April 10, 2018

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Board Members:

SUBJECT: Traffic Resolution Establishing a 30-foot Vehicle Length Restriction on a Portion of Muir Woods Road

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the resolution.

SUMMARY: Members of the public have expressed concern with buses crossing the centerline of the road along several curves on Muir Woods Road between the Muir Woods National Monument entrance and Panoramic Highway. This section of roadway is very steep with several sharp curves.

Muir Transit conducted an operational review of 30 and 32-foot buses along Muir Woods Road which included video cameras mounted on the buses to assess how well the buses of varying lengths traveled within the travel lanes. It was observed that the 32-foot-long buses crossed the centerline at several curves, while the 30-foot buses negotiated the curves within the travel lanes.

On December 16, 2014, your Board adopted a resolution to prohibit vehicles in excess of 36 feet on several County roads including Muir Woods Road. An enabling ordinance was previously adopted that established the authority to prohibit motor vehicles in excess of 36 feet on narrow and windy roads as specified by resolution. On January 9, 2018, your Board adopted an ordinance that expanded this authority to also allow adoption of 30-foot vehicle length prohibitions when specified by resolution.

The proposed restriction was circulated to Marin Transit, National Parks Service, and California Highway Patrol. All supported the proposed 30-foot vehicle length restriction. On January 16, 2018, a community meeting was held at the Muir Beach Community Center to review and discuss the proposed vehicle length restriction. Several members of the community expressed concerns that if the proposed 30-foot length restriction was adopted only on the portion of Muir Woods Road between the Muir Woods National Monument entrance and Panoramic Highway that the narrow section of Franks Valley Road/Muir Woods Road between Shoreline Highway (Hwy 1) and the Muir Woods National Monument entrance was too narrow to accommodate the increased tour bus
traffic. They requested that the proposed 30-foot vehicle length restriction be extended to include the entire section of Franks Valley Road/Muir Woods Road from Shoreline Highway (Hwy 1) to Panoramic Highway. Marin Transit and several tour bus companies have stated that if the parking restriction was extended to include all of Franks Valley Road/Muir Woods Road that they would not be able to provide service in the near-term. Current fleets rely on buses that exceed 30 feet in length and it would take some time and a substantial increase in funding to transition their bus fleets. The overall number of bus trips would also increase.

Marin County has received a Federal Lands Access Program Grant to improve Franks Valley Road/Muir Woods Road between Shoreline Highway and Panoramic Highway. The scope of this project includes widening the roadway to 22 feet, repaving the road and repairing/stabilizing slopes between the roadway and Redwood Creek. This project, however, is not scheduled to start construction until Spring 2020.

DPW staff conducted a field review of all of Franks Valley Road/Muir Woods Road to determine if any interim measures are needed. Three locations were identified where erosion has occurred between the roadway and Redwood Creek that warrant interim measures be implemented prior to the implementation of a 30-foot vehicle length restriction between Panoramic Highway and the Muir Woods National Monument entrance. The locations and interim measures are summarized below:

1. The first location is approximately one mile northeast of the existing stop signs (with shared, one-lane traffic control) near Santos Meadow. The erosion has intruded into the travel lane, narrowing it to 9 feet. Additional stop signs (with shared one lane traffic control) have recently been installed at this location.
2. The second location is approximately 200 feet north of the existing stop signs (with shared, one-lane traffic control) near Santos Meadow. The adjacent slope has eroded adjacent to the travel lane, but not into the travel lane. It is recommended that, prior to the implementation of the proposed 30-foot vehicle length restriction, the shoulder be widened on the opposite side of the road and the road restriped to shift the centerline. This will provide additional space between the edge of the travel way and the adjacent slope.
3. The third location is at the existing stop signs (with shared one lane traffic control) near Santos Meadow. The adjacent slope has eroded into the travel lane on the northbound approach to the stop control. It is recommended that, prior to the implementation of the proposed 30-foot vehicle length restriction, the shoulder be widened on the opposite side of the road and the road restriped to shift the centerline. This will allow vehicles to align within the travel lane at the stop sign and facilitate the passage of vehicles, including buses, through this section of road.

DPW has included the above recommended shoulder widening projects in their near-term work plan. Due to seasonal environmental restrictions on construction work in the area (such as the provision to protect the endangered spotted owl), those improvements are not scheduled to be begin construction until September 2018, with completion in December 2018.
Board of Supervisors  
April 10, 2018  
Page 3 of 3  

DPW staff recommends that the following vehicle length prohibitions be established and conditioned to not be posted and implemented until after the above shoulder widening projects are completed:

1) The portion of Muir Woods Road between Panoramic Highway and the Muir Woods National Monument entrance (milepost 1.52) be added to a list of roads in which vehicles of 30 feet in length are prohibited, and

2) The portions of Muir Woods Road and Franks Valley Road between the Muir Woods National Monument entrance (milepost 1.52) and Shoreline Highway (Hwy 1) remain on the list of roads in which vehicles of 36 feet in length are prohibited.

The attached resolution also includes text to reflect the renaming of a portion of Muir Woods Road to Franks Valley Road that was adopted by the Marin County Deputy Zoning Administrator on December 15, 2016.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** This action will result in the installation and ongoing maintenance of new signage. Existing funds are budgeted and available in Road Org 21625531. There is no additional impact to the General Fund by this action.

**REVIEWED BY:**

[ ] County Administrator [ ] Department of Finance [ ] County Counsel [ ] Human Resources

[ X ] N/A [ X ] N/A [ X ] N/A [ X ] N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Goralka, P.E., T.E.
Principal Civil Engineer

Attachment: Resolution

c: Robert Mota, Lieutenant, CHP  
Mike Ridgway, Undersheriff  
David Augustus, Captain, Marin County Sheriff’s Office  
Nina Snyder, Lieutenant, Marin County Sheriff’s Office  
Darren Brown, Transportation Planner, GGNRA, National Parks Service  
Mia Monroe, Park Ranger, National Parks Service