

# Okanagan Lake Second Crossing Project

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## Highway 97 – Peachland Transportation Study Fact-Finding

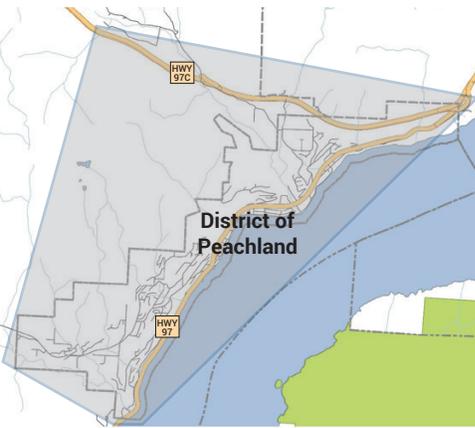


Photo courtesy of District of Peachland

**Consultation Companion**  
Open House — Spring/Summer 2016



Ministry of  
Transportation  
and Infrastructure



## How to use this Consultation Companion

This booklet is designed to work as a companion to information displays and the Comment Form.

Your responses, combined with those of other participants, will help in the development and, eventually, selection, of future transportation improvement options.



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## Welcome

Thank you for participating in this consultation for the Peachland Transportation Study. This Consultation Companion document provides an introduction to the work currently under way to assess options for the Highway 97 corridor in Peachland for the short, medium and long term.

### How to get involved and help plan for the future:

- Visit <http://www.gov.bc.ca/peachlandtransportationstudy> to find background and technical information
- Attend an open house—see below
- Arrange a presentation / dialogue session for your group or organization
- Read this Consultation Companion and complete a Feedback Form (online or hard copy)
- Sign up to receive ongoing updates—see contact details below.

Please submit your feedback by June 30, 2016.

### Public Open Houses\*

Date	Time	Venue
June 21, 2016	4:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Peachland Community Centre

Future sessions to be held in Fall 2016 and in 2017

\*Please visit <http://www.gov.bc.ca/peachlandtransportationstudy> for the most current information

### Stakeholder Meetings

In addition to open houses and online consultation, the project team is meeting with a Community Liaison Committee and a Technical Advisory Group established by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to help identify opportunities, considerations, issues and concerns.

### Other Opportunities

Presentations and dialogue sessions with local groups and organizations can be arranged by contacting us via the information below.

**Web:** <http://www.gov.bc.ca/peachlandtransportationstudy>

**Email:** Peachland97study@gov.bc.ca

**Phone:** 250-712-3660

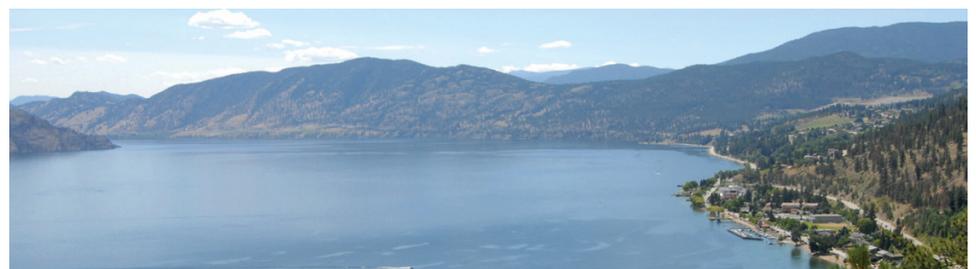


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## At the Crossroads

The appeal of the Central Okanagan area has been reflected in strong economic and population growth, accompanied by increasing highway traffic volumes. The Highway 97 corridor is the only north-south link connecting Okanagan communities and is vital to the region's economy. The segment of this corridor through Peachland is the last remaining two-lane portion between Penticton and Vernon. The time for safety and mobility improvements is approaching.

The timing of the Highway 97—Peachland Transportation study coincides with the start of an update by the District of Peachland to its Official Community Plan. The study has linkages to the Central Okanagan Planning Study and the Okanagan Lake Second Crossing project, and is being undertaken with significant stakeholder and public input to objectively:

- Examine current transportation needs for the Highway 97 corridor through Peachland
- Identify future transportation needs through Peachland
- Identify and assess possible short, medium, and long-term solutions to address future needs through / around Peachland.

The study will result in the identification of two scenarios:

- one preferred option within the existing corridor
- one preferred option using an alternate route

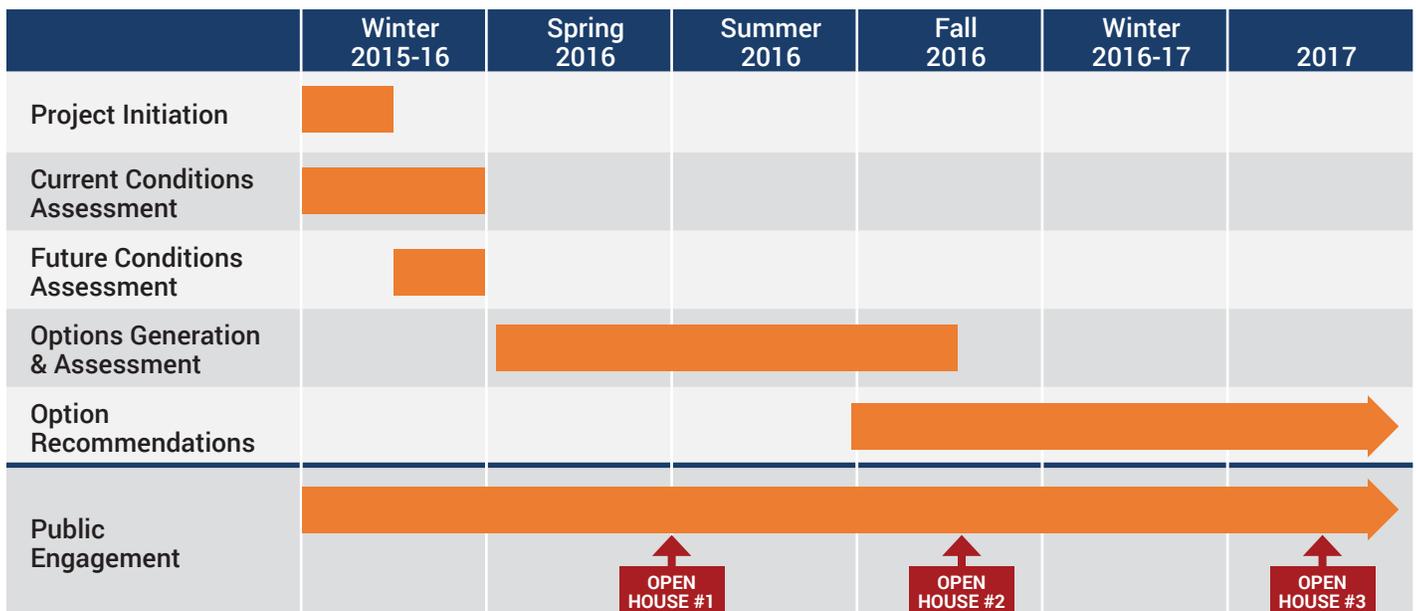
The study will not choose between these scenarios; that choice will be made by the Ministry in the future, following careful consideration of the study results and community input.

## Your Input is Important

Your input throughout the study will be considered by the Ministry, together with the input of local governments, technical data, overall provincial government priorities and other information as it evaluates options to meet the future transportation needs of the area.

## Purpose of this Consultation

At this fact-finding stage, we are looking at information that will be relevant to the study. This includes demographics, community plans, traffic/safety and other factors. We are also examining existing and future conditions on the Highway 97 corridor. Our purpose in consulting you is to ensure that we are aware of the issues, opportunities and concerns to be considered when potential options are explored.



## Community Context

The Peachland Transportation Study occurs just as the District of Peachland undertakes a major update to its Official Community Plan (OCP), which had its last major revision in 2001.

Primarily a residential area with a current population of approximately 5,200, the District has the theoretical potential to build out to a population of 27,000 or more. This build-out may be seen as ambitious, and would take half a century or more to achieve, but it forms part of the overall transportation context.

While the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) consistently exceeded population growth rates in BC during the period 2001-2013, annual growth in Peachland has not kept pace with either the RDCO or even BC as a whole. The population actually declined during the period 2009-2013.

The proportion of residents 65 and over exceeds the rest of the Central Okanagan Region, which itself is higher than the provincial average. Nearly half the households are “empty-nesters”. Pensions form a larger proportion of the total income than found in other parts of the RDCO.

The current OCP for Peachland forecasts a population between a low of approximately 6,700 and a high of about 8,300 by 2022. On the other hand, if historical patterns continue, Peachland’s population by 2040 will be only about 7,700. For the purposes of this study, the options to be developed will be based on a 2040 population of 7,700 with sensitivity analysis considering a range of up to 13,000.

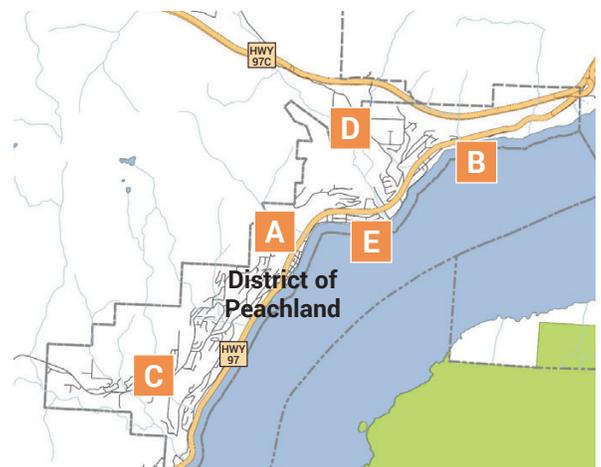
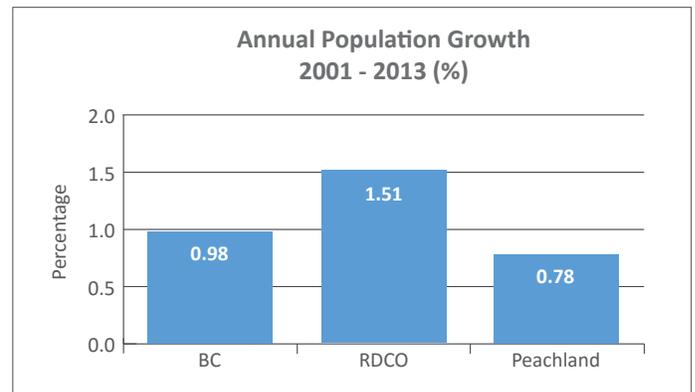
To date, growth areas have been concentrated above Highway 97, with the exception of Lower Princeton and infilling within the Downtown zone. Areas identified for future development include:

- A.** Ponderosa/Pincushion, to contain over 2,100 residential units
- B.** New Monaco, with 2,800 residential units proposed
- C.** Upper and Lower Princeton Avenue, with 700 residential units proposed
- D.** Tabletop Mountain Resort, with a 58 unit hotel and 20 cottages approved
- E.** Downtown, with 800 new and infill residential units proposed.

All of these developments have been slow to build out. Reasons cited include the overall state of the economy and historical uncertainty over long-term plans for the Highway 97 corridor.

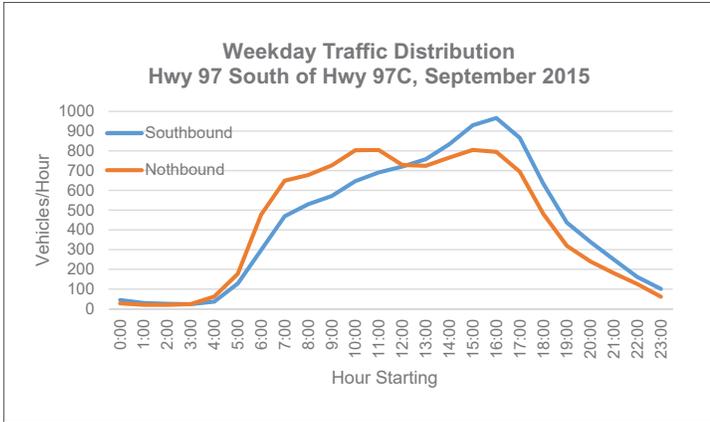
The local economy is reflective of the regional economy with an emphasis on tourism, recreation, agriculture and agribusiness, construction and service industries.

The District of Peachland falls within the traditional territories of some First Nations represented in the Okanagan Nation Alliance.



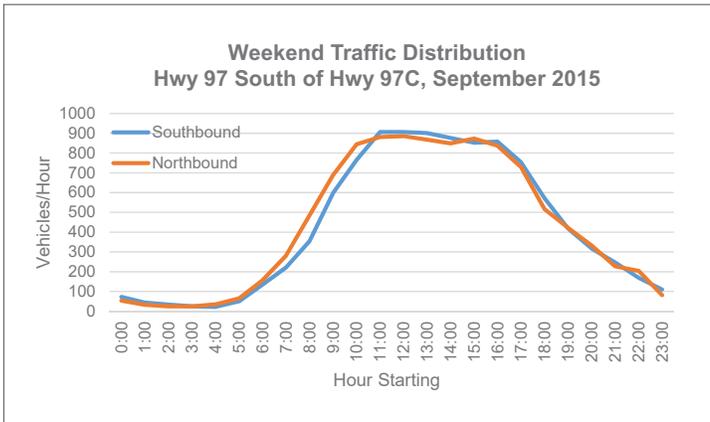
# Destinations—In Peachland and Beyond

In most communities, travel from home to work and back again represents a major portion of the traffic within the community. Peachland is different. The proportion of employment to residential land use is very low, and the retired / non-working population in Peachland is considerably higher than most of the rest of the province. As a result, travel patterns in Peachland are unique.



**Peak traffic in the morning occurs later than in most communities; afternoon peak traffic is earlier**

Without a high number of commuters, peak traffic in the morning coincides with the opening of services, shopping and other activities at around 10 am.



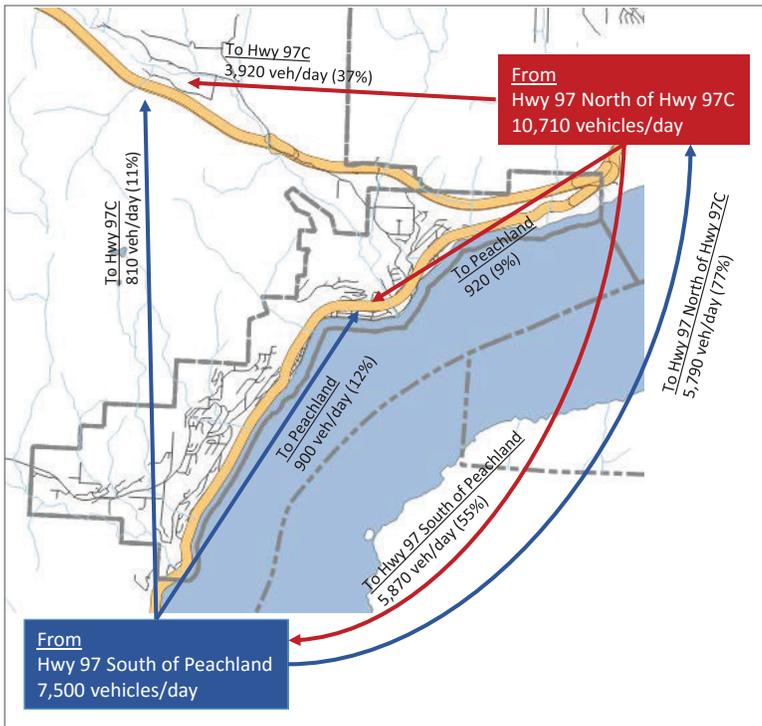
**Weekend traffic is important**

Peak weekend hourly traffic volumes are similar to weekdays, with the highest level occurring late in the morning and continuing into the afternoon.



Photo courtesy of District of Peachland

# Destinations—In Peachland and Beyond



## Highway 97 in Peachland Serves a High Proportion of Through Traffic

An extensive origin-destination survey completed during a two-week period in August 2014 shows that the majority of traffic on Highway 97 in Peachland is through traffic. In this survey, 12% of the traffic entering Peachland from the south and 9% from the north is destined for Peachland. Some through travellers may stop and use services in Peachland, but then continue to an ultimate destination beyond. This is based on 24-hour data for the two weeks of the survey.

Most traffic entering Peachland from the south is destined north of Highway 97C (77%), while just over half of traffic from north of the Highway 97C interchange is destined for south of Peachland.

August 2014 (24 hrs/day, two weeks) –  
Daily Traffic Entering Peachland on Highway 97

## About One-Third of Trips Generated in Peachland Stay in Peachland

Based on regional traffic modelling for typical weekday AM and PM peak periods, roughly one-third of trips that start in Peachland also have a destination in Peachland (29% in the morning; 37% in the afternoon). Most trips leaving Peachland have a destination north of the District (69% in the morning; 61% in the afternoon). Only 2% of traffic originating in Peachland in the morning or afternoon peak hours has a destination south of Peachland.

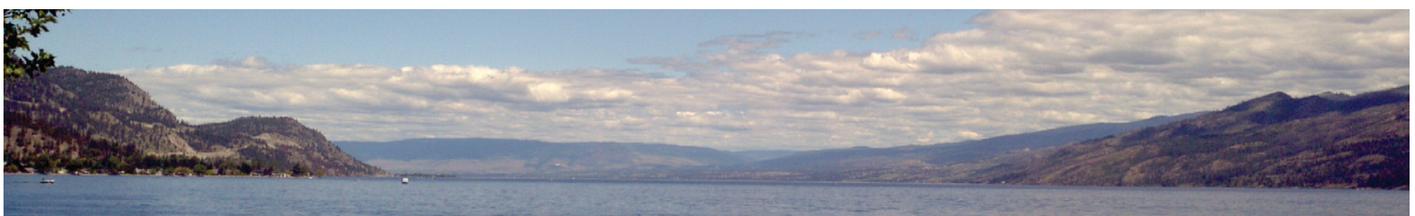
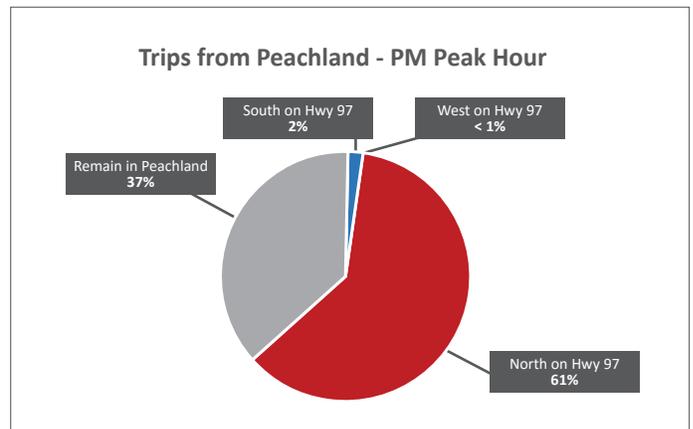
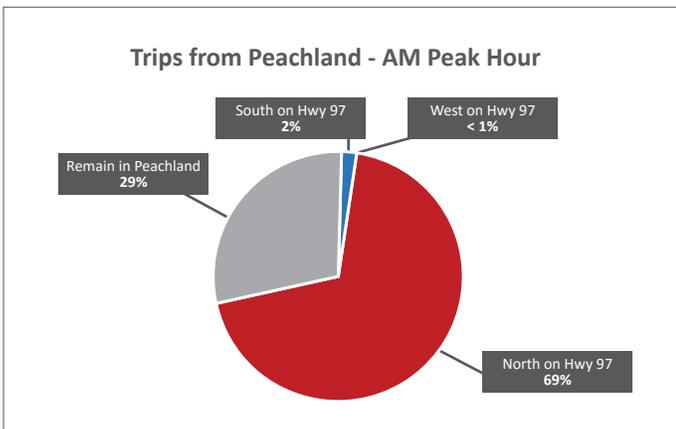
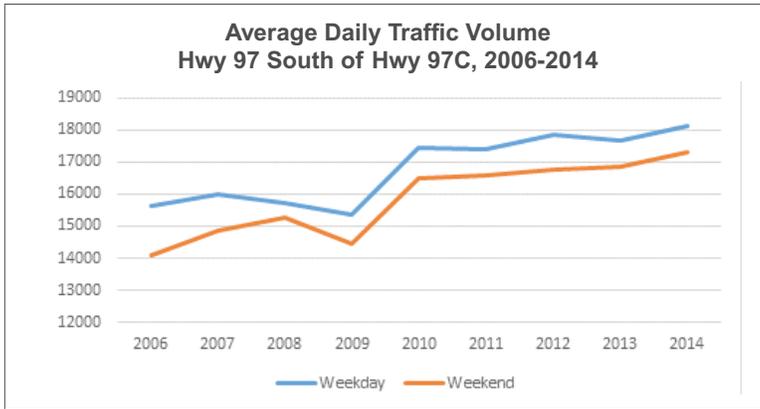


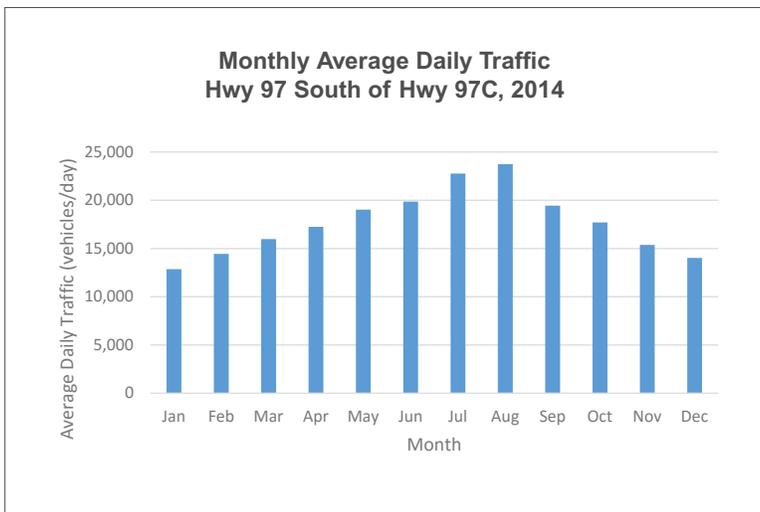
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# Existing and Future Traffic Conditions



## Traffic growth has been slow

The segment of Highway 97 through Peachland is primarily a two-lane regional undivided highway, with posted speeds of 90 km/h and 70 km/h. Traffic volumes have grown slowly in recent years, from slightly under 15,000 vehicles daily (annual average daily traffic, measured south of Drought Hill) in 2006 to approximately 18,000 in 2013.



## Traffic volumes are much higher in summer

Not surprisingly, traffic volumes during summer months are much higher than in the other seasons. In August, the average daily volume is more than 30% higher than the annual average, and is 80% higher than January volumes. There is significant seasonal variation in total volumes, with the average daily levels in August being close to 25,000. The highway through Peachland is clearly becoming busier, and Peachland itself is a destination for a portion of that traffic. Weekend volumes also increase in summer months, and daily volumes on weekends are higher than the annual average from May to August.



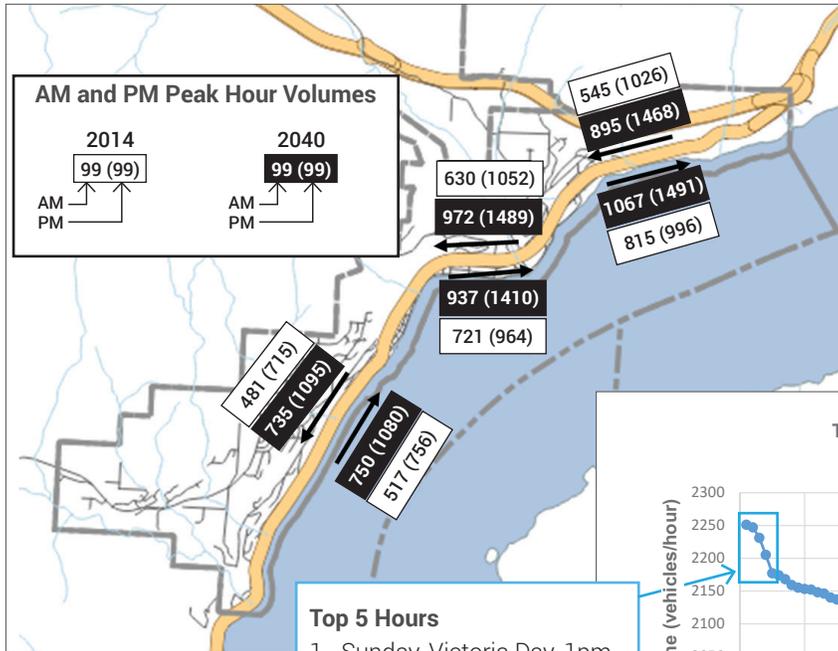
Photo courtesy of District of Peachland

# Existing and Future Traffic Conditions

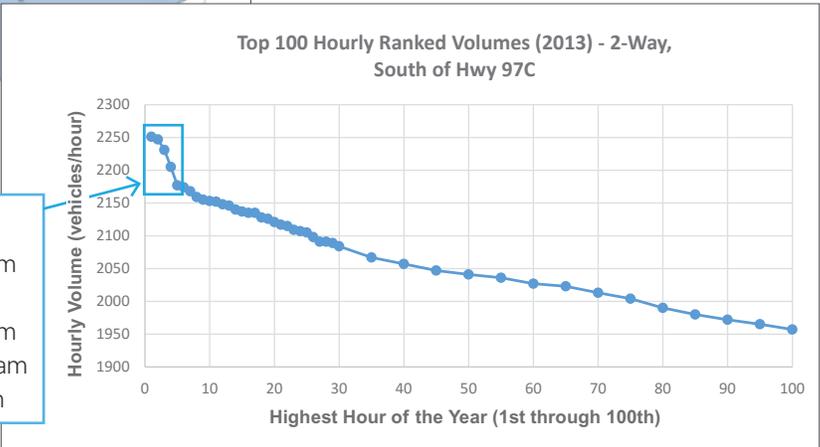
## Traffic moves well along the highway... except when it doesn't

Heavy congestion is rare through Peachland, but when it happens, it is very congested. Congestion generally occurs on spring and summer long weekends and when there are special events in the region. The top five highest hours of the year all fall on holiday/summer weekends, and two of them coincide with the annual World of Wheels car show. However these are not typical. While there is a small number of hours in the year when traffic volumes are very high, causing significant congestion, most of the time the traffic flows well.

As traffic continues to grow, the number of times in a year when there is congestion will increase. By 2040, with no improvements to the highway, traffic on the highway will continue to move freely during typical AM and PM peak hours, but driving will become frustrating with almost no opportunity to pass cars ahead. Periods of congestion will become increasingly frequent.



- Top 5 Hours**
1. Sunday, Victoria Day, 1pm
  2. Monday, BC Day, noon
  3. Sunday, Victoria Day, 2pm
  4. Saturday, August 10, 11am
  5. Sunday, August 11, noon



The increase in travel time through Peachland 25 years from now will be 3 minutes or less during peak periods. While this is a relatively small increase, it will be noticeable to most drivers.

## Estimated Travel Time Changes 2014 - 2040

	North of Hwy 97C to South of Peachland	
	AM	PM
2014	8.5 min.	9.5 min.
2040	10 min.	12.5 min.
<b>Change</b>	<b>+1.5 min.</b>	<b>+3.0 min.</b>

	South of Peachland to North of Hwy 97C	
	AM	PM
2014	9 min.	9.5 min.
2040	10 min.	11.5 min.
<b>Change</b>	<b>+1 min.</b>	<b>+2.0 min.</b>

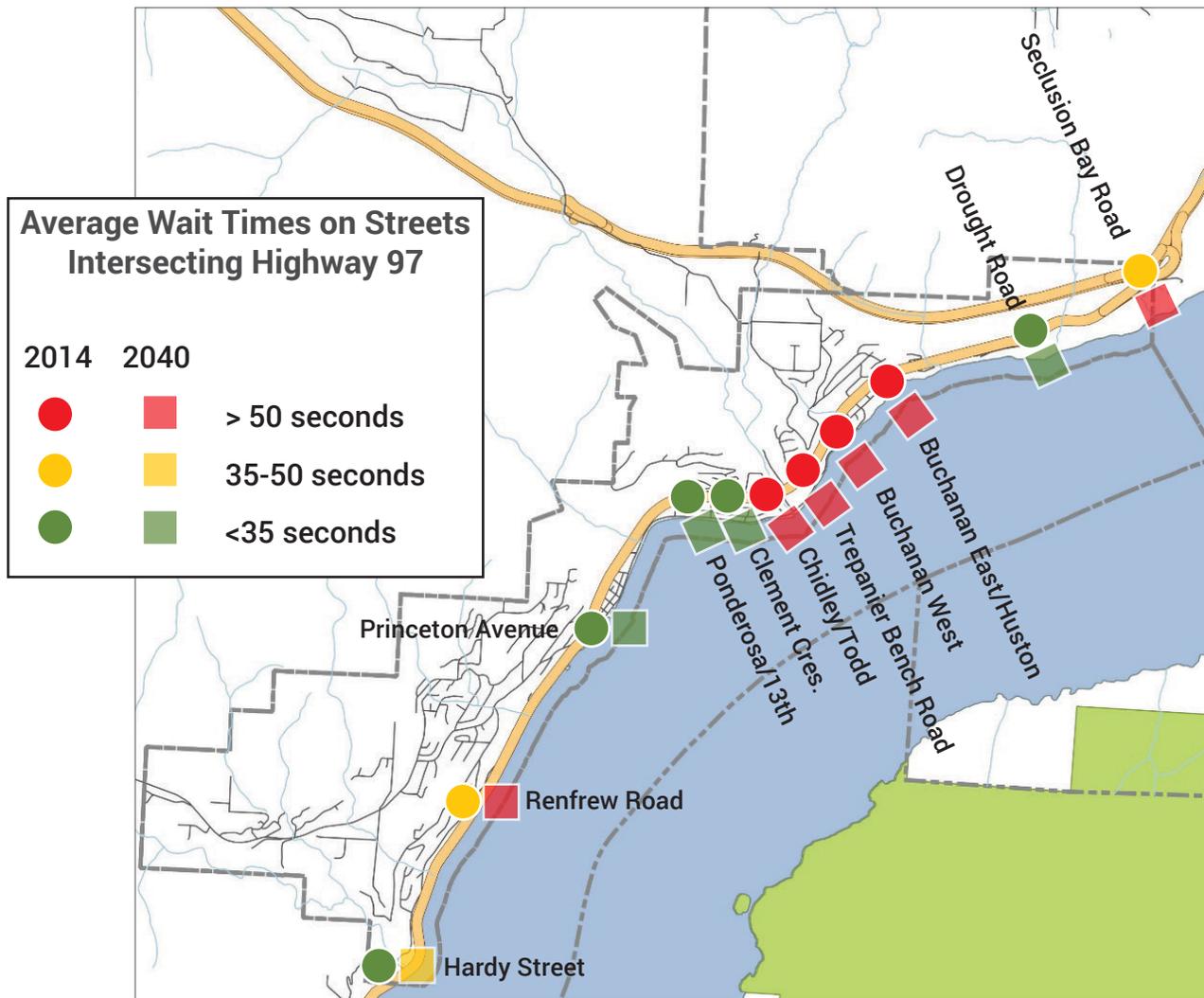
# Existing and Future Traffic Conditions

## Crossing and Turning onto Highway 97 is challenging

With current traffic volumes, particularly in peak periods during the high season, it is difficult to find gaps in the traffic at unsignalized intersections. This creates delays getting on and across the highway at some of Peachland's intersections. As traffic increases on the highway, delays for local street traffic will also increase.

The performance of the intersections and the lack of pedestrian facilities and convenient crossing opportunities compound the barrier-like nature of the highway. In addition, the lack of inter-neighbourhood connections means that most travel within Peachland requires using or crossing Highway 97.

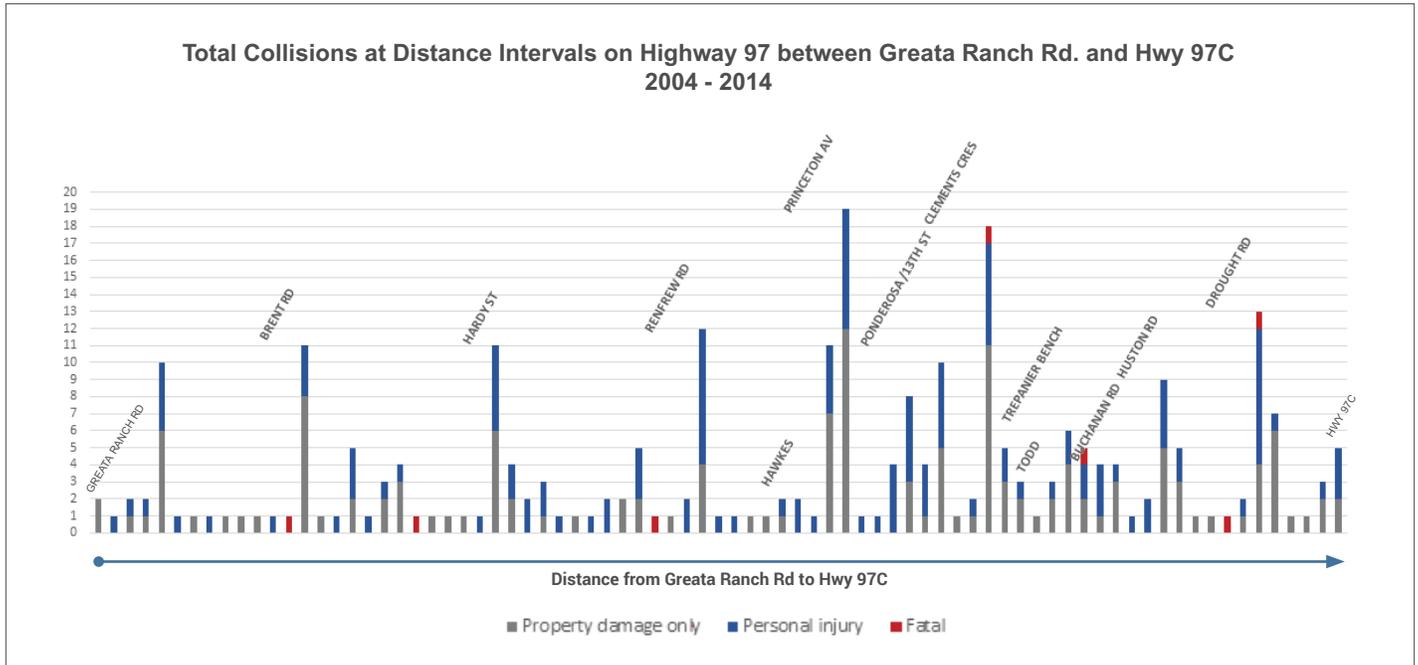
The challenges in accessing or crossing Highway 97 are most pronounced in the PM peak hour. Delays at some intersections are already very high. Most notably, drivers at Huston Road can expect delays of several minutes. By 2040, drivers will experience major delays when trying to turn onto or across the highway at several more intersections, including Renfrew Road, Todd/Chidley, and Buchanan Road West. These challenges make driving uncomfortable and may lead to risk-taking as drivers attempt to cross or make turns onto the highway.



# Existing and Future Traffic Conditions

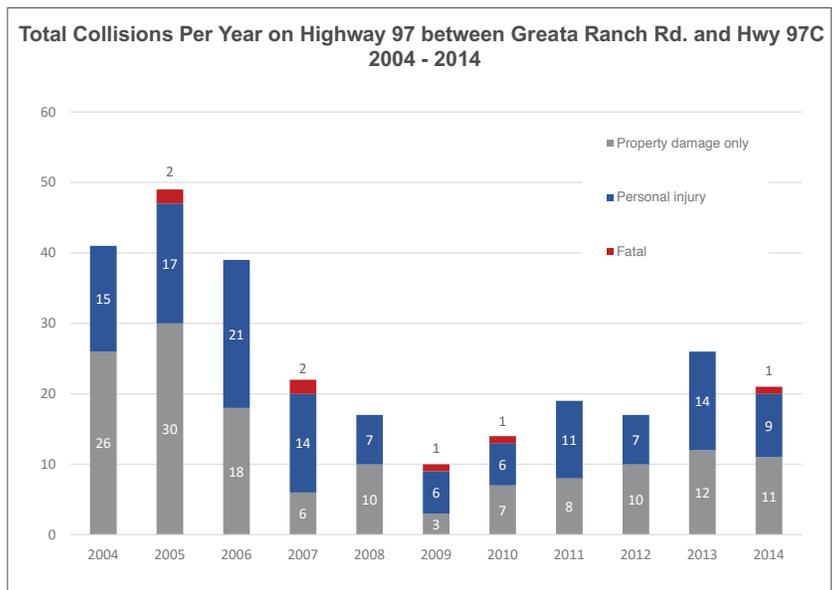
## The number of collisions is not high, but they tend to be severe

Most collisions occur at intersections, which is typical of most highway corridors. In the 10-year period from 2004 to 2014, the highest number of collisions occurred at Clements Crescent (18) and Princeton Avenue (19). When considered as a rate (number of collisions per millions vehicles per year), these intersections have a much lower collision rate than the provincial average for comparable intersections. In fact, none of the intersections in Peachland has a collision rate that is higher than the provincial average.



Signals were added at Clements Crescent in 2011, however there has been no significant change in the number or type of collisions since then. When considered as a rate (number of collisions per millions of vehicles per year), these intersections have a significantly lower collision rate than the provincial average for comparable intersections. Further, none of the intersections in Peachland have a collision rate that is higher than the provincial average.

For all collisions through the full corridor, "Driver Inattentive" was reported as the most common first contributing factor, accounting for 21% of all collisions and 25% of injury and fatal collisions.



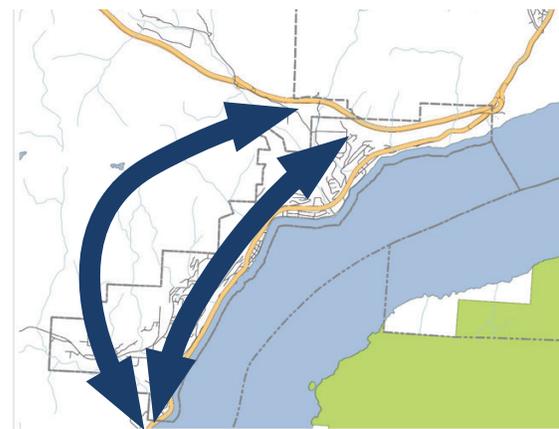
**Input requested:** What do you see as the major issues on the highway?

## Next Steps: Options and Considerations

The Peachland Transportation Study will develop two sets of options for further consideration:

- Options within the existing corridor
- Options using an alternate alignment

This study will not choose between existing-corridor and alternate alignment options. Rather, it will ultimately recommend one best option from each set, i.e. a Corridor Preferred Option and an Alternate Alignment Preferred Option. The process of identifying, developing and evaluating options will take into account the wide-ranging input being received from the community, and will require consideration of many factors including:



### Land Use Impacts

Any transportation improvements should, as much as possible, be integrated with existing and planned future land use. Review of official community plans and ongoing stakeholder engagement are essential.

### Environmental Protection

*Air Quality and Emissions:* In 2007, the B.C. Government set a bold target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia by 33 per cent by 2020. Some of this reduction will come from cleaner fuels, but some will also come from reducing congestion-related idling, and reducing our dependency on the single-occupant vehicle.

*Habitat:* The balance of human interaction with nature is often a delicate one. Plants, animals and fish require consideration and protection.

### Local Economy

Impacts and opportunities for the local economy must be considered. We will continue to consult with the District of Peachland and business organizations in this regard.

### Goods Movement

The Highway 97 corridor through the Central Okanagan is part of the National Transportation System. However, it is not a primary through route for goods movement and the majority of traffic is regional. Nevertheless, future plans need to support the movement of goods into and out of the area.

### Tourism, Recreation & Health

With the increasing importance of tourism to the Central Okanagan, the corridor of the future must do more than provide safe and efficient travel and access to services, but support visitors and residents alike in their desire to experience the natural beauty and recreational opportunities in the area.

### Community Liveability

Any improvements will occur with consideration of community impacts. Communities must remain accessible, there must be consideration of visual impacts. Noise impacts must also be taken into account. Ongoing engagement will be essential in assessing and avoiding or mitigating such impacts.

### Heritage & Archaeology

Engagement is ongoing with area First Nations to identify and address matters of heritage and archaeology, as well as current and future economic opportunities and development.

### Affordability & Cost

The study will provide cost estimates to be applied in a business case that will be required to assess the feasibility of significant initiatives.

***Input requested:*** In addition to the factors listed above, what should the Ministry consider before determining how it will make its investment in managing highway traffic through the Peachland area?

## Contact Information:

### Highway 97 - Peachland Transportation Study

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
#300 – 1358 St. Paul Street  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2E1  
250-712-3660

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## Sources:

BC Stats  
District of Peachland  
HDR Consultants  
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Parsons - Central Okanagan Planning Study  
Statistics Canada

All of the information provided in this Consultation Companion is based on the most recent complete data available.



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