

Ms. Saunders: Please attach a copy of this correspondence to Council agenda

To the Mayor and City Councillors of London, Ontario

Let me begin by saying that I am a new resident of London, Ontario. During my first year here, I was discouraged by what I saw as a lack of vibrancy and a culture of nay-saying. I made plans to move back home as soon as I could.

This year, however, I discovered the other side of London. I started attending civic events, the car free festival on Dundas, ReThink events, and the London Fringe Festival.

I began to look forward to a summer of festivals. Some of my best memories of living in Hamilton, Ontario, is of festivals I had attended there.

Please do not listen to people who claim that London has a reputation as a party town... As an outsider, I can confidently state that the opposite is in fact the case.

Before I continue, I have to confess that am not a fan of loud noise. I do not regularly go to indoor concerts, or nightclubs. I'm unusual amongst my thirtysomething peers since I hate going to restaurants that are playing obnoxiously loud music.

So I have a great deal of sympathy for the balance the City of London is trying to establish between encouraging festivals and protecting citizens of the downtown.

Having said that, I also feel very strongly that we, as citizens, must sometimes make sacrifices for the greater communal good. This does not mean that we should completely disregard the concerns of those who live near festival venues.

However, it does mean, that as elected officials, you have the opportunity of establishing a compromise. I believe staff did an excellent option of coming up with some very reasonable and conservative options. I am in favour of increasing the noise by laws to midnight. I would also be open to a small increase in the decibel levels.

This is by no means an extreme solution. Those who have concerns should be mollified by knowing the change is conservative. Sacrificing one additional hour of quiet is a small price to pay for attracting musical acts and performance, and creating a city that is welcoming to youth, musicians, and those looking for a creative and vibrant culture.

I am not in favour of eliminating by laws, or extending them to levels common in most Latin America cultures (of which I am a part of).

Take a chance, City of London! This IS a great place to live. But we have to work at it.

Thanks,

Susan Toth