

Soundscape Assessment Pilot Project Scoping Report

Introduction:

In responding to Notice of Motion EC2023-0642, it is recognized that The City of Calgary can influence a range of environmental noise, potentially reducing the long-term cumulative impacts of noise on health. This summary outlines the approach of a pilot project focused on engaging a subset of the Calgary community in soundscape assessment and evaluating the perceived impact of sound on residents' mental and physical well-being. Administration is not recommending that The City make pursue this soundscape assessment pilot project at this time. Depending on the outcome of researcher-driven noise modeling and Council direction, this pilot project could be considered in the future.

Purpose:

The pilot project's main purpose is to demonstrate the viability of an approach to actively involve the public in assessing and addressing positive and negative noise in their communities and its potential impact on their mental and physical well-being. It would leverage existing local engagement methods and insights from other jurisdictions' community engagement efforts. The pilot would target high-usage areas, community gathering spaces, and special interest groups, selected through data analysis and previous research/findings. The Engage Resource Unit would prioritize resources and tailor engagement strategies to specific community contexts to maximize pilot project participation.

Goals & Objectives:

1. Use research and leading practices to identify three locations within the city suitable for a soundscape assessment pilot project. Target high-usage areas, community gathering spaces and special interest groups.
2. Develop tailored engagement strategies informed by local data and experience and best practices from other jurisdictions.
3. Encourage the public to actively participate in the soundscape assessment pilot project.
4. Provide a What We Heard Report with the feedback collected from the soundscape pilot assessment project.

Methodology:

Targeted engagement activities would be developed for gathering spaces such as parks, recreation centers, and cultural venues, as well as special interest groups including but not limited to [CNIB](#), [Deaf and Hear Alberta](#), [Alberta Health Services](#),

[Autism Calgary](#), [Alzheimer Association of Calgary](#). Locations would be selected based on usage and population data, historical data, geographical variations, accessibility, safety and security, and technical feasibility.

Budget:

\$50,000 for a four-week outreach and engagement period. This budget also includes the design and delivery of communications and advertising tactics.

Implementation:

Implementation of a pilot project would involve collaboration between City departments, community organizations, and the public. Engagement activities would be tailored to suit the needs and user preferences of each target area, utilizing a combination of in-person events and online platforms, potentially including sound walks to facilitate feedback from participants.

Evaluation:

Evaluation of the pilot project would focus on assessing the effectiveness of engagement strategies in reaching and getting residents in high-usage areas, community gathering spaces and special interest groups to participate. Key performance indicators would include participation rates, quality of data collected, and community satisfaction with the engagement process. Feedback from participants would be presented in a final What We Heard Report to the Project Team. This report would be used to determine the next steps in a larger, city-wide soundscape assessment and/or planning for civic noise mitigation. The feedback collected as part of this pilot project could also influence the development of goals and objectives of the Noise Strategy outlined in Attachment 6.

Conclusion:

A soundscape assessment pilot project would represent a new-to-Calgary approach to collecting residents' feedback about sound in high-usage areas, community gathering spaces, and from special interest groups that would allow The City to effectively allocate resources and improve residents' awareness of sound and noise impacts.