

City of Long Beach Noise Element Update

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Noise Element?

The Noise Element is one of the seven state-mandated General Plan Elements required for every city in California. The Long Beach Noise Element was last updated in 1975. Since then, the City's physical makeup, population, regional context, and the regulatory guidance around noise have changed significantly. The update to the Noise Element aims to provide a tailored approach to noise policy across neighborhoods, recognizing the unique characteristics of a mixed-use downtown and major transportation corridor environments. The Noise Element will establish updated policies that will guide noise and land use throughout the City.

Does the Noise Element deal with noise from special events in Long Beach?

The Noise Element is a vision document that will inform Long Beach's long-term, holistic approach to ambient noise and provide a framework for general policies about special events. At the request of the Long Beach City Council, the City is also concurrently preparing a Special Events Noise Study. That effort is currently underway and is a separate effort from the Noise Element Update. The Special Events Noise Study will more specifically focus on evaluating and identifying strategies for managing special events noise. City staff anticipates providing a status update on this effort to City Council in summer 2019.

Does the Noise Element apply to the Long Beach Airport?

Aircraft and other noise resulting from the operations of the airport and industry at the Long Beach Airport is regulated by a special 1995 Airport Noise Compatibility Ordinance, which still governs today. Airport operations and noise are largely regulated by federal and state agencies. For more information related to airport noise, please visit: http://www.lgb.org/information/noise_abatement/frequently_asked_questions.asp

Was community input involved in developing the Noise Element?

To inform the Draft Noise Element Plan and identify potential issues, a variety of community engagement strategies were employed in 2017 and 2018. The Noise Element update process has incorporated a significant online outreach component, including a project website and opportunities to provide input via email and the Development Services Facebook and Twitter. A digital mapping tool, "Listen Up Long Beach," was also used to crowdsource data from residents and the community on local noise issues and observations through their smart phone or other device. Multiple stakeholder meetings and focus groups were conducted. Input received from the numerous outreach efforts were recorded, studied, and used to inform a Draft Existing Conditions Report (released in early 2018) and has informed the Draft Plan (released May 2019).

How does the Noise Element get implemented?

The City of Long Beach generally regulates noise and vibration through the broad policy direction of the Noise Element of the General Plan which is implemented through specific regulations codified in the Noise Ordinance, found in Chapter 8.80 of the Long Beach Municipal Code. The existing Noise Ordinance was last comprehensively updated in 1977 to implements the City's Noise Element, which was last updated in 1975. The Noise Ordinance will likely be updated in the future to implement the policies of the Noise Element update, after it is adopted. Generally, the City's Noise Ordinance regulates internal and external noise produced by various land uses and limits noise levels that can be heard beyond site boundaries.

How can I file a noise complaint in Long Beach?

The City of Long Beach has adopted a Community Noise Ordinance (Section 8.80.010) to address loud noises from sources that include but are not limited to construction, delivery noises, amplified music from nightclubs, loud stereos and TVs, air conditioners, and other equipment. Noise complaints are handled by different City departments depending on the source of the noise. For more information about where to report complaints from various noise sources, please visit: <http://www.longbeach.gov/health/inspections-and-reporting/reporting/noise-monitoring/>

Does the City have a policy for busking (playing live music in public places) in Long Beach?

The City does not have a specific policy pertaining to busking in Long Beach. The Special Events Noise Study includes case studies of cities that have policies pertaining to busking that may help inform development of sound and noise policies in Long Beach.

What are the next steps for the Noise Element update?

In the near term, the City will continue to accept feedback on the Draft Plan and comments on the Initial Study (environmental document) until the deadline of June 17, 2019. Comments received on the Initial Study will be used to inform the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Noise Element. Ultimately, the updated Noise Element will require approval by the Planning Commission and adoption by City Council to become an official element of the Long Beach General Plan.

For more information about the Noise Element update, go to: http://www.lbds.info/noise_element_update/ or contact Jennifer Ly, Planner, at Jennifer.Ly@LongBeach.gov or (562) 570-6368.



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