

NOISE IMPACTS from Caltran I-5/SR-56 FEIR

Tucked away in Volume II of Caltrans I-5/SR-56 FEIR within Appendix I is a report from **Menlo Scientific Acoustics, Inc.** Since this report was not presented in a CEQA question format, Caltrans did not reply but only attached it to FEIR. I will take excerpts from this professionally prepared document authored by Neil Shaw, that point out the flaws and insufficient analysis provided by Caltrans within the Final Environmental Impact Report of June, 2017.

Sound Annoyance kills

The World Health Organization in 2011 came to that conclusion that sound annoyance kills on the long term through **stress-related illnesses** in a way that is not easily attributable in individual cases. In another article by Regnar Rylander entitled “Noise, Stress, and Annoyance”, the author concludes “that **chronic exposure** situations lead to involuntary reflexes and feeling of fright and despair.” A study in Denmark states that NOISE=increased stress = High Blood Pressure and Heart Disease.

Caltrans fails to evaluate noise from single vehicular sources such as **truck engine noise from climbing the direct connector or brake noise** that sounds like “machine gun” exhaust noise. With Caltrans admitting that there will be a 25% increase in truck traffic with the Preferred Alternative #2, this is a systemic flaw in their analysis. Additionally, Caltrans fails to analyze the human perception to changes in sound levels especially to intermittent and sudden noises at **elevated levels**.

Impacts from the project’s ELEVATED FEATURES

“Noise sources that are elevated will ensonify more receptors”. The impact on **upslope** receptors may be greater than for a receptor closer to the Right of Way (ROW). Caltrans only provides data related to receptors immediately adjacent to the freeway. Pointe Del Mar is directly impacted by the Alternative #2 ramp that rises 107 feet above their neighborhood and then turns East to connect with SR-56 but Caltrans fails to model noise impacts throughout this community.

Reflected Noise from large Barriers

There is no supporting documents that analyze the effect of noise reflections from the massive retaining walls that range from 35 feet to 45 feet or the sound walls that maybe located atop these concert barriers. Furthermore, the earthen tree lined hillsides will be taken down eliminating a natural sound buffer system. Caltrans uses a +3dB increase in sound as a threshold of significance. Human sensitivity to noise varies considerably with differences as little as 1 dB being recognized. The Del Mar Hills Academy is only 57 feet from the project and no analysis is provided to ascertain the health impact upon the children playing on the fields which currently are listed at 67 dBs at Receptor R 5.3. Future calculations at R 5.3 under project "Build" without Soundwalls drops to 64 dB's. How is that even possible? The Carmel Del Mar School at 12345 Carmel Park Drive is within 531 feet of the project.

Mitigation using Noise Barriers

Noise monitoring was performed in 2004 and 2007 to establish a baseline condition(s) and calibrate a future traffic noise model. These calculations do not represent today's traffic volume on I-5 or SR-56, new housing or commercial development.

Under the Direct Connector Alternative, 86 receptors were reviewed for abatement measures. Nineteen soundwalls were considered but **only six** were preliminary recommended. Two more soundwalls were conditionally recommended if Caltrans would be given at no cost the right-of-way. For soundwalls that are deemed "not recommended due to a determination that they are "not feasible" or "not reasonable" no mitigation measures will be forth coming even though the DEIR had identified significant noise impacts from the I-5/SR-56 project. Based upon Table 3.16-9b in section 3-16, these soundwalls would cost an additional \$6 million dollars over the state allowance or just 2% of the total \$300 million project cost.

Conclusion

Woefully, out-of-date noise study with insufficient and lacking analysis of the future projects impacts. No study provided regarding the effect of reflected noise from massive retaining walls. No study of upslope impact of noise from elevated ‘flyover ramps’.

What is most shocking is the lack of scientific and health related analysis for citizen’s health issues regarding noise along the entire length of the Preferred Alternative 2. Finally, Caltrans was placed a price tag on what they consider a “reasonable allowance” versus what is a human life worth!

Dennis E. Ridz, Chair Torrey Pines Community Planning Board