



Safe Neighborhood South Goldenrod Action Plan September 2011



Prepared by the Orange County Neighborhood Preservation & Revitalization Division

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

CITIZENS OF SOUTH GOLDENROD

ORANGE COUNTY

Teresa Jacobs
Orange County Mayor

Lui Damiani
Orange County Commissioner, District 3

Orange County Government Staff

South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood Action Plan

Safe Neighborhoods Program

The Safe Neighborhoods program is a voluntary program to help Orange County residents address crime that causes neighborhoods to decline in quality and livability. Participation in the Safe Neighborhoods program gives residents direct control over a small allocation of funds to improve the overall safety of the community. Each Safe Neighborhood has a unified “voice” which helps Orange County staff and elected officials know what each neighborhood needs and priorities are when planning for future county projects and expenditures. The current Safe Neighborhoods are Azalea Park, Lee Road, Orlo Vista, Pine Castle, Pine Hills, South Apopka, Tildenville, and Orange Blossom Trail.

Since the program’s inception the neighborhoods have had significant success in decreasing crime. Over the last four years the Safe Neighborhoods have shown a collective, and individual, decrease in the percentage of Part 1 Crimes¹. The decrease in crime can directly be attributed to the crime prevention and public safety initiatives being utilized via the Safe Neighborhoods Program. Table 1 depicts the decrease in crime in each Safe Neighborhood over a period of four years (2006-2009).

Table 1. Four Year Percentage Change in Part 1 Crimes in Safe Neighborhoods²

Safe Neighborhood	4 Year Percentage Change
Azalea Park	-7%
Lee Road	-12%
Orlo Vista	-11%
Pine Castle	-8%
Pine Hills (N)	-8%
Pine Hills (S)	-26%
South Apopka	-32%
Tildenville	-25%

The success experienced in the Safe Neighborhoods Program was a result of constant resident involvement using crime prevention techniques and community outreach. The model used to implement the program can be duplicated in other areas to assist with crime reduction and neighborhood improvement.

Selection of South Goldenrod

In April of 2010 the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division staff met with the Orange County Sheriff’s Office (OCSO) to review the Safe Neighborhoods Program. During the meeting, staff from both agencies discussed the successes of the program and the

¹ Part 1 Crimes are a sex crime, robbery, homicide, burglary to a residence, burglary to a commercial, burglary to an automobile, auto theft, and aggravated persons

² This data is taken from a report generated by the Crime Analysis Unit from the Orange County Sheriff’s Office in April 2010

possibility of adding additional areas. One particular area was raised for consideration, South Goldenrod. The South Goldenrod area had seen an 11% increase in Part 1 Crimes from 2006-2009³. This area had been an “area of focus” for Sector II Uniform Patrol and the OCSO as a whole; the criminal activity had been monitored and addressed continually by OCSO staff. The OCSO had committed numerous resources to these locations over the last year; including intermittent deployment of tactical squads, the Motors Squad working traffic in these areas, and the Gang Unit⁴.

On July 14, 2010 the Orange County Sheriff’s Office (OSCO), accompanied the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division staff conducted a tour of the South Goldenrod area. Some of the issues identified in the South Goldenrod area were:

- Neighborhood crimes and code violations- residential burglaries, auto burglaries, abandoned cars, and junk in yards
- Calls for Service- a high volume of calls for service to OCSO come from Autumn Pines, and Quail Hollow, especially disturbances relating to fights
 - Rio Pinar Lakes has an ongoing problem with truants and also generates a large volume of calls for service to OCSO; many issues are criminal mischief/property damage incidents at the community swimming pool; the community hired off-duty deputies to patrol the area until the HOA could not afford the cost any longer
- Gang Activity- gangs are a new criminal element that has entered the South Goldenrod area; these gangs have been tied to a recent homicide in the area
- Graffiti- this has become a problem on neighborhood walls, utility boxes, and buildings; OCSO is unsure if the graffiti is gang-related
- Vacant and abandoned homes- the area has a high number of vacant and foreclosed homes; in the Chickasaw Ranch Estates neighborhood only two homes have been built; the area has been the site of criminal mischief; the neighborhood perimeter wall and landscaping is not being maintained
- An abandoned site of a former gas station- this site attracts a homeless population; people appear to be living out of a van on the site; an abandoned and dilapidated building on site creates an eyesore on one of the busiest intersections in the area.
- Homeless camps- the camps are located in wooded areas along Lake Underhill Road, across from Florida Hospital East; the homeless residents are shoplifting, stealing, and trespassing at local shopping centers and neighborhoods.
- Community Groups- there is no institution or community-wide group looking out for the welfare of the South Goldenrod area.

Staff developed a report which documented the findings and recommended to County Commissioner Luis Damiani that the South Goldenrod area be designated as a Safe Neighborhood. Commissioner Damiani quickly moved forward to have the area formally designated on October 5th, 2010.

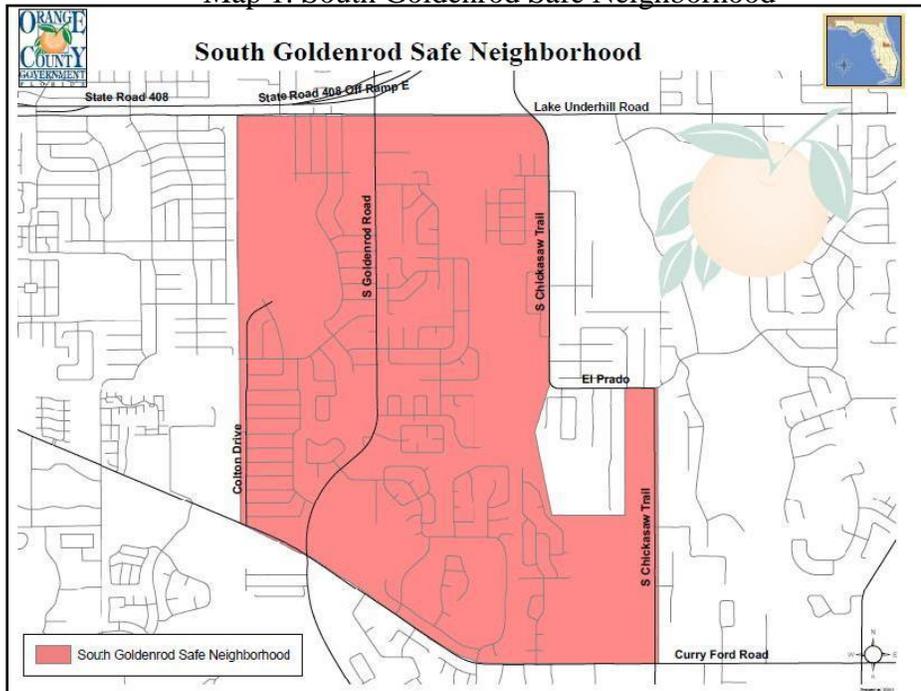
³ This data is taken from a report generated by the Crime Analysis Unit from the Orange County Sheriff’s Office in April 2010

⁴ Paraphrased from an email from Sector II Captain Tina Gordon requesting the Off Duty Deputy Program be implemented in this area

South Goldenrod Characteristics

The South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood is centrally located within the heart of Orange County. Consisting of approximately 2 square miles, the community is bounded to the north by Lake Underhill Road, to the east by Chickasaw Trail, to the south by Curry Ford Road and to the west by Colton Drive (extended to Lake Underhill Road). The community is located approximately four miles from Downtown Orlando.

Map 1. South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood



Demographic Data

There are currently 8,616 people living within the boundaries of South Goldenrod. This number is made up of 2,926 households, with a median household income of \$47,840 and a per capita income of \$20,434. The homeowner to renter ratio is 2:1, with 1,967 (61.8%) owner occupied housing units, 959 (30.1%) renter occupied housing units, and 258 (8.1%) vacant homes.

The largest portion of the area's adult population (1,418, 16.5%) is between 25 and 34 years old. The second highest age group is between 35 and 44 years old (1,258, 14.6%). When asked to identify their race, 5,500 answer that they are white residents in the South Goldenrod area, making up 64% of the population. When asked their ethnic status, there are 4,358 Hispanics in South Goldenrod, which account for approximately 50% of the residents in the area.

Neighborhoods/Homeowner's Associations

There are five existing neighborhoods organization within the South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood. The neighborhoods are Royal Manor Estates, Rio Pinar Lakes, Morgan Hill, Lake Rose, and Quail Hallow at Rio Pinar. Royal Manor Estates, Morgan Hill, and Lake Rose

each have mandatory homeowner's association groups, and are registered in the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Neighborhood Organization Directory. Rio Pinar Lakes and Quail Hollow at Rio Pinar do not have mandatory homeowner's association groups; however, Quail Hollow at Rio Pinar has a voluntary homeowner's association group.

Rio Pinar Lakes received two ReNEW Grants from the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division. In 2007 they received a \$3,973.70 grant to install signage and landscaping at the entranceway of the neighborhood. In 2009 they received a \$1,000 grant for landscaping.

Morgan Hill received two ReNEW Grants from the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division. In 2007 they received a \$3,266.70 grant to pressure wash the front wall and sidewalks of subdivision, repair the irrigation system, and replace or remove landscaping. In 2005 they received a \$15,000.00 grant to replace a storm damaged wooden fence and a chain link fence.

In 2005 Lake Rose received a ReNEW grant from the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division for \$4,750.00 for landscaping.

Quail Hollow at Rio Pinar received two ReNEW grants from the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division. In 2004 they received a \$5,359.24 grant for a comprehensive strategic plan. In 2005 they received a \$5,000 grant to install a neighborhood entrance sign and landscaping.

Future Land Use

Most of the future land use designations in South Goldenrod are residential. The most common of the residential future land uses are Low Density Residential⁵ and Low Medium Density Residential⁶. The remaining residential future land use designation in South Goldenrod is Medium Density Residential⁷.

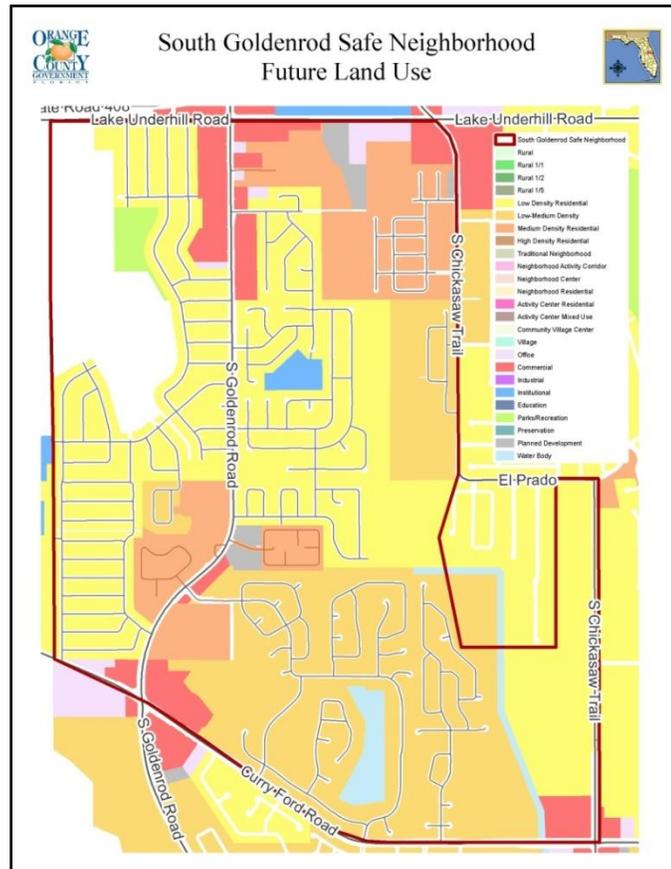
Although the majority of future land use designations in South Goldenrod are residential there are a few small pockets of non-residential designations. There are Office, Commercial, and Institutional future land use designations scattered throughout the area at major intersections.

⁵ A future land use designation that allows up to four (4) dwelling units per acre on a parcel of land

⁶ A future land use designation that allows up to ten (10) dwelling units per acre on a parcel of land

⁷ A future land use designation that allows up to twenty (20) dwelling units per acre on a parcel of land

Map 2. South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood Future Land Use Map



Parks/Schools/Libraries/Community Centers

There is one park, Capehart Park, located within South Goldenrod. There are no schools, libraries, or community centers within the boundaries of the neighborhood. However, Chickasaw Elementary School is located just outside the neighborhood. Community meetings were held at the school and a community clean up of South Goldenrod was staged there.

Code Enforcement

To date (8/3/2011), there have been 198 code enforcement citations written in South Goldenrod in 2011. The most common citations are for high grass/weeds, debris on the lawn, unmaintained pools, and junk vehicles being parked on the property. Prior to this year (2011) the amount of code enforcement citations had been decreasing. In 2007 there were 293 citations written, in 2008 there were 244 citations written, in 2009 there were 219 citations written, and in 2010 there were 167 citations written.

Foreclosures

Following the trend in many areas across Orange County, the South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood has been hard hit by foreclosures. The amount of foreclosures increased for four years before declining in 2010. In 2006 and 2007 this area recorded 25 foreclosures a year. Between 2007 and 2008 the amount of foreclosures increased with 86 foreclosures in 2008. Between 2008 and 2009 the amount of foreclosures again increased with 157 foreclosures in

2009. In 2010 the amount of foreclosures declined to 124. To date (8/11/11), there have been 34 foreclosures in 2011. If this trend continues the amount of foreclosures is projected to decline for the remainder of 2011, and 2012.

Identifying Neighborhood Issues

The initial South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood community meeting was held on February 15th 2011 at Chickasaw Elementary School. Flyers were sent to all the addresses in South Goldenrod to attend the inaugural community meeting in their neighborhood. Over 100 curious residents packed the Chickasaw Elementary School cafeteria to hear about the Safe Neighborhoods Program. In attendance at the meeting were Orange County District 3 Commissioner Lui Damiani and his staff, Orange County Sheriff's Office Sector 2 Captain Lee Massie and other representatives from OCSO, and Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division (NPRD) staff. During the initial meeting NPRD staff introduced the Safe Neighborhoods Program and explained the benefits of having the program in the neighborhood. An issues identification exercise was conducted at the meeting which gave residents a chance to voice the ongoing issues and concerns in their neighborhood. Residents were able to voice their concerns and issues regarding their neighborhood. Listed below are the issues identified in the initial meeting.

Traffic/Speeding

- Toledo Street– speeding; cut through to other subdivisions
- Colton Drive-School traffic goes to fast; kids walk home from school are in danger
- Leighton Way– Cut through speeding; need late night police patrols; can hear cars zooming by at 2-3 am; suspicious behavior happening
- Autumnvale Drive – speeding traffic damaging property, trees
- Need lighting on some blocks; repaint traffic lines

Lighting

- Colton Drive coming toward elementary school is very dark
- Elementary school entrance is very dark
- Existing street lights go on and off for months; area gets very dark
- Streetlights are not bright enough

Code Enforcement

- Auto repair business in residential area; oil and gas run off in neighborhood; speeding while test driving repaired motorcycles
- Colton Drive abandoned home full of bees
- Business encroachment into residential neighborhoods (car dealerships)
- Digging wells without permits
- No response from code enforcement officers
- Junk in back yards causing rat infestations
- Abandoned vacant parcels with high grass and dumping
- Rental properties are not always kept up to code

- Bank-owned homes
- Homes exceeding garage sale limit

Gangs/Youth

- Capehart and Yucatan Parks – drugs at the unmanned parks; need more law enforcement presence (horseback)
- Young teens out late at night; cars broken into; trespassing; stealing items from yards
- Stockholm Way– boys dressed in black roaming around 2-3 a.m.; disappeared when OCSO patrolled
- Toledo Street– youth doing drugs in daylight
- Graffiti on fences and corners where drainage infrastructure is located.
- Painting murals on graffiti prone areas has worked in other areas.
- Need more youth recreation activities

Beautification

- Neighborhood signage needed in some areas
- Partnerships with home stores so people can paint or improve landscaping
- Would like some nice gateways into the neighborhood

Miscellaneous

- Children’s safety walking to and from school
- Kids have to walk in the street due to poor drainage near school streets
- Rio Pinar fence at entrance off Goldenrod torn down during hurricane has not been replaced; illegal dumping occurs; concerned that transients from woods can accost pedestrians using sidewalks
- Trash not put out properly/ trashcans not taken in after trash day
- No homeowners associations in the majority of neighborhoods
- Would like to have Citizens on Patrol (COPS) program
- Landlord-Tenant mediation for renters who have issues
- Stockholm Way-drug houses
- Drug sales in front of homes
- Transients in the neighborhood

Over the course of several community meetings the residents of South Goldenrod were given an opportunity to voice their concerns and issues in their neighborhood, meet with the relevant Orange County Government staff to discuss their issues, and form committees to address their issues.

Safe Neighborhood Program Survey⁸

Using information gathered during the initial meeting, a survey was developed and sent to every residential and commercial address within the South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood. Fourteen percent (14%), 413, of the surveys were returned.

The survey results show that the residents of South Goldenrod are homeowners, and the overwhelming majority of the homeowners have lived in their home for 15+ years. Residents feel safe in their neighborhood but still perceive crime as a serious issue. The survey also showed concerns about traffic/speeding, graffiti and vacant homes are other important issues. The survey results were very similar to the comments received during the initial meeting. The full survey results can be found in the Appendix.

Vision and Goals

We envision South Goldenrod as a safe community with strong neighborhoods and dedicated residents. What makes South Goldenrod unique is that it is home to generations of families who desire to keep the community safe and beautiful. Located just minutes from downtown and the international airport, the community is an integral part of the image of Orange County. Residents will demonstrate their pride by caring for their properties, reducing the speed of their vehicles, working cooperatively with Orange County staff and supporting neighborhood businesses.

In order to realize this vision, residents agreed to work together along with Orange County staff. The majority of issues the residents raised fell under four categories: Crime, Traffic, Beautification, and Code Enforcement. Based on these categories, the residents formed committees to begin identifying solutions. The following is a summary of the goals developed by the committees.

Traffic Committee Goals

- Partner with Orange County Traffic Engineering to find solutions to issues with egress onto Goldenrod Road, Curry Ford Road, and Lake Underhill Road from neighborhood side-streets.
- Partner with Orange County Traffic Engineering to address the need for traffic calming on neighborhood streets and recruit residents living on the identified problematic streets to do a petition drive for traffic calming on their street.
- Partner with Orange County Roads & Drainage to resolve issues with roadways that need repairs/resurfacing and storm water drainage issues.
- Partner with Orange County Traffic Engineering to identify solutions to continuing traffic congestion on Lake Underhill Road.

Code Enforcement Committee Goals

- Implement a Community Code Enforcement Program in neighborhoods

⁸ A copy of the survey can be found in the appendix

- Contribute to the neighborhood newsletter to disseminate information about code violations and ways to report code enforcement violations
- Coordinate efforts and work closely with the Crime Prevention Committee
- Work with the Orange County Code Enforcement Division and other agencies to address homeowners renting rooms, broken glass panes on windows, homeowners building additions without permits, tractors being parked in the neighborhood, non working cars being parked in yards, graffiti on structures, and “snipe” signs in the neighborhood

Beautification Committee Goals

- Install neighborhood entranceway signs
- Apply and partner with Homeowner Associations for beautification grants offered through the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division to beautify relevant areas
- Partner with non-profit organizations for minor repairs to homes for the elderly and indigent
- Beautify the neighborhood by encouraging litter control, yard maintenance, and code compliance
- Schedule annual community clean-up events

Crime Prevention Committee Goals

- Partner with the Orange County Sheriff’s Office to implement neighborhood watch programs
- Contribute to the neighborhood newsletter to disseminate public safety and crime prevention information (for example, Orange County Sheriff’s Office non emergency number)
- Coordinate efforts and work closely with the Code Enforcement Committee
- Explore the possibility of implementing Citizens on Patrol Program
- Conduct routine safety training workshops for residents
- Participate in National Night Out by organizing an awareness event

This is a living document, designed to change and adapt to the needs of the community. The residents will make sure to update the vision to reflect the current desires of the entire community. As goals are accomplished, new ones will take their place. In order to ensure that this document is maintained, residents will form an organization with bylaws, officers and members who will be dedicated to the purpose of reducing crime, increasing safety and maintaining the physical quality of the community. South Goldenrod is a safe neighborhood.

Appendix



ORANGE COUNTY SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM SURVEY



To determine the crime and public safety needs of the South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood the Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division has developed this short survey. Please complete and return the survey. *Thank you for caring about your community!*

1. Are you responding to this survey primarily as a:

Renter Homeowner Landlord Business Owner Other (specify) _____

2. How long have you lived in your neighborhood?

0-5 years 5-10 years 10-15 years 15+ years

3. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?

Yes No

4. Do you think crime is a serious issue in your neighborhood?

Yes No; If yes, how serious of an issue is it? Somewhat serious Serious Very Serious

5. Are you concerned about traffic/speeding in your neighborhood? Yes No

6. Do you think foreclosures are a problem in your neighborhood? Yes No

7. Have you noticed an increase in the amount of vacant/abandoned homes in your neighborhood? Yes No

8. Have you noticed more graffiti in your neighborhood in the last 6 months?

Yes No

9. How do you feel about graffiti on structures in your neighborhood?

It doesn't bother me It bothers me but I can live with it It bothers me and I want it removed

10. Have you noticed more Orange County Sheriff's Officers in your neighborhood in the last 6 months? Yes No

11. Are you satisfied with the amount of Orange County Sheriff's Officer patrolling your neighborhood? Yes No

12. Please select the issues that you think are decreasing the quality of life in your neighborhood. Select all that apply

Foreclosures Gangs Homelessness Speeding/Traffic Vandalism/Graffiti
 Code enforcement violations Rundown/vacant homes Rundown/vacant businesses

13. Do you know of other associations in the South Goldenrod area that aims to decrease crime, increase public safety, and improve the quality of life? Yes No

If yes, what: _____

14. Does your street (area) have a neighborhood watch program?

Yes No; If yes, are you a member of it? Yes No

Please return the survey in the addressed and metered envelope provided.
The survey can also be faxed to (407) 836-0920.

Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division
P.O. Box 1393
Orlando, FL 32801



South Goldenrod Safe Neighborhood Crime and Public Safety Survey Results

May 17, 2011



Are you responding to this survey primarily as a:

Renter	25
Homeowner	375
Landlord	3
Business Owner	6
Other	4

Total Respondents: 413



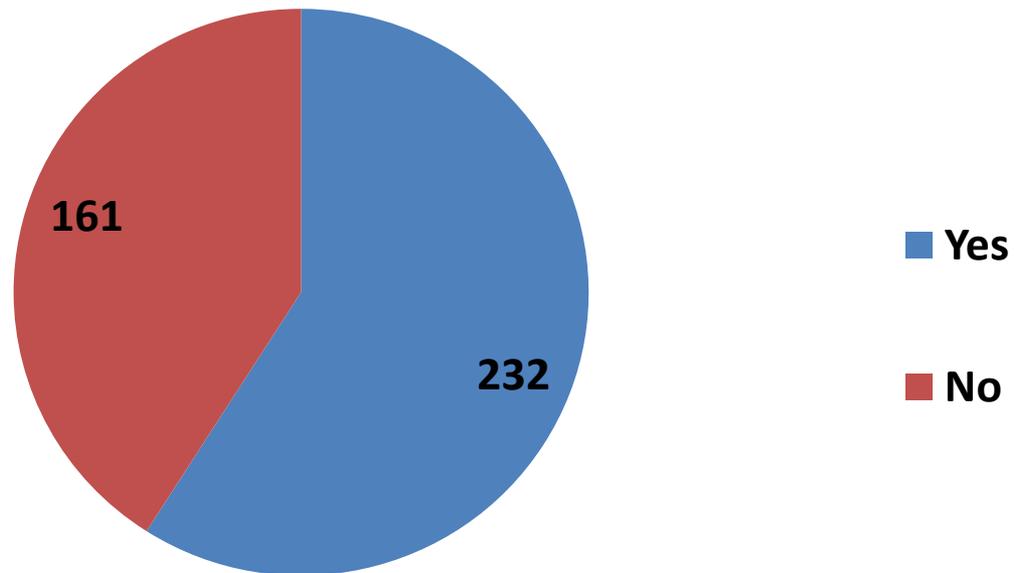
How long have you lived in your neighborhood?

0-5 Years	68
5-10 Years	57
10-15 Years	70
15+ Years	212

Total Respondents: 407



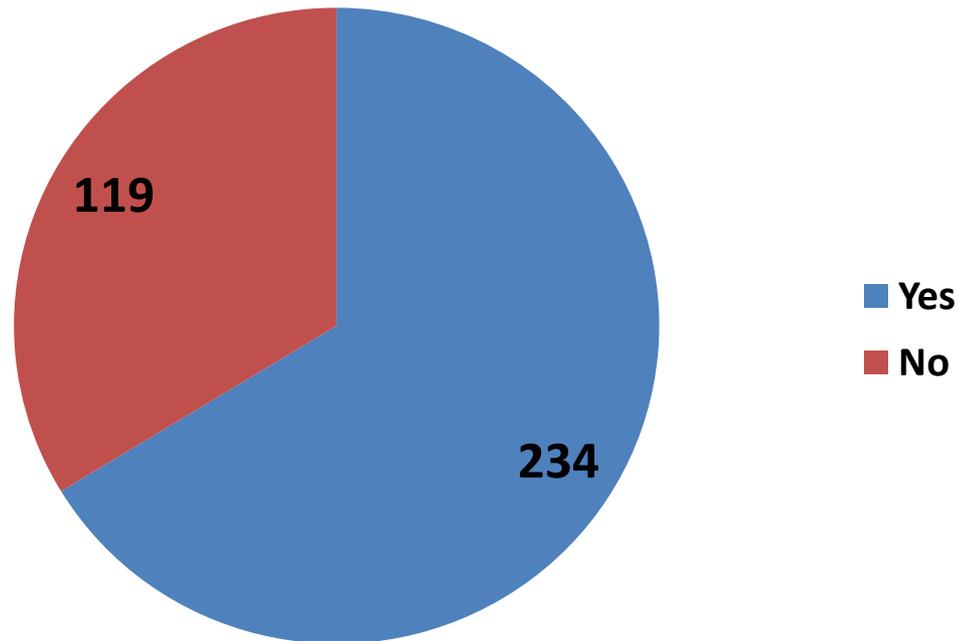
Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?



Total Respondents: 393



Do you think crime is a serious issue in your neighborhood?



Total Respondents: 353



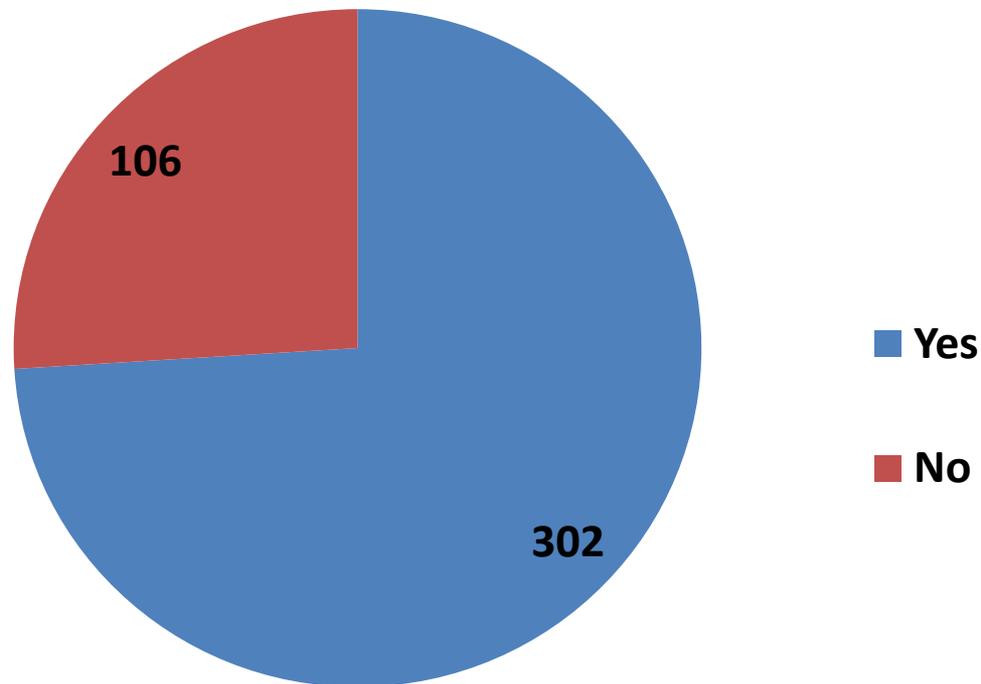
If yes (crime being an issue), how serious of an issue is it (crime)?

Somewhat Serious	134
Serious	75
Very Serious	43

Total Respondents: 252



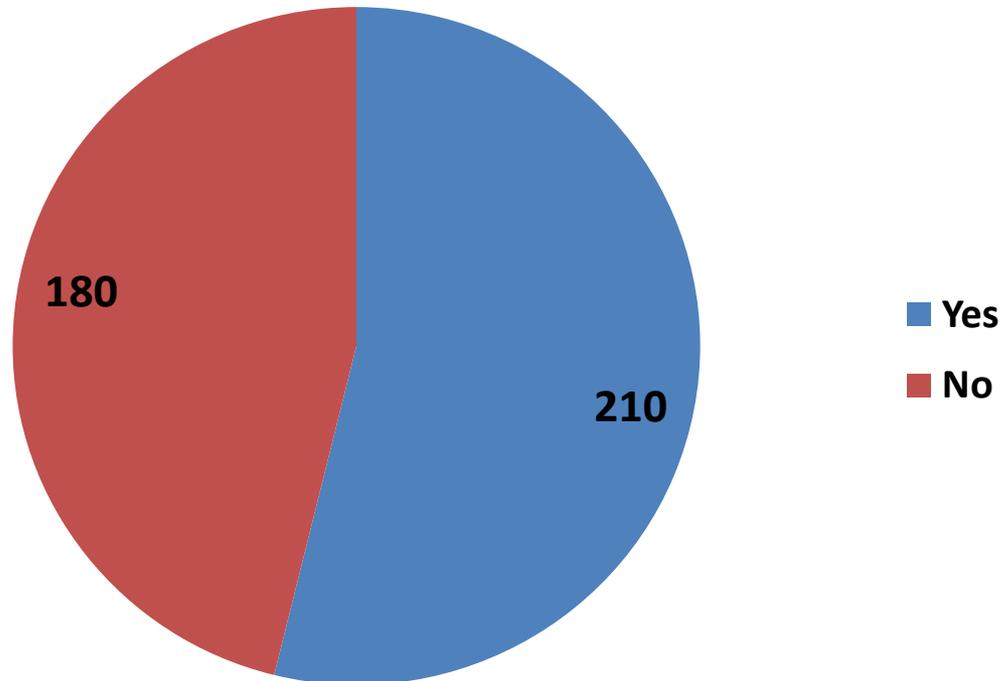
Are you concerned about traffic/speeding in your neighborhood?



Total Respondents: 408



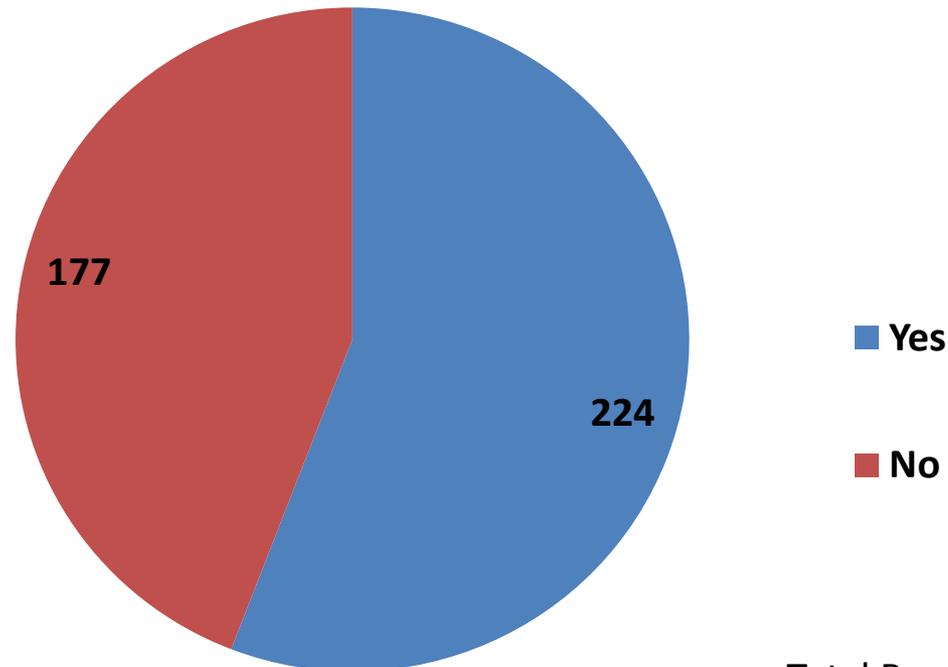
Do you think foreclosures are a problem in your neighborhood?



Total Respondents: 390



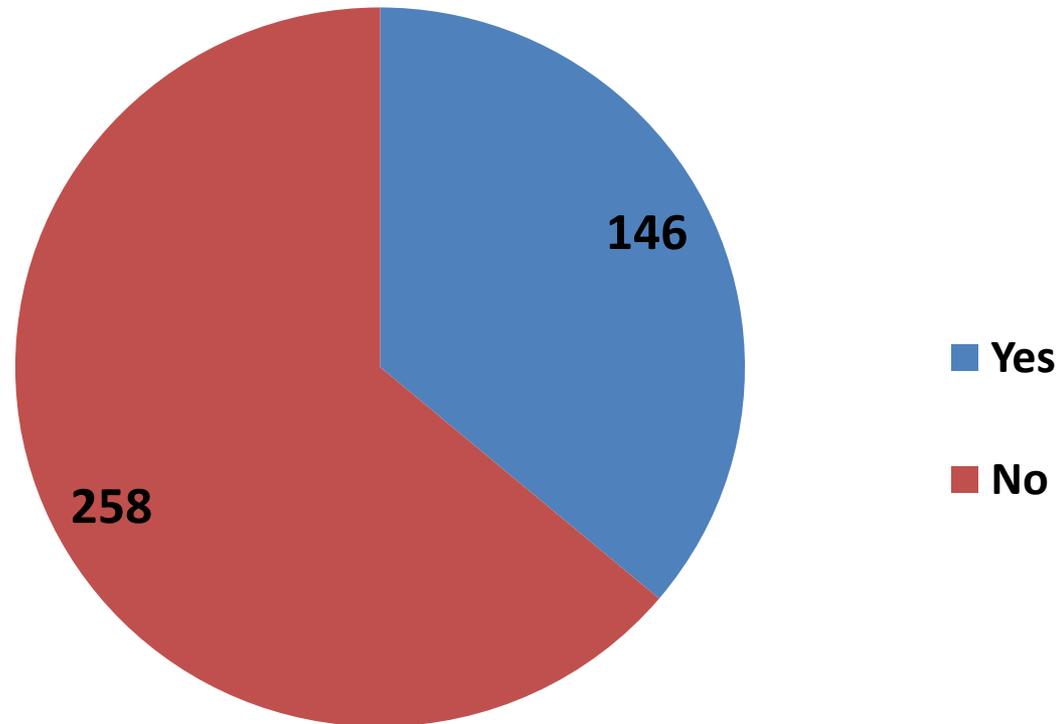
Have you noticed an increase in the amount of vacant/abandoned homes in your neighborhood?



Total Respondents: 401



Have you noticed more graffiti in your neighborhood in the last 6 months?



Total Respondents: 404



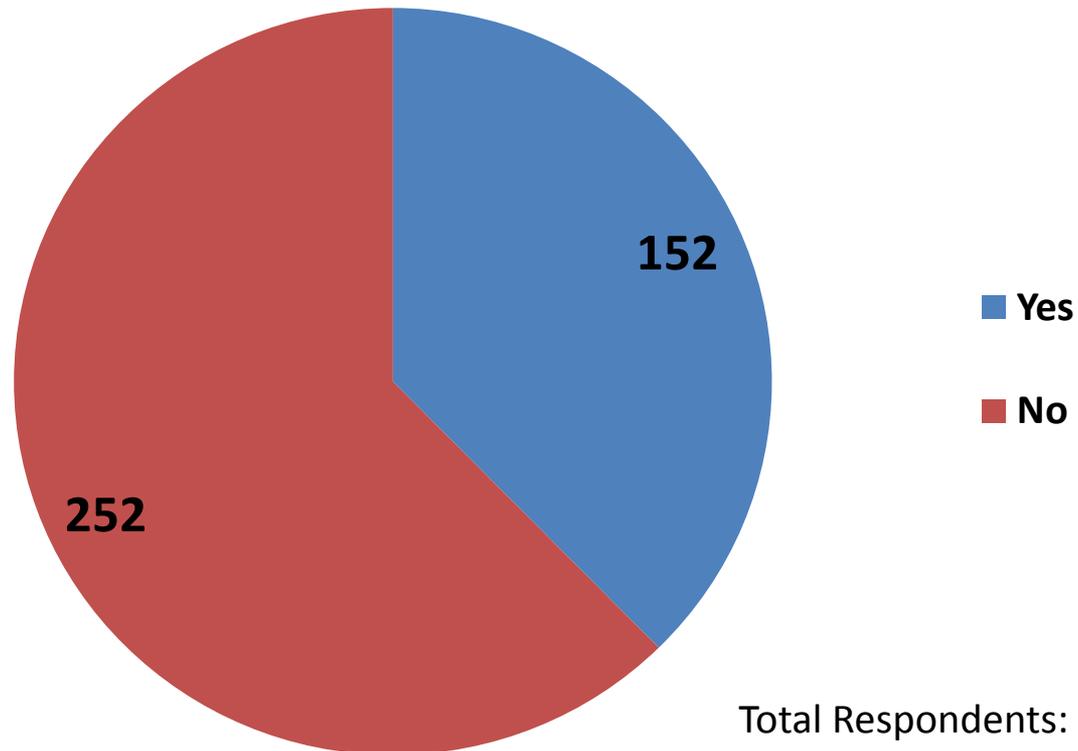
How do you feel about graffiti on structures in your neighborhood?

It doesn't bother me	24
It bothers me but I can live with it	47
It bothers me and I want it removed	318

Total Respondents: 389

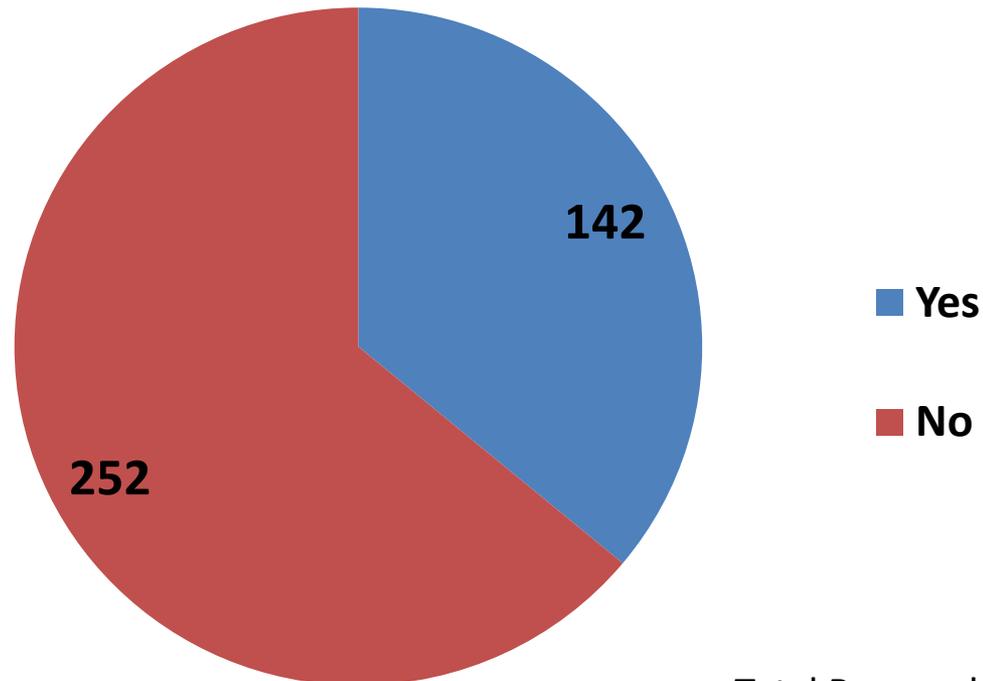


Have you noticed more Orange County Sheriff's Deputies in your neighborhood in the last 6 months?





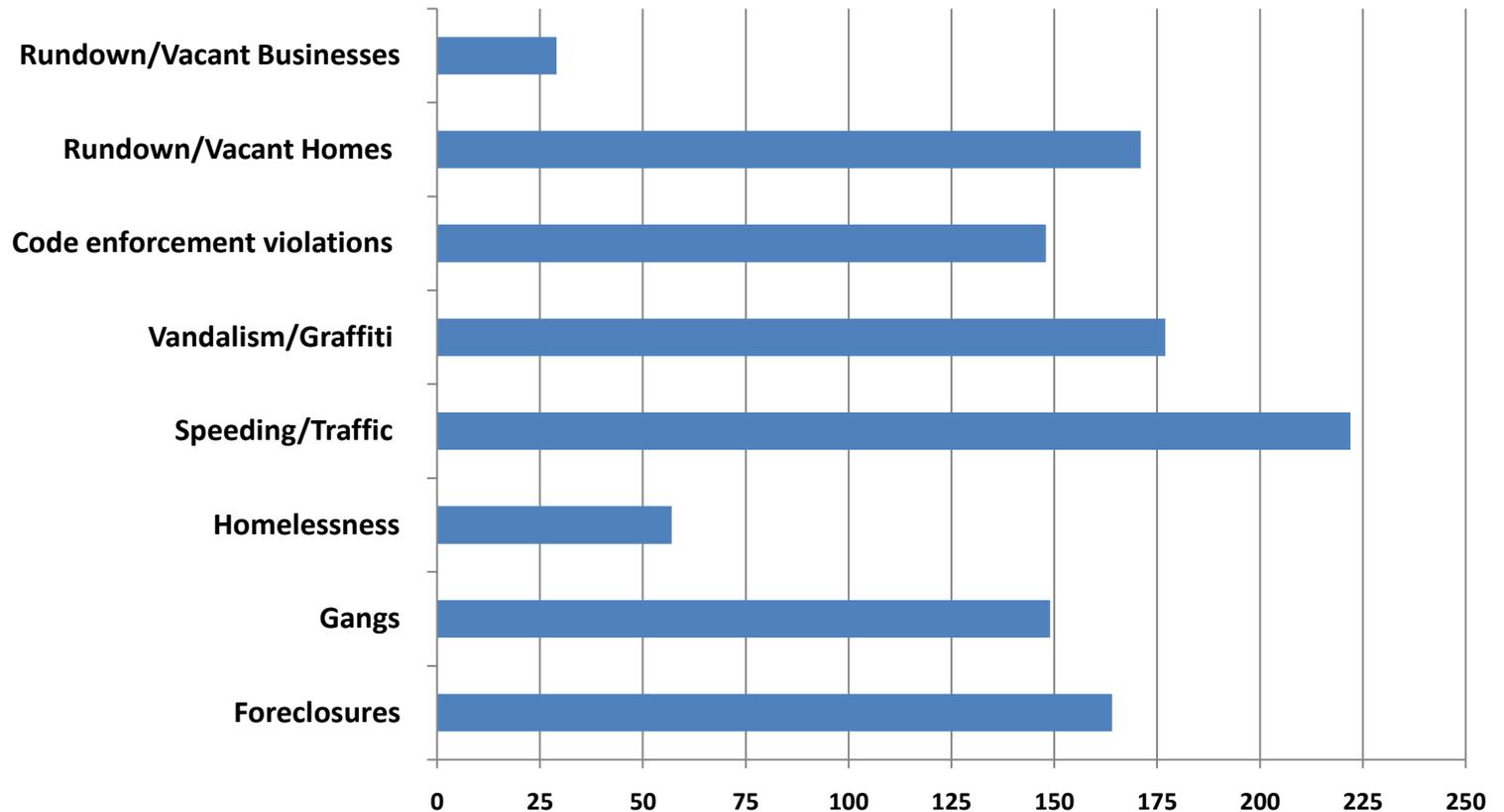
Are you satisfied with the amount of Orange County Sheriff's Officer patrolling your neighborhood?



Total Respondents: 394

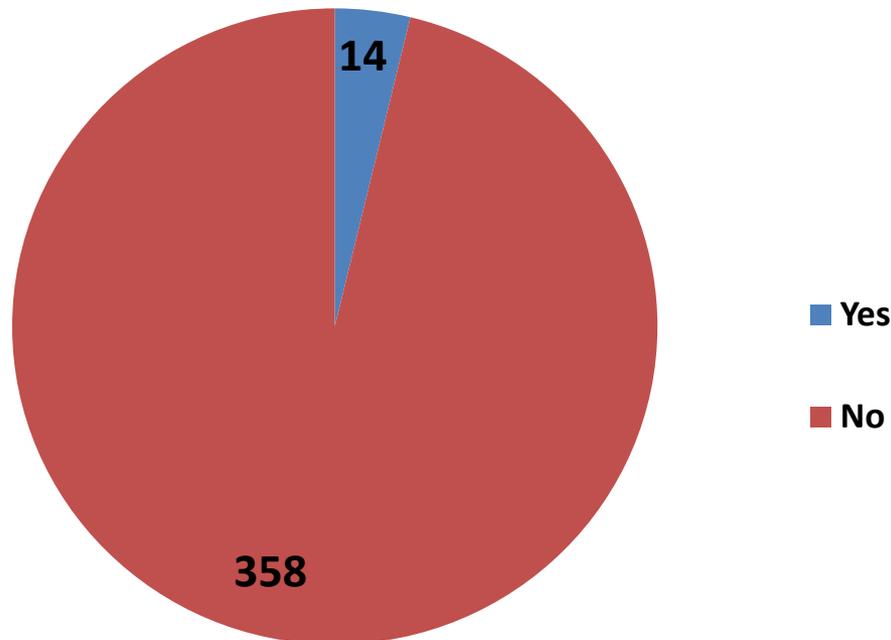


Please select the issues that you think are decreasing the quality of life in your neighborhood.





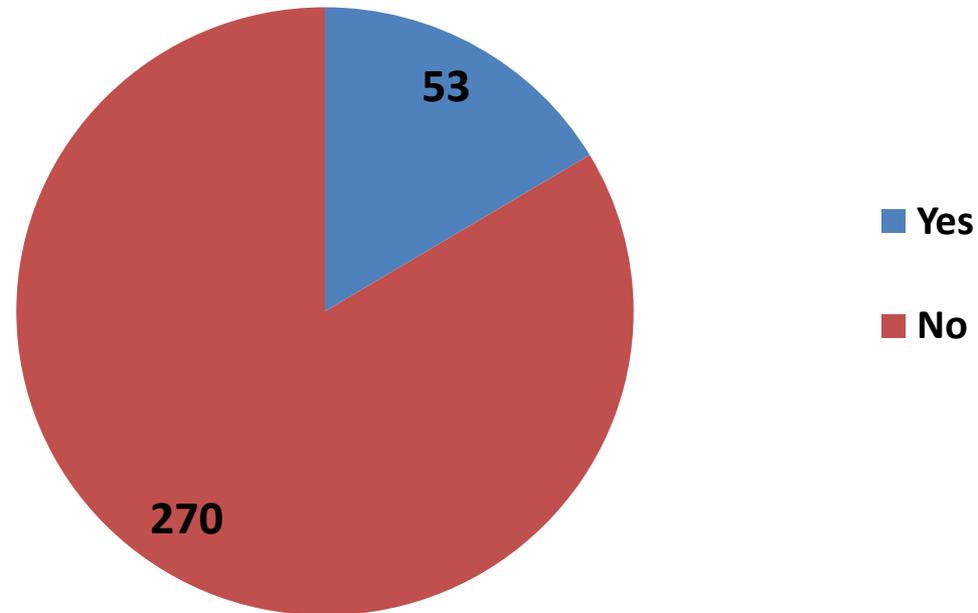
Do you know of other associations in the South Goldenrod area that aims to decrease crime, increase public safety, and improve the quality of life?



Total Respondents: 372



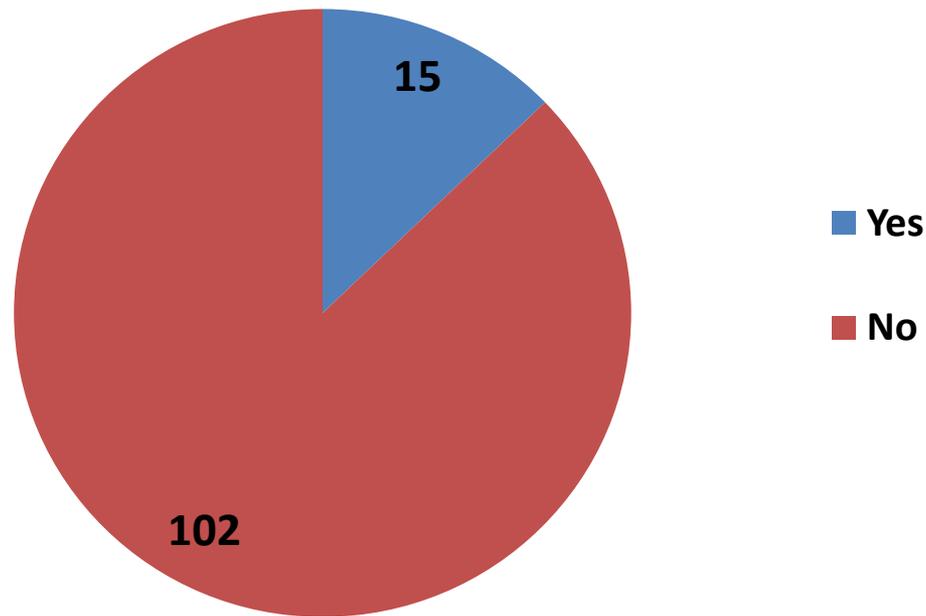
Does your street (area) have a neighborhood watch program?



Total Respondents: 323



If yes (to having a neighborhood watch), are you a member of it (neighborhood watch)?



Total Respondents: 117



Thank you!