



## ***Will Your New Home Be Too Noisy?***

There's nothing worse than making one of the biggest purchases of your life only to discover a real problem after the fact. Most people searching for a new home have a long list of criteria that must be satisfied within a specific budget, at a specific time, but few of them consider noise. Even if all your criteria are met, life in your dream home can be made a nightmare by unexpected noise. Here are some practical suggestions to reduce your chances of being unpleasantly surprised after you move in:

***Study a recent map*** of the neighborhood to determine the proximity of noise sources. Look for freeways, arterials, airports, railroads, industrial/commercial or retail centers, entertainment centers, schools and parks near your selected home.

***Take a drive*** from your chosen home to each of the noise sources. Sometimes it's hard to appreciate the impact of the source without visiting it, and it may be closer than you think. (Note that some noise sources are not readily apparent, e.g., trains crossing arterials at grade must sound their horns – even during the night – and the sound can travel over a long distance.) Can you tolerate what you're hearing?

***Visit the home at various times*** on weekdays and weekends. Visit nearby parks and entertainment centers on weekend afternoons. Visit your selected home on a weekday between 9 am and 5 pm (to experience the noise impact of local businesses and/or industries in operation) and between the hours of 5:00 am and 7:00 am, to check out the noise from the morning rush traffic. Listen objectively to the noise. Is it too loud for you? If it's a good neighborhood, you may be asked by curious neighbors what you're doing there. So...

***Talk to the neighbors***, who can be very informative. Do they find it noisy? Ask their occupations. Do they have a job involving "unsociable" hours? (Think: slamming car doors at 3 am.) Do they have babies (midnight feeds), teenagers (loud music, cars) and/or pets (barking)? What are their hobbies? (Model planes, woodwork, and musical instruments are just some that can cause irritation.) What sports do they enjoy? (Boisterous Monday night football parties or endless basketball-bouncing at all hours are also popular contributors to annoying-neighbor noise.)

***Talk to the planners*** at City Hall. They will know of any plans to widen or add streets or freeways, build new industrial parks or retail centers, increase rail movements through the city, or increase the volume or nature of aircraft at local airports. They'll be able to tell you the location and duration of new construction, and can direct you to up-to-the minute planning information available at your local library to assist you in making an informed choice.

Even if you check out only these few suggestions, you will have done more than most people, and your effort may save you from making a very costly mistake.