RECON

*An Employee-Owned Company*

April 2, 2026

Ms. Shannyn Henkel
Fairfield Residential
5355 Mira Sorrento Place, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92121

Reference: Noise Addendum for the Fairfield Residential Rezone Project (RECON Number 10498)

Dear Ms. Henkel:

This report discusses potential noise impacts from the construction and operation of the Fairfield Residential Rezone Project (project). Noise impacts were assessed in accordance with the City of San Diego (City) Municipal Code (SDMC) limits, General Plan Noise Element compatibility guidelines, and the City's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Significance Determination Thresholds. Impacts are compared to those identified in the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan Update (CPU) Revised Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR; City of San Diego 2018).

## 1.0 Project Description

The project proposes a Community Plan Amendment (CPA) and Rezone for 16.05 acres of partially developed space in the Midway-Pacific Community Plan area. Figure 1 shows the regional location. The project site comprises three parcels, which are further described as areas A, B, and C. Area A (Parcel 1 of Parcel Map 22202) is developed with a 405-dwelling-unit residential building (Bevel Apartments) located at 3250 Barnett Avenue on 7.12 acres with Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) of 450-480-015 and 450-480-016. Area B (Parcel 2 of Parcel Map 22202) is developed with a 253-dwelling-unit residential building (Bowen Apartments) located at 3280 Barnett Avenue on 4.47 acres with an APN of 450-480-017. Area C (Parcel 1 of Parcel Map 21693) is currently undeveloped but is paved and contains building foundations from a recently demolished structure. It is located at 2535 Midway Drive on 4.46 acres with an APN of 450-480-013. Figure 2 shows an aerial photograph of the project site and vicinity.

Surrounding land uses include residential land uses to the southwest, Dewey Elementary School to the west, a United States Postal Service property to the northwest, commercial/retail uses to the north, northeast, and east, and Marine Corp Recruit Depot to the south. The residential uses are located as close as 10 feet west of the project boundary and Dewey Elementary School is located 740 feet west of the project boundary.

The project site (areas A, B, and C) is currently designated as Business Park – Residential Permitted (0–44 dwelling units) in the Midway-Pacific Community Plan and Multiple Use in the City's General Plan. All parcels are zoned as Commercial Office 3-1 (CO-3-1). The project proposes the following:

- A CPA to redesignate the project site from Business Park – Residential Permitted (0–44 dwelling units) to Residential – High (45–73 dwelling units) in the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan
- A Rezone from CO-3-1 to Residential–Multiple Units 3-9 (RM-3-9)

Because no site development plan is currently proposed, the project is limited to approval of a CPA and Rezone. Accordingly, this project description, and the analysis that follows, focuses on the reasonably foreseeable development that could occur under the proposed land use and zoning designations rather than a specific site design.

Based on the acreage of the project site (16.05 acres) and the development restrictions of the City's Land Development Code, Table 1 provides a review of the existing allowed and proposed maximum development potentials of the project site. Under the existing zoning (CO-3-1), the project site could be developed with or without residential components. However, it should be noted that in the existing condition, areas A and B contain residential projects recently completed in 2025. Buildout of the project site assumes demolishing the existing residential development that currently occupies areas A and B.

**Table 1**
**Maximum Development Potential**

| Zoning | FAR Ratio | Maximum Potential GFA or Number of Units |
|---|---|---|
| **Existing Zoning (CO-3-1)[1]** | | |
| ***Existing Zoning (CO-3-1) – With Residential*** | | |
| Commercial Component (Base GFA) | 2.0 | 1,398,276 sf |
| Residential Component (Bonus GFA)[2] | 1.0 | 699,138 sf (a maximum of 699 units) |
| Maximum GFA | 3.0 | 2,097,414 sf |
| ***Existing Zoning (CO-3-1) – Without Residential*** | | |
| Commercial Component (Maximum GFA) | 2.0 | 1,398,276 sf |
| **Proposed Zoning (RM-3-9)[3]** | | |
| ***Proposed Zoning (RM-3-9)*** | | |
| Commercial Component (10 percent of GFA)[4] | -- | 188,767 sf |
| Residential Component[2] | -- | 1,698,906 sf (a maximum of 1,165 units) |
| Maximum GFA | 2.7 | 1,887,673 sf |

FAR = floor area ratio; GFA = gross floor area; sf = square feet
[1] City of San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) Chapter 13, Article 1, Division 5.
[2] Residential units are calculated based on the lot area. Zone RM-3-9 allows a greater density (600 sf of lot area/unit) than Zone CO-3-1 (1,000 sf of lot area/unit) [SDMC Section 113.0222(a)].
[3] SDMC Chapter 13, Article 1, Division 4.
[4] Up to 10 percent of the GFA for RM-3-9 zones may be used for commercial uses (SDMC Section 131.0423).

The project for this environmental review is the proposed CPA and Rezone, not a specific development proposal. Future development on the site could take a variety of forms, provided it is consistent with the land use and zoning designations established by the project, as described in Table 1. Accordingly, the analysis evaluates the change in allowable development intensity and land uses compared to existing allowable entitlements and assesses the environmental effects that could result from that increased or modified development potential. Table 2 provides a comparison of these two scenarios.

| Table 2<br>Potential Maximum Development Scenario Comparison | |
|---|---|
| **Existing Zoning (CO-3-1)** | |
| Residential | 699 units |
| Commercial (retail and office, see table 3 below)[1] | 1,398,276 sf |
| **Proposed Zoning (RM-3-9)** | |
| Residential | 1,165 units |
| Commercial (retail and office, see table 4 below) | 188,767 sf |
| **Change in Allowable Development Intensity** | |
| Residential | +466 units |
| Commercial | -1,209,509 sf |
| sf = square feet | |

Table 3 identifies the maximum development that could occur under the site's current CO-3-1 zoning. These estimates incorporate the provisions of SDMC Section 131.0541, which allow a limited portion (up to 10 percent) of the permitted commercial development to be used for retail.

| Table 3<br>Existing Zoning Maximum Development Potential Scenarios | |
|---|---|
| **Scenario 1: Mixed-Use Project with Retail Component** | |
| Minimum FAR required for Residential (1.0) | 699,138 sf (699 units) |
| Maximum GFA permitted for Retail (10 percent) | 209,741 sf |
| GFA Allowance for Office | 1,188,535 sf |
| **Scenario 2: Mixed-Use Project without Retail Component** | |
| Minimum FAR required for Residential (1.0) | 699,138 sf (699 units) |
| GFA Allowance for Office | 1,398,276 sf |
| **Scenario 3: Commercial Only Development with Retail Component** | |
| Maximum GFA permitted for Retail (10 percent) | 139,828 sf |
| GFA Allowance for Office | 1,258,448 sf |
| **Scenario 4: Commercial Only Development without Retail Component** | |
| GFA Allowance for Office | 1,398,276 sf |
| FAR = floor area ratio; GFA = gross floor area; sf = square feet; | |

Table 4 summarizes the maximum development potential under the proposed RM-3-9 zoning. Under this designation, up to 10 percent of the total gross floor area (GFA) may be developed with commercial uses. This commercial component may consist of office, retail, or a combination of both, consistent with SDMC Section 131.0423.

| Table 4<br>Proposed Zoning Maximum Development Potential Scenarios | |
|---|---|
| **Scenario 1: Mixed-Use Project with Office and Retail** | |
| Residential | 1,165 units |
| Retail (75 percent) | 141,575 sf |
| Office (25 percent) | 47,192 sf |
| **Scenario 2: Mixed-Use Project with Office and Retail** | |
| Residential | 1,165 units |
| Retail (50 percent) | 94,384 sf |
| Office (50 percent) | 94,384 sf |
| **Scenario 3: Mixed-Use Project with Office Only** | |
| Residential | 1,165 units |
| Retail (0 percent) | 0 sf |
| Office (100 percent) | 188,767 sf |
| **Scenario 4: Mixed-Use Project with Retail Only** | |
| Residential | 1,165 units |
| Retail (100 percent) | 188,767 sf |
| Office (0 percent) | 0 sf |
| sf = square feet | |

## 2.0 Regulatory Setting

### 2.1 City of San Diego General Plan

The City's Noise Element of the General Plan specifies compatibility standards for different land use categories (Table 5). As shown, multi-family residential uses are compatible with noise levels up to 60 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), conditionally compatible with noise levels from 60 to 70 CNEL, and are incompatible with noise levels above 70 CNEL. The interior noise level standard is 45 CNEL. Retail and office uses are compatible with noise levels up to 65 CNEL, conditionally compatible with noise levels from 65 to 75 CNEL, and are incompatible with noise levels above 75 CNEL. The interior noise level standard is 50 CNEL.

**Table 5**
**City of San Diego Land Use – Noise Compatibility Guidelines**

| Land Use Category | Exterior Noise Exposure [dB(A) CNEL] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | |
| *Parks and Recreational* | | | | | |
| Parks, Active and Passive Recreation | | | | | |
| Outdoor Spectator Sports, Golf Courses; Water Recreational Facilities; Indoor Recreation Facilities | | | | | |
| *Agricultural* | | | | | |
| Crop Raising and Farming; Community Gardens, Aquaculture, Dairies; Horticulture Nurseries and Greenhouses; Animal Raising, Maintaining and Keeping; Commercial Stables | | | | | |
| *Residential* | | | | | |
| Single Dwelling Units; Mobile Homes | | 45 | | | |
| Multiple Dwelling Units<br>**For uses affected by aircraft noise, refer to Policies NE-D.2. & NE-D.3.For uses affected by motor vehicle traffic noise, refer to Policy NE-B.10.* | | 45 | 45 | | |
| *Institutional* | | | | | |
| Hospitals; Nursing Facilities; Intermediate Care Facilities; Kindergarten through Grade 12 Educational Facilities; Libraries; Museums; Child Care Facilities | | 45 | | | |
| Other Educational Facilities including Vocational/Trade Schools and Colleges and Universities | | 45 | 45 | | |
| Cemeteries | | | | | |
| *Retail Sales* | | | | | |
| Building Supplies/Equipment; Food, Beverage, and Groceries; Pets and Pet Supplies; Sundries, Pharmaceutical, and Convenience Sales; Wearing Apparel and Accessories | | | 50 | 50 | |
| *Commercial Services* | | | | | |
| Building Services; Business Support; Eating and Drinking; Financial Institutions; Maintenance & Repair; Personal Services; Assembly and Entertainment (includes public and religious assembly); Radio and Television Studios; Golf Course Support | | | 50 | 50 | |
| Visitor Accommodations | | 45 | 45 | 45 | |
| *Offices* | | | | | |
| Business and Professional; Government; Medical, Dental, and Health Practitioner; Regional and Corporate Headquarters | | | 50 | 50 | |
| *Vehicle and Vehicular Equipment Sales and Services Use* | | | | | |
| Commercial or Personal Vehicle Repair and Maintenance; Commercial or Personal Vehicle Sales and Rentals; Vehicle Equipment and Supplies Sales and Rentals; Vehicle Parking | | | | | 50 |
| *Wholesale, Distribution, Storage Use Category* | | | | | |
| Equipment and Materials Storage Yards; Moving and Storage Facilities; Warehouse; Wholesale Distribution | | | | | 50 |
| *Industrial* | | | | | |
| Heavy Manufacturing; Light Manufacturing; Marine Industry; Trucking and Transportation Terminals; Mining and Extractive Industries | | | | | 50 |
| Research and Development | | | | 50 | 50 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Compatible | Indoor Uses | Standard construction methods should attenuate exterior noise to an acceptable indoor noise level. Refer to Section I [of the Noise Element]. |
| | | Outdoor Uses | Activities associated with the land use may be carried out. |
| 45, 50 | Conditionally Compatible | Indoor Uses | Building structure must attenuate exterior noise to the indoor noise level indicated by the number (45 or 50) for occupied areas, including residential habitable areas, commercial work/shopping areas, and office areas associated with industrial uses. Refer to Section I [of the Noise Element]. |
| | | Outdoor Uses | Feasible noise mitigation techniques should be analyzed and incorporated to make the outdoor activities acceptable. Refer to Section I [of the Noise Element]. |
| | Incompatible | Indoor Uses | New construction should not be undertaken. |
| | | Outdoor Uses | Severe noise interference makes outdoor activities unacceptable. |

SOURCE: City of San Diego 2024.

Additionally, as stated in Policy NE-B.10 of the City's Noise Element, although not generally considered compatible, the City conditionally allows multi-family residential uses in areas experiencing noise levels above 70 CNEL from motor vehicle traffic noise. Any future residential use exposed to noise levels above 70 CNEL must limit the amount of outdoor areas subject to exposure above 70 CNEL and include attenuation measures to ensure an interior noise level of 45 CNEL.

The General Plan defines Noise-Sensitive Land Uses as:

> "Land uses depending on the specific indoor or outdoor use that can be affected by a loud noise environment. The most common types of uses include, but are not limited to: residential, hospitals, nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities, educational facilities, libraries, museums, places of worship, child care facilities, and certain types of passive recreational parks and open space (see also Sensitive Receptors)."

Sensitive Receptors are also defined in the General Plan as:

> "Land uses considered to be sensitive receptors include residential, schools, child care centers, acute care hospitals, and long-term health care facilities. Sensitive receptors are determined based upon special factors which may include the age of the users or occupants, the frequency and duration of the use or occupancy, continued exposure to hazardous substances as defined by federal and state regulations, and the user's ability to evacuate a specific site in the event of a hazardous incident."

## 2.2 California Environmental Quality Act Significance Thresholds

### 2.2.1 Traffic Generated Noise

The noise section of the City's Significance Determination Thresholds for CEQA identifies thresholds related to noise. The City's thresholds for traffic noise (City of San Diego 2022) are summarized in Table 6. Impacts associated with the project-related increase in traffic noise are analyzed in Section 5.1, and impacts associated with land use compatibility (i.e., on-site exposure to traffic noise) are addressed in Section 5.2.

**Table 6**
**Traffic Noise Significance Thresholds**

| Structure or Proposed Use that Would Be Impacted by Traffic Noise | Interior Space | Exterior Useable Space* | General Indication of Potential Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Single-family detached | 45 CNEL | 65 CNEL | Structure or outdoor useable area is less than 50 feet from the center of the closest (outside) lane on a street with existing or future ADT greater than 7,500 |
| Multi-family, school, library, hospital, day care center, hotel, motel, park, and convalescent home | The Development Services Department ensures 45 dB pursuant to Title 24 | 65 CNEL | |
| Office, church, business, and professional uses | n/a | 70 CNEL | Structure or outdoor useable area is less than 50 feet from the center of the closest lane on a street with existing or future ADT greater than 20,000 |

| Table 6<br>Traffic Noise Significance Thresholds | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Structure or Proposed Use that Would Be Impacted by Traffic Noise | Interior Space | Exterior Useable Space* | General Indication of Potential Significance |
| Commercial, retail, industrial, and outdoor spectator sports uses | n/a | 75 CNEL | Structure or outdoor useable area is less than 50 feet from the center of the closest lane on a street with existing or future ADT greater than 40,000 |
| SOURCE: City of San Diego 2022.<br>CNEL = community noise equivalent level; dB = decibel; ADT = average daily traffic<br>*If a project is currently at or exceeds the significance thresholds for traffic noise described above and noise levels would result in less than a 3 dB increase, then the impact is not considered significant. | | | |

### 2.2.2 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-Funded Projects and Noise

If a project is receiving U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding, noise analysis and mitigation must be in accordance with the HUD Noise Guidebook. Minimum attenuation requirements are prescribed in Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations26 (24 CFR 51.104(a)), which are the HUD Environmental Criteria and Standards. Note that the project is not HUD funded; therefore, these requirements do not apply.

### 2.2.3 Airport Noise Impacts

If a project is proposed within the Airport Environs Overlay Zone as defined in Chapter 13, Article 2, Division 3 of the SDMC, the potential exterior noise impacts from aircraft noise would not constitute a significant environmental impact. However, interior noise impacts will be regulated by the requirement for residential development within the Airport Environs Overlay Zone to reduce interior noise levels attributable to airport noise to 45 CNEL. Interior noise levels for new construction of multi-family units are addressed by the Building Development Review Division (BDR) of the City's Development Services Department and do not need to be mitigated through conditions in an environmental report, but the BDR requirements should be noted. BDR requires additional insulation and upgraded building materials so that interior noise levels do not exceed 45 CNEL. The requirements for acoustical testing are defined in the SDMC, Chapter 13, Article 2, Division 3, §132.0308, "Acoustical Testing of Interior Noise Levels." Requirements for noise studies are found in the SDMC at Chapter 13, Article 2, Division 3, §132.0308. This section of the SDMC applies to "development" as defined at, §113.0103 to include "constructing, reconstructing, converting, establishing, altering, maintaining, relocating, demolishing, using, or enlarging any building, structure, improvement, lot, or premises." Remodels and additions to single-family and multi-family residences subject to airport noise levels above 65 CNEL ordinarily would not be considered a significant issue and a noise study would not be required for the purposes of CEQA analysis. However, new construction of hospitals, schools, day care centers, or other sensitive uses subject to airport noise levels in excess of 65 CNEL would be considered a significant issue, and a noise study would be required that could recommend measures to mitigate potential noise impacts to a level below significance. Impacts associated with airport noise are analyzed in Section 5.3.

### 2.2.4 Noise from Adjacent Stationary Uses (Noise Generators)

A project which would generate noise levels at the property line which exceed the City's Noise Ordinance Standards is considered potentially significant (such as a carwash or projects operating generators or noisy equipment). If a non-residential use, such as a commercial, industrial, or school use, is proposed to abut an existing residential use, the decibel level at the property line should be the arithmetic mean of the decibel levels allowed for each use as set forth in Section 59.5.0401 of the SDMC (see Section 2.3.1). Although the noise level above could be consistent with the City's Noise Ordinance Standards, a noise level above 65 CNEL at the residential property line could be considered a significant environmental impact. Impacts associated with Noise Ordinance compliance are addressed in Section 5.4.

### 2.2.5 Impacts to Sensitive Wildlife

Noise mitigation may be required for significant noise impacts to certain avian species during their breeding season, depending upon the location of the project such as in or adjacent to a Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), whether or not the project is occupied by the California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, southern willow flycatcher, least tern, cactus wren, tricolored blackbird, or western snowy plover, and whether or not noise levels from the project, including construction during the breeding season of these species, would exceed 60 dB(A) or the existing ambient noise level if above 60 dB(A). In addition, significant noise impacts to the California gnatcatcher are only analyzed if the project is within an MHPA; there are no restrictions for the gnatcatcher outside the MHPA any time of year. Note that the project is not located adjacent to any sensitive habitats or the MHPA; therefore, these requirements do not apply.

### 2.2.6 Temporary Construction Noise

Temporary construction noise which exceeds 75 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at a sensitive receptor would be considered significant. Construction noise levels measured at or beyond the property lines of any property zoned residential shall not exceed an average sound level greater than 75 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ during the 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. In addition, construction activity is prohibited between the hours of 7:00 p.m. of any day and 7:00 a.m. of the following day, or on legal holidays as specified in Section 21.04 of the SDMC, with exception of Columbus Day and Washington's Birthday, or on Sundays, that would create disturbing, excessive, or offensive noise unless a permit has been applied for and granted beforehand by the Noise Abatement and Control Administrator, in conformance with SDMC Section 59.5.0404. Additionally, where temporary construction noise would substantially interfere with normal business communication, or affect sensitive receptors, such as day care facilities, a significant noise impact may be identified. Impacts associated with construction noise are analyzed in Section 5.5.

### 2.2.7 Noise/Land Use Compatibility

Noise is one factor to be considered in determining whether a land use is compatible. General Plan noise compatibility guidelines are shown in Table 5. The transition zone between compatible and incompatible should be evaluated by the environmental planner to determine whether the use would be acceptable based on all available information and the extent to which the noise from the proposed project would affect the surrounding uses. Impacts associated with noise and land use compatibility are analyzed in Section 5.2.

## 2.3 City of San Diego Municipal Code

### 2.3.1 On-Site Generated Noise

Section 59.5.0401 of the City's Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance states that:

A. It shall be unlawful for any person to cause noise by any means to the extent that the one-hour average sound level exceeds the applicable limit.

B. The sound level limit at a location on a boundary between two zoning districts is the arithmetic mean of the respective limits for the two districts.

The applicable noise limits of the City's Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance are summarized in Table 7.

**Table 7**
**Applicable Noise Level Limits**

| Land Use | Time of Day | One-Hour Average Sound Level [dB(A) $L_{eq}$] |
|---|---|---|
| Single-family Residential | 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.<br>7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.<br>10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. | 50<br>45<br>40 |
| Multi-family Residential (up to a maximum density of 1 unit/2,000 square feet) | 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.<br>7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.<br>10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. | 55<br>50<br>45 |
| All other Residential | 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.<br>7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.<br>10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. | 60<br>55<br>50 |
| Commercial | 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.<br>7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.<br>10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. | 65<br>60<br>60 |
| Industrial or Agricultural | Anytime | 75 |

SOURCE: City of San Diego Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance Section 59.5.0401.
dB(A) Leq = A-weighted decibels equivalent noise level

### 2.3.2 Construction Noise

Section 59.5.0404 of the City's Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance states that:

A. It shall be unlawful for any person, between the hours of 7:00 p.m. of any day and 7:00 a.m. of the following day, or on legal holidays as specified in Section 21.04 of the San Diego Municipal Code, with exception of Columbus Day and Washington's Birthday, or on Sundays, to erect, construct, demolish, excavate for, alter or repair any building or structure in such a manner as to create disturbing, excessive or offensive noise. . . .

B. . . . it shall be unlawful for any person, including the City of San Diego, to conduct any construction activity so as to cause, at or beyond the property lines of any property zoned residential, an average sound level greater than 75 decibels during the 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Construction would be restricted to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and construction noise levels may not exceed a 12-hour equivalent noise level [dB(A) $L_{eq(12)}$] of 75 dB(A) $L_{eq(12)}$ as assessed at or beyond the property line of a property zoned residential.

## 3.0 Methodology

For the purposes of this noise analysis, the most-impactful development scenarios would be those that generate the most traffic. Using the land use data provided in Tables 2 through 4 along with trip generation data provided by the project traffic engineer, it was determined that the most-impactful development scenario under the existing CO-3-1 zoning would be a mixed-use residential, retail, and office development, and the most-impactful development scenario under the proposed RM-3-9 zoning would be a mixed-use residential and retail (specifically Food, Beverage, and Groceries). Maximum trip generation rates for these land uses are 6 trips per multi-family dwelling unit, 50 trips per 1,000 square feet of office use, and 150 trips per 1,000 square feet of retail use. These non-residential trip generation rates are based on medical office land uses and supermarket grocery land uses. All other office and retail land uses would generate less traffic than these land uses. The most-impactful development scenarios and trip generation are summarized in Table 8.

**Table 8**
**Modeled Maximum Development Scenarios**

| Land Use | Amount | Trip Generation Rate | Total Trips |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Existing Zoning (CO-3-1)** | | | |
| Multi-Family Residential | 699 units | 6 trips per unit | 4,194 |
| Office | 1,188,535 sf | 50 trips per 1,000 sf | 59,427 |
| Retail | 209,741 sf | 150 trips per sf | 31,461 |
| Total Trips | | | 95,082 |
| **Proposed Zoning (RM-3-9)** | | | |
| Multi-Family Residential | 1,165 units | 6 trips per unit | 6,990 |
| Retail | 188,767 sf | 150 trips per sf | 28,315 |
| Total Trips | | | 35,305 |
| Difference in Trips | | | -59,777 |

## 4.0 Significance Thresholds

Based on the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, impacts related to noise would be significant if the project would:

1. result in or create a significant increase in the existing ambient noise levels;

2. result in an exposure of people to current or future transportation noise levels which exceed guidelines established in the Noise Element of the General Plan;

3. result in land uses which are not compatible with aircraft noise levels as defined by an adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP);

4. result in the exposure of people to noise levels which exceed property line limits established in the Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance of the SDMC; or

5. result in the exposure of people to significant temporary construction noise.

## 5.0 Noise Impact Analysis

### 5.1 Issue 1: Ambient Noise

The CPU PEIR calculated the change in noise levels adjacent to a series of roadway segments throughout the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan area. The CPU PEIR concluded that a significant traffic noise increase would occur adjacent to the segment of Sports Arena Boulevard between Rosecrans Street and Pacific Highway. This would be a significant impact to both existing noise sensitive land uses (Impact 5.5-1) and future noise sensitive land uses that only require a ministerial permit (Impact 5.5-2) located adjacent to this segment. For all new development, there is an existing regulatory framework in place that would ensure future projects implemented in accordance with the project would not be exposed to ambient noise levels in excess of the compatibility levels in the General Plan and SDMC. However, for impacts that would still remain beyond regulatory compliance, the CPU PEIR identifies mitigation measure NOISE 5.5-1 that would require an acoustical analysis to demonstrate that exterior noise levels would be reduced to 65 CNEL or less, however, there is no procedure to ensure that these mitigation measures would be implemented for a ministerial project; therefore, the mitigation measure is infeasible. Impacts associated with ambient traffic noise to existing and future ministerial noise sensitive land uses would remain significant and unavoidable.

As shown in Table 8, in comparison to the existing zoning, the project would result in a decrease of 59,777 trips when comparing the most-impactful development scenarios. Thus, the project would reduce the severity of the impact identified in the CPU PEIR. Note that noise compatibility on the project site is discussed in Section 5.2, Issue 2: Vehicular Noise.

### 5.2 Issue 2: Vehicular Noise

The CPU PEIR calculated roadway and railroad (Amtrak, Coaster, and freight) noise contour distances through the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan area. The CPU PEIR concluded that noise compatibility impacts associated with future discretionary projects implemented in accordance with the project would be less than significant with implementation of existing regulations and noise standards. However, in the case of ministerial projects, there is no procedure to ensure that exterior noise is adequately attenuated. Therefore, exterior noise impacts for ministerial projects located in areas that exceed the applicable land use and noise compatibility level would be significant (Impact 5.5-3). The CPU PEIR identifies mitigation measure NOISE 5.5-1 that would require an acoustical analysis to demonstrate that exterior noise levels would be reduced to 65 CNEL or less, however, there is no procedure to ensure that an acoustical analysis would be required for a ministerial project; therefore, the mitigation measure is infeasible. Impacts associated with noise compatibility of future ministerial noise sensitive land uses would remain significant and unavoidable.

The project site is exposed to vehicle traffic noise from Midway Drive and Barnett Avenue. Future (year 2035) vehicle traffic noise contours are shown in Figure 3. These contours are based on the distances summarized in Table 5.5-4 of the CPU PEIR. Distances to the roadway noise contours are based on an assumed hard, flat site, with no intervening barriers or obstructions. As shown, noise levels are projected to be 70 CNEL or less across the project site. Noise levels would be considered conditionally compatible with multi-family residential, office, and retail land uses. Noise levels would not exceed the City's CEQA significance thresholds for office and retail uses. As stated in Section B of the City's Noise Element, the City conditionally allows multi-family and mixed-use residential uses in areas experiencing

up to 75 CNEL from traffic noise provided that interior noise levels are reduced to 45 CNEL or less and the project is located in an area where a community plan allows multi-family and mixed-use residential uses. This would apply to the project. Site-specific interior noise analyses demonstrating compliance with the interior noise compatibility guidelines of the General Plan would be required for land uses located in areas where exterior noise levels exceed the noise and land use compatibility thresholds as defined in the General Plan Noise Element, Table N-3. This requirement is implemented through submission of a Title 24 Compliance Report to demonstrate interior noise levels of 45 CNEL. With this framework, traffic noise impacts associated with the project would be less than significant. This is a reduced impact compared to the conclusions of the CPU PEIR.

### 5.3 Issue 3: Airport Compatibility

The CPU PEIR determined that, based on the projected airport noise contours for the San Diego International Airport (SDIA), there are sensitive receptors in the proposed Midway – Pacific Highway Community Plan area that are located where noise levels due to aircraft operations exceed 60 CNEL. At the project level, future development must include interior noise attenuation consistent with the Noise Element of the General Plan and the ALUCP for SDIA; therefore, impacts related to airport noise would be less than significant. No mitigation is required at the program level.

SDIA noise contours in relation to the project site are shown in Figure 4 (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority 2014). As shown, the northeastern portion of the project site would be exposed to airport noise levels that range from 60 to 65 CNEL, and the southwestern portion of the project site would be exposed to airport noise levels that range from 65 to 70 CNEL. As discussed in the CPU PEIR, per the City's CEQA Significance Determination Thresholds, if a future project implemented under the CPU is within the 60 dBA CNEL and greater contour, the potential exterior noise impacts from aircraft noise would not constitute a significant environmental impact. However, interior noise impacts would be regulated by the requirement for residential development within the 60 CNEL and greater noise contour to reduce interior noise levels attributed to airport noise to 45 CNEL. The City currently submits both discretionary and ministerial projects that increase residential units and non-residential floor area and result in change in use to the ALUC for a consistency determination with the ALUCP. As discussed in Section 5.1.3 of the CPU PEIR, the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority determined that the CPU is conditionally consistent with the ALUCP, and that all future projects under the CPU would be required to submit project-level consistency determination applications until such time as the ALUC determines that the City has incorporated the noise policies and standards of the ALUCP into the SDMC. Interior noise levels for new construction are also addressed through implementation of General Plan policies NE-D.2, NE-D.3, NE-I.1, and NE-I.2, and Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, which requires submission of a Title 24 Compliance Report to demonstrate interior noise levels of 45 CNEL. With this framework, airport noise impacts to the project would be less than significant. This is consistent with the conclusions of the CPU PEIR.

### 5.4 Issue 4: Noise Ordinance Compliance

The CPU PEIR determined that mixed-use sites and areas where residential uses are located in proximity to commercial sites would expose sensitive receptors to noise. Although noise-sensitive residential land uses would be exposed to noise associated with the operation of these commercial uses, City policies and regulations would control noise and reduce noise impacts between various land uses. In addition, enforcement of state noise regulations in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations would control impacts. With implementation of these policies and enforcement of the Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance of the SDMC, impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required at the program level.

The project could result in the development of a mixed-use site with residential uses located in proximity to commercial and retail uses. Noise sources associated with commercial and retail uses could include mechanical ventilation equipment, loading docks, and parking lot activity. Typical five-ton heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units generate a sound power level of 72 dB(A) $L_{pw}$, which is equivalent to a sound pressure level of approximately 40 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at 50 feet. Larger 10-ton HVAC units generate sound power levels of 79 dB(A) $L_{pw}$ which is equivalent to a sound pressure level of approximately 47 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at 50 feet. If these unshielded HVAC units were located at the property lines closest to the nearest noise-sensitive receivers, noise levels would be 54 to 61 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at the residential uses 10 feet from the property line and 17 to 24 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at the school 740 feet from the property line. HVAC units and other mechanical equipment are typically located on rooftops or within mechanical equipment enclosures that screen the equipment from the adjacent uses. These noise levels also do not take into account any noise reduction provided by existing or proposed buildings. Trucks idling at loading docks generate a sound power level of 92.1 dB(A). During the loading/unloading of the truck, the engine can only idle for a maximum of five minutes in compliance with state regulations for air quality. Taking this into account, a truck generates an hourly average sound power level of 81.3 dB(A) $L_{pw}$, which is equivalent to a sound pressure level of approximately 50 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at 50 feet. If loading docks were to be located immediately adjacent to the property lines closest to the nearest noise-sensitive receivers, noise levels would be 64 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at the residential uses 10 feet from the property line and 26 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at the school 740 feet from the property line. As with HVAC equipment, loading docks are typically located behind buildings with screening walls. Depending on the stationary sources associated with future development, noise levels have the potential to exceed the applicable noise level limits. While noise-sensitive residential land uses would be exposed to noise associated with the operation of commercial uses, policies are in place to control noise and reduce noise impacts between various land uses. However, as concluded in the CPU PEIR, City policies and enforcement of the Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance of the SDMC would ensure that noise levels generated by commercial and retail uses would not exceed the applicable limits. Noise impacts would be less than significant. This is consistent with the conclusions of the CPU PEIR.

## 5.5 Issue 5: Temporary Construction Noise and Vibration

### 5.5.1 Construction Noise

The CPU PEIR determined that due to the highly developed nature of the Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan area with sensitive receivers potentially located in close proximity to any given construction site, there is a potential for construction of future projects to expose existing sensitive land uses to significant noise levels (Impact 5.5-4). The CPU PEIR identifies mitigation measure NOISE 5.5-3 which would reduce construction noise levels emanating from the site, limit construction hours, and minimize disruption and annoyance. With the implementation of these controls, and the limited duration of the noise-generating construction period, the substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels would be less than significant.

Construction noise generated during future development of the project site would be the same as those analyzed in the CPU PEIR. As calculated in the CPU PEIR, maximum average hourly construction noise levels would be 83.7 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at 50 feet. Construction activities would occur throughout the entire project site with the acoustic center of construction at roughly the center of the project site. Construction noise is analyzed at the acoustic center of the site because the noise limit of 75 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ is averaged over a 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. as stated in Section 59.5.0404 of the City's Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance (see Section 2.3.2). Although equipment may be located closer to the property lines for shorter durations, when averaged over a 12-hour period or an entire construction day, the acoustic center would be the center of the daily construction activity. For the purposes of this analysis, the center of the daily construction activity was assumed to be the centers of areas A, B, and C. Residential uses are located approximately 210 feet from the center of area A, 290 feet from the center of area B, and 230 feet from the center of area C. Construction noise levels would attenuate to 71.2 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at 210 feet, 70.4 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at 230

feet, and 68.4 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ at 290 feet. Construction noise levels are not anticipated to exceed the Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance limit of 75 dB(A) $L_{eq}$. This is consistent with the CPU PEIR conclusion that noise levels would be 75 dB(A) $L_{eq}$ or less at distances of 177 feet or greater. As construction noise would comply with the limit specified in the Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance, construction noise impacts associated with the project would be less than significant. Mitigation measure NOISE 5.5-3 of the CPU PEIR would not be required.

### 5.5.2 Vibration – Construction

The CPU PEIR determined that by use of administrative controls, such as scheduling construction activities with the highest potential to produce perceptible vibration to hours with least potential to affect nearby properties, perceptible vibration can be kept to a minimum and, as such, would result in a less than significant impact with respect to perception. However, due to the highly developed nature of the CPU area with existing structures occupying the majority of parcels, pile driving within distances of existing structures listed in Table 5.5-7 of the CPU PEIR has the potential to exceed damage thresholds and would be potentially significant (Impact 5.5-5). Implementation of mitigation measure NOISE 5.5-3 would reduce construction-related vibration impacts; however, at the program level it cannot be known whether the measures would be adequate to minimize vibration levels to less than significant. Construction-related vibration impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

Given site conditions and height restrictions of the project site, pile driving is not anticipated and mitigation measure NOISE 5.5-3 would not apply. As discussed in the CPU PEIR, non-pile driving or foundation work construction phases that have the highest potential of producing vibration (such as jackhammering and other power tools) would be intermittent and would only occur for short periods of time on a given project site. By use of administrative controls, such as scheduling vibration-intensive construction activities to hours with the least potential to affect nearby properties, perceptible vibration can be kept to a minimum and, as such, would result in a less than significant impact with respect to mere perception. Adjacent structures are located at distances of 25 feet or more from the project boundary. Non-pile driving construction equipment such as large bulldozers generate vibration levels of 0.089 in/sec peak particle velocity at 25 feet. This vibration level would not result in structural damage. Impacts associated with construction vibration would be less than significant.

### 5.5.3 Vibration – Operation

The CPU PEIR determined post-construction operational vibration impacts could occur as a result of commercial operations that are implemented in accordance with the CPU. The commercial uses that would be constructed under the CPU would include uses such as retail, restaurants, and small offices that would not require heavy mechanical equipment that would generate groundborne vibration or heavy truck deliveries. Residential and civic uses do not typically generate vibration. Thus, operational vibration impacts associated with the project would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Consistent with the CPU PEIR, land uses that could be constructed on the project site include residential, commercial, and retail uses that would not be significant sources of groundborne vibration. Impacts associated with operational vibration would be less than significant.

## 6.0 CPU PEIR Mitigation Framework

The CPU PEIR identified the following mitigation measures related to noise:

> NOISE 5.5-1 Prior to approval of a development permit for any ministerial development within 900 feet of the I-5 edge-of-pavement, 700 feet of the I-8 edge-of-pavement, or adjacent to any roadway featuring ADT volumes greater than 6,000, an acoustical analysis shall be performed to determine if any required outdoor open space areas would be exposed to noise levels in excess of 65 dBA CNEL.

As stated in Section 5.5.7 of the CPU PEIR, "while implementation of mitigation measure NOISE 5.5-1 has the potential to reduce impacts associated with ministerial projects, there is no procedure to ensure that an acoustical analysis would be required for a ministerial project; therefore, the mitigation measure is infeasible. Even if there were a procedure to require an acoustical analysis for a ministerial development, which would require the incorporation of controls to reduce traffic noise impacts on required open space areas, without knowing the exact spatial relationship between the open space areas and the contributing traffic noise source(s) for each future development, it is impossible to know whether every future development would be able to maintain noise levels below 65 dBA CNEL within their respective open spaces. Furthermore, if it is determined that the only feasible approach to reducing traffic noise to acceptable levels within the space would require the construction of an enclosure, such an attenuation measure may be contrary to the basic goal of creating "outdoor" open space."

NOISE 5.5-2: At the project level, future discretionary projects will be required to incorporate feasible mitigation measures. Typically, noise can be controlled to comply with City standards when standard construction noise control measures are enforced at the project site and when the duration of the noise-generating construction period is limited to one construction season (typically 1 year) or less.

- Construction activities shall be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Construction is not allowed on legal holidays as specified in Section 21.04 of the SDMC, with exception of Columbus Day and Washington's Birthday, or on Sundays (consistent with Section 59.5.0404 of the SDMC).

- Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with appropriately-sized intake and/or exhaust mufflers that are properly operating and maintained consistent with manufacturer's standards.

- Stationary noise-generating equipment (e.g., compressors or generators) shall be located as far as possible from adjacent residential receivers and oriented so that emitted noise is directed away from sensitive receptors, whenever feasible.

- If levels are expected to potentially exceed SDMC thresholds, temporary noise barriers with a minimum height of 8 feet shall be located around pertinent active construction equipment or entire work areas to shield nearby sensitive receivers.

- Utilize "quiet" air compressors, generators, and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.

- The contractor shall prepare a detailed construction plan identifying the schedule for major noise-generating construction activities. The construction plan shall identify a procedure for coordination with adjacent residential land uses so that construction activities can be scheduled to minimize noise disturbance.

- Designate a "disturbance coordinator" who would be responsible for receiving and responding to any complaints about construction noise or vibration. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint and, if identified as a sound generated by construction area activities, will require that reasonable measures be implemented to correct the problem.

NOISE 5.5-3: For discretionary projects where construction would include vibration-generating activities, such as pile driving, within the distances of specific structures listed in Table 5.5-7 [of the CPU PEIR], site-specific vibration studies shall be conducted to ensure the development project would not adversely affect adjacent properties to the satisfaction of the Chief Building Official. Such efforts shall be conducted by a qualified structural engineer and could include:

- Identify sites that would include vibration compaction activities such as pile driving and have the potential to generate groundborne vibration and the sensitivity of nearby structures to groundborne vibration.

- Develop a vibration monitoring and construction contingency plan to identify structures where monitoring would be conducted; set up a vibration monitoring schedule; define structure-specific vibration limits; and address the need to conduct photo, elevation, and crack surveys to document before and after construction conditions. Construction contingencies would be identified for when vibration levels approach the limits.

- Monitor vibration during initial demolition activities and during pile-driving activities. Monitoring results may indicate the need for more or less intensive measurements.

- Designate a "disturbance coordinator" who would be responsible for receiving and responding to any complaints about construction vibration. The disturbance coordinator will determine the cause of the noise complaint and will require that reasonable measures be implemented to correct the problem.

- When vibration levels approach limits, suspend construction and implement contingencies to either lower vibration levels or secure the affected structures.

- Conduct post-activity survey on structures where either monitoring has indicated high levels or complaints of damage have been made. Make appropriate repairs or compensation where damage has occurred as a result of construction activities.

These mitigation measures would be applicable to future development associated with the project.

## 7.0 Conclusions

Based on the foregoing analysis and information, there is no evidence that the project would require a major change to the CPU PEIR. The project would not result in any new significant impacts, nor would a substantial increase in the severity of impacts from that described in the CPU PEIR. Future development would be required to implement mitigation measures NOISE 5.5-1, 5.5-2, and 5.5-3.

If you have any questions about the results of this analysis, please contact me at jfleming@reconenvironmental.com or (619) 308-9333, ext. 177.

Sincerely,



Jessica Fleming
Senior Noise Specialist

JLF:sjg

## 8.0 Certification

The following is a list of preparers, persons, and organizations involved with the noise assessment.

RECON Environmental, Inc.
- Jessica Fleming, Senior Noise Specialist
- Lori Spar, CEQA Director
- Leah Boyer, Project Manager
- Steven Gaughran, Production Specialist
- Benjamin Arp, GIS Specialist

## 9.0 References Cited

San Diego, City of

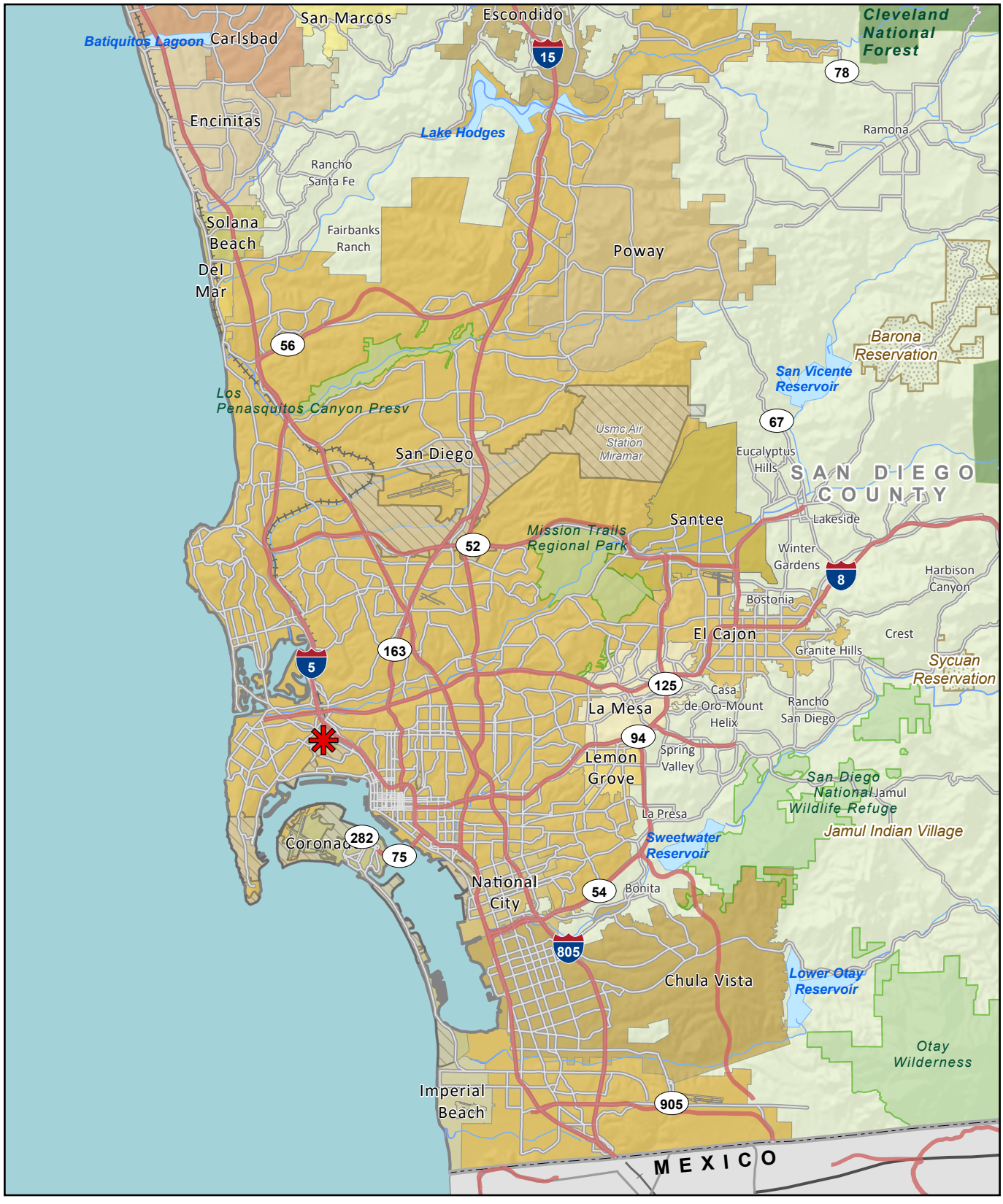
2018 Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan Update Revised Final Program Environmental Impact Report. SCH #2015111013. Prepared by AECOM. May 2018.

2022 California Environmental Quality Act Significance Determination Thresholds. September.

2024 City of San Diego General Plan. July 2024.

San Diego County Regional Airport Authority

2014 San Diego International Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Prepared by Ricondo & Associates, Inc. Adopted April 3, 2014.




Project Location

RECON

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FIGURE 1
Regional Location

Image Source: Nearmap (flown January 2026)




0 Feet 500

Project Boundary

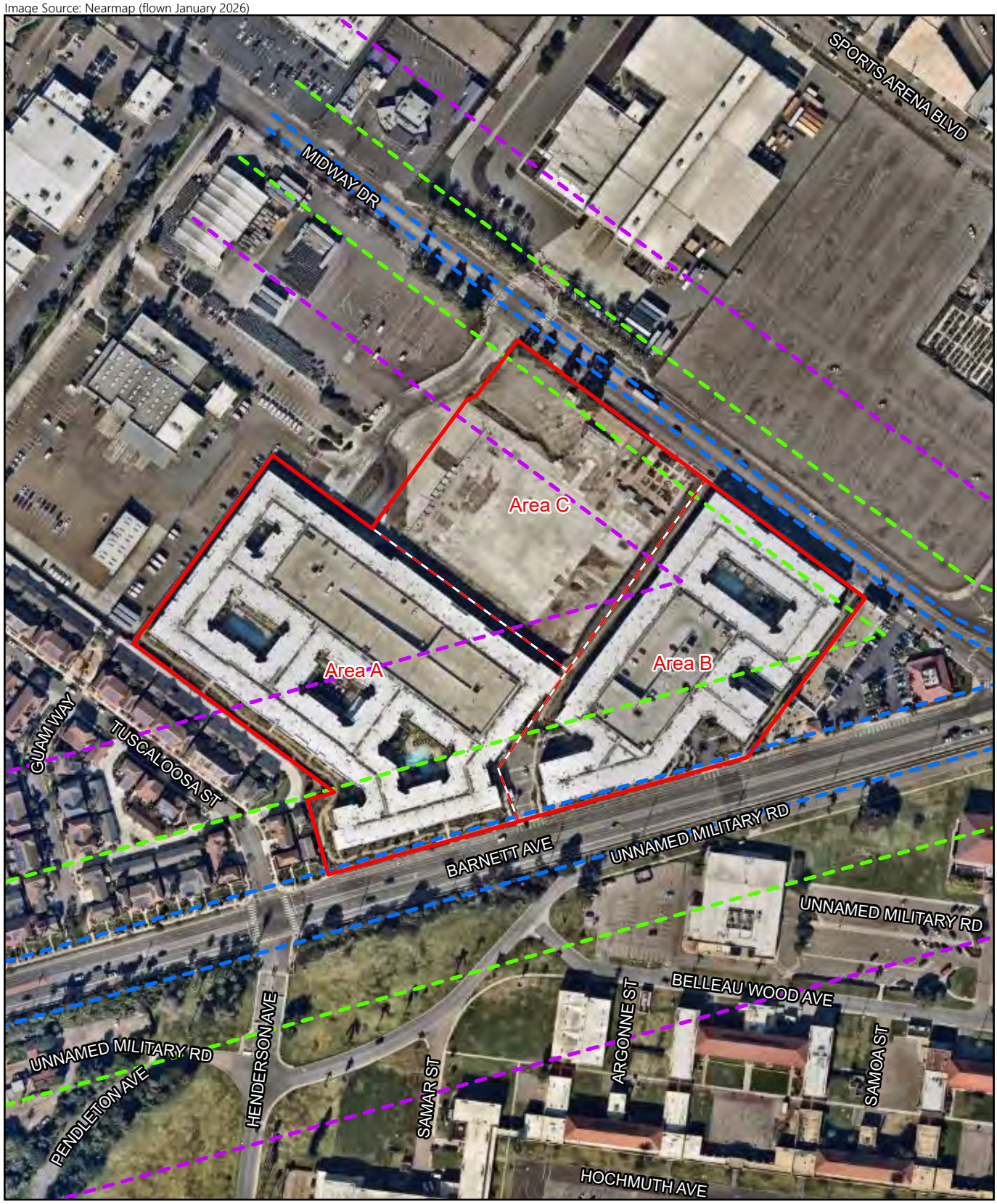
Project Phases

RECON

FIGURE 2
Project Location on Aerial Photograph

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Image Source: Nearmap (flown January 2026)




Project Boundary

**Future Traffic Noise**

60 dB(A) CNEL

65 dB(A) CNEL

70 dB(A) CNEL

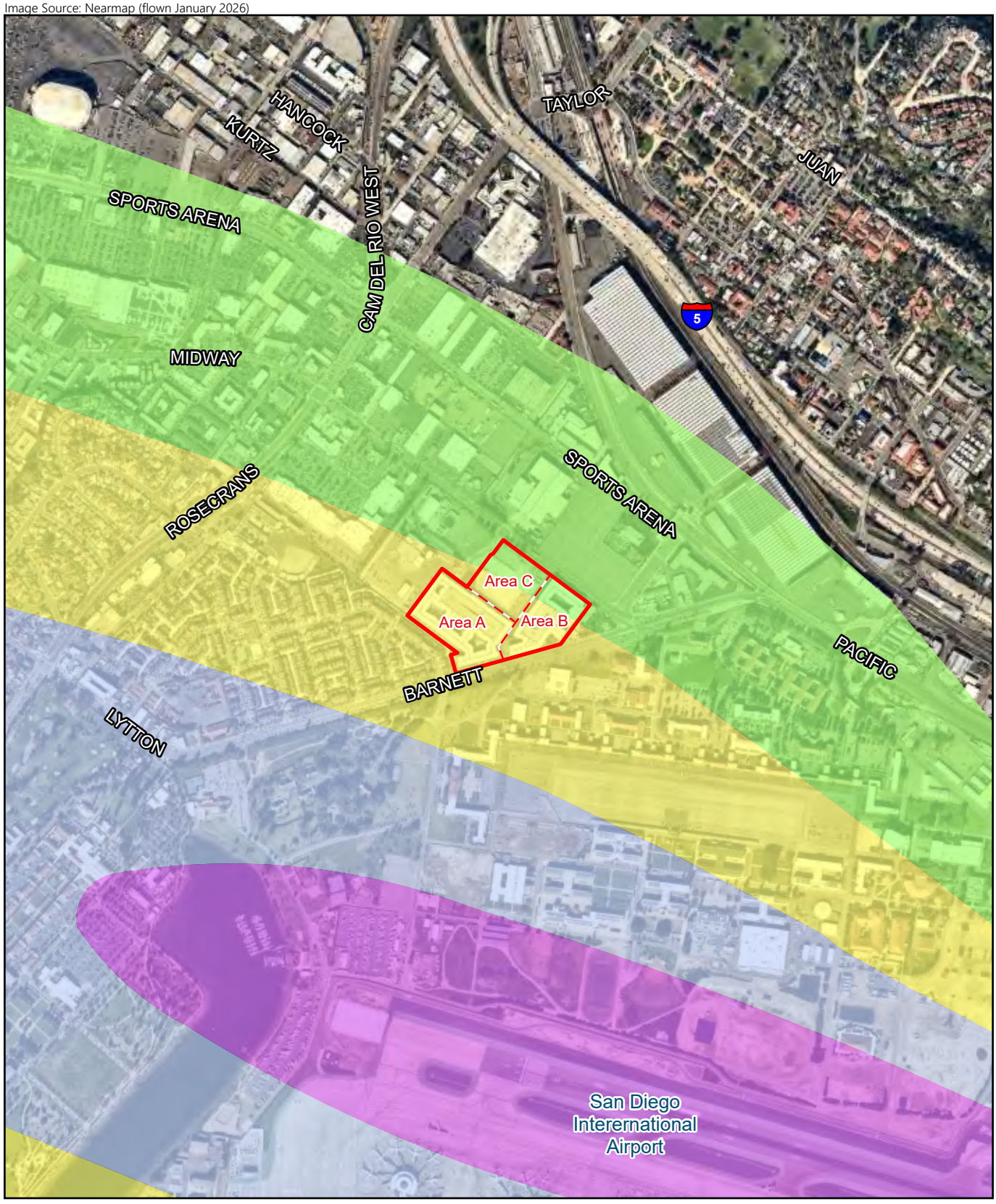
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FIGURE 3
Future (Year 2035)
Vehicle Traffic Noise Contours

RECON

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Image Source: Nearmap (flown January 2026)




Project Boundary

**Airport Noise**

- 60-65 dB CNEL
- 65-70 dB CNEL
- 70-75 dB CNEL
- >75 dB CNEL

0 Feet 1,000

FIGURE 4
San Diego International
Airport Noise Contours

RECON

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