



# Memorandum

Date: August 4, 2020

To: City Council

From: Rachel C. Patterson, Director of Environmental Health & Sustainability (EHS)

Subject: Noise Ordinance Measurement, Exemptions

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## **Background**

On April 27, 2020, I gave a presentation on the noise ordinance in response to inquiries submitted by council regarding noise measurement procedures. At the time, we received direction from council to review methods of noise measurement and to look into whether certain exemptions or variances from the noise ordinance could be issued for music venues or in conjunction with an entertainment district designation.

## **Field Testing**

In response to council's concern regarding measurement methods, we conducted field testing where measurements were taken in varying locations:

1. At the receiving property line at the point closest to the noise source
2. At the side of the building receiving the noise (where the complainant is), and/or
3. At the closest opening (window/door, common space, etc.) of the building receiving the noise

The latter two locations were an attempt to determine the difference in measurement if taken from closest to where the specific noise was heard. Findings will be discussed during the council presentation.

## **Exemptions**

The idea of an exemption for activities involving entertainment (e.g. indoor or outdoor live or amplified music) was also researched. After consideration of many alternatives, it was determined the easiest pathway to easing requirements on music venues would be the creation of an additional affirmative defense within the ordinance. This would allow a relaxation of the specific noise threshold for music venues on certain days and times of the week. It would avoid the need to create any new or special zoning districts or processes and would apply equally throughout the city.

Please contact me if any questions arise prior to August 10.