

Introduction



Noise levels within the community can affect the quality of life experienced by people living and working in San Jacinto. High noise levels can create stress and irritation. The Noise Element addresses this issue by creating effective strategies to reduce excessive noise and limit the community's exposure to loud noise sources.

PURPOSE OF THE NOISE ELEMENT

The Noise Element addresses noise sources in the community and identifies ways to reduce the impacts of these noise sources. The Noise Element contains policies and programs to achieve and maintain noise levels compatible with various types of land uses. The Element identifies those land uses that are sensitive to noise and assures that noise-generating land use are located so that they do not impact those sensitive areas.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE NOISE ELEMENT

The Noise Element satisfies the requirements of State planning law and is a mandated component of the General Plan. Government Code Section 65302(f) establishes the required components of the Noise Element. The Element also complies with California Health and Safety Code Section 56050.1 guidelines for Noise Elements.

Future noise conditions from short- and long-term growth are quantified as noise exposure contours. This noise information serves as the basis for developing guidelines identifying compatible land uses.



The Noise Element comprises three sections: 1) this Introduction; 2) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 3) the Noise Plan. An Implementation Program is provided as an appendix to this Element. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues pertaining to noise sources are identified and related goals and policies are established. The goals are statements of the City's desires and comprise broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for reducing or avoiding adverse noise effects on residents. The Plan explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented. Specific implementation programs for the Noise Element are contained in the Noise Element appendix.

***RELATED PLANS
AND PROGRAMS***

There are a number of existing plans and programs that directly relate to the goals of the Noise Element. These plans and programs have been enacted through state and local legislation and are administered by agencies with powers to enforce state and local laws.

***California Environmental
Quality Act Guidelines***

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in response to a public mandate for thorough environmental analysis of projects that might affect the environment. Excessive noise is considered an environmental impact under CEQA. The provisions of the law and environmental review procedures are described in the CEQA Statutes and the CEQA Guidelines. Implementation of CEQA ensures that during the decision making stage of development, City officials and the general public will be able to assess the noise impacts associated with public and private development projects.

***California Noise
Insulation Standards
(Title 24)***

The California Commission of Housing and Community Development officially adopted noise standards in 1974. In 1988, the Building Standards Commission approved revisions to the standards (Title 24, Part 2, California Code of Regulations). As revised, Title 24 establishes an interior noise standard of 45 dB(A) for residential space (CNEL or Ldn). Acoustical studies must be prepared for residential structures to be located within noise contours of 60 dB(A) or greater (CNEL or Ldn) from freeways, major streets, thoroughfares, rail lines, rapid transit lines, or industrial noise sources. The studies must demonstrate that the building is designed to reduce interior noise to 45 dB(A) or lower (CNEL or Ldn).

***City of San Jacinto
Noise Ordinance***

The City's Noise Ordinance provides controls for excessive and annoying noise from stationary sources such as air conditioning and refrigeration units, industrial development and commercial activities. The Ordinance also regulates construction activities within the City. The Noise Ordinance establishes allowable interior and exterior noise levels for residential and commercial areas. Specific standards for daytime and nighttime hours are also provided. Certain noise sources are prohibited and the ordinance establishes an enforcement process. Noise Ordinance requirements are identified in this Element.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER
GENERAL PLAN
ELEMENTS**

According to state planning law, the Noise Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. Each element is independent and all the elements together comprise the General Plan. All elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree, and certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of overlapping issues and policies provides a strong basis for implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals.

Policies and plans in the Noise Element are designed to protect existing and planned land uses. Potential noise sources are identified in the Noise Element and programs are established to avoid or mitigate noise impacts from planned development. Concurrently, the Land Use Element contains policies to ensure that environmental conditions, including noise, are considered in all land use decisions. The distribution of residential and other sensitive land uses as identified on the Land Use Policy map is designed to avoid areas where noisy conditions have been identified.

The Noise Element is inextricably linked to the transportation policies in the Circulation Element. Transportation noise is largely responsible for excessive noise levels in certain locations in an urban environment. The projected noise distribution identified in the Noise Element directly corresponds to the Circulation Plan. Both the Noise and Circulation Elements contain policies and plans to minimize the effects of transportation noise on existing and planned land uses. Noise exposure is a key consideration when locating and designing new arterials.

The Noise Element also relates to the Resource Management Element and the parks component of the Community Services and Facilities Element. Excessive noise can diminish enjoyment of parks and open space. Because of this, noise levels should be considered in the planning of new recreational and open space areas. Additionally, open space areas can be used to buffer noise sensitive land uses from noise producers.

Issues, Goals and Policies



The quality of life in San Jacinto can be reduced by excessive noise levels. Three major issues related to noise are addressed in the Noise Element. These major issues are: 1) avoiding the negative effects of noise through the use of land use planning and noise reduction techniques; 2) minimizing the impact of transportation related noise; and 3) minimizing the impact of non-transportation related noise.

NOISE AND LAND USE PLANNING

Certain areas within San Jacinto are subject to high noise levels. Consideration of the sources and recipients of noise early in the land use planning and development process can be an effective method of minimizing the impact of noise on people in the community. Areas already impacted by noise need to have noise reduced through rehabilitative improvements.

Noise Goal 1: Minimize the effects of noise through proper land use planning and development techniques.

- Policy 1.1:** Use the City's adopted noise/land use compatibility standards as a guide for future planning and development decisions.
- Policy 1.2:** Require noise control measures, such as berms, walls, and sound attenuating construction in areas of new development or rehabilitation.
- Policy 1.3** When necessary, require buffer areas between noise sources and sensitive receptors.
- Policy 1.4:** Use creative techniques to mitigate potential noise incompatibilities, particularly in areas with a mixture of uses.
- Policy 1.5:** Discourage development that will create unmitigated nuisances associated with noise.

Related Noise Element Implementation Programs: N-1, N-2, N-3, N-4

TRANSPORTATION RELATED NOISE

The primary source of noise in San Jacinto results from transportation related noise. The Ramona Expressway, State Route 79, the railroad, and other major roadways create high levels of noise that affect the overall quality of life in the community. Trucks and tractors associated with agricultural activities also create noise that may not be compatible with surrounding land uses. Reduction in transportation related noise is

necessary to deal with the detrimental effects attributable to excessive noise.

Noise Goal 2: Minimize the effects of transportation-related noise.

Policy 2.1: Reduce transportation-related noise impacts to sensitive land uses through the use of noise control measures.

Policy 2.2: Require sound-reduction design in development projects impacted by transportation-related noise, particularly along highways and major arterials.

Policy 2.3: Control truck traffic routing to reduce transportation-related noise impacts to sensitive land uses.

Related Noise Element Implementation Programs: N-1

**NON-TRANSPORTATION
RELATED NOISE**

Noise sources that are not directly related to transportation include construction, manufacturing or business operations, agricultural operations, and property maintenance activities. Such noise sources should be controlled to minimize exposure to excessive noise levels.

Noise Goal 3: Minimize the effects of non-transportation-related noise.

Policy 3.1: Reduce the impacts of noise-producing land uses and activities on noise-sensitive land uses.

Policy 3.2: Require sound-reduction design techniques in new construction or rehabilitation projects impacted by non-transportation noise.

Policy 3.3: Provide a means for the public to report non-transportation related nuisance noises.

Related Noise Element Implementation Programs: N-1, N-2, N-3, N-4

Noise Plan



San Jacinto, like most urbanized areas, is experiencing increased noise levels associated with transportation and non-transportation related noise. As the ambient noise level in the community rises, the City must seek ways to safeguard the community from excessive noise levels. The goals and policies contained in the previous section establish an agenda to reduce the overall noise levels within the City. The Noise Plan defines the City's approach for achieving the agenda and generally outlines action programs. The Noise Element Implementation Program contained in Appendix A of this General Plan is an extension of the Noise Plan and contains specific programs that the City enacts to protect community well being.

NOISE AND LAND USE PLANNING

Noise in the Planning Area is the cumulative effect of noise from transportation activities and stationary sources. Transportation noise refers to noise from automobile use, trucking, airport operations, and rail operations. Non-transportation noise typically refers to noise from stationary sources such as commercial establishments, machinery, air conditioning systems, compressors and landscape maintenance equipment. Regardless of the type of noise, the noise levels are highest near the source and decrease with distance.

Noise Sensitive Receptors

Noise is problematic when noise sensitive land uses are affected. Noise sensitive land uses, (i.e., sensitive receptors) include residences, schools, hospitals, religious meetings and recreation areas. Most noise impacts can be avoided when noise sources, sensitive land uses and information about the future noise environment are considered in land use planning and development decisions.



Noise Standards and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

To ensure that noise producers do not adversely affect sensitive receptors, the City uses land use compatibility standards when planning and making development decisions. **Table N-1** summarizes City noise standards for various types of land uses. The standards represent the maximum acceptable noise level and are used to determine noise impacts.

**Table N-1
Interior and Exterior Noise Standards**

Land Use	Noise Standards ¹	
	Exterior	Interior
Residential – single-family, multi-family, duplex and mobile home	65 dB(A)	45 dB(A)
Residential – transient lodging, hotels, motels, nursing homes, hospitals, assisted care facilities	65 dB(A)	45 dB(A)
Private offices, churches, libraries, theaters, concert halls, meeting halls, schools	65 dB(A)	45 dB(A)
General commercial, office, retail, reception, restaurant	65 dB(A)	45 dB(A)
Light industrial ²	---	---
Parks and playgrounds	65 dB(A)	50 dB(A)
Golf courses, outdoor spectator sports	70 dB(A)	---

- 1 In Community Noise Level Equivalent (CNEL).
- 2 Noise standards do not apply to Light Industrial areas.
- 3 Outdoor environment limited to playground areas, picnic areas and other areas of frequent human use.

These noise standards are the basis for the development of the land use compatibility guidelines presented in **Table N-2**. If the noise level of a project falls within Zone A or Zone B, the project is considered compatible with the noise environment. Zone A implies that no mitigation will be needed. Zone B implies that minor mitigation measures may be required to meet the City’s noise standards.

If the noise level of a project falls within Zone C, substantial noise mitigation will be necessary to meet the noise standards. Mitigation may involve construction of noise barriers and substantial building sound insulation. Projects in Zone C can be successfully mitigated; however, project proponents must demonstrate that the noise standards will be met prior to issuance of building permits. If noise levels fall outside of Zones A, B, and C, projects are considered clearly incompatible with the noise environment and should generally not be approved.

Table N-2
Noise/Land Use Compatibility Matrix
Noise Contours and Noise Impact Areas

Land Use Category	Community Noise Equivalent Level CNEL, dB						
	55	60	65	70	75	80	
Residential - Single Family, Multifamily, Duplex	A	A	B	B	C	---	---
Residential - Mobile Homes	A	A	B	C	C	---	---
Transient Lodging - Motels, Hotels	A	A	B	B	C	C	---
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	A	A	B	C	C	---	---
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters, Meeting Halls	B	B	C	C	---	---	---
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports, Amusement Parks	A	A	A	B	B	---	---
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	A	A	A	B	C	---	---
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Cemeteries	A	A	A	A	B	C	C
Office and Professional Buildings	A	A	A	B	B	C	---
Commercial Retail, Banks, Restaurants, Theaters	A	A	A	A	B	B	C
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Wholesale, Service Stations	A	A	A	A	B	B	B
Agriculture	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Source: Taken in part from Aircraft Noise Impact Planning Guidelines for Local Agencies, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, TE/NA-472, November 1972.

- A = Normally Acceptable - 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 - New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.
- C = Normally Unacceptable - New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If it does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.
- = Clearly Unacceptable - New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

The Director of Planning acts as the noise control coordinator. This delegation of responsibility allows consistent and continued enforcement of the established noise standards.

The noise environment for the community can be described with noise contours based on the major noise sources. Noise contours define areas of equal noise exposures. Future noise contours have been estimated with information about existing and projected land use development and transportation activity.

Figure N-1 shows the projected noise contours for San Jacinto and the noise impact areas. The noise contours are used as a guide for land use and development decisions. Contours of 60 dB(A) or greater define noise impacted areas. When noise sensitive land uses are proposed within these contours, an acoustical analysis must be prepared. For the project to be approved, the analysis must demonstrate that the project is designed to attenuate noise to meet the City's noise standards as defined in **Table N-1**. If the project is not designed to meet the noise standards, mitigation measures can be recommended in the analysis. If the analysis demonstrates that the noise standards can be met with implementation of the mitigation measures, the project can be approved with the mitigation measures required as conditions of project approval.

Construction Standards

The provisions of the state Noise Insulation Standards (Title 24) are enforced in San Jacinto. Title 24 specifies that combined indoor noise for multi-family living spaces shall not exceed 45 db(A) CNEL. This standard must be implemented when the outdoor noise level exceeds 60 dB(A) CNEL. The future noise contour map (**Figure N-1**) can be used to determine when to implement this standard. Title 24 requires that the standard be applied to all new hotels, motels, apartments and multi-family projects. The City also applies the standard to new single-family development.

The City also requires all construction activity to comply with the limits (maximum noise levels, hours and days of allowed activity) established in the City noise regulations (Title 24 California Code of Regulations, Noise Ordinance)

TRANSPORTATION RELATED NOISE

Noise from transportation activity is the primary component of the noise environment in San Jacinto. Transportation noise is related to the transportation corridors that traverse the community such as State Route 79, the Ramona Expressway, major arterials such as Sanderson, and the railroad. The most efficient and effective means of controlling noise from transportation systems is to reduce the noise at the source.

The City has little direct control over noise produced by transportation sources because state noise regulations for motor vehicles preempt local regulations. Because the City cannot control the noise at the source, City noise programs focus on reducing the impact of transportation

noise on the community. Cost effective strategies to control noise impacts are an essential component of this Element.

The most effective method for mitigating transportation noise impacts on the community is by utilizing the site design review process and CEQA.

During the planning stages of the development process, potential impacts from transportation noise shall be identified and mitigation measures will be required as needed to meet the City's noise standards.

Site planning, landscaping, topography and the design and construction of noise barriers are the most common method of alleviating vehicular traffic and train noise impacts. Setbacks and buffers can also be used to achieve small noise reductions.

Noise attenuating barriers are commonly incorporated into projects and can be extremely effective in reducing noise levels. The effectiveness of the barrier depends on the relative height and materials of the barrier, the noise source, the affected area, and the horizontal distance between the barrier and the affected area. Although noise barriers can be extremely effective, the aesthetic impact of barriers on neighborhoods should be considered and minimized.

Noise barriers should be included in the design of roadway, freeway and rail improvements. The City supports efforts by Caltrans, the County of Riverside and other transportation providers to provide acoustical protection for noise sensitive uses. In addition, the City will request that barriers are constructed as part of highway, roadway and rail improvement projects to mitigate significant noise impacts. State Route 79 and the Ramona Expressway are prime candidates for barriers to protect the community from excessive transportation noise.

Noise Control at the Source

The California Vehicle Code contains noise regulations pertaining to the operation of all vehicles on public roads. These noise standards for cars, trucks, and motorcycles are enforced through coordination with the California Highway Patrol and the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. The City also regulates traffic flow and coordinates with the California Highway Patrol to enforce speed limits to reduce traffic noise.



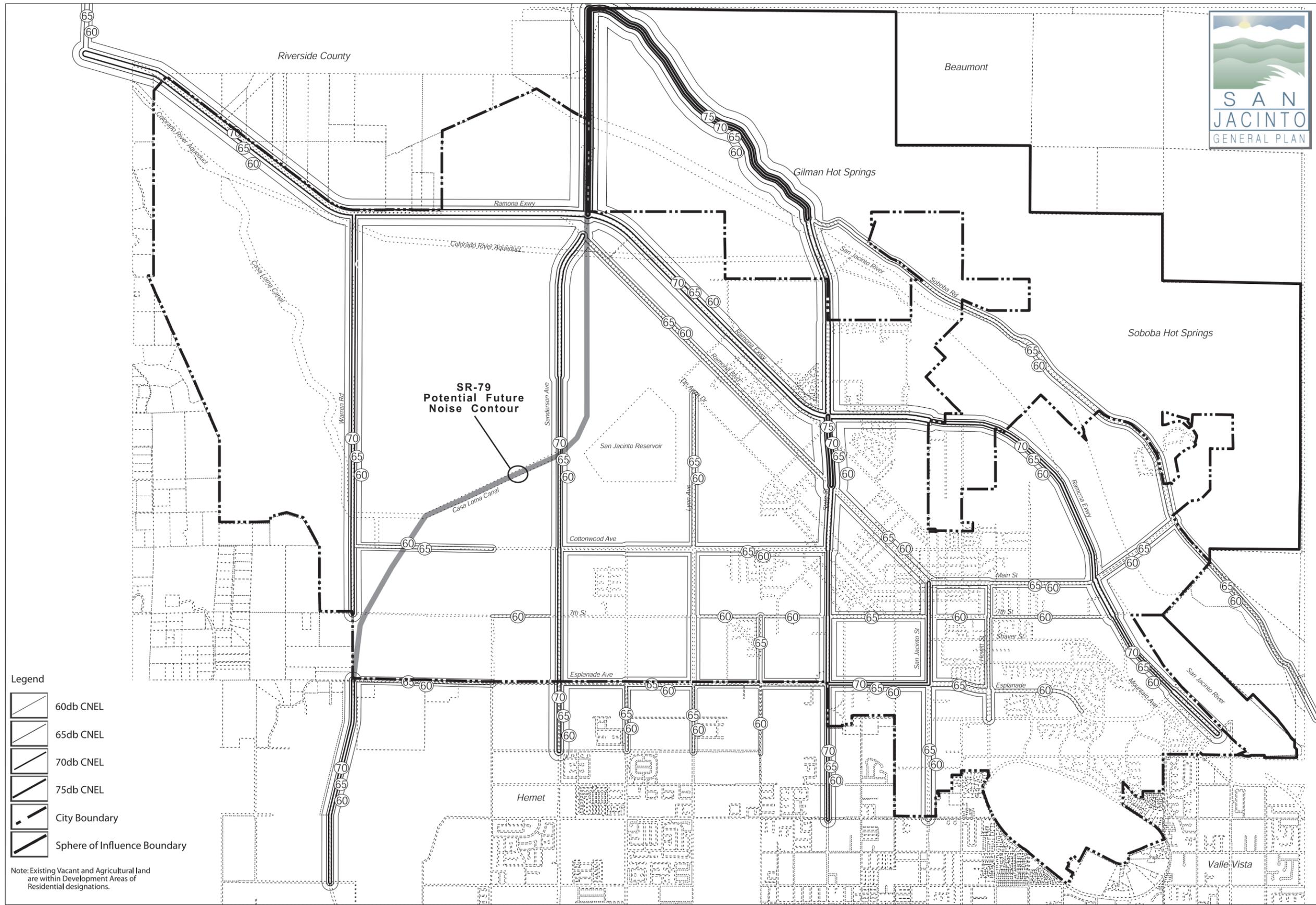


Figure N-1
Future Noise Contours
May 2006

**NON-TRANSPORTATION
RELATED NOISE**

Sensitive receptors must also be protected from excessive noise generated by non-transportation sources such as commercial and industrial centers, agricultural activities, restaurants and bars, religious institutions and civic centers. Application of the City Noise Ordinance is the best means to control noise from existing noise sources. The Community Development Department and Police Department cooperate to identify development or activities that violate the noise regulations. The City's Municipal Code gives the City the authority to enforce the noise standards through penalties and other abatement tactics.

Noise generated by new development is effectively controlled through the site design review process, compliance with CEQA and compliance with the City noise standards contained in this Noise Element and the City Noise Ordinance. During these preliminary stages in the development process, potential noise impacts shall be identified and mitigation measures can be imposed.

When reviewing proposed non-residential projects, noise generation and potential impacts to surrounding development are considered. An acoustical analysis is required for projects that will generate noise potentially affecting sensitive receptors. Where significant impacts are identified, mitigation measures will be required. Mitigation measures that could be applied when reviewing projects include acoustically treated and/or quiet design: 1) furnaces; 2) fans; 3) motors; 4) compressors; and 5) valves and pumps. The City may also require limited delivery hours and hours of operation in order to minimize impacts to adjacent residential or other sensitive uses.

In addition, all City departments must comply with state and federal OSHA standards. Any new equipment or vehicle purchased by the City will comply with local, state and federal noise standards.

Noise Ordinance

The City Noise Ordinance is designed to protect people from non-transportation noise sources such as: construction activity; commercial, industrial, and agricultural operations; machinery and pumps; and air conditioners. Enforcement of the ordinance ensures that adjacent properties are not exposed to excessive noise from stationary sources. Enforcing the ordinance includes requiring proposed development projects to show compliance with the ordinance, including operating in accordance with noise levels and hours of operations limits placed on the project site. The City also requires construction activity to comply with established work schedule limits. The ordinance is reviewed periodically for adequacy and amended as needed to address community needs and development patterns.

Appendix: Implementation Program



This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Noise Element. The Noise Element Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques that includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Noise Element.

N-1
Review Development
Projects

Review discretionary development proposals for potential on- and off-site stationary and vehicular noise impacts per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Any proposed development located within a 60 dB or higher noise contour (per Figures N-1 and N-2) shall be reviewed for potential noise impacts and compliance with the noise and land use compatibility standards. The thresholds established in the Noise Element, Noise Ordinance, the Noise Contours Maps (Figure N-2), and Tables N-2 and N-3 of the Noise Element will be used to determine the significance of impacts. If potential impacts are identified, mitigation in the form of noise reduction designs/structures (e.g., landscaped berms, barriers, walls, enhanced parkways, increased setbacks) will be required to reduce the impact to a level less than significant, where feasible.

Responsible
Agency/Department:
Funding Source:
Time Frame:
Related Policies:

Community Development
General Fund, project proponent
Ongoing
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

N-2
Minimize Commercial/
Industrial Noise

Review the locations of proposed projects with the potential to generate stationary noise in relation to sensitive receptors through the discretionary project review process. Limit delivery or service hours for stores and businesses with loading areas, docks, or trash bins that front, side, border, or gain access on driveways next to residential and other noise sensitive areas. Only approve exceptions if full compliance with the nighttime limits of the noise regulations is achieved.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, Police
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1

N-3 Minimize Construction Noise
 Require all construction activity to comply with the limits (maximum noise levels, hours and days of allowed activity) established in the City noise regulations (Title 24 California Code of Regulations, Noise Ordinance) in order to reduce impacts associated with temporary construction noise to the extent feasible. Trucks associated with construction activities shall follow the designated truck routes described in Implementation Program C-3.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, Police
Funding Source: General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 3.1

N-4: Noise Ordinance
 Actively enforce the standards identified within the City's Noise Ordinance and Noise Plan in order to reduce impacts to the extent feasible. Update and amend the Noise Ordinance and Plan as appropriate. Provide a link on the City's website for those to file complaints against activities and uses that may be violating the Noise Ordinance.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, Police
Funding Source: General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 3.1, 3.3