



Saanich staff to look into feasibility of 'noise camera' pilot program

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A motion asking Saanich staff to look into the feasibility of a “noise camera” pilot program has been moved to the strategic planning process.

This will determine if it should be prioritized ahead of other council requests, according to Mayor Dean Murdock.

Coun. Teale Phelps Bondaroff was the driving force behind the pilot, which would allow cameras to take an audio recording of a vehicle with an after-market muffler or too-loud

exhaust system.

At a council meeting on Monday, March 11, the councillor said noise pollution often languishes “quietly in the bike racks” of the strategic planning process.

“So it’s my hope that if we send something like this to the strategic planning process, it will add additional weight, perhaps volume, to that overall conversation,” Phelps Bondaroff said Monday.

Saanich’s Transportation Advisory Committee discussed the report and put forward a request for the pilot program back in January.

Phelps Bondaroff said Monday that there is “a broad range” of noise issues in Saanich, “but this is one of them...I’m happy to have this conversation more fulsomely at strategic planning and hope that we can have that conversation and address not just this issue but a broader range of noise issues.”

“Because it is something that impacts well-being, health and community engagement in our neighbourhoods,” he added.

While Phelps Bondaroff opposed the strategic plan check-in, all other councillors supported it. The check-in aims to avoid overwhelming district staff with current council priorities, according to the mayor.

“So we’re not saying we won’t do it, just have to make sure we’re not overwhelming staff with requests,” Murdock told CHEK News.

It was in [August 2023](#) when Phelps Bondaroff said he was pitching to install the cameras at select intersections in Saanich. At the time, he said anyone awakened by an after-market muffler in the middle of the night couldn't do much about it.

"They're not going to get on the phone and call bylaw enforcement. By now, the car's miles away in some unknown direction," he told CHEK News.

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Ryan Burghardt, who owns Budget Brake and Muffler in Victoria, said last August that loud mufflers were making a comeback. He added that the average customer for these systems was males between 18 and 29 years old looking to make their vehicles more performance-sounding.

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Police can issue tiered tickets to vehicles deemed too loud. Regular cars are allowed 83 decibels, while industrial diesel vehicles are allowed up to 93 decibels.

According to Phelps Bondaroff, noise pollution has been linked to a wide range of health effects, such as stress and cardiovascular issues.

"We know that loud noise and noise pollution reduces the enjoyment of everyday tasks, it disrupts face-to-face social interactions, and it stops people from initiating conversations," he

added.

Murdock says the check-in will likely happen in April.

-With files from CHEK's Jordan Cunningham, Andy Neal

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