

Vehicle Noise Mitigation Recommendations Grouped by Themes

Public Engagement

This work includes developing a public engagement strategy to solicit input from the public on vehicle noise issues.

The main objective is to consult the public on their perception of vehicle noise, suggestions, and priorities for mitigation measures.

The strategy could include:

- Survey/questionnaire, and
- Focus groups, interviews, and discussions with citizen groups affected by vehicle noise.

Pros

- Clarifies the extent of the community's perception of the vehicle noise issues.
- Provides insights into vehicle noise issues (locations, time of day, frequency, vehicle noise sources, etc.).
- Identifies possible hotspots of vehicle noise activity.
- Increases public acceptance of any mitigation strategies implemented and improves compliance.
- Findings could support amendments to regulations.

Cons

- Could raise public expectations of the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.
- Could lead to a higher number of complaints related to vehicle noise with limited resources to respond.
- Refined costs and staffing impacts are unknown.

Complaints Management

This work would establish and implement an improved complaints management system for vehicle noise.

The main objectives for improving the complaints management process are to:

- facilitate the filing of complaints by simplifying and clarifying the complaint channels;
- provide information on the enforcement mechanisms, the course of action undertaken and expected results; and,
- collect information on the source(s) of complaints to improve guidance on enforcement measures.

A review of vehicle noise information would be conducted to ensure that the information is updated for the future customer relationship management (CRM) system.

The future CRM would be promoted and advertised once operational so that all vehicle noise complaints are entered and tracked into one management system.

Pros

- Improves customer service for residents with complaints related to vehicle noise.
- Provides insights into vehicle noise issues (locations, time of day, frequency, vehicle noise sources, etc.).
- Identifies possible hotspots of vehicle noise activity.
- Informs enforcement efforts.

Cons

- Increased staff resources to set up the complaints management system and establish processes.
- Refined costs and staffing impacts are unknown.

Public Awareness

This work would develop a communication and media strategy to raise awareness on vehicle noise issues for the following topics:

- adverse health effects of vehicle noise;
- importance of the vehicle noise mitigation strategy;
- enforcement mechanisms; and,
- course of action undertaken and expected results.

Formal marketing materials for the website and social media would be developed to provide examples of what an excessively noisy vehicle sounds like and explain vehicle noise enforcement.

Existing city-produced information materials (i.e., web pages, Good Neighbour Guide) will be reviewed to ensure that the content about vehicle noise is current and accurate. Comments on the Saskatoon Police Service vehicle noise brochure will be reviewed to ensure that the content is current and accurate. Comments will be forwarded to Saskatoon Police Service for their consideration.

Deployment of responsive signage, (i.e., changeable message signs) would be considered to aid with raising awareness of vehicle noise issues.

Pros

- Raises awareness of vehicle noise issues and improves compliance.
- Informs the community about mitigation strategies for vehicle noise.

Cons

- The estimated cost for a marketing campaign is not refined.
- Costs to deploy responsive signage are not refined.
- Could lead to a higher number of complaints related to vehicle noise, with limited staff to respond and follow up.

Data Collection and Analysis

This work consists of measuring acoustical data and traffic data to use as a benchmark.

The main goal of this option is to assess the current situation and monitor the progress of the noise mitigation strategy and could include:

- noise and traffic measurements at the roadside to detect excessively noisy vehicles at the source of the noise; and/or,
- noise measurements at residents' property to measure the levels of vehicle noise in indoor and outdoor spaces on private property.

The data collection would be conducted using commercially available noise and traffic monitoring systems to collect and analyze vehicle noise-related acoustical data.

Pros

- Provides a benchmark of current situation to monitor effectiveness of mitigation strategies.
- Provides insights into vehicle noise issues (locations, time of day, frequency, vehicle noise sources, etc.).
- Identifies possible hotspots of vehicle noise activity.

Cons

- Cost and staff time required are not refined.
- Requires specialized equipment and technical skills not currently available in-house, costs are not refined; no existing operating or capital program is currently funded for this work.

Police Enforcement Process Assessment

This work involves collaboration with SGI to consider vehicle noise inspection procedures and assess feasibility of new methods to address non-compliant vehicles.

The main objective is to optimize vehicle noise enforcement efficiency and effectiveness.

Pros

- Improves compliance.
- Objective method to detect non-compliance rather than subjective.
- Improves customer service for residents with complaints related to vehicle noise.

Cons

- Relies heavily on SGI involvement for adoption.
- Requires investigation of possible legislative or legal implications.
- Requires dedicated test centres for vehicle inspections (and funding and staffing for the centres). Resources at provincial test centres are limited. There are currently no City-run test centres.
- Costs and staffing impacts are unknown.

Lobby the Province

This work considers lobbying the provincial government for modifications of the provincial regulations to:

- Implement higher vehicle noise fines and stronger inspection policies; and,
- Implement tougher penalties for street racing and stunt driving infractions.

Pros

- Increased deterrence.

Cons

- Relies on SGI involvement for adoption.

Dedicated Staff Resources

This work requires the allocation of dedicated internal staff resources to manage the vehicle noise mitigation strategy and allocate a noise control officer to the bylaw compliance team.

The role of the Vehicle Noise Mitigation Coordinator would be to:

- establish stakeholders' roles and responsibilities;
- strategy planning, scheduling, and program execution;
- facilitate stakeholder engagement;
- manage and produce reports; and,
- review and monitor new approaches, strategies, and technological development.

The role of the Noise Control Officer would be to:

- investigate vehicle noise complaints;
- deploy vehicle noise monitoring equipment;
- analyze vehicle noise-related acoustical data; and,
- collaborate with other stakeholders involved with vehicle noise issues.

Pros

- Improves compliance.
- Supports data collection and analysis to develop and monitor effectiveness of mitigation strategies.
- Clarifies roles and responsibilities for vehicle noise mitigation strategy.
- Improves delivery of the vehicle noise mitigation strategy.
- Improves customer service for residents with complaints related to vehicle noise.

Cons

- Cost and staff time required.
- Requires specialized equipment and technical skills not currently available in-house.
- Costs are not refined; no existing operating or capital program is currently funded for this work.