# Appendix H

Noise Technical Report

# Noise Technical Report **SDSU Evolve Student Housing Project**

**DECEMBER 2024**

*Prepared for:*

**SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY**

5500 Campanile Drive San Diego, California 92182 *Contact: Kara Peterson*

*Prepared by:*



605 Third Street Encinitas, California 92024 *Contact: Nick Segovia*

Printed on 30% post-consumer recycled material.

## Table of Contents

#### **SECTION**

#### **PAGE NO.**



#### **TABLES**



Ŧ



#### **EXHIBITS**



#### **FIGURES**



#### **APPENDICES**



- B [Construction Noise Modeling Input and Output](#page-64-0)
- C [Operation Noise Prediction Model Inputs](#page-76-0)

## <span id="page-6-0"></span>Acronyms and Abbreviations



SDSU EVOLVE STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT / NOISE TECHNICAL REPORT

## <span id="page-8-0"></span>1 Introduction

## <span id="page-8-1"></span>1.1 Report Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this technical report is to assess the potential noise impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed San Diego State University (SDSU) Evolve Student Housing Project (Project or Proposed Project) located in the City of San Diego (City). This analysis was conducted pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and utilizes the significance criterion/thresholds in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Noise, and other applicable thresholds of significance (e.g., the California Department of Transportation [Caltrans]).

## <span id="page-8-2"></span>1.2 Regional and Local Setting

The SDSU campus is located along the Interstate 8 corridor, approximately 8 miles from downtown San Diego (see Figure 1, Regional Map, and Figure 2, Vicinity Map). The campus is located within the College Area Community of the City. The College Area Community is characterized by SDSU as a major hub of activity, with single-family and multifamily residential uses and neighborhood commercial developments that serve the surrounding community, including SDSU.

The Proposed Project consists of two components, the Peninsula Component and the University Towers East Component. The proposed Peninsula Component would be located within the approximately 10.3-acre site at the northern terminus of 55th Steet, at the northwest portion of campus just south of Interstate 8 and west of Canyon Crest Drive. The proposed University Towers East Component would be located on an approximately 1.1-acre site on Montezuma Road that is currently utilized as a parking lot (see Figure 2).

The SDSU campus can be accessed from the north by College Avenue, which also provides local access to Interstate 8. The campus can be accessed from the east or west by Montezuma Road, an east–west roadway near the southern boundary of the campus, and accessed from the south via College Avenue.

## <span id="page-8-3"></span>1.3 Project Description

The proposed Peninsula Component would be located on an approximately 10.3-acre site adjacent to the northwest portion of campus, just south of Interstate 8 and west of Canyon Crest Drive. Development of the Peninsula Component would include demolition of all 13 existing buildings, which presently provide housing for 702 students, and the subsequent phased development of one 9-story student housing building and five student housing buildings up to 13 stories in height that would contain a total of approximately 4,450 student beds. The Peninsula Component would also include the development of a 2-story amenities building for food service and program space. The proposed University Towers East Component would be developed on an approximately 1.1-acre site located immediately east of the existing University Towers Building, south of Montezuma Road. The existing parking lot would be demolished to allow for redevelopment of the site to include a new 9-story student housing building that would accommodate approximately 720 students.

Development of the Proposed Project would result in approximately 5,170 new student beds, a net increase of approximately 4,468 student beds to the main campus inventory.



## <span id="page-9-0"></span>1.4 Fundamentals of Noise and Vibration

The following is a brief discussion of fundamental noise concepts and terminology.

### <span id="page-9-1"></span>1.4.1 Sound, Noise, and Acoustics

Sound is actually a process that consists of three components: the sound source, sound path, and sound receiver. All three components must be present for sound to exist. Without a source to produce sound, there is no sound. Similarly, without a medium to transmit sound pressure waves, there is no sound. Finally, sound must be received; a hearing organ, sensor, or object must be present to perceive, register, or be affected by sound or noise. In most situations, there are many different sound sources, paths, and receptors rather than just one of each. Acoustics is the field of science that deals with the production, propagation, reception, effects, and control of sound. Noise is defined as sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or undesired.

### <span id="page-9-2"></span>1.4.2 Sound Pressure Levels and Decibels

The amplitude of a sound determines its loudness. Loudness of sound increases with increasing amplitude. Sound pressure amplitude is measured in units of micronewton per square meter, also called micropascals. One micropascal is approximately one-hundred billionth (0.00000000001) of normal atmospheric pressure. The pressure of a very loud sound may be 200 million micropascals, or 10 million times the pressure of the weakest audible sound. Because expressing sound levels in terms of micropascals would be very cumbersome, sound pressure level (SPL) in logarithmic units is used instead to describe the ratio of actual sound pressure to a reference pressure squared. These units are called Bels. To provide a finer resolution, a Bel is subdivided into 10 decibels (dB).

### <span id="page-9-3"></span>1.4.3 A-Weighted Sound Level

Sound pressure level alone is not a reliable indicator of loudness. The frequency, or pitch, of a sound also has a substantial effect on how humans will respond. Although the intensity (energy per unit area) of the sound is a purely physical quantity, the loudness, or human response, is determined by the characteristics of the human ear.

Human hearing is limited not only in the range of audible frequencies, but also in the way it perceives the sound in that range. In general, the healthy human ear is most sensitive to sounds between 1,000 and 5,000 hertz, and it perceives a sound within that range as more intense than a sound of higher or lower frequency with the same magnitude. To approximate the frequency response of the human ear, a series of sound level adjustments is usually applied to the sound measured by a sound level meter. The adjustments (referred to as a weighting network) are frequency-dependent.

The A-scale weighting network approximates the frequency response of the average young ear when listening to ordinary sounds. When people make judgments about the relative loudness or annoyance of a sound, their judgments correlate well with the A-scale sound levels of those sounds. Other weighting networks have been devised to address high noise levels or other special situations (e.g., B-scale, C-scale, D-scale), but these scales are rarely used in conjunction with most environmental noise evaluations. Noise levels are typically reported in terms of A-weighted sound levels. All sound levels discussed in this report are A-weighted decibels (dBA). Examples of typical noise levels for common indoor and outdoor activities are depicted in Table 1.



#### <span id="page-10-2"></span>**Table 1. Typical Sound Levels in the Environment and Industry**

Source: Caltrans 2013. Note:  $dB =$  decibels.

### <span id="page-10-0"></span>1.4.4 Human Response to Changes in Noise Levels

Under controlled conditions in an acoustics laboratory, the trained, healthy human ear is able to discern changes in sound levels of 1 dBA when exposed to steady, single-frequency signals in the mid-frequency range. But for outdoor conditions, a change of 3 dB is considered "barely perceptible" (Caltrans 2013). Since a doubling of sound energy results in a 3 dB increase in sound, this means that a doubling of sound energy (e.g., doubling the volume of traffic on a road) would result in a barely perceptible change in sound level. A change of 5 dBA is readily perceptible, and a change of 10 dBA is perceived as twice (if a gain) or half (if a loss) as loud (Caltrans 2013).

### <span id="page-10-1"></span>1.4.5 Noise Descriptors

Units of measure have been developed to evaluate the long-term characteristics of sound. The energy-equivalent sound level  $(L_{eq})$  is also referred to as the time-average sound level. It is the equivalent steady-state or constant sound level that in a stated period of time would contain the same acoustical energy as the time-varying sound level during the same time period. For instance, the 1-hour A-weighted Leq is the energy average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 1-hour period.

People are generally more sensitive to and thus potentially more annoyed by noise occurring during the evening and nighttime hours. Hence, another noise descriptor used in community noise assessments—the community noise equivalent level (CNEL)—represents a time-weighted, 24-hour average noise level based on the A-weighted sound level. However, unlike an unmodified 24-hour L<sub>eq</sub> value, the CNEL descriptor accounts for increased noise sensitivity during the evening (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) by adding 5 dBA and 10 dBA, respectively, to the average sound levels occurring during these defined hours within a 24-hour period.

### <span id="page-11-0"></span>1.4.6 Sound Propagation

Sound propagation (i.e., the traversal of sound from a noise emission source position to a receiver location) is influenced by multiple factors that include geometric spreading, ground absorption, atmospheric effects, and occlusion by natural terrain and/or features of the built environment.

Sound levels attenuate (or diminish) geometrically at a rate of approximately 6 dBA per doubling of distance from an outdoor point-type source due to the spherical spreading of sound energy with increasing distance traveled. The effects of atmospheric conditions such as humidity, temperature, and wind gradients are typically distancedependent and can also temporarily either increase or decrease sound levels measured or perceived at a receptor location. In general, the greater the distance the receiver is from the source of sound emission, the greater the potential for variation in sound levels at the receptor due to these atmospheric effects. Additional attenuation can result from sound path occlusion and diffraction due to intervention of natural (ridgelines, dense forests, etc.) and built features (such as solid walls, buildings and other structures).

### <span id="page-11-1"></span>1.4.7 Ground-Borne Vibration Fundamentals

Ground-borne vibration is fluctuating or oscillatory motion transmitted through the ground mass (i.e., soils, clays, and rock strata). The strength of ground-borne vibration attenuates rapidly over distance. Some soil types transmit vibration quite efficiently; other types (primarily sandy soils) do not. Several basic measurement units are commonly used to describe the intensity of ground vibration. The descriptors used by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) include peak particle velocity (PPV) that is in units of inches per second (ips). The calculation to determine PPV at a given distance is as follows:

 $PPV<sub>distance</sub> = PPV<sub>ref</sub> × (25/D)<sup>1.5</sup>$ 

Where:

PPV<sub>distance</sub> = the peak particle velocity in inches per second of the equipment adjusted for distance

 $PPV_{ref}$  = the reference vibration velocity in inches per second at 25 feet

 $D =$  the distance from the equipment to the receiver (in feet)

## <span id="page-12-0"></span>2 Regulatory Setting

The following subsections summarize relevant laws, ordinances, regulations, policies, standards, and guidance that establish noise and vibration impact significance assessment criteria for the Proposed Project.

## <span id="page-12-1"></span>2.1 Federal

#### Federal Transit Administration

In its Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment guidance manual, the FTA recommends a daytime construction noise level threshold of 80 dBA L<sub>eq</sub> over an 8-hour period (FTA 2018), when detailed construction noise assessments are performed to evaluate potential impacts to community residences surrounding a project. Although this FTA guidance is not a regulation, it can serve as a quantified standard in the absence of such noise limits at the state and local jurisdictional levels.

With respect to vibration, Table 2 presents FTA guidance thresholds for assessing building damage risk and human annoyance. Similar to the guidance for construction noise, the values in Table 2 represent recommended assessment guidance when local regulations lack such standards.



#### <span id="page-12-2"></span>**Table 2. Federal Transit Administration Vibration Threshold Guidance**

Source: FTA 2018.

Notes: PPV = peak particle velocity; ips = inches per second; VdB = vibration decibels.

Root mean square VdB is calculated from the PPV using a crest factor of 4 and is with respect to 1 micro-inch per second.

## <span id="page-13-0"></span>2.2 State

## <span id="page-13-1"></span>2.2.1 California Department of Transportation – Vibration

In its Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual (Caltrans 2020), Caltrans recommends 0.5 ips PPV as a threshold for the avoidance of structural damage to typical newer residential buildings exposed to continuous or frequent intermittent sources of ground-borne vibration. For transient vibration events, such as blasting, the damage risk threshold would be 1.0 ips PPV (Caltrans 2020) at the same type of newer residential structures. For older structures, these guidance thresholds would be more stringent: 0.3 ips PPV for continuous/intermittent vibration sources, and 0.5 ips PPV for transient vibration events. With respect to human annoyance, Caltrans guidance indicates that building occupants exposed to continuous ground-borne vibration in the range of 0.1 ips PPV ("strongly perceptible") to 0.4 ips PPV ("severe") would find it "annoying" at 0.2 ips PPV and "unpleasant" at the 0.4 ips PPV value. Although these Caltrans guidance thresholds are not regulations, they can serve as quantified standards in the absence of such limits at the local jurisdictional level.

## <span id="page-13-2"></span>2.3 Local/Regional

The noise limits outlined in Table 3 reflect generally applicable standards for sound levels in the region. While the Project is not required to adhere to local or regional standards, the guidelines presented in Table 3 are used in the analysis because they provide the most relevant guidelines for evaluating noise impacts. The limits specify that the 1-hour average sound level should not exceed the values indicated in the table at any location on or beyond the boundaries of the property where the noise is generated.



#### <span id="page-13-3"></span>**Table 3. Noise Guidelines**

Note: dBA = A-weighted decibels.

As to construction noise, absent a special permit, it is generally held throughout the state that construction activities that generate noise be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and excluding legal holidays. During the permissible hours, noise levels at or beyond the property lines of any property zoned residential should not exceed an average sound level greater than 75 dBA during the 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

## <span id="page-14-0"></span>3 Existing Conditions

Field measurements of SPL were conducted near the Proposed Project site on August 27, 2024, to quantify and characterize the existing outdoor ambient sound levels. Table 4 provides the location, date, and time period at which these baseline sound level measurements were performed by an attending Dudek field investigator using a Rion-branded Model NL-62 sound level meter equipped with a 0.5-inch, pre-polarized condenser microphone with pre-amplifier. The sound level meter meets the current American National Standards Institute standard for a Type 1 (PrecisionGrade) sound level meter. The accuracy of the sound level meter was verified using a field calibrator before and after the measurements, and the measurements were conducted with the microphone positioned approximately 5 feet above theground.

Four short-term (ST) sound level measurement locations (ST1–ST4) that represent existing noise-sensitive receivers were selected on and near the Proposed Project site. These locations, depicted as receivers ST1–ST4 on Figure 3, Noise Measurement and Modeling Locations, were selected to characterize the baseline outdoor ambient sound levels for City residential noise-sensitive receptors and the traffic noise exposure from Project adjacent roadways (see Figure 3). The measured L<sub>eq</sub> and maximum sound levels are provided in Table 4. The primary sound sources at the sites identified in Table 4 consisted of traffic along adjacent roadways and conversations/yelling. As shown in Table 4, the measured SPL ranged from approximately 57.8 dBA L<sub>eq</sub> at ST4 to 69.8 dBA L<sub>eq</sub> at ST3. Beyond the summarized information presented in Table 4, detailed sound measurement data is included in Appendix A, Baseline Noise Measurement Field Data.



#### <span id="page-14-1"></span>**Table 4. Measured Baseline Outdoor Ambient Noise Levels**

Source: Appendix A.

Notes: L<sub>eq</sub> = equivalent continuous sound level (time-averaged sound level); dBA = A-weighted decibels; L<sub>max</sub> = maximum sound level during the measurement interval; ST = short-term sound measurement locations.

Generally, the measured samples of daytime Leq agree with expectations: at ST2 and ST3, Leq values are above 65 dBA due largely to being close to a heavily trafficked roadway (Montezuma Road), whereas ST1 and ST4 were near smaller, local roadways (Remington Road and Campanile Drive) and further from Montezuma Road.

Two long-term (LT) sound level measurement locations (LT1 and LT2) that represent existing noise-sensitive receivers were also selected near the Proposed Project site. Measurement location LT1 was selected to characterize the daytime, evening, and nighttime baseline outdoor ambient sound levels at the nearest residential noise-sensitive receptors to the west of the Peninsula Component. Measurement location LT2 was selected to characterize the daytime, evening, and nighttime baseline outdoor ambient sound levels at the nearest residential noise-sensitive receptors to the east and south of the University Towers East Component. The long-term sound measurements at locations LT1 and LT2 spanned a full 24-hour cycle, totaling 1440 consecutive minutes in duration. Both L<sub>eq</sub> and 90% statistical sound level (L<sub>90</sub>) metrics were measured. While L<sub>eq</sub> provides insight into the overall sound exposure level detected by a sound level meter, as introduced in Appendix A, the L<sub>90</sub> value (the level exceeded 90% of the measurement time) is a good indicator of the background sound environment, offering a perspective clear of short-lived disturbances. Exhibit A shows the L<sub>eq</sub> vs. L<sub>90</sub> plot derived from the LT1 measurement data and Exhibit B shows the Leq vs. Leo plot derived from the LT2 measurement data.



<span id="page-15-0"></span>

Notes: Measurement location LT1 represents the nearest residential noise-sensitive receptors to the west of the Peninsula Component.



<span id="page-16-0"></span>Exhibit B. LT2 L<sub>eq</sub> vs. L<sub>90</sub> Measurement Results (Hourly dBA)

Notes: Measurement location LT2 represents the nearest residential noise-sensitive receptors to the east and south of the University Towers East Component.

Throughout the day, the general ambient outdoor sound environment at LT1, located at the neighborhood west of the Peninsula Component, shows higher L<sub>90</sub> sound levels that trend with anticipated traditional "rush hour" roadway traffic in the early morning and late afternoon period and lower L<sub>90</sub> levels during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.). This becomes evident when observing the A-weighted L<sub>eq</sub> values that are often elevated by brief, but relatively high contributions. Such noise patterns are consistent with transient roadway vehicle noise. LT2, located at the southeast corner of the University Towers East Component Project boundary, was in proximity of a major roadway with a consistent heavy traffic flow (Montezuma Road), which would explain L<sub>90</sub> levels remaining generally consistent during daytime hours. Med 00:00:1 easing the state of the state of the position of  $\overline{\mathbf{E}}$ Net be continued as a day continued by a day of the contribution of the contribution of the contribution of d

SDSU EVOLVE STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT / NOISE TECHNICAL REPORT

## <span id="page-18-0"></span>4 Thresholds of Significance

The following significance criteria are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) and are used to determine the significance of potential noise impacts. Impacts to noise would be significant if the Proposed Project would result in the following:

- Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the A. project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.
- Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels. B.
- Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels (for a project located within C. the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport).

In light of the above significance criteria, this analysis uses the following standards to evaluate potential noise and vibration impacts:

- **Construction noise Temporary construction noise that exceeds 75 dBA L<sub>eq</sub> during the 12-hour period** between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. at a sensitive receptor would be considered a significant impact. In particular, 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 L<sub>eq</sub> during the 12-hour period from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Additionally, where temporary construction noise would substantially interfere with normal business communication or affect sensitive receptors, such as educational facilities, a significant noise impact may be identified.
- Construction vibration Guidance from Caltrans indicates that a vibration velocity of 0.2 ips PPV received at a structure would be considered annoying by occupants within it (Caltrans 2020). As for the receiving structure itself, aforementioned Caltrans guidance from Section 2 recommends that a vibration level of 0.3 ips PPV would represent the threshold for building damage risk of older residential structures exposed to continuous or frequently intermittent sources of ground-borne vibration.
- Project-attributed stationary source noise emission to the community Project-attributed stationary source noise must adhere to the maximum exterior L<sub>eq</sub> for single-family residential land uses of 50 dBA hourly L<sub>eq</sub> during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.), 45 dBA hourly L<sub>eq</sub> during evening hours (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.), and 40 dBA hourly L<sub>eq</sub> during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.).
- Off-site Project-attributed transportation noise For purposes of this analysis, a direct roadway noise impact would be considered significant if increases in roadway traffic noise levels attributed to the Proposed Project were greater than 3 dBA CNEL at an existing noise-sensitive land use.
- **Exterior to interior traffic noise intrusion** For purposes of this analysis, traffic noise intrusion to the Proposed Project would be considered significant if interior noise levels exceed 45 dBA.
- Exposure of project workers or visitors to excessive aviation noise Typically, Project areas where outdoor workers or visitors may be present that intersect the 65 dBA CNEL aviation noise contour of a public or private airport would be considered a potentially significant noise impact.

SDSU EVOLVE STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT / NOISE TECHNICAL REPORT

## <span id="page-20-0"></span>5 Impacts Analysis

The following noise and vibration impact assessment for the Proposed Project is arranged in the same order of the three Appendix G significance criteria (a, b, c) for noise as listed in Chapter 4, Thresholds of Significance.

#### *a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

## <span id="page-20-1"></span>5.1 Short-Term Construction Noise

Construction noise and vibration are temporary phenomena, with emission levels varying from hour to hour and day to day, depending on the equipment in use, the operations performed, and the distance between the source and receptor. Equipment that would be in use during construction would include, in part, graders, backhoes, rubber-tired dozers, loaders, cranes, forklifts, pavers, rollers, and air compressors. The typical maximum noise levels at a distance of 50 feet from various pieces of construction equipment and activities anticipated for use on the Proposed Project site are presented in Table 5. The equipment noise levels presented in Table 5 are maximum noise levels. Usually, construction equipment operates in alternating cycles of full power and low power, producing average noise levels over time that are less than the maximum noise level. The average sound level of construction activity also depends on the amount of time that the equipment operates and the intensity of construction activities during that time.



#### <span id="page-20-2"></span>**Table 5. Typical Construction Equipment Maximum Noise Levels**

Source: DOT 2006.

Note:  $HP =$  horsepower;  $L_{max} =$  maximum sound level;  $dBA =$ A-weighted decibels.

Aggregate noise emission from Proposed Project construction activities, broken down by sequential phase, was calculated from the nearest position of the construction site boundary for each component to the nearest existing noise-sensitive receptor. Table 6 summarizes the distances from the boundary of each phase of building construction (Phase 1–6) to the closest noise-sensitive receptor (east of the University Towers East Component for Phase 1b; west of the Peninsula Component for Phases 1a and 2–6) during each of the six sequential construction phases. At the site boundaries, the analysis assumes that each piece of equipment of each listed type per phase would be involved in the construction activity for a 6- to 8-hour period at the nearest distance.

<span id="page-21-0"></span>



Note:  $N/A$  = not applicable.

A Microsoft Excel–based noise prediction model emulating and using reference data from the Federal Highway Administration Roadway Construction Noise Model (FHWA 2008) was used to estimate construction noise levels at the nearest occupied noise-sensitive land use. Input variables for the predictive modeling consist of the equipment type and number of each (e.g., two dozers, three excavators, a backhoe), the duty cycle for each piece of equipment (i.e., percentage of time within a specific time period, such as an hour, when the equipment is expected to operate at full power or capacity and thus make noise at a level comparable to what is presented in Table 5), and the distance from the noise-sensitive receiver. The predictive model also considers how many hours that equipment may be on site and operating (or idling) within an established work shift. Conservatively, no topographical shielding was assumed in the modeling. The Roadway Construction Noise Model has default duty-cycle values for the various pieces of equipment, which were derived from an extensive study of typical construction activity patterns. Those default dutycycle values were used for this noise analysis, which is detailed in Appendix B, Construction Noise Modeling Input and Output, and would result in the predicted noise levels displayed in Table 7.





#### <span id="page-22-0"></span>**Table 7. Predicted Construction Noise Levels per Activity Phase**

Notes:  $L_{eq}$  = equivalent noise level; dBA = A-weighted decibels;  $N/A$  = not applicable.

As presented in Table 7, during Phases 1a and 2–6, representing the construction of the Peninsula Component where distances from the Project site boundary to the nearest existing residences to the west range from 500 feet to 1,000 feet, construction noise levels would be up to 15 dBA higher than the measured ambient noise levels (see Exhibit A) at the nearest existing residences to the west and are estimated to range from approximately 40 dBA L<sub>eq</sub> to 61 dBA L<sub>eq</sub>, which is less than the 75 dBA L<sub>eq</sub> 12-hour threshold.

During Phase 1b, representing the construction of the University Towers East Component, the estimated construction noise levels are predicted to be as high as 83 dBA L<sub>eq</sub> over a 12-hour period and would be up to 30 dBA higher than the measured ambient noise levels (see Exhibit B) at the nearest existing residences (as close as 45 feet away) when grading activities take place near the eastern Project boundary of the University Towers East Component. While construction of Phase 1b is estimated to take approximately 68 weeks, this analysis assumes that, for those phases that would result in an exceedance of the acceptable noise levels, construction equipment would be operating at the closest distance to the nearest noisesensitive receptor for 8 hours per day throughout the construction of Phase 1b. However, this is a worstcase scenario, and it is likely that construction activities would occur for less than 8 hours per day (or sporadically) for no more than 6 days at a time, and more likely that construction equipment would be operating further from the closest distance to the nearest noise-sensitive receptor (i.e., further than 45 feet).

To mitigate the identified potentially significant impact, when operation of construction equipment is estimated to potentially cause activity noise levels to exceed 75 dBA Leq during Phase 1b of Project



construction, Mitigation Measure (MM) NOI-1 is recommended, which would require the CSU/SDSU, or its designee, to implement certain noise reduction measures as site conditions warrant. Proper implementation of MM-NOI-1 would reduce noise levels by up to 8 dB if a 9-foot-tall temporary construction noise barrier is implemented during Phase 1b construction, which would correspondingly reduce the highest predicted estimated non-mitigated construction noise level from 83 to 75 dBA L<sub>eg</sub> during the grading phase, which would be within the applicable 75 dBA threshold. Appendix B includes a construction noise prediction worksheet that illustrates a sample scenario of what the anticipated and quantifiable noise reduction effect would be of adding a temporary 9-foot-tall noise barrier to reduce construction noise exposure at the nearest sensitive receptor.

In summary, Phase 1b construction activities during allowable daytime hours (between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.) have the potential for noise to exceed the 75 dBA  $L_{eq}$  12-hour threshold on occasion at the nearest residential receiver to the University Towers East Component. Therefore, incorporation of MM-NOI-1 is recommended to reduce construction noise exposure levels to acceptable levels. Thus, under such conditions, temporary construction-related noise impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

## <span id="page-23-0"></span>5.2 Long-Term Off-Site Traffic Noise Exposure

The Traffic Impact Assessment prepared for the proposed Project by Linscott, Law, & Greenspan, Engineers determined that the Proposed Project would result in a net reduction of Project-attributed average daily traffic volumes on both regional and local arterial roadways (i.e., Interstate 8, Remington Road, 55th Street, Montezuma Road, and Campanile Drive) of approximately 2,948 average daily trips (LLG 2024). While the Proposed Project would result in a net increase of 4,468 student housing beds and, correspondingly, 4,468 students living on campus, parking at the Peninsula Component site would be extremely limited and, therefore, those students that do bring cars to campus would need to park in parking structures and lots to the east of the Peninsula Component site on the main campus. These lots and structures generally cannot be readily accessed via the local roads and, instead, would be accessed largely via 55th Street, Montezuma Road, and College Avenue. While non-freshmen students living on campus would have the opportunity to bring their vehicle to campus, the Project is expected to result in an overall decrease in parking demand due to the large decrease in commuter students no longer driving and parking.

Therefore, the Project would result in a reduced number of SDSU students commuting and parking a vehicle while on campus. While the analysis recognizes that some students may park in the surrounding residential neighborhoods, such parking violates City of San Diego parking restrictions and would represent a relatively small number of the students living on the Peninsula Component site. Thus, by increasing on-campus student housing and enabling 4,468 more SDSU students to live on campus, the Proposed Project would result in fewer students driving to campus and an overall reduction in average daily trips relative to existing levels, thereby reducing traffic volumes and related traffic noise levels. Notwithstanding, even if there were increased average daily traffic volumes attributed to the Project, the increase would not be sufficient to increase traffic noise levels by greater than 3 dBA CNEL over existing levels at adjacent noise-sensitive land uses, which is the threshold for significant impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with traffic noise would be less than significant.



## <span id="page-24-0"></span>5.3 Long-Term Operational Noise Exposure

#### Stationary Noise Sources

Using DataKustik's CadnaA software, which models three-dimensional outdoor sound propagation based on International Organization for Standardization 9613-2 algorithms (ISO 1996) and relevant reference data, an operational scenario of the Proposed Project was modeled for purposes of this analysis. The modeled scenario included operating assumptions for the anticipated noise sources, specifically, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) units representative of combined SPL data for air-cooled chillers and air-handling units, placed on the rooftops of the eight modeled buildings. HVAC units associated with the building are expected to operate at any time up to 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. There are no other stationary noise sources associated with Project operation.

For purposes of this analysis, the overall A-weighted decibel levels appearing in Table 8 were used to define the individual Project sound sources.

#### <span id="page-24-1"></span>**Table 8. Sound Power Levels for the Modeled Individual Sources of Outdoor Noise Emission**



Notes:  $dBA = A-weighted decibels; k = thousand; MBH = 1000 British thermal units per hour.$ 

a Reference SPL data shown herein based upon "lo" value per Loren Cook Company 1999, pp. 59-60.

b Based on data from 1- to 5-minute range for "factories (general)" per Loren Cook Company 1999, p. 41.



The reference sound power levels in Table 8 were used to define area sources of sound emission in the CadnaA computer model with respect to the placement of the rendered Peninsula Component and University Towers East Component. In addition to the above sound source inputs, the following parameters are included in this CadnaA-supported stationary noise source assessment:

- Ground effect acoustical absorption coefficient equal to 1 for the rendered Peninsula Component, which represents acoustically absorptive "soft" vegetated ground cover, loose soils, and granular aggregate, and an absorption coefficient equal to 0.25 for the rendered University Towers East Component, which represents the acoustically reflective roadway surfaces surrounding the site
- Reflection order of 1, which allows for a single reflection of sound paths on encountered structural surfaces
- **■** Inclusion of georeferenced topography: the Project site, the canyon to the west, and the grade of the nearest residential community to the west reflect their true elevations above sea level
- Calm meteorological conditions (i.e., no wind) with  $68^{\circ}$ F and 50% relative humidity
- Eight total rendered buildings: the proposed Apartment Buildings 1-5, Flex Building, and Amenity Building (Peninsula Component), as well as University Towers East

Predicted noise exposure levels attributable to concurrent operation of the Proposed Project on-site stationary sources (i.e., HVAC systems) as modeled appear in Table 9. As shown in the table, the predicted levels at the studied noise-sensitive receptor locations would not exceed the exterior noise level threshold for single-family residential land uses of 50 dBA hourly L<sub>eq</sub> during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.), 45 dBA hourly L<sub>eq</sub> during evening hours (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.), or 40 dBA hourly L<sub>eq</sub> during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.); therefore, potential noise impacts associated with project operation would be less than significant.



#### <span id="page-25-0"></span>**Table 9. Project Operation Noise Prediction Model Results Summary**

Notes:  $dBA = A$ -weighted decibels;  $L_{eq} =$  equivalent noise level. See Figure 3 for modeled "R#" receptor locations.

> Figure 4 and Figure 5 correspondingly illustrate the predicted Project stationary equipment operation sound levels—for the Peninsula Component and University Towers East Component, respectively—across a

horizontal plane approximately 5 feet above grade (i.e., a first-floor or pedestrian listening elevation) over the Project site and beyond into the surrounding vicinity.

Details of the CadnaA modeling input parameters (e.g., modeled sources) can be found in Appendix C, Operation Noise Prediction Model Inputs. As illustrated, the model results show that the Proposed Project would be consistent with required noise level limits. Therefore, potential noise impacts associated with the operation of the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

#### *b) Would the project result in generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?*

## <span id="page-26-0"></span>5.4 Construction Vibration

Construction activities may expose persons to excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise, causing a potentially significant impact. Caltrans has collected ground-borne vibration information related to construction activities (Caltrans 2020). Information from Caltrans indicates that continuous vibrations with a PPV of approximately 0.2 ips are considered annoying. For context, heavier pieces of construction equipment, such as a bulldozer that may be expected on the Project site, have peak particle velocities of approximately 0.089 ips or less at a reference distance of 25 feet (DOT 2006).

Ground-borne vibration attenuates rapidly, even over short distances. The attenuation of ground-borne vibration as it propagates from source to receptor through intervening soils and rock strata can be estimated with expressions found in FTA and Caltrans guidance. For example, for a roller operating on site and as close as the eastern Project boundary of the University Towers East Component to the nearest occupied property (i.e., 45 feet) the estimated vibration velocity would be 0.09 ips per the equation as follows (FTA 2018):

PPV<sub>rcvr</sub> = PPV<sub>ref</sub>  $\times$  (25/D)<sup>1.5</sup> = 0.09 = 0.21  $\times$  (25/45)<sup>1.5</sup>

In the above equation, PPV<sub>rcvr</sub> is the predicted vibration velocity at the receiver position, PPV<sub>ref</sub> is the reference value at 25 feet from the vibration source (the roller), and D is the actual horizontal distance to the receiver. Therefore, at this predicted PPV, the impact of vibration-induced annoyance to occupants of nearby existing homes would be less than significant. The nearest occupied property to the Peninsula Component is 510 feet.

Construction vibration at sufficiently high levels can also present a building damage risk. However, anticipated construction vibration associated with the Proposed Project would yield levels of 0.04 ips PPV, which would not surpass the guidance limit of 0.3 ips PPV for building damage risk to older residential structures under Caltrans guidelines (Caltrans 2020). Because the predicted vibration level at 45 feet is less than this guidance limit, the risk of vibration damage to nearby structures is considered less than significant.

Once operational, the Proposed Project would not feature major producers of ground-borne vibration. Anticipated mechanical systems like HVAC units are designed and manufactured to feature rotating (fans, motors) and reciprocating (compressors) components that are well-balanced with isolated vibration within or external to the equipment casings. On this basis, potential vibration impacts due to Proposed Project operation would be less than significant.



#### *c) Would the project expose people to excessive aviation noise levels?*

The San Diego International Airport is located approximately 6.6 miles from the Project site, and Montgomery Field is located approximately 3.86 miles northwest of the Project site. The Project site is outside of the 60 dBA CNEL contour shown in the San Diego International Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (SDCRAA 2014). The Project is not located within designated noise or safety impact areas defined by the Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (SDCRAA 2010). Therefore, construction workers and post-construction project operational or maintenance staff on site would not be exposed to excessive noise levels, and there would be a less-than-significant impact associated with aviation noise levels.

## <span id="page-28-0"></span>6 Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measure would apply during construction activities for the University Towers East Component (Phase 1b).

- MM-NOI-1 Temporary Construction Noise Reduction (University Towers East Component). The California State University or San Diego State University, or its designee, shall implement one or more of the following measures, as necessary, in order to achieve on-site noise control and sound abatement that, in the aggregate, would result in a minimum construction noise reduction of approximately 8 A-weighted decibels (dBA) at the closest noise-sensitive receptor during each phase of the construction of Phase 1b:
	- Administrative controls (e.g., reduce operating time of equipment and/or prohibit usage of equipment type[s] within certain distances to a nearest receiving occupied off-site property).
	- *Engineering controls* (change equipment operating parameters [speed, capacity, etc.], or install features or elements that otherwise reduce equipment noise emission [e.g., upgrade engine exhaust mufflers]).
	- **EXTED INSTALLY INSTALLY INCO ADATE IN ADAMORY FEE** *Install noise abatements Install noise abatements in the site boundary fencing (or within, as practical and appropriate)* in the form of sound blankets or comparable temporary solid barriers of at least 9 feet tall to occlude construction noise emission between the site (or specific equipment operation as the situation may define) and the noise-sensitive receptor(s) of concern.
		- For example, suspended sound blankets, field-erected plywood sheeting, or comparable temporary solid (or flexible but sufficiently massive) barriers (of minimum sound transmission class rating of 25, which per California Department of Transportation guidance indicates would permit up to 8 dBA of expected barrier insertion loss) would occlude construction noise emission between the site (or specific equipment operation as the situation may define) and the noise-sensitive receptor(s) of concern.
		- Temporary barriers should adhere to a minimum height standard of 9 feet to serve as an effective deterrent against noise pollution and shielding for adjoining off-site receptors.

Appendix B includes a construction noise prediction worksheet that illustrates a sample scenario of what the anticipated and quantifiable noise reduction effect would be of adding a temporary 9-foot-tall noise barrier to reduce construction noise exposure at the nearest sensitive receptors. Such a wall should be strategically located on the Proposed Project boundary (focusing on the northern, eastern, and southern boundary) so as to reduce construction noise exposure at the nearest sensitive receptors.

SDSU EVOLVE STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT / NOISE TECHNICAL REPORT

## <span id="page-30-0"></span>7 Summary of Findings

This noise report was conducted to predictively quantify construction and operation noise and vibration attributed to the Proposed Project. The results indicate that potential construction noise impacts during site preparation and grading phases for the University Towers East Component would be significant but would be reduced to less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Otherwise, all potential impacts related to noise and vibration for the construction and operation of the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

## <span id="page-32-0"></span>8 References

- Caltrans (California Department of Transportation). 2013. *Technical Noise Supplement to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol*. September.
- Caltrans. 2020. *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*. Division of Environmental Analysis, Environmental Engineering, Hazardous Waste, Air, Noise, Paleontology Office. Sacramento, California. April.
- DOT (U.S. Department of Transportation). 2006. *FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model: User's Guide*. Final Report. FHWA-HEP-06-015. DOT-VNTSC-FHWA-06-02. Cambridge, Massachusetts: DOT, Research and Innovative Technology Administration. August.
- FHWA (Federal Highway Administration). 2008. "Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM)," Software Version 1.1. U.S. Department of Transportation, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, Environmental Measurement and Modeling Division. Washington, DC.
- FTA (Federal Transit Administration). 2018. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. FTA Report No. 0123. September.
- ISO (International Organization of Standardization). 1996. Standard 9613-2 (Acoustics Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors – Part 2: General method of calculation). Geneva.
- LLG (Linscott, Law & Greenspan). 2024. *Transportation Study, San Diego State University Evolve, San Diego, California*. October 9, 2024.
- Loren Cook Company. 1999. *Engineering Cookbook – A Handbook for the Mechanical Designer*. Second Edition. Springfield, MO.
- SDCRAA (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority). 2014. *San Diego International Airport; Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*. May 1, 2014. https://www.san.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/API/ Entries/Download?EntryId=2990&Command=Core\_Download&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId.
- SDCRAA. 2010. *Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.* January 25, 2010. https://www.san.org/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/API/Entries/Download?EntryId=16148&Comm and=Core\_Download&language=en-US&PortalId=0&TabId=807



<span id="page-34-0"></span>

**DUDEK & <u>Second</u> Miles** 

Regional Map Noise Technical Report for the SDSU Evolve Student Housing Project **FIGURE 1** SOURCE: SOURCE: ESRI

SDSU EVOLVE STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT / NOISE TECHNICAL REPORT


 $\mathbf{D} \mathbf{U} \mathbf{D} \mathbf{E} \mathbf{K}$   $\mathbf{\Phi}$   $\mathbf{S}$   $\mathbf{S}$   $\mathbf{S}$   $\mathbf{S}$   $\mathbf{S}$   $\mathbf{F}$   $\mathbf{F}$   $\mathbf{F}$   $\mathbf{F}$   $\mathbf{F}$   $\mathbf{F}$ 

Vicinity Map Noise Technical Report for the SDSU Evolve Student Housing Project

## DUDEK

SDSU EVOLVE STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT / NOISE TECHNICAL REPORT

#### INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



SOURCE: AERIAL-SANGIS IMAGERY 2023



 $450$ <br>
Feet

FIGURE 3 Noise Measurement and Modeling Locations Noise Technical Report for the SDSU Evolve Student Housing Project

## DUDEK

SDSU EVOLVE STUDENT HOUSING PROJECT / NOISE TECHNICAL REPORT

#### INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



SOURCES: Google 2024; SDSU Evolve 2024; Dudek 2024 **DUDEK**  $\oint$   $\frac{1385}{277}$  **Feet** 

Predicted Stationary Source Operation Noise from Proposed Project (Peninsula Component)

Noise Technical Report for the SDSU Evolve Student Housing Project

## DUDEK

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



SOURCES: Google 2024; SDSU Evolve 2024; Dudek 2024

**DUDEK 6** 

Noise Technical Report for the SDSU Evolve Student Housing Project **<sup>0</sup> 59.5 <sup>119</sup> Feet Predicted Stationary Source Operation Noise from Proposed Project (University Towers East Component) FIGURE 5**

## DUDEK

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## **Appendix A**

Baseline Noise Measurement Field Data

#### **Field Noise Measurement Data**





## FRIMS FIELD DATA REPORT





#### **FOOR RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT Post-Test (dBA SPL) 94 Yes Windscreen **Weighting?** A-WTD Slow/Fast? Slow



# RMS FIELD DATA REPORT

Yes

Are the meteorological conditions the same as previously noted?











# **Site Photos** Photo Æ **A WARRANT COMPANY**

# **POOR RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT

**Comments / Description** 

Facing W



## **FOOD RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT

**Description / Photos** 

Terrain

Hard







**Comments / Description** 

Facing  $\bar{E}$ 





# **POOR RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT

**Comments / Description** 

Facing W



## **FOUR RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT **Description / Photos**

Terrain

Hard



# **Site Photos** Photo







# **POOR RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT

**Comments / Description** 

Facing W



## FUNS FIELD DATA REPORT





#### **RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT **Description / Photos** Terrain Hard







**Comments / Description** 

Facing W





#### **RMS** FIELD DATA REPORT Facing N **Comments / Description**









## **Appendix B**

Construction Noise Modeling Input and Output

noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego =<br>= allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego

To User: bordered cells are inputs, unbordered cells have formulae



To User: bordered cells are inputs, unbordered cells have formulae

 $\boxed{0}$  = temporary barrier (TB) of input height inserted between source and receptor

noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego =<br>allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego =



To User: bordered cells are inputs, unbordered cells have formulae

 $\boxed{0}$  = temporary barrier (TB) of input height inserted between source and receptor

noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego =<br>allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego =



noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego =<br>= allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego

To User: bordered cells are inputs, unbordered cells have formulae



noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego =<br>allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego =

To User: bordered cells are inputs, unbordered cells have formulae



noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego = allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego =

To User: bordered cells are inputs, unbordered cells have formulae



 $\frac{1}{12}$


noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego =<br>= allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego

To User: bordered cells are inputs, unbordered cells have formulae







noise level limit for construction phase at residential land use, per City of San Diego =<br>allowable hours over which Leq is to be averaged, City of San Diego =



 $\frac{1}{12}$ 

erted between source and receptor



# **Appendix C**

Operation Noise Prediction Model Inputs

### SDSU Evolve Student Housing Project / Noise and Vibration Technical Memorandum

#### **Area Sources**



## **Barriers**



# **Buildings**



#### **Sound Levels (local)**





\*from 2-5 minute range for "residences" per Loren Cook's "Engineering Cookbook", 1999 edition, p. 41



\*based upon "lo" for "residential (large) value per Loren Cook's "Engineering Cookbook", 1999 edition, pp. 59-60