

## Major Public Projects Construction Noise Variance (MPPCNV)

### Questions and Answers

Updated: 3/10/17

#### Introduction

As part of recent public outreach conducted by the SR 520 Program regarding WSDOT's application for a Major Public Projects Construction Noise Variance, WSDOT has compiled a variety of common questions from members of the public, which are listed below, along with answers to these questions.

**1. Question: What is an MPPCNV?**

**Answer:** The Major Public Project Construction Noise Variance is a noise variance granted by the city of Seattle that defines the allowable nighttime noise limits for a construction project. It is tailored specifically for major public construction projects, such as the Montlake Phase, and is administered by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections. The variance will define the noise limits and regulations that nighttime construction work must adhere to throughout the full phase of construction. WSDOT is currently applying for a MPPCNV for the Montlake Phase of construction.

**2. Question: Why is WSDOT applying for an MPPCNV?**

**Answer:** WSDOT is applying for this variance because there will be nighttime construction work during the Montlake Phase. Nighttime construction work is needed for public and worker safety and to avoid unacceptable traffic impacts to SR 520 and local streets such as Montlake Boulevard and Lake Washington Boulevard. Daytime construction activities can be done within the daytime noise limits set by the city of Seattle. Since nighttime work will be required, WSDOT would receive this variance from the city to set limits on the noise levels for nighttime construction activities. WSDOT is working with SDCI and has applied for the variance in advance of releasing Montlake Phase contract requirements so that a future design-build contractor is aware of the nighttime noise limits they must comply with when developing their proposed construction means and methods.

**3. Question: What is included in WSDOT's MPPCNV application?**

**Answer:** The Major Public Project Construction Noise Variance application includes:

- **Project descriptions and proposed construction activities:** This section is based on how WSDOT anticipates a contractor may construct the project. The exact construction activities may change once a contractor is hired and they finalize the project design and their construction plans.
- **WSDOT's baseline noise measurements and proposed nighttime noise limits:** The application includes WSDOT's proposed nighttime noise limits, which were developed based on existing nighttime noise conditions.
- **Noise Management and Mitigation Plan:** The application provides a framework for the Noise Management and Mitigation Plan to be prepared by the design-build contractor, which will identify how a contractor will keep noise below the approved limits, and identifies measures needed to meet the conditions set in the variance that will be granted by the city. Once hired, a design-build contractor will develop this plan, based on their selected construction means and methods. The design-build contractor will be required to submit their Noise Management and Mitigation Plan to the city of Seattle to demonstrate how they can construct the project within the noise limits set by the MPPCNV.
- **Public outreach and process to resolve noise complaints:** The variance also describes how WSDOT and the contractor will maintain communication with the public during construction, and the process for a neighbor to make a noise complaint.

**4. Question: What is the process and timeline for obtaining a MPPCNV?**

**Answer:** The schedule for obtaining the Montlake Phase MPPCNV is as follows:

- February 2017:
  - ✓ WSDOT submits draft MPPCNV application to Seattle's Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI).
  - ✓ WSDOT hosts informational public meeting. Meeting occurred on Feb. 28, 2017, and materials are [posted online](#).
- March 2017:
  - ✓ WSDOT submits final MPPCNV application to SDCI.
- Spring 2017:
  - ✓ SDCI publishes WSDOT's MPPCNV application online for public review.
  - SDCI hosts a public meeting and comment period on WSDOT's MPPCNV application. Public notifications will be made through the [city of Seattle Land Use Information Bulletin](#).
  - WSDOT's goal: SDCI publishes decision on Montlake Phase MPPCNV.
- 2018:
  - Selected SR 520 Montlake Phase design-build contractor submits updated Noise Management and Mitigation Plan to SDCI.

**5. Question: How will nighttime construction noise in the Montlake Phase differ from nighttime noise experienced during the current West Approach Bridge North (WABN) construction?**

**Answer:** The current West Approach Bridge North (WABN) construction project has used temporary noise variances (TNVs) rather than an MPPCNV. TNVs are short-term permits that exempt the contractor from the city's nighttime noise level limits for certain types of activities and they do not set specific noise levels that must be met. The MPPCNV will set noise level limits that apply during all nighttime activities. This will help to provide a clear, longer-term set of limits and requirements for nighttime work and noise levels during construction of the Montlake Phase.

**6. Question: How will nighttime noise limits for the Montlake Phase be monitored and enforced?**

**Answer:**

- Per variance requirements, nighttime noise monitoring is required and will be performed throughout the entirety of Montlake Phase construction. 24-hour noise monitors will be used to ensure that nighttime noise activities remain within the approved limits and if any exceedances occur. Weekly and annual noise monitoring reports will be provided to SDCI to ensure compliance. These reports will be made available to the public.
- An Independent Noise Monitor (INM) will also be hired by WSDOT to oversee noise monitoring and reporting, and will report on compliance directly to SDCI. The INM will be on-site during all periods of scheduled nighttime work and will be notified of any noise complaints received. If the INM receives a complaint during nighttime work hours, the INM will notify the contractor, perform a site inspection, and conduct additional noise measurements while on-site. The INM will report any exceedances if they occur. If noise exceedances occur, WSDOT will work with the Montlake Phase contractor and SDCI to ensure that the associated construction activity is halted or modified. SDCI retains the authority to suspend or cancel the noise variance if the requirements of the variance are not met.
- If members of the public wish to submit a noise complaint, they can continue to utilize the SR 520 24-hour construction hotline.
- WSDOT is also evaluating opportunities to incorporate incentives and/or disincentives into the Montlake Phase construction contract in order to further promote compliance with the noise variance.