

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Executive Summary

More than 3,100 residents have participated in consultations regarding the Noise By-law Review. Data collected from the consultations has helped staff to formulate final recommendations to Committee and Council, based on the options outlined in the Noise Management Discussion Paper.

The preferred options identified in the discussion paper for several issues as outlined below were supported by these consultations:

- regulating bass noise by defining it in the by-law and specifically referencing it as part of a chargeable offence
- lowering the maximum decibel threshold from 90 to 85 for nighttime construction noise
- exempting municipal waste collection and improving enforcement of private waste collection and deliveries
- maintaining as-is current by-law provisions that would address motorcycle and wind chime noise

Options presented for snow clearing and removal, special event exemptions and car alarms were re-considered as a result of feedback received by residents, resulting in:

- no changes to the existing snow clearing and removal exemption
- no changes to the current special event exemption process
- a reduction in the permitted car alarm time to five minutes (from 20)

Consultations

Four (4) in-person public consultations were planned as part of the consultation portion of the development of the by-law review. Consultations were held at: Greenboro Community Centre, April 25; McNabb Recreation Centre, April 26; Overbrook Community Centre, May 1; and Mlacak Centre, May 2. A combined total of 36 participants attended the in-person workshops.

In addition, an online consultation was available to all residents on ottawa.ca from April 18 to May 2. Awareness of public consultations was raised through a Public Service Announcement, social media, offices of Councillors and emails to community organizations.

The online consultation was the preferred option for most residents to provide feedback on proposed changes to the by-law. Online consultation materials were viewed more than 7,100 times, and more than 3,100 residents completed the online survey. 24 surveys collected from in-person consultations were compiled with the online results to reflect the totals presented in this document. The analytical tools included in the survey system have enabled detailed analysis of each issue covered by the by-law review to inform the recommendations of the report.

Consultation Questions and Responses

1. General Noise Questions

Have you filed a noise complaint in the last 12 months?

(3135 respondents)

- 85% - No
- 14% - Yes
- 2% - Don't know / Refuse to Answer

After making your complaint, has the problem re-occurred?

(234 respondents)

- 83% - Yes
- 17% - No

Have you received a warning or fine for a noise violation in the last 12 months?

(3123 respondents)

- 96% - No
- 3% - Yes
- 1% - Don't know / Refuse to Answer

How often do you feel that noise is impacting your quality of life?
(3031 respondents)

- 6% - Constantly
- 20% - Frequently
- 31% - Occasionally
- 26% - Rarely
- 16% - Not at all
- 0% - Don't know / No opinion

How important is this issue for you?

- 43% - Very Important
- 31% - Somewhat Important
- 11% - Neutral
- 6% - Less Important
- 8% - Not Important
- 1% - No Opinion

2. Low Frequency Noise and Vibrations

For low frequency noise and vibrations caused by bass, the City is recommending changes to regulate “noise likely to disturb” without establishing set dB(C) limits. Do you support this recommendation?
(2865 respondents)

- 43% - Yes. This approach is reasonable.
- 30% - No. I prefer that the City adopt set dB(C) standards.
- 17% - No. I don't support any changes to the existing standards.
- 10% - No Opinion.

How important is this issue for you?

- 38% - Very Important
- 32% - Somewhat Important
- 16% - Neutral
- 4% - Less Important
- 6% - Not Important
- 4% - No Opinion

3. Permitted Construction Times

Do you think the current times for permitted construction are reasonable?
(2813 respondents - residents could vote for multiple options.)

- 44% - Yes. The current limits are reasonable.
- 29% - No. Construction should start later on weekends.
- 24% - No. Construction should start later and end earlier each day.
- 9% No Opinion.

How important is this issue for you?

- 30% - Very Important
- 39% - Somewhat Important
- 19% - Neutral
- 5% - Less Important
- 4% - Not Important
- 4% - No Opinion

4. Snow Clearing and Removal

The City is recommending that snow removal from residential properties using powered equipment should be restricted overnight unless we receive 5 cm of snow or more. Do you agree?

(2780 respondents)

- 32% - Yes. The City should limit snow removal noise as much as possible.
- 59% - No. Snow removal is too important to restrict.
- 3% - No. Overnight snow removal should be prohibited completely.
- 6% - No Opinion.

How important is this issue for you?

- 45% - Very Important
- 36% - Somewhat Important
- 12% - Neutral
- 2% - Less Important
- 2% - Not Important
- 3% - No Opinion

5. Refuse Collection

The City is recommending that municipal refuse collection be exempted from the Noise By-law. Do you support this recommendation?

(2687 respondents)

- 58% - Yes
- 23% - No
- 19% - No Opinion

How important is this issue to you?

- 18% - Very Important
- 34% - Somewhat Important
- 27% - Neutral
- 5% - Less Important
- 4% - Not Important
- 11% - No Opinion

The City is proposing measures to make it easier to fine companies for after-hours waste collection and deliveries. Do you support this recommendation?
(2687 respondents)

- 41% - Yes. Fines for companies will help reduce noise.
- 39% - No. The current regulations are effective.
- 20% - No Opinion.

How important is this issue for you?

- 14% - Very Important
- 34% - Somewhat Important
- 28% - Neutral
- 6% - Less Important
- 6% - Not Important
- 12% - No Opinion

6. Festival and Event Noise Exemptions

The City is proposing specific noise regulations for stadiums and festivals. Do you support this recommendation?

(2634 respondents)

- 35% - Yes. The limits proposed are reasonable.
- 45% - No. The current regulations are effective.
- 10% - No. Noise from stadiums and festivals is too disruptive.
- 10% - No opinion.

How important is this issue for you?

- 38% - Very Important
- 34% - Somewhat Important
- 17% - Neutral
- 3% - Less Important
- 3% - Not Important
- 5% - No Opinion.

7. Car Alarms

The City is recommending against further restrictions on car alarms. Do you support this recommendation?

(2733 respondents)

- 25% - Yes. 20 minutes is a reasonable amount of time for a car alarm to operate.
- 56% - No. Car alarms should be limited to 5 minutes.
- 7% - No. Car alarms should be banned.
- 13% - No Opinion.

How important is this issue for you?

- 19% - Very Important
- 38% - Somewhat Important
- 25% - Neutral
- 7% - Less Important
- 6% - Not Important
- 6% - No Opinion

8. Motorcycles

The City is recommending increased fines to address noise from motorcycles and other loud vehicles. Do you support this recommendation?
(2677 respondents)

- 71% - Yes
- 21% - No
- 9% - No Opinion

How important is this option for you?

- 41% - Very Important
- 34% - Somewhat Important
- 15% - Neutral
- 4% - Less Important
- 3% - Not Important
- 4% - No Opinion

9. Wind Chimes

The City is recommending against creating specific regulations for wind chimes.

Do you support this recommendation?

(2762 respondents)

- 59% - Yes. This approach is reasonable.
- 11% - No. Wind chimes should be restricted.
- 6% - No. Wind chimes should be banned.
- 24% - No Opinion.

How important is this issue for you?

- 16% - Very Important
- 21% - Somewhat Important
- 26% - Neutral
- 9% - Less Important
- 18% - Not Important
- 10% - No Opinion

10. Do you wish to provide any other comments with regards to the City of Ottawa Noise By-law?

1,106 respondents provided additional comments to the above questions.

Comments can be grouped into the following areas:

- Special Events – Approximately 260 respondents provided additional comments on festival and event noise, with 114 expressing comments supporting less restriction on festival noise, 112 supporting more restrictions and 33 providing neutral comments.
- Vehicle Noise – Approximately 170 respondents commented on motorcycles, car exhausts and traffic noise; 162 comments asked for greater enforcement; 6 respondents opposed additional enforcement of

motorcycle noise, with 4 expressing the opinion that loud exhaust pipes improve rider safety by alerting other motorists to their presence.

- Enforcement – Approximately 140 respondents commented on by-law enforcement in general; 117 respondents expressed negative sentiments about enforcement experiences or practices; 22 expressed neutral comments and 10 highlighted positive experiences. Late night party noise and response times were frequently cited issues.
- Music – Approximately 160 respondents provided additional comments related to the regulation and enforcement of music, with 98 respondents supporting less regulation, 6 providing neutral comments and 53 supporting additional regulation and enforcement.
- General Noise Levels – Approximately 150 respondents provided additional comment on general noise levels, with 79 expressing opinions that the Noise By-law was too restrictive, 20 providing neutral comments and 53 expressing comments supporting stricter regulation and enforcement.
- Other Issues – Approximately 120 respondents provided comments regarding issues un-related to the Noise By-law Review. The majority (58 responses) involved dogs barking, which is regulated under the Animal Care and Control By-law (2003-77).

Demographics

In addition to the evaluation of options provided in the discussion paper, respondents were asked a number of demographic questions. This data has shown:

- 49% of respondents were female. 49% were male and 2% identified with an other gender identity
- 63% of respondents were from urban communities, 32% were from sub-urban communities and 4% were from rural communities
- 47% of respondents lived in detached homes, 29% lived in apartments or condominiums and 21% lived in semi-detached homes.
- 57% of respondents have university degrees. 21% have college education or trades training. 8% have high school diplomas.
- The ages of respondents were:

- 18 to 34 30%
- 35 to 44 23%
- 45 to 54 18%
- 55 to 64 16%
- 65 or older 9%
- Decline to answer 4%

Data Retention

Personally identifiable information collected through the survey will be retained for a period of two (2) years. General responses will be retained indefinitely for use in future reviews of the Noise By-law.