

## **ACOUSTICS2008/3038 Soundscape and California planning guidelines**

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Community noise has been recognized as a significant environmental concern in California for more than 30 years. All cities and counties are mandated by state law to include a Noise Element as a part of the community's General Plan to provide "a basis for comprehensive local programs to control and abate environmental noise and to protect citizens from excessive exposure." What is, and has been missing from this process, is how the soundscape in a particular setting may affect the compatibility of land uses there. Generalized noise and land use planning guidelines are no longer sufficient. Specific attention must be given to the development of guidelines and policies that address "smart growth" in and around urban and suburban transportation corridors, residential and agricultural interactions, mixed-use developments, industrial-to-residential conversions (e.g., the gentrification of traditionally industrial areas like ports). A new soundscape vocabulary must be introduced to describe the acoustical environments in these settings to facilitate other goals in land use planning. Examples are presented of specific communities where planning goals and traditional noise and land use compatibility guidelines were in conflict and how these were resolved.