

APPENDIX B. SELECTING RECEIVERS OF INTEREST

This appendix provides additional detail in selecting receivers of interest for those users desiring such detail. The general approach given in Chapter 6 includes the following guidelines:

- Every major public building or site with noise-sensitive indoor use within the noise study area should be selected as a separate receiver of interest.
- Each isolated residence and small outdoor noise-sensitive area within the noise study area should be selected as a separate receiver of interest in the same manner as for public buildings.
- In contrast, groups of residences and larger outdoor noise-sensitive areas within the noise study area should be "clustered" and a receiver of interest selected from each cluster. Clustering reduces the number of computations later needed, especially for large-scale projects where a great number of noise-sensitive sites may be affected. For this approach to work, however, it is essential that the receiver selected provide an accurate representation of the noise environment of the cluster.

This appendix elaborates on the clustering procedure. In brief: (1) cluster boundaries are first drawn relative to the proposed project, either running parallel to a linear project or circling major stationary sources. These boundaries approximate contours of equal project noise. (2) Then a separate set of cluster boundaries is drawn parallel to, or circling, major sources of ambient noise to approximate contours of ambient noise. (3) Finally, a third set of cluster boundaries may further subdivide the noise study area, if there are changes in project layout or operations along the corridor.

Following are suggested procedures for drawing cluster boundaries and for selecting a receiver of interest from each cluster:

Boundaries along the proposed project. First draw cluster boundaries along the proposed project, to separate clusters based upon distance from the project. Draw such cluster boundaries for all sources that are listed as "Major" in Table 6-2.

Within both residential and noise-sensitive outdoor areas:

- **Primary project source.** Draw cluster boundaries at the following distances from the near edge of the primary project source: 0 feet, 50 feet, 100 feet, 200 feet, 400 feet, and 800 feet. If the primary project source is a linear source, such as a rail line, draw these boundaries as lines parallel to the proposed right-of-way line. Around major stationary sources, draw these boundaries as approximate circles around the source, starting at the property line. Do not extend boundaries beyond the noise study area, identified in the Screening Procedure of Chapter 4 or the General Assessment of Chapter 5.
- **Remaining project sources.** Repeat this for all other project sources listed as Major in Table 6-2, such as substations and crossing signals. If several project sources are located approximately together, only one need be considered here, since the others would produce approximately the same boundaries. It is good practice to optimize the number of clusters for a project, to avoid needlessly complicating the procedure.

Where rows of buildings parallel the transit corridor:

- Check that cluster boundaries fall between the following rows of buildings, counting back away from the proposed project:

Between rows 1 and 2

Between rows 2 and 3

Between rows 4 and 5

If not, add cluster boundaries between these rows.

Boundaries along sources of ambient noise. Next, draw cluster boundaries along all major sources of ambient noise, based upon distance from these sources.

- Along all interstates and major roadway arterials, draw cluster boundaries at the following distances from the near edge of the roadway: 0 feet, 100 feet, 200 feet, and 500 feet.
- Along all other roadways that have state or county numbering, draw cluster boundaries at 0 feet and 100 feet from the near edge of the roadway.
- For all major industrial sources of noise, draw cluster boundaries that circle the source, at the following distances from the near property line of the source: 0 feet, 100 feet, 200 feet, 400 feet.

Further boundaries based upon changes in project layout or operations along the corridor.

Where proposed project layout or operating conditions change significantly along the corridor, further subdivision is needed to account for changes in project noise. Draw a cluster boundary perpendicular to the corridor, extending straight outward to both sides, at the following locations:

- Where parallel tracks, previously separated by more than 100 feet or so, come closer together

- Approximately where speed and/or throttle is reduced approaching stations and where steady service speed is reached after departing stations.
- Approximately 200 feet up and down the line from grade-crossing bells
- At transitions from jointed to welded rail
- At transitions from one type of cross section to another -- from among these types: on structure, on fill, at grade, and in cut.
- At transitions from open terrain to heavily wooded terrain
- At transitions between areas free of locomotive-horn noise and areas subject to this noise source
- Any other positions along the line where project noise is expected to change significantly -- such as up and down the line from tight curves where wheels may squeal

Selection of a receiver of interest from each cluster. The cluster boundaries divide the land area into clusters of miscellaneous shape. Each of these pieces constitutes an area that will be represented by a single receiver of interest.

- For residential clusters, locate this receiver of interest within the cluster at the house closest to the proposed project. If in doubt, select the one furthest from significant sources of ambient noise.
- For outdoor noise-sensitive clusters, such as an urban park or amphitheater, locate this receiver of interest within the cluster at the closest point of active noise-sensitive use. If in doubt, select the one furthest from significant sources of ambient noise.

In following the foregoing procedures, some clusters may fall between areas with receivers of interest. This could occur, for example, when operational changes or track layouts change in an open undeveloped area. Retain such clusters -- that is, do not merge them with adjacent ones -- but do not select a receiver of interest from them.

Example B-1. Receivers of Interest and Cluster Boundaries

An example of receivers of interest and cluster boundaries is shown in Figure B-1. In this hypothetical situation, a new rail transit line, labeled "new rail line," is proposed along a major urban street with commercial land use. A residential area is located adjacent to the commercial strip, starting about one-half block from the proposed transit alignment. A major arterial, labeled "highway," crosses the alignment.

Following the procedure described in this appendix, the first step is to draw cluster boundaries along the **proposed primary project source** (in this case, the new rail line) at distances of 0 feet from the right-of-way line (edge of the street in this example), 50 feet, 100 feet, 200 feet, 400 feet, and 800 feet. These lines are shown with distances labeled at the top of the figure. This is proposed to be a constant speed section of track, so there are no changes in boundaries due to changes in operations along the corridor. Moreover, no **other project sources** are shown here, although if there had been

a station with a parking lot, lines would have been drawn enveloping the station site at the specified distances from the property line. However, this example does show **rows of buildings parallel** to the transit corridor. The first set of lines satisfies the requirement that cluster boundaries fall between rows 1 and 2, and between rows 2 and 3, but there is no line between rows 4 and 5. Consequently, a cluster boundary (labeled "R" at the top of the figure) has been drawn between the 4th and 5th row of buildings.

Next, cluster boundaries are to be drawn along major sources of ambient noise. The roadway arterial (labeled "highway") is the only major source of ambient noise shown. Again following the procedure described in this appendix, cluster boundaries are drawn at 0 feet, 100 feet, 200 feet and 500 feet from the near edge of the roadway, both sides. These lines are shown with distances labeled at the side of the figure.

The foregoing describes the procedures for drawing all the lines defining the cluster boundaries shown in Figure B-1. The next step is to **select a receiver of interest within each cluster**. These are shown as filled circles in the figure. Some receivers of interest are labeled for use as examples in Appendix C. Taking the shaded cluster with "Rec 3" as an example: the cluster is located at the outer edge of influence from the major source ("highway"), where local street traffic takes over from the highway as the dominant source for ambient noise, which would be verified by a measurement. "Rec 3" is chosen to represent this cluster because it is among the houses closest to the proposed project source in this cluster and it is in the middle of the block affected by the dominant local street. Ambient noise levels at one end of the cluster may be influenced more by the highway and the other end may be affected more by the cross street, but the majority of the cluster would be represented by receiver site "Rec 3."

End of Example B-1

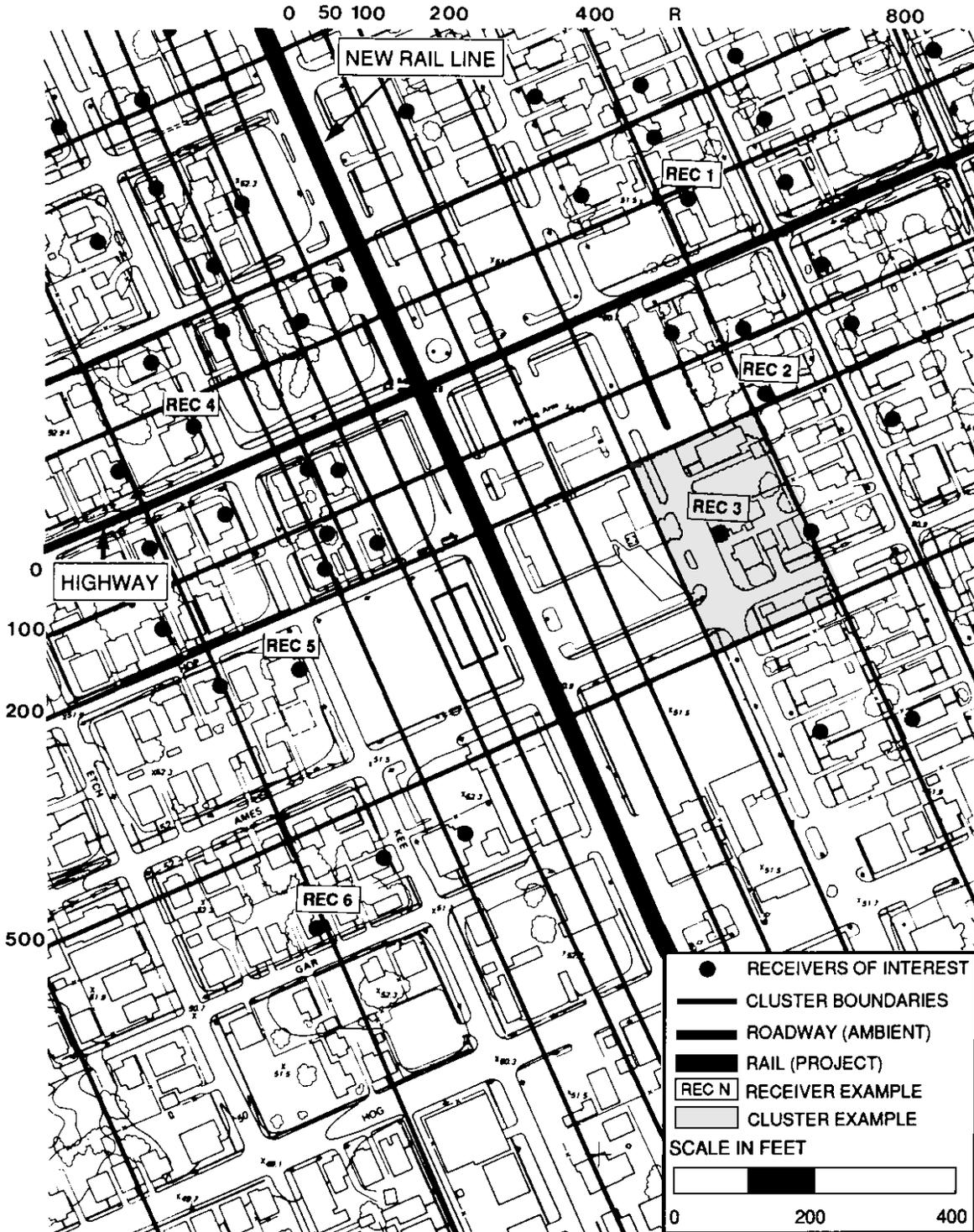


Figure B-1. Example of Receiver Map Showing Cluster Boundaries