

NoMoreNoise Toronto!

My name is Ingrid Buday, and I am the founder of [No More Noise Toronto](#). I started this group after learning that I was not alone in being frustrated and annoyed while giving up on trying to sleep due to vehicles with modified mufflers and street racing. This noise is enough to wake me up despite a closed door and white noise playing at over 60 dBA close to my pillow. I live above the 20th floor in a condo at least 150 meters away from a road. This street racing and modified exhausts started in 2019 and has only increased since then. There are many of us who are kept up at night and are suffering the serious health impacts of unnecessary noise. I am personally impacted – I am stressed, tired and my quality of life has deteriorated. I don't enjoy my days anymore and sometimes can think of little else but fighting something I have no defense from.

[Dr. Tor Oiamo](#) was a co-author of the 2017 Toronto Public Health Report [How Loud is Too Loud](#). I trust you remember the [deputation he made](#) on January 11th, calling noise a public health hazard and predicted that it would replace air pollution as the #1 Environmental Urban Health Hazard. Air pollution has been managed for decades, it's time we do the same for noise pollution.

The current decibels levels for testing stationary vehicles (92 and 96 dba) is too high. As you will have read from the many emails that have been sent, these levels do not uphold Canadian Federal Regulations, do not support the Highway Traffic Act and in fact support the modification of mufflers.

Additionally, No More Noise Toronto is now working with Toronto Police Services to have a better understanding of this issue that is poorly managed from the City side and is hard to enforce from the Police side. They stated that the wording "of 96 dba at any engine speed above idle" weakens the bylaw. After all, a test that uses a subjective and arbitrary number for the test, is hard to enforce. In fact, other parts of the bylaw were changed to reduce subjectivity and to make it easier to enforce. Why is this one so vague?

If the city doesn't protect its residents, who does? Municipal Licensing and Standards decision to not provide options, but a decision to uphold the status quo confirms many residents' beliefs that the City of Toronto doesn't care about their health.

Additionally, noise pollution is an equity issue. Noise impacts all of us and some more than others. People who are living with vision loss, have had any sort of brain damage or cognitive issues have to manage their daily lives around noise, which is pervasive and further limits or damages them. My friend who is blind uses the word "terrified" at describing how she feels when she needs to venture outside of her home without assistance. Is this the city we want?

I urge the Committee and anyone else reading this to reject this decision from the MLS and require them to find solutions to the growing noise pollution issue from vehicle vanity noise in Toronto.

Sincerely,

Ingrid Buday, Founder No More Noise Toronto

PS. Below you will find more details of how this impacts me and what I have learned about noise in Toronto from my measurements.

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Three years ago, I read the Toronto Public Health report from 2017 report, “[How Loud is Too Loud](#)” and noticed that the heat maps didn’t show peak noise events and only shows averages. To understand the noise that I live with, I bought a sound level meter (the same sound level meters that were used in the TPH report) and resolved to measure peak noise events at the bedroom window. In 2021 I started taking measurements from my balcony, and now I’ve taken measurements from over 40 locations across the city. In these measurements I calculate peak noise events by adding 10 decibels to the LEQ of that entire measurement. The software I use from Convergence Instruments counts the number peak noise events and provides it to me in a table for each day. There are many variables when it comes to sound, but as a starting point below is a basic analysis for peak noise events and population exposure.

Below are three tables of measurements from locations across the city:

- Gardiner location is approximately 180 meters away from the highway.
- Brookers Lane location is approximately 32 meters away from the centerline of the road.
- Avenue Road location is approximately 39 meters away from the centerline of the road.
 - On December 13th was construction noise which produced 973 peak noise events.
 - This number is removed from the calculations below.

Gardner Expressway		LEQ: 68
Date	Day of Week	# of peaks over 78 (dB -A)
14-Nov-23	Tuesday	40
15-Nov-23	Wednesday	76
16-Nov-23	Thursday	83
17-Nov-23	Friday	65
18-Nov-23	Saturday	60
19-Nov-23	Sunday	57
20-Nov-23	Monday	60
21-Nov-23	Tuesday	69
22-Nov-23	Wednesday	79
23-Nov-23	Thursday	69
24-Nov-23	Friday	67
25-Nov-23	Saturday	52
26-Nov-23	Sunday	57
27-Nov-23	Monday	62
28-Nov-23	Tuesday	75
29-Nov-23	Wednesday	58
30-Nov-23	Thursday	71
01-Dec-23	Friday	67
02-Dec-23	Saturday	31
03-Dec-23	Sunday	21
04-Dec-23	Monday	32
Average		60

Brookers Lane		LEQ: 66.5
Date	Day of Week	# of peaks over 76.5 (dB -A)
03-Jan-24	Wednesday	34
04-Jan-24	Thursday	60
05-Jan-24	Friday	66
06-Jan-24	Saturday	76
07-Jan-24	Sunday	26
08-Jan-24	Monday	65
09-Jan-24	Tuesday	120
10-Jan-24	Wednesday	458
11-Jan-24	Thursday	69
12-Jan-24	Friday	342
13-Jan-24	Saturday	269
14-Jan-24	Sunday	330
15-Jan-24	Monday	46
16-Jan-24	Tuesday	58
17-Jan-24	Wednesday	44
18-Jan-24	Thursday	68
19-Jan-24	Friday	52
20-Jan-24	Saturday	37
21-Jan-24	Sunday	40
22-Jan-24	Monday	67
23-Jan-24	Tuesday	56
24-Jan-24	Wednesday	51
25-Jan-24	Thursday	75
26-Jan-24	Friday	42
Average		106

Avenue Road		LEQ 63.6
Date	Day of Week	# of peaks over 73.6 (dB -A)
13-Dec-23	Wednesay	616
14-Dec-23	Thursday	973
15-Dec-23	Friday	390
16-Dec-23	Wednesay	224
17-Dec-23	Saturday	166
18-Dec-23	Sunday	334
19-Dec-23	Wednesay	267
20-Dec-23	Monday	304
21-Dec-23	Tuesday	304
22-Dec-23	Wednesay	449
23-Dec-23	Wednesay	208
24-Dec-23	Thursday	146
25-Dec-23	Wednesay	87
26-Dec-23	Friday	162
27-Dec-23	Saturday	215
28-Dec-23	Wednesay	214
29-Dec-23	Sunday	203
30-Dec-23	Monday	139
31-Dec-23	Wednesay	121
01-Jan-24	Tuesday	138
02-Jan-24	Wednesay	562
03-Jan-24	Wednesay	262
04-Jan-24	Thursday	213
05-Jan-24	Friday	345
06-Jan-24	Wednesay	106
Average		286

Because highways have a higher LEQ, they have fewer peak noise events that break that level. However they still average about 60 noise spikes in 24 hours and there are many other distinctive exhaust notes that are of different frequencies which can wake people up and annoy at all hours.

Residential streets in areas with lots of tall buildings (i.e. transit oriented communities) are very busy roads and so are also very noisy, experiencing over 100 events in 24 hours. Arterial roads are the worst, with approximately 250 peak noise events in 24 hours.

I wanted to know how many people one vehicle can impact as it seems so extremely unfair that one person can impact so many. To estimate exposure, I conducted a buffer analysis and determined that in 2021 over 650,000 people lived within 750 meters of a highway. If there are on average 60 peak noise events in 24 hours there are 39,000,000 million noise impacts in that time.



I also conducted an analysis on arterial roads and over 1.2 million people lived within 100 meters of an arterial road. Multiplying their over 250 noise spikes in 24 hours amounts to over 300 million noise spikes delivered to these residents in that time.



It doesn't take a lot more math to see that the peak noise event exposures are into the billions in a couple days on arterial roads alone.

Most of these peak exposures are from modified vehicles and aggressive or stunt driving.

The [Toronto Noise Action Plan](#) that was published in 2019 is a starting point, but there needs to be more work to reflect the issues we face today. We are building more noise canyons in Toronto, making this problem worse and exposing even more people.

Reducing noise pollution is not that difficult, improves the quality of life for everyone, and the benefits are instant. All it takes a City that cares and elected officials that have the will to force the change when the city simply wants to uphold the status quo.