

Noise Barrier Retrofit Program Budget Approval

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Infrastructure Planning Committee recommend that Council approve a capital budget increase of \$12.1 million, (\$372,000 in 2023, \$4.62 million in 2024, \$4.235 million in 2025, and \$2.869 million in 2026) to Budget ID P202_000 Noise Attenuation Retrofit Program to be funded from the Reserve for Future Capital.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Properties located adjacent to roads with high-volume traffic can be negatively impacted by noise levels exceeding a defined threshold. The Noise Barrier Retrofit Program (the “Program”) mitigates these impacts by erecting noise barriers (walls) to reduce noise levels at impacted properties.
- The Program currently includes a list of eleven noise barriers necessary to mitigate noise impacts at 240 homes. The Program has been unfunded since 2019. The installation of eleven noise barriers requires a budget of \$12.1 million over the current 4-year planning cycle 2023-26.
- **What does this mean for Calgarians?** Calgarians living next to roads with high-volume traffic experience an improved quality of life when excessive noise volumes are reduced by a noise barrier.
- **Why does it matter?** The quality of life of Calgarians include the enjoyment of outdoor spaces. Excessive noise generated by high-traffic roads negatively impact citizens using their outdoor amenity space.
- Background and Previous Council Direction (Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION

The Noise Barrier Retrofit Program is an annual capital investment program established to erect noise barriers at locations that meet the criteria specified in The City’s Surface Transportation Noise Policy (Attachment 3). Funding for this Program was stopped in 2019, and the 10 locations on the list remained unconstructed.

Citizens may request an assessment of the noise levels at their property. Properties assessed by The City that meet the noise criteria are included in the Program. A preliminary design for each noise barrier is developed and prioritized using a benefit - cost assessment. The final design and erection of the noise barriers are subject to funding of the Program.

Administration restarted annual noise surveys in 2022 after having been suspended for 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 impacts on vehicle volumes. Between July and September 2022, noise measurements were conducted at 18 locations, including the SE corner of 36 Street and 16 Avenue NE, as requested in the Notice of Motion of March 15, 2022 (Attachment 2). These surveys resulted in one additional location warranting noise mitigation, bringing the Program list to eleven locations.

The eleven locations were evaluated during the summer months, and prioritized using the most up-to-date site information, traffic forecasts, noise modelling and analysis. Updated cost estimates were provided in the 2022 November 10 Briefing – Noise Barrier Retrofit Program Update (IP2022-1065); since that time, the cost estimates for the eleven barriers have been

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refined and reflect upward commodity price pressures. The current budget required to design and erect the eleven noise barriers is \$12.1 million.

The Notice of Motion directed Administration to fund the Program using the surplus available from the Local Access Fund and Municipal Franchise Fees for 2022. Confirmation of this surplus has been recommended in the Accountability Report to move to the Reserve for Future Capital. Sufficient surpluses are available to approve a budget of \$12.1 million to the Noise Barrier Retrofit Program.

Construction timelines for the eleven noise barriers will be determined once budget is approved and is expected to occur over several years.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public engagement was undertaken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public communication or engagement was not required |

As part of the noise barrier retrofit program, citizens are engaged and provided information regarding their location and the results of the measurements that were taken. Further engagement will be taken as part of each individual project that would be relevant for the location of construction. The prioritized list of locations has been posted on Calgary.ca for citizens to access (Attachment 4).

IMPLICATIONS

Social

A noise barrier typically results in a reduction of traffic noise equivalent to removing half the number of vehicles on a road. Reduced traffic noise allows residents to enjoy their outdoor amenity space and enhances their quality of life.

Environmental

This program is an integral component of improving the quality of properties that are close to high traffic areas.

Economic

The program has not been funded since 2019 and citizens in impacted locations have been waiting for at least four years for a resolution.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing capital funding - one-time

\$12.1 Million for 11 locations

Funding request from the Reserve for Future Capital.

**Infrastructure Services Report to
Infrastructure and Planning Committee
2023 April 05**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
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RISK

Current program backlog will continue to increase as new requests for noise barriers continue to be reviewed by the program.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. Notice of Motion – EC2022-0360 – Noise Barrier Retrofit Program
3. Surface Transportation Noise Policy
4. 2022 List of Prioritized Locations
5. Noise Barrier Retrofit Program Budget Approval - Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Francois Bouchart	Infrastructure Services	Approve
Kerensa Fromherz	Infrastructure Services	Approve
Michael Thompson	Infrastructure Services	Approve