

13 March 2026

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**Subject: West Valley Muslim Association, Los Gatos, CA
Acoustic Review of Public Comments
Salter Project 25-0042**

Dear Matthew:

We have reviewed the Public Comments provided to us via email on 6 August 2025. Included is a documentation of traffic noise levels collected by Hongzhi Zhao, a resident at [REDACTED]. Additionally, we have reviewed the 27 July 2025 document titled *West Valley Muslim Association (WVMA) Traffic Noise Levels on Farley Road Between 4:00am-6:00am During the Summer Morning Services* that was also authored by Hongzhi Zhao. We have the following comments.

Summary

- **Mr. Zhao applied the wrong noise standard.** The analysis does not compare measured vehicle noise to the applicable motor vehicle standards of the Los Gatos Municipal Code. It compares them to the general property line noise limits which do not apply.
- **Mr. Zhao used incorrect measurement settings.** The measurements were made with the sound level meter set to “fast” response. Per the Los Gatos Noise Ordinance, traffic noise levels should be measured in “slow” response.
- **Mr. Zhao’s interpretation would result in ordinary driving being a civil infraction.** If the general nighttime property line noise limits were applied to vehicle noise, then all vehicles – not just those associated with the WVMA – traveling at the speed limit along Farley Road between the hours of 10 pm and 7 am would be in violation of the noise ordinance.



Motor Vehicle Noise Standards

Mr. Zhao has compared vehicle passby noise against the general nighttime (10 pm to 7 am) property line noise limits set forth in the Los Gatos Noise Ordinance, which are as follows:

- Weekdays: 54 dBA
- Weekends and Holidays: 49 dBA

Mr. Zhao has also provided reference to vehicle noise vs. speed¹. This table is shown below.

Speed (mph)	Noise at 50 ft (dB)		
	Auto	Medium Truck	Heavy Truck
30	62	73	80
31	62	74	80
32	63	74	81
33	63	75	81
34	64	75	81
35	64	76	82
36	65	76	82
37	65	77	82
38	66	77	82
39	66	77	83
40	67	78	83

Extrapolating the data in the table indicates that auto noise levels at a speed of 25 mph (the speed limit along Farley Road) would be approximately 60 dBA at a distance of 50 feet. Therefore, if the general nighttime property line noise limits were applied to vehicle noise, then all vehicles – not just those associated with the WVMA – traveling at the speed limit along Farley Road between the hours of 10 pm and 7 am would be in violation. Additionally, residential properties along Farley Road are closer than 50 feet to the roadway. Thus, vehicle passby noise levels would be even louder than levels reported in the table.

All nighttime vehicle passbys on Farley Road do not exceed the Noise Ordinance. This is because, in addition to general property line noise limits, the Los Gatos Municipal Code provides different noise standards for specific categories such as construction, animals, and **motor vehicles**. Section 16.20.055 of the Town's Noise Ordinance provides the motor vehicle noise standards which are summarized as follows:

- Typical non-commercial vehicle noise (less than 6,000 lbs.) is limited, according to the Vehicle Code of the State of California, to 95 dBA²

¹ <https://nonoise.org/resource/trans/highway/spnoise.htm>

² A-Weighted Sound Level – The A-weighted sound pressure level, expressed in decibels (dB). Sometimes the unit of sound level is written as dB(A). A weighting is a standard weighting that accounts for the sensitivity of human hearing to the range of audible frequencies. People perceive a 10 dB increase in sound level to be twice as loud.

- Heavy vehicles (greater than 10,000 lbs.) are not to idle for 15 minutes or more during any hour within 150 feet of a residential area
- Vehicle repair and testing noise shall meet the Town's property line noise limits
- Motorized recreational vehicles (e.g., non-commercial racing vehicles, motorcycles, go-carts, campers) must meet the Town's property line noise limits

Mr. Zhao's noise measurements do not indicate that WVMA traffic has exceeded the motor vehicle standards of the Los Gatos Municipal Code.

Section 16.10.010 of the Code defines the "continuous or recurrent acceleration of a motor vehicle or other engine while stationary" as a noise disturbance. Additionally, this section specifies that motor vehicle horns are to be used solely for traffic safety purposes. Therefore, congregants of the WVMA should avoid "revving" engines or honking horns, except as necessary for traffic safety purposes during site ingress and egress. We understand the WVMA has parking lot attendants at high-traffic events directing traffic before and after to reduce the likelihood of these occurrences.

Sound Level Meter Settings

In the *WVMA Traffic Noise Levels on Farley Road Between 4:00am-6:00am During the Summer Morning Services* document, Mr. Zhao indicates that the sound level meter was set to "fast" response. Section 16.10.010 of the Town Municipal Code specifies that sound level measurements are to be taken in "slow" response "unless the noise issue is impulsive". This section further defines impulsive sound as follows:

Impulsive sound means sound of short duration, usually less than one (1) second, with an abrupt onset and rapid decay. Examples of impulsive sound include explosions, drop impacts, and firearm discharge.

While certain motor vehicle noises, such as backfires, trunk slams, or speed bumps could be considered impulsive, vehicle passbys are not impulsive. Therefore, these noise measurements should have been made with the meter in "slow" response. Measuring in "fast" results in higher reported noise levels than measuring in "slow" and is not accurate per the measurement procedures defined in the Municipal Code.

This concludes our acoustic review of the public comments. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Best,

SALTER



Ben Piper
Vice President

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