

# Noise Related in Issues in Contra Costa County Community Forum

JULY 8, 2025

FOLLOW-UP MEETING

# Agenda

2

Welcome/Introductions

Background

Introductory Meeting Recap

Preliminary proposal

Follow up questions

Overview of next steps



# 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

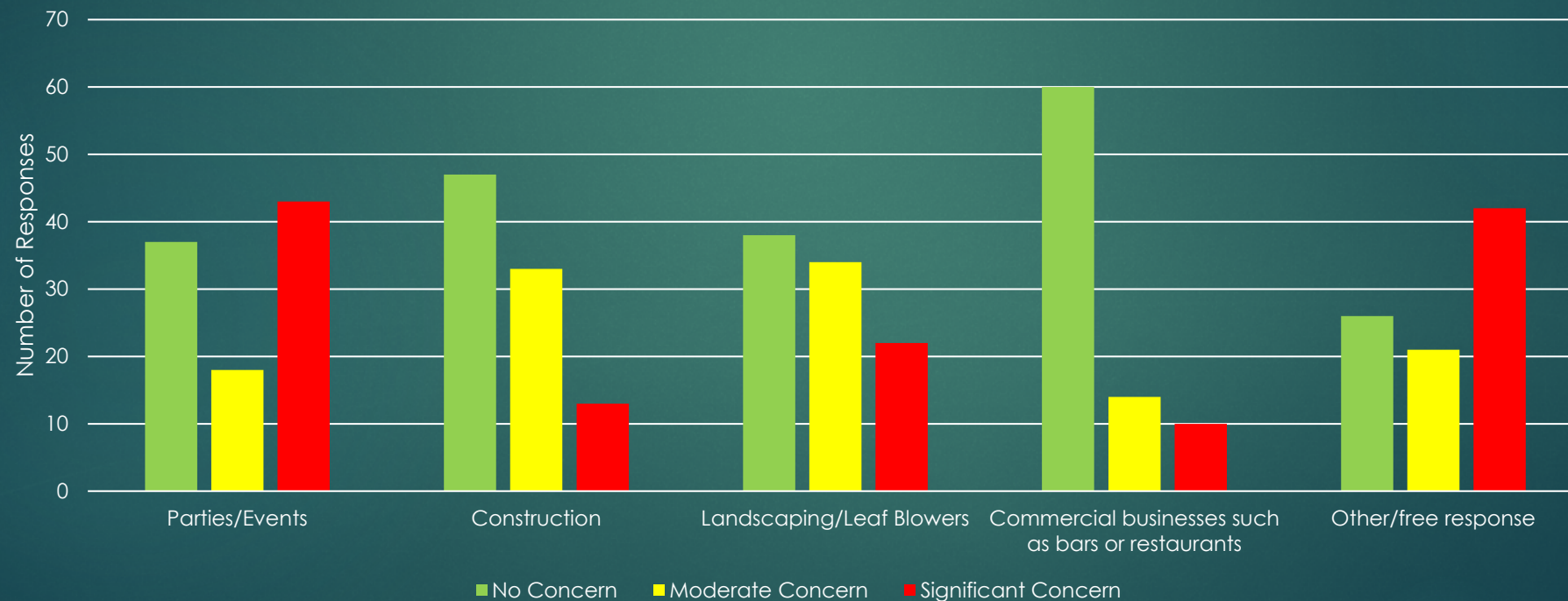
## Key Issues Discussed at September 16, 2024 Meeting:

- ▶ 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

5

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

7

## 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.)

10

## 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

12

- ▶ 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](mailto:Grant.Farrington@dcd.cccounty.us)