



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
Public Works



Date: September 24, 2013
Board Meeting Date: October 22, 2013
Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: James C. Porter, Director of Public Works
Subject: Study Session: Alpine Road Truck Restrictions

RECOMMENDATION:

Provide direction on whether to proceed with process to restrict truck traffic on Alpine Road.

BACKGROUND:

Over the past several years, San Mateo County's Department of Public Works (Department) has received requests to address issues related to truck traffic along Alpine Road north of the I-280 freeway between Stowe Lane and I-280 (Map - Attachment A). Complainants have specifically objected to truck traffic affiliated with several small projects and expressed concerns over Stanford University's Medical Center improvements near Sand Hill Road in Palo Alto which are likely to be ongoing for several years.

Complainants have stated that there is excessive truck traffic on Alpine Road north of the I-280; that the trucks create dangerous driving conditions for other drivers on Alpine Road, including residents who rely on Alpine Road for ingress and egress to their homes along Alpine Road; that the trucks are noisy; and that truck drivers drive too fast around the bends in Alpine Road. Residents have requested that the speed limits be reduced and weight restrictions be placed on truck traffic.

Speed limit standards are regulated by the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Controls and Devices (MUTCD) and these standards do not allow for speed limits reductions below those currently posted for this type of road.

DISCUSSION:

In light of these complaints, the Department, under the County Manager's direction, investigated the process associated with banning trucks and solicited input from partnering agencies with responsibilities on this or immediately adjacent sections of road.

Because truck traffic on Alpine Road typically enters or exits at I-280, which is under Caltrans' control, efforts to restrict trucks along the specified segment will require Caltrans' support and approval as signs specifying the truck restrictions will be required within the Caltrans road right-of-way on I-280 and Alpine Road. Additionally, the northern portion of Alpine Road near Junipero Serra Boulevard is under the jurisdiction of the City of Menlo Park. Therefore, Menlo Park would need to approve truck restrictions on their segment of Alpine Road if truck restrictions are to be implemented.

In conjunction with our evaluation of a possible truck restriction on Alpine Road between I-280 and Junipero Serra Boulevard, we provided adjoining and affected agencies (City of Menlo Park, Town of Portola Valley, Caltrans, CHP, and the California Trucking Association) with the results of a truck origin/destination study for the Alpine Road Corridor recently performed by the County.

In general, agencies contacted expressed concerns regarding potential truck restrictions and suggested that additional studies be performed to further evaluate impacts beyond the Alpine Road Corridor.

A brief summary of the comments received to the proposal as well as a tabular synopsis of the comments and possible cost impacts of analyses requested are included below and in Attachment A.

City of Menlo Park: In order to make any recommendation to their Council, the City of Menlo Park has requested several additional studies for Level of Service (LOS) analysis and Noise analysis along the Sand Hill Road corridor and Alpine Road corridor. These studies are to be performed per the City of Menlo Park's Transportation Impact Analysis guidelines in line with their long range plan. The City of Menlo Park may require additional analyses once the results of the requested studies are provided and we believe their approval of a truck ban on Alpine Road would likely be contingent upon the installation of traffic and noise mitigation measures, such as new traffic signals, traffic signal interconnection and coordination, and improved roadway structural sections.

Town of Portola Valley: The Town of Portola Valley has concerns with the impact of the re-routed trucks when the Stanford Hospital project is complete in 2018. Alpine Road has been designated as a truck route in the Stanford Hospital EIR and the Town is concerned that any prohibition of trucks on Alpine Road will send a large number of trucks onto neighboring roadways after the construction is over and the hospital is in operation. The Town is requesting the County perform an analysis which includes all of the future truck traffic to be generated by the hospital operation. The Town of Portola Valley has suggested imposing a limitation on time that trucks can access Alpine Road instead of an outright prohibition on truck traffic.

California Department of Transportation: Caltrans has raised concerns with congestion levels at the adjacent interchanges located at Page Mill Road and Sand Hill Road if a truck ban were to be imposed on Alpine Road. Caltrans is asking that additional studies take into consideration any potential impact to these two adjacent interchanges.

California Highway Patrol (CHP): The CHP has raised concerns regarding safety if any additional trucks were added to the already busy Sand Hill Road and that Sand Hill Road has a more significant grade in the roadway than Alpine Road. CHP officers have been involved with the residents of Weekend Acres with regards to their concerns with truck traffic on Alpine Road. CHP has indicated that there has been a total of four traffic collisions involving commercial vehicles on Alpine Road over the past five years and that the officers have noted very few violations of the California Vehicle Code relating to the operation of these trucks or the actions of their drivers while travelling through this corridor.

California Trucking Association: There have been no comments from the California Trucking Association.

In summation, adjoining agencies have expressed significant concerns and have requested a considerable amount of additional studies so that the far reaching impacts of a truck ban might be better understood. Based on the extent of the expressed concerns, it would appear that preliminary additional analysis, at a potential total cost to San Mateo County of \$48,500, could reasonably be expected to generate a request for further analysis and/or mitigation that could exceed \$600,000.

The Department believes that a potential truck ban on Alpine Road lacks overall support from affected agencies; that there would be considerable concern as to whether the benefits of a truck ban on Alpine would be overshadowed by impacts to adjacent streets; and that the cost of this proposal may outweigh the achievable benefits.

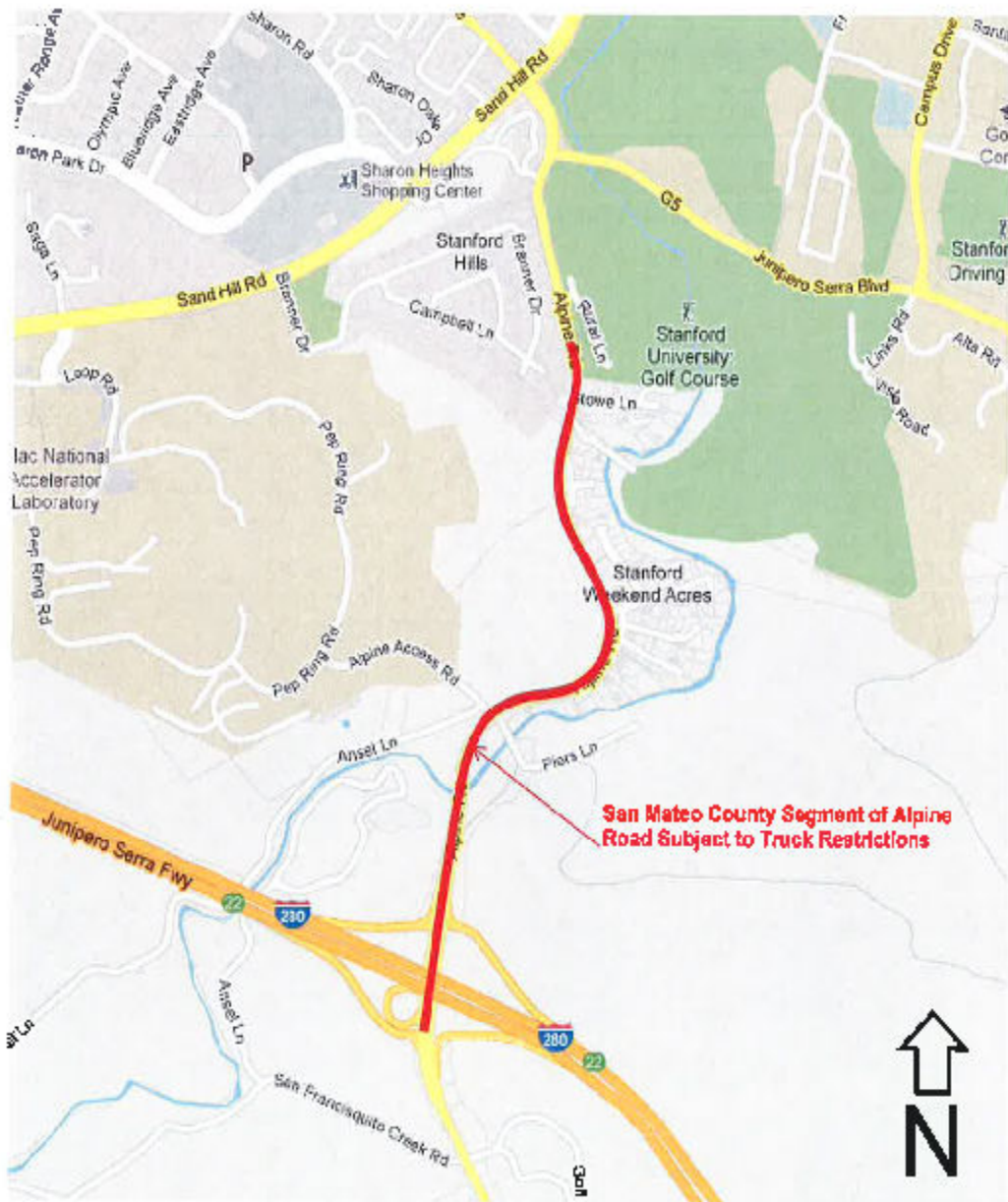
FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact at this time. Future study costs and construction improvements could total \$648,500 based on current estimates.

Attachments: Attachment "A:" Map of Subject Area
Attachment "B:" Summary of Agency Comments and Requested Analysis
or Mitigation Measures

Attachment "A" – Proposed Alpine Road Truck Restriction – Alpine Road Truck Restriction – Weekend Acres County Limits near Stowe Lane to Interstate 280

Map of Subject Area



Attachment “B”
Summary of Agency Comments and Requested Analysis or Mitigation Measures

Agency	Comments	Additional Studies Requested	Cost of Additional Studies Requested	Duration of Additional Studies Requested	Mitigation Measures	Cost of Mitigation Measures
City of Menlo Park	Additional Studies required. Analysis that identifies impacts which meet the City’s significant impact criteria may require mitigation or generate the need for additional studies	Level of Service Analysis on Sand Hill Road Corridor	\$36,500	30 days	Unknown. May include signalization improvements.	Up to \$300,000/intersection for signalization improvements. Two or more intersections are likely to be impacted.
		Noise Analysis on Sand Hill Road Corridor	\$12,000	30 days	unknown	unknown
Town of Portola Valley	Additional Studies required. May require mitigation or generate the need for additional studies	Analysis that includes future traffic generated by operation of Stanford Hospital after opening in 2018	Included in the \$36,500	-	unknown	unknown
CHP	Additional studies required. May require mitigation or generate the need for additional studies	Truck origin/destination studies on Sand Hill Road as possible alternate route and comparison with Alpine Road to better quantify impact	Included in the \$36,500	-	unknown	unknown
Caltrans	Additional studies required. May require mitigation or generate the need for additional studies	Additional studies to include impact on adjacent interchanges at Sand Hill Road and Page Mill Road	Included in \$36,500	-	unknown	unknown
California Trucking Association	No Comments	-	-		n/a	n/a
	TOTALS		\$48,500	60 days	unknown	Unknown. May include signalization improvements in excess of \$600,000.