

Noise Related in Issues in Contra Costa County Community Forum

JULY 8, 2025

FOLLOW-UP MEETING

Agenda

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Welcome/Introductions

Background

Introductory Meeting Recap

Preliminary proposal

Follow up questions

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Background

Noise Concerns Review Timeline

- ▶ The Department of Conservation and Development (DCD) was authorized by the Board of Supervisors on March 5, 2024 to evaluate noise related issues in Contra Costa County
- ▶ A survey on noise related issues was sent to all Municipal Advisory Councils on June 14, 2024.
- ▶ A working group meeting was held on September 16, 2024 to discuss the survey and solicit input on any additional noise concerns.
- ▶ Staff reviewed input and options with potential enforcement partners in the Spring of 2025 to assess the feasibility of additional noise regulations.

Introductory Meeting Recap

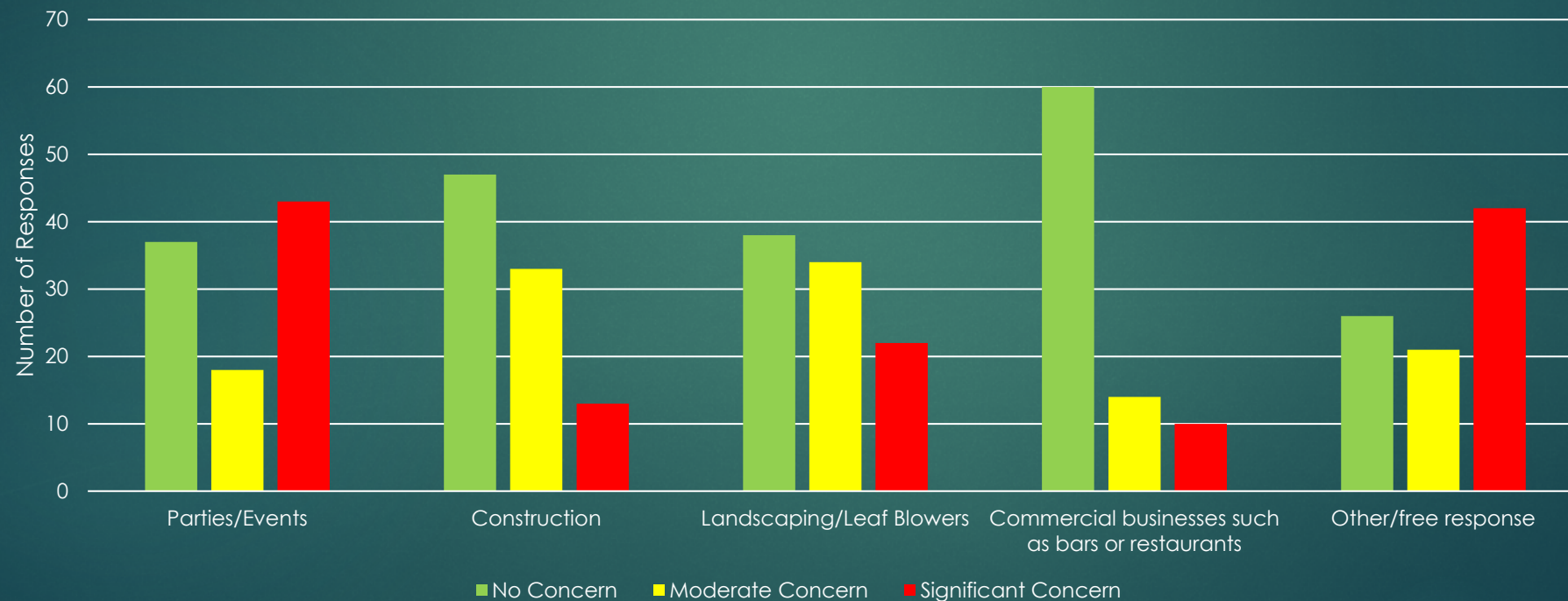
Key Issues Discussed at September 16, 2024 Meeting:

- ▶ Contra Costa County residents have strong concerns about existing noise-related nuisances within the unincorporated communities.
- ▶ Specific areas of concern include loud parties, construction, vehicular noise, leaf blowers, gunshots and fireworks.
- ▶ Staff provided details on existing regulations as well as limitations on our ability to enforce any potential new regulations.
- ▶ Staff communicated next steps which included review of community input, coordination with Sherriff's Office and scheduling of future community meetings.

Noise Issues Survey and Meeting Recap

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Survey results below and informal show of hands at September meeting indicate that party noise is the most significant concern of those providing feedback.



Constraints on Existing and Proposed Regulations

Challenges with Enforcement of Regulations

- ▶ Excessive sounds or vibrations occurring outside of typical working hours when DCD staff may not be available, or Sheriff's staff resources may be limited.
- ▶ Some sounds and vibrations occur intermittently or irregularly.
- ▶ Sounds or vibrations can carry long distances.
- ▶ Many activities can have noise impacts and it can be hard to reach consensus on what impacts are acceptable and which are not.
- ▶ Establishing and upholding a threshold for an unreasonable level of noise can be challenging to measure.
- ▶ The cost of enforcing such an ordinance, primarily with respect to increased demand for staff time, is not currently known but could be significant.

Follow up Outreach

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Recap from DCD on its Discussions with Sheriff's Office

- ▶ Community concerns and priorities regarding noise were discussed, as were current enforcement tools.
- ▶ Sheriff's Office shared enforcement concerns and capabilities. Officers have a wide scope of responsibility already. Enforcement of noise regulations is more feasible and likely to be effective if prohibitions are simple and clearly defined with a range of enforcement mechanisms established.
- ▶ Discussion of what new concerns if any may arise as a result of new regulations as well as penalties for possible new regulations.

Preliminary Proposal

DCD suggests new regulations to address two specific areas of concern.

- ▶ Outdoor Amplified Sound
- ▶ Construction-Related Noise

Preliminary Proposal

Suggestions for addressing party noise nuisances by focusing on amplified sound.

- ▶ Propose regulations to prohibit all outdoor amplified sound after 10:00pm on Friday and Saturday and after 8:00pm on other nights.
- ▶ Amplified sound may be considered outdoor if emanating from an indoor location but doors or windows are left open.
- ▶ Remedies may include infraction citations, administrative fines and other existing tools.
- ▶ Proposed regulations would be consistent with existing prohibitions on amplified sound in the Temporary Events Ordinance but would apply whether or not there was a gathering or “event”.
- ▶ Proposed regulations could be enforced by Department of Conservation and Development (DCD) Code Enforcement and Sheriff’s Office.

Preliminary Proposal (cont.)

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Suggestions for addressing construction-related noise

- ▶ The following construction noise restriction conditions of approval are typically applied to planning entitlement projects that require discretionary or ministerial approval.
 - ▶ Internal combustion engines are to be fitted with mufflers and stationary noise-generating equipment are to be located as far away from existing residences as possible.
 - ▶ Construction activities are limited to the hours of 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, and prohibited on State and Federal holidays.
 - ▶ Large trucks and heavy equipment are subject to the same restrictions that are imposed on construction activities, except that the hours are limited to 9:00am to 4:00pm.
- ▶ Consider new regulations to apply construction noise restriction conditions of approval to all projects that require a building permit.
- ▶ Proposed regulations would also include penalties for violations through administrative fines, infraction citations and other existing tools.
- ▶ DCD Code Enforcement and Sheriff's Office could enforce the proposed regulations.

Exclusions and Limitations

- ▶ Noise regulations to address general vehicular noise or leaf blowers are not recommended because such activities are prevalent, the noise is a byproduct of the activity, and fleeting or short-lived noises are difficult to regulate.
- ▶ Noise regulations to address gunshots or fireworks are not recommended because these activities are separately regulated.
- ▶ Additional specific regulations would strain enforcement capacity of Sheriff's Office and DCD.
- ▶ Any new regulations would only apply to the unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County.

Next Steps

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- ▶ Discuss tonight the preliminary proposal for noise regulation and receive feedback.
- ▶ Collect additional written feedback from the public through July 31.
- ▶ DCD will draft a report on noise issues and recommendations for addressing them, including community input received, and present it to the Board at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting, targeting a to-be-determined meeting date in August or September.

Questions?

925-655-2868

Grant.Farrington@dcd.cccounty.us