

**Interim Report Number 1**  
**Mooretown Rancheria Transportation Planning Study**



**Submitted to:**

**Mooretown Rancheria Tribal Council**

**Prepared by:**

**Local Government Commission; Michael Sweeney, AICP;  
and KD Anderson and Associates**

**November 2007**

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**Prepared by Local Government Commission; Michael Sweeney, AICP;**  
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(November 2007)

**Summary & Recommendations**

The following summary describes existing transportation and circulation conditions at the Mooretown Rancheria, Butte County, California. The purpose of the report is to identify transportation related issues, especially in the context of improving pedestrian flow and roadway design to support existing and future economic and community development at the Rancheria.

The summary is based on a review of the 2003 Transportation Plan, 2000 Land Use Plan, a field review that included interviews with tribal council, staff, and community members, and a traffic study completed in October 2007.

Transportation Plan

Many of the projects identified in the 2003 Transportation Plan have been completed. Projects identified but not completed in the 2003 Transportation Plan are listed below:

Flashing yellow light in front of casino;

Installation of “speed humps” as a traffic calming mechanism in residential areas; and

Grading, draining and paving the south side of Lorene Court.

Additionally, the 2003 Transportation Plan also proposed amending selected segments of Rancheria roadways for inclusion and exclusion on the BIA road system.

The 2003 Transportation Plan identified the issue of whether or not a fountain and walkway encroaches upon a non-exclusive easement for 60-feet of road over Lorene Court and Alverda Drive granted to Dennis Robinson. This issue has yet to be resolved.

The 2003 Transportation Plan called for elimination of the bottleneck which occurs at the fixed entrance and exit point into the mini-mart parking lot from Lower Wyandotte Road. This issue remains unresolved

**Recommendation:** These projects and others that may be identified in this study should be considered for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Plan list for the 2007 Transportation Plan update, pending the recommendations of this Transportation Planning Study.

### Traffic Accidents

According to the 2003 Transportation Plan, most traffic accidents occur on Alverda Drive and are of minor-collisions and failure to yield in origin. The intersection of Lower Wyandotte Road and Feather Falls Boulevard also experiences traffic accidents. Most of these are a result of poor sight distance and speeding. Accidents also occur in the mini-mart parking lot.

**Recommendation:** Improvements necessary to address these issues should be considered for inclusion on the improvement plan list for the 2007 Transportation Plan update or modified as a result of this study.

### Land Use Plan

The projected population for Tribal enrollment in 2010 is 1,656, an increase of 452 persons. The 20% target percentage for housing results in a total of 331 additional housing units. To date, a total of 50 housing units have been developed. Land is available for an additional 42 housing units. Roads and utilities have been installed to serve future residential lots.

Since 2000, a gymnasium (including facilities for early childhood development), and facilities for health and social services, education and training classrooms and public safety have been constructed. Similarly, the existing casino has been expanded and the hotel and RV Park, mini-mart and gas station have been constructed.

Projects called for in the 2000 Land Use Plan but not completed to date include baseball fields, neighborhood parks, and natural open space along with a visitor's center and/or a cultural museum facility as well as a large gathering area for tribal activities.

The Land Use Plan also called for development of facilities for a laundry and smoke shop, office space for tribal businesses and retail development and an events center. A parking garage and an events center have also been slated for development adjacent to the casino.

**Recommendation:** These and other future development projects that may be identified in this study should be reflected in the 2007 Transportation Plan update as a basis for evaluating future transportation and circulation needs.

## Traffic Study

A recent traffic study described current traffic volume levels and accompanying traffic operations on the roadways and intersections within the study area (See Attachment 1 - Traffic Impact Analysis for Mooretown Rancheria Transportation Plan, Butte, Ca, KD Anderson & Associates, Inc., October 2007). Traffic count information yielded the following conclusions:

The volume on Lower Wyandotte Road is higher on weekdays than on weekends, even with the traffic being generated by Feather Falls Casino.

The weekday volumes on the Rancheria's roads that link the site with Lower Wyandotte Road are also similar to but slightly higher than the observed weekend volumes.

Review of turning movement counts yields the following conclusions.

During these peak hours, close to 90% of the traffic arriving at the Rancheria is from the west on Lower Wyandotte Road.

Entering traffic during these peak hours typically uses the Feather Fall Access (80%) rather than Alverda Drive (20%) even though they drive past the Alverda Drive entrance.

More than half of the traffic exiting the Rancheria uses Alverda Drive to reach Lower Wyandotte Road.

Pedestrian counts revealed very little pedestrian activity at any location except for the main Casino access intersection on Alverda Drive. At this intersection, 422 and 455 pedestrians were observed crossing Alverda Drive during the highest volume hour before and after the show, respectively.

90% of the pedestrians crossing Alverda Drive used a well-marked crosswalk across Alverda Drive at the Casino Entrance. Nearly all of the pedestrians parking in the western half of the main parking lot "jay-walk" across the throat of the driveway approaching the intersection. Pedestrian use of unmarked crossings creates conflicts with both entering and exiting vehicles, particularly with arriving vehicles that are making right turns into the parking lot. However, because this right turning traffic proceeds slowly, drivers generally had time to stop for pedestrians.

"Levels of Service" were determined at study area intersections and on individual roadway segments. All of the study intersections deliver Levels of Service that are LOS B or better. None of the intersections carry traffic volumes

that would warrant the installation of traffic signals. The desirable Level of Service is LOS “C”.

Level of Service on the portion of Lower Wyandotte Road west of Alverda Drive reaches LOS D during the peak hours, but other segments and other streets operate at LOS C or better. While the LOS D for the segment of Lower Wyandotte Road between Pano Lane and Alverda Drive raises concern at a “planning” level, realistically it may or may not affect traffic flow. One possible explanation for the LOS D during peak hour is traffic exiting the casino/hotel facility via Alverda Drive rather than Feather Falls Boulevard.

**Recommendation:** Current traffic volume levels, pedestrian counts, and levels of service will be used as a baseline for evaluating impacts on roadways and circulation of proposed economic and community development projects in subsequent phases of this study.

### Community Design Issues

Most of the community design issues center on conflicts between the commercial development and residential areas. In general, the commercial area is located at the eastern end of the Rancheria with the exception of the mini-mart and gas station, located at the western end of the Rancheria.

The residential area is located along the northern portion of the Rancheria, sandwiched between the mini-mart at the west end, and the casino (and future parking structure) at the east end. Most residents of the Rancheria access the residential areas using Alverda Drive.

Community design issues along Feather Falls Boulevard are largely a result of conflicts between RV Park, casino and hotel uses, specifically a mix of pedestrian and vehicular traffic that can become chaotic during peak casino use. There are no sidewalks along either side of this road. A bottle-neck occurs at the intersection of Feather Falls Boulevard and Alverda Drive as vehicles encounter traffic entering and leaving the area from either roadway.

No sidewalks along either side of Lorene Court Road require pedestrians to walk in the roadway. Access and egress to and from this road will encounter the same bottle-neck at the intersection of Feather Falls Boulevard and Alverda Drive.

Community design issues along Alverda Drive are largely a result of spill-over traffic from the casino. These issues are most prominent on the weekends during peak casino use (Friday and Saturday night). While vandalism of resident’s property does not appear to be an issue, litter and late night noise along the stretch of roadway is.

Though posted at a speed limit of 25 mph, many vehicles speed (40 mph) along Alverda Drive, especially through the straight section and especially egressing as the roadway goes downhill. Issues along other residential streets include speeding and trespass by casino patrons. Community members and Rancheria staff have expressed concern about casino and hotel patrons “wandering” and trespassing through the residential community seeking exercise and fresh air.

In general, there is no gateway or “sense of arrival” at the Mooretown Rancheria. Community design issues may center on where a “gateway” would be located. Should there be a more defined gateway on Alverda Drive as the access to Tribal facilities and the residential area? Should this gateway be separate and distinct from the gateway for the casino, hotel and RV Park?

A 5.2 acre overflow parking lot is located in the geographic center of the Rancheria. Largely vacant during week-days, the lot is primarily used for bus parking, big rigs, boat trailers and casino crowds on Fridays and Saturday nights, and activities at the gymnasium at the western end of the lot. The lot is used privately by Rancheria residents and Tribal Members as well as publicly by Casino patrons.

In the absence of sidewalks or other pedestrian pathways separate from roadways and vehicle hazards, pedestrian safety is a concern. The need for more dedicated pedestrian paths to facilitate “walkability” and “fitness” were identified by many as desirable. Most people felt that pedestrian trails should be designated for casino patrons separate from a trail that serves residents. There are no bicycle lanes or paths within the Rancheria. A field survey observed limited bicycle use by residents.

Lighting and landscaping along sidewalks and other pedestrian paths are relatively absent and were identified as desirable for safety and comfort by local residents.

Currently there are no designated parks or open space areas open to residents adjacent to the residential portion of the Rancheria. Vast areas of undeveloped land provide opportunities to set aside designated park or open space areas.

**Recommendation:** The community image survey will be completed as part of an upcoming workshop to consist of 1) a presentation of community design issues; 2) a walking audit; and 3) a community image survey. The image survey will be used to finalize design issues and identify priorities for inclusion in the Transportation Plan update.

## **Introduction**

This report summarizes the assessment of existing transportation and circulation conditions at the Mooretown Rancheria, Butte County, California. The purpose of the report is to identify transportation related issues, especially in the context of improving pedestrian flow and roadway design to support existing and future economic and community development at the Rancheria.

The summary is based on a review of the 2003 Transportation Plan, 2000 Land Use Plan, a field review that include interviews with tribal council, staff, and community members, and a traffic study completed in October 2007.

### Land Area

Starting off with 35 acres in 1987, the Mooretown Rancheria has expanded to approximately 312.89 acres as of 2007.

### Population

According to the land use plan, tribal enrolment was 1,204 as of July 2000. Of this total, 46% are male, 54% female. About 36% of the population is under the age of 16; 44% under the age of 25, and only 6% is 65 years or older. A net increase of 452 persons was projected over the next 10 years for an enrollment of 1,656, by 2010. As of 2000, the average household size was 3.52 people.

## **2003 Transportation Plan**

### Roadway Improvement Projects

The Transportation Plan prepared in 2003 (Transportation Plan for the Mooretown Rancheria, ASCG Incorporated of New Mexico, 2003), recommended an integrated set of roadway improvement and construction projects needed to meet current and projected housing and economic development goals within the Mooretown Rancheria and identifies the governmental agency responsible for implementing the plan. The status of these recommendations is presented in Table 1 and summarized below:



**Table 1. Status of Roadway Improvement Projects  
2003 Transportation Plan**

<b>Project*</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Speed limit signs	installed on Alverda Drive, Maji Lane, Sumi Court, Sawwali Court	
Restriping of Alverda Drive	done	
Pedestrian warning	Existing crosswalk is striped	Flashing yellow light in front of casino is pending.
Speed bumps	Speed bumps have been shaved down	Installation of “speed humps” is pending.
Bus stops/shelters	2 north of Tribal Admin. Center and 1 in front of casino	
Lorene Court Expansion		Grading, draining and paving the south side of Lorene Court is pending

\*as presented in 2003 Transportation Plan

BIA Road System

The Transportation Plan also proposed adding 0.2 miles of Feather Falls Boulevard to the Rancheria’s BIA Road System and deleting 0.6 miles (Pano Lane at 0.1; Concow Maidu at 0.2; Majhi Lane at 0.1; Sumi Court at 0.1; and Sawwali Court at 0.1 miles) from the BIA Road System.

Right-of-Way Status

Prior to the United States government acquisition of property to be held in trust for the Mooretown Rancheria a non-exclusive easement for 60-feet of road over Lorene Court and Alverda Drive was granted to Dennis Robinson. Robinson has stated that construction of a fountain and walkway encroaches upon this easement. As of 2003, the Tribe was working with the BIA to resolve this issue. (Note: According to the Tribe, as of 2007, this issue remains unresolved.)

Traffic Hazards

The Transportation Plan identified no specific areas as hazardous to traffic with the exception of high speeds and speed bumps on residential streets. “Speed

bumps” do not conform to AASHTO standards. The Transportation Plan identifies “speed humps” (12-14 feet wide and approximate 3 inches high) as effective in controlling speeds up to 35 mph and calls for existing speed bumps in residential areas to be retrofitted on roads where speeding is a problem. Many speed bumps have been shaved in residential areas but “speed humps” as specified above have not been installed.

The crosswalk in front of the Casino is difficult to see for oncoming traffic and does not meet FHWA standards for a high-visibility crosswalk. Although a pedestrian crossing sign exists, many motorists are not aware of the crosswalk until they are right upon it. The Transportation Plan suggested installing a flashing warning device and better striping of the crosswalk. To date, the crosswalk has been striped but installation of the flashing yellow pedestrian warning light is pending.

The Transportation Plan identified another area of concern in front of the mini-mart on Lower Wyandotte Road. There is a fixed entrance and exit into the mini-mart parking lot from Wyandotte. The entrance is a one-way driveway in which the motorist must go around the back of the building to park or get to the gas pumps. To exit the parking lot, the motorist must go out at the same entrance point. Temporary cones are being use to help direct vehicles. However, many disregard this and enter the parking lot through the out-going driveway. The Plan recommended a second access driveway off of North Lower Wyandotte Road to help eliminate the bottle-neck which occurs at the single entrance/exit point.

#### Motor Vehicle Accident Data.

According to the 2003 Transportation Plan, traffic accident data was obtained from tribal enforcement personnel for the years 2000 – 2002. A total of 6 accidents occurred during the year 2000, 7 during 2001, and 16 during 2002. All but one of these accidents was non-fatal. A fatality occurred in 2002 at an accident on Lower Wyandotte and Ophir Road to the west of the Rancheria.

Most traffic accidents occur on Alverda Drive and are of minor-collisions and failure to yield in origin. The intersection of Lower Wyandotte Road and Feather Falls Boulevard also experience traffic accidents. Most of these are a result of poor sight distance and speeding. Accidents also occur in the mini-mart parking lot.

#### Offsite Improvements

Additional recommendations from the 2003 Transportation Plan included improvement projects slated for State Highway 70 including an interchange at Ophir Road. Caltrans is responsible for these improvements.

## **2000 Land Use Plan**

According to the Mooretown Rancheria Land Use Plan, the Concow-Maidu Tribe is actively planning for future development of its land within and outside of the Rancheria (Mooretown Rancheria, Land Use Plan, Visions Enterprises, Inc., July 26, 2000).

Specific land use strategies outlined in the 2000 Land Use Plan are summarized below:

### Residential

The need for trust land housing will increase as the population of the tribe grows. According to the 2000 Land Use Plan, a target percentage for necessary tribal housing on trust lands has been projected at 20% of total tribal population over the next 10 years (2010).

Short-term development plans called for 19 single-family units on lots of 7,500 – 10,000 square feet designated for the southwesterly portion of the Hallmark parcel and 45 homes on the southerly portion of the Rice property.

The 2000 Land Use Plan designated multi-family housing for elders' housing to be carefully planned and could be incorporated into the residential development slated for the Hallmark and Rice parcels.

The projected population for 2010 is 1,656, an increase of 452 persons. The 20% target percentage for housing results in a total of 331 additional housing units. To date, a total of 50 housing units have been developed. Land is available for an additional 42 housing units. Roads and utilities have been installed to serve future residential lots.

### Community Facilities

The Land Use Plan identified community facilities to support the expected tribal household population which include the following:

- A large gathering place for Tribal activities
- Early childhood/head start program
- Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities
- Classrooms for education and training
- Space for health and social services
- Public safety services and facility

Since 2000, a gymnasium (including facilities for early childhood development), and facilities for health and social services, education and training classrooms and public safety have been constructed.

Other community projects called for in the 2000 Land Use Plan are pending including outdoor recreation areas for baseball fields, neighborhood parks, and natural open space. A visitor's center and/or a cultural museum facility as well as a large gathering area for tribal activities have also been identified.

### Commercial Development

Since 2000, the existing casino has been expanded and the hotel and RV Park, mini-mart and gas station have been constructed.

The Land Use Plan also called for development of facilities for a laundry and smoke shop, office space for tribal businesses and retail development and an events center. A parking garage and an events center have also been slated for development adjacent to the casino. For transportation planning purposes, future development projects should be confirmed as part of this study and as input to the 2007 Transportation Plan update.

### **Traffic Analysis**

A traffic study was prepared by KD Anderson & Associates, Inc. to analyze the potential short-and long-term traffic impacts associated with development within the Mooretown Rancheria in Butte County, California (See Attachment 1 - Traffic Impact Analysis for Mooretown Rancheria Transportation Plan, Butte, Ca, KD Anderson & Associates, Inc., October 2007).

The report describes current traffic volume levels and accompanying traffic operations on the roadways and intersections within the study area.

### Regional Access Routes

Regional access to Mooretown Rancheria is via County roads that link the site with State Route 70 to the west of the site and with State Route 162 through Oroville.

*State Route 70.* State Route 70 (SR 70) is the primary route linking Oroville with the Sacramento metropolitan area to the south. This route extends from Sacramento through Marysville to Oroville before continuing northeasterly to US 395 in Nevada. Today SR 70 is a two lane rural road in the area where routes to Mooretown Rancheria access the state highway. SR 70 widens to a multi-lane controlled access freeway through the city of Oroville. The 2005 Butte County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) notes that widening SR 70 to

4 lanes from SR 162 in Oroville to Ophir Road with construction of an interchange at the Ophir Road intersection is one of 14 listed priorities.

The volume of traffic on SR 70 varies along its length. Today the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) reports that SR 70 carries an *Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)* volume of 12,900 vehicles per day in the area of the Ophir Road intersection.

*Ophir Road.* Ophir Road is a major road that links the Mooretown Rancheria with SR 70. Ophir Road originates at an unsignalized intersection on the state highway and continues east for approximately 3 miles to a signalized intersection with Lower Wyandotte Road just west of the Rancheria. Today Ophir Road is a two lane rural highway. Traffic counts by Butte County in 2001 indicated that Ophir Road carries approximately 6,500 vehicles per day in the area between SR 70 and Lower Wyandotte Road.

#### Local Access Routes

*Lower Wyandotte Road.* Lower Wyandotte Road provides direct access to the Rancheria. Lower Wyandotte Road extends south from an intersection on SR 162 in Oroville for approximately 3 miles to the Rancheria before continuing another three miles to its terminus at Foothill Blvd in the community of Wyandotte. Lower Wyandotte Road is a major two lane road, and Butte County traffic counts made in 2003 indicated that the road carries 6,600 vehicles per day north of the Ophir Road intersection.

Various local roads link portions of the Rancheria with Lower Wyandotte Road.

*Alverda Drive.* Alverda Drive is the primary access to the non-casino portions of the Rancheria, although traffic counts suggest that is also used by some casino guests. Alverda Drive extends east as a two lane road from an unsignalized intersection on Lower Wyandotte Road to an all-way stop controlled intersection with the Feather Fall Access Road. Alverda Drive continues east from that intersection through the entrance to the main casino parking lot to Lorene Court.

*Feather Falls Access Road.* Feather Falls Access Road is the designated entrance to the Casino. This two lane road beings at an intersection on Lower Wyandotte Road east Alverda Drive and continues north along the RV campground access to Alverda Drive.

#### Local Roads

*Pano Lane, Concow Maidu Drive and Majhi Lane* are two lane local streets that serve the Rancheria's residential area north of Alverda Drive.

#### Traffic Counts

An extensive traffic count program was conducted to provide a basis for evaluating current traffic operations and also for estimating future traffic volumes.

While it is likely that the volume of traffic on area roads may vary somewhat throughout the year, traffic count information yields the following conclusions:

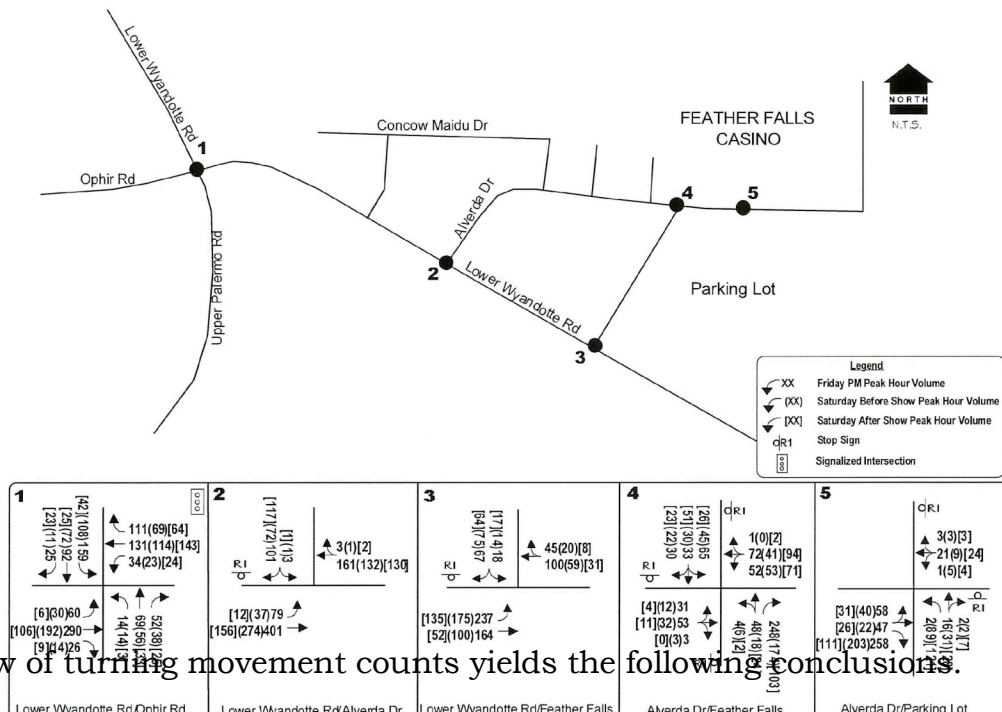
The volume on Lower Wyandotte Road is higher on weekdays than on weekends, even with the traffic being generated by Feather Falls Casino.

The weekday volumes on the Rancheria's roads that link the site with Lower Wyandotte Road are also similar to but slightly higher than the observed weekend volumes.

### Turning Movement Counts

Turning movement counts were conducted at study intersections for the purpose of capturing the typical weekday peak hour and the peak periods before and after a Saturday night event. Figure 1 presents the results of these counts.

**Figure 1. Existing Traffic Volumes**



Review of turning movement counts yields the following conclusions:

During these peak hours, close to 90% of the traffic arriving at the Rancheria is from the west on Lower Wyandotte Road.

Entering traffic during these peak hours typically uses the Feather Fall Access (80%) rather than Alverda Drive (20%) even though they drive past the Alverda Drive entrance.

More than half of the traffic exiting the Rancheria uses Alverda Drive to reach Lower Wyandotte Road.

### Pedestrian Counts

The number of pedestrians crossing local streets was counted during the peak hour traffic volume counts. On the weekend evenings that these observations were made, there was very little pedestrian activity at any location except for the main Casino access intersection on Alverda Drive. At this intersection, 422 and 455 pedestrians were observed crossing Alverda Drive during the highest volume hour before and after the show, respectively.

The pedestrian activity observed on Saturday night leads to the following initial conclusions:

There is a well marked crosswalk across Alverda Drive at the Casino Entrance and 90% of the pedestrians crossing Alverda Drive used this crosswalk.

However, before or after crossing Alverda Drive, nearly all of the pedestrians parking in the western half of the main parking lot “jay-walk” across the throat of the driveway approaching the intersection.

To a high degree, this pedestrian pattern results from the layout of the parking lot, which has a main aisle that is connected to the throat of the entrance in very close proximity to Alverda Drive.

Pedestrian crossings at unmarked locations create conflicts with both entering and exiting vehicles, particularly with arriving vehicles that are making right turns into the parking lot. However, because this right turning traffic proceeds slowly, drivers generally had time to stop for pedestrians.

### Levels of Service

"Levels of Service" were determined at study area intersections and on individual roadway segments. "Level of Service" (LOS) is a quantitative measure of traffic operating conditions whereby a letter grade "A" through "F" is assigned to an intersection. LOS "A" through "F" represents progressively worsening traffic conditions. The Butte County General Plan Circulation Element establishes the allowable Level of Service standard for public roads, and this measure could be applicable to roads on the Rancheria itself. The desirable Level of Service is LOS "C".

*Intersection Level of Service.* The study summarizes the results of intersection Level of Service calculations and traffic signal warrant analysis (See Table 5 in Appendix C). As shown, all of the study intersections deliver Levels of Service that are LOS B or better. None of the intersections carry traffic volumes that would warrant the installation of traffic signals.

*Roadway Level of Service.* Table 6 presents the daily and peak hour traffic volumes counted on study area roads and notes the Level of Service associated with each volume. As shown, the Level of Service on the portion of Lower Wyandotte Road west of Alverda Drive reaches LOS D during the peak hours, but other segments and other streets operate at LOS C or better.

## **Community Design Issues**

On July 26 and 27, 2007, the Local Government Commission team visited the Mooretown Rancheria for the purpose of identifying community design issues pertaining to roadways and pedestrian walkways. Issues were identified through a field survey (on foot and via car) and discussions with Tribal Council, Rancheria staff, and community members.

The Mooretown Rancheria has grown very rapidly over the last few years. A pro-active approach to development has resulted in major projects that generate revenue (mini-mart, casino, and hotel) and provide housing and tribal services to community members. Most of the community design issues center on conflicts between the commercial development and residential areas.

### Commercial Area

In general, the commercial area is located at the eastern end of the Rancheria. This area includes the casino, casino parking, hotel and parking, and RV Park. A parking structure and events center will be located in this area in the future. Most of the customers of the casino, hotel, and RV Park use Feather Falls Boulevard for access. The mini-mart is an exception in its location at the western end of the Rancheria.



*Feather Falls Boulevard* – Community design issues along Feather Falls Boulevard are largely a result of conflicts between RV Park, casino and hotel uses.

Large buses use this road to drop off casino patrons. Service to both the casino and hotel use this road for access and egress. Casino patrons must cross this road from the parking lot to the casino. Casino employees also have a parking lot here as well as handicapped parking. This results in a mix of pedestrian and vehicular traffic that can become chaotic during peak casino use. There are no sidewalks along either side of this road. Although there is an enclosed escalator from the hotel to the casino, no sidewalks lead from the casino to the hotel or from the RV park to the casino. Pedestrian crosswalks between the casino and casino parking are not well defined. Sidewalks in front of the casino, within the bus loading zone, end abruptly without providing for adequate or safe pedestrian routes. A bottle-neck occurs at the intersection of Feather Falls Boulevard and Alverda Drive as vehicles encounter traffic entering and leaving the area from either roadway.

*Lorene Court Road* – This road traverses the back side of the hotel and may be the primary access road for the future new events center. This road also accesses employee parking and a facility called the “white house.” Issues associated with this road are the same as the connecting roads. No sidewalks along either side require pedestrians to walk in the roadway. Access and egress to and from this road will encounter the same bottle-neck at the intersection of Feather Falls Boulevard and Alverda Drive.

*Mini-mart* – The mini-mart is located at the western end of the Rancheria. Access and egress are from the same driveway and designed as a counterclockwise one way loop around the building. The entry drive is very confusing with many people going the “wrong way” (clockwise). A bright yellow barricade has been installed to separate traffic upon entry but a “one way” sign appears to apply to the entire lane and furthers the confusion. The location of the entry lane is very close to the intersection of Lower Wyandotte and Upper Palermo Road. Queuing traffic at this intersection adds to the difficulty in safely accessing or egressing the mini-mart.

### Residential Area

The residential area is located along the northern portion of the Rancheria, sandwiched between the mini-mart at the west end, and the casino (and future parking structure) at the east end. Most residents of the Rancheria access the residential areas using Alverda Drive.

*Alverda Drive* – Community design issues along Alverda Drive are largely a result of spill over traffic from the casino. These issues are most prominent on the weekends during peak casino use (Friday and Saturday night). The road parallels many residences between Mahi Lane and Sawwali Court. Some customers of the casino use Alverda Drive for access and egress, increasing traffic during peak hours of casino events. Spillover parking also occurs along the sidewalk paralleling Alverda Drive adjacent to resident’s homes. While vandalism of resident’s property does not appear to be an issue, litter and late night noise along the stretch of roadway is.

Though posted at a speed limit of 25 mph, many vehicles speed (40 mph) along Alverda Drive, especially through the straight section and especially egressing as the roadway goes downhill. Residents claim that some of the speeders are staff and also local resident’s who should “know better.” Sidewalks are located along the north side of Alverda Drive adjacent to the residences. However, the sidewalks dead ends at the exit drive from the casino. Numerous casino shuttle bus stops are located along the southern edge of Alverda, however the lack of sidewalks and grade change from the roadway to the parking lot make access to the bus stops a challenge. There are no dedicated bicycle lanes along Alverda Drive. No use of bicycles was notice during the field survey.

*Other Residential Streets* – Other residential streets serving the Rancheria include Pano Lane, accessible from Lower Wyandotte Road, and connecting with Concow-Maidu Drive, which also connects with Majhi Lane; Sumi Court, a dead end cul-de-sac accessible from Alverda Drive, and Sawwali Court. All these streets are paved with full curb, gutter, and sidewalk on both sides.

New roads for future residential development include an extension of the existing Sawwali Court, Archuleta Drive, Jackson Trial Court, Ina Court, and Taylor Springs Court. These roads are paved with a rolled gutter and 3 foot sidewalks.

Community design issues along these residential streets include speeding and trespass by casino patrons. The existing residences along Concow-Maidu, Majhi Lane, Sumi Court, and Sawwali Court have fenced yards (front and back). New residential construction along Sawwali Court and future residences will not have front yard fences and the houses will be located closer to the street with the intention of creating more “neighborliness” and supporting the public realm. Residents are concerned that this will create a potential hazard to children playing out side (without fences) and speeding local traffic.

Trespass issues result from casino and hotel patrons “wandering” through the residential community seeking exercise and fresh air.

*Log Cabin* – A former log cabin residence is located just south of the new hotel and east of the casino parking lot. This facility is currently being used for special occasion venues such as anniversaries, birthday parties, and weddings, etc. While located in the Commercial Area, the facility largely serves the local residents and their families and friends. Access to this facility is currently through an unimproved road. The primary community design issue is improvement of the access road and adjacency to the residential portion of the Rancheria. The log cabin is adjacent to the main parking lot and hotel, but without pedestrian access.

### Gateways and Sense of Arrival

In general, there is no gateway or “sense of arrival” at the Mooretown Rancheria. Entering the Rancheria from the west, the first thing you see is the mini-mart. The casino sign can be seen in the distance. Entering from the east, the casino sign is highly visible as traffic crests the hill. There is no gateway (sense of arrival) as you enter Alverda Drive, though the architecture of the Tribal Operations Center certainly catches your eye. Community design issues may center on where a “gateway” would be located. Should there be a more defined gateway on Alverda Drive as the access to Tribal facilities and the residential area? Should this gateway be separate and distinct from the gateway for the casino, hotel and RV Park?

### Overflow Parking Lot

A 5.2 acre overflow parking lot is located in the geographic center of the Rancheria. Currently, this area is covered with gravel and oil and provides portable lighting for nighttime use. Primarily used for bus parking, big rigs, boat trailers and casino crowds on Fridays and Saturday nights, the western end also accommodates buses and parking associated with activities at the gymnasium. For patrons, a shuttle provides rides to the casino. Residents and Rancheria staff expressed concern that shuttle service is often inadequate; they suggested call boxes as a means of improving shuttle service. There is no sidewalk along the south side of Alverda Drive. Patrons who don't use the shuttle can cross the road and use the sidewalk on the north side adjacent to the residences, but, as mentioned above, this sidewalk deadends at the casino exit drive.

### Pedestrians

Sidewalks serve the residential areas north of Alverda Drive. A sidewalk parallels the north side of Alverda Drive from the junction with Lower

Wyandotte Road pass the Tribal Operations Center and Gymnasium up to the casino where it dead ends. There is no sidewalk from the RV Park to the casino making it necessary to walk along Feather Falls Boulevard.

There is no sidewalk along Lower Wyandotte Road. Children walking to and from school must use the road shoulder which is very narrow. A bridge structure north of the intersection with Palermo Road and Ophir Road narrows the shoulder even further. A “cow path” has been created by children through an open space between Pano Lane and the mini-mart. Another “cow path” trail has developed behind Concow-Maidu Drive allowing residents and school children to walk to the mini-mart. This path has been gated to keep outsiders from encroaching upon Rancheria land and threatening the privacy of adjoining residences. Other informal dirt trails exist to the north of the existing residential area

Pedestrian safety is a concern in the absence of sidewalks or other pedestrian pathways separate from roadways and vehicle hazards. As mentioned above, casino patrons often “wander” into residential areas as they seek “fresh air” and an opportunity to “stretch their legs.” The need for more dedicated pedestrian paths to facilitate “walkability” and “fitness” were identified by many as desirable. Most people felt that pedestrian trails should be designated for casino patrons separate from a trail that serves residents. There are no bicycle lanes or paths within the Rancheria. A field survey observed limited bicycle use by residents.

There are few designated pedestrian crosswalks. One from the Tribal Center/Gymnasium parking lot crosses Alverda Drive to the overflow parking lot. The location of this crosswalk on a curve in the road (and between driveways to the Tribal Center and Gymnasium) makes it especially hazardous as vehicle drivers cannot see pedestrians and pedestrians cannot see oncoming vehicles because of the curve in the roadway. Striping of the crosswalk is faded and is barely visible. A crosswalk from the casino parking lot to the casino is striped and more visible but pedestrians must compete with incoming casino and hotel traffic as well as cars entering and leaving the parking lot. No crosswalks on the Rancheria were identified that meet high-visibility standards.

Lighting and landscaping along sidewalks and other pedestrian paths are relatively absent and were identified as desirable for safety and comfort by local residents.

### Parks and Open Space

Currently there are no designated parks or open space areas open to residents (ORV access to trails on the north end of the Rancheria has been discontinued). Limited recreational opportunities are provided at the

Community Center on Alverda Avenue. The need for entertainment for local children as well as children of casino and RV Park kids was expressed as desirable by many residents. Vast areas of undeveloped land provide opportunities to set aside designated park or open space areas. One of these is a marsh pond located between Sawwali Court and Ina Court in the new residential area. Some residents felt developing this area with trails and sitting areas would be desirable. The need for more play areas with swings and slides was also identified. Another area between the gymnasium and the swimming pool was identified as a good area for some lawn, barbeque, tables and benches.

### Offsite Issues

Butte County should address the route to school along Lower Wyandotte Road, specifically the narrow bridge where kids cross with no shoulder, and lack of shoulder and sidewalks along the route to nearby schools.

Concern was expressed by Rancheria staff that as the Rancheria expands, traffic will increase and Levels of Service (LOS) on Ophir, Lower Wyandotte and Upper Palermo will be diminished.

Butte County Transit and Oroville Area Transit provide bus service to Oroville and the surrounding area, including the Rancheria.

There are several subdivisions proposed on the outskirts of Oroville and annexation of existing suburbs is being considered. New development will result in an increase in vehicle traffic on surrounding area roads, including Lower Wyandotte Road, Ophir Road, and Upper Palermo Road.

## **Community Image Survey**

The following listing of community design issues is provided for purposes of characterizing the major design considerations that may be addressed in the Community Image Survey.

- Parking
- Casino Access
- Connectivity
  - Crosswalks
  - Sidewalks
  - Trails
  - Safe Routes to School
  - Regional Bike/Pedestrian Connections
- Separation of the Realms

Residential Realm with a Community Center  
Commercial Realm with a Public Center

- Gateways & Sense of Arrival
- Cultural Icons
- Traditional Architecture
- Streetscape Design
- Signage
- Parks & Open Space
- Landscaping

The community image survey will be completed as part of an upcoming workshop to consist of 1) a presentation of community design issues; 2) a walking audit; and 3) a community image survey. The image survey will be used to finalize design issues and identify priorities for inclusion in the Transportation Plan update. The results of the workshop will be incorporated into an Interim Report that will be submitted to the tribal council upon completion of associated tasks.

## **References**

Transportation Plan for the Mooretown Rancheria, ASCG Incorporated of New Mexico, 2003

Mooretown Rancheria, Land Use Plan, Visions Enterprises, Inc., July 26, 2000

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