



Study Session on the Noise Element and Noise Ordinance Update

Planning Commission

December 1, 2022

Background and Context

- The Long Beach General Plan Noise Element was first adopted in 1975. Since then, the City's physical makeup, population regional context, & the regulatory guidance around noise have changed
- The Noise Element update process has been **underway since 2017** including robust public engagement & technical analysis
- The proposed Noise Element update would ensure the City's policy framework reflects changes in the City's urban fabric & its soundscape, while identifying new strategies & policies to maintain healthy, livable neighborhoods for all residents
- **A broad long-range process that helps inform future land use & development decisions**
- A draft has been made available since **June 2019**. A revised draft was released in **March 2021**. **The most recent draft was released in Oct 2022 and made available for public comment until Dec 1st**



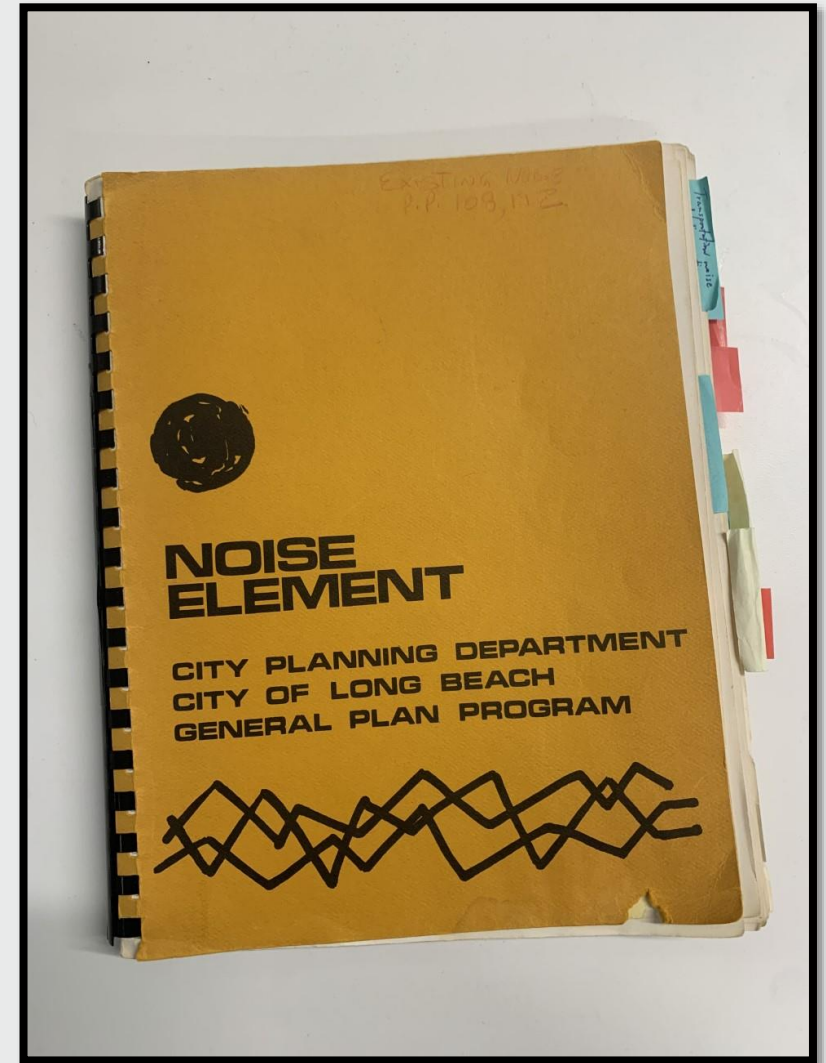
Background and Context Cont.

- First Noise Element Study session with Planning Commission took place in **2017**
- **In October 2021**, the item was presented to PC for adoption. PC directed City staff to conduct a further study of special events and regulations around noise in mixed use areas
- **The Noise Element Update was revisited at the October 20, 2022 Planning Commission meeting by way of a study session**
- **A second study session was scheduled for December 1, 2022 and members of the public were notified more than a month in advance for an additional opportunity to provide public input**



Noise Element Overview

- Content and framework guided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Guidelines for General Plans
- **Establishes policies that will guide how noise and land use compatibility are addressed throughout the City**
- Addresses noise from a range of stationary sources
- Mandated by State law to be consistent with all other General Plan elements (Land Use, Housing, Mobility, Open Space, Urban Design)
- Implemented by the Noise Ordinance (LBMC Chapter 8.80)



Noise Element Chapters

1. Vision: A City That Thrives
2. Introduction: What is a Noise Element?
3. Context: Understanding the Noise Environment
4. Noise Fundamentals: Characteristics of Sound
5. Noise Plan: Creating Livable Environments
6. Administration + Implementation: Maintaining the Noise Element

“Just as we share the air we breathe, we are submerged in a sea of shared sound. We are all connected by the vibrations we make as we use energy in daily life.”

Bruce Odland and Sam Auinger

Reflections on the Sonic Commons, a Special Section of the Leonardo Music Journal



Noise Plan

- Chapter 5: This Noise Plan identifies strategies and policies to implement the vision of a healthy, livable noise environment in Long Beach
- The Noise Plan contains a total of 16 strategies and 108 policies



Noise Element Update Public Outreach and Engagement

2017-2019

Community Engagement Strategies

- The creation of the project website dedicated to all Noise Element Update information and materials
- Social media outreach with the hashtag #ListenUpLB. Online Engagement Tool “Listen Up Long Beach”
- City hosted webpage, emails, Facebook, and Twitter
- April 2017 Planning Commission Study Session



Noise Element Update Public Outreach and Engagement

Stakeholder Meetings

- Internal and External Stakeholders
- City Department and local agencies including Police Department, Special Events, Noise Control Office, Animal Care Services Public Works, Port, Airport, and LBUSD

Focus Groups

- Public health professionals, environmental justice advocates, bar and restaurant operators, construction industry representatives. Environmental health working groups, and local school students



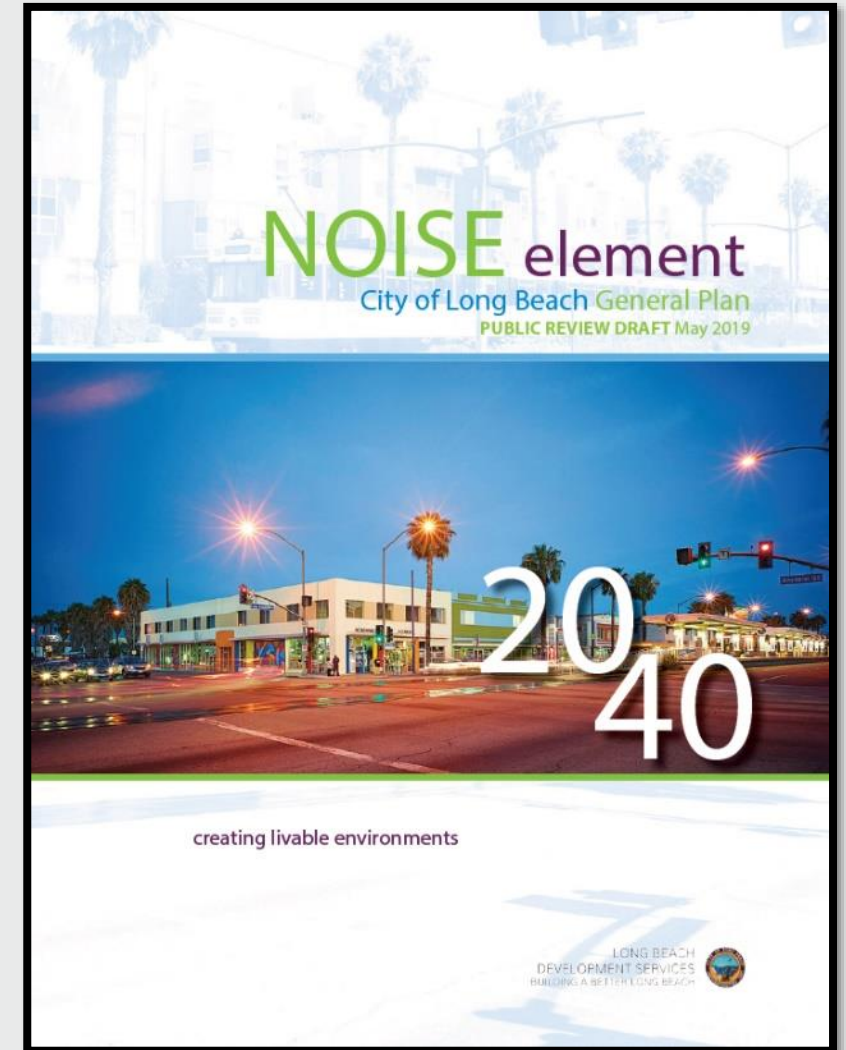
Noise Element Update Public Outreach and Engagement

- October 17, 2018 – The Development Services Department (DV) held a focus group on Special Events and Outdoor Noise
- May 30, 2019 – DV held Noise Element Open House
- September 26, 2019 – Based on City Council & Public feedback, a Special Events Sound Study was conducted & the results were presented at this meeting
- DV attended multiple ORCA meeting throughout the multi year process



Noise Element Update Process

- The draft plan was released in 2019 with revised drafts released in 2021 and 2022
- EIR review and comment took place in 2021
- The most recent version the October 2022 draft was made available for public comment from October 14 to December 1, 2022
- A spectrum of oral public comments supporting and opposing the item have been acknowledged. Individuals who have provided public input have been heard, many of whom have been heard numerous times



Chapter 3. Context

Long Beach is a vibrant coastal city with attractions serving residents, businesses, and visitors. As such, the City has experienced an **increased** interest in holding special events in Long Beach, especially outdoor special events along the waterfront in the downtown area. These events include, but are not limited to, community festivals, runs/walks, citywide holiday celebrations, Long Beach Grand Prix, Long Beach Marathon, Long Beach Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade and Celebration, Jazz Festival, **film production,** and events hosted at the Queen Mary.

Chapter 5. Noise Plan: Creating Livable Environments

Long Beach provides a desirable setting for special events of many forms. These events include, but are not limited to, community festivals, runs/walks, citywide holiday celebrations, Long Beach Grand Prix, Long Beach Marathon, Long Beach Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade and Celebration, Jazz Festival, **film-production** and events hosted at the Queen Mary.

Proposed Noise Element Edits Cont.

Chapter 5. Noise Plan: Creating Livable Environments

New Proposed Noise Element Language

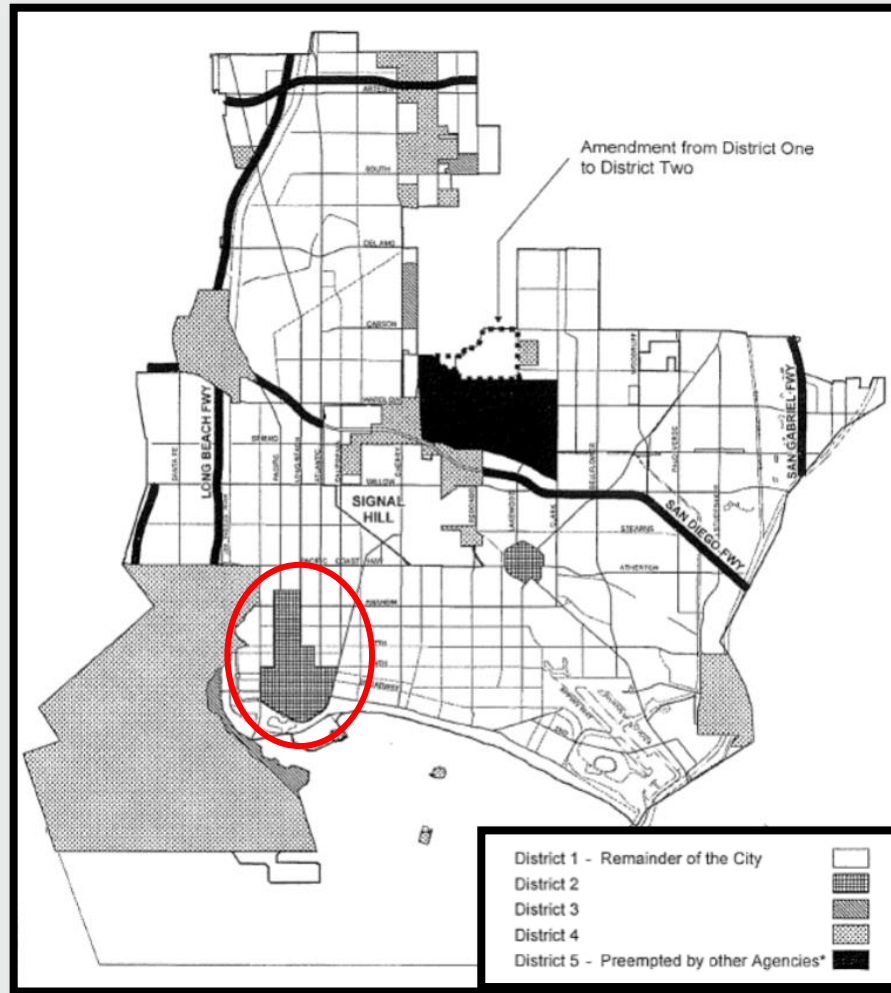
Special Events- Strategy No. 13

Policy N 13-3: Implement and enforce procedures related to noise level requirements for **large** special events, **and review procedures on an annual basis**

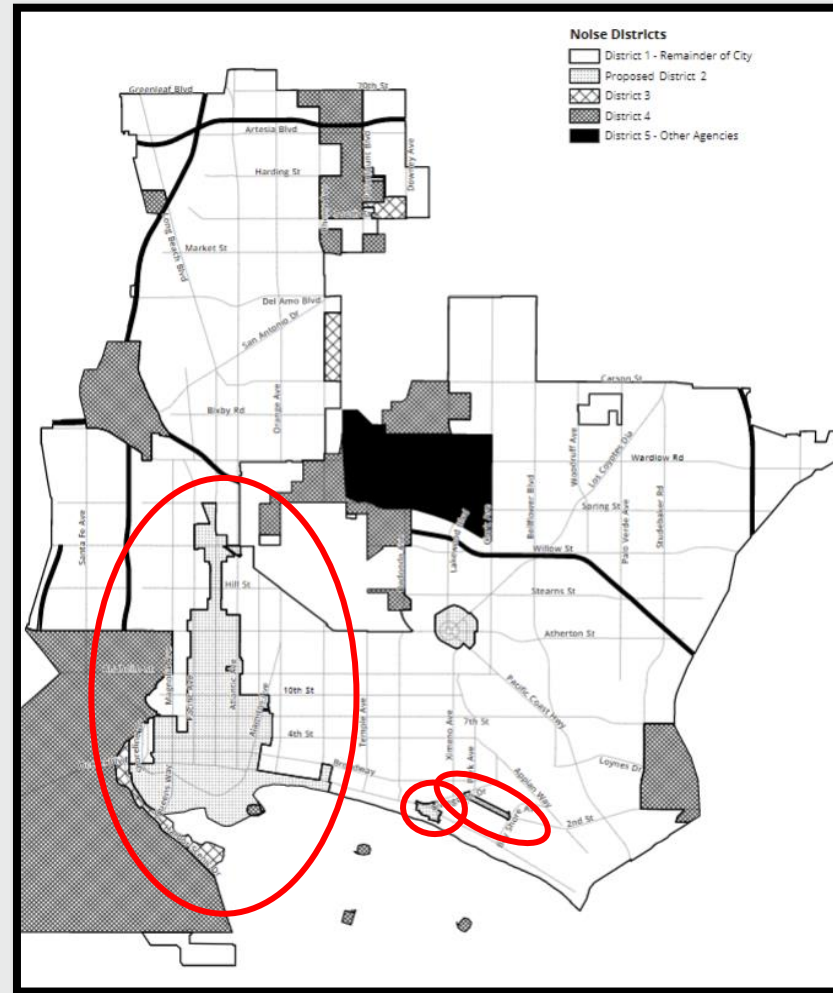
Proposed edits to **Title 8 Health & Safety, under Chapter 8.80 (Noise) of the Long Beach Municipal Code** to implement the Noise Element Update

8.80.160 Noise District Map - Existing and Proposed

Existing



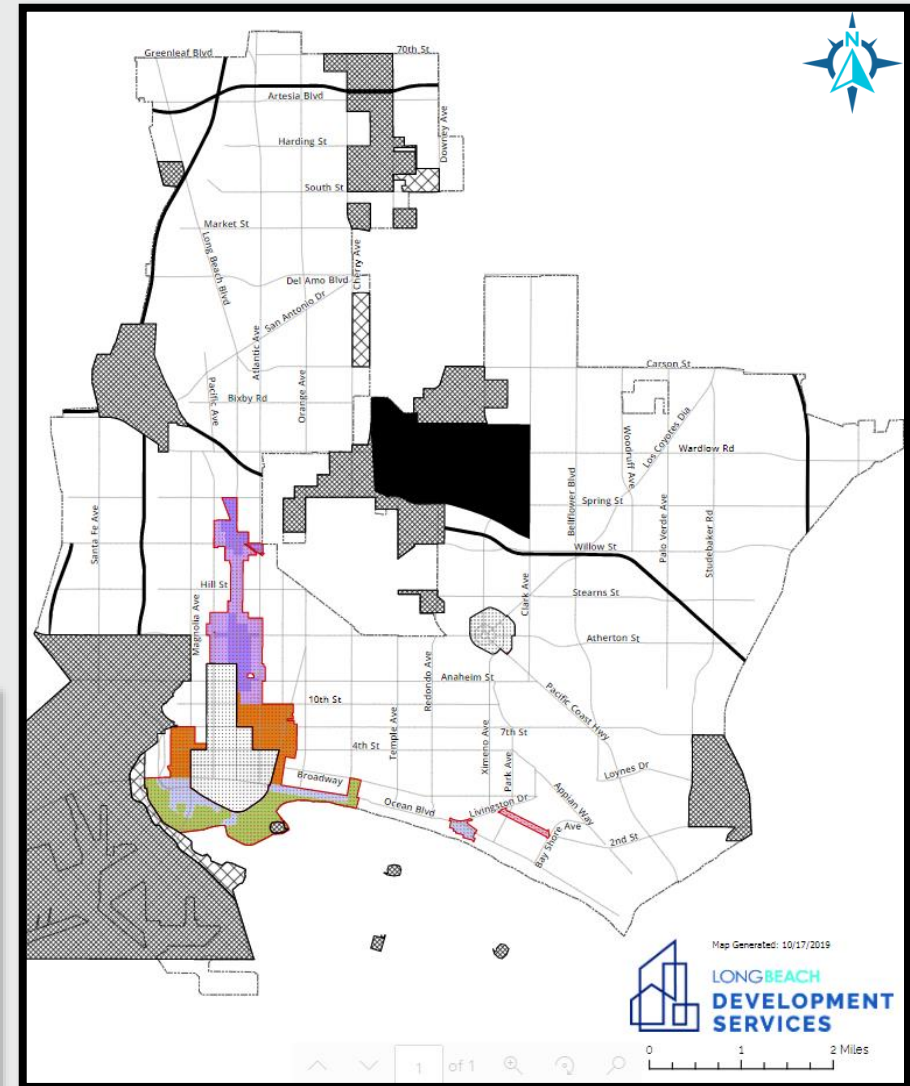
Proposed



Proposed Noise District Map with PlaceTypes

Proposed Noise District two expansion areas encompass additional areas that tend to be:

- High intensity, mixed-use areas
- Serve by transit, function as regional destinations, and incorporate visitor-serving uses



Proposed Chapter 8 (Noise Ordinance) Amendments

8.80.160 Exterior Noise Limits

Receiving Land Use District		Time Period	Noise Level** (dBA)
District One	Predominantly residential with other land use types also present	Night: 10:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.	45
		Day: 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	50
District Two	Mixed-use or predominantly commercial with other land use types also present	Night: 10:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.	55
		Day: 7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.	60
District Three	Predominantly industrial with other land use types also present	Any time	65
District Four		Any time	70
District Five	Airport, freeways and waterways regulated by other agencies	Regulated by other agencies and laws	

Proposed Noise Ordinance Amendments

8.80.170 Interior Noise Limits

Receiving Land Use District	Type of Land Use	Time Interval	Allowable Interior Noise Level (dBA)
All	Residential	10:00 p.m.—7:00 a.m.	35
		7:00 a.m.—10:00 p.m.	45
All	Mixed-Use	10:00 p.m.—7:00 a.m.	45
		7:00 a.m.—10:00 p.m.	50
All	School	10:00 p.m.—7:00 a.m. (while school is in session)	45
Hospital, designated noise sensitive zones		Any time	40

New Proposed Noise Ordinance Amendments

8.80.030 Administration and enforcement

The noise control program established by this Chapter shall be administered by the noise control office as designated by the City Manager. An official within the noise control office shall be appointed as the Noise Control Officer and shall be a person with sufficient knowledge of environmental acoustics to enforce noise regulations. All departments with noise regulation responsibility may, based on circumstance and need, carry out the duties of the Noise Control Officer to help ensure that noise complaints from the public are timely and adequately addressed. This includes but is not limited to taking noise measurements and acting as a case manager, upon receiving a noise complaint; coordinating with the Noise Control Officer and relevant departments as appropriate based on the circumstance; and conducting other actions necessary to facilitate resolution of the noise complaint. **Further, the City is committed to annually reviewing the provisions of this ordinance.**

Special Events Noise in the Long Beach Municipal Code

Special Events are not regulated by the Noise Ordinance under Chapter 8.80. Rather, they are regulated according to their temporary and unique characteristics:

Title 8 Health and Safety, Chapter 8.80 (Noise)

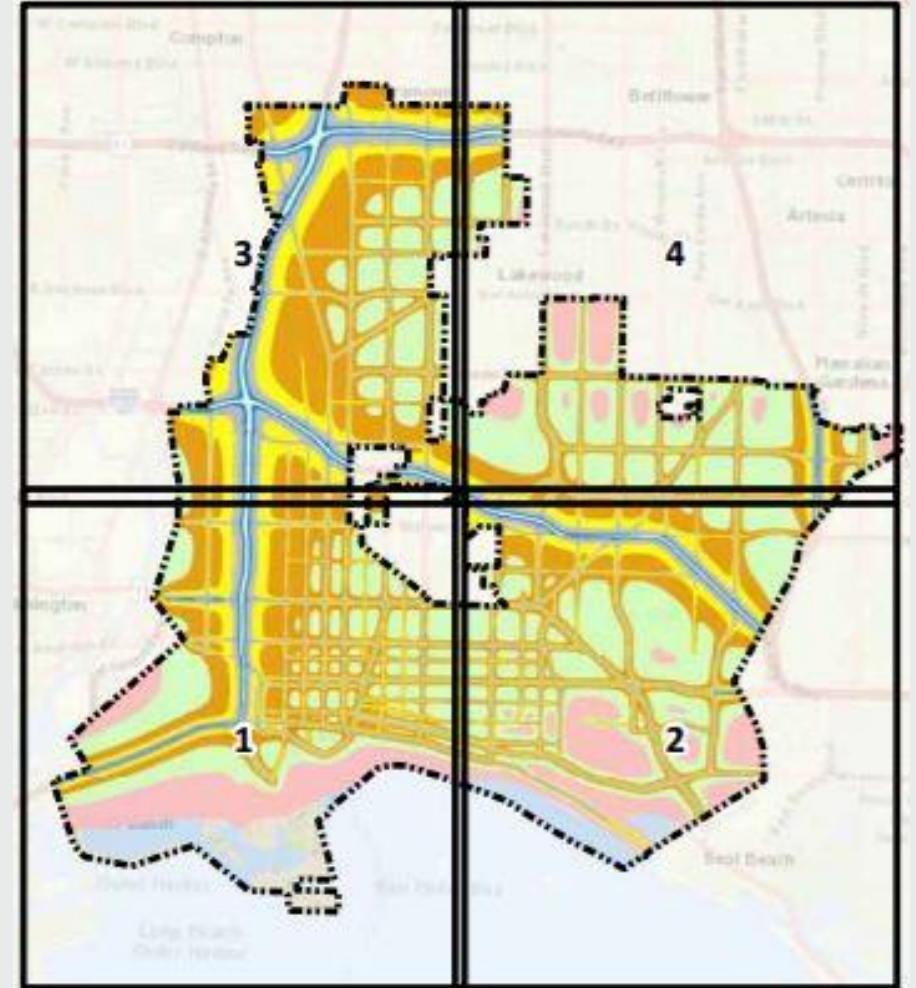
- 8.80.280 – **Exemption—Entertainment events.** The provisions of this Chapter shall not apply to occasional outdoor or indoor gatherings, public dances, shows and sporting and entertainment events

Chapter 5.72 (Entertainment and Similar Activities)

- **Entertainment events are regulated by Chapter 5.72**, where the permitting process includes standard conditions as well as regulates events according to their temporary and unique characteristics.

Special Events as a Temporary Noise Source

- OPR's General Plan Guidelines state that the noise element should address stationary noise sources such as highways and freeways, aviation, military, and other stationary sources identified by local agencies that contribute to the noise environment
- The City does not identify short-term, temporary, and seasonal special events as stationary noise sources that consist of typical noise patterns and contribute to the existing ambient noise setting
- Each permitting process event is regulated according to its temporary and unique characteristics through the special events



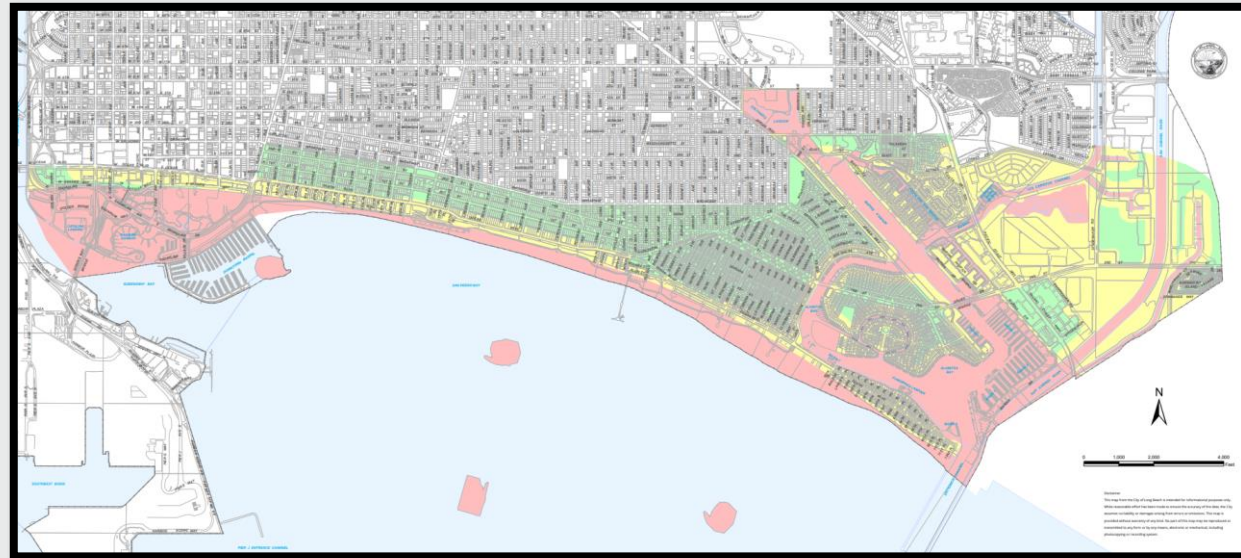
Future 2040 Traffic Noise Contours (Stationary Noise)

Special Events in Planning Documents

- **Section 21.53 (Temporary Uses)** of the Zoning Code addresses the occurrence of special events, such as carnivals, fiestas, other outdoor exhibition or celebration in certain zoning districts.
- In the Coastal Zone, coastal permitting may be required depending on the location of the special event and timing of the event to ensure the maintenance and preservation of coastal access in accordance with the Coastal Act and the City's Local Coastal Program.
 - City Staff, Office of Special Events and the California Coastal Commission are working together on a Local Coastal Program Amendment (LCPA) to amend language in the Local Coastal Program regarding public events at Alamitos Beach.
 - This amendment would introduce policies related to the occurrence of events and best management practices to ensure the policies of the Coastal Act are adhered to.
 - The City's Local Coastal Program is a separate document from the Noise Element Update and will have additional opportunities for outreach and public hearings.

Special Events in Coastal Zone

- The Coastal Zone is divided into three jurisdictional areas: Coastal Commission Original Permit Jurisdiction, Appealable Area, and City Coastal Zone.
- Areas shown in red are under the permitting authority of the California Coastal Commission, which typically includes the sandy beach areas of the City's coastline. Special events in these areas are required to demonstrate compliance with the California Coastal Commission's policies for temporary events.
- The Grand Prix is subject to a separate Coastal Commission permit that is renewed on a 5-year basis.



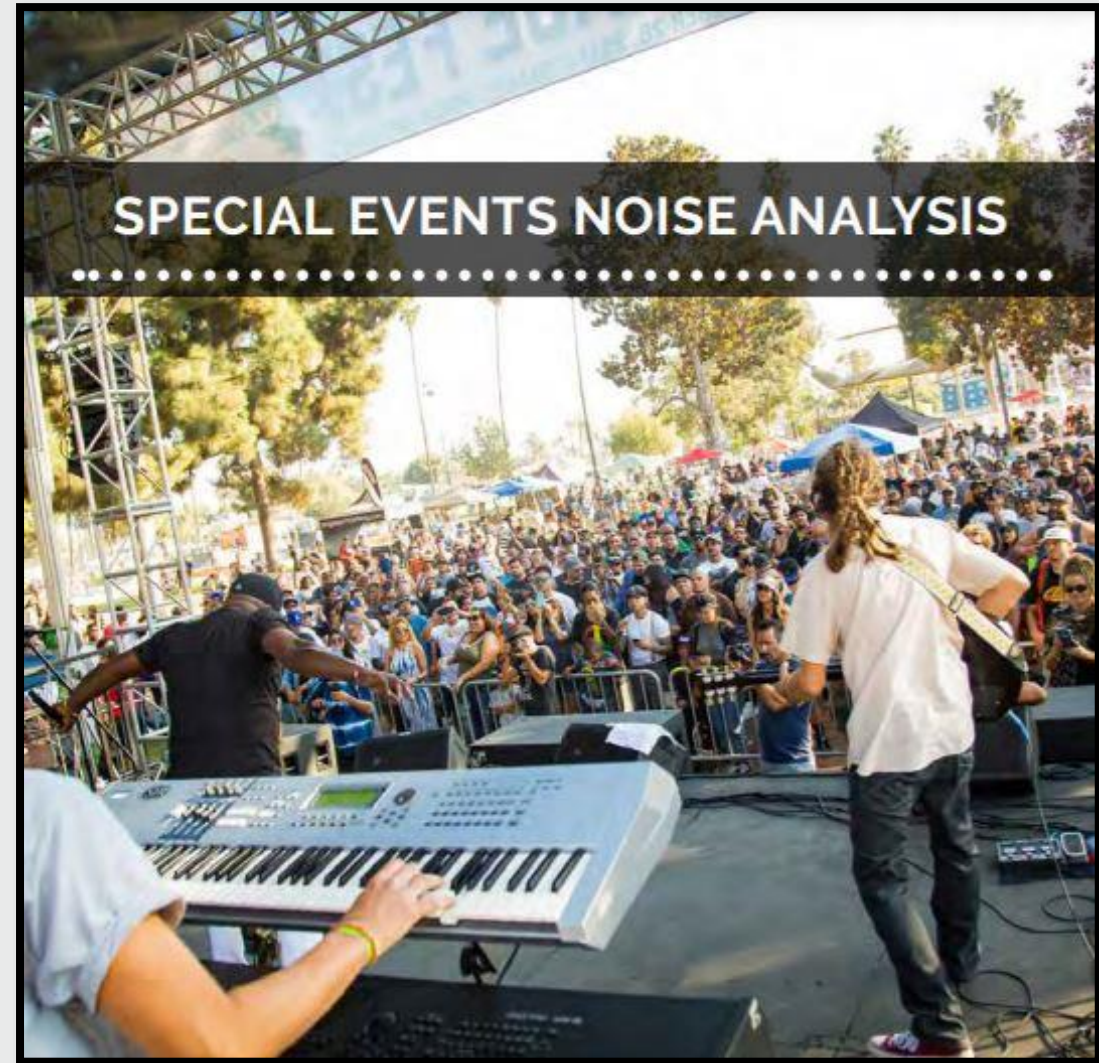
Special Events Noise Study

Special Events and Filming Office conducted a Special Events Noise Study, at the request of City Council

- Evaluated current regulations and procedures related to noise from special events
- Includes case studies on cities with comparable range of special events

Key Study Findings

- Identified additional strategies, technologies and procedures to explore as next steps
- Informed development of Noise Element Strategy 13 (Special Events) and associated policies



Special Events Implementation Measures

Outreach, Communication and Transparency

- Special events public calendar and notifications
- Permit applications for special events are circulated to various City departments for review and approval with conditions
- After hours events line to respond to noise complaints



Concert Map – Sound Study Grid

Special Events Implementation Measures Cont.

Sound Mitigation

- Sound readings conducted with calibrated sound meter
- City staff trained in sound engineering and conducts regular sound monitoring and reporting
- Use of sound boxes monitored by third party
- Additional sound mitigation such as acoustical sound barriers



Special Events Future Anticipations

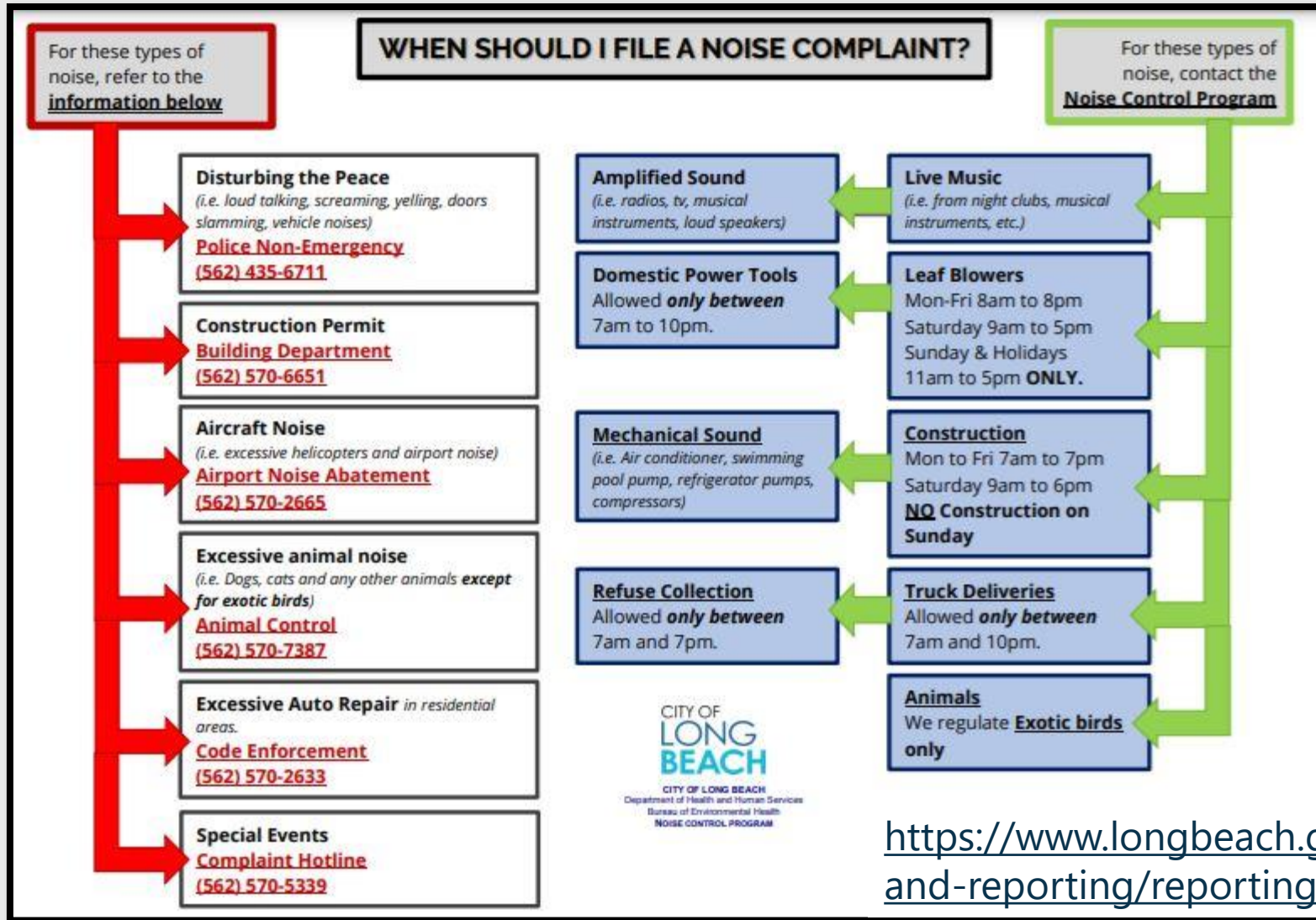
- Sound reading available in real time and visible to constituents
- Continue to monitor potential future mitigation measures as sound technology advances and implement as appropriate



Environmental Review

- Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines, the City, as Lead Agency, prepared a Draft and Final Environmental Impact Report (**EIR 03-20**).
- The Draft EIR was **released** on March 23, 2021 and the public comment period ended on June 14, 2021.
- **Recent minor edits made to the Noise Element and Noise Ordinance does not require another Draft EIR re-release for public comment.**

City Departments with Noise Regulatory Responsibilities



<https://www.longbeach.gov/health/inspections-and-reporting/reporting/noise-monitoring>

Looking Ahead: Noise Element Update Process



- **Early 2023:** A Planning Commission public hearing to recommend that the City Council adopt the EIR, General Plan Noise Element and associated amendments to the Noise Ordinance



Thank you

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Response to Common Comments

Common Comment #1. Special events should not be categorized as temporary, but rather stationary noise sources

- *Response:* Due to the temporary and often seasonal nature of these events, they are not considered representative of typical noise patterns that contribute to the existing ambient noise setting.

Common Comment #2. Standards for noise limits should be added to the Noise Element, in particular as a means for providing enforcement for Special Events

- *Response:* The Noise Element appropriately does not include specific noise limits as the purpose of the General Plan Noise Element is to establish goals and policies related to noise

Response to Common Comments

Common Comment #3. Lack of air conditioning in older buildings may inhibit the ability to keep windows closed during certain times of the year.

- *Response:* These standards are based on the requirements of the California Code of Regulations, Title 24. Comments related to the interior noise insulation standards demonstrate concern regarding existing State regulations and the state of existing, older buildings

Common Comment #4. Excessive noise is a hazard to public health per California Health and Safety Code Section 46000

- *Response:* As stated in Section 4.2.7 of the Draft EIR, the proposed Noise Element includes strategies and policies that are intended to provide protection for land uses from excessive noise and vibration sources, as well as to implement the vision of a healthy, livable noise environment in the City

Noise Plan - Example Strategies and Policies

PlaceType Characteristics and Land Use Compatibility

- Strategy No. 1 - Apply site planning and other design strategies to reduce noise impacts, especially within the Founding and Contemporary Neighborhoods, Multifamily Residential—Low and Moderate, and Neighborhood Serving Centers and Corridors – Low and Moderate PlaceTypes.
 - Policy N 1-5. Use urban design strategies such as the use courtyards, paseos, alleys, plazas and open space areas to provide a buffer to noise sensitive uses.
 - Policy N 1-6. Encourage project site planning and the location of the various functional spaces within developments to minimize the potential adverse impacts of noise.

Noise Plan - Example Strategies and Policies

Environmental Justice and Social Equity

- Strategy No. 15 - Reduce the disproportionate environmental noise burdens affecting low-income and minority populations.
 - Policy N 15-2. Requires that proposals for new sensitive land uses incorporate adequate setbacks, barriers, landscaping or other measures as necessary to minimize noise impacts, particularly in areas of the City that are disproportionately impacted by noise.