

# IMPACT OF SOUND ON SCOTTSDALE

Prepared for City of Scottsdale  
December 26, 2023

Scottsdale Citizens Engagement Platform

A plan and purpose for the future!

# PLEASE NOTE

Please Note: The findings from the report on Impact of Sound in Scottsdale are the ideas, options, and suggestions gathered from the members of the Speak up Scottsdale STREAM community and are not necessarily a reflection of all citizens of Scottsdale. This report may refer to Speak Up Scottsdale community members as respondents, community members, participants, and/or SUS members.

# OVERVIEW

One Hundred of the Speak Up Scottsdale members participated in the Impact of Sound in Scottsdale Questionnaire. Before beginning the questionnaire, members were invited to view the Impact of Sound in Scottsdale YouTube Video.

The questionnaire was designed with four sections each featuring a specific scenario respondents were asked to contemplate.

The questionnaire is comprised of twenty-seven questions:

- 3 Choice
- 10 Open-end questions
- 14 Yes/No (nominal scale) with an option for other please explain

Questionnaire commenced: November 16, 2023

Closed: December 1, 2023



# IMPACT OF SOUND IN SCOTTSDALE

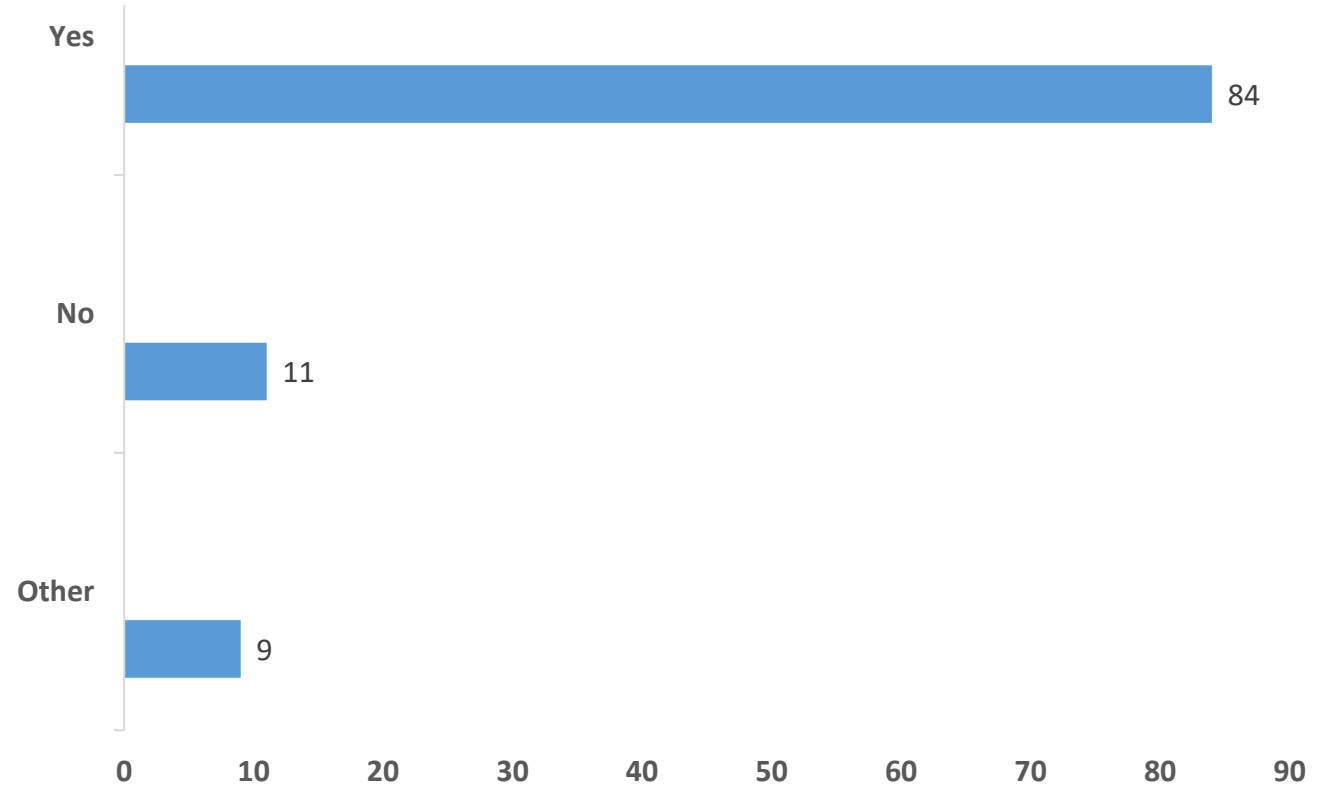


# SCENARIO 1

## ELECTRIC VIBE NIGHT CLUB

Speak Up Scottsdale (SUS) Members were asked, "The Electric Vibe, a nightclub known for its great dance music and high energy, located in a vibrant area of the city with many restaurants, great shopping and other entertainment venues. Mr. Smith A resident who lives 1 mile from the nightclub, in an area that is close to all the amenities that he loves. Scenario Its fall and the weather is finally cooling down to where windows can be kept open at night. Its 11:52pm on a Thursday night and the music coming from the Electric Vibe is pounding so loud that he can't sleep."

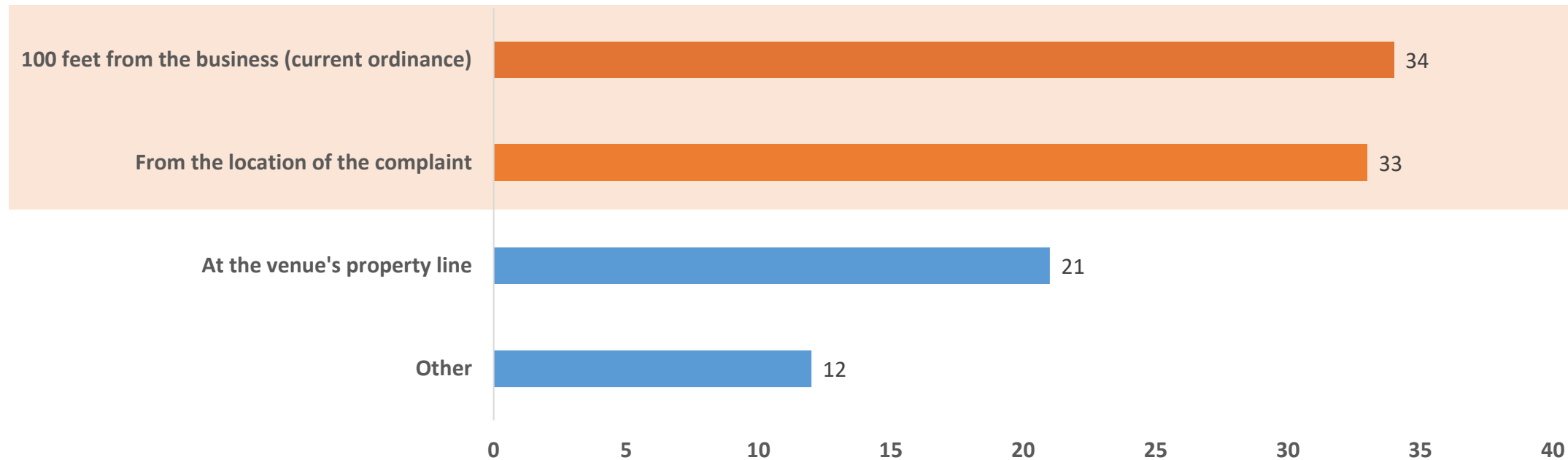
Of the 100 members 84% (84) **believe a noise decibel level should be implemented as a measure of criteria.**



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## SCENARIO 1

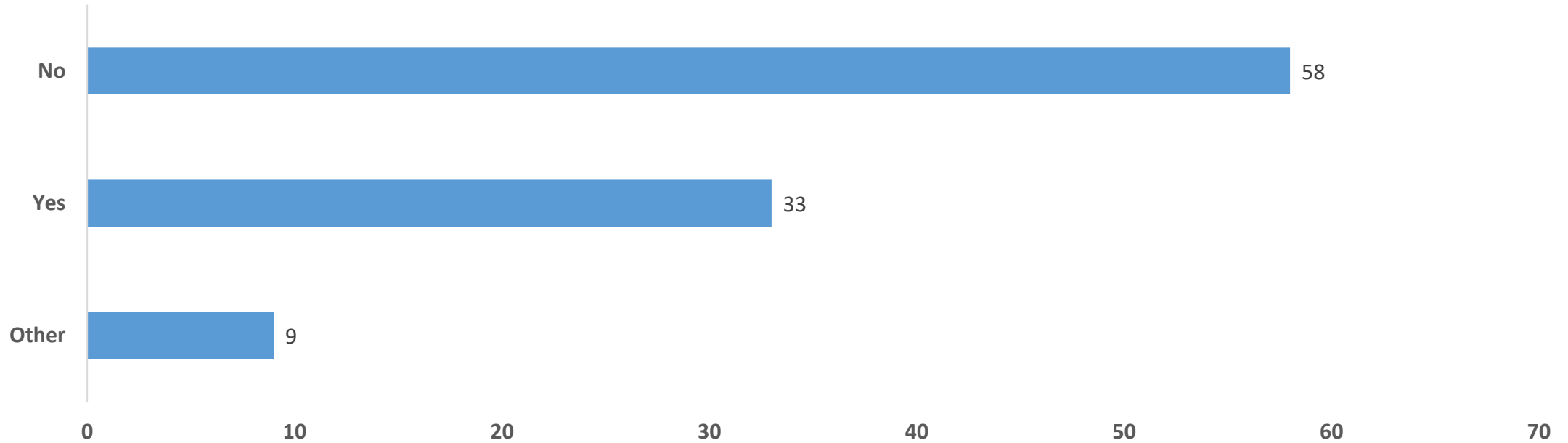
SUS members felt the **decibel level should be measured either from the location of the complaint** (34) or **100 feet from the business** (current ordinance)(33). And 21 members felt decibel level should be measured at the venue's property line. 12 of respondents indicated *Other*.



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## SCENARIO 1

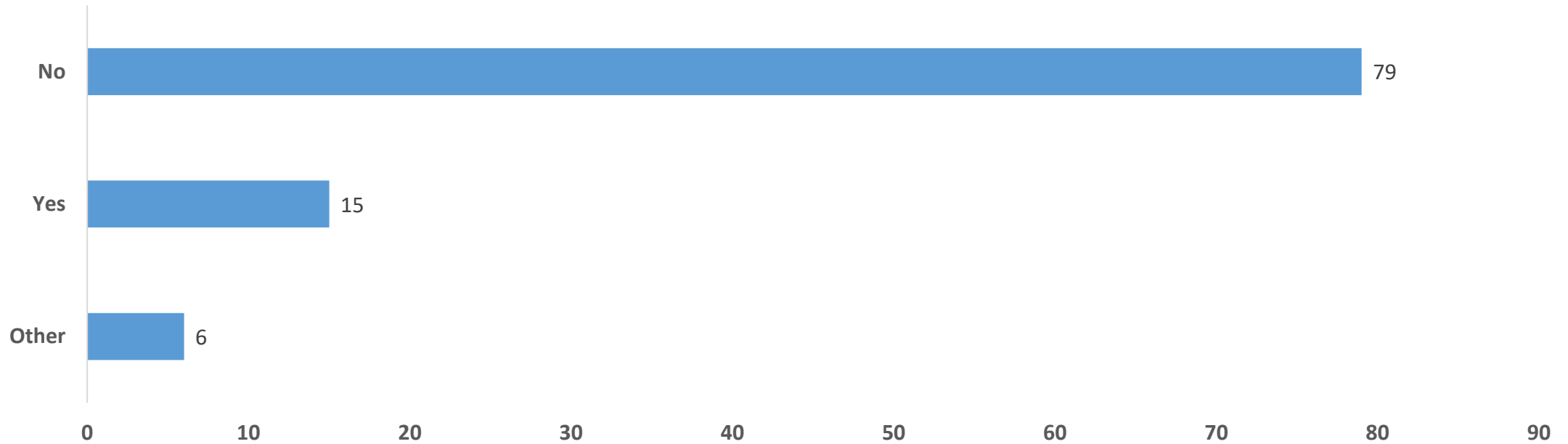
Of the 100 SUS Members, 58 of respondents indicated *No*, **to exceptions for event season such as spring training or WMPO**, and 33 of the respondents indicated *Yes*, and 9 respondents indicated *Other*.



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## SCENARIO 1

79 of respondents indicated *No*, **exceptions made if it was in the middle of summer and windows were closed**, 15 of respondents indicated *Yes*, and 6 respondents indicated *Other*.

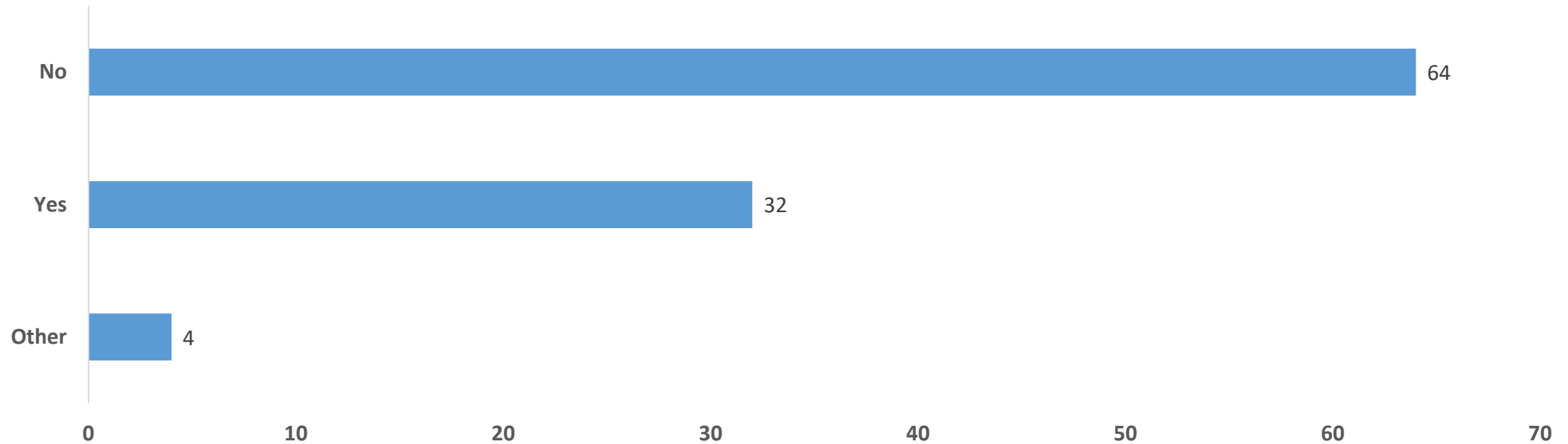


#q5



## SCENARIO 1

64 of respondents indicated *No*, **exception made if this was at 3:00 p.m. on a Saturday or a Tuesday**, 32 of respondents indicated *Yes*, and 4 of respondents indicated *Other*.



#q6

# SCENARIO 1

48 of respondents provided additional comments regarding Scenario 1.

Six themes were revealed from their comments:

**Distance & Disturbance** - Underlines the influence of residential location choices on noise level expectations.

**Noise Tolerance** - Discusses the balance between regular sleeping hours and acceptable noise levels.

**Nightlife & Awareness** - Acknowledges the fact that living near nightlife and areas of entertainment often comes with higher noise levels, and that this should be considered when choosing a residence.

**Peaceful Environment** - Identifies periods when peace and quiet are expected in residential areas, particularly during sleeping hours on weekdays.

**Noise Adjustments** - Suggests that the acceptable noise levels may change depending on the season or during certain times that are deemed 'allowable'.

**Complaint Verification** - Addresses the conflicts that can arise between residential peace and business activities.

Most Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Distance & Disturbance	13
Noise Tolerance	13
Nightlife & Awareness	10
Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Peaceful Environment	6
Less Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Noise Adjustment	2
Complaint Verification	2
Other	3

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# SCENARIO 1



# SCENARIO 2

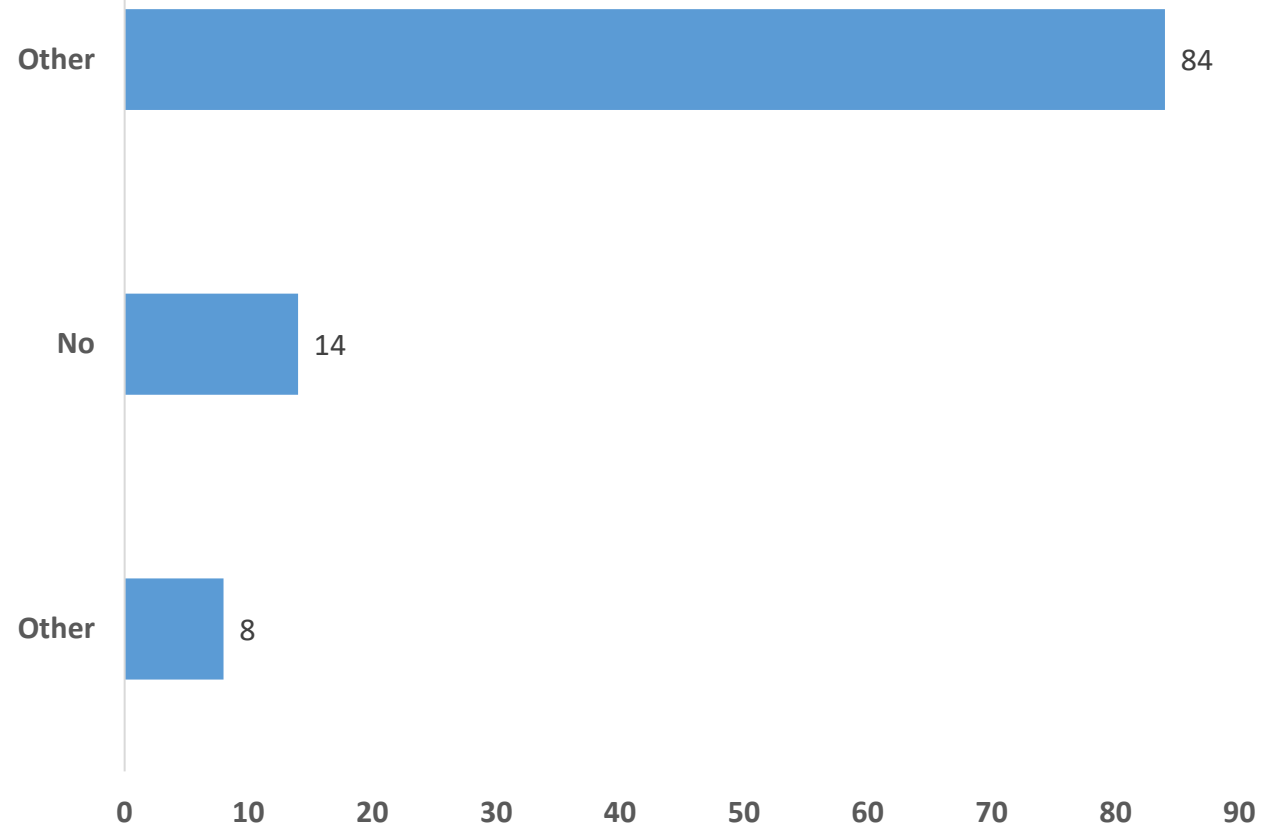


## SCENARIO 2

### MRS. PORTMAN

Respondents were asked, "Uptown An area of the city with multiple nightclubs, restaurants, and bars. Great atmosphere for people wanting to celebrate and walk between establishments. Mrs. Portman A resident who lives across the street in a condo complex. Issue Mrs. Portman calls PD at 10 p.m. on a Friday to complain about the noise. Just after midnight on Saturday, she calls again stating that the music was not lowered. She says she has a sound level meter on her phone and the readings are in excess of 60dB so she wants a citation issued. At 1:22 a.m. Saturday, she claims the noise level has risen even louder than the previous calls. She is exasperated and wants something to be done about the noise."

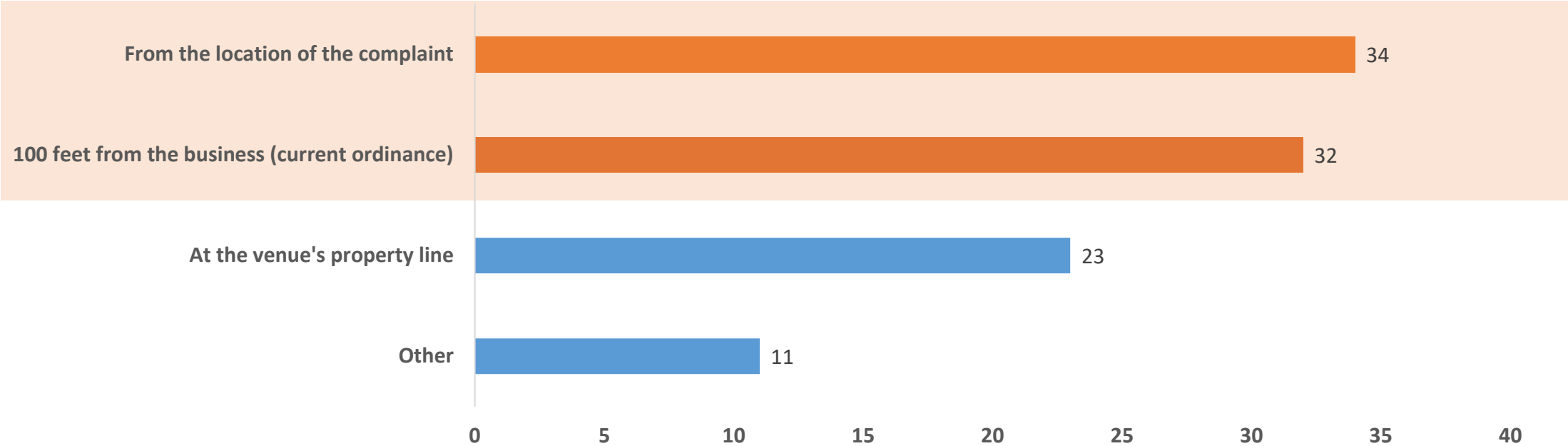
Most respondents selected Yes (84), a **noise decibel level should be implemented as a measure of criteria** and a few respondents selected No (14). While a fewer respondents selected Other (8).



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## SCENARIO 2

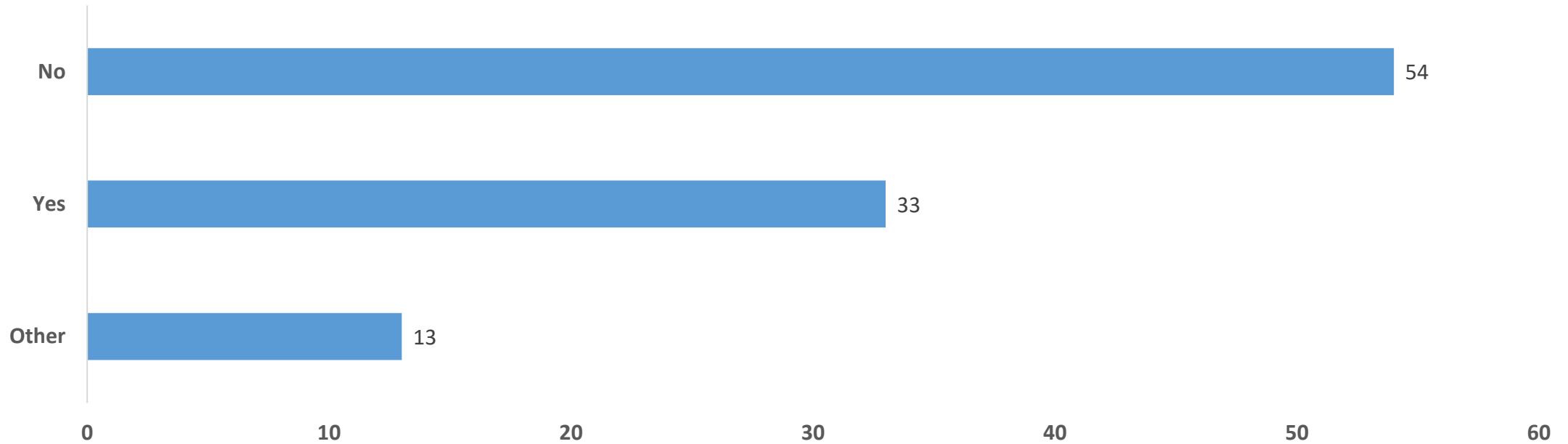
Members were asked at which **distance should the decibel level should be measured**. Noise complaint's measurement was almost evenly divided between location of the complaint (34 responses) and 100 feet from the business as per the current ordinance (32 responses). 23 respondents preferred measurements from the venue's boundary line, 11 Other.



#q10

## SCENARIO 2

54 of respondents indicated *No*, **to does it matter that Mrs. Portman lives in the vicinity of the establishments vs. Mr. Smith's location in the previous scenario**, while 33 of respondents indicated *Yes*, and 13 of respondents indicated *Other*.



#q11

## SCENARIO 2

The six themes surfaced from common threads and key ideas within the responses by SUS members regarding how Scottsdale PD should determine which venue Mrs. Portman is complaining about.

**Officer's On-Site Interaction** - Emphasizes the role of police officers visiting the complaint location, listening to the noise, and assessing the situation.

**Decibel Measurement & Actions** - Centers around the practical use of technical tools and measurements to identify noise levels, take necessary action.

**Communication and Identification** - Focuses on the necessity of clear communication and accurately identifying the source of noise.

**Strict Regulations** - Suggests that prioritizing noise complaints should be based on their severity and adherence to rules.

**Uncertain** - Respondents were not sure how to answer.

**Use of Common Sense** - Underscores the importance of sensibility, experience, and intuition in resolving noise complaints.

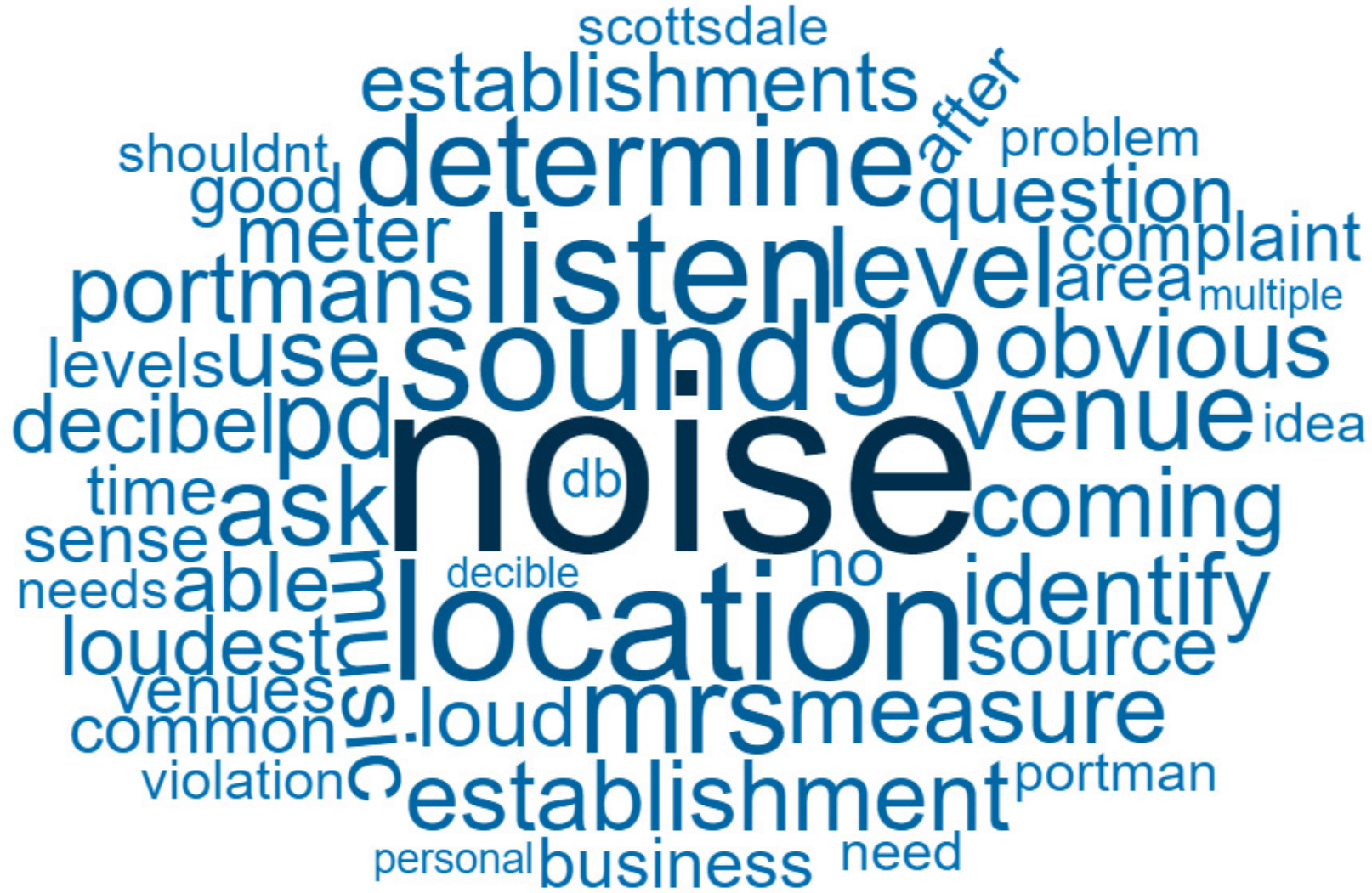
**Proactive Assessment** - Highlights the importance of observation, investigation, and detective work in addressing noise complaints.

Most Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Officer's On-Site Interaction	26
Decibel Measurement & Actions	18
Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Communication and Identification	15
Strict Regulations	11
Uncertain	10
Use of Common Sense	10
Less Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Proactive Assessment	8
Other	7

#q12



## SCENARIO 2



## SCENARIO 2

All 100 respondents provided thoughts on the consequence for violating the noise ordinance. Two categories surfaced: **Solutions** and **Opinions** regarding noise ordinance violations. The solutions suggest a tiered approach, starting with a warning, then escalating fines, and ultimately the suspension or loss of the business license. The frequency and gravity of offenses dictate the consequences.

In contrast, the opinions cover various approaches from affordable fines, escalating monetary penalties, to the potential closure and loss of license.

Most respondents reflect an agreement and the need for a fine or penalty system to maintain noise level regulations.

Solutions	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Fines	44
<b>Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Course of action	25
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Close the violating establishment	6
Warning	5
Opinions	
<b>Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Opinions	10
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Uncertain	5

#q13

## SCENARIO 2

A word cloud visualization of public feedback. The words are in shades of blue and are arranged in a cluster. The largest words are 'fine', 'warning', and 'compliance'. Other prominent words include 'fines', 'license', 'noise', 'music', 'violation', 'shut', 'time', 'increasing', 'escalating', 'establishment', 'closure', 'operate', 'venue', 'repeated', 'heavy', 'followed', 'period', 'citation', 'shut', 'think', 'third', 'months', 'monetary', 'event', 'violation', 'loss', 'business', 'license', 'infraction', 'violations', 'after', 'point', 'sound', 'fourth', 'permits', 'offenders', 'repeat', 'day', 'penalty', 'offense', 'week', '3rd', and 'potential'.

## SCENARIO 2

Four themes were uncovered from 30 additional explanations regarding Scenario 2.

**Solutions and Adaptations to Noise Issues** - Encompasses proposed solutions and adaptations to noise problems.

**Living Location and Noise Expectations** - Touches on the concept of personal responsibility when choosing places to live known for higher noise levels, such as near airports or entertainment districts.

**Noise Control and Regulations** - Relate to ideas about how noise can be better managed and regulated.

**Public Interest versus Business Operations** - Focuses on weighing the broader public's interest (including quality of life, nighttime peace, and public health) against the needs of businesses to operate, particularly those that

#q14 may generate significant noise.

Most Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Solutions and Adaptations to Noise Issues	10
Living Location and Noise Expectations	8
Noise Control and Regulations	7
Less Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Public Interest versus Business Operations	4

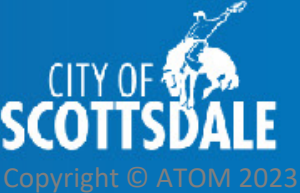
## SCENARIO 2



# SCENARIO 3



**Speak Up**  
Scottsdale



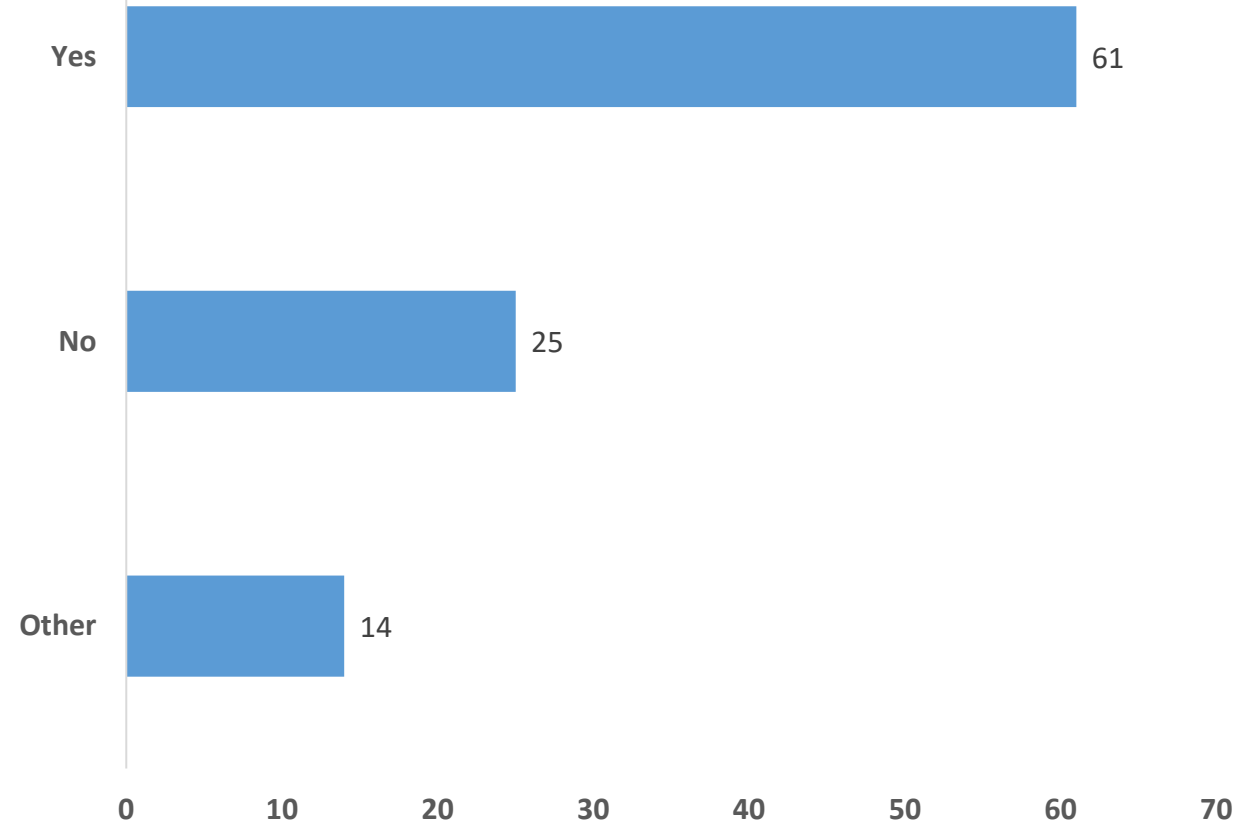
## SCENARIO 3

### THE ORCHARD A BOUTIQUE

SUS Members were asked, "The Orchard A boutique development containing restaurants, shops, upstairs office space and open-air courtyards. About a year ago, one of the establishments renovated their restaurant to include a back patio where patrons can listen to recorded music while they dine. The Villas A small enclave of homes that were built many years before the development of The Orchard. Some units about the Orchard parking, service areas and the restaurant's back patio. Issue Residents complain of loud gatherings at night where music can be heard from open to close. They feel The Orchard needs to stop this music outdoors if its to the point that the residents can hear it. They say it is very loud and conflicts with the rights of quiet enjoyment of homes in their neighborhood. The Orchard is in compliance with the city ordinance. The restaurant owners and managers say they are tired of ongoing complaints from the neighborhood when they have repeatedly shown themselves to be operating within the rules."

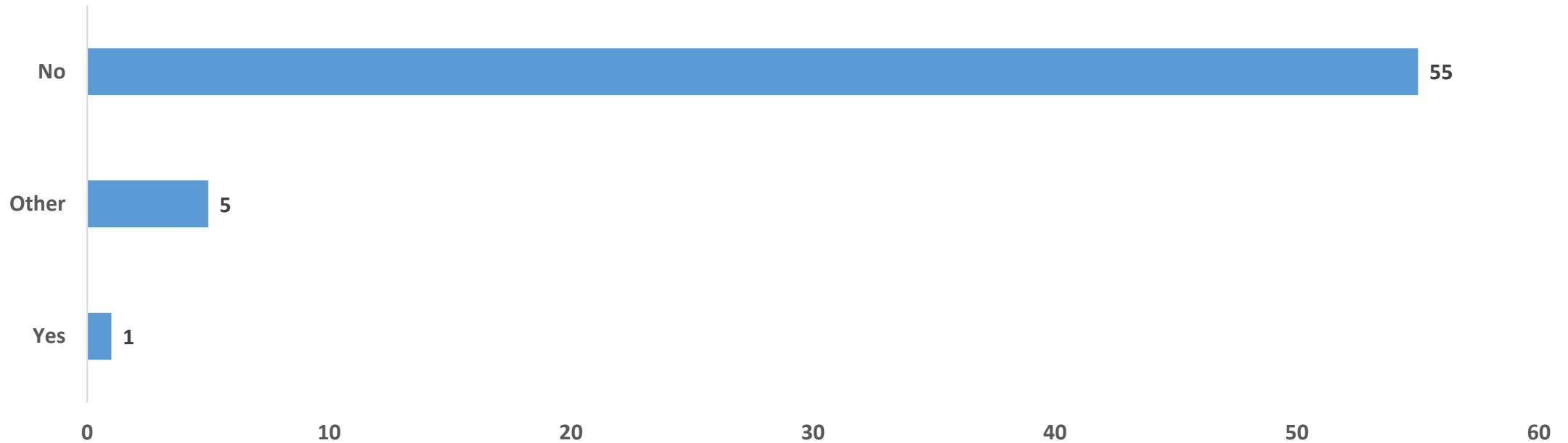
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61 members out of 100 responded **Yes to change the current ordinance**. One quarter (25 members) indicated *No*; 14 members selected *Other*.



### SCENARIO 3

61 members responded to if **there is a change to the ordinance, should The Orchard be grandfathered under the current ordinance**, of which 55 members responded *No*, 5 indicate *Other*, and 1 selected *Yes*.



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## SCENARIO 3

SUS members were asked to respond to the type of sound or music that should be addressed in an updated ordinance.

Six categories surfaced with a subcategory of other:

**Noise Type** - Ranges from amplified music to percussive or droning sounds, any loud sounds, or anything produced by commercial establishments.

**Decibel Level** - Concerns over anything over a set decibel limit, bass vibrations, and the volume of music across different genres.

**Time Regulations** – Related to noise disturbances that occur particularly after a certain hour, indicating a need for controls based on the time of day.

**Geographic Considerations** – Attention to noise in particular spaces such as outdoor areas or specific establishments, indicating a need for spatially specific noise regulations.

**Sound Regulations** - The need for comprehensive and fair noise regulations, focusing on equitable enforcement across different music types and various establishments.

**Community Engagement** - Suggestions for community meetings, noise ordinances based on local considerations, and engagement between businesses and residents highlight a desire for community-driven solutions.

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### SCENARIO 3

<b>Noise</b>	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
All or Any	24
<b>Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Music Type	15
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Vibration	6
Amplified	5

<b>Decibel Level and Restrictions</b>	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Violation of decibel level	6
Noise Level	5
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Decibel complaints	1

<b>Time Regulations</b>	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Time of Day	7

<b>Geographic Considerations</b>	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Outside	2
Residents	2
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Property Value	1
Residential areas	1

<b>Sound Regulations</b>	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Restrict noise	4
<b>Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Ordinance	2
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Materials requirements	1

<b>Other</b>	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
None, N/A	9
Suggestions	7
<b>Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Solution	4
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Uncertain	2

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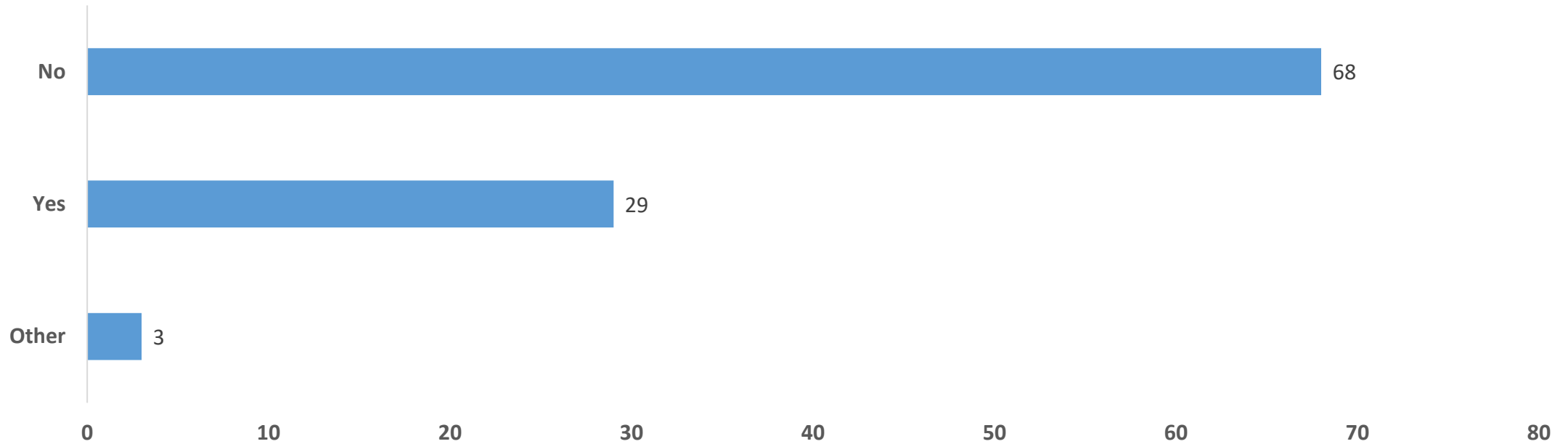
# SCENARIO 3



#q18

### SCENARIO 3

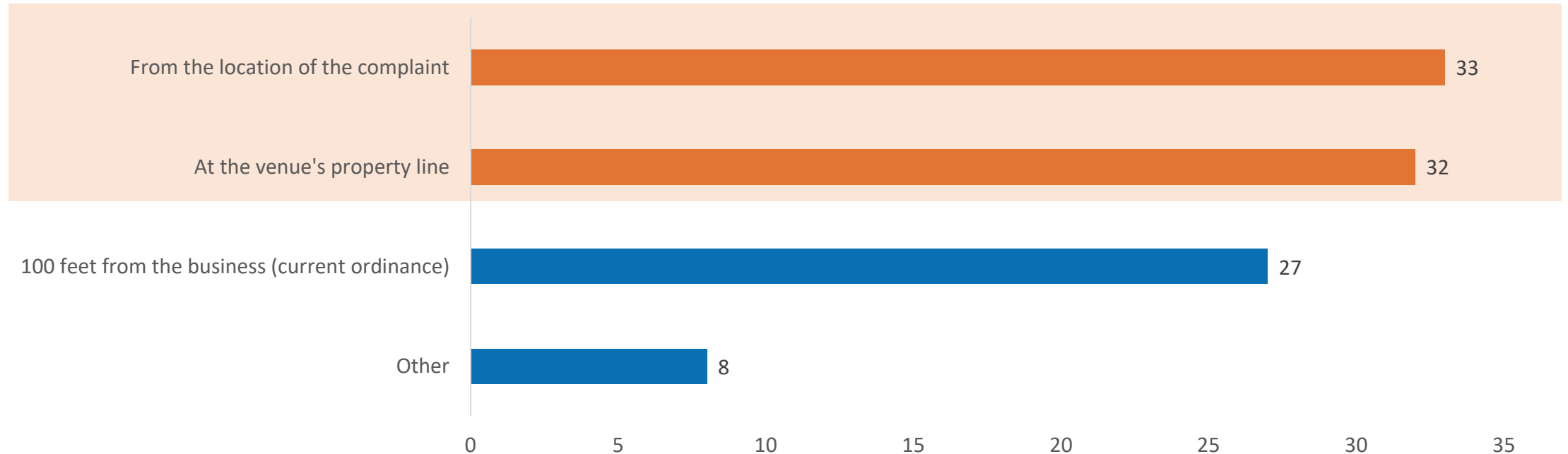
68 members out of 100 responded *No* to **does it matter that the Orchard is part of a development vs being located within the Entertainment District**. 29 members respondent *Yes*, and 3 members selected *Other*.



#q19

## SCENARIO 3

SUS members felt the **decibel level should be measured either from** the location of the complaint (33) or should be measured at the venue's property line (32). While 27 members felt decibel level should be measured at 100 feet from the business (current ordinance) and 8 members selected Other.



#q20

## SCENARIO 3

Twenty-five members of SUS provided additional responses to scenario 3. Their comments were sorted into five categories:

**City Planning and Growth** - Discussions around the city's responsibility for urban planning and its role in approving establishments.

**Noise Regulation and Measurement** - Refers to ways of regulating and measuring noise within the city.

**Respect for Residential Rights** - Comments about the rights of residential property owners.

**Solutions, Compromises, and Enforcement** - Are ideas for resolving the noise issue, including potential compromises and enforcement strategies.

**Community Opinion** - Encompasses opinions from community members on noisy disturbances and the broader implications for public health.

Most Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Community Opinion	9
Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Solutions, Compromises and Enforcements	4
Respect for Residential Rights	4
Noise Regulation and Measurement	4
Less Frequently Mentioned Responses	
City Planning and Growth	2
Other	2

#q21

# SCENARIO 3



# SCENARIO 4





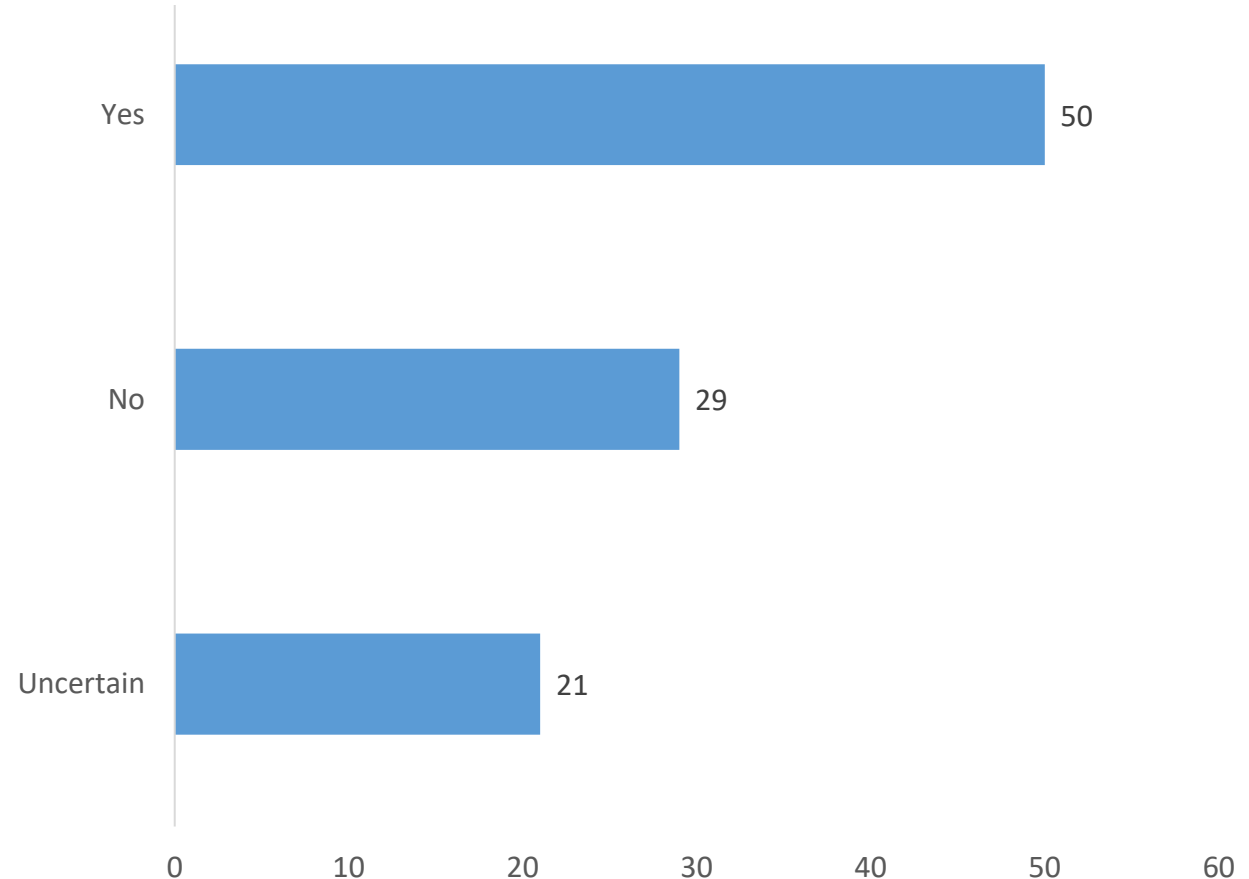
# SCENARIO 4

## COUNTRY ACRES COUNTRY CLUB

Country Acres Country Club A beautiful country club with stunning views, a lake that runs around the perimeter and a well-known golf course. It hosts many events due to its large club house and expansive grassy area. Country Acres Estates A residential community within the development that is very family-oriented with many children. Issue Its spring, the Club is hosting a spring festival. While mostly attended by residents, the event is also open to the public. As a fundraiser, the Club hired an auctioneer to assist with the silent auction and an emcee to relay announcements over the loudspeaker. There are food trucks, a few carnival games and a movie being shown on a large screen at the far end of the grassy area. The event is scheduled to run until 11pm. Police began receiving complaints at 8pm and continued through the evening, from nearby residents complaining about the loudspeaker and the sound from the outdoor movie. At midnight, the calls turn to complaints related to the beeping coming from the trucks backing in, canopies being taken down and the tent poles clamoring to the ground.

#q23

**Members provided their opinions on whether the complaints are valid.** 50 members affirmed the complaints' validity, 29 members negated the complaints' validity, 21 members were unsure about the complaints' validity.



## SCENARIO 4

SUS Community provided explanation on whether the complaints are valid. Several themes surfaced from their comments.

**Noise Disruption** - Noise itself being a disruption to the resident's peace or daily living.

**Event Timing** - Refers to specifics about when the noise or event happens.

**Complaint Validity** - Covers all responses expressing an opinion on whether raised complaints are justified.

**Jurisdiction and Responsibility** - Regarding the roles and responsibilities of city officials, event organizers, and citizens.

**Frequency of Events** - Comments about the issue of how often the noise or event happens.

**Noise Limits and Permits** - Responses in this category relate to the existence, enforcement, or need for official noise limits or permits.

**Teardown and Event Wrap-up** - Responses discussing the timeframe post-event.

**Uncertainty** - Encapsulates responses reflecting confusion or a lack of knowledge regarding events, noise control ordinances or community decisions.

**Frequency of Events and Community Awareness** - While sorting through responses, it became evident that the frequency of the event and the awareness of community members played a large role in their reactions.

**Legal Entitlement and Responsibility** - Similarly, several responses addressed the legal responsibilities of event organizers and community members.

**Community Events** - Responses that expressed a more positive or accepting view of the event suggested the presence of another dimension that wasn't captured by the original categories: the perception of the event as a shared and communal experience, thus warranting the creation of this new category.

**Location and Zoning** - Several responses brought up questions about the proximity of residential areas to event venues, and whether residents should expect disturbances given their location.

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# SCENARIO 4

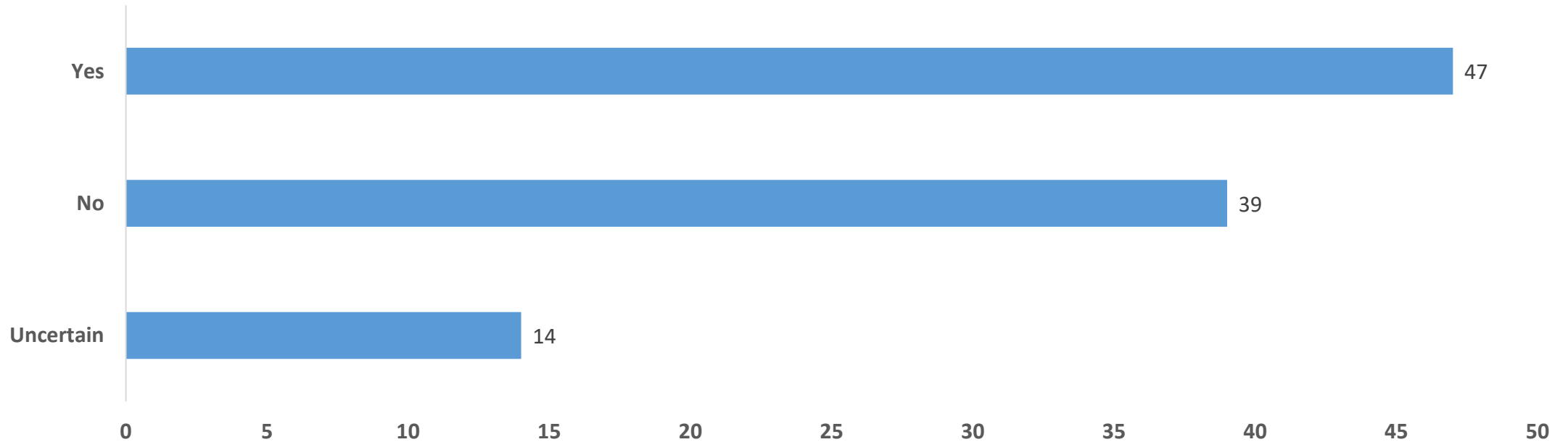
Explanations	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Noise Disruption	17
Event Timing	16
<b>Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Frequency of Events	11
Complaint Validity	10
Teardown and Event Wrap-up	9
Frequency of Events and Community Awareness	7
Jurisdiction and Responsibility	7
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Location and Zoning	5
Community Events	5
Legal Entitlement and Responsibility	5
Noise Limits and Permits	5
Uncertainty	3

#q24



## SCENARIO 4

47 of respondents indicated *Yes* **that time of the complaint matters**, while 39 of respondents indicated *No*, and 14 of respondents indicated *Uncertain*.



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## SCENARIO 4

There are 8 key categories were uncovered relating to considerations or actions event venues should take prior to the event occurring:

**Event permissions and restrictions** - Requiring permits; disclosure to home purchasers that events will be occurring regularly.

**Noise management** - Refers to noise control and event timing.

**Communication and transparency** - Notifying residents of events; regulatory compliance, phone numbers for complaints.

**Event timing** - Defined as cut-off times 9 pm or 10 pm or late-night restrictions

**Event type and operations** - Defined as event setup and tear down, and interactions with local authorities.

**Resident consideration** - The impact the event may have on the resident and event type.

### Four miscellaneous categories:

No respondents replied "no".

Uncertain respondents indicated they did not know.

**Common sense** - Respondents stressed importance residents using sound judgement.

**Enforcement** - Respondents suggested the Mayor or Police Chief get involved.

#q26

# SCENARIO 4

Considerations and Actions	
<b>Most Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Event Permissions and Restrictions	18
Noise Management	18
Communication and Transparency	15
Event Timing	14
<b>Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
No	8
Event Type and Operations	8
Resident Consideration	8
<b>Less Frequently Mentioned Responses</b>	
Uncertain	6
Common Sense	2
Enforcement	2

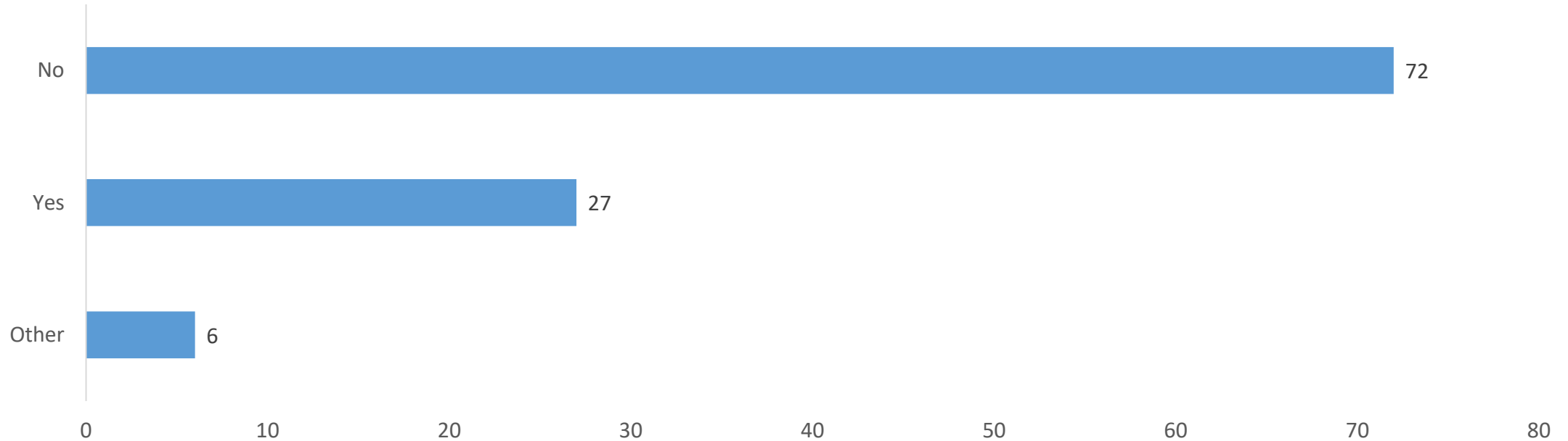
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## SCENARIO 4

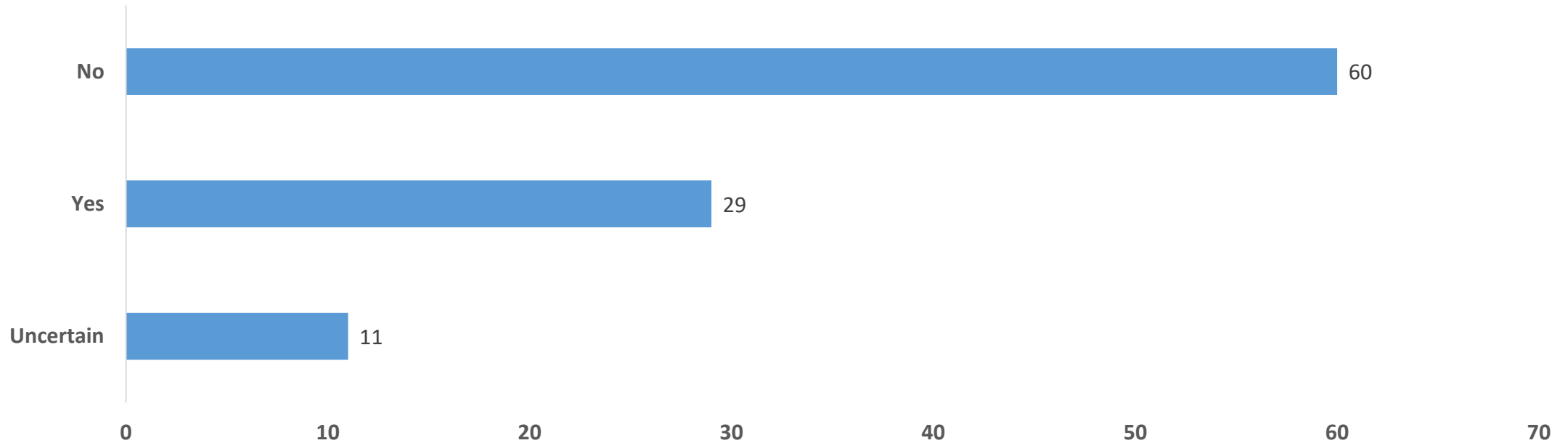
72 members out of 100 responded *No that the type of sound does not matter: auctioneer and/or movie verse amplified sound*. 27 respondents indicated Yes; 6 members selected Other.



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## SCENARIO 4

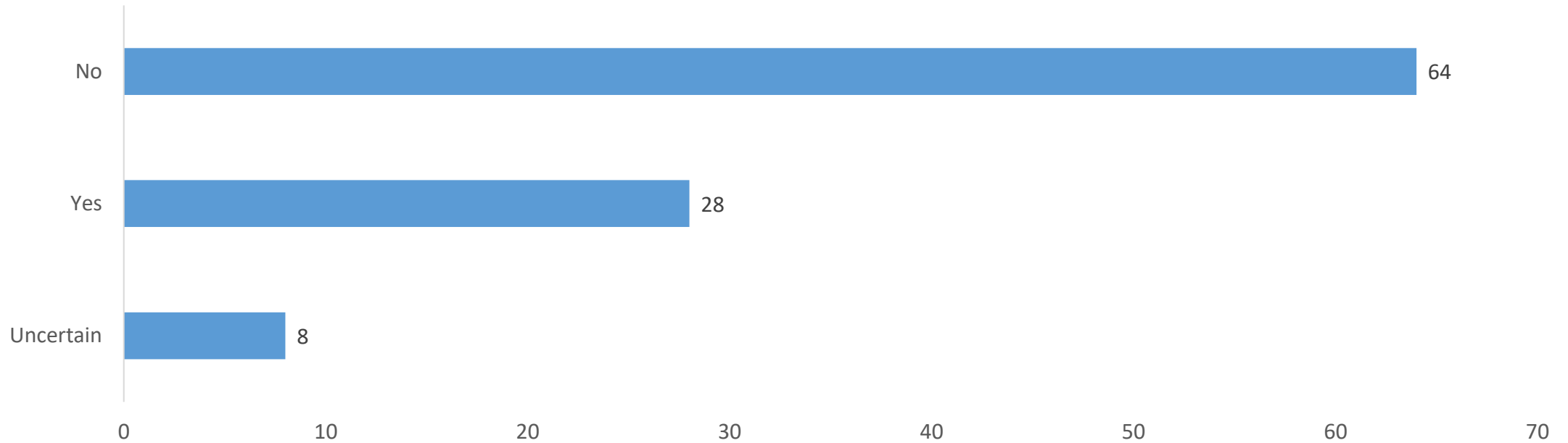
60 of respondents indicated *No* to **would it matter if the event was a city-sponsored event and-or took place at a city-owned facility such as WestWorld, the Civic Center or the Stadium**, while 29 of respondents indicated *Yes*, and 11 of respondents indicated *Uncertain*.



#q28

## SCENARIO 4

64 members responded *No* **exception should be made if this were during an event season such as Spring Training or WMPO**, while 28 of respondents indicated *Yes*, and 8 of respondents indicated *Other*.



#q29

## SCENARIO 4

Overall, there is an importance of adhering to noise ordinances, with residents stating that the noise should obey the existing regulations and complete by designated quiet hours. There's annoyance at noises that occur during cleanup, particularly truck beeping and commotion from tent dismantling.

Some solutions suggested include deferring cleanup to daylight hours, limiting the truck operating times, and scheduling tear downs the following day.

There's a call for respectful, quick cleanup processes that consider residents while also accepting that some inconvenience may occur due to the nature of event setups and takedowns.

8 categories surfaced from responses about tent poles and beeping from the SUS community:

Most Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Acceptance of Noise	25
Time Restrictions for Cleanup	17
Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Specific Noise Complaints	11
Tent Removal Timeline	10
Annoyance and Discomfort	9
Adherence to Noise Ordinances	9
Less Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Backup Beeping and Alternative Solutions	8
Duration and Speed	4
Uncertain	3
No answer	3



## SCENARIO 4

19 participants in SUS community provided thoughtful responses to addition explanations. Based on the common themes in the responses there are four key categories surfaced:

**Permissible Levels and Timing of Noise** - Concerns around having 24/7 noise control, noise during special events and regular business operations, noise coming from venues and clubs.

**Local Laws, Enforcement, and City Responsibility** - Discussions about the city's priorities, rules-violations, enforcement of noise rules, recourse for noise complaints, considerations for residents' comfort and quality of life, city's decision on acceptable noise levels, and proposals for change.

**Community Cohesion and Consideration for Others** - Perspectives about living together in a shared community harmoniously, consideration for diverse groups of people, adapting personal ideals, remembering the reasons behind choosing to live in your community.

**Proposals for Noise Reduction and Management** - Ideas for how to manage the noise.

Most Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Permissible Levels and Timing of Noise	6
Local Laws, Enforcement, and City Responsibility	5
Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Frustration	3
Community Cohesion and Consideration for Others	3
Less Frequently Mentioned Responses	
Proposals for Noise Reduction and Management	2
Other	1
N/A	82

#q31

# SCENARIO 4



#q31



# Thank you!

Let's us know if you have any questions!

Tery Spataro  
Director of Research / UX

