

COBURG CITY COUNCIL ACTION/ISSUE ITEM



TOPIC: Industrial Noise Solution

Meeting Date: July 12, 2022

Staff Contact: Brian Harmon

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REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION

Staff Direction for Industrial Noise Solutions Policy

BACKGROUND

The City frequently gets complaints regarding the industrial noise in Coburg. The City processes these complaints and we do contact the industrial businesses, educate them regarding the noise ordinance, and remind them of required compliance. If needed the City sends a formal letter and the Police deliver it and talk to the business managers.

Businesses such as Carry-on Trailers have done extensive work, shift changes, and set internal policies in order to address the complaints. However, there is still industrial noise that is necessary, happens during the regular shifts, and annoys the neighborhood around it.

One area that is consistently an issue is in and around the Sarah Lane Water Booster Station. Staff have contemplated that the metal reservoirs are acting as sound reflectors and the residual echo might be actually increasing the noise into the neighborhoods

Staff asked a professional sound expert to come and look at the area, investigate how sound is traveling and make a recommendation as to whether there was anything the City could do to reduce the sound carrying to the neighborhood in the Sarah Lane Area. Acoustic Science Corporation (ASC) has provided a recommendation for how sound could be reduced. Their quote and recommendation is attached.

This solution would not be an inexpensive solution and would involve attaching a sound wall to the existing fence that surrounds the booster station and location of the water towers.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

There have been several complaints from the public on this matter over the last several years. Most of those complaints are in the area of the water towers.

POLICY CONSIDERATION

The City has a residential neighborhood that abuts an industrial zone. There is the recommended buffer present, and the industrial businesses have built their businesses to the specifications of the City. Therefore, this becomes a policy discussion for the City Council of whether or not the City has a responsibility to buffer the sound coming from the industrial area that is largely operating within the Noise Ordinance.

Other areas of town have industrial areas that also abut residential neighborhoods nearby. Additional industrial properties will be built within the industrial zones, and those properties will have noise associated with the industrial business.

Council must decide if allowing for a buffer in this area will set precedence that the City will be responsible for buffering noise between industrial and residential areas.

Council should consider and give staff direction as to whether they want to move forward to provide buffering in this instance, and consider other issues in the future. The Council may also decide that the City will not fund and install additional measures for buffering sound outside of the normal requirements through the zoning code.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff does not have a recommendation on this. This is a Council policy decision.

BUDGET

There is no budget currently for this type of a project. If Council would like to consider placing the sound wall, then staff would seek to find funds within the existing budget and/or consider whether it could be included in the scheduled updates to the water booster station and water reservoirs 1 and 2. An estimate for a phased in project is attached to this staff report.

NEXT STEPS

1. Staff will take Council direction to either move or not move the project forward
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ATTACHMENTS

A. ASC Quote

Reviewed by:

Anne Heath, City Administrator