

7.0 Noise

7.1 Purpose

The Noise Chapter describes existing noise and vibration conditions, major noise and vibration sources, and the regulatory framework related to noise and vibration levels in Port Hueneme. The purpose of this chapter and the Noise Element is to identify the community's primary noise and vibration sources and areas with high noise and vibration levels to plan for new noise- and vibration-sensitive uses in quieter areas or require that project applicants take appropriate measures to reduce exposure to ambient noise and vibration.

7.2 Noise Background

Noise is defined as loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or undesired sound. The effects of noise on people can include general annoyance, interference with speech communication, sleep disturbance, and, in the extreme, hearing impairment (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2013).

Noise level (or volume) is generally measured in decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level. The A-weighting scale is an adjustment to the actual sound pressure levels to be consistent with that of human hearing response, which is most sensitive to frequencies around 4,000 Hertz (about the highest note on a piano) and less sensitive to low frequencies (below 100 Hertz). When people make relative judgments of the loudness or annoyance of a sound, their judgments correlate well with the "A-weighted" levels of those sounds. Therefore, the A-weighted noise scale is used for measurements and standards involving the human perception of noise. In this analysis, all noise levels are A-weighted and "dBA" refers to the A-weighted decibel.

Decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale that quantifies sound intensity in a manner similar to the Richter scale used for earthquake magnitudes. A 10 dB increase represents a 10-fold increase in sound intensity, a 20 dB change represents a 100-fold difference, a 30 dB change represents a 1,000-fold difference, etc. Thus, a doubling of the energy of a noise source, such as a doubling of traffic volume, would increase the noise level by 3 dB, and a halving of the energy would result in a 3 dB decrease.

In addition to the actual instantaneous measurement of sound levels, the duration of sound is important because sounds that occur over a long period of time are more likely to be a nuisance or cause direct physical damage or environmental stress. One of the most frequently used noise metrics that considers both duration and sound power level is the equivalent noise level (L_{eq}). The L_{eq} is essentially the average noise level over a period of time. Typically, L_{eq} is summed over a one-hour period. L_{max} is the highest RMS (root mean squared) sound pressure level within the measuring period, and L_{min} is the lowest RMS sound pressure level within the measuring period.

The time period in which noise occurs is also important because noise that occurs at night tends to be more disturbing than that which occurs during the day. Community noise is usually measured using the Day-Night Average Level (L_{dn}), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a 10-dBA penalty for noise occurring during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.), or the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a 5-dBA penalty for noise occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and a 10-dBA penalty for noise occurring from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Noise levels described by L_{dn} and CNEL usually do not differ by more than 1 dB.

Human perception of noise has no simple correlation with acoustical energy. The perception of noise is not linear in terms of dBA or in terms of acoustical energy. Two equivalent noise sources do not sound twice as loud as one source. It is widely accepted that the average healthy ear can barely perceive increases or decreases of 3 dBA; that a change of 5 dBA is readily perceptible; and that an increase of 10 dBA sounds twice as loud (similarly, a decrease of 10 dBA sounds half as loud; Caltrans 2013). To help relate noise level measurements to common experience, Table 7-1 shows typical noise levels from various sources.

Table 7-1 Typical Noise Levels

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Activities
	110	Rock Band
Jet Flyover at 1,000 feet		
	100	
Gas Lawnmower at 3 feet		
	90	
Diesel Truck at 50 feet, at 50 miles per hour		Food Blender at 3 feet
	80	Garbage Disposal at 3 feet
Noisy Urban Daytime		
	70	Vacuum Cleaner at 10 feet
Commercial Area		Normal Speech at 3 feet
Heavy Vehicular Traffic at 300 feet	60	
		Large Business Office
Quiet Urban Daytime	50	Dishwasher in the Next Room
Quiet Urban Nighttime	40	Theater, Large Conference Room (background)
Quiet Suburban Nighttime		
	30	Library
Quiet Rural Nighttime		Bedroom at Night, Concert Hall (background)
	20	
		Broadcast/Recording Studio
	10	
Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing	0	Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing

Source: Caltrans 2013

7.3 Vibration Background

Ground borne vibration consists of the oscillatory waves that move from a source through the ground to adjacent structures. It is typically measured in peak particle velocity (ppv) or vibration decibels (VdB). Vibration in buildings, such as from nearby construction activities, may cause windows, items on shelves, and pictures on walls to rattle. Vibration of building components can

also take the form of an audible low-frequency rumbling noise, referred to as ground borne noise (Federal Transit Administration 2018). Although ground borne vibration is sometimes noticeable in outdoor environments, it is almost never annoying to people who are outdoors. The primary concern from vibration is that it can be intrusive and annoying to building occupants and vibration-sensitive land uses. Vibration significance ranges from approximately 50 VdB, which is the typical background vibration-velocity level, to 100 VdB, the general threshold where minor damage can occur in fragile buildings (Federal Transit Administration 2018). The general human response to different levels of ground borne vibration velocity levels is described in Table 7-2.

Table 7-2 Human Response to Different Levels of Groundborne Vibration

Vibration Velocity Level	Human Reaction
65 VdB	Approximate threshold of perception for many people
75 VdB	Approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible – many people find that transportation-related vibration at this level is unacceptable
85 VdB	Vibration acceptable only if there are an infrequent number of events per day

VdB = vibration decibels
 Source: Federal Transit Administration 2018

7.4 Noise Sources

Major sources of noise in Port Hueneme include motor vehicles; stationary sources such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, loading docks, and machinery; railroad operations; and construction activities. Minor sources of noise include aircraft overflights, intermittent military operations and activities, freight and goods movement operations at the Port of Hueneme (Port), and amplified noise. The most widespread and predominant noise source is traffic noise from motor vehicles driving along roadways. Traffic noise is of concern because it is characterized by a high number of individual events, which often create a sustained noise level.

Traffic Noise

Traffic is the most prevalent noise source in Port Hueneme. Major arterial roadways in Port Hueneme that generate substantial noise include Channel Islands Boulevard, Ventura Road, Patterson Road, Port Hueneme Road, Pleasant Valley Road, and Bard Road. In addition, land uses along the western, northern, and eastern City limits experience noise generated by traffic along South Victoria Avenue, West Hemlock Street, and South J Street, respectively, which are located in Oxnard. Traffic noise levels can vary seasonally due to higher traffic volumes in summer months associated with the beach.

Stationary Noise

Noise generated by stationary noise sources such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, loading docks, machinery, and commercial activity associated with restaurants, bars, outdoor dining, and parking garages/lots contributes to the ambient noise environment in their immediate vicinity. These noise sources may operate intermittently or on a continual basis depending on the nature of the activity. Stationary noise may be generated by any land use, although industrial and commercial activities typically generate the highest noise levels. Industrial land uses in Port Hueneme, as shown on the City’s existing zoning map, are primarily clustered at

the Port of Hueneme, at Naval Base Ventura County – Port Hueneme, and in the southern portion of the City south of Port Hueneme Road and east of South Surfside Drive.

Other stationary noise sources include residences and schools; however, these land uses typically generate lower noise levels than industrial and commercial activities. Stationary noise generated by these uses is generally intermittent. Residential uses generate noise from landscaping, maintenance activities, and HVAC systems. Consequently, potential noise concerns can arise when new mixed-use developments (such as developments mixing residential, commercial, and office uses) are proposed. In addition, outdoor activities at school campuses throughout Port Hueneme can generate noticeable levels of noise. While it is preferable to have schools in residential areas to support the neighborhood, noise generated on both weekdays (by students outside at recess, physical education classes and sports programs) and weekends (by use of the fields by youth organizations) can elevate ambient noise levels. Typical noise levels from selected stationary noise sources are summarized in Table 7-3.

Table 7-3 Typical Noise Levels from Selected Stationary Sources

Noise Source	Noise Level ¹	Reference
Rooftop Mounted HVAC Equipment	60 to 70 dBA L_{eq} at 15 feet	Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 2009
Loading Docks	70 to 79 dBA L_{eq} at 25 feet	Charles M. Salter Associates 2017
Car Wash	78 dBA L_{eq} at 40 feet	Rincon Consultants, Inc. 2017
Drive-through Restaurant	66 dBA L_{eq} at 30 feet	Rincon Consultants, Inc. 2016
Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers	100 dBA L_{max} at 25 feet	RGD Acoustics 2016
School Playgrounds (100 students)	60 to 75 dBA L_{eq} at 25 feet	County of Sacramento 2011
Softball Games	70 dBA L_{eq} at 350 feet	County of Sacramento 2011
Conversations	55 dBA L_{eq} at 3 feet	American Journal of Audiology 1998

¹ dBA = A-weighted decibel; L_{eq} = equivalent noise level; L_{max} = maximum instantaneous noise level (see Section 7.2, Noise Background, for further discussion)

Railway Noise

Railway operations are predominantly a localized source of noise along railroad corridors. The Genesee & Wyoming Railroad operates two tracks (collectively known as the Ventura County Railroad) that are used to transfer freight and goods between the Union Pacific Railroad Coast Main Line in downtown Oxnard and the Port of Hueneme and Naval Base Ventura County – Port Hueneme. One railroad track runs east-west through the southern portion of the City from the eastern City limit to the Port of Hueneme, where it terminates at a shipping terminal. The other railroad track runs north-south parallel to Patterson Road from the northern City limit to West Channel Islands Boulevard, at which point it enters the Naval Base and expands into a 16-mile network of rail lines on site (Oxnard Harbor District 2015; Ventura County Transportation Commission 2015a and 2015b). Both railroad tracks run through and adjacent to residential neighborhoods in the City, which results in the potential for noise/land use compatibility conflicts with new and existing residential development, especially if railroad operations increase in the future.

Construction Noise

Construction activity typically generates substantial short-term increases in ambient noise levels in the immediate vicinity of construction sites, which can be disruptive to nearby noise-sensitive

receivers. Each phase of demolition and construction has its own noise characteristics; some will generate higher continuous noise levels than others and some may generate substantial intermittent noise levels from high-impact activities (e.g., pile driving) depending on the type and number of equipment used. Port Hueneme is largely built out; nevertheless, construction activities continue to occur for projects on undeveloped parcels as well as for redevelopment and renovation projects. Noise levels from individual pieces of construction equipment range from 76 to 101 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet (Federal Transit Administration 2018).

Aircraft Overflight Noise

Aircraft overflights are a minor source of noise in Port Hueneme. The nearest airports are the Oxnard Airport and Naval Air Station Point Mugu, located approximately 1.1 miles north and 3.7 miles southeast of the City, respectively. The City is located outside the planning boundaries and mapped noise contours associated with aircraft approaches and departures at Naval Air Station Point Mugu. Although portions of Port Hueneme fall within the planning boundary of the Oxnard Airport, the City is located outside of the mapped noise contours associated with aircraft approaches and departures at this airport. Therefore, noise levels from aircraft overflights associated with Oxnard Airport and Naval Air Station Point Mugu are less than 60 CNEL (Ventura County Airport Land Use Commission 2000). Nevertheless, Port Hueneme experiences occasional noise from aircraft approaches and departures at these airports as well as the Camarillo Airport, Santa Paula Airport, Los Angeles International Airport, Hollywood Burbank Airport, and Van Nuys Airport. However, due to the distance of the City from these airports and the high altitude of aircraft, overflights do not result in substantial noise in Port Hueneme.

Amplified Noise

Amplified noise is noise that is increased in volume through the use of sound amplifying devices, such as radios, televisions, loudspeakers, stereos, megaphones, and public address systems. Amplified noise is typically associated with social gatherings in residential areas and large events held in public spaces such as parks, restaurants, the beach, and music/event venues. The frequency of events that produce amplified noise levels typically increases during the summer months due to increased use of the beach for large vents such as festivals. Amplified noise is also associated with the use of speaker systems at schools, drive-through restaurants, and Naval Base Ventura County – Port Hueneme as well as day-to-day activities of residents who use radios, televisions, and stereos in their residences for entertainment. Amplified noise levels can range from approximately 65 dBA L_{max} at 30 feet for drive-through restaurant speakers to approximately 90 to 100 dBA at outdoor festivals (Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc. 2010; Alpine Hearing Protection 2017).

7.5 Vibration Sources

Typical vibration sources in Port Hueneme include construction activities and port and railroad operations. Both railroad tracks run through and adjacent to residential neighborhoods in the City, which results in the potential for land use conflicts including human annoyance and structural damage due to transient vibration, especially if railroad operations increase in the future. In addition, heavy truck traffic associated with freight and goods movement at the Port and Naval Base Ventura County – Port Hueneme operations generates vibration on local roadways, specifically along Hueneme Road, Ventura Road, Channel Islands Boulevard, and South Victoria Avenue. Furthermore, military readiness operations at Naval Base Ventura County – Port Hueneme have the potential to generate intermittent vibration at neighboring land uses (Ventura County

Transportation Commission 2015b). Vibration is also generated by heavy manufacturing, but no heavy manufacturing activities that would be expected to generate substantial levels of vibration currently occur in the City.

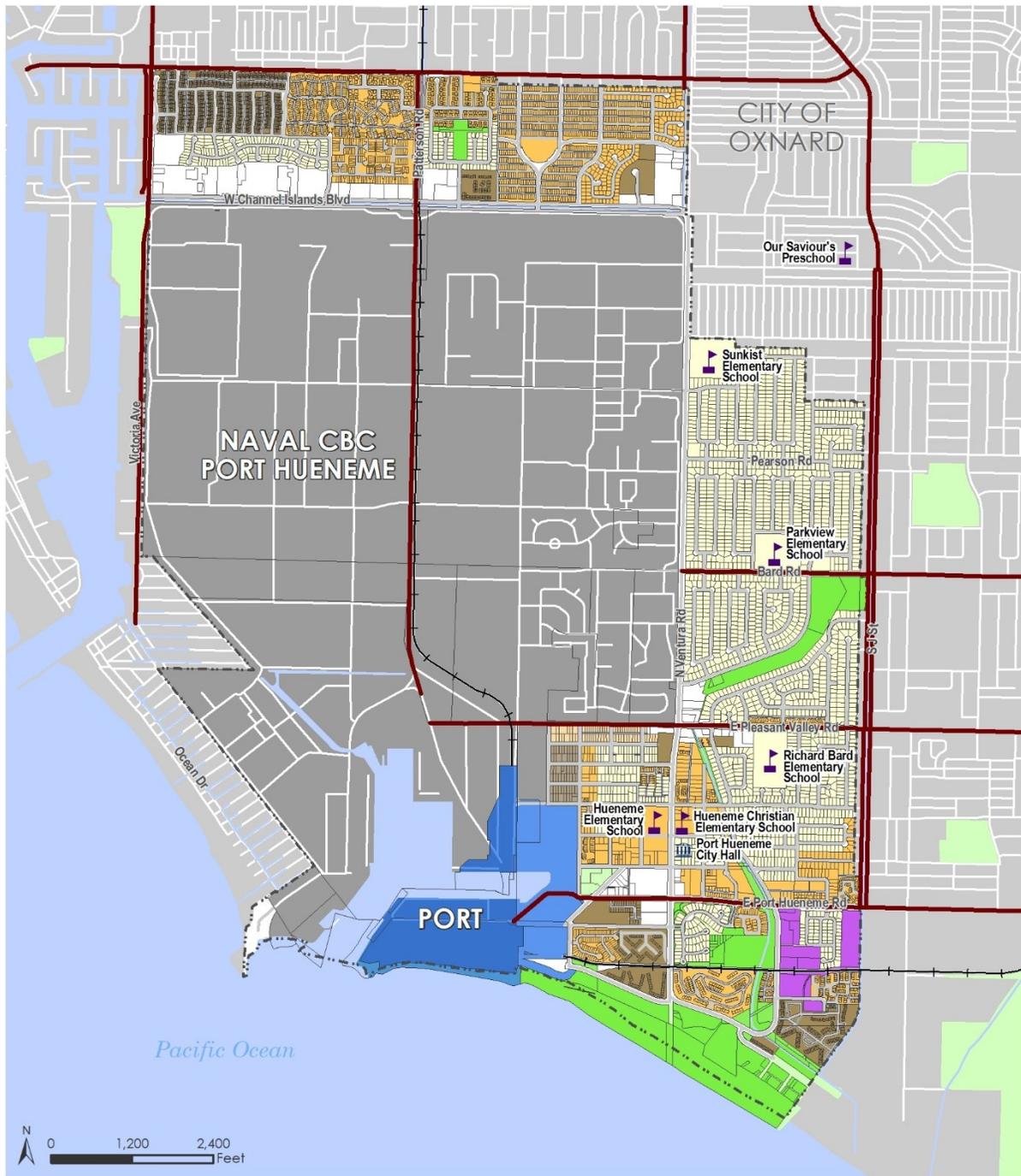
7.6 Noise-Sensitive Land Uses

Noise exposure goals for various types of land uses reflect the varying noise sensitivities associated with each of these uses. Port Hueneme Municipal Code (PHMC) Section 3428(n) defines noise-sensitive properties as all permitted and conditional uses allowed within Residential (R) and Park Reserve (PR) zones. Permitted and conditional uses in the R zone consist of:

- Residential
- Parks
- Residential care
- Child/elder care facilities
- Schools
- Community centers
- Clubs
- Places of worship
- Hospitals and medical offices
- Government / public facilities
- Harbor-related warehousing/science/research
- Mixed commercial and residential uses

Permitted and conditional uses in the PR zone include public parks, recreational buildings and facilities, public parking, community centers, assembly buildings for public and private use, and commercial uses and buildings where incidental or accessory to any of these uses. The general locations of noise-sensitive properties in Port Hueneme are shown in Figure 7-1.

Figure 7-1 Noise-Sensitive Properties in Port Hueneme



Sources: City of Port Hueneme, Ventura County

Port Hueneme City Boundary

Major Noise Sources

- Major Roads
- Railroad
- M-1 Light Industrial
- M-PR Port Related Use

Sensitive Receivers

- R-1 Single Family
- R-2 Limited Multi-Family
- R-3 Multi-Family
- R-4 Mixed Use
- R-5 Transitional Residential/ Coastal-related Industry
- P-R Park Reserve

- School
- City Hall

7.7 Noise Regulation

California Code of Regulations

Interior noise levels for habitable rooms and non-residential space are regulated by Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). Title 24, Part 2 (2019 California Building Code), Chapter 12, Section 1206.4 requires that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources not exceed 45 CNEL in any habitable room within a residential structure. A habitable room is a room used for living, sleeping, eating, or cooking. Bathrooms, closets, hallways, utility spaces, and similar areas are not considered habitable rooms under this regulation. Title 24, Part 11 (2019 California Green Building Standards Code), Chapter 5, Section 5.507.4.2 requires that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources not exceed 50 dBA $L_{eq[1h]}$ in occupied areas of non-residential spaces during any hour of operation when exposed to noise levels of 65 dBA $L_{eq[1h]}$ during any hour of operation or located within the 65 CNEL noise contour of an airport, freeway or expressway, railroad, industrial source or fixed-guideway source as determined by the Noise Element of the General Plan.

Port Hueneme General Plan Noise Element

California Government Code Section 65302(f) requires all General Plans to include a Noise Element that addresses noise-related impacts in the community. The City of Port Hueneme General Plan (1997) outlines goals and policies to:

- Reduce the exposure of existing residences, schools, parks, libraries, and community centers to transportation noise;
- Minimize the number of new residences constructed within areas of high noise levels or incorporate measures to reduce noise exposure; establish guidelines for new construction along arterials and secondary roadways where noise may be a problem; and
- Identify, mitigate, and attenuate intermittent or short-term noise.

The current Noise Element includes noise/land use compatibility guidelines, which are used when the City makes environmental and development decisions in order to identify and avoid noise/land use conflicts to the greatest extent practicable (see Table 7-4). These criteria identify the ambient noise levels that are considered clearly compatible, normally compatible, normally incompatible, and clearly incompatible for a variety of land uses. For example, ambient noise levels up to 55 CNEL are considered clearly compatible for single-family residential land uses (See section 7.2 Noise Background for description of CNEL). The Noise Element also includes exterior and interior noise standards (see Table 7-5) for the City to use when evaluating land uses and determining acceptable noise levels.

Table 7-4 Noise/Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

Land Use Category		Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)						
Category	Typical Uses	<55	60	65	70	75	80	>80
Residential	Single-Family, Duplex, Multiple Family	A	B	C	C	C	D	D
Residential	Mobile Homes	A	B	C	C	C	D	D

Commercial - Regional, District	Hotel, Motel, Transient Lodging	A	A	B	B	C	C	D
Commercial – Regional, Village District, Special	Commercial Retail, Bank, Restaurant, Movie Theater	A	A	A	B	B	B	C
Commercial Industrial Institutional	Office Building, Research and Development, Professional Offices, City Office Building	A	A	A	B	B	C	D
Commercial – Recreation Institutional – Civic Center	Amphitheater, Concert Hall Auditorium, Meeting Hall	B	B	C	C	D	D	D
Commercial – Recreation	Children’s Amusement Park, Miniature Golf Course, Go-cart Track, Equestrian Center, Sports Club	A	A	A	B	B	D	D
Commercial – General, Special Industrial Institutional	Automobile, Service Station, Auto Dealership, Manufacturing, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities	A	A	A	A	A	B	B
Institutional - General	Hospital, Church, Library, School Classrooms	A	B	B	C	C	D	D
Open Space	Parks	A	A	A	B	C	D	D
Open Space	Golf Course, Cemeteries, Nature Centers, Wildlife Habitat	A	A	A	A	B	C	C
Agriculture	Agriculture	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Zone A - Clearly Compatible: Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction without any special noise insulation requirements.

Zone B - Normally Compatible: New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features in the design are determined. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.

Zone C –Normally Incompatible: 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.

Zone D - Clearly Incompatible: New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Source: City of Port Hueneme General Plan Noise Element (1997) Table N-3

Table 7-5 Interior and Exterior Noise Standards

Land Use Category		Allowable Noise Level (CNEL) ¹		
		Interior ²	Exterior ³	
			7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	10 p.m. to 7 a.m.
Residential	Single-family, Duplex, Multiple Family	45 ⁴	55	50
	Mobile Home	45	55	50
Commercial Industrial Institutional	Hotel, Motel, Transient Lodging	45	--	--
	Commercial Retail, Bank, Restaurant	55	65	--
	Office Building, Research and Development, Professional Offices, City Office Building	50	65	--
	Amphitheater, Concert Hall, Auditorium, Meeting Hall	45	--	--
	Gymnasium (Multipurpose)	50	--	--
	Sports Club	55	--	--
	Manufacturing, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities	65	75	--
	Movie Theatres	45	--	--
	Institutional	Hospitals, School Classrooms	45	55
Church, Library		45	55	50
Open Space	Parks	--	65	--

¹ CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level (see Section 7.2, *Noise Background*, for further discussion)

² Indoor environment includes bathrooms, toilets, closets, and corridors.

³ Outdoor environment limited to private yards of single-family dwellings, multi-family private patios or balconies which are served by a means of exit from inside the dwelling, mobile home parks, park picnic areas, and school playgrounds. Balconies six feet deep or less are exempt.

⁴ Noise level requirement with closed windows. Mechanical ventilating systems or other means of natural ventilation shall be provided.

Source: City of Port Hueneme General Plan Noise Element (1997) Table N-4

Port Hueneme Municipal Code

Article III, Chapter 5 of the PHMC contains the City’s Noise Control Ordinance, including provisions aimed at limiting excessive noise from specific sources. PHMC Section 3427 prohibits unnecessary, excessive, or annoying noise in the City. PHMC Section 3430 establishes allowable noise levels for properties within designated noise zones, which are defined in PHMC Section 3429. Table 7-6 shows the allowable noise levels associated with each designated noise zone (See Section 7.2 Noise Background for description of dBA Leq).

Table 7-6 Exterior Noise Level Standards

Designated Zone		Time Intervals	Exterior Noise Levels (dBA L _{eq}) ^{1, 2, 3}
Zone 1	Noise Sensitive Properties	7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	55
		10 p.m. to 7 a.m.	50
Zone 2	Residential Properties	7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	55
		10 p.m. to 7 a.m.	50
Zone 3	Commercial Properties	Anytime	65
Zone 4	Industrial Properties	Anytime	70

¹ dBA = A-weighted decibel; L_{eq} = equivalent noise level (see Section 7.2, *Noise Background*, for further discussion)

² PHMC Section 3432 states that if the ambient noise level exceeds that permissible for any of the noise level limits, the noise level limit shall be increased in 5-dB increments as appropriate to encompass or reflect said ambient noise level.

³ PHMC Section 3433 states that if the measurement location is on a boundary between two different designated noise zones, the lower noise level limit applicable to the two zones shall apply.

Source: PHMC Section 3430

PHMC Section 3431 states that no person shall operate or cause to be operated any source of sound at any location within the City, or allow the creation of any noise on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person which causes the noise level when measured on any receiving property to exceed the following noise level limits or more restrictive standards established elsewhere in PHMC:

- The Exterior Noise Levels for that land use, as specified in Table 7-6, for a total period of more than 30 minutes in any consecutive 60 minutes;
- The Exterior Noise Levels plus 5 dB for a total period of more than 15 minutes in any consecutive 60 minutes;
- The Exterior Noise Levels plus 10 dB for a total period of more than five minutes in any consecutive 60 minutes;
- The Exterior Noise Levels plus 15 dB for a total period of more than one minute in any consecutive 60 minutes; or
- The Exterior Noise Levels plus 20 dB for any period of time.

PHMC Section 3434 states that in the event the intrusive noise contains a steady, audible, pure tone such as a whine, screech, or hum, or is an impulsive noise, or is a repetitive noise exceeding one second in duration or contains music or speech, the noise level limits set forth in Section 3431 above shall be reduced by 5 dB.

PHMC Sections 3436 through 3443 and 3512 contain restrictions on certain noise sources, including sound amplifying equipment, animals and fowl, machinery, equipment, fans, air conditioning equipment, construction activities, domestic power tools and machinery, off-road vehicles, vehicle repair and testing, and idling motor vehicles. Specifically, PHMC Section 3439 restricts construction activity to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays through Saturdays, and 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and federal holidays. Specific noise level performance standards for oil drilling, production, and maintenance operations are detailed in PHMC Section 10207(C)(2)(m).

PHMC Section 3444 exempts the following noise sources from compliance with the noise ordinance: emergency notifications/alerts; emergency work; public safety warning devices (e.g., police, fire, and ambulance sirens); activities on public playgrounds, parks, schoolyards, and other public facilities; and locomotives and rail cars on railroads regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission.

7.8 Issues and Opportunities

The following list identifies issues and opportunities related to noise that can be addressed in the General Plan update:

- The current Noise Element does not include definitions of noise- and vibration-sensitive receivers. The City should add definitions as well as any necessary California Building Code references and requirements to provide clarity in the application of noise standards.
- The current Noise Element and Municipal Code do not include specific noise level limits on construction noise, which limits the City’s ability to regulate construction noise and to evaluate the significance of construction noise impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act. The City should add best management practices and provide standards that can be used to monitor, regulate and enforce construction noise activities. For example, the City may consider adopting the criteria recommended by the Federal Transit Administration, which provides reasonable criteria for assessing construction noise impacts based on the potential for adverse community reaction. These criteria include daytime noise thresholds of 80 dBA L_{eq} for residential land uses, 85 dBA L_{eq} for commercial land uses, and 90 dBA L_{eq} for industrial land uses for an 8-hour period (Federal Transit Administration 2018, Table 7-3).
- Since publication of the current Noise Element, the Office of Planning and Research has updated its recommended noise/land use compatibility criteria to consolidate some land use categories and provide more flexibility in the criteria for certain land uses. The City should update its noise/land use compatibility criteria to be consistent with the most recently published OPR guidance.
- The City should add policies related to mitigating noise and vibration associated with railroad operations, including policies to require additional noise insulation and vibration reducing features for new residential development along railroad corridors in compliance with City and state building codes, and to collaborate with Naval Base Ventura County and the Port of Hueneme to encourage implementation of vibration-reducing measures, such as slower speed limits on trains through residential areas and routine maintenance of wheel and rail surfaces.
- The current Noise Element does not specify the magnitude of a noise level increase from mobile sources that would be considered significant, which limits the City’s ability to evaluate mobile noise sources under the California Environmental Quality Act. The City should establish standards for evaluating impacts to roadway noise levels. For example, the City may consider adopting thresholds of a 5-dBA increase (a readily perceptible increase) in areas where existing and future ambient noise levels are within the clearly compatible or normally compatible ranges and a 3-dBA increase (a barely perceptible increase) in areas where existing or future ambient noise levels are within the normally incompatible or clearly incompatible ranges (see Table 7-4).

7.9 References

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