



TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Susan Grant, Acting City Manager

DATE: November 19, 2024

TITLE: First Reading – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 17 – Noise Control of
the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale - **(Commission
Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission consider amending Chapter 17 – Noise Control of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale.

Background

On September 9, 2021, the City Commission adopted Resolution 21-177 creating the Noise Control Advisory Committee (NCAC). The NCAC was formed to review the impact of noise on residences in the city and to make recommendations to the City Commission on the implementation of strategies to minimize the imposition of noise that provide a balanced approach to the administration and enforcement of the City’s Noise Control Program in a manner that allows businesses to thrive while assuring a reasonable noise comfort level for residents.

In January 2022, the city hired Siebein Associates, Inc. to work closely with the NCAC and Staff to complete a soundscape study. At the October 17, 2023, City Commission conference meeting, Siebein Associates, Inc. presented the results of the soundscape study and a prioritized list of actions items to the Commission. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Commission directed a 60-day follow-up to provide Staff with direction for drafting a revision to Chapter 17 – Noise Control of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale. Staff provided a follow-up presentation at the December 19, 2023, City Commission Conference Meeting, and the City Commission directed staff to conduct a 90-day pilot study. As part of the Conference presentation, the Commission extended the term of the NCAC so that the Committee had the opportunity to review the results of the pilot study and review the amendments before bringing them to the City Commission. The results of the 90-day pilot study are attached as Exhibit 1.

Since that time, staff has conducted the following public outreach to review the consultant’s report and gather recommendations:

- February 13, 2024, District 4 Noise Ordinance Community Townhall
- March 28, 2024, Central Beach Alliance Homeowner’s Association meeting
- April 9, 2024, Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations (CFLCA) meeting
- June 11, 2024, CFLCA meeting
- November 7, 2024, City Commission Conference Meeting

The proposed ordinance (Exhibit 3) includes the following changes:

- The inclusion of dBC limits in Table 1 to account for low frequency sounds such as bass. Seibein Associates specified adding 10 decibels for the dBC weighting because “There is a 10 to12 dB difference between the dBA and dBC levels for most “typical sounds” in an urban environment. *Most sounds do not have the same dBA and dBC levels.*”
- The specification that proactive noise measurements are taken five (5) feet from the building, structure, or establishment, and that the maximum permissible sound level limit for the source of the sound shall apply.
 - Note: The Noise Control Advisory Committee disagrees with the inclusion of this language.
- An amendment to allow complaint-initiated measurements in Special Entertainment Districts to be taken at the property line of the complainant.
- The inclusion of the following language for non-amplified sound emanating from residential properties:
 - Residential use: Sound shall not be plainly audible for a period of one (1) minute or longer at a distance of twenty-five (25) feet or more when measured from the source property line between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. daily.
 - Sound shall not be plainly audible for a period of one (1) minute or longer at a distance of fifty (50) feet or more when measured from the source property line between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. daily.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connections

This item supports the Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024 Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- Goal 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods.

This item advances the Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Community

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Housing Element
- Goal 2: Be a community of strong, beautiful, and healthy neighborhoods.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – 90-Day Noise Pilot Data Summary

Exhibit 2 – 90-Day Noise Study Readings

Exhibit 3 – Business Impact Estimate

Exhibit 4 – Ordinance

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Development Services Department

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