

The Impact of Sound in Scottsdale

Community Input Sessions | November 2023

Presenter's information



Problem Statement

There is a concern among some residents and businesses that current sound levels are too loud at times from outdoor amplification from some bars, restaurants, live entertainment venues, and special events.

City regulations to address problems from noise are different depending on the location of the issue and do not account for all types of disruptive sound. This conundrum adds to the confusion for some residents and businesses.



Goal

To maintain and improve quality of life within Scottsdale, look at possible ordinance changes and other mitigation methods that would provide a mechanism for setting reasonable sound standards, including for bass frequencies, and provide guidance for sound management related to outdoor amplification at bars, restaurants, live entertainment venues, and special events.



The current ordinance



Definition

Unreasonable noise created by businesses that serve alcohol or provide live entertainment prohibited

The ordinance also includes:

- Criteria for measurement of sound

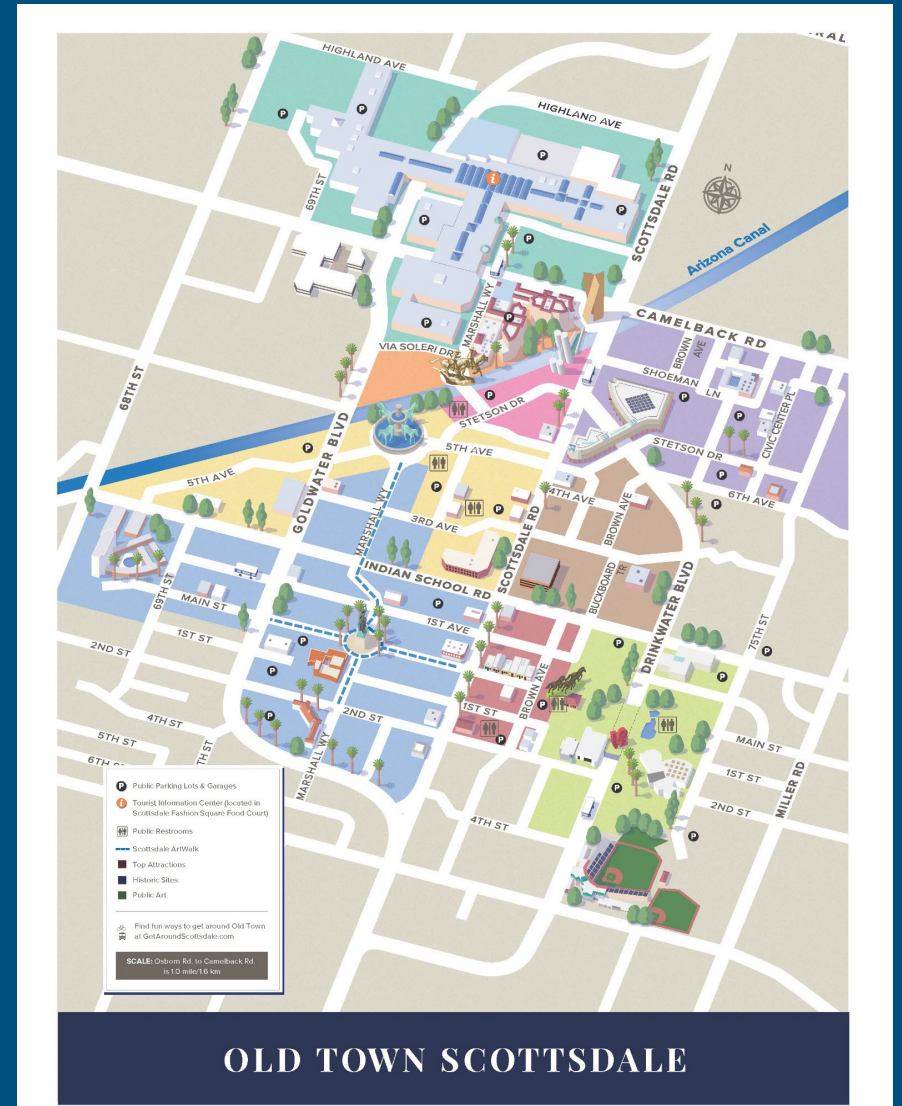
- Penalties for violations and habitual offenders

- Authority to issue civil complaints



Current ordinance challenges

- What is considered “unreasonable”
- Special events are exempt
- Does not apply within commercial and mixed-use districts, including Old Town neighborhoods
- Does not address sound from bass frequencies



Why is this such a challenging issue?

The science of sound is complicated!

Decibel levels



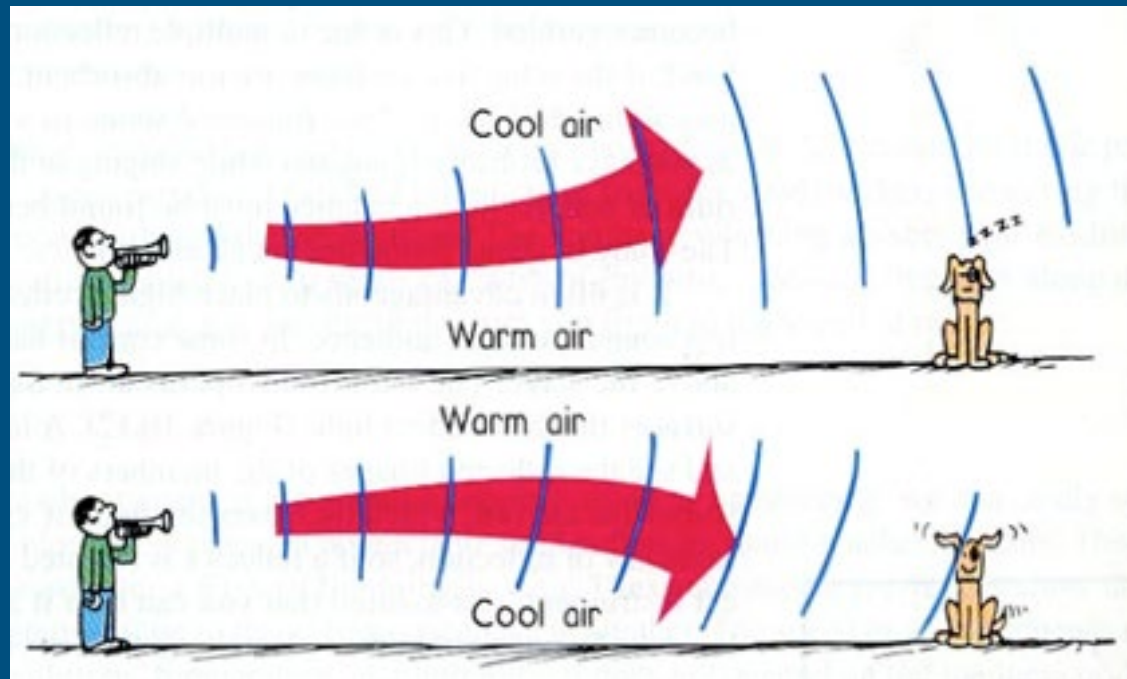
120 dB

10 dB



Why is this such a challenging issue?

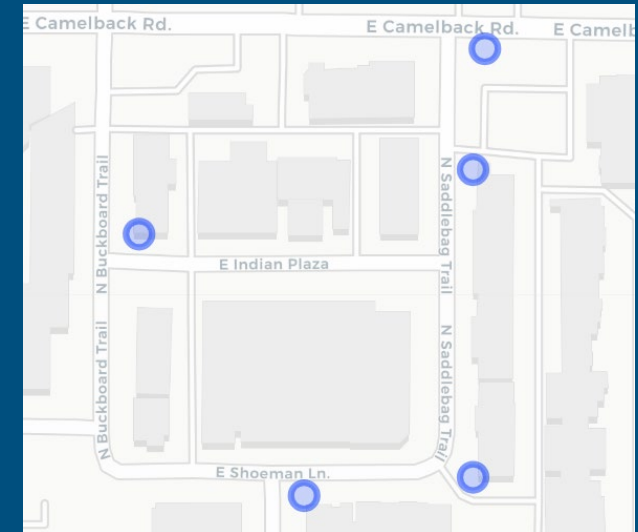
Sound interacts with the environment



Why is this such a challenging issue?

Gathering data from:

- Sensors
- Citizen complaints
- Interviews with stakeholders
- Sound experts



Who have we spoken with?

Residents
Businesses
Nightclubs/bars
Hotels
Special Event producers
Sound Industry
professionals

Concerns

History
with the
City

Who
should be
involved



What did we learn from the interviews?

Perceptions

Owners & Managers

Residents

Considerations

Entertainment area vs Residential neighborhoods

Timeframe: day, time, season

Type of event or establishment

Architecture

Other cities



What did we learn from the interviews?

Amplified Sound

Decibel levels

Vibe of the area

Timeframe / Location

Special events

Nightclubs vs special events

Timeframes

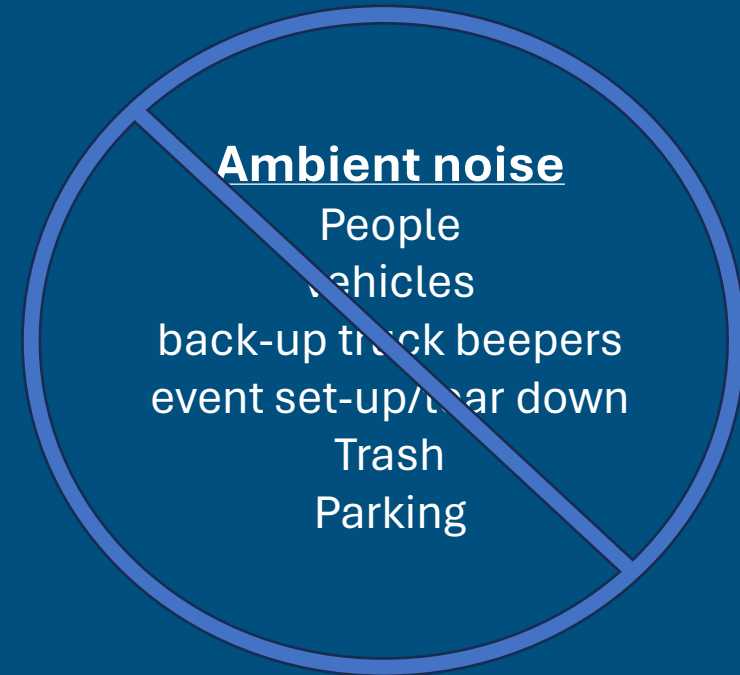
Notifications

Enforcement

Fair, reasonable

Enforceable

Correct source is targeted



Next Steps

January 2024

Presentation to City Council

Spring 2024

Public outreach on proposed changes

Stay up to date

[ScottsdaleAZ.gov](https://scottsdaleaz.gov), search Noise

