

# TOWN OF LAKE SANTEETLAH

## SURVEY RESULTS

### BACKGROUND

During October and November of 2019, the Town of Lake Santeetlah (TOLS) Planning Board administered a community wide survey to all property owners. The survey questionnaire was jointly developed by Planning Board members and the Town Attorney, along with input from NC Commerce, through various work sessions and reviews. A Public Hearing on the draft Land Use Plan (the Plan) along with this document was held on March 12, 2020. As a result, the Plan was finalized. The Planning Board will then work to finalize the draft Land Use Ordinance and submit it to the Town Council for approval.

The survey objectives are:

1. To gain public information to help inform the Land Use Plan process.
2. Benchmark of attitudes and perceptions regarding a variety of key town issues.
3. Input on ideas for the future of TOLS.

### METHOD

A Land Use Plan survey was delivered to all Town property owners via US mail with an enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. The survey was enclosed with the September water bills; a separate survey was sent to property owners who pay their water bill electronically. The survey was delivered to individual households of all Town property owners regardless of resident or non-resident status. All property owners were sent an email informing them of the survey and asking them to participate. A follow-up email was sent reminding property owners of the importance of completing the survey.

### RESPONSE RATE

The Town received 103 completed responses out of 196 survey mailers. This represents a response rate of approximately 53%. Background information gathered from the respondents was reflective of the Town's resident and non-resident composition. The total responses are highly reflective of property owners' opinions.

### HIGHLIGHTS

Overall the survey results were consistent across the board. A large majority of the questions resulted in high levels of agreement. The survey's results also yielded a high number of write in comments for the four (4) qualitative questions. Supporting response data is contained in Attachment 3 of the Plan. Response Tabulation Methodology is contained in Attachment 5 of the Plan.

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS CONTAIN AN OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RELATED RESPONSES THAT RECEIVED THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF AGREEMENT.

### COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

The following demographics are reflective of the numbers at the time the survey was administered:

Resident status: The majority of property owners are non-resident. Eleven (11) property owners report full-time residency.

Length of years of property ownership: Most property owners show 11-20 years and 20 and over years of ownership.

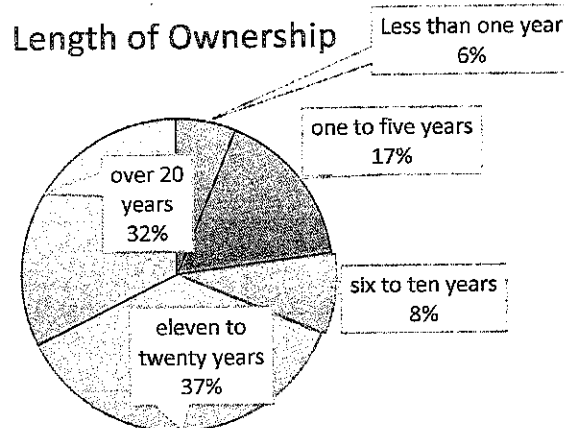
Time spent at Town property each year: Most property owners spend five (5) months or less in TOLS.

Plans to make Town property primary residence within five years: 47 property owners reported no.

Registered Voters: Seven (7) households.

Ownership of residential Town property: 41

Ownership of vacant Town property: 9

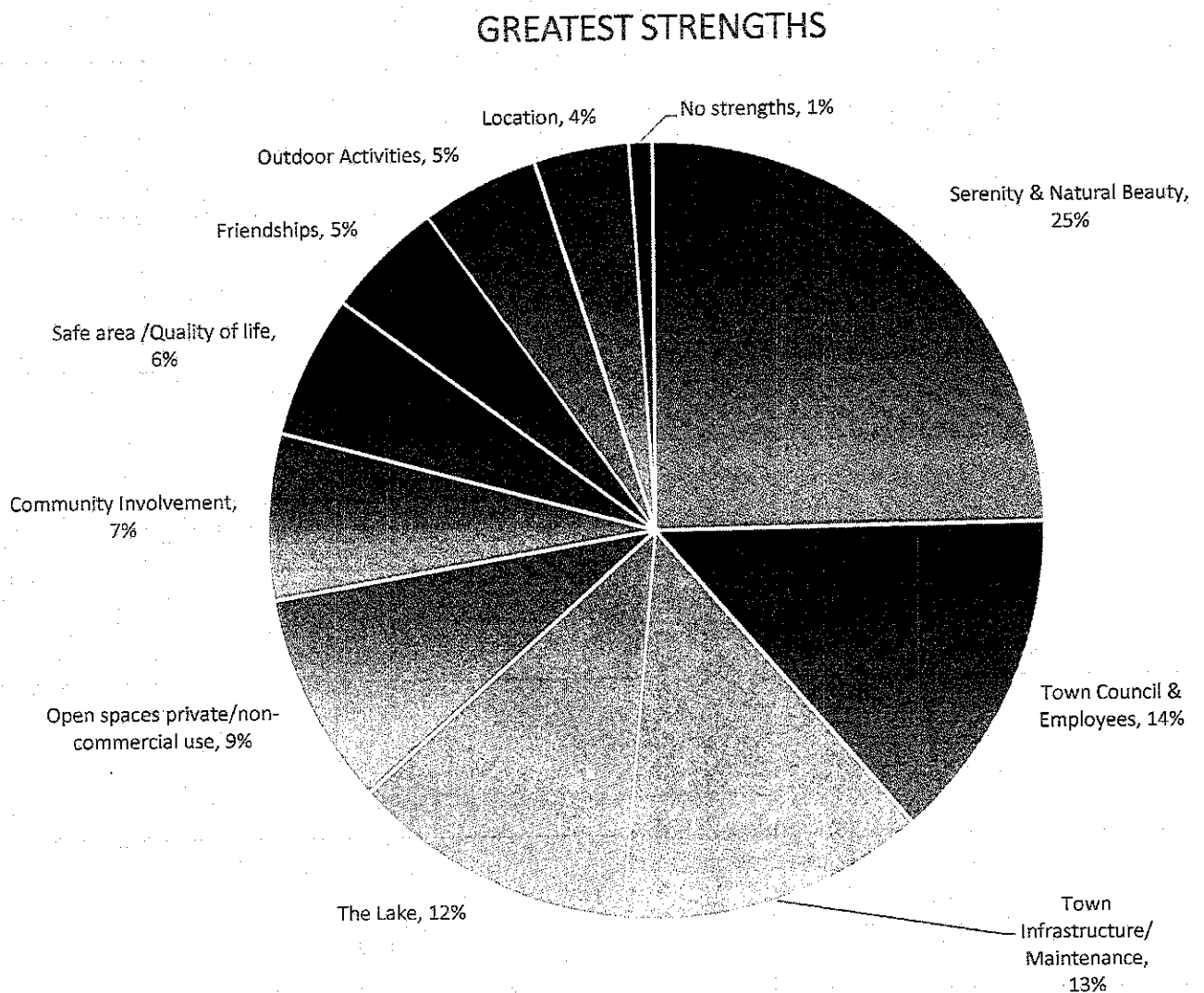


Legend:  Less than one year  one to five years  six to ten years  eleven to twenty years  over 20 years

## TOWN'S THREE GREATEST STRENGTHS:

The survey instrument asked for narrative input regarding the TOLS three greatest strengths. The responses were tabulated and the three strengths most frequently stated were identified:

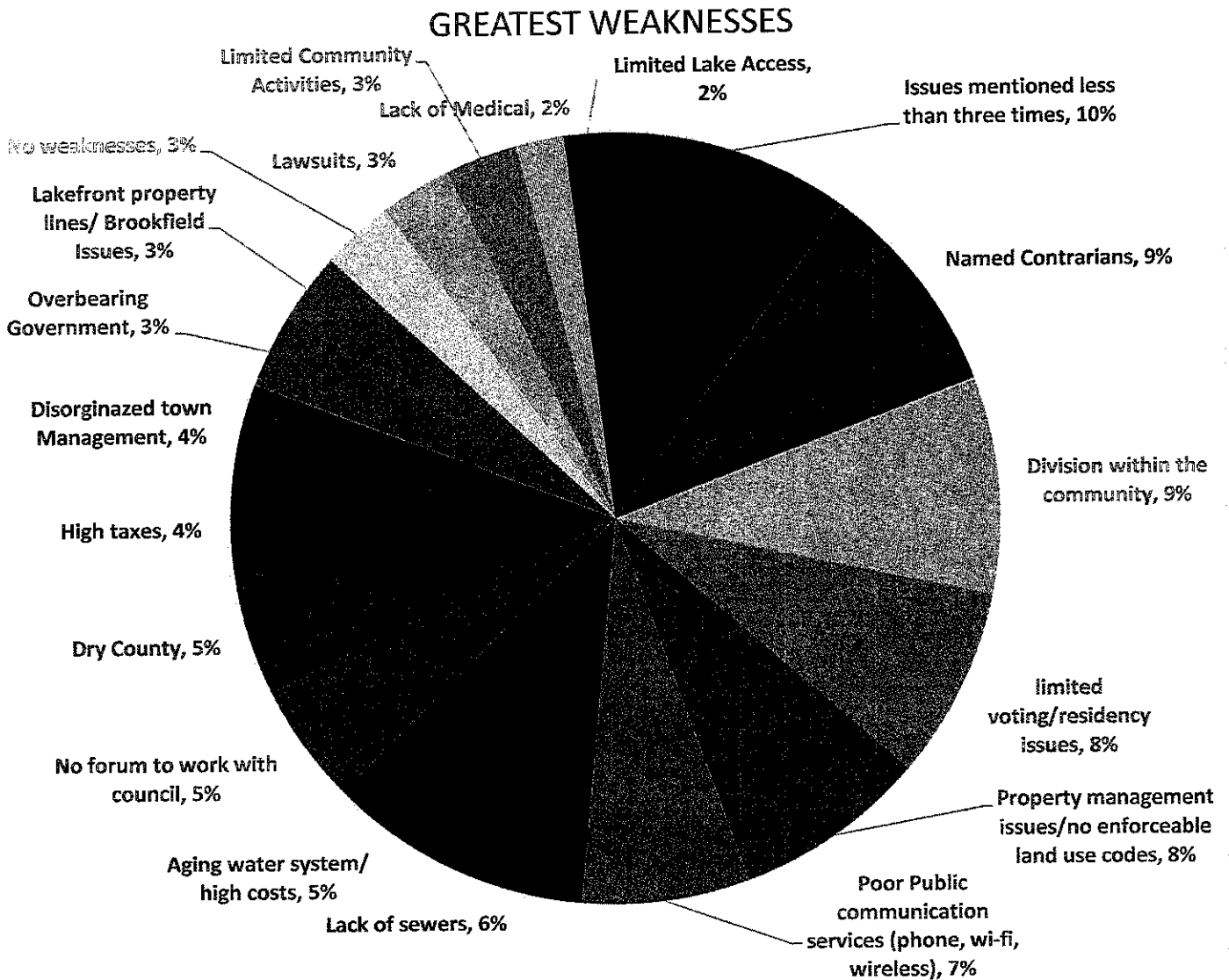
1. Serenity & Natural Beauty
2. Town Council & Employees
3. Town Infrastructure/Maintenance



## TOWN'S THREE GREATEST WEAKNESSES:

The survey instrument asked for input regarding the TOLS three greatest weaknesses. The three weaknesses most frequently stated were identified:

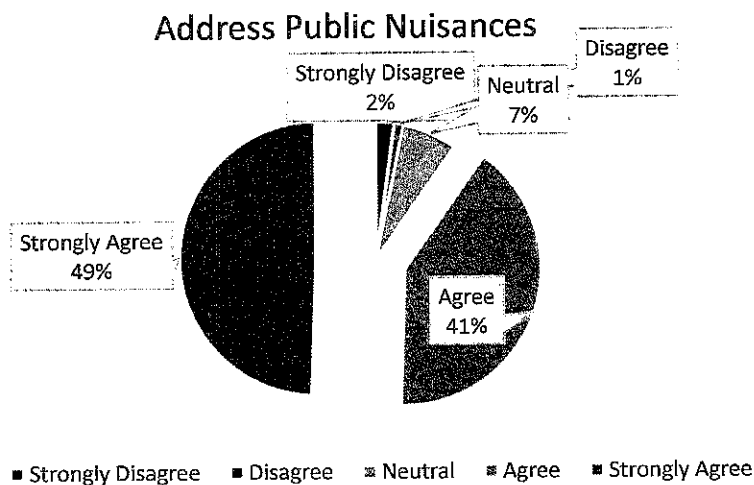
1. Named Contrarians
2. Division Within the Community
3. Limited Voting/Residency Issues



## TOWN VISION 20 YEARS FROM NOW

The Planning Board tabulated all responses for each Vision category. Percentages reflect the highest response rate for each item. Some respondents marked two categories, e.g. "Agree and Strongly Agree". (See Plan Attachment 3).

- Favor the Town remaining as unchanged as possible over the next 20 years: 62% agree and strongly agree.
- Favor minimizing disturbance of the land as much as possible: 91% agree and strongly agree.
- Favor maintaining the landscape and a "mountain view" as much as possible: 96% agree and strongly agree.
- Favor addressing public nuisances in accordance with state statutes: 90% agree and strongly agree.
- Favor promotion of health, safety and public welfare of the Town: 81% agree and strongly agree.
- Favor new development should conserve property values: 94% agree and strongly agree.



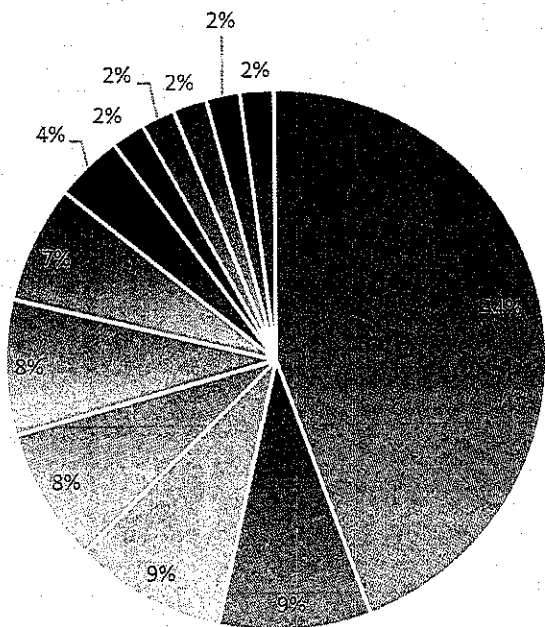
## VISION

The Survey questionnaire asked for input on property owners' TOLS Vision for the Town 20 years from now. The three most frequent responses to the TOLS Vision were identified:

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY OWNERS' VISION 20 YEARS FROM NOW:

1. Remain without change
2. Some growth with enforced zoning – no Multi-Family
3. Remain the same with more community spirit

### Town Vision



- Remain without change
- Some Growth-no multifamily
- Remain the same-more community spirit
- Some growth with little change
- Responses with unshared unique visions
- Some growth with more infrastructure-sewer system
- Additional full time residents
- Same-improved communication (phone, internet, wi-fi, wireless)
- Eliminate local control
- Remain unchanged without obstructive interference
- Same with more medical access
- Same with less Brookfield (Lake Owner) rules

## LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The Planning Board tabulated responses to the following issues. Percentages reflect the highest response rates for each item. Some respondents marked two categories, e.g. "Agree and Strongly Agree" or "Disagree and "Strongly Disagree". (See Plan Attachment 3).

Favor maintaining and improving current infrastructure: 96% agree and strongly agree.

Favor addressing light and noise pollution: 82% agree and strongly agree.

Favor future renovation of current homes not limiting the lakeside views of other properties ( 83% )

Favor encouragement of tourism: 64% strongly disagree and disagree.

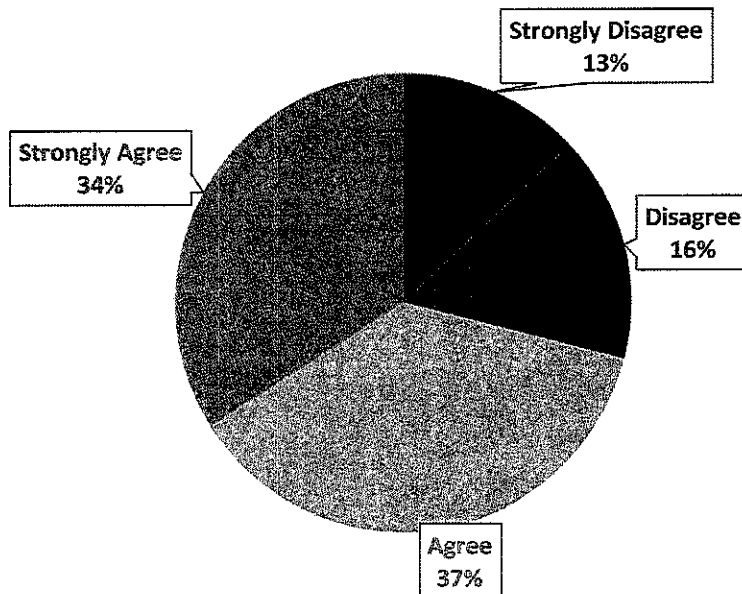
Favor better signage regulations: 64% agree and strongly agree.

Favor protection of natural resources: 95% agree and strongly agree.

Favor regulations for vacation rentals: 71% agree and strongly agree.

Favor only single-family homes: 80% agree and strongly agree.

## DEVELOPE REGULATIONS FOR VACATION RENTALS



## MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Planning Board tabulated responses to the following issues. Percentages reflect the highest response rate for each item. (See Plan Attachment 3).

Sewer – 57% favor no change. 39% favor new or improved. 33% favor higher taxes.

Water – 66% favor no change. 34% favor new or improved. 27% favor higher taxes.

Police protection – 73% favor no change.

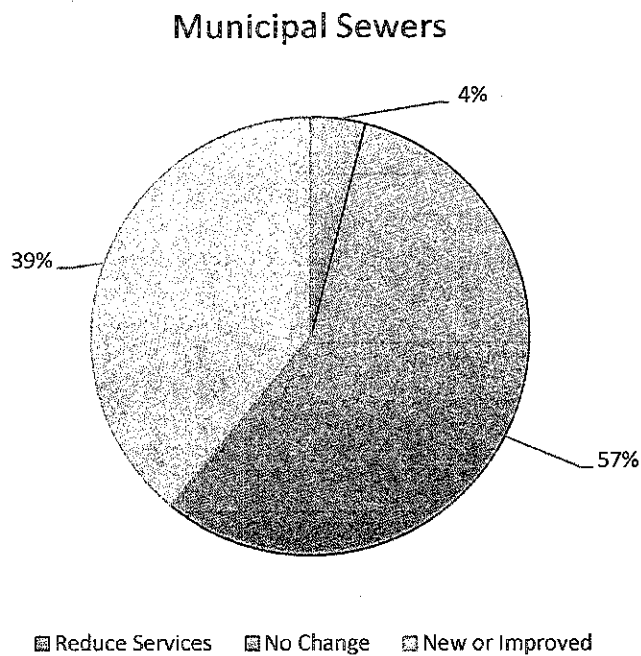
Fire protection – 66% favor no change.

Erosion Control – 51% favor no change.

Garbage Services – 74% favor no change.

Street Maintenance – 72% favor no change.

EMS Services – 67% favor no change.

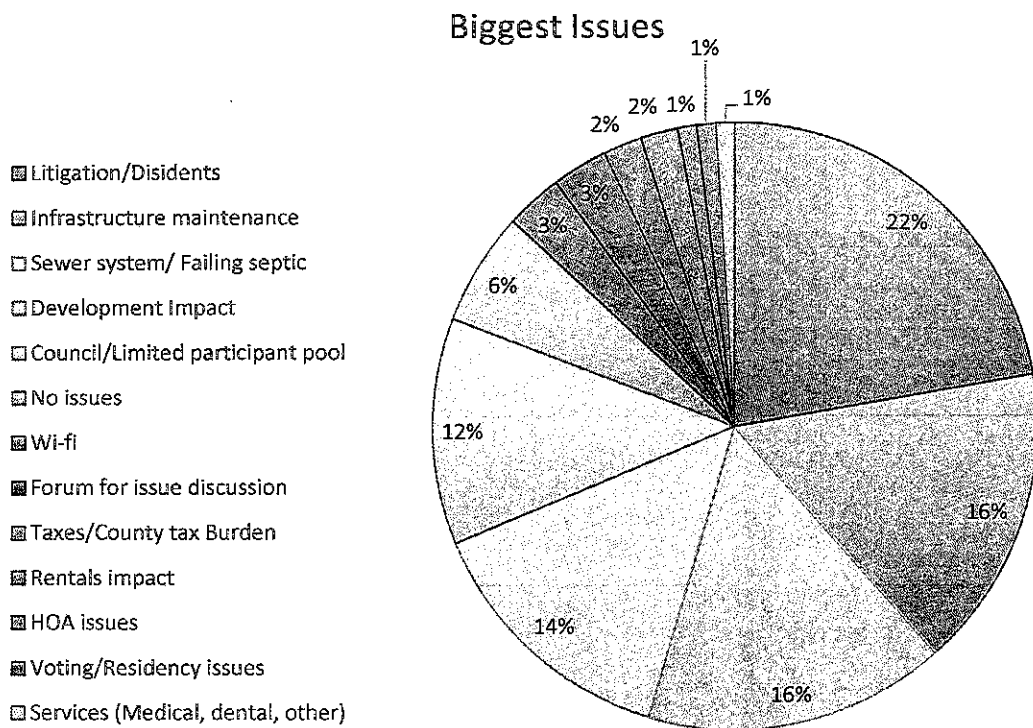




## RESPONSES TO THE SINGLE BIGGEST ISSUE FACING THE TOWN OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS

Narrative questions to property owners' responses to The Single Biggest Issue Facing the Town over the Next Several Years were tabulated. The three most frequent responses were:

1. Litigation/Dissidents
2. Infrastructure Maintenance
3. Sewer System/Failing Septic



**EXISTING AND FUTURE ZONING MAP**

The TOLS existing and future Zoning Map is contained in the Attachment 6 of the Land Use Plan.