

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MT BOUCHERIE – MENU RD, VINEYARD, MCCALLUM RD REVIEW

Boulevard Transportation Group was retained by the District of West Kelowna to conduct a traffic study for the south Mt Boucherie area of West Kelowna, specifically in the area of Vineyard Dr and Menu Rd. Specific concerns to be addressed are vehicular volumes and speeds, the potential need for traffic calming, and what the potential traffic and safety impacts might be should one or two new cross-mountain road connections (at Menu Rd and/or McCallum Rd) be made. Based on the investigation, recommendations are made regarding the traffic network along with associated mitigation measures.

Traffic measurements were made and a residents survey was conducted in order to understand the origins and destinations that would benefit from the opening of the cross mountain connections.

This data was then analyzed using traffic models.

Connection Options

There were three alternatives that were considered in regards to managing Mt Boucherie traffic. They are as follows:

- 1) Leave as-is (closed)
- 2) Open connection(s) (Menu and McCallum)
- 3) Allow special vehicle access across Menu Rd only

Option 1: Leave as-is

This option is the status-quo, with Menu Rd and McCallum Rd being fully closed at their west termini.

PROS:

- no new traffic is added to existing residential streets; safety and street ambiance unaffected

CONS:

- all vehicles must continue to exit via one route only (Vineyard Dr or Ourland Rd); added travel time / emissions
- emergency vehicle and transit vehicle passage is either difficult or not possible.

Option 2: Open Connection(s)

This option would open Menu Rd, McCallum Rd, or both to all traffic.

PROS:

- Overall traffic volumes would be largely unaffected on Ourland Rd and Vineyard Dr
- More route options that provide convenience and directness; reduced travel time and emissions.
- Opportunities for introducing transit service and for better facilitating emergency vehicle access. Introducing transit would reduce traffic volumes.

CONS:

- New traffic is added to currently low-volume residential streets (up to 1,000 veh/day)
- Adding traffic to the narrow geometry on Menu Rd (that also has no sidewalk) is a concern, as well as adding traffic to the intersection of Ourtoland Rd & Menu Rd (which has an undesirable skew, leading to sight line and approach speed concerns).
- Providing traffic calming and/or sidewalks on Menu Rd is therefore an important consideration for this option, but this is difficult and expensive given the limited available right-of-way and the topography constraints.

Option 3: Special Vehicle Access Only

This option would allow passage for emergency vehicles and potentially transit vehicles, as well as public works vehicles, but not general private vehicles. The benefit is that this option would better facilitate special vehicle access than at present without otherwise affecting general traffic patterns. This could be done through the installation of a gate system, which could potentially be electronically activated. Such electronic systems have been used effectively in Calgary, Edmonton, and in Europe to allow transit access but not general vehicle access.

PROS:

- Improved emergency vehicle access
- In the future, transit could potentially be introduced, resulting in reduced overall traffic volumes
- no new traffic is added to existing residential streets; safety and street ambiance unaffected

CONS:

- all private vehicle trips must continue to exit via one route only (Vineyard Dr or Ourtoland Rd); added travel time / emissions

Recommended Strategy

In consideration of the data collection, resident's survey, and pros and cons of the options, it is recommended that Option 3: Special Vehicle Access Only be adopted on Menu Rd. This option would provide enhanced emergency response and allow for future transit service without unduly impacting existing residents on the hillside roads (Pinot Gris, Menu Rd, McCallum Rd) or adversely affecting the drive options for those residents not on the hill (e.g. Vineyard Dr residents can continue to use existing available routes which are just as (if not more) convenient). Menu Rd is preferable to McCallum Rd as it is more accessible to a greater number of residents should transit service ever be implemented.

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Example of an Automated Bollard System for Special Vehicle Access

As part of this plan, traffic calming along Vineyard Dr should be undertaken, since speeding was identified as an issue and the area is residential. It is recommended that a combination of median rumble strips and curb extensions be installed. These measures were selected since they can reduce vehicle speeds without invasively impacting vehicles (unlike, for example, speed humps), which is preferable for emergency, transit, and through-traffic vehicles.