



congestion and unpredictable travel times, during the Peak Season weekends with Industry-Wide-Events, for Southern Sonoma Valley.

Recommendations

This following provides recommendations for addressing existing capacity, operational, and safety deficiencies in the Northern and Southern Sonoma Valley study areas for both Off-Peak Season Non-Event Weekend travel conditions, and for Peak Season Event Weekend travel conditions. These recommendations can also be found in the conclusion of this report.

Traffic Operations and Safety

Recommendation #1: Safe driveway access for all wineries needs to be maintained. For new permits and permit renewals as they occur, driveway access should be evaluated if the volume of visitors to wineries changes, particularly if the application includes allowing wine tasting and participation in events. Therefore, records of past attendance as well as forecasted visitor attendance should be required at time of application and/or renewal. Should forecast attendance increase upon permit renewal and/or the adjacent traffic substantially increases, existing driveway access should be re-evaluated to ensure the design is adequate to provide safe access, including provision of turn channelization and/or lengthening of left and right turn pockets. If safe driveway access cannot be provided, or would affect the capacity or safety of the adjacent roadway, such uses should be limited. The determination of the need for a driveway access evaluation, as well as the requirement for further driveway access improvements, will fall under purview of the County Engineer.

Recommendation #2: In the vicinity of driveway access to all wineries, require no parking along adjacent County roads with adequate “No Parking” signage to improve sight distance and minimize access conflicts with County roadway traffic operations. Distance of “No Parking” area is to be based on a traffic study and at the discretion of the County Engineer.

Recommendation #3: From a transportation design and engineering perspective, improving the primary roadway system to current Sonoma County design standards would address some of the transportation capacity, operations, and safety deficiencies identified. This would also include working with the State to widen the shoulder where necessary and provide Class II Bike Lanes along Highway 12. However, factors including high improvement costs, increased travel speeds, potential for environmental impacts, and effects on the rural character of Sonoma Valley and community values are all considerations that make substantial improvements to the roadways a challenge.

Recommendation #4: Continue to use the approved Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodologies for two-lane highways to calculate roadway capacities and traffic operational conditions (Level of Service) based on HCM roadway classifications and corresponding measures of effectiveness. The HCM methodologies account for the effects of geometric, traffic, and environmental factors including travel lane width, shoulder width, travel speed, segment length, travel interruptions such as driveways and intersections, roadway horizontal and vertical curves, and delay due to passing restrictions. The Highway Capacity Software (HCS) implements the HCM methodologies and can be utilized to calculate this measure of effectiveness.



Recommendation #5: For any new development, permit application, or permit renewal that would potentially increase traffic levels within Sonoma Valley, a transportation study is recommended to be required and performed to identify potential transportation impacts, following the Sonoma County Transportation Impact Study Guidelines and the measure of effectiveness included in Recommendation #4.

Community Engagement

Recommendation #6: The existing community needs to be respected when Industry-wide events are scheduled. Highway 12, Highway 116, and Highway 121 provide regional through traffic in addition to local and winery tourist traffic. To that end, the following are recommendations to communicate with the community:

- Require the wine industry to communicate with the Sonoma County community of upcoming Industry-Wide Events, so that the “locals” can plan for and not be surprised by increased traffic and potential congestion. When advertisements to visitors are solicited to come to Industry-Wide Wine Events, public advertisements notifying the community should also be provided so the community can plan for the increase in visitors and impacts in travel within their community. Local newspapers, television, radio and other social media should be utilized to “get the word out” on upcoming large wine-industry events.
- Require the wine industry to coordinate with other local community calendars of events, including, but not limited to, car rallies, running and cycling races, and other large community events.
- On State Highways and strategic County roads, place either permanent or portable message signing the week in advance of Industry-Wide Wine Event weekends so commuters within or those that pass through the community can also plan ahead.

Transportation Monitoring

Recommendation #7: At strategic locations on State Highways and some primary County roads, install, or coordinate the installation of, permanent traffic count stations within Sonoma Valley. The purpose of this effort is to start a long-term transportation database that allows monitoring of not only annual travel changes, but also Off-Peak and Peak Season travel fluctuations from month to month, and even from day to day. The database will serve as a resource for transportation studies.

Management of Industry-Wide Event Travel

Recommendation #8: No more than two (2) such Industry-Wide Events should be scheduled within any one given month. Limit Industry-Wide Events to occur no more than fifteen (15) event-days per year and schedule events with more than 2,000 participants to be during the Off-Peak Season. Therefore, the potential schedule during September, should eliminate at least two of the four scheduled Industry-Wide Events to allow intermittent relief to the community of additional traffic impacts created by large wine events.



Recommendation #9: Establish standards for Industry-Wide Wine Events to maintain rural character, ensure neighborhood compatibility, and minimize environmental impacts.

Recommendation #10: Require Industry-Wide Event sponsors or participants to obtain an annual cultural event permit listing all participating wineries and tasting rooms. The permit will also serve to coordinate timing with other Special Events and Peak Season traffic. The permits should limit the event to no more than fifty (50) persons per participating winery or tasting room, or no more than fifty (50) originating winery host tickets. The County should also require the event sponsor to verify that each participating winery or tasting room holds a valid use permit prior to submission of the cultural event permit. Event permits should require each participating winery or tasting room to have a traffic and parking management plan, approved by the event sponsor, and require parking attendants on event days with over 100 participants or when overflow parking is used. This will ensure traffic does not back up onto County roads, and will expedite the parking process. All parking and queuing of traffic must be located on the winery or tasting room premises.

Recommendation #11: For Industry-Wide Events, require the event sponsor or participants to coordinate timing with other concurrent events. Require the event sponsor or participants to provide a shuttle bus plan to support each day of the event to minimize traffic, for events with more than 2,000 participants. The shuttle bus plan should be approved by the County Transit Coordinator. To be effective, it is recommended that the shuttle bus plan include the following:

- Require the top five (5) to ten (10) busiest wineries along the Highway 12 and Arnold Drive corridors to provide shuttle bus service (up to 24 seats) to their wineries.
- Require advertising for the event to note that larger tour buses with a capacity of more than 24 seats are not allowed.
- Shuttle bus costs should be included in the event tickets. Event ticket sales should clearly indicate which wineries have shuttle bus service, and indicate that private parking at wineries is limited, except handicapped parking.
- Event sponsor should locate a convenient and secure 'park and ride' area within Sonoma from which the shuttle bus system connects with wine patrons. A circular shuttle bus route between Kenwood, Glen Ellen, and Sonoma would be about 8 miles long. At minimum, 20-minute headways should be provided in order to maximize convenience.
- Event sponsor should provide support for wine purchases with the shuttle system such that winery sales are not negatively impacted during events when patrons choose shuttle service. For example, event patrons could make purchases from wineries, have purchases loaded onto shuttles, and pick up purchases at a secure 'park and ride' facility.

Recommendation #12: For all Industry-Wide and other large cycling events requiring a County Special Event/Cultural Event permit, it is recommended that cycling events be scheduled early in the morning as to not overlap with any Industry-Wide Wine Event. Additionally, event permits should require a traffic management plan and parking attendants on events days with over 100 participants.