City of Calistoga
STAFF REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Matt McCaffrey, Police Chief
Meeting: City Council Regular Meeting - Jan 27 2026
Subject: **Presentation on the current, ordinance, challenges, and possible changes.**

DESCRIPTION:

Presentation on Possible Noise Ordinance Changes

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the Presentation

SUMMARY:

The current noise ordinance is difficult for the public to understand, has loopholes in it and can be hard to enforce. The presentation will provide Council a chance to give feedback and possible direction for staff on ordinance changes.

ANALYSIS:

Consider making changes to the ordinance that would allow the public to have amplified sound in residential areas, with restrictions, without requiring permit.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None

CEQA STATUS:

Not Applicable

ATTACHMENT(S):

Noise Ordinance
Noise Ord

APPROVAL(S):

Connie Cardenas, Admin. Services Director	Approved - Jan 12 2026
Mitch Celaya, Interim City Manager	Approved - Jan 17 2026
Yudiana Galvan, City of Calistoga | City Clerk	Approved - Jan 21 2026

Review of the City's Noise Ordinance and Possible Amendments:

- Current Ordinance
- Challenges
- Potential Changes



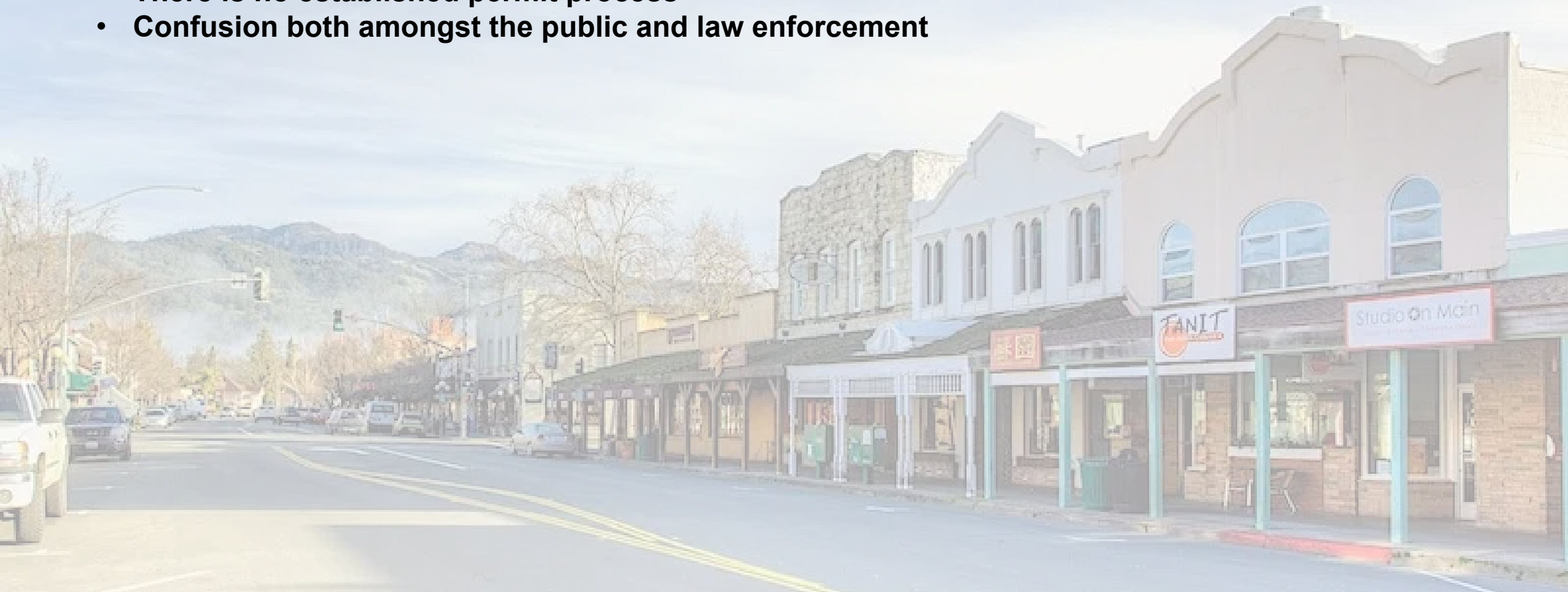
Current Ordinance:

8.20.010 Persistent noise – Declared nuisance – Abatement.
A. The persistent maintenance and emission of any noise or sound produced by human, animal, electrical, radio or mechanical means between the hours of 10:00 p.m., and 7:00 a.m., next ensuing, which by reason of its raucous or nerve-racking nature, disturbs the peace, quiet or comfort, or is injurious to the health of any person, constitutes a public nuisance.

8.20.020 General noise regulations.
A. It is unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to use or operate or cause to be used or operated any mechanical device, machine, apparatus or instrument for intensification or amplification of the human voice or any sound or noise, in any public or private place in such a manner that the peace and good order of the neighborhood is disturbed, or that persons owning, using or occupying the property in the neighborhood are disturbed or annoyed, unless the amplification or intensification has been previously approved through an established permit process

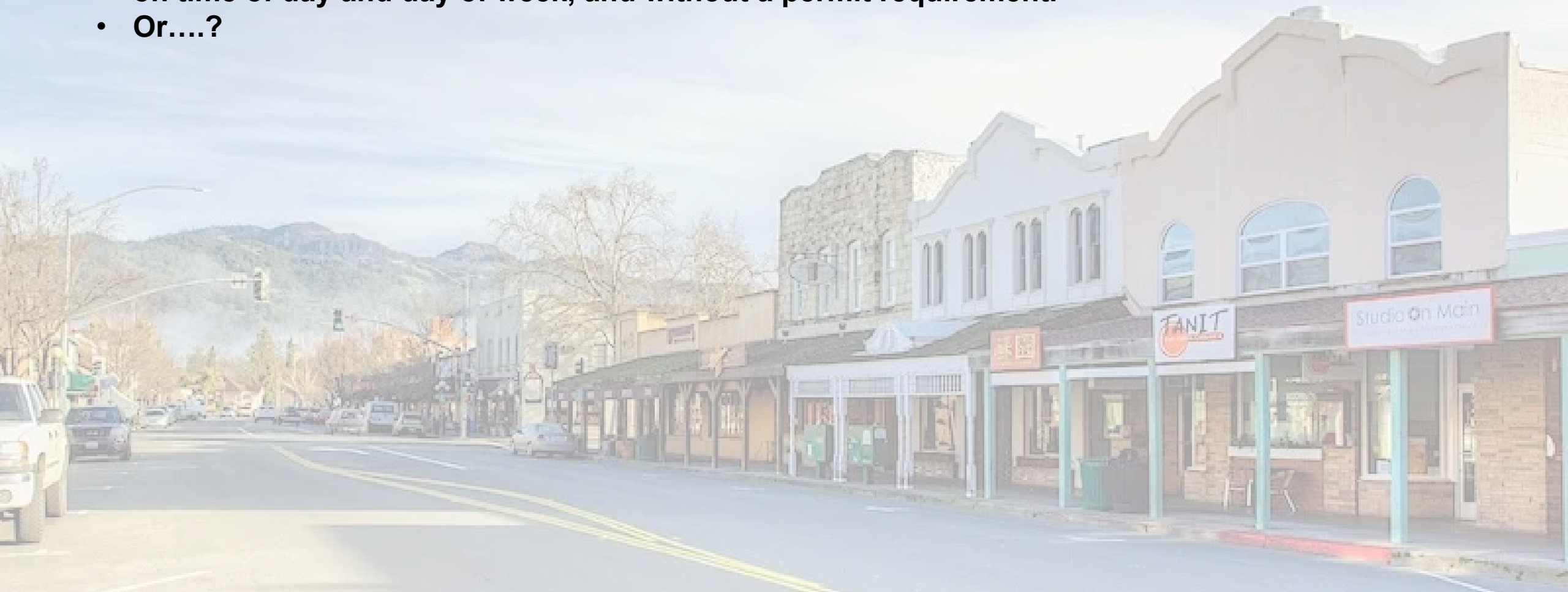
Challenges:

- **Criminalizes all amplified sound by members of the community**
- **There is no established permit process**
- **Confusion both amongst the public and law enforcement**



Potential Changes:

- **Change ordinance to allow amplified sound by individuals (non-business), with restrictions on time of day and day of week, and without a permit requirement.**
- **Or….?**



Questions?

§ 8.20.010. Persistent noise – Declared nuisance – Abatement.

A. The persistent maintenance and emission of any noise or sound produced by human, animal, electrical, radio or mechanical means between the hours of 10:00 p.m., and 7:00 a.m., next ensuing, which by reason of its raucous or nerve-racking nature, disturbs the peace, quiet or comfort, or is injurious to the health of any person, constitutes a public nuisance.

B. Whenever the existence of any such nuisance comes to the attention of the Chief of Police, it shall be the Chief's duty to notify in writing the occupant of the premises upon which said nuisance exists, specifying the measures necessary to abate such nuisance, and unless the same is abated within 48 hours thereafter the occupants so notified shall be guilty of a violation of this chapter and the Chief of Police shall summarily abate such nuisance.

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A. It is unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to use or operate or cause to be used or operated any mechanical device, machine, apparatus or instrument for intensification or amplification of the human voice or any sound or noise, in any public or private place in such a manner that the peace and good order of the neighborhood is disturbed, or that persons owning, using or occupying the property in the neighborhood are disturbed or annoyed, unless the amplification or intensification has been previously approved through an established permit process.

B. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this code, and in addition thereto, it is unlawful for any person willfully to make or continue, or cause to be made or continued, any loud, unnecessary or unusual noise which disturbs the peace and quiet of any neighborhood or which causes discomfort or annoyance to any reasonable person of normal sensitivities residing in the area.

C. In enforcing subsections (A) and (B) of this section, the standards which shall be considered in determining whether a violation of the provisions of this section exists shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The volume of the noise;
2. The intensity of the noise;
3. Whether the nature of the noise is usual or unusual;
4. Whether the origin of the noise is natural or unnatural;
5. The volume and intensity of the background noise, if any;
6. The proximity of the noise to residences;
7. The nature and zoning of the area within which the noise emanates;
8. The density of the inhabitation of the area within which the noise emanates;

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9. The time at which the noise occurs;

10. The duration of the noise;

11. Whether the noise is produced by a commercial or noncommercial activity.

(Ord. 569 § 1, 2000; Ord. 594 § 2, 2003)

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