

1 Appendix A

2 **WSDOT NOISE ANALYSIS & ABATEMENT PROCESS**

3 **When are noise reports and/or recommendations final?**

4 The noise abatement process from the preparation of a noise wall to the final noise wall
5 design (or decision not to build) can be confusing. The following process attempts to provide
6 some clarification to project teams and outlines a recommended “standard” process, but
7 acknowledges that variations to this process are likely because of the differences between
8 projects.

9 **Environmental Discipline Reports**

10 The noise analyst works with the project team to model project elements affecting noise that
11 include traffic, topography, and the location of noise-sensitive receivers. If traffic noise
12 impacts are discovered through modeling, then abatement is evaluated.

13 Abatement is compared to the feasibility (constructability, effectiveness) and reasonableness
14 (allowable barrier size/cost) for a “standard” project. If abatement is feasible and reasonable,
15 the report recommends the optimal (cost to benefit) noise barrier.

16 The traffic noise discipline report can be finalized.

17 **Design Phase**

18 *Design Phase and Public Involvement steps (below) may be incorporated before the report is*
19 *finalized.*

20 The project office reviews the recommended noise wall height and horizontal alignment to
21 determine if there are any conflicts that were not realized at the time the discipline report
22 was prepared.

23 If conflicts from utilities, steep slopes, etc. are present, the details and costs of the conflicts
24 are provided to the noise analyst by the project team. The noise analyst will then add any
25 additional (“but for” the noise wall) costs to the reasonableness evaluation.

26 If noise wall costs including accommodation of conflicts are still less than the allowable costs
27 for the noise wall, the barrier height and/or alignment are re-evaluated and a new barrier will
28 be recommended. If barrier costs plus the new costs exceed the allowable costs, the barrier
29 may not be recommended by the WSDOT Air, Noise, and Energy (ANE) Program.

- 1 If a noise wall is recommended, the ANE Program will review and confirm noise wall
- 2 dimensions throughout the design process.

3 Public Involvement

- 4 If abatement is recommended in the Traffic Noise Discipline Report, public outreach to
- 5 determine public desires for abatement must occur. The noise wall discussion may be
- 6 introduced to the public before the Design Phase, but should happen after the noise wall
- 7 alignment, height, and length (or other abatement description) is established so that people
- 8 can understand any effects of the noise wall (or other abatement) on their community.
- 9 The final determination whether to construct a noise wall or other abatement that is
- 10 recommend in the traffic noise analysis cannot be made until public outreach has occurred.

11 Final Steps

- 12 Any updates to the Traffic Noise Discipline report to clarify changes that occurred during the
- 13 Design Phase or from Public Involvement can be made at the project engineering office's
- 14 discretion. Addendum or supplementary memorandum to clarify changes can also be added
- 15 to the discipline report or project file.
- 16 The noise wall is constructed or a letter from the ANE Program is added to the project file
- 17 clarifying why a noise wall was not constructed.