

Agenda Title: Noise Ordinance Recommendations - Amplified Sound - Proposed Amendments
Meeting Date: October 7, 2025
Meeting Type: City Council Meeting - First Tuesday - Afternoon & Evening Sessions
Department: City Attorney's Office
Sponsor: Dottie Kibler

Agenda Item Description:

Whitney Schoenfeld, Special Events
Dottie Kibler, City Attorney's Office

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At the July 1, 2025, City Council meeting, the Council directed staff to assess the current noise ordinances and to provide recommendations addressing concerns about amplified sound. Businesses and neighbors raised concerns about commercial amplified entertainment and enforcement of noise ordinances. The City engaged Brian Block of Sound City Planning to evaluate the City's current noise standards for amplified entertainment and to offer recommendations for addressing concerns. Mr. Block has extensive experience in nightlife regulation in Austin, Texas and has worked with a number of cities on establishing noise regulations for amplified entertainment. In addition to working with staff, Mr. Block made multiple visits to Raleigh, Glenwood South, and venues elsewhere in the City. His work also incorporated survey responses and stakeholder interviews with business representatives and residents. His report is included with the agenda materials.

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Based on Mr. Block's recommendations, staff across multiple departments have prepared an amendment to the City's noise ordinances, proposing three categories of decibel limits for commercial amplified sound: for Glenwood South, for the remainder of the City, and for venues outside Glenwood South that obtain a permit. A copy of the draft ordinance is included in the agenda materials.

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Business owners expressed frustration that there was no mathematical limit that applied to sound. Adopting a decibel limit sets clear expectations for all. The specific decibel limits proposed are recommended by the expert based on his work in Raleigh and differ depending on the time of day and day of the week. The proposed amendment

aims to establish clear rules that balance business interests in playing amplified sound and residents' desire to enjoy quiet in their own homes.

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Because violation of the amended ordinance can be punished as a misdemeanor, State law requires that the Council receive this proposed ordinance at one meeting and vote on the ordinance at a later meeting. If the Council wished to proceed with this ordinance, it would be appropriate to place the item on another Council agenda. The Council could direct that the item appear on the Consent Agenda, in the City Attorney's Report, as a Special Item, or issue other directions.

Recommended Action: Receive the proposed noise ordinance amendments and determine any further action.

Agenda Item Details:

Add the additional details here that allow the item description to be brief. This section appears in backup content only.