

# 11. NOISE

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## INTRODUCTION

The Noise Element is required in a General Plan. The State requires local governments to identify and quantify community noise levels expressed in such sound weighting scales as Community Noise Equivalent Levels (CNEL) or day-night average levels (Ldn). The findings must be included in the General Plan and used to guide future land use decisions, implementation measures for noise control, and policies to aid in limiting the community’s noise exposure. Noise management acts in coordination with Circulation, Land Use, and Housing patterns, and the purpose of this element aims to inform policies to prevent public exposure to excessive noise.

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. An adequate Noise Element must include the following two components: (1) an analysis of noise levels and the extent of noise exposure through noise measurements or modeling, and (2) noise standards to be used for land use planning.

Existing conditions identify a variety of main noise sources: traffic, animal nuisances, and lake activity. Future development plans should reflect the careful consideration of land use choices and sensitivity demands of such choices. Appropriate land uses should be located adjacent to the main traffic corridors of SR 53 and Lakeshore Drive. By grouping commercial uses together, noise levels can be contained to corridors and specific areas.

Noise abatement is measured by a change of at least 5 dBA in noise levels, the availability of landscaped berms and sound walls. Open space can also be utilized as a noise buffer. Clearlake’s ability to identify and mitigate noise can result in the maintenance of quiet lakeside neighborhoods and a small town character.

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

## GOAL NO 1

A community with minimal exposure to excessive sound.

### Objective NO 1.1

Separate land uses that are sensitive to noise from land uses that traditionally produce high levels of noise

#### Policy NO 1.1.1

The City shall avoid placing noise generators next to sensitive land uses such as churches, schools, parks, hospitals and cemeteries.

##### Program NO 1.1.1.1

Protect the community from harmful noise levels through discretionary review procedures such as environmental review, design review and conditional use permits.

##### Program NO 1.1.1.2

Designate “quiet zones” around sensitive uses to maintain acceptable levels of noise exposure.

#### Policy NO 1.1.2

The City shall not approve variances to land development proposals that create significant changes to the levels of noise without further analysis.

##### Program NO 1.1.2.1

Require a noise analysis as part of the variance review process.

##### Program NO 1.1.2.2

During the development approval process, use projected noise levels to determine the impact of the development proposal on surrounding areas.

#### Policy NO 1.1.3

Noise analysis shall be measured by Ldn, CNEL, or dBA as defined in the Noise element. Table 9.1 shows the ranges of acceptable and unacceptable levels of noise for key land uses.

##### Program NO 1.1.3.1

Adopt a noise ordinance designating appropriate hours for motorcycle and dirt bike use to minimize exposure to excessive noise at nighttime hours.

Table 9.1 Maximum Allowable Noise Exposure by Land Use							
Land Use	Noise Level (CNEL)						
	45-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	>76
Residential – Low Density Single Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes							
Residential – Multiple Family, Group Homes							
Motels/Hotels							
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Extended Care Facilities							
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters							
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports							
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks							
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries							
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional							
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture							
Interpretations							
	<b>Normally Acceptable.</b> Specified land use is satisfactory, based on the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal, conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.						
	<b>Conditionally Acceptable.</b> New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed insulation features have been included in the design.						
	<b>Normally Unacceptable.</b> New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Outdoor areas must be shielded.						
	<b>Unacceptable.</b> New construction or development should not be undertaken.						
<i>Governor's Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Guidelines, Appendix C</i>							

## Objective NO 1.2

Minimize impact of traffic noise along main transportation corridors.

### Policy NO 1.2.1

Adopt regulations that limit public exposure to noise from automobiles and motorcycles.

#### Program NO 1.2.1.1

Require a traffic impact studies to include transportation noise effects of additional volumes of traffic that result from new development and steps to mitigate excessive levels of traffic related noise.

#### Program NO 1.2.1.2

Designate specific truck routes to avoid interaction with sensitive land uses.

#### Program NO 1.2.1.3

Designate reasonable commercial activity loading/unloading hours.

#### Program NO 1.2.1.4

Establish and enforce noise regulations which set limits on intensity and hours of truck routes within city jurisdiction.

### **Objective NO 1.3**

Reduce noise related to construction activities.

#### Policy NO 1.3.1

Construction permits shall contain restrictions on hours of operation and deliveries so as not to disturb neighboring uses, particularly retail/mixed use and residential.

#### Policy NO 1.3.2

The City shall conduct a traffic impact study to analyze transportation noise effects of any long-term additional volumes or change in circulation patterns that increases noise levels during the construction phase of the development process.

### **Objective NO 1.4**

Keep noise levels below state and federal thresholds.

#### Policy NO 1.4.1

Assess and abide by “Normally acceptable” Noise Abatement Standards as put forth by CalTrans & FHWA, which are between 50 & 60 dBA.

#### Program NO 1.4.1.1

Establish and enforce noise abatement requirements for new development in mixed use and commercial centers/corridors.