

dB A -L $_{eq}$ or less by measures including, but not limited to, installing acoustical materials, eliminating windows, installing air conditioning, or constructing sound baffle structures.

Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. Caltrans indicates in its Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (October, 1998) that reasonable and feasible noise abatement measures should be incorporated into new or reconstruction highway projects. Caltrans has adopted the FHWA established NAC, as shown in Table 3.8.A, which indicates a value of 67 dB A (exterior L $_{eq}$) for Category B noise sensitive activities/land uses. Category B land uses include picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals. Because the project corridor study area includes mostly Category B land uses that may be affected by the proposed CETAP corridor, Category B NAC was used for purposes of initial analyses for the WT Corridor Tier 1 route location study. Category C land uses include developed lands, properties, or activities not included in Categories A and B shown in Table 3.8.A. The NAC for Category C land uses is 72 dB A L $_{eq}$.

The determination of whether a noise increase is considered to be substantial is dependent on the existing noise level. Caltrans considers a noise level increase to be substantial when the predicted noise levels with the proposed project exceed existing noise levels by 12 dB A , L $_{eq}$ (h).

It should be noted that the NAC should not be viewed as federal standards or desirable noise levels; nor should they be used as design goals for noise barrier construction. The NAC should only be used as absolute values that, when approached or exceeded, require the consideration of traffic noise abatement measures.

For the purposes of noise analysis on new highway construction or reconstruction projects, when the predicted noise level approaches within one dB A or exceeds the NAC, a traffic noise impact would occur. Therefore, for the purposes of this noise impact analysis, when traffic noise reaches 66 dB A L $_{eq}$ or higher at Category B land uses, traffic noise impacts would occur and noise abatement measures should be considered.

3.8.2.3 Riverside County Standards and Guidelines

The County of Riverside has noise standards based on land use categories in its Noise Element, including the following standards applicable to analyzing the WT Corridor:

1. The following uses shall be considered noise sensitive and shall be discouraged in areas in excess of 65 dB A CNEL/Ldn: single and multiple family residential, group homes, hospitals, schools and other learning institutions, and parks and open space lands where quiet is a basis for use.
2. Business and professional offices where effective communication is essential shall mitigate interior noise to 45 dB A CNEL/Ldn.
3. Proposed noise sensitive projects within noise impacted areas shall be required to have acoustical studies prepared by a qualified acoustical engineer and may be required to provide mitigation from existing noise.

4. In areas in close proximity to highways and roads, the road's design standard (average daily trips) shall be used to estimate the maximum future noise hazard.

The County of Riverside also has a land use compatibility chart for community noise. Among the various land uses, schools and single and multiple family residential uses are generally unacceptable in areas between 65 dBA and 75 dBA CNEL and are conditionally acceptable between 55 and 70 dBA CNEL. Sports arenas and outdoor spectator sports are conditionally acceptable up to 70 dBA CNEL. Recreational land uses such as open space areas with horseback riding trails are generally acceptable up to 65 dBA CNEL and are generally unacceptable between 60 dBA and 70 dBA CNEL. The County of Riverside has stricter standards than those of the State of California.