewalks
Police

Want #3

Economic development
Parks
School/city council collaboration with community groups
Splash pad
Lake development
Attract new business
No sidewalks- not enough front yard.
Development new residential area
Better law enforcement available.
Updated City Park
Neighborhood watch and communication conduit.
Sidewalks throughout town
Updated City Park
Better drainage

Resident/Stakeholder: Prioritization of “Wants” (Appendix F)

The “Prioritization of Board Wants” portion of the strategic planning process asked each Resident/Stakeholder to prioritize the “wants” or desires that were collectively shared as priorities. The results can be found in this Appendix. All Residents/Stakeholders who attended participated in the process.

Note: The list provided included the previous list from staff, as well as an additional item that was mentioned “Review feasibility of sidewalks”.

2. Please review the list of "wants" expressed by the Board in today's meeting. Once you've identified your priorities, rank the items by placing the choice that's most important to you at the top and the item that's least important to you at the bottom.

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Transparency In Gov't/Quicker Council Decisions	1		69	10
Review feasibility of sidewalks	2		52	10
Consider Recreation Commission (ex. park enhancement)	3		51	8
Clean Up Town/Code Enforcement	4		48	9
Make the lake a usable attraction	5		47	10
Beautification of downtown	6		44	9
Increase diversity and community involvement	7		42	8
Focus on Human Resources- More staff, better pay, and better equipment	8		33	8

Lowest Rank Highest Rank

Council Members: What Do We Believe (Appendix G)

The “What Do We Believe” portion of the strategic planning process included seven questions and the results are in this Appendix. All Council Members who attended participated in the process.

What is the purpose of Silver Lake?

To make decisions in the best interest of the city.
To provide a safe living situation in a small town with good schools for those who want it.
Provided an alternative to living in Topeka in a small town setting.
To provide a safe environment, for residents.
Provide services to its citizens

What problem are we trying to fix?

Some residents don't think the city moves forward enough in both maintenance of current facilities and development of new initiatives.
Attempting to understand what the community wants done. What are the priorities.
Safe water, safe streets. Provide a community people are proud to call home.
Get a majority of community working toward common goals

What would happen if the City of Silver Like didn't exist?

Citizens rights would be diluted.
People would live in other cities or in rural settings.
The traditions established would not exist.
We would continue to exist.
Services provided to citizens may not be as good

What do we want to get done in 2023 (and 2024)?

Spend taxpayer dollars wisely with the best interest of the city in mind
Beautification
Develop a plan of action to address the community's needs.
New recreation, in connection with the school district.
Determine common and specific goals for the community going forward

What should be our cause in 2023 (and 2024)?

To work with the school on their plan of expansion.
Prioritize and develop plans and a budget for what we think we can get done.
To enhance the community through data.
Unity

What can we reasonably accomplish in 2023 (and 2024)?

Responsible management of city revenue.
Start a process of beautification.
Developed a plan of action.
Determine the community goals going forward

How can I contribute?

The act in the best interest of the city.
Express my opinion in prioritization and budget process.
Listen to the community.
Be open to improvement.
Listen and act

Council Members: What Do We Want (Appendix H)

The “What Do We Want” portion of the strategic planning process asked each Council Member to identify three “wants” or desires for the organization, and the results are in this Appendix. All Council Members who attended participated in the process.

Want #1

Quality reliable services

Improved parks

More input from the community

Dependable Infrastructure

Solid expansion plan with the school.

Want #2

Safety

Smooth roads

Direction as to what the community needs
--

String Community involvement

Getting more involvement and input from the younger generation.

Want #3

Recreation opportunities

More coordination with USD

Recreational Opportunities

Ownership of the leak, so that expansion project would be a possibility.
--

Council Members: Prioritization of “Wants” (Appendix I)

The “Prioritization of Board Wants” portion of the strategic planning process asked each Council Member to prioritize the “wants” or desires collectively shared. Council Members prioritized their own “wants” independent of the staff/stakeholder priorities and blended those together in the draft action plan.

The prioritization results can be found in this Appendix. All Council Members who attended participated in the process.

1. Please review the list of "wants" expressed by the Board in today's meeting. Once you've identified your priorities, rank the items by placing the choice that's most important to you at the top and the item that's least important to you at the bottom.

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Provide quality and reliable services (roads, water, sewer, law enforcement)	1		19	5
Identify collaborations with the school district.	2		13	5
Identify park and recreation opportunities, including potential lake utilization	3		10	5
Increase community involvement, including target populations (fixed income, youth)	4		8	5

Resident Survey Results (Appendix J)

The complete, unedited list of responses is available in this appendix.

**1.What do you think should be the City of Silver Lake's top three priorities?
(Choose up to three.)**

Value	Percent	Responses
Community Partnerships	14.5%	61
Drainage/Ditches	18.1%	76
Economic Development	38.3%	161
Public Safety	25.0%	105
Recreation- Parks	32.6%	137
Recreation- Walking Trails	29.3%	123
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	24.3%	102
School Collaboration	24.5%	103
Sidewalks	24.3%	102
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	37.9%	159
Streets	9.0%	38
Tourism	1.2%	5
Other - Write In (Required)	12.1%	51

Write-In Responses

Population growth

1. Summer programs for children like boys and girls club for families who depend on the school for help in daycare and meals. 2. Major road pavement like Humphries and Hodges. 3. High speed internet within a 5 to 10 mile radius of center of Silver Lake.

A fitness center/community building.

An ordinance on David Bahm piling up trash along Hwy 24

Appearance of our city - clean up of all the junk along Highway 24

Beautification

Beautification of city and trash pick up/codes

Better water pressure

Bringing businesses to our town and keeping them here (restaurants)

Change nothing

City beautification-down town development

City pool

Clean up and enforce the codes and if needed write new ones. Worry about entire city and not special interests.

Clean up and kick out Bahm - trashing up both sides of Silver Lake

Clean up downtown as in make Ba move his crap!! Makes the city look like trash. He needs to have more respect for his own town! That's what our town is attracting trash!!

Clean up of the north side of highway. What an eyesore!

Clean up random crap

Clean up the Bohem junk that runs through town along the railroad tracks

Clean up the town. Allowing Bahm to move his junk business into every vacant area in the city limits of Silver Lake near Highway 24 has made the town look like a trash dump. This never should have been allowed and needs to be cleaned up.

Cleaning up all the trash from the salvage business. It looks like a dump in our downtown and is unsafe and affecting the drainage near Thomas road & Hwy 24.

Cleaning up the town

Community Partnerships would be the start to all these choices.

Conditions of properties around town. Illegal dumping

Cross walks added
Development of downtown area: bring in businesses to fill empty buildings; removal of junk yard look along 24.
Downtown aesthetics
Downtown/Main St beautification
Ensuring property owners are keeping their properties clean and free of junk. There are parts of town that looks awful. Need to enforce the codes that are on the books.
Environmental & Health Concerns (i.e. - large amount of pesticides used, # of people with cancer)
Facilities improvement
Fill in the lake to reduce mesquitos
Food establishment such as sonic
Get rid of the Mayor; make term limits.
Get rid of the junk on Main Street.
Hwy around the city not though it
If the lake was utilized/developed, walking trails and parks would go right along with that project. Getting 3 things accomplished. Even drainage could be added in there helping direct some of the ditches that flood. Those could be re directed in the lake development. Tackling the lake Project would open the door to a number of positive town growth opportunities.
Lights at the softball field
Main Street clean up
Make main-street not look like a dump with bahms garbage.
Making Dave Bahm clean up his shit all over town
Move bahm construction so it's not an eye sore. Makes the town look trashy
New softball complex
Sports Complex for School & Community
Swimming pool
Term limits for the Mayor.
Updating baseball fields-facilities
Water Qty/Quality
Water and sewer mains

cleaning up any public property, especially when it involves safety

why limit to 3, prioritize and estimate cost of all

2. Which of the following do you feel the City of Silver Lake should be investing in financially? (Choose all that apply.)

Value	Percent	Responses
Community Partnerships	17.5%	73
Drainage/Ditches	29.7%	124
Economic Development	44.3%	185
Public Safety	27.8%	116
Recreation- Parks	38.8%	162
Recreation- Walking Trails	32.1%	134
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	28.2%	118
School Collaboration	27.0%	113
Sidewalks	32.3%	135
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	36.4%	152
Streets	21.3%	89
Tourism	4.1%	17
Other - Write In (Required)	8.6%	36

Write-In Responses

Swimming pool

1. Summer programs for children like boys and girls club for families who depend on the school for help in daycare and meals. 2. Major road pavement like Humphries and Hodges. 3. High speed internet within a 5 to 10 mile radius of center of Silver Lake.

3, 5- and 10-year strategic plan for our city (all departments).

Affordable housing for young families

Appearance/Clean up

Beautification of city

Beautification of the city

Better water pressure in old part of town

City pool

Clean up and kick out Bahm

Cleaning up the town

Cleaning up the town/ aesthetics

Code enforcement

Communication avenues

Community Pool

Downtown development

Facilities improvement

Find a new place for people to dump yard waste for safe burning by the city or volunteer fire department. If a place can be found, be sure to post it yard waste only, no building materials, trash, etc.

Hiding the eye sore that is a junkyard

Hwy around city not though it

Invest in all you want...but until you remove Bahm's trash off the main street it will continue to detour any patrons or business.

Keep it affordable.

Kids safe walking on sidewalks.

Let's make a plan to include everything.

Make downtown not look a junkyard

Making Dave Bahm clean up his shit all over town
New softball complex and splashpad/swimming pool.
Pave Hodges
Population growth
Public safet/Blanket man. This is a problem and the police need fo deal with it.
Sports complex to benefit school and community
Water mains and little lake park drainage
a pool
infrastructure
investment in all areas will improve Tourism dollars spent in SL

3. Would you support increased funding to the City in order to pay for the items you've identified as most important to you? (Examples of possible ways to generate funding include a sales tax, mill increase, or fee-based services.)

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	79.0%	332
No	21.0%	88
	Totals	420

4. In your opinion, what is the best thing about the City of Silver Lake?

Community
Na
Small town pride. Great schools
Great small town with good access to major cities. Pride has in faith, family and community.
Small town pride
Go community to live in
It is quiet.

How you fell safe. But that has changed since hired out of town Cheif. You don't get the protected personal feel with our police department like you use to.

Small town where we can feel safe raising a family.

The community and friendliness

The community rallies together when others are in need or businesses could use their help. They set up benefits and fundraisers to help each other out.

Small Town community everyone knows each other

It's a great community. Would love to see a dog park.

Good schools, friendly people.

Friendly

It seems like a safe and healthy community.

Small town living but we lack businesses to keep business in town and not relying on Topeka and we lack land to grow businesses.

Family friendly

Small community living

Size of community/district.

The school system

The safety aspect of it.

It's quiet and we are a family. We need more events in the summer to bring us all together.

Small town pride

The school system

The unused Lake

Everything

Outdoor play areas for kids/families

Small town vibe it's a nice break from the big city

Small town life

The great people and community atmosphere

Overall, the city is well taken care of, clean, and safe. By making the lake usable again, it would be adding to our city. Walking trails around the lake, stocking it with fish, just a couple of ideas for that area.

The potential that exists to create a caring and sustainable community

Close knit community and educational opportunities
Silver Lake Schools and the residents in and around Silver Lake
The tight-knit community that comes together to celebrate or help each other out.
Amazing school systems Truly wonderful community to live in.
Small town atmosphere
Everyone wants what's best for our community
The school
The community is safe and residents generally look out for each other.
It's a safe small town.
It's a very safe and active place to live. I love seeing so many people exercising and being together outside each evening.
School. Town support.
The safety and the tight knit community.
Sense of community. Safety (as long as Blanket man doesn't hurt someone- seems like its just a matter of time until he does).
Our school system and everybody is friendly and it's safe.
The school is wonderful, the city is safe, and there are so many ways to get involved in the community.
The school - it has created a sense of pride within students and parents that make being apart of it fun
Small town community feeling
Proximity to Topeka and towns to the west
Small town close to Topeka
Na
That it doesn't change. Shouldn't change. Stop messing with things that aren't broken. The only change we need now is a new council.
The people
Small town, mostly safe, community supportive in sports.
Sense of community. Lots of people outside of the household looking out for our kids.
Small in size. Great school district.
Feeling of being safe

Location
The school.
The people. I used to think it was awesome how we were the first to do things but lately it seems like we would rather follow than lead. We have lost our pride to be the standard
The library. They do a great job of having programs for all ages.
Community support
Overall SL feels like a safe place to raise a family and live. There are a lot of great residents that feel a lot of pride for our town. The school district has historically been a good place to send kids to school.
It's not big
Population
Community but then it can be the worse bc we don't do anything to bring people together
friendly people
Small town community
The community is very tight
The school and churches are some of the best qualities in our community.
The close knit community feeling and the people in it!
Close community/community support
Small and tight knit community.
The pride people feel in the community.
The quality of the people who live here and the standard that people set for themselves and others in the community.
Small community and good schools.
The school
A small community where everyone comes together to support each other.
School system
Being a community and the community supporting the school
Desire of community to make improvements.
Blacksmith Hall
Community

The supportive community with the school district.
Top school. Small town atmosphere
The community
Schools
Community events
The fact it still feels like a family-oriented farm community
Community
I feel safe here. We also enjoy playing at the school playgrounds.
I like the small town community. Having more things to do would be great though
The community. This community comes together to support one another.
Schools
Family-like community
The young people moving back to raise families here.
Small town. Close to Topeka.
A great place to raise a family.
The community
School
Quiet, safe, close to Topeka , good schools
Small town living
The people. Everybody knows everybody and it's just a great community feel.
The citizens
It's quiet and no crime. Dave Bahm just makes the city look like a dump with his shit all over town
The people
It's a small town that is safe to raise kids.
I'm going to have to say the schools. Also, Enjoying the revamping of downtown Silver Lake (library, Blacksmith hall, police station, parlor)
How the community supports each other
Small community with a close commute to Topeka, Manhattan. A solid educational reputation K-12.

I like the way the community supports the school. It is a tight knit community where neighbors know each other and hopefully look out for one another.

Having a grocery store.

Above average socioeconomic level which allows for citizens to invest time and money in the school and community.

The community

It is not TOPEKA!

The lake

The school

The people!

Community

Close enough to Topeka but small town feel

Sense of overall community and quality of education

No crime no drama

The school. It draws residents to relocate in SL but once the kids are out of school people relocate. I'm a lifelong resident. My kids are out of college and will not relocate back here. The only reason I remain is elderly parents.

Community

Wehners grocery store

For me it would be the nearby shopping. I.e grocery store, pizza restaurants, beauty salon. I'd love to see the downtown area by the Library built up a bit more.

It is a safe place to live.

Sense of community, good school district

The people

Small town community

The community and the people.....but we need to make our town even BETTER.

the close nit community

Small community but in proximity to bigger city

Everyone is friendly

The small hometown feeling, and the feeling of being safe.

Silver Lake is built on a tradition of excellence. We strive to be the best in multiple facets which is noticeable by our high achieving school both academically and in sports. It is great to see us begin to pull together to improve the community. The events around town over the past few years have been great to see.

Location

Great small town with, gas, grocery store, library, banking and eating establishments but within small distance to a larger town. Great location!

History, tradition

This is a community where I want to raise my kids because of the people that we have met since moving here 11 years ago. I feel my kids are safe, healthy, and happy here.

The people

The connection of a small community.

community pride, people looking out and taking care of each other. the school system in our small town being the main focus and priority.

The small town community. Ability to support local business. In the past, community support for the school.

Our school system.

Connection! Neighbors know other neighbors.

Small town, schools

The best thing about Silver Lake is the small-town and loving community.

The library. It is one of the few things that brings us out of our houses and creates community.

Being able to feel safe.

Community, education, people

Pride and sense of belonging.

Willie and Bill

Schools

The school district.

The sense of community.

Small town, large city assessability.

Small town and suburban conveniences.

Small town but close to Topeka. Great schools

It's a nice town but main street looks dumpy.
Low crime and friendly people
Small town pride and new officer
Good schools.
It is a friendly community
The Lake
Small, close knit community with a decent variety of businesses and a great school.
The safe and tight knit community.
Community
I see the Silver Lake Police Department out everyday and feel their presence making this a very safe town.
The small town feel and the small school district
We have a great community and I love that we have a grocery store.
The cleanliness but wish there were projects to help people paint their houses in old section of town.
A fairly safe place to live and raise a family.
The community, but we need ways to bring people together more that is not based on school sports and activities.
Quiet and safe neighborhood
The close community
Friendly neighbors
It's school
School
Silver Lake School District
It's a small community where neighbors watch out for each other.
Wonderful community living- safety
Small town community support.
The schools for sure. Also the people and proximity to Topeka.
The people in the town and small town feeling.
People. SL Baptist church campus. School.

The community
Tradition
Community feeling
The lake
The schools and close proximity to Topeka
Community atmosphere. Small and safe.
Most of the citizens of this small town. Willing to help each other.
The people
Community pride and people that care about their neighbors and help each other out.
Small community feel
Small, tight knit community, safety and security.
Small town, friendly people
Community events
Good community
Local library
Great schools, safe environment.
Safety
The city has some great things about it, including the people who live in it! There are so many who want to get involved and help and be supportive. We need to make it easy and readily available for that to happen!
It is small, friendly and safe!
The safety of the community and the schools
Proximity to topeka
small, rural town values
Small and friendly town where you know many of the community members and business owners as well as the fact that SL is conveniently located within close range to several larger cities.
Community.
Free dump day
Small, friendly, tight-knit community.

The small town feeling, less traffic than Topeka, and not having to worry about crime as much.
It is a smaller and safe community. Very little crime . We have stores , banks , churches and restaurants. Wish we had like a Sonic great place to work and a variety of foods.
Good smaller school and good location for access to Topeka
Safer than topeka
Faraz
Sense of community, looking out for each other. Also location, not too far from other/larger towns and maintains closeness with rural qualities which includes surrounding nature in and around Silver Lake.
the best thing is the air
The community of people.
Small town
The people within the community
It is a small town with excellent schools. That is the reason I moved here.
Sense of community. Pride. Tradition. Our school system is top ranked! Our community needs to back that and support the new generations!
Small town outside of the city
We have two excellent veterinarians. We have a decent grocery store, convenience store, and gas station. There is now another barber and we still have a few hair stylists in town.
The school system and the tradition.
School
Relatively quiet. Close to Topeka. Excellent school system.
The hometown feel, which is best shown in the route 66 station that is the current central hub
It had a lake, I think it would have been a great place to kayak on. Small town feel.
The people, particularly the way that the whole community supports our youth and schools. This has a huge impact on the quality of life in our city.
Community
It is a nice, clean town that parents can raise their kids in and still get that small town feel and safety.
The people
Being a small community with residents that have lived here for generations.
Small community with great school academically and athletically

Safe with good schools
Clean, friendly
Size. Close location to a larger town. Feeling of small town community.
The sense of community
People and the pride in the community
Our sense of "one". All-in together.
Library
School
Quiet small town living
I think the best thing about Silver Lake is the school district and the overall community feel Silver Lake has
Small town atmosphere close to a big city
Small town community that does a great job supporting itself
The community is wonderful. It has a great school system and small town vibe close to a bigger city. People are kind and caring. The public library is a wonderful place to go and helps support the community.
The community support and involvement in the school and activities around town. Small town atmosphere.
Safety
The school and the citizens.
Silver Lake is a great place to raise a family.
There are a lot of groups and individuals who are ready to make changes in Silver Lake right now.
School
Schools and Library
People/community
Small Town-Love It!, We've lived here a long time and love it.
Love living in a small town.
The people who live and work here. It's a little bit old fashioned, and we have proud residents. People are willing to pitch in to make a difference.
Safer than Topeka. Could use a little expansion in houses and the city limits.

The gas station burritos
Small town atmosphere
How close the community is. Everyone is willing to help each other and are very supportive.
school district
It is less than ten miles to Topeka.
School system and small town
Great small close knit community with excellent schools
The schools and coaches that mentor and promote growth in our student athletes
Community involvement and the education system
Small town feel.
Safe quiet
The School, and the small town feel close to Topeka.
The community
Home town atmosphere
The community and it heritage.
Small town community, great schools
Silver Lake residents have a strong bond w/each other! One organization or the other is always willing to help those w/needs & business also answer the call...especially to school events. We are a great example of "One Town, One Dream".
The history and sense of community.
Location and size
We were attracted to silver lake because it's quiet and clean and feels safe
It seems to be a sought after area to live. We were lucky Enough to to purchase a home here recently!
The small town/friendly atmosphere.
It is a very family oriented city, we do however lack in buildings for new businesses to come to town which would offer maybe more jobs and make it so we spend more of our monies locally verses traveling into topeka for the simplest of things.
School
The safe environment.
It's people

Small town atmosphere
Its for the most part a quiet little town.
Good Schools.
Quiet.
Quiet.
Small town close to the big city.
USD 372
All the people. Friendly neighbors.
Schools are great. Small community. Low Crime
The schools
Trying to promote activities for kids like ball association
Neighborhood atmosphere. Excellent school system
Small town, fairly clean and kept up.
Wheeners, The Library, Silver Lake Bank
The school and the residents.
The pride of the school
Small town lack of crime
School System.
The community partnerships trying to get things going
Close knit community with a lot of pride
small town, low crime, school is the center of the community (literally and figuratively)
Small town atmosphere
small, safe community with good schools
Small KS community, affordable taxes.
respectful community
Community involvement in school district
Schools
our largest employer does keep up the facility, looks good, clean (school)

The People.
The school
Low crime rate, most residents are generally neighborly
It's really safe
The best things are the feeling of a small town while still being full of things to do.
A safe community that prides itself on tradition and self-identity.
Small town pride
Small Town Living, Schools, People, Business
It's proximity to Topeka.
Small community
In spite of no town square to plan events in and around, and no newspaper, people who live here perpetuate a sense of community and care of neighbors.
Small community with short access to Topeka.
Small town, good community
Safety, Community
Schools
Small town, good people
I love the small town and quietness of it.
Small town feel

5.What concerns you the most about the City of Silver Lake?

Willingness to try new things
Kids disrespect and running wild
Lack of police patrol, drug activity
Not prepared for natural disasters, not maintaining infrastructure (streets, ditches).
MOSQUITOES! Lack of patrol.
None

The appearance along the highway.

Poor community relationships with the police department

We are not keeping up with other communities in bringing business and/or economic growth to our community. We need to offer something that entices businesses or recreation to our community.

Lack of education and discipline in the youth

My concern is about highway 24 being a major drug route and it impacts our youth.

Lack of outdoor activities for children in town and surrounding rural communities.

We're falling behind in economic progress in way

Mosquitoes

Lack of code compliance enforcement on run down/abandoned properties.

Property Taxes.

Taxes

There is little to do if you are not involved with schools and churches. And, honestly, it needs some TLC. The flowers, decorations at city hall a nice touch, as is the park bench by the bank. I see tiny glimmers with the renovation of that tiny building in the curve, the new restaurant. Still wish for a coffee shop - maybe with a used bookstore? It would provide a casual place for people to meet.

The lack of sidewalks throughout town.

City water quality

Lack of forward thinking. We need more businesses. Our community has been stagnant when it comes to change

Lack of community support/engagement outside of sports.

It concerns me that we don't have a real cohesiveness around our community. It lacks excitement and support from neighbors. It isn't necessarily the city's problem but really the attitude of our community. As for the city, I feel like our town just looks drab and not enticing. People move here for the school but if we didn't have the success of the school, why would people stop here? We really need to think of what can make people remember Silver Lake when they drive through.

The lack of parks and recreation group/funding

The west side of town needs cleaned up a bit

Lack of community resources

Community involvement

David Bahm

Having enough income generated within the town

We're not utilizing the things we have for the community and surrounding areas

Close mindedness

Needing more opportunities/options for the residents to enjoy our town instead of needing to leave for food and necessities

It seems that there's never been much desire to add to Silver Lake (city pool, for example). Doing something like that and/or the lake would be a great improvement for our city. It would add recreational value and improving the lake would most likely increase property value as well.

Lacking support of volunteers to sustain youth programs.

Our Main Street. We have so much junk cluttering our Main Street. Especially everything north of hwy 24. It is not eye appealing at all. Our rival towns have gorgeous main streets.

Aging population. Our class sizes are getting smaller.

The lack of Law enforcement!

How hard the water is.

Sidewalks No rec commission to help youth recreation in the area. It is left up to volunteers to organize recreation activities. The lake. It could be a center point to make our town beautiful and unique. Instead it feels like a eye sore dumping ground.

Lack of places for youth to be safely, lack of a public park that is updated and safe, lack of law enforcement presence especially at night

Lack of change, mainly due to the persons on the council.

Longevity

No parks, playgrounds, pool, rec center for the youth.

There is nothing for the kids to do. Many of them walk to the Baptist Church north of town on Hoch road and that is dangerous!

School funding

I do wish there were more restaurants or ways for people to gather inside. The Mexican restaurant was a fantastic place to be around people.

Bahm construction trash everywhere. It's an eye sore.

Schools not keeping up. Our curriculum is not able to keep up with many students. We make too many decisions bases on sports— which are important— but not to the detriment to education.

The lack of things to do for kids and families together in the community. Our parks need a major upgrade!

That the city's namesake seems to be neglected, the lake isn't much of a lake anymore.

That we are dying - when you look at Rossville and St Mary's they have a thriving Main Street, places to eat, little shops to support, parks to play in... I want to stay in silver lake for the rest of my life and I want it to be a place my kids want to come back and visit.

Not progressing and trying to bring in small business

Lack of businesses

The schools. The amount of girls that have had to transfer due to bullying and no support from the administration

Na

Our council thinks we need to change

Drainage ditches need cleaned. Maybe then streets would not flood so much. It is the city's responsibility to keep them clean and they are not doing their job.

Drainage ditches need cleaned. Maybe then streets would not flood so much. It is the city's responsibility to keep them clean and they are not doing their job. Could grants be applied for to help pay for some of the costs for economic development or other projects for the betterment of the community?

Lack of sidewalks for children walking home from school - especially on rice between lake and gemini

Safety, more hang outs for students.

Limited growth. Need more engagement opportunities for our youth and young adults.

No side walks

No city center to bring people together. Lack of support for businesses within the community. The appearance of the town.

Hwy 24 is a highly traveled road. School system exceptional, library too small for needs. Lots of senior citizens & transient individuals that require help they cannot obtain.

The lack of community spaces.

Complacency

Drainage

Keeping drugs and crime under control.

We need to keep up with updates and maintenance to the parks we have. Weve asked for a light bulb replaced in the tennis courts for 3 years and it never got done. Weve asked multiple times. They didnt want to mow around courts so they sprayed it with weed killer now we have mud. The nets are from 1860. Why cant we have decent place to enjoy.

Lack of consumer generated businesses and community pool

The lack of community events and business

Outside of high school sports, there doesn't seem to be a lot of sense of small town community. I think in part because we are so close to Topeka, but would be nice to have more of a small town close knit community. I think we are moving in the right direction with the focus groups that are organizing activities.

David barn making it a dump

Tue people that we are attracting to move here!

Buildup of materials created at west end of town.

That they just shuffle papers and don't try to do anything to make this town look nicer or progress

No crosswalk lights for the two crossings across the highway for school kids or even just people trying to cross.

Not much to the downtown, needs more restaurants and stores

Lack of downtown

Not much growth

That there are not many opportunities for the youth to work. The salvage yard on the north side of town makes the community look trashy and now they are adding more to the south of the Vet.

Loosing opportunities Not having a local recreational director. This takes away opportunities for kids to learn and grow, takes away job opportunities for kids and revenue goes to another entity. Keep that opportunity in SL. Businesses struggling —chinese restaurant raising prices, Mexican restaurant closing. Limited restaurants A community pool would be nice There seems to be a divide between the multiple groups within this town that are all working toward the same goal to better the town and provide events. Solidify one solid group and one monthly meeting to talk about all the ways this community can grow and provide more opportunities and events to the kids and families.

N/a

Nothing to draw people here such as recreation, business or venues.

The lack of business growth.

Lack of sidewalks. People texting and driving near schools. Drivers who don't stop at crosswalks. Citywide garage sale is held when children are trying to get to school.

Need more reasons to spend time and money in silver lake: restaurants & entertainment.

Falling behind as a small town. You look at neighboring towns and they are improving and have a lot of community involvement. Silver Lake used to be the town to be in and now we are being put down by other towns. Community involvement , support and school spirit are lacking!

Keeping it safe and providing a good education for our children which I think we do a good job at!

Lack of growth. Heard about a new Casey's and Dollar Store but nothing happened. We need new business

Business leaving and or no place for new business

Economic Development Lack of Funding for school improvements
The lack of support for change to improve the city of SL.
Need more things for kids to do
No recreation opportunities for youth.
Drainage
I would say the clerk in the city hall office. She can be rude at times.
Transient/outsider threats
Small town gossip
The loss of amenities and services due to proximity to Topeka
Terrible drainage issues
Main Street needs updated. It looks like you're driving into a scrap yard when you come into town.
Even though we don't need a lot of law enforcement it would be nice to know if they were available for the residents
Our town looks like a dump. Bahm construction has our downtown area looking like a junkyard. And now he's tearing up more land on S side of town to do the same thing. Rossville, St Mary's has economic development. Local Businesses are supported. Why would anyone want to establish their business in a junk town? I'd love to see our town turn into something that people drive through and can't help but to stop.
Knowledge of city workers, city allowing no use of Lion's field.
Small businesses struggle to survive. Our "downtown" is essentially a junkyard compared to nearby communities.
Lack of progress compared to other nearby cities.
Only one way in and out of our neighbor.
Lack of housing and industry/business.
None
The amount of real estate utilized as a salvage yard. It looks unappealing and takes up valuable real estate along 24 Hwy.
Increased pricing
Curb appeal. Drive down highway 24 in St Marys and check it out. We CAN do that here! You have Bahm that is holding any possibility of this back. Get someone fresh in charge and lay down some ordinances. Absolutely unacceptable.
The trashy Bahm areas that make our city look poor.

Dave Bahms shit all over town

Lack of police presence to discourage criminal activity

Clutter. Drainage. Speed limits not being enforced.

If it wasn't for the school there just isn't much here.

Feel that parts of the city looks trashy

Kids being hit because they don't have sidewalks to walk on

The appearance of our town looks shabby. With the strip mall by wehners that needs some love, a downtown that is starting to look better, but then you have all that construction garbage as you enter the west side of town, Bahms junk all through downtown and now by the vet as well. Plus a new nursing home that is sitting pretty much empty.

Bahm has "depressed" the entire west side of town with all of their junk along Railroad/Hwy 24.

There is nothing for kids to do in town, so all our community money is spent in neighboring towns.

All the junk along Main Street.

Lack of business and tax base to fund projects.

Remaining relevant and capable to support new families moving in

Certain times it's difficult to get ahold of police if needed.

Lack of space for new businesses

D. Bahm eye sore

Lack of support to the school lately

The man that walks the highway

The town looking outdated

Not a lot for youth to do.

No Community involvement

The poor investment in recreation and poor enforcement of building codes/ trash that surrounds the town

The lack of growth and places to eat and things to do in Silver Lake (pool, arcade, etc)

Mayor and some Council members. Always using the same excuses to not act. City expenditures are wasteful. Employee requests are not scrutinized. City cost accounting is vague. If one wanted to know total cost expended to repair water lines in a particular month, each repair would need a project number assigned and costs reported by an accounting code assigned to EACH factor associated with repairing the water line. The City needs to know the true cost of services before they can consider changes that improve cost efficiency. Privatization of services could be considered if the City knew their current true cost.

The lack of economic development. Other small communities are enhancing their downtown areas and Silver Lake stays stagnant.

Trashy looking downtown

Right now nothing. I feel that it's a safe and quiet town.

Development and opportunities to grow.

Lack of businesses (too close to Topeka). Most people live outside the city limits so a property tax increase wouldn't apply. Lack of recreational activities.

Major highway goes right through town where children can be easily grabbed and be gone in seconds.

Main Street-needs cleaned up and junk removed. Makes the town look trashy

Get rid of the junk downtown - it looks horrible and it is embarrassing for our town. It used to be that Rossville was the trashy town with nothing good - but now roles are reversed. Let's make SL even BETTER than Rossville. Let's get a good park or place for our kids to hang out and play. Let's get a pool for our community. Let's make this town FUN!

none

Keeping the schools on the leading edge of education

Increased drug traffic, police don't seem to be out on patrol like they used to. Mosquitos. Put a fountain/bubbler in little lake pond and also in lake when there is water just sitting. You can go 5 miles down road to Rossville and it's night and day for mosquitoes.

I would like to see SL police driving around more often. Another would be putting up more street lights on the west side of town.

There are some things we could do to improve ourselves. The aesthetics of our "main" street is one of those. Rossville has outdone us here. We need to clean up and possibly rezone. It would be nice to bring the lake back to life; however, I also worry that will bring in even more families to the area. I worry we will become a much bigger district. I like raising my kids in a small town, and would hate to see us get too big, like Rock Creek. Our parks leave much to be desired. There aren't many trees around which makes for no shade. They aren't well kept up either. The tennis courts at the lion's club park needs painted, lights, and new nets. The softball diamond needs restored to the people of town (stop renting to Storm, please). Rossville's playground is so nice! Can we do something similar? Maybe even look into a splash pad like the one in Mayetta?

Lack of businesses

Not properly taking care of streets, drainage for the entire city, not just certain areas and police coverage around the clock.

Lack of opportunities/places for community gatherings and events

We need to be able to attract people to move here expanding housing in the city to attract people that are not upper class but working middle class to this area. We can do that by developing the town and the surrounding areas with more businesses, housing, and activities.

Lack of growth

The division between those who have lived in SL there whole life and those who move to SL.

seeing action taken on improvement opportunities. small tax base. If we increase this with economic development or mill or sales tax, when and how will residents see those dollars at work with tangible improvements?

Our police chief's misuse of city property (driving police cruiser home and leaving his mustang parked), police chief not living in the county he works in. Lack of involvement in school activities. Not engaging the community to support local sports or academics as had in the past. Letting Bahm let our town look like trash by storing his scraps wherever he wants and within view of the roads. Make him put a fence up. Police are worried about people's vehicles sitting on their property, while we look at unused solar panels, burned up semi trucks, scrap wood and metal everywhere, and a Subaru that has been parked at the old police station for over a year while the chief worries about resident's vehicles. Find a local police chief that actually cares for the community, preferably because he is local.. at least in county. Support advertising local elections. Time for a new mayor who is visibly active in the community. Come down on Bahm Construction and make them stop making our town look like trash. He does not benefit the community. He is rude and does not care about the community, just a dollar for himself. Example, land behind Faraz's, could have been left alone, or a building to put a local shop in, instead is now another area for his crap to be stored. MAKE OUT POST OFFICE DELIVER MAIL. No reason they cannot deliver Mail. Hire 1 more person that can do an in town route. Our mail is either sorted in the wrong place, they can't find it, don't put it in boxes, or no one can make it in with their business hours since people work. Clean up our town. This isn't Rossville.

The appearance of the downtown area and on the south east of town behind the vet clinic.

It is hard to attract young families to the city due to a lack of affordable housing and an aging population that continues to reside here.

The police are not friendly as they used to be. There is no connection. I would also like to see sidewalks with benches bso the disabled and elderly people can get out but when they need to test they can.

At this time it would be the Nathan situation. I understand he is not a threat and has the right to walk but the way he walks out in front of you so quickly is such a worry for whoever hits him or hurts someone else by avoiding him. I wish there was a safe solution to this but just not sure what that looks like.

No police on duty before and after school.

My main concerns with Silver Lake is that as a small town we cannot continue to run to Topeka for all extra curricular activities, etc. We must take our time and energy to invest in our town otherwise we're just going to be a suburb of Topeka.

Our parks stink. We need a way to get involved together. Would be great to have a place that community could be more active to be more healthy.

I think there needs to be more sidewalks to ensure the safety of the residents as well as the drainage issues which then cause an abundance of bugs in the summer.

Unsafe dirt roads.

Clean up of eye sores around the city

Appearance of city - collection of junk along highway

Lack of growth.

Not maintaining current ditches and drainage, public safety 24-7.

Some of the parents in town whom think they can run people out of town with bullying and intimidation tactics.

Restaurants cannot stay in business.

All the city wants to do is maintain the status quo.

We do not have amenities other towns or cities have. Lack of committees and community working together to accomplish these amenities. There are several small community groups that accomplish very little or individual tasks, or recreational opportunities ie the 2 small "parks" we have, had they been combined or better planned we could have one great park.

The street in sage. We had gutters done but in front of my house there is a 3inch drop. I've already called and everyone ignores me. I just had to replace tires \$1200 because it's ruined them. I tripped last summer mowing and if I break a ankle I'll be going after the city.

Drainage by wehners and sage/center

Traffic during school events. Wish there was a stop light

Safety

Lack of economic progress.

Nothing comes to mind

Lack of street lights; hassles and fees business owners have to go through to renovate, etc; lack of sidewalks near highway and lack of sidewalks connecting all residential areas; lack of flashing crosswalks across the highway

I am afraid that we are stagnant in development and are not progressing like other communities. We have a supportive community that will get behind projects if done correctly.

No place for kids...youth center, public swimming pool, tennis courts or soccer fields.

Water

School board and lack of restaurants.

Drainage ditch

The inability to address the infrastructure issues. A large part of the South East side of town all drain through a silted in ditch that was put in years ago and was never meant to handle the amount of runoff then let alone now. It's a disaster waiting to happen for some of us. I've expressed the concern and it just falls on deaf ear even though the city agrees it's a area of concern.

The lack of engagement and resistance for any type of change.

The water pressure is almost non-existent on Beaubein street. I am sure it is below legal standards.

Our drainage issues and safety.

The lake

Limited activities

Business either start here but we can't keep them here. Or we don't do anything to attract them.

No businesses

The lack of long-term planning.... I'm excited to see that you plan to take the time to discuss and address the options presented in this survey, no matter the priority order they would be listed. I look forward to the improvements and growth as we all work together in our Silver Lake community. Community Partnerships Drainage/Ditches Economic Development Public Safety Recreation- Parks Recreation- Walking Trails Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens School Collaboration Sidewalks Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake Streets Tourism

We are not progressing like other community and making people wanting to stay here

The lake and its underutilization. Also aesthetics and upkeep/ appearance when people drive through town.

I would like to see an increase of police or Shawnee county sheriffs around.

Plans for new highway.

All the mess of old scrap and construction equipment on the north side of town.

Mosquitos

No Parks and Rec for kids, other similar size towns have a rec dept offering sports for kids

The eyesore of Bahm construction in down town.

Bahm taking over every corner with junk and trash. It's a huge eye sore and no positive development can happen until that's taken care of.

Few opportunities to work or participate in activities locally. Always have to go to Topeka for these.

Crime -- and the down grade in housing to a couple parts of this little town.

Keeping/ building a community feel. Sometimes we are too close to Topeka that we don't look to do business or congregate here at home as much

The industrial blight and spread along highway 24...

Lack of new and sustained businesses, inability to grow population in the city due to no available land.

Other than school functions, not much to do.

The parks are not good so people end up going to Rossville's park instead.

Seems like buildings, facilities, and parks are falling behind in comparison to other small towns in area.

Quality of drinking water, heavy pesticide use for mosquitoes; heavy traffic through town; lack of sidewalks

Lack of activities.

It seems as though moving forward and making things happen because of lack of information and communication is a big reason why we can't make that final push into generating big things for our town!

Not enough economic development for our community -

Stagnation. Have lived here 25 years and couldn't list 1 improvement the city has made.

keeping the small town identity

The lack of community

-The fact that someone we know and love is very likely going to hit the man that walks through our town and on the highways near by very regularly and is right on the road. Many many times wandering right out in front of vehicles. If he wants to put himself in danger, fine, But someone else will be to blame for it and will have to try to live with the fact that they killed a man all because law enforcement refuse to deal with him in a more responsible way.

Non growth

Mosquitos, not enough police presence, Mosquitos,

Water drainage. Businesses leaving

Homeless walking on the highway. Having side walks all the way through town would be a bonus for safety of walkers and drivers.

Can the city PLEASE sand streets BEFORE school traffic!!! Today Jan 25, lake and rice was a sheet of ice.

No land available to buy and build on. No room for economic growth except out in the country.

Lack of interest for our communities opportunities for all. Too many go to Topeka or other locations for community events. Examples ball teams, community activities, relay for life, even groceries or eating out. School is our main thing holding us together.

Taxes

All the junk downtown

Lack of amount and/or development of recreational areas for the town outside of the school

some people can be very rude

The amount of demolition junk being collected/ stored by Bahm's Demolition on the NW side of the city.

Lack of growth, not allowing our town to have more businesses.

Limited activities for kids

The town seems to be in decline in terms of junk around properties, housing that looks like should be condemned. Code enforcement needs to be prioritized so property values are maintained or increased which will bring in more money to the community. Some parts of the city have no issues. The major issues are on the west side of town.

"Getting by". People just doing the minimum. Need someone that has passion, wants to better our community for the long haul. Has a vision and a plan moving forward! The support is there, let's be open to how we can be the best!

- Silver Lake doesn't have an actual lake - The old equipment and random junk off of the main highway (24 Hwy) making the town look run down. Locations include around Bahm Construction just north of Railroad and 24 Hwy, south of the Silver Lake vet, and west of Eagle Machine.

The limited police service is concerning. Having the local police chief post on Facebook to call 911 at certain times implies we have limited service and when service has to be called in versus when officers are already in town. It was like telling criminals the best time to come out and polish their theft skills. We could also use a couple more restaurants (maybe a fast food type place).

Continued development of facilities for youth.

Lack of future vision and planning. Need for master planning and design for school, city and economic development.

Post office parking is in need of repair. Put in a pool.

The lack of businesses and recreational areas that welcome and benefit ALL age groups, without these I feel like Silver Lake will continue to shrink and eventually become a forgotten town.

1. Since the lake doesn't have fish to control the mosquito population it has exploded. I don't care for the mosquito pesticides. 2. There needs to be more to do than school sports, like a drive-in movie theater, walking trails, beer fest, lake activities, street dance, etc.

Too much low income development. Not enough law enforcement coverage.

Crime

There is not much to do here outside of the school park. The ball fields at the school are not well maintained and often times are used as the neighborhood dog bathroom facility. There have been times we wanted to use a field and there was dog poo all over the infield. The other field is full of stickers. We spent almost an hour picking stickers one day. The community not taking pride in the few places kids can go to play is frustrating. SL is better than that, in my opinion.

Lack of public outdoor recreation, i.e. trails, park, ATV trails would be amazing with a pay per day to maintain and bring revenue.

I have lived here for 13 years and the city has not seen much change. No improvements in new business or buildings downtown.

Cliques, not welcome if outsider, no activities to do in community, no businesses to "shop" at

Lack of residential lots for building in city limits.

Safety of the children

Regulations on businesses. Physically clean up the town.

Growing too large as Topeka grows.

We've become stagnant. There's been a lack of desire to make improvements and/or changes.

Our infrastructure.

They don't seem to want to draw in more people to the community. I would love to see a road connecting us across the river to Topeka rather than going clear over to 75 all the time. I would love to see places adults can get together and work out or play. Like pickle ball courts a gym we can use for basketball pick up games.

What happened to the Dollar Store I heard was coming? We need a new Casey's like Rossville!

Attracting new families

Public safety. We used to have a police chief that was active in the community and truly cared about our town. The new police chief is never around town. He is not active or involved in the community, school districts or the with the residents.

Not enough police protection

The highway running thru town and the failure to follow posted speed limits or passing zones. I have been passed inside city limits more than once because I was adhering to speed limit.

As a parent it would be nice if there were sidewalks for all the kiddos who walk to and from school. Also, there are a lot of people in the community who walk around town and would be nice to have sidewalks to keep people safer. Also, having a part time parks and rec employee would be very beneficial. There are so many who play in town for baseball and softball it needs to be a paid position. It would be nice to see other sports expanded to allow local participation instead of having to go into Topeka.

The eye sore of bahms garbage on main street. Makes the town look trashy.

I don't see the city the City investing back into the city itself.

Non proactive approach to take care of community. Roads leading to town with abundant amount of housing and no road considerations. Cause families extensive vehicle wear and tear

The large amounts of junk (rusty equipment, rock piles, metal debris, etc.) on the sides of hwy 24, lack of sidewalks, lack of protection of citizens (poor safety crosswalks and lack of police presence), Silver Lake lake is not a lake with recreational facilities or trails, no recreational sports organization or fields (school provides the only fields/courts available), several unsafe intersections (ex. The stop sign on westbound Lake St. beside the "cabins" it's impossible to see unless you pull way out past the stop sign), several large trees throughout the city have needed to be cut down but did not get replanted, and lack of housing (I.e. open land for housing development).

Community pride has fallen off. I think one or two new businesses might help. our community and school used to be the best of everything but we seem to take it for granted and assume we can still be the best doing the same things we've always done.

The Police Chief driving the city vehicle to his home, out of the county, and getting paid to not be working in our city. The Mayor and Council turning a blind eye to this behavior.

Unattractive

The eyesore of the dump as you drive downtown.

Rain-Flooding-need more drainage into our lake would help and could be provided with some careful planning and sensible thought.

flooding during rain

It's a challenge to do things differently than they have been done in the past.

The amount of flooding in the streets during storms. The amount of cottonwoods trees that cause a lot of issues during storms. (Removal of cottonwoods). Streets are a bit narrow and working the neighborhoods parking on the streets causes even more safety concerns with the narrow streets. (No street parking?)

The drainage issue

Safety!! Especially when a person can not see to pull on the highway due to 'stuff permanently parked' along highway 24, even though it is on the state right of way!!

Nothing

lack of quality businesses (ie: industrial park, restaurants) ; downtown stretch appears trashy with salvage area that is not aesthetically maintained (this is what people see when they drive through Silver Lake)

The lack of community spirit about anything except the sports programs at the schools.

Conditions of property with junk on them as well condition of some of the properties.

I would like to know why we have a Police Chief we never see and why don't live in our community he lives in another county and also would like to know if us tax payers are paying for a vehicle for him to drive back and forth to work and where ever he goes during the day because we don't see him in town and why we only have one marked police car. The only police officer I ever see is the older guy in the marked police car in the evenings.

No reinvesting in the community.

Neglected properties and broke down vehicles on city streets. Mostly the junk yard on Center Dr

Lack of consistency within the community (too many silos although the intent is good). And no downtown like others communities where people can gather

Disabled vehicles that are not legally tagged sitting as an eye sore on city streets

Our public safety, maintaining our streets and drainage.

Side walks for kids to walk to and from school in town
Lack of businesses
The unkept appearance along Highway 24.
Lack of areas for commercial growth.
The 4 way stop by the high school
Silver lake can be cliquy and nit picky, which can include city officials as well. I've seen it drive away people who were going to move here or did move here. Also If you aren't involved in the school there isn't a lot for those individuals to do in this town. There are no businesses, areas (parks, trails or lake), or things to do that can be for a variety of people and not related to the school.
I understand Bahm is running a business but it would be nice to see more development around town rather than construction sites. The lake project would bring more recreation/development opportunities.
Appearance!!!! As we drive into our town from the west, we look like a junk yard. Sure hope we're not going to have the same appearance down by our shelter house.
Lack of support for economic development. One businessman has taken over the north side of the hwy & turned it into a "dumping ground"...not only does it look unbecoming, it creates safety issues in areas for drivers along a major hwy.
Lack of moving forward. Economic development. Spending time focusing on the business development,growth and planning and less on items that seem ridiculous like golf carts and utv's.
Lack of rec center
If you didn't know it looks like a dying town as you drive through
Doesn't seem like there is city growth- we don't need a lot but it looks like A storage area as you drive through. I'd really like access to the lake- With a little trail. We are Silver lake!!! But no lake!
Lack of visible law enforcement presence.
The lack of properties that could be used for more businesses, that would offer employment to some who do not have access to transportation to a larger town, the lack of high speed internet to neighbors in silver lake schools. There are many grants available out there for such improvements maybe we need a committee to research such things and maybe higher a grant writer to assist in this. Due to covid there were many monies out there that I'm sure we might be able to obtain the financial funds to make such improvements to our city and surrounding families who live within silver lake schools.
Having a police chief who is never around. Police chief should have to live in Silver Lake.
We do not seem to have any regular police officers.
Drugs, crime, and sex offenders being anywhere close to kids. Newest item being Blanket Man. Is he is accidentally hurt or if others swerve to miss him and hit another vehicle - lives could be lost or at the very least - life changing physical or emotional damage for life. What is can we do to help him - don't know the legal answer. Allowing him to stay in SL businesses or private property or by feeding him - in my opinion only - "could be" encouraging him to stay around. I don't know what the answer is but believe it's

a "when something happens and not if something happens" tragedy we need to attempt to avoid proactively.

We need a splash park for kids

The junk yard is a terrible impression

Nothing is done to clean up the junk the Bohem family has strung out through town.

Lack of planning: Develop plan with this data, put a timeline with cost and present into the city for approval. Then, follow through with the results.

Lack of growth. No vision.

Lack of growth, no vision.

Good ole boys club at City Council.

Replacing retiring teachers and staff with quality people.

Mexican restaurant closing.

Police Chief not vested in the community. Lack of a Recreation Department. Trash all along Hwy 24 - Bahm's stuff. Lack of Economic development.

The lack of sidewalks and the lack of safe sidewalks is a safety concern. And that there isn't a way for certain neighborhoods to walk safely to the store, schools etc. Lack sidewalks and crosswalks.

The wasting of money to the employees that sit around do little work. To many employees on maintenance workers

Lack of small-town business.

drainage issues, besides being an eyesore, there are health and safety issues related to the lack of drainage.

Safety

Not enough for our young people to do. They have to drive out of town.

The lack of tax revue from commerce

City is depending on a church to provide recreation facilities for residents

Hardly ever see the police around town, espedially at night when crime is more apt to happen,

The amount of money we're paying out for the chief of police and his workings, compared to the amount of time he is seen in the community.

I am concerned about the police chief. I want to know how much he is paid and what his work hours are. I never see him at all I only see the evening police officer in the marked police car drive by on our ring door bell. As a tax payer I think there should be more over sight on this. I also want to know as a tax payer are we paying for a vehicle for him to drive out of County where he lives and I want to know how you as council members can justify spending our tax dollars on this??? I want to know is there any

accountability at all. I personally am not happy about this situation and there are many in the community that feel the same. I want to know if his work hours are available for the public to see since we are paying his salary through our taxes.

Losing families to other areas due to lack of activities and resources

Need sidewalks and the park by the pond needs updates to make more accessible and welcoming.

Taxes rising too fast for fixed income households. Primarily due to USD372 mill levy. \$/district student budget. Best district in the area, spending per pupil is a concern. Our public safety needs to work hours more assoc to criminal activity. 7AM-3PM and 9PM-5AM. SL has very little overnight coverage by PD or Sheriff.

lack of progress, falling behind

Just because it is in the budget does not mean u need to spend it! Stop giving the cop everything he wants. Use some of the budget u already have to do some of the things you are asking about. Im not willing to pay for the items because I do not agree with the way you spend the money you have.

Lack of business growth and opportunities

The downtown area and by the vets office cleanup would be nice

city will not grow business with the scrap iron on north side of highway, eye sore

None: I'm Happy

No community identity outside of the school. Commuter outpost/bedroom community mentality that can lead to apathy towards town appearance and poor support for businesses in the community.

Aging buildings and infrastructure, empty land not being utilized, lack of businesses, many businesses that are present are outdated or in need of expansion

There are far more reasons to leave than there are to stay. Outside of school functions, there's almost no reason to go to SL other than a quick grocery/gas run. For night life, you have to drive to Topeka, Rossville, or wherever.

It is hard to have a designated walk through nature.

A sense of stagnation. We have been successful in so many things that we have failed to continue to evolve and improve. I see the city exactly the same way it was 25 years ago while growing up here.

Not having police around the city, you used to see Silver lake police patrolling a lot. See them very rarely now.

The City of Silver Lake should work with the tax payers to make it a better place to live.

The City should be more concerned about the library. It is good but needs exterior decorative help. That should be a civic duty of the City.

Losing the small community feeling.

No central place for dissemination of information or easy ways for community groups and partnerships to support each other.

We've lived here for 30 plus years and I see children having to walk on the street to go to school. Put in sidewalks for the safety of the children. You think it would be a priority of both the school and the city.

That big issues are not put on the ballot for voting on. That rates for water and sewer increased without much heads up. That the internet to the town is the worst in Kansas. We need more options like att.

Lack of things to do.

No entertainment

Many businesses don't thrive. Lake is filled with sand. Not a lot for people to do. Water back-up when it rains.

People speeding through town, using Sage and Center Street to speed through to try and cut the corner. The raise in the water bill without notice.

How old are you?

Value	Percent	Count
Under 18	1.0%	4
18-25	3.1%	13
26-35	16.1%	67
36-45	34.1%	142
46-55	18.0%	75
56-65	14.9%	62
Over 65	9.4%	39
Prefer not to answer	3.6%	15
	Totals	417

What is your gender?

Value	Percent	Count
Male	40.1%	167
Female	55.8%	232
Prefer not to answer	4.1%	17
	Totals	416

Do you live inside the city limits of Silver Lake?

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	59.4%	247
No	40.6%	169
	Totals	416

Stakeholder Survey Results (Appendix K)

The complete, unedited list of responses is available in this appendix.

1. What do you think should be the City of Silver Lake's top three priorities? (Choose up to three.)

Value	Percent	Responses
Community Partnerships	15.4%	8
Drainage/Ditches	23.1%	12
Economic Development	28.8%	15
Public Safety	30.8%	16
Recreation- Parks	30.8%	16
Recreation- Walking Trails	21.2%	11
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	26.9%	14
School Collaboration	21.2%	11
Sidewalks	38.5%	20
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	34.6%	18
Streets	11.5%	6
Other - Write In (Required)	9.6%	5

Write-In Responses

Hwy around the city not though
New Businesses
Our City SHOULD be involved in ALL these areas. (Maybe not tourism)
Water quality
city pool

2. Which of the following do you feel the City of Silver Lake should be investing in financially? (Choose all that apply.)

Value	Percent	Responses
Community Partnerships	25.0%	13
Drainage/Ditches	42.3%	22
Economic Development	38.5%	20
Public Safety	42.3%	22
Recreation- Parks	50.0%	26
Recreation- Walking Trails	34.6%	18
Recreation- Youth/Senior Citizens	36.5%	19
School Collaboration	36.5%	19
Sidewalks	48.1%	25
Utilization/Optimization of the Lake in Silver Lake	34.6%	18
Streets	30.8%	16
Tourism	5.8%	3
Other - Write In (Required)	3.8%	2

Write-In Responses

Again, it is our city's RESPONSIBILITY to be a part in all these things, (other than tourism)

city pool

3. Would you support increased funding to the City in order to pay for the items you've identified as most important to you? (Examples of possible ways to generate funding include a sales tax, mill increase, or fee-based services.)

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	90.2%	46
No	9.8%	5
	Totals	51

4. Please explain any initiatives/investments/collaborations that should be explored (or further explored) in the City of Silver Lake.

More cops on duty
Expansion of city limits to increase tax base (include those whom use/rely on the city, but don't live within the current bounds). Investing in annexation of land to create opportunities for more housing within the city limits. Regulating and enforcing rental property safety and appearance standards. Adopting zoning policies to restrict junk yards from lining the face of our community.
Better housing for seniors
The interconnectedness of the Silver Lake community with Topeka & Shawnee County lends itself nicely to exploring private partnerships and partnerships with the Shawnee County Parks and Rec and State Parks and Wildlife.
If there are potential grants from state and federal monies to enhance existing or develop new services and/or facilities, I would hope the City would pursue them diligently.
City and school work together on youth recreation
Park, pool.
A recreation commission would be very beneficial for the city.
A nicer park or upgrades to existing features would be nice for the youth in our community. It would be nice to have other options as far as places to eat, etc.
Having access to a cleaned up lake area park would really put the lake in Silver Lake.
Parks or other things to improve the community for kids. A splash park/pad would be amazing!
drainage
Clan up the lake to support local recreation.
investing in ways to utilize the lake to enhance our city

The development of communal places for activities. This would enhance the mental & physical health of our community.

Keeping the streets fixed and maintaining streets and facilities in a clean and attractive manner.

Bring the groups that promoting/planning for Silver Lake together in some meaningful way so that efforts are not duplicated but that there is coordination and cooperation and inclusion.

Invest in city hall staff

School land swap collaborative.

Collaborate with the schools, in order to provide daytime activities for kids when parents are working. Something here in our town that kids can do, like day camps. This would keep our kids off of the highway, and eliminate the need to commute to Topeka.

Recreation Commission Land for Economic development Development of Lake

?

Current population is roughly the same as in 1980. The City has not changed/improved with exception of housing development in 2020.

Annexing land adjacent to the city limits to create opportunities for more housing in the city. Wamego just did this. Incorporate houses north of town that use the city but do not pay city taxes. Means of increasing city revenue need to be explored in order to meet the needs of city and outer city residents. SL has the potential to be great.

We have very few sidewalks. The ones we do have are in terrible shape. Our community has many disabled citizens in it that get around by foot, walker or bike. We have athletes that workout on the streets and sidewalks. The sidewalks we do have are hazardous. We have homes where people cannot safely get to the store via foot or bicycle. Could really use improving sidewalks, adding sidewalks and walkways, crosswalks, etc. It's a safety concern. If left in current condition the city might get sued. Someone will eventually get hurt.

It would be fantastic if there were updates to all aspects of the city physically, parks, increased utilization of public areas etc.

A swim park. Long overdue. It is an embarrassment that we do not have this for our community.

I believe the City should be more invested in the School system.

Increase community pride and supporting local opportunities- business and community events. I believe there is pride but lack of support for the local community. Would like to see city have a facebook/IG/Twitter page. Develop a city slogan that is used throughout the community. More focus on community and less on school. The school has plenty of support.

5. In your opinion, what is the best thing about the City of Silver Lake?

The community
Sense of community
The current public safety leaders are the best thing in the city. The police have a visible presence and maintain a high sense of safety and security when you are in the city. The city of Silver Lake has the potential to be so much more than just a safe community though. I truly hope the city leaders can become creative and collaborative in ways that lead us to the realization of all the potential that SL has.
It is a safe place to raise kids.
I love the small town atmosphere; low crime rate; school system
The community
Schools
Silver Lake Schools, the community, the people
The people
Great schools and small town "neighborly" atmosphere
Close community
The residents of Silver Lake have pride in our community. We are a quiet bedroom community with a lot of potentials when we all work toward a common goal.
the school and the community members
Population size and a close knit community where you can know and care about your neighbors and others in the community, School district has a good reputation for strong academics and extracurricular programs, which is a draw for young families.
The people
The people
The school and the people. The location.
The people, the support, the education system
We have a great school and safe community.
The community, and small town feel.
Very little crime, safe environment
Small town environment
The dedication from the people who live here in all areas of life.

The school system.
Our schools
small town atmosphere and neighbors helping neighbors. Businesses know my name
Safety of a small town
the people
the people
Small, safe community.
Emphasis on education as evidenced by the school system and the public library.
City clerk
It's a Great small town
Great Schools, Good people and wonderful library.
Small town, close knit and friendly. Good school system.
The many community groups currently interested in making a difference in Silver Lake.
The people keeping everyday business operating.
Schools Small in size Location
Nothing
School
SL has a good sense of community and strong public safety.
The size of the community.
The school system and families
Safe, Quiet, Strong Values, Access to Topeka, Great place to Raise Families.
In my opinion, the pride in Silver Lake is something that is very special. However that pride stems from a grouping of aspects such as the city, the people, the school district, sports and all of the facilities in Silver Lake. It is with pride that I say I know we can do better.
Well respected, high achieving, sought-after school district
Small, but lively community, with various ages represented. Unlike other towns of a similar size, Silver Lake is not dead, or even dying. It is alive and well.
The people and the school system.
Small community, nice people, and feel insulated from the problems in larger communities.

6. What concerns you the most about the City of Silver Lake?

The rundown look of the town between rundown properties and junk along the highway
The city clerk
Failure of city leaders in the areas of vision, determination and willingness to collaborate to make SL the place that it has never been, but yet must be.
There hasn't been any focus on moving the city forward.
Lack of opportunities for those over the age of 60 to interact and meet new people
Lack of police
Unsure
The unsightly large machines that line the road, the unattractiveness of the city during holidays & lack of flowers/landscaping along 24, the absence of police activity/interaction/presence during the daytime hours.
Lack of business
Given all the potential of the community, we are the only community along Highway 24 from Manhattan to Leavenworth that has not seen any significant growth in the community or opportunities for our youth.
As a retiree, my greatest concern is with increasing mill levees for property taxes by governmental units which taken together with State and County assessments, USD et. al, outpace inflation High cost and lack of available housing is a concern I hear from people who would like to move into the Silver Lake city limits.
Getting the younger generation involved in future projects to make the city better
Other towns around us are adding cool things, and we have been stuck with the same things for years. We need walking trails, splash pads, other things for young kids to do...We need our downtown revamped to be more inviting. We are supposed to be one of the best towns/schools in the state, but we haven't made ANY updates for years... I want this to be a place my kids want to come raise their families...just like I came back to raise mine.
Lack of businesses.
It seems some things just remain the same, with no changes.
I would like to see the lake restored
Need infrastructure upgrades roads etc
The construction equipment and materials that make the eyes sore around both entrances to our lovely town.
The appearance of the downtown area and the south east side of town by the vet clinic.

Everyone is very opinionated and always wants to complain about everything, but when different groups or entities ask for volunteers, it's never the people who complain that want to actually help make it a better community. They just want to complain.

different organizations not working with each other. Many organizations doing great things to make SL better but instead of working together they are all doing their own thing. TEAMWORK

Water quality, public safety.

lack of recreational facilities for not only our youth but our elder citizens as well as a central outdoor facility for public gatherings

The lack of our City governing body's involvement, both financially and leadership, in our youth & community programs.

Maintaining facilities and maintaining businesses with the possibility of growing new businesses.

That there is not enough coordination, cooperation and inclusion. And I know that is not sufficient information.

Mayor, council, police chief

The Police Chief is never available and is never seen. And why does he have a unmarked vehicle. The only person we ever see is the older white haired Guy in the marked police vehicle we see him at all the city functions and ball games and driving up and down our streets but never see the Chief. As a tax payer as much as we are paying the Chief he should be at all city functions and be available and he don't even live in our county also are we the taxpayers paying for a vehicle for him to drive home. The old Chief lived in town and was at all the city functions and was always available.

City codes that are not being enforced.

Lack of forward thinking and diversity from Silver Lake's leaders.

Rid/hide the downtown of Bahm's stuff. Lack of economic growth Possible loss of ball association

Wasting money

Population and geographic size is basically the same as it was 40 years ago but city spending is out of control. More staff but no more residents in 40 years. Technology advancements should actually allow a reduction in staffing. City budget control is out of hand. The foxes (employees) guard the hen house (budget).

Failing to take advantage of grant opportunities that are currently offered; lots of money on the table if we are creative. Failing to regulate unsafe rental houses and allowing a junk yard to operate along the face of the city. The track record of the city is not good; this must be changed incrementally if we want to build momentum and make SL great.

The junk all over town that impedes view of traffic at some stop signs. The lack of concern by the police to keep Nathaniel off the highway. We should have connections established in our city to be able to contact advocates for those in need, especially those with learning disabilities that are homeless.

The lack of parks and recreation

Some people are stuck in their ways and don't think that updates are improvements. It is hard to get people involved and want to help. Now that an interest has been sparked, lets back it up!

Extracurricular activities for youth seem limited to sports teams. (Yes, there is also debate, forensics, and summer ball). Sidewalks or some safe paths are needed so kids can ride their bikes away from vehicle traffic. An indoor recreation center that would provide activity opportunities during the long winter months would be ideal - ping pong, basketball, dance sessions, an indoor "track" for walking exercise. Many drive miles elsewhere - to Lake Shawnee, the Shawnee North Community Center, the mall - just to walk comfortably. And again - a swim park is essential.

The lack of law enforcement presents in Silver Lake. Lyons park ball field not being utilized by Silver Lake residents. The speeding vehicles going through town.

Appearance of our community. Look run down and old. It appears the city council lacks desire to make big moves to improve our community appearance. For example- sidewalks have been discussed for over 10 years and nothing has changed. Another concern is the community not having access to Lyons Field and the appearance of the field is also another issue. There is not a field for the older youth to play. They have to go to Topeka which has a financial impact of the community. Ball games bring in revenue for local businesses. The lack of a long term plan for the community- development and financially. Need a vision plan for community to understand importance of possibly revenue increases and will increase community pride.

7.You have been asked to complete this based on your role in the community. Please indicate how you would best identify your role. (Choose all that apply.)

Value	Percent	Count
Civic/Volunteer Group Member	19.6%	10
Education Professional	31.4%	16
Elected Official	7.8%	4
Health Care Professional	5.9%	3
For-Profit Business Owner/Leader	9.8%	5
Media Professional	2.0%	1
Non-Profit Organization Representative	13.7%	7
Religious Institution Representative	11.8%	6
Resident	62.7%	32
State, County, or Local Agency Representative	7.8%	4

Other - Write In (Required)	7.8%	4
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Write-In Responses

County resident who relies on the cities infrastructure and amenities
Employee of government office
School Classified Professional
concerned resident

How old are you?

Value	Percent	Count
26-35	17.6%	9
36-45	21.6%	11
46-55	15.7%	8
56-65	25.5%	13
Over 65	15.7%	8
Prefer not to answer	3.9%	2
	Totals	51

What is your gender?

Value	Percent	Count
Male	37.3%	19
Female	58.8%	30
Prefer not to answer	3.9%	2
	Totals	51

Do you live inside the city limits of Silver Lake?

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	48.0%	24

No	52.0%	26
	Totals	50

Draft Action Plan (Appendix L)

An action plan containing specific action items, responsible parties, due dates, and proof of completion was created by the Board and is provided in this Appendix.

**Draft Action Plan
City of Silver Lake**

Investigate a potential Special Election for City Sales Tax to fund infrastructure projects.

What?	Who?	By When?	How do we know it's done?	Comments
Contact Kansas League of Municipalities regarding technical assistance with special election processes.	City Clerk/Mayor	June 2023	Information reported	
Consult with City Attorney regarding specific legal steps when considering a special election.	Council	June 2023	Information reported	
Work with City staff to begin a detailed list of infrastructure needs with estimates and prioritization in the following areas: Public Works Public Safety Shared Places/Spaces (parks, sidewalks, etc).	Council/City Clerk/Staff	September 2023	Prioritized list with general estimates	
Collect community input on a prioritized list.	Council/City Clerk	September - October 2023	Survey results/Other forms of input	
Council action to either place question on the ballot during a special election or during a scheduled election.	Council	November 2023	Action	
Identify a volunteer group to publicize the election.	Council/Community	Based on the election date	Promotional Materials	

Promote the City of Silver Lake and Silver Lake School District (USD 372) collaboration.

What?	Who?	By When?	How do we know it's done?	Comments
Complete the process for maximizing land use to improve shared spaces for recreational purposes.	Council/School Board	TBD	Contracts approved	Aligns with school district strategic plan
Promote the use of shared spaces following the completion of the land use project.	Joint ad hoc committee of the School Board and Council	TBD	Communication Plan. Marketing materials.	Aligns with school district strategic plan
Establish bi-annual joint meetings of the School Board and City Council to promote collaboration and communication.	City Clerk/Board Clerk	July 2023	Meetings scheduled. Agendas.	
Explore shared events and programs with the school district.	Joint ad hoc committee of the School Board and Council	August - September 2023	Report to both boards with plans for the 23-24 school year	Aligns with school district strategic plan

Implement a coordinated effort to update and enforce city codes regarding commercial and residential properties.

What?	Who?	By When?	How do we know it's done?	Comments
Establish a schedule for ordinance/code review.	City Council	July 2023- November 2023	Agendas	
Communicate the schedule to solicit the community for input.	City Clerk/City Council	July 2023- November 2023	Communication plan	
Articulate current code enforcement process.	City Staff	July 2023 Council Meeting	Short written report with data points	

Review current frequently reported code violations.	Council	November 2023	Report to Council	
Build relationships with the community to remove barriers to code enforcement and collaborate on possible solutions.	Council/City Clerk/Staff/ Community	July 2023- November 2023 and ongoing	Council Members identify social and other opportunities to personally meet with residents	
Review options for collaborative relationships with helping agencies, outside funders, and community partners.	Council/City Clerk/Staff/Community	December 2023	List of partners to be shared by city staff and on the website	

Improve shared community places and spaces for recreation and leisure time.

What?	Who?	By When?	How do we know it's done?	Comments
Form an ad hoc committee to review recreation and leisure time opportunities in shared places and spaces.	City Council/Committee	July - November 2023	Committee formed with recommendations to City Council at November 2023 meeting	
Prioritize infrastructure needs for city-managed places and spaces (parks, tennis court, etc.).	City Staff/Council	September 2023	Articulated list of priorities	
Review collaborative opportunities with Shawnee County at City Council meeting.	Shawnee County Commissioner serving Silver Lake/City Council	August 2023	Agenda	

Review collaborative opportunities with the Parks for All Foundation.	City Clerk/Mayor	August 2023	Oral report during Council meeting	Website: https://parksforallfoundation.com/projects/
Review options for community walkability assessment.	Ad Hoc Committee/Council	December 2023	Report to Council regarding partnering options which would lead to an articulated plan	