



COLORADO
Department of Transportation

Environmental Programs Branch
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DATE: October 9, 2020

TO: Colorado Regional Planning and Environmental Managers

FROM: Rose Waldman, CDOT EPB Air Quality and Noise Program Manager

SUBJECT: Release of Revised CDOT *Noise Analysis and Abatement Guidelines* (NAAG), Revised Traffic Noise Technical Report Template, and Summary of Revisions

Please distribute this information to the appropriate individuals and offices in your Region. If there are questions or concerns regarding the NAAG, please contact me at rose.waldman@state.co.us.

Background: Until today, the most current version of the CDOT *Noise Analysis and Abatement Guidelines* (NAAG) was from January 2015. This September 2020 NAAG revision is also an update to and supersedes the noise guidance provided in Section 9.22 of the March 2020 version of CDOT *NEPA Manual*, which is based on the 2015 NAAG.

Guidance Applicability: This September 2020 NAAG shall be used on projects that have a Scoping Date that is on or after October 9, 2020. Scoping Date is defined as the earliest of the following:

- Environmental scoping meeting
- Environmental kick-off meeting
- EPB Environmental Clearance Request

For projects that were scoped prior to October 9, 2020, this 2020 NAAG can be used as determined by a CDOT noise specialist and FHWA via consultation.

Revisions Summary: The following is a summary of revisions between the 2015 and 2020 NAAG versions and the 2018 and 2020 report template versions:

1. **Cost/Benefit Threshold:** Changed units and, therefore, value from \$6,800/dB/receptor to \$34,000/receptor.
2. **Number of Receptors for Feasibility:** Changed number of receptors to reach feasibility threshold from one to three impacted receptors.
3. **Number of Receptors for Reasonableness:** Changed number of receptors to reach reasonableness threshold from one to two benefited receptors.

4. **Number of Receptors per Facility:** Increased number of Activity Category C and E receptors for some facilities including schools, playgrounds, amphitheaters, and sports fields. Decreased number of receptors at campgrounds.
5. **Applicability of NAAG to State-only projects:** Rather than having the NAAG apply to all state, local, and public-private partnership Type I projects overseen by CDOT or requiring CDOT approval, the NAAG now applies under two circumstances, as defined in Section 1.3 of the 2020 NAAG.
6. **Model Validation:** Clarified validation language, including the duration of validation noise measurements and when to use long-term measurements.
7. **New topics:** Added new topics or expanded upon previous topics including introductory text, reevaluations, Noise Verifications, how to obtain traffic data, and barrier optimization.
8. **Minor guidance revisions:** Some minor guidance revisions have been made. For example, the Noise Study Zone will be smaller (300 feet vs. 500 feet) for projects that are not along freeways or expressways. Another example is that some language regarding design-build projects was revised.
9. **Former Appendix C:** Removed former Appendix C, which contained 2006 technical modeling guidance. Some information was brought into the main document.
10. **Traffic Noise Technical Report Template:** The template was revised from the April 2018 version to be consistent with the 2020 NAAG and to add clarification for some requirements. The April 2018 template should be used for traffic noise technical reports that are based on the 2015 NAAG. For reports based on the 2020 NAAG, use the September 2020 template.
11. **Form 1209:** This form was revised from the February 2015 version to be consistent with the 2020 NAAG. Also, it was converted to being a fillable form that can be completed electronically.
12. **Clarifications:** Many topics were clarified, including the definition of Type I projects, benefitted receptor survey requirements, what does and does not constitute a noise sensitive receptor for various receptor types, documenting noise barrier fatal flaws, rounding to determine if receptor is benefitted, and submitting the noise report to local officials if contours were developed (done by Project Manager or environmental Project Manager)
13. **Reorganization and editorial corrections:** Many sections (chapters, sections, paragraphs, and sentences) were reorganized, by cutting and pasting and by moving text into tables or breaking up paragraphs into bullets. Editorial corrections were also made.

Individuals/Entities Impacted by Procedural Directive: This memorandum and the NAAG applies to all divisions, Regions, offices and branches of CDOT. It also applies to consulting firms performing contracted work for CDOT as well as Local Agencies and quasi-governmental entities performing work under CDOT's authority.

Effective Date: Immediate