

Citizen Comments – MU-1 District Noise Ordinance Proposal Open House Meeting

Jan. 15, 2019, Baca Center

Below are the written comments received at the open house meeting, listed by topic as presented at the meeting.

What's the Problem?

- I have concerns about the noise affecting sleep. With sleep deprivation a large number of health issues are initiated. High blood pressure, diabetes, and depression. I feel that it is unfair to subject our neighborhood to the damage caused by the noise.

Kent Macaulay
East Liberty
Resident since 1977

- Regarding the placement of loudspeakers, there needs to be a way to ensure that there is not a situation in which a venue hangs up or sets out portable speakers, and then “hides” or removes them whenever the police arrive. It’s one thing to ask the officers to use a decibel meter, which they can do easily, but it would be hard for the officers to monitor “speaker placement.” There may need to be some cooperation between officers and code enforcement to address (prevent) this from occurring.

Greg Kirwin
Sunset Dr.

- My concern with noise comes from late night bar patrons. They make noise when they return to their automobiles. Such noise could be loud talking, setting car alarms, fireworks or firearms, and playing loud music with their car radios etc. I worry too about drunk people fighting and having shootouts.

Jesus Franco
Blair St.

- Cannot sleep with the loud noise. I live four blocks and two streets over and the noise is still too loud! Even with double pane windows.

Susan Bennett
E. Austin Ave.

What Has the City Done?

- Thank you for addressing this issue in consideration of the residents in the downtown district. It’s a good start and we are hopeful things will quiet down as it truly is a health and quality of life issue for us and many of our neighbors. When we moved to our home on the creek 21 years

ago, the only noise we dealt with was traffic on I-35 which was tolerable. The removal of outside speakers at bars should go a long way to reduce the decibel level. We appreciate that significant change and that the businesses will be monitored and fined for violations.

Alan and Regina Sagen

What is the Proposal?

- I believe that the latest proposal should go a long way taking care of the noise problem downtown involving bars. The other noise maker is the loud sounding of train horns. We pray that our City leaders can make progress in getting us a quiet train ordinance.

Jesus Franco
Blair St.

- I think it is great to see the council so involved and listening to the long-time residents of the neighborhood.

Roger Ludlon

- Only the bar operators can really solve this. I'd like the City to make violation of the noise ordinance so certain and so expensive that the bar operators voluntarily obey the law without burdening the neighborhoods and the police.

(1) Drastically increase the fines. \$292 is not a deterrent to anyone selling \$90K/month.

(2) Apply the fines to the property owners and individual bar tenders as well as the license holders.

(3) Please review the noise ordinance with respect to the VFW on Georgetown Rd. and the Dell Diamond. Not usually, but sometimes they have events that are much too noisy and complaints to police have not been effective.

(4) The downtown bars have a huge advantage over the I-35 corridor bars: they do not have to provide safe, lighted parking lots for their employees and customers. They should be willing to pay for this by being considerate of the residential neighbors.

(5) Please cancel permit at 1st violation, not third.

(6) 65 violations of the existing ordinance is not a few, it is a lot. The three worst bars are habitual offenders.

(7) The noise ordinance should apply to City programs as well as bars. "Music on Main" and movies in Prete Plaza are sometimes much too loud and audible all the way to Veterans Park.

Cathey Carter
Pecan Ave.

Comparing Current to Proposal

- Proposal Promising – A system of fines for non-compliance would seem proper to help keep compliance constant – much as traffic fines do.

Requiring permanent noise absorption barriers at outside music/noise venues would reduce non-compliance incidents to near zero.

Fines for non-compliance should be at the upper end legally allowed for first three violations. Enough to “stink” and encourage future compliance.

Pete Doughtrey
E. Main St.
Resident since 1988

- Great job explaining the problem and proposed solutions. Additional thoughts are to keep the new residents that will eventually move into condos as the Gypsum Plant property in mind. Also, the TABC can impose penalties on the liquor licenses of the venues if pulling the permits doesn't work.

Ben Klein
College St.

Next Steps/Other Input

- Thank you for holding this public meeting regarding our noise problem. I believe you are moving towards a workable solution.

Jesus Franco
Blair St.

- We appreciate the display and explanations. Also having staff on hand was helpful. Love the idea of a permit that can be revoked after 3 violations and don't want businesses to lose their music venues – but do want some accountability if the bar owner chooses to ignore the sound problem. Most of the downtown residents want to peacefully coexist with the bars. It is important that the businesses respect the homeowners' quality of life balanced with their need to operate and thrive. The new ordinance “sounds” like a step in the right direction. Please keep the time at midnight.

Liz Klein
College St.