



To: Saint Paul City Council

From: Union Park District Council

Re: Support for a noise regulations variance with conditions (listed below) for Breakaway Music Festival June 26 and June 27, 2026

Councilmembers,

Union Park District Council respectfully urges the City Council to approve a Noise Regulations variance for Breakaway Music Festival 2026, with the following conditions:

- o Sound will be monitored around the perimeter, with a decibel limit at each of the perimeter monitors equal to the measured perimeter sound levels June 7, 2025.
- o A log of the sound levels will be kept, with the interval between documentation of the sound levels specified by the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI).
- o Reductions in sound levels will be made in real time in response to the monitored perimeter sound levels.
- o Breakaway Festival will pay for DSI staff to be present onsite to assist with sound monitoring. Reductions in sound levels will be made in real time in response to DSI instructions.
- o A community feedback line will be clearly identified. Reductions in sound levels will be made in real time in response to the feedback, even if this requires a reduction below the approved sound levels.

This approach rewards the use of effective sound containment while protecting surrounding properties from ineffective sound containment.

Background:

Please see the attached Union Park District Council letter of support with conditions for Breakaway Music Festival 2025.

The 2025 festival made the following changes:

- o a change in the orientation of the stage –
 - in 2024 the stage faced southeast, directed toward the brick façade of Cub Foods;
 - in 2025 the stage faced southwest, directed toward Allianz Field’s laminated PTFE mesh exterior
- o improved speaker technology, which reduced spread of the sound beyond United Village
- o a DSI employee on site throughout the festival, paid for by Breakaway Festival
- o a real-time comment line, which was organized, marketed, and managed by Breakaway.

In 2024, the City received 641 complaints regarding the Breakaway Music Festival.

In 2025, the City received no complaints regarding the Breakaway Music Festival. The real-time comment line, which was organized, marketed, and managed by Breakaway, received 53 responses, which ranged from “I love the event” to “It’s loud.” Every respondent was given the opportunity to have the sound level measured at their residence. Only 1 person requested this and, based on the measurement, adjustments were

made to the sound system which resolved the concern.

It is Union Park District Council's position that:

- o The 2025 Breakaway Music Festival's noise variance requirements (sound monitoring at the front of the house, with sound levels equal to those approved in 2024) were not responsible for the reduction in the spread of sound beyond the festival's perimeter.
- o The change in the orientation of the stage to face toward Allianz Field's laminated PTFE mesh exterior and the improvement in speaker technology were primarily responsible for the reduction in the spread of the sound beyond the festival's perimeter. This was supplemented by real-time adjustment of sound levels based on feedback received through the real-time comment line.
- o The St. Paul Police Department should be the last resort for real-time enforcement, rather than the only option for real-time enforcement.
- o Administrative citations after a noise incident do not undo the disruption experienced by residents during the noise incident.

Respectfully,

Sarah Dvorak
Union Park District Council President

CC: Saint Paul Department of Safety and Inspections