Working Draft Noise Element

INTRODUCTION

The General Plan provides goals and policies to guide compatible land uses and the incorporation of noise attenuation measures for new buildings that will protect people living and working in the City from an excessive noise environment. The General Plan provides sufficient policy direction for noise-related issues. The policies in the Community Plan focus on specific noise and land use compatibility issues. Noise sensitive land uses typically include residential uses and schools for children. The Land Use Element provides policies and recommendations for future mixed-use, residential, industrial, and commercial uses. The Urban Design element addresses building and site design, which can be used to avoid and attenuate excessive noise levels.

Clairemont is an urban community with a mix of land uses and transportation facilities. The community has higher ambient noise levels from commercial and industrial, activities, freeways, major streets, aircraft operations, and rail operations. The General Plan recognizes that elevated ambient noise levels are normal within a developed and urbanized City, and it does not seek to limit activities in a community, especially those related to school and community events.

Figure 9-1 illustrates the future noise contours from freeways, major roads, and rail lines. The noise contours do not reflect changes in noise levels due to topography such as the freeway elevation above ground level or other physical barriers including vegetation, walls, or buildings. The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans contains the noise contours for Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport and Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar.

Community Noise Equivalent Level or CNEL is the noise rating scale used for land use compatibility. The CNEL rating represents the average of equivalent noise levels, measured in A-weighted decibels (dBA), at a location for a 24-hour period, with upward adjustments added to account for increased noise sensitivity in the evening and night periods. The A-weighted filter places a greater emphasis on frequencies within the range of the human ear. The General Plan provides compatibility guidelines for evaluating land uses based on noise levels. To maintain and enhance the existing land use character, the General Plan specifies that noise levels at or below 75 dBA are conditionally compatible for multifamily residential uses and mixed-use (commercial-residential) development. Any new residential use above 60 dBA CNEL will need to include sound attenuation measures that are included to reduce the interior noise levels to 45 dBA. Typical attenuation measures are addressed in the General Plan.

NOISE ELEMENT GOAL

Development that is planned and designed to avoid or attenuate excessive noise levels.

BOX NE-1: GENERAL PLAN TOPICS

The Noise Element policies in the General Plan and in the Community Plan provide goals and policies to guide compatible land uses and the incorporation of noise attenuation measure for new uses to protect people living and working in the City from an excessive noise environment. Related Noise Element Topics covered in the General Plan include the following and should be referenced as applicable:

- *Noise and land Use Compatibility*
- *Motor Vehicle Noise*
- *Trolley and Train Noise*
- *Aircraft Noise*
- *Commercial and Mixed-Use Activity Noise*
- *Industrial Activity Noise*
- *Construction, Refuse Vehicles, Parking Lot Sweepers, and Public Activity Noise*
- *Event Noise*
- *Typical Attenuation Methods*

9.1 NOISE ENVIRONMENT

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY

Where residential and other sensitive receptor uses are present or proposed, the potential for noise impacts from commercial and industrial activities are important to evaluate, such as deliveries during late night and early morning hours, which generate noise that can affect the nearby residential uses. Reducing the effect from commercial and industrial activity noise involves site planning and integrating noise attenuation measures in new buildings that will reduce interior sound levels. Refer to General Plan Policies NE-E.1 through NE-E.6.

MOTOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC NOISE

Vehicle traffic noise is directly related to the traffic volume, speed, and mix of vehicles. Freeways and major streets that include State Route 163, Interstate 805, and Interstate 5, Balboa Avenue, Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, and Genesee Avenue are the primary sources of motor vehicle noise within the community. Noise from trucks driving within, or parked and idling in commercial and industrial areas can also be a source of annoyance for noise sensitive uses. Trucks in general generate more noise than cars and light trucks. Refer to General Plan policies NE-B.1 through NE-B.9.

RAIL NOISE

Rail noise is a source of noise in the community adjacent to Morena Boulevard and Interstate 5. Freight trains, intercity rail (Amtrak), commuter rail (Coaster), and light rail transit (Trolley) can generate relatively brief, intermittent noise events. Refer to General Plan policies NE-C.1 through NE-C.4.

AIRCRAFT NOISE

Aircraft noise and overflight of aircraft from Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport and MCAS Miramar affect the eastern portion of Clairemont. Aircraft noise can affect people living and working in the community at varying degrees, depending on a person's level of annoyance. The community is within the Airport Influence Area, which is the boundary for the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) for both Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport and MCAS Miramar. The ALUCPs are prepared by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for San Diego County. Aircraft noise is one of the factors that the state-required ALUCP addresses with established policies for land use compatibility, as discussed in the Introduction. The policies and criteria contained in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans are addressed in the General Plan (Land Use and Community Planning Element and Noise Element and implemented with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Overlay Zone.

POLICIES

NE-1.1 Consider feasible operational measures to reduce noise for conditionally permitted commercial uses in areas where eating, drinking, entertainment, and assembly establishments are adjacent to residential uses.

A. Consider appropriate window open/close hours for eating and drinking establishments.

B. Consider lowering the volume of amplified music during the last hour of service.

C. Encourage the use of evening security staff to control crowds as well as loitering after hours.

D. Provide noise attenuation measures to reduce the noise levels generated from the establishment, to the degree possible, within their premises with special attention to "open air" concept establishments (such as beer gardens or large outdoor eating and drinking venues.

E. Encourage bars that serve food to keep their kitchens open after alcohol has stopped being served to encourage a slower flow of people leaving the establishment.

NE-1.2 Encourage drive-thru restaurants to use visual-only confirmation order screens at locations adjacent to residential buildings.

NE-1.3 Encourage truck deliveries to commercial uses to occur during day-time hours and to turn off engines during loading where commercial uses are adjacent to residential areas.

NE-1.4 Encourage private waste pick-up to occur during day-time hours where commercial uses are adjacent to residential areas.

NE-1.5 Incorporate sound attenuation measures such as sound absorbent wall/ceiling materials, sound walls, and dense, drought-tolerant landscaping where commercial uses are adjacent to residential areas.

NE-1.6 Locate the commercial portion of new mixed-use developments away from existing single-family residences and ensure that noise levels generated are at or within acceptable levels when residential uses are located nearby.

NE-1.7 Utilize site design to create physical separation between noise sensitive uses and noise-generating activities where possible.

A. Consider using building setbacks along streets with high noise levels to

increase distance between the street and residential buildings, as well as to enhance the urban realm and pedestrian environment.

B. Consider siting non-residential uses or buildings closer to noise-generating uses or transportation facilities to shield residential buildings from noise, and separate or shield residential uses from delivery areas for non-residential uses for mixed-use and multiple-use developments on larger sites.

NE-1.8 Encourage the use of traffic calming measures as a means to enhance safety and reduce vehicle noise along neighborhood streets.

NE-1.9 Establish wayfinding signs within the community to facilitate efficient and more immediate vehicle access to community destinations such as parks, schools, business areas, parking areas, and freeways for motorists.

NE-1.10 Work with Caltrans to establish and maintain landscape buffers along freeway rights of way through the use of berms, planting of native and/or drought resistant trees and shrubs.

NE-1.11 Utilize the Community Plan and the ALUCP noise contours when making land use planning decisions.

NE-1.12 Ensure that future residential use above the 60 dBA CNEL aircraft noise contour includes noise attenuation measures to ensure an interior noise level of 45 dBA CNEL.

NE-1.13 Apply standard noise controls to reduce construction noise levels emanating from new construction to minimize disruption and annoyance to adjacent residential or other noise sensitive uses.

A. Limit construction activity hours.

B. Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition, and appropriate for the equipment.

C. Locate stationery noise-generating equipment (e.g. compressors) as far as possible from adjacent residential receivers.

D. Acoustically shield stationary equipment located near residential receivers with temporary noise barriers.

E. Utilize "quiet" air compressors, and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.

F. Encourage construction contractors to prepare a detailed construction plan identifying the schedule for major noise generating construction activities that includes coordination with adjacent residents so that construction activities can be scheduled to minimize noise disturbance.

G. Encourage construction contractors to designate a "disturbance coordinator" who would be responsible for responding to any complaints about construction noise.