

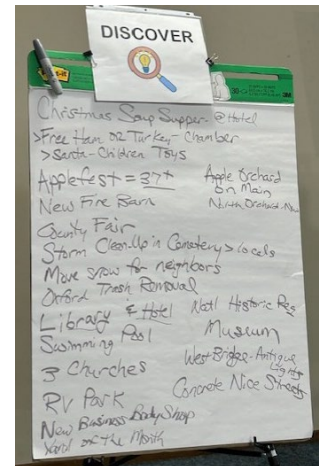
Village of Orleans Town Visioning Meeting

Village Board Report with Survey Comments – August 5, 2025

The Village of Orleans hosted a Town Visioning meeting at the Village office on August 5, 2025. South Central Economic Development District, Inc. (SCEDD) facilitated the Town Visioning meeting with staff LeAnn Jochum, Deputy Director, Lori Ferguson and Howard Wong, Community Consultants. Attendees were asked to complete a brief survey upon arrival regarding their opinion on Village of Orleans services, needs, and priorities, with twenty-seven completing the survey via paper or the online survey link. The Village Board and employees sponsored the meal provided for attendees. Thirty-four (34) community members participated in the meeting filling the Community Center room.

The Visioning session was opened with a welcome to the community members by Jochum of SCEDD followed by providing a short description of what SCEDD provides for the region. A thank you to participants for investing their time in identifying and discussing community priorities was shared with the group. SCEDD proceeded with introductions and a review of the agenda for the evening. Community participants were then led through a facilitated process to identify and develop community priorities.

Following a brainstorming session to *Discover* past successes, *Dream* into the future, and *Design* the future with top priorities for first 1-2 years, SCEDD provided cookies during a short break. Then participants divided into groups based on the priorities established and the topic that most interested them to *Deliver* actionable results. Business Investment & Growth was a top priority but did not garner attendees to form a group for the *Deliver* portion. The input provided by the participants as well as the priority goals established by the four groups follows. The Village of Orleans – Community Survey results are provided at the end of this report.

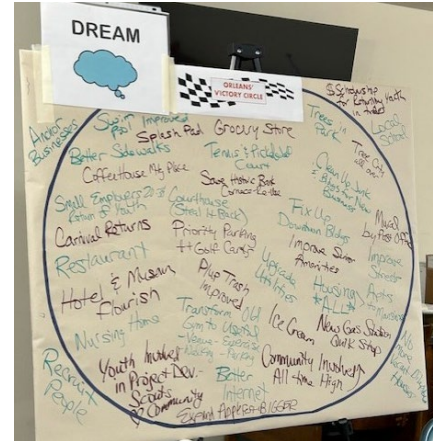


DISCOVER Success Stories: participants were asked to share events or accomplishments they considered successes in the history of Orleans.

A. What was the community's success or achievement?

- Christmas Soup Supper at Hotel
 - Free Ham or Turkey
 - Children provided toys from Santa
- Applefest for 37 + Years
- Library & Hotel – both on National Historic Registry
- New Fire Barn
- County Fair
- Storm Clean-Up in Cemetery by Locals
- Moving Snow for Neighbors
- Oxford providing Trash Removal
- Swimming Pool
- 3 Churches
- RV Park
- New Business - Body Shop
- Yard of the Month is back
- Apple Orchard on Main
- North Orchard – New
- Museum
- West Bridge – Antique Lights
- Nice Streets, many with concrete

DREAM future possibilities for the community – 10 years into the future what do you want for Orleans. (Victory Circle - racetrack: ideas placed inside circle). Participants were to envision 2035 as Orleans was recognized as the ‘Showcase Community in Nebraska by the Governor’ due to the accomplishments achieved and community growth. Share what their desired future looks like by dreaming big and state what had been accomplished and realized as part of their goal setting to achieve their desired community in 10 years.



- Anchor Businesses
- Recruit People
- Scholarship \$ for Returning Youth in Trades
- Local School Back
- No More Vacant Dilapidated Houses
- Swimming Pool Improved
- Splash Pad
- Better Sidewalks
- Coffee House Meeting Place
- Small Employers (20-30 people) - Return of Youth
- Carnival Returns to Fair
- Restaurant
- Hotel & Museum Flourish
- Nursing Home
- Youth Involved in Project Development, loving their community, such as Scouts
- Grocery Store
- Tennis & Pickleball Courts
- Save Historic Bank Cornice - Reuse
- Courthouse (Steal it Back)
- More golf carts for seniors and priority parking

- Pick up Trash on properties is improved
- Transform Old Gym to Useful Venue (Exercise, Walking, more Parking)
- Better Internet
- Extend Applefest – Bigger
- Trees in Park
- Trees in City All Over
- Clean up Junk & Buildings for New Businesses
- Mural on Post Office building
- Fix up Downtown Buildings
- Improve Senior Amenities
- Improve Streets
- Upgrade Utilities
- Need All Housing – Apartments to Mansions
- Ice Cream store
- New Gas Station – Quick Stop
- Community Involved – All Time High

DESIGN for the future through priority goals what you hope can be accomplished: participants were asked to consider the preferred future goals they had established and write down one step or goal that would be needed to reach that big Dream goal, using one idea per sheet and 3-5 words on the half sheets provided. Each person provided at least one top priority. SCEDD Facilitators put the half sheets on a wall in themed groups by topic/commonalities and asked participants to provide any additional goals not already identified in a 2nd round. Below is the list of priority goals in groups: X2' indicates 2 people listed the same goal.



COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT	TREES:	BUSINESS INVESTMENT & GROWTH:	TAKING PRIDE IN ORLEANS:	RECREATION ACTIVITIES:
Improve Streets & Sidewalks	<u>Plant Trees in the Park x7</u>	New Gas Station	<u>Tear Down Old Building x6</u>	Carnival and kids' activities return at fair
<u>Fix Bad Sidewalks x3</u>	<u>Better Park Facilities; Grass x2</u>	<u>Ice Cream Shop x2</u>	<u>Clean up Orleans x3</u>	Ask the Kids
Better Streets	Complete Landscaping in the Park	Coffee Time Gathering Place	<u>Empty – Clean Lots – Housing Demo x4</u>	<u>Keep the Pool Open x4</u>
Paint Downtown Stores	A Community Garden	New Grocery Store	Remove Abandoned Houses	Pool Lessons & Volunteer Staff to Fund
<u>Murals on Buildings x2</u>		Open a Cafe	Make Downtown Buildings Safe	Heaters in the Pool
MISCELLANEOUS Topics:		Restaurant – Coffee Shop	Make Fake Store Fronts Historic	Tennis Court & Pickle Ball
All Types of Housing	Semi Annual Community Meeting	Old Gym Revamp	Remove Unlicensed Vehicles	Fishing Access Area

DELIVER the goals that will impact your community: participants identified four priority areas for community improvement. Volunteers then organized themselves into Task Forces to address these priorities by moving to the table designated with the priority in which they were most passionate. Each group worked through a goal setting grid, stating their purpose, members, who else might be asked to help, goals, and actions steps. They were tasked to create a News Headline that states what has been accomplished for their goal in 1-2 years.

Task Force #1: Trees in the Park

Members: Jessica Johnson, Tom Tomas, Cece Tomas, Danielle Shada, Sue Roberts, Bryce Jorgenson, Shelia Shulz, Judy Beck

Who else should be invited: Rolan Gunn, Richard Gunn, Village employees

Purpose: Park Improvement

30-60 Days:

Goal #1: Park Trees Plan

Action Steps: Approve FFA (Alma & Southern Valley schools) plans for tree layout, communicate plan to community

Goal #2: Better thicker grass, thicker

Action Steps: Thick grass in the fall, keep it thick, something with clover

Goal #3: Order trees

Action Steps: Confirm through Steinbrink's as the best source for largest trees available; ask people to fund memorial trees dedicated to loved one.



6 Months:

Goal #1: Plant trees, shrubs, flowers – get volunteers to assist with planting

Goal #2: Memorial Plaques – order and install

Goal #3: Build maintenance plan for tree upkeep and care

One Year:

Goal #1: Water grass and upkeep – make sure grass is coming along

Goal #2: Tree Care – monitor trees growth

Goal #3: Bench improvements – talk to shop classes to build

Who or what resources can help the group address these priorities?

RESOURCE	WHO WILL CONNECT	BY DATE
Robin & Richard for Plan	Bryce	Done
FFAs – Alma & SV	Bryce	Done
Orleans Village	Bryce	Done
Community	Village Board	September

Headline: Made Orleans Green Again!

Task Force #2: Recreation

Members: Michaela Jackson, Natalie Howart, Doug Fischer, Roger King, Deb Moore, Carol Bose, Walt Havenridge

Who else should be invited: kids

Purpose: Have recreation for youth and adults

30-60 Days: 18th Note; 25th Mon, 410pm

Goal #1: Talk to kids for their input – meeting at library, do drawings, ask principal of SV and Alma

Goal #2: Get pickleball on old tennis court – ask Ashley and Wendy to paint and mark both; on Village agenda – Carol; price 4 sets - Natalie

Goal #3: Have adults a place to walk in winter – talk to fair board for Ag Center 2 hours in evening such as 5-7 or 7-9pm – Susan on Board; walking; concern with dogs; in summer – north streets around; ask Lana about gym

**One Year:**

Goal #1: Fix or replace pool

Goal #2: Splash pad with grant

Headline: Get Orleans Moving!

Task Force #3: Take Pride in Orleans

Members: Robin Gunn, Diana Aldrich, Tara Craig, Neal Roberts, Marcia Roberts, Fran Dunlay, Kim Shada, Casey Bantam

Purpose: Clean up our town

30-60 Days:

Goal #1: Create a committee, advertise meeting, talk to people, prioritize properties

Action Steps: Utility superintendent for nuisance enforcements

Goal #2: Talk to owners of vehicles and building,

Action Steps: Clean up old, abandoned buildings and vehicles

Goal #3: Make a list of abandoned buildings, contact people, contractors, volunteers

Action Step: Haul vehicles off, contact property owners willing to clean up or if they need help, encourage youth involvement in clean-up



6 Months:

Goal #1: Buy properties

Action Steps: Contact contractors, equipment, ask to donate equipment

Goal #2: Call Holdrege for dump fees \$ estimate; explore money and grant; repurpose concrete – trail with crushed concrete?

Goal #3: Advertise and find volunteers to help clean up properties; time, labor, equipment; SCEDD – major part?

One Year:

Goal #1: Buildings taken down

Goal #2: New houses going up

Who or what resources can help the group address these priorities?

RESOURCE	WHO WILL CONNECT	BY DATE
Farmers	Rodger Nock will take rock	
Local Businesses	Village Board	
Volunteers – contact Bud White, Richard Gunn		
Community		

Headline: Orleans Creates 20 Properties in 2 Months and Creates New Housing Opportunities

Task Force #4: Community Clean-Up/Improvements

Members: Tyler Shada, James Shada, Mike Shaw, Cindy Callan

Purpose: Community maintenance and improvement

30-60 Days:

Goal #1: Contact Existing owners, reach out to Community; create Clean-up group



Goal #2: Murals – look for supplies, contact property owners, contact would-be volunteers, etc.

Who or what resources can help the group address these priorities?

RESOURCE	WHO WILL CONNECT	BY DATE
Community Clean up – Emily White	Mike Shaw	Aug 12, 2025
Cassie Ekenberg	Cindy Callan, Cassie@inktonsolution.com	
Post Office	Tyler Shada	

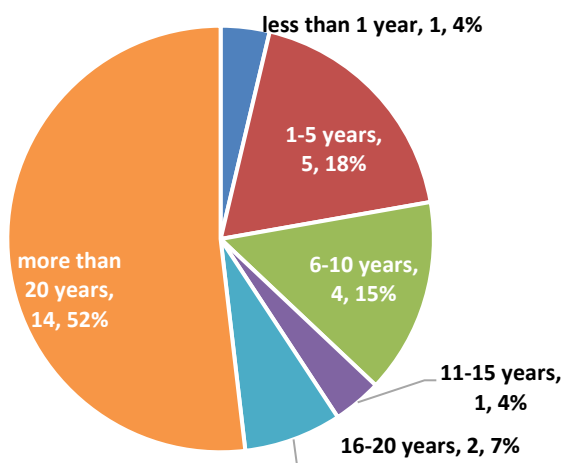
Headline: We Got ‘er Done!



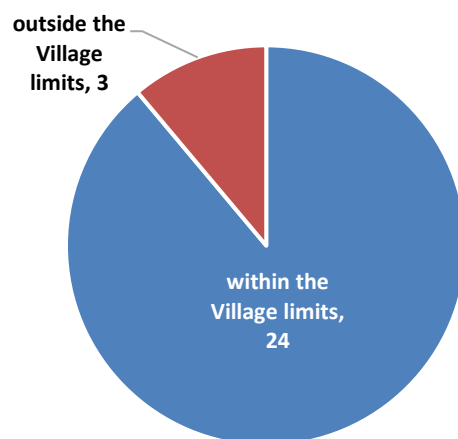
Village of Orleans Town Hall Visioning Public Input Survey – Results

All attendees were encouraged to complete a paper or online survey.
Twenty-seven (27) individuals provided their opinion.

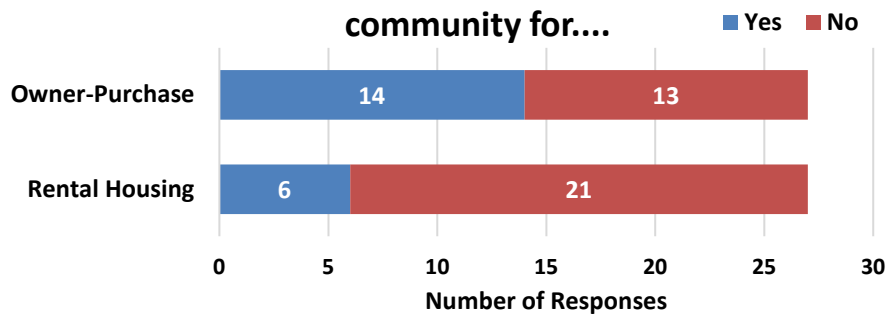
How many years have you lived in the community?



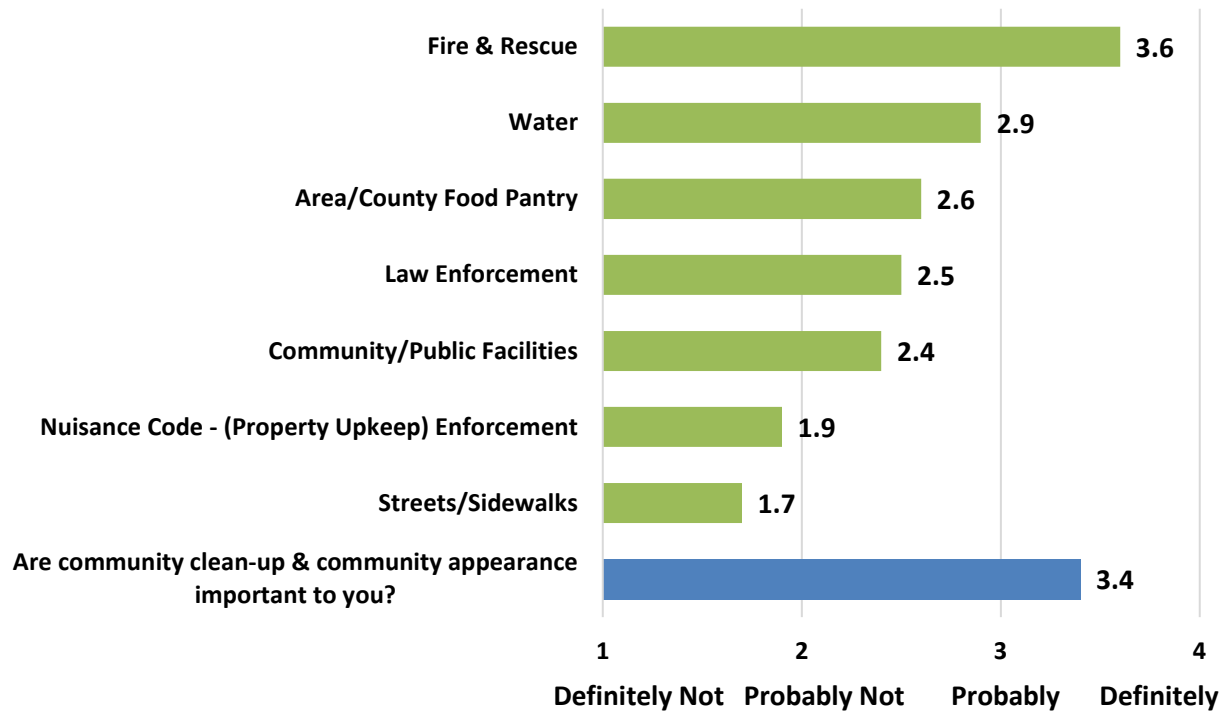
Do you live:



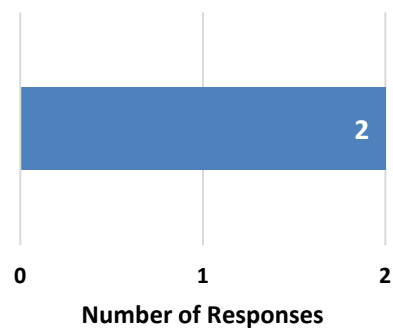
Are you aware of available housing on the community for....



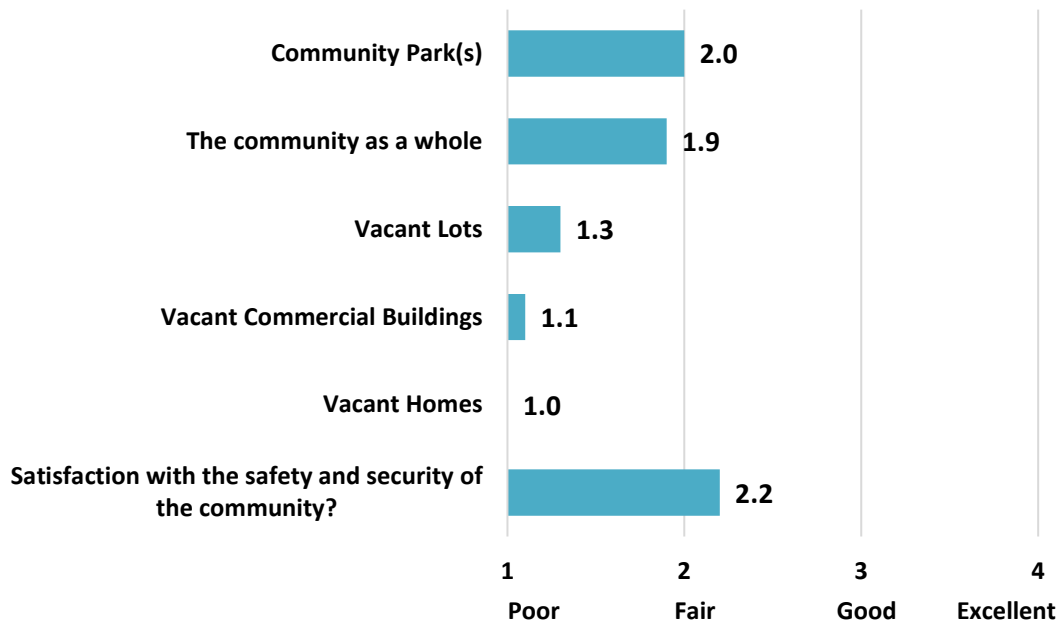
Are you satisfied with the following aspects of community infrastructure or service:



Do you agree with the following statement as it pertains to your household: At least one time within the last 90 days we have worried whether our food would run out before we could afford more?



Please Rate the General Appearance or Condition of...

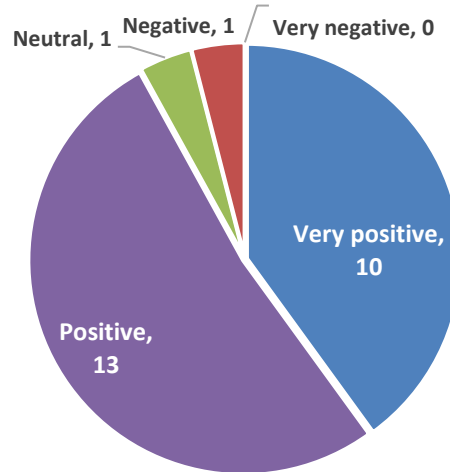


Q20. Explain why you rated the 'General Appearance or Condition' of the Community as a Whole:

Sad almost no business left
Clean up still needs to be done
People and community members that take care of their property
Because we have so many substandard homes and lots
Run-down buildings and homes
There are some really nice places and home in the area, but the ones that are not taken care of really effects the appearance of the town.
Empty house that needs to be removed, junk piled up. Trees need trimming.
Dilapidated
There are some good clean sections of town
The biggest issue in town is the run down/ falling down businesses and homes.
No one cares to keep it clean. No one has pride in the community including the board members.
Lots of abandoned properties. Even some occupied homes are not kept up. Unsafe buildings downtown.
Weeds, junk cars
Some houses/ properties look very nice but lots of unlicensed vehicles and properties that look unkempt and junkie
The town is a junk town.
Our town has gone downhill in the last few years. People just don't care. Sadly, there are only a select few who push to clean up and make our town great again. I am very grateful you are here and excited to see what the future holds!!
Several downtown buildings really need to go now!
As a whole it's ok.

92% of those
responding
indicated
**Community Clean-
up would have a
Positive or Very
Positive impact
on Orleans**

**If community clean-up of empty and/or
dilapidated buildings were addressed, what
impact would this have for our community?**



Q22. Why did you choose the "impact" answer that you did? (describe the possible impact your community may experience)

A clean-looking town is always better than a junky town.

Would look better

More property values

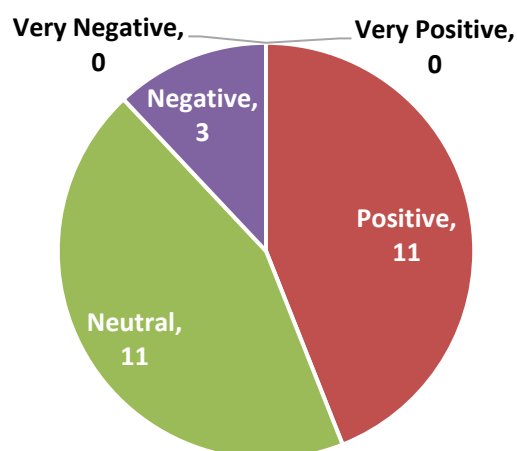
Too many unsafe and unkept buildings do not encourage people to come here or live here or open business here

The empty/ dilapidated buildings are not only an eyesore, they are a hazard to the public.

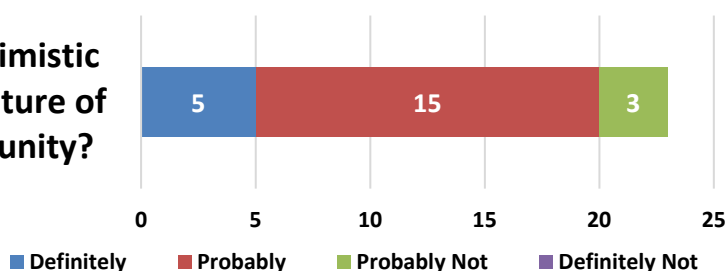
The buildings that are empty have not been taken care of and they are a risk for families and children walking around the town.

If it didn't look like a dump it would be safer and people might want to live here.
Look nicer. Be safer.
Orleans needs to remove falling buildings and houses. Very dangerous
It's the biggest issues in our town. Falling down businesses are a hazard
Very needed
Many failing buildings

Overall, how do you feel about our community?



Are you optimistic about the future of your community?



Q25. What are the best qualities of living in your community?
Nice people!
Quiet and friendly
Friendly
Quiet
Usually quiet
Peaceful
Small town. Cheap to live here

Low cost. Low crime.
Raising children in small town life is wonderful. They are typically "safe"
Small town living, kids can run around without worrying about getting hurt. Everyone knows who they are
Small town.
Small town atmosphere
Small town
Small town. help each other
Small town. Can help each other. Not chaotic like large towns.
Small quiet town
No traffic jams.
Country life

Q26. What project or projects would you like to see accomplished in your community?
Houses and buildings removed
Buildings cleaned up and torn down
Vacant building clean up
Get rid of unsafe buildings downtown.
Clean it up!
Clean up
Tearing down wrecked buildings, getting rid of junk cars
Cleanup of unlicensed vehicles, falling down buildings and houses
Vacants out
Removing the empty buildings. Improving streets and sidewalks. Improving park and pool.
Improve downtown area
Painting of downtown businesses
More business in town. More things for kids to do.
Alot
Trees for the library
Plant trees in the park
Park clean up better grass and more kid friendly amenities. Old buildings torn down.
The park needs updated. Roads and buildings are not very safe.
Trees for library. Splash pad in park/pool.
Community involvement

Q27. Other comments:
Don't want fancy over-regulated life or town. Need emergency power line. Holdrege - people near froze when storm took out power about 17 days in Winter or community heated places for emergency when no power.
I support the library and support and swim in the pool.
Again, grateful you are here and excited to work with you on this!