



STAFF REPORT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CLERKS AND PLANNING SERVICES RE. NEW NOISE BY-LAW

OBJECTIVE

To provide information with respect to a proposed new Noise By-law

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report from the Director of Clerks & Planning Services concerning a new Noise By-law be received;

And that the Bylaw and Planning Committee recommend to Council the adoption of the proposed Noise By-law and repeal of By-law 96-66, as detailed in the report.

Respectfully Submitted

Natalie Bray
City Clerk

Approved

Daniel Gagnon
Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND

The City's Noise By-law provides standards for noise and applies to all properties in the City of Elliot Lake. The existing by-law was last updated in 2011 with additions around engine brake systems, but has not been comprehensively reviewed since 1996.

ANALYSIS

Managing and regulating noise is a complex undertaking. A Noise By-law must balance the desires of residents wishing to enjoy their homes and environments while meeting the needs of construction projects, yard maintenance, recreation and outdoor events.

This report proposes substantial amendments to the Noise By-law after a comprehensive review. The proposed changes to the by-law address specific noise issues such as amplified sound, the general prohibition, noise from construction, domestic power devices and motor vehicles. These changes contribute to simplifying the Noise By-law by aligning time constraints between similar activities and otherwise clarify the standards set for noise by introducing decibel limits for amplified sound.

Introducing quantitative sound limits (decibel limits) will increase the objectivity of the Noise By-law as it sets a limit that can be monitored (through sound level meters and measurement guidelines) and provides Municipal Enforcement with a measurable tool to properly enforce the by-law. The previous by-law had no method to measure acceptable noise and left it open to interpretation. By following the Guidelines for Community Noise as set out by the World Health Organization, staff have compiled decibel level limits to protect the well-being and guard against the serious annoyance of citizens. The decibel level limits set out in the proposed by-law range from 45 dB(A) to 92dB(A). For example, 30 dB would be equivalent to whispering, a lawnmower 80 to 100 dB, a rock concert 95 to 115 dB. (see attached decibel chart)

Additional changes include clear definitions, an exemption permit application and fees, the authority to request noise mitigation plans as well as fines and penalties with the appropriate short from wording.

If the proposed Noise By-law is adopted, staff will proceed with identifying and procuring sound level meters and will ensure information be made available to the public through the City's website and Facebook pages to enhance public awareness and knowledge of the Noise By-law.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Two (2) decibel meters would be required. The cost of a decibel meter is approximately \$50.00 for a total of \$100.00.

LINKS TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This project aligns with the City's Strategic Plan through Strong Municipal Corporate Administration and Governance – review and update bylaws, policies and procedures.



SUMMARY

Adopting the new Noise By-law will enable Enforcement Officers to respond to these issues efficiently and effectively.

It is recommended that the proposed Noise By-law be forwarded to Council for approval and passing and that the existing Noise By-Law (96-66) be repealed.

