

South Lyon Business Owner Survey

Friday, October 18, 2019

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Methodology

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Surveys were mailed to XXX business owners in the city of South Lyon in September 2019, with an option to complete the survey online. Reminders to complete the survey were posted on Facebook. Twenty-two responses were received.

Of those:

- Thirteen business owners are in the service industry; 5 are in retail.
- Eleven have 5 or fewer employees.
- Six are age 45 or younger, ten are between 46 and 60, and five are 61 or older.

Due to the low number of responses, caution should be exercised when interpreting the results.

Executive Summary

Doing Business in South Lyon:

Over three-fourths of are somewhat or very likely to recommend starting a business in South Lyon.

- Top business advantages include the supportive community, small town feel, growth, location, and affordability.
- Top disadvantages include heavy traffic, lack of business diversity, issues with city officials/regulations, and high taxes.

Marketing and Advertising:

Of the marketing efforts used by South Lyon businesses, social media and email considered are the most effective.

- Half of responding business owners spend at least \$2000 on advertising each year.
- Nearly two-thirds of respondents expressed interest in group advertising with the City or DDA.

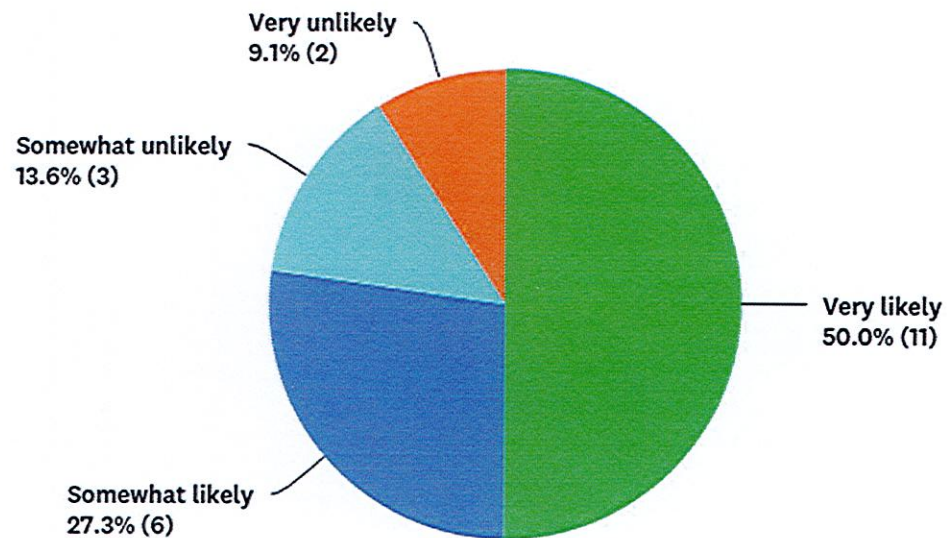
The City of South Lyon and the DDA:

Nearly three in four rate the City as either somewhat or very effective at accommodating business development.

- More than half of responding business owners have interacted with the City within the past 6 months.
- Police, Fire, and DPW are the highest rated departments in the City.
- Improved communication (including through phone calls, Facebook, the City's website, and email) was the most mentioned suggestion for improvement.
- Of respondents who rated the City's website, just over half find it either somewhat or very effective.

Q1: How likely are you to recommend someone to open a business in South Lyon?

Over three-fourths of responding business owners are somewhat or very likely to recommend starting a business in South Lyon.



Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q2: What are South Lyon's three greatest business advantages?

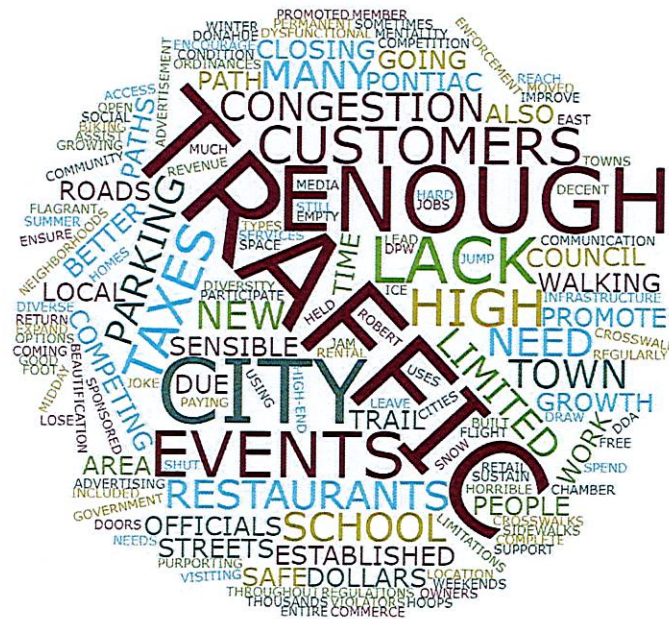
Top mentions include the supportive community and the small town feel, growth, location, and affordability.



Answered: 20 Skipped: 2

Q3: What are South Lyon's three greatest business disadvantages?

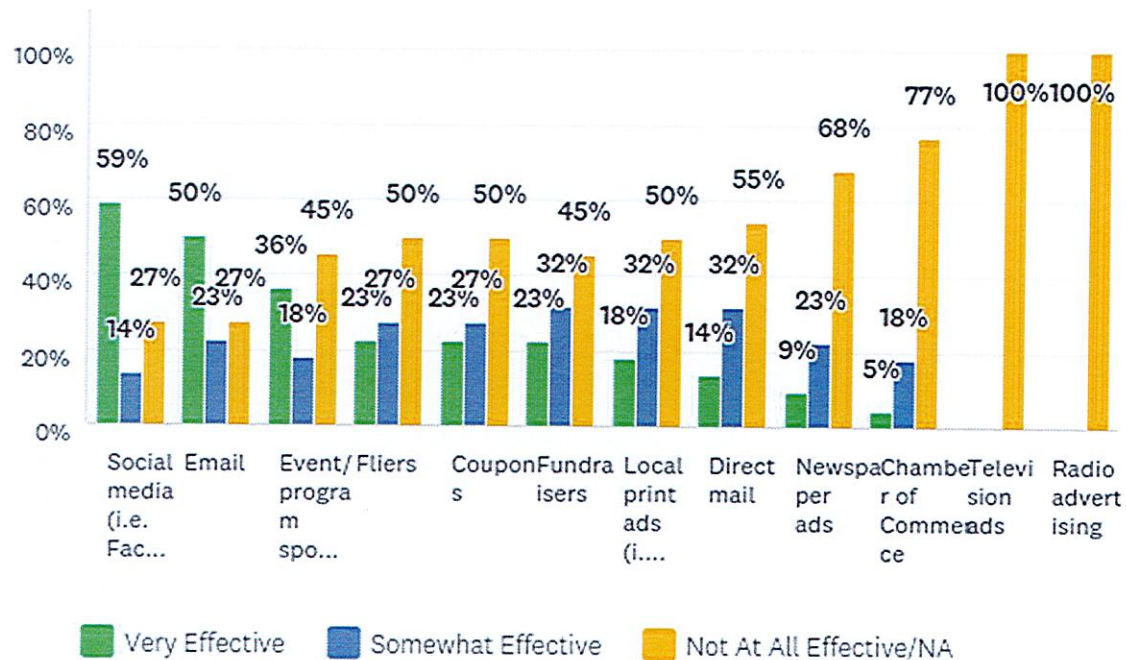
Top mentions include traffic, lack of business diversity, issues with city officials/regulations, and high taxes.



Answered: 20 Skipped: 2

Q4: If your business has used any of the following types of marketing or advertising efforts, how effective have they been for you?

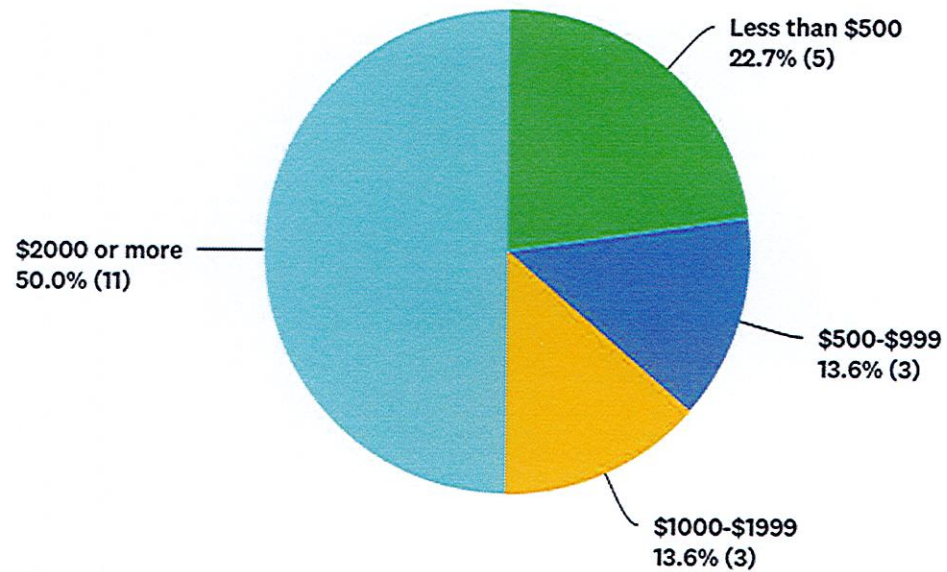
Social media and email are most effective, followed by event sponsorships, fliers, coupons, and fundraisers.



Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q5: Approximately how much does your business spend annually on marketing and advertising?

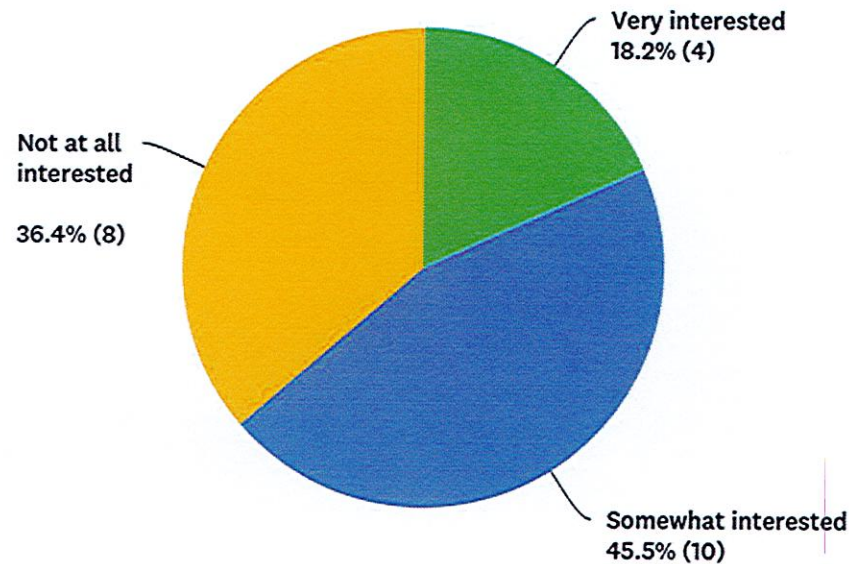
Half of responding business owners spend at least \$2000 on advertising each year.



Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q6: Group advertising programs can be an affordable way for a business to get their name into their target market in a big way. How interested would your business be in participating in group marketing or advertising through the City or the Downtown Development Authority (DDA)?

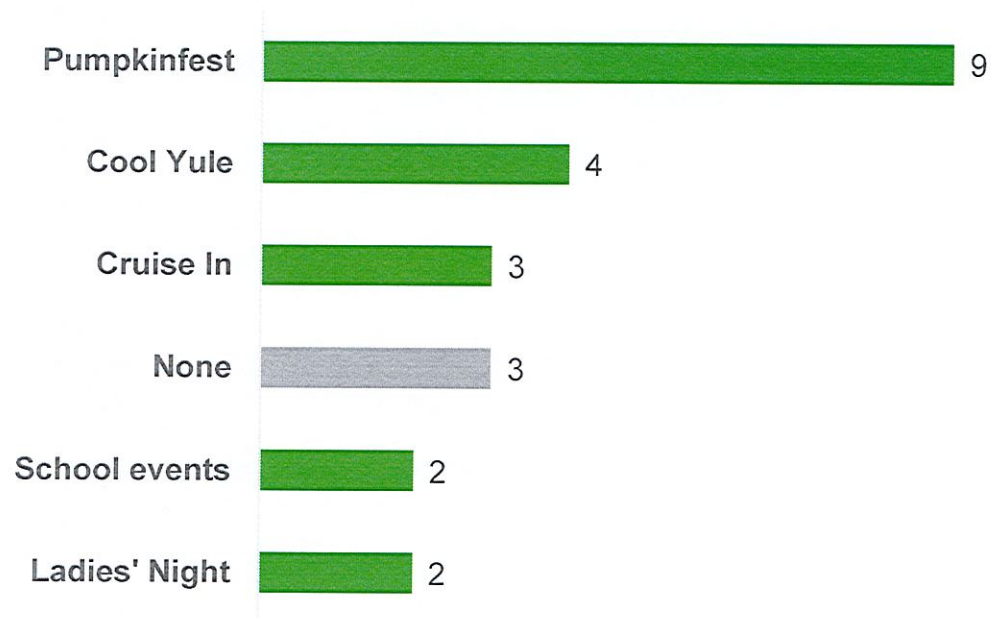
Nearly two-thirds of respondents expressed interest in group advertising with the city or DDA.



Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q7: Are there local events you find beneficial to your business? If so, please list or describe below:

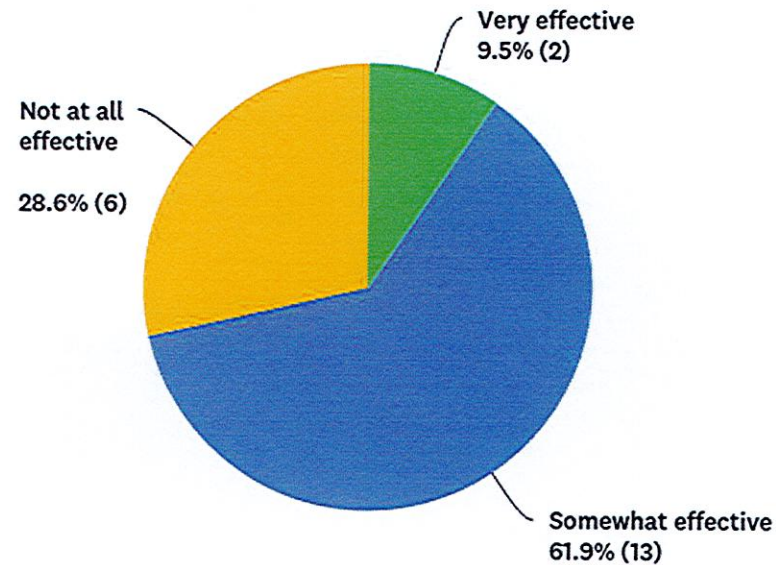
Pumpkinfest was the event most often mentioned as beneficial to business.



Answered: 17 Skipped: 5

Q8: How effective has the City been in recent years accommodating business development and expansion opportunities?

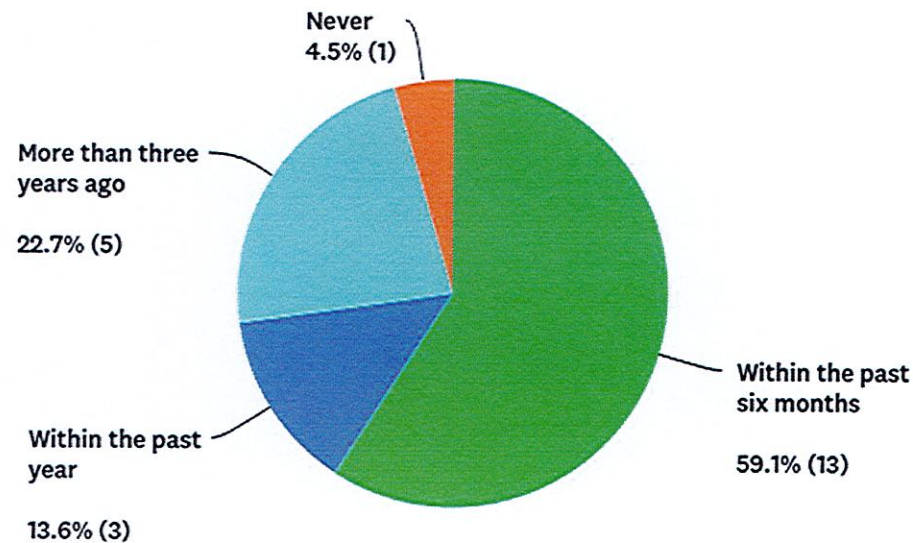
Nearly three in four rate the City as somewhat or very effective at accommodating business development.



Answered: 21 Skipped: 1

Q9: When did you last interact with the City of South Lyon on a business-related issue?

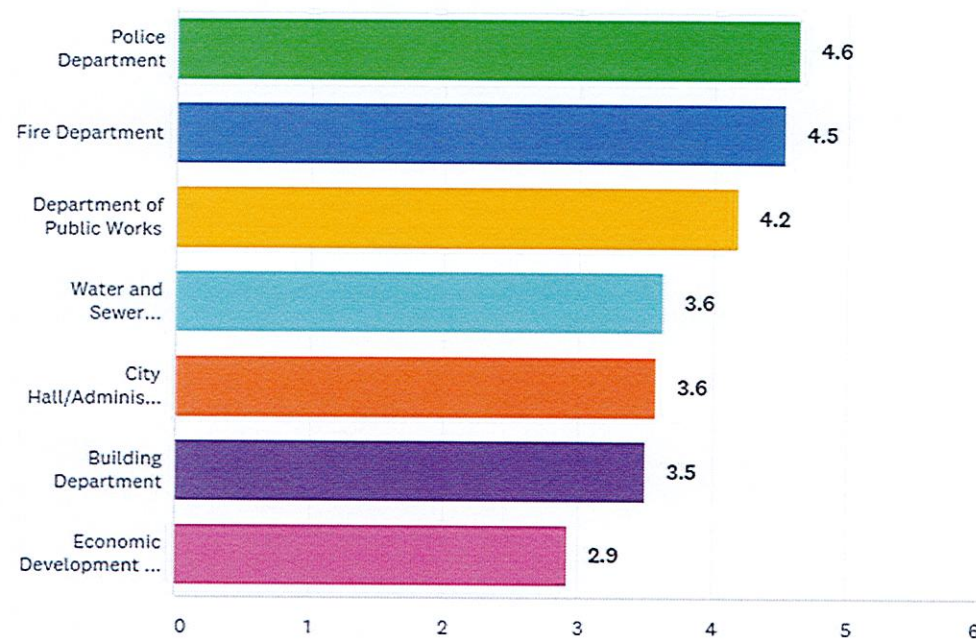
More than half of responding business owners have interacted with the City within the past 6 months; a quarter of them say they've never interacted with the City, or that it's been more than 3 years since their last interaction.



Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q10: If you have interacted with any of the following City departments in recent years, how would you rate them (on a scale of 1 to 5) in terms of providing helpful and/or prompt service?

The Police Department and Fire Department have the highest ratings, with averages of 4.6 and 4.5 respectively.



Answered: 21 Skipped: 1

Q11: What suggestions do you have for improving our services?

Communication

"Communication needs to improve. We have had so many experiences of miscommunication or no communication. City officials taking multiple weeks to reply to an email if at all."

"Friendlier staff and follow through from all."

"Downtown South Lyon [Facebook page] seems to consistently favor the same businesses. (Venue, Corner Cafe, Divine Yoga). Many businesses are located within the city and rarely featured or mentioned. Not sure who runs the [page] but seems biased."

Ordinances

"**Better enforcement** of established ordinances on flagrant violators."

"It took a very long time for the owner of King Plaza to be able to **attain permits** to connect to city water and sewer- it was a disruption to my business during that time as the septic tank was pumped weekly with associated strong odors."

Other

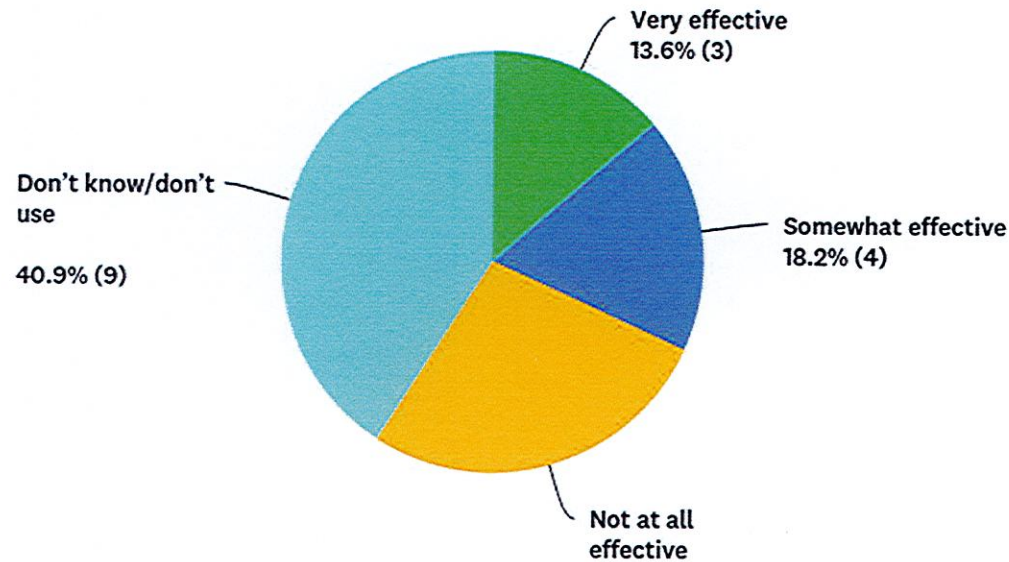
"**Lower taxes** and hence the cost of business."

"Widen Pontiac Trail. Move farmers' market to high school parking lot to make it larger and draw walking traffic past our location."

Answered: 9 Skipped: 13

Q12: The City uses their website (www.southlyonmi.org) to communicate information to its residents and businesses. How effective is this means of communication for your business needs?

Of the 13 respondents who rated the website, just over half find it either somewhat or very effective.



Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q13: If you don't find the website effective, what improvements would you recommend, or what other means of communication would you prefer?

Website

"Be sure to keep the website **up to date**."

"It needs to be **more current** and have **more content**."

"Better website, **up-to-date** information, **easier to navigate**, more **promotional events**, more **advertising**, etc."

"Make it **user friendly**."

Facebook

"Social media presence from City Hall would help tremendously. I do not know anyone who randomly visits the city website to look for updates. It is a fine place to put information and updates, but adding social to inform people of updates would be an improvement. The police, fire and schools do a great job posting and updating on social sites, City Hall needs to catch up to really properly communicate. As an example, both the Police and Fire Departments posted a reminder about this survey, we could not find anything from City Hall... There is a Downtown South Lyon page, not sure if this a city page or not, even if it is, only posts about the DDA area, which has not benefit to me or my business."

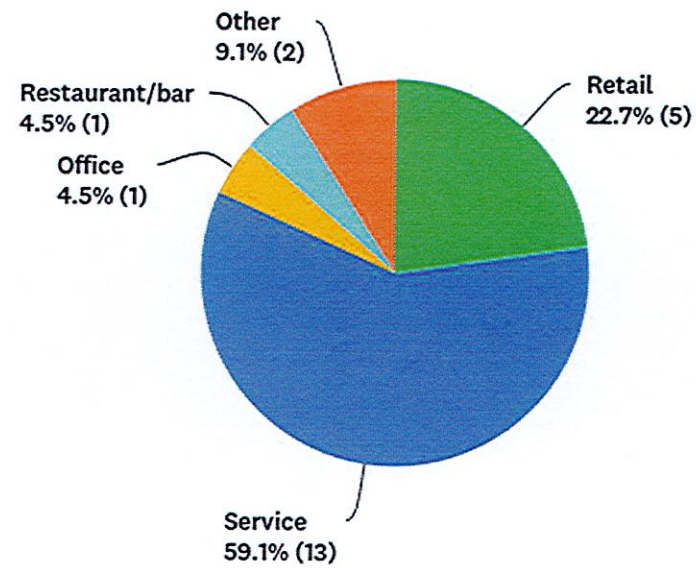
Email

"Need proactive "pushes" versus looking for information. Send emails. Collect emails from businesses within the city."

"I prefer emails."

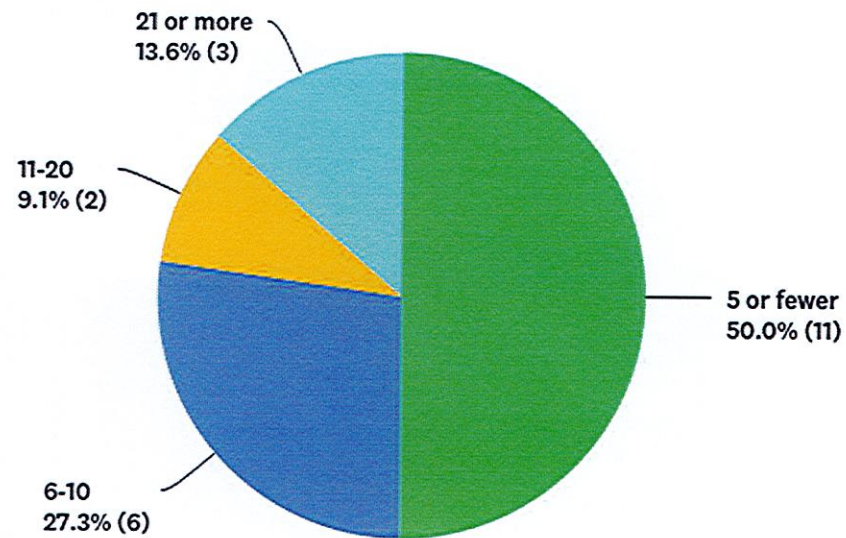
Answered: 10 Skipped: 12

Q14: What type of business do you operate?



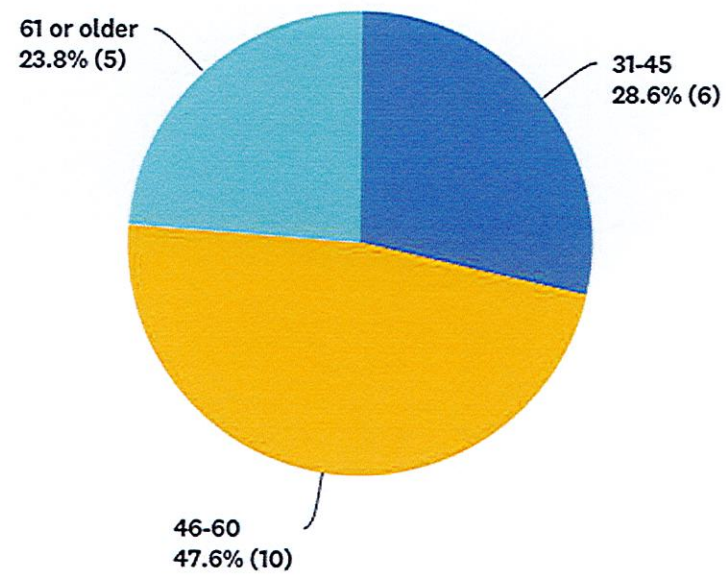
Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q15: How many people are employed at your business?



Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

Q16: What is your age?



Answered: 21 Skipped: 1

Q17: If you have any other comments that haven't been addressed above, please enter them here:

Communication Issues

"An upper level staff member that works at city does not return phone calls or emails. Hard to promote business and city when emails and phone calls not returned."

"Lack of city sponsored events, poor communication with downtown businesses, very poor choices of event dates with no survey of business input, no return phone calls."

"The Downtown South Lyon Facebook page STILL lists former City Manager Lynne Ladner as the contact in two different places! On the Events page listing, there have been no events posted since November 2017. Also, since August 27th, there have been 60 posts, with 20 posts being of one of three downtown businesses."

Other Issues

"Stop building stuff there are already enough vacant buildings in South Lyon and Lyon township."

"The 2 mechanic places in town are eye sores to the downtown area."

Positive Feedback

"I love The City of South Lyon."

"Keep pushing forward."

"I love to practice my profession in the South Lyon community. It is a wonderful close knit community! Also the police department has been extraordinarily helpful in the past when they responded to past incidences that occurred with previous neighbor tenants. Thank you!"

Answered: 10 Skipped: 12