



# Revised Noise Ordinance

## Why revise noise ordinance?

- Virginia Supreme Court decision on a Virginia Beach case made sections of the noise code become unconstitutional because of vague language such as unreasonably loud, disturbs or annoys, excessive, etc.
- Consideration of allowing higher noise limits for commercial and institutional uses
- Enhanced monitoring and enforcement

## Revision Process

- Since noise control is technical, it was decided to draft document and request public input
- Interdepartmental effort including staff from T&ES, ADP, CAO, P&Z, Code Administration
- Review of noise codes from other jurisdictions
- Legal and management review on several draft versions
- Comprehensive public outreach including civic associations and businesses, EPC, Planning Commission

## Present Status

- Final draft is being reviewed internally
- Public outreach has started; two public meetings to be held in January (9<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>)
- Council consideration in March

# How Is Noise Regulated in Alexandria



## Permitted hours for some specific activities

- Construction
- Lawn and garden equipment

## Decibel limits by property use

- Residential; commercial; institutional; industrial

## Prohibited

- Uncontrolled animal noise
- Sound reproduction/ generation

## Exempted

- Aircraft; railroads; emergency utility work; emergency generator

## Noise Variance Permits

- Strictly for temporary relief from the noise code for special requirements or events

# Summary of Proposed Changes



- New definitions
  - Plainly audible
  - Use areas – residential; commercial; institutional; industrial
- New permitted-by-time Activities
  - Loading/ unloading
  - Outdoor power cleaning equipment
  - DIY construction
  - Plainly audible in residential area
- New Daytime decibel limit for commercial/ institutional use areas
- Noise in public places
  - Extending from Central Business District to whole city
- Allow Special Use Permit (SUP) specific conditions to vary from noise ordinance provisions – may be more or less stringent
- Increased penalty fines

# Public Outreach



- Two public meetings are currently planned in January 2019
  - January 9<sup>th</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup>
- Civic & HOA associations
- Business & professional organizations
- City Commissions
  - Environmental Policy Commission, Planning Commission



**THANK YOU!  
QUESTIONS?**

Contact Information:

Department of Transportation & Environmental Services

Office of Environmental Quality

Telephone: 703-746-4065