

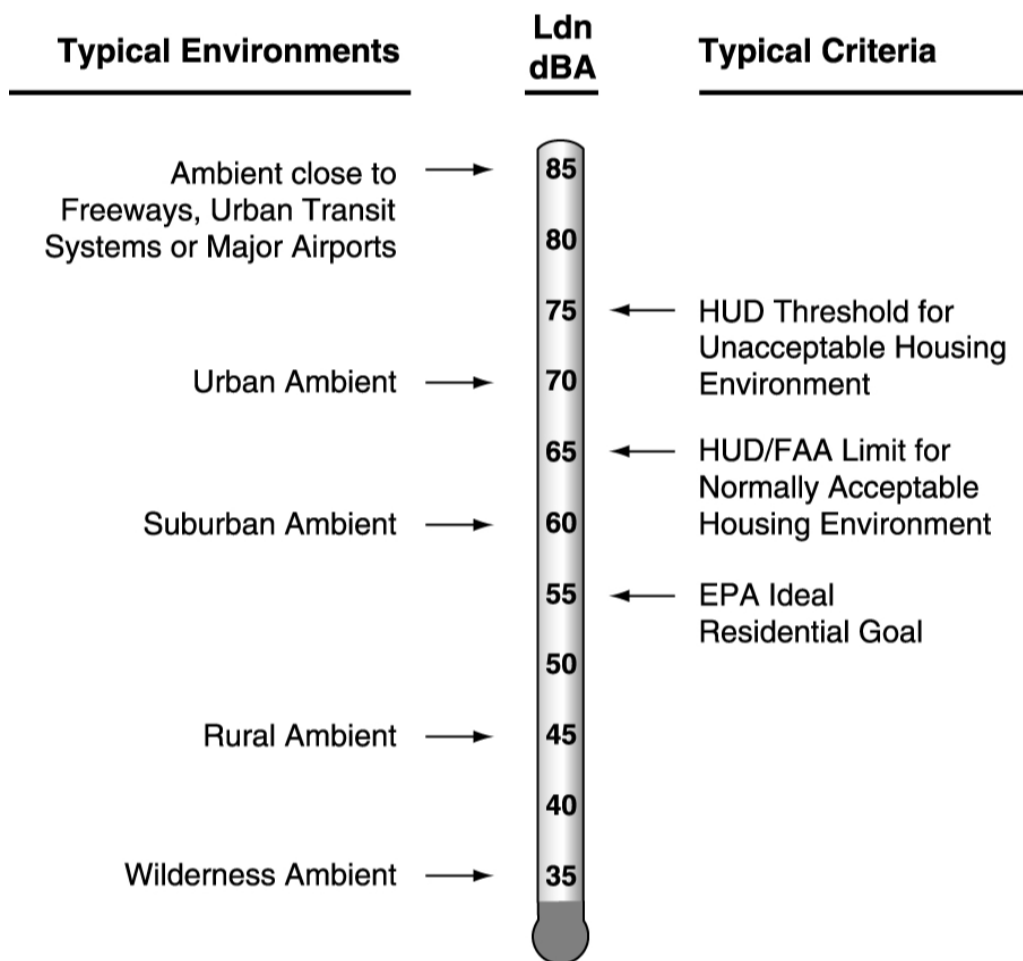
descriptor is widely used for environmental noise impact assessment. **Figure 3-18** provides examples of typical noise environments and criteria in terms of Ldn. While the extremes of Ldn are shown to range from 35 dBA in a wilderness environment to 85 dBA in noisy urban environments, Ldn is generally found to range between 55 dBA and 75 dBA in most communities. As shown in **Figure 3-18**, this spans the range between an “ideal” residential environment and the threshold for an unacceptable residential environment according to U.S. Federal agency criteria.

### 3.5.1 Transit Noise Criteria

Noise impact for this project is based on the criteria as defined in the U. S. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance manual **Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment** (FTA-VA-90-1003-06, May 2006). The FTA noise impact criteria are founded on well-documented research on community reaction to noise and are based on change in noise exposure using a sliding scale. Although more transit noise is allowed in neighborhoods with high levels of existing noise, smaller increases in total noise exposure are allowed with increasing levels of existing noise.

The FTA Noise Impact Criteria group noise sensitive land uses into the following three categories:

Category 1: Buildings or parks where quietness is an essential element of their purpose.



**Figure 3-18**  
**Examples of Typical Outdoor Noise Exposure**