

Questions and Answers

Session #11: Traffic Noise Update 2018

June 13, 2018

Q. Please discuss the potential for a noise study when the project is solely the addition of a center turn lane?

A. In general, for access management projects where capacity is not being increased, such as adding a center turn lane or converting a center turn lane to a raised median, a noise study is not required. The exception to this would be if homes are already very close to the roadway, and the addition of a center turn lane would cause the travel lanes to be so close to the homes that it would constitute a substantial change in horizontal alignment (i.e. the distance between the closest home and the center of the nearest proposed travel lane is being reduced by half from the existing condition), then a noise study might be warranted. However, this scenario is relatively rare.

Q. What is the best practice for modeling median Jersey barriers?

A. This is outside the scope of this webinar. However, if there is a desire within the industry for training on noise modeling, then please contact Missy Pair and let her know. We do plan to conduct training in the near future that focuses on noise modeling and barrier design.

Q. In addition to noise walls, what are some other forms of mitigation?

A. An earthen berm can be provided if there is adequate space within the right of way, which is usually not the case. There are also ways to eliminate the need for a wall altogether via design changes; i.e., using concrete barrier in lieu of guardrail may serve to sufficiently reduce noise levels from the tire-pavement interface such that a traffic noise impact does not occur.

Q. Regarding balloting, if an apartment building has 20 residences, would the building owner have only 4 points, or would it be 4 points per receptor?

A. In this case, each tenant would be entitled to one vote and the owner would have 4 x 20 votes.

Q. How do real estate agents and developers typically become aware of the Date of Public Knowledge?

A. Throughout the project development process, NCDOT utilizes a robust public involvement program. During this process, many real estate agents request to be on the DOT mailing list for a project. This allows them to stay current on the project's timeline and status. In addition, many agents will call NCDOT and ask the project team for information. Many of the larger projects also have project websites that agents and the public can use to find the most recent project documents and information.

Q. Does a Type I CE require a Traffic Noise Report (TNR)?

A. *It should be noted that CEs and the Noise Policy both use the nomenclature of Type I and Type III projects, with very different meanings, so please be careful when using this terminology to avoid confusion. The decision on whether or not a Traffic Noise Report is required is made based on the project itself, not the NEPA document classification. For example, if you are doing a Type I CE in which the project is on new location, or adds through lanes, or substantially changes the horizontal or vertical alignment of an existing road, a noise study is still required. The only document type that takes the requirement for a noise study off the table is the State Minimum Criteria Determination Checklist.*