

Renaud Road Traffic, Mud Creek Ecological Damage, and unsafe access to Prescott-Russell Cycling Trail

Esteemed Dr. Kristmanson,

On behalf of the Bradley Estates Community Association (BECA), we congratulate and welcome you in your new role as CEO of the NCC. Bradley Estates is a beautiful neighbourhood in the East Urban Community on the edge of the Greenbelt in the Mer Bleue sector, along Renaud Rd and Navan Rd. Homeowners were not only attracted to purchasing in the area because of the beautiful views of the green space, but also because of the privilege of being next to recreational trails and bike paths, such as the Prescott-Russell, hoping these trails would be used as an alternative to driving or using public transportation to travel to and from their places of employment.

Unfortunately, road safety and quality of life in our neighbourhood have degraded in the past few years, and we are currently witnessing how the Greenbelt and ecological areas surrounding Renaud Rd are being damaged as a result of the high volume of traffic that travels along this route.

Not only are the road surface and shoulders rapidly deteriorating, but several vehicles drive off the road accidentally on a regular basis into the areas surrounding Mud Creek on the 90 degree curves. Although the City has taken several measures to reduce accidents along the curves, they have not shown to be effective.

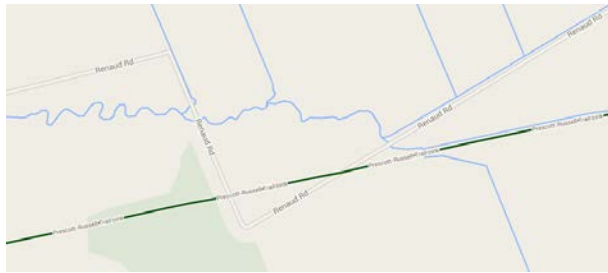


Damage from the multiple vehicle accidents

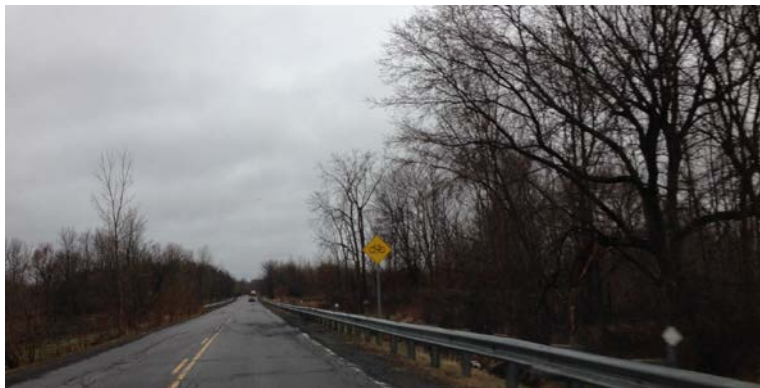
Unusable and dangerous Prescott-Russell cycling trail access

Despite a \$2 million investment in the Prescott-Russell Trail that was made through the Infrastructure Program to provide a link from the Ottawa / Prescott-Russell border where the trail extends to Québec, the access points to the recreational pathways and cycling paths on Renaud Rd are virtually unusable during peak hours (and increasingly unusable during off-peak hours). Cyclists consider it impossible to cross Renaud Rd at the two access points due to the current alignment and the 90 degree curves. The only access on the northern edge is Renaud Road, a stretch of road that is unusable by cyclists and pedestrians due to poor road conditions and unsafe traffic volumes.

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Prescott-Russell Trail crossing Renaud Rd



Bike crossing warning and poor asphalt conditions



Difficulty crossing Renaud Rd safely during peak hours making the bike trail access dangerous and not beneficial to cyclists

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Difficulty crossing Renaud Rd safely during peak hours making the bike trail access not beneficial to cyclists

A proposal by Councillor Bloess to exchange land with the Prescott-Russell trail so that Renaud Road would run parallel with the trail at the 90 degree curves was made to Mr. Jean-Francois Lapointe in 2013 to which Mr. Lapointe replied:

“... With regard to the proposal, itself, I can confirm that NCC staff is generally supportive of the concept of re-aligning Renaud Road to reduce the number of crossings of the recreational pathway. It is important, however, that this and all other such individual initiatives that may be forthcoming be fully reconciled and prioritized by the City of Ottawa in order to ensure that our two organizations can coordinate and prioritize our engagements on traffic and transportation issues.

As you know, this coordinated approach is a fundamental aspect to the recently completed Cumulative Effects Study that examined City priorities across the greenbelt as a whole. The result was a robust and shared understanding of traffic and transportation objectives that are fully reconciled within our two organizations’ planning frameworks.

In the case of this specific initiative, the NCC would seek to better understand traffic management and environmental impacts on and adjacent to Renaud Road, itself, prior to providing its formal approval.

Indeed, we expect that a re-configured Renaud Road would see an increase in traffic patterns. That needs to be properly measured and understood in terms of its overall impact in the area. Would this lead to the road being designated as a major arterial road, for example? How could this eventuality affect the adjacent environmentally-sensitive land? These questions need to be explored in order to understand the scope and scale of issues and mitigation measures that may be necessary, should the proposal proceed.

Although, generally, in a watershed like Mud Creek – where the proposal is located – reducing the number of creek crossings is desirable in order to minimize challenges to the shoreline (e.g. erosion, contaminants, etc...), increased traffic problems could undo any such advantage from this proposal.....”

This response has led us to believe that the NCC may be unaware of the current state of the traffic on Renaud Rd and the resulting impact it is having on the Greenbelt. Although Renaud Rd through the East Urban Community is designated as a minor collector, the behaviour and traffic flow is more indicative of a major arterial. This impact is expected to increase as development continues on the east side of Navan Road along Renaud and Mer Bleue Roads. It is a main route for commuters to access the south of the City, and anticipated pattern changes with the planned road network are unlikely in reality.

Community Design Plan aims to reduce traffic and Mud Creek crossings

The final road network as detailed in the Community Design Plan for the East Urban Community (Phase 1) *“aims to reduce the amount of cut-through traffic to the Greenbelt from Renaud Road and to limit the number of crossings of Mud Creek”*. However, a 2013 safety review on the S-curves on Renaud Rd by the City of Ottawa states that “Renaud Road carries approximately 10,000 vehicles per day”. The effects of this are evident in the roadside garbage, damage, and contamination that are visible along Renaud Road. The current configuration of Renaud Road crosses Mud Creek three times.

Also from the CDP of the East Urban Community, Phase 1, *“...the Orléans projected population is expected to increase steadily over the next 15 years to an anticipated population of 130,500 people in 2021.*

Estimate of Total Units and Population CDP area

Area	Units	Population
Phase 1	3,498	9,003
Phase 2	1,726	5,322
Mixed Use Centre	700 - 850	1,330 - 1,615
General Urban Area	525	1,680
Estimate of existing Dwellings	250	775
Total	6,699 - 6,849	18,110 - 18,395

Projected Population by Sub-Area, City of Ottawa 2001- 2021

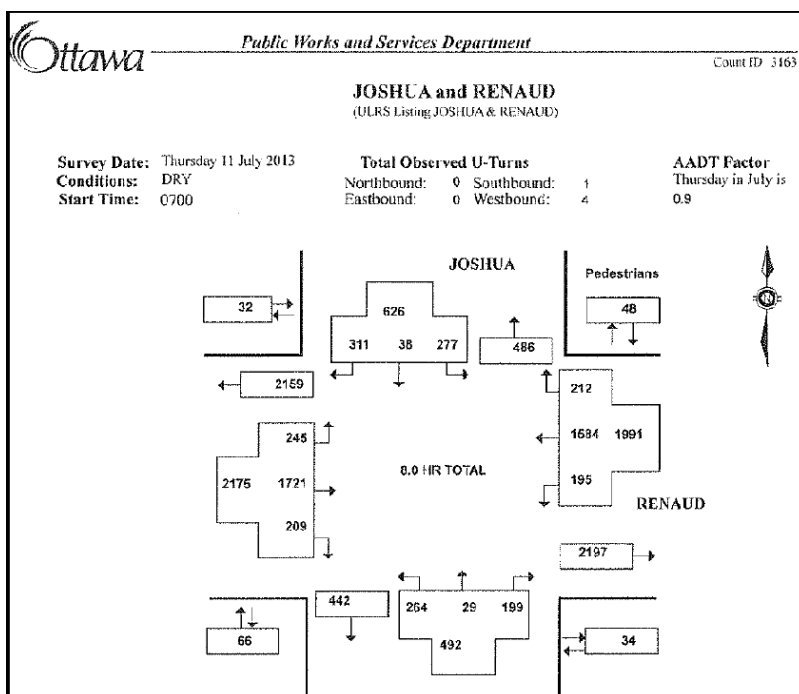
	2001	2006	2011	2021
Population	88,200	99,700	111,100	130,500

From the 2007 **INNES-WALKLEY-HUNT CLUB CONNECTION ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT – STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS** ([HTTP://WWW.OTTAWA.CA/CALENDAR/OTTAWA/CITYCOUNCIL/OCC/2007/12-07/TRC/ACS2007-PTE-POL-0070.HTM](http://www.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/OCC/2007/12-07/TRC/ACS2007-PTE-POL-0070.HTM)):

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Because of congestion on the arterial roads such as Innes Road and Walkley Road there are a significant number of vehicles using roadways within the Greenbelt. **Approximately 500 vehicles (during the commuter peaks) now travel through the Greenbelt using Ramsayville, Ridge, Anderson and Renaud Roads to make the trip between the south and the east. These roadways were not designed to accommodate these volumes of traffic and exhibit operational and safety problems. If the additional capacity (i.e. the IWHC connection) is not provided, the current operational and safety deficiencies evident on these roads will increase.**

However, the current data from the City of Ottawa shows that the traffic flow is actually almost **twice** the 2005 volume count during morning and afternoon peak hours.



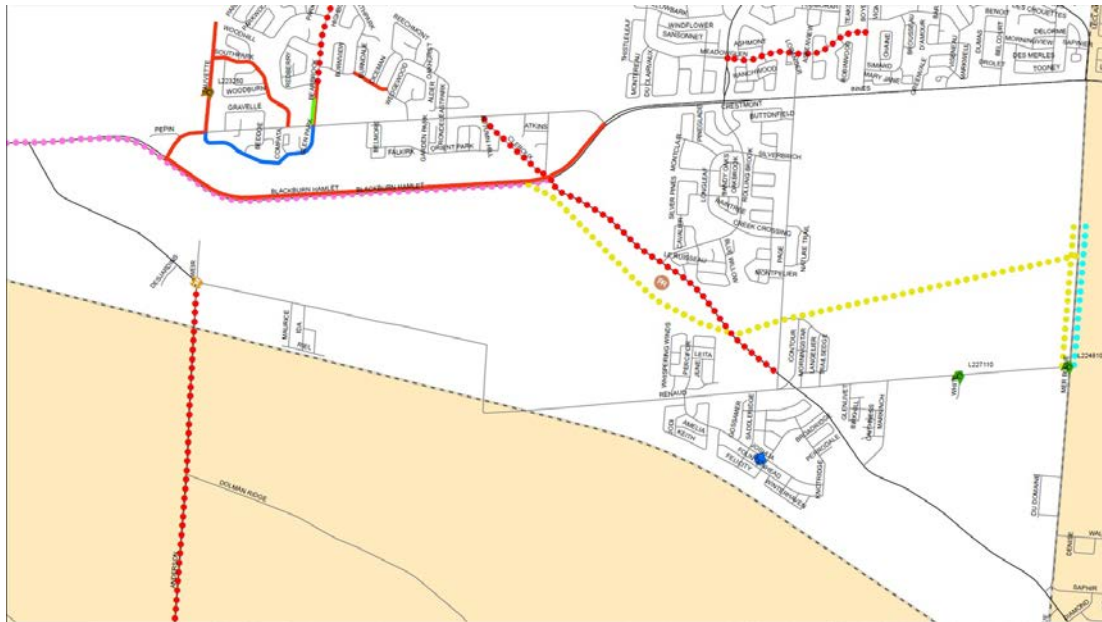
Traffic Count: Total 5918 vehicles counted in an 8-hour period at the eastern entrance to the Greenbelt (lighter summer traffic) and afternoon traffic exiting the Greenbelt Tuesday May 6 2014

BECA has been working with the City, in particular with our City Councillor Rainer Bloess, over the past few years to come up with solutions to mitigate this progressively increasing volume of the east-to-south flow of traffic, the resulting safety concerns, and the damage this volume of traffic is causing. Unfortunately, our efforts have had minimal effect and we continue to witness the damage and experience the degradation of quality of life in our neighbourhood despite “soft” traffic calming measures to mitigate the impact. Though we are hopeful that the objective of the CDP will be accomplished, in our attempts to justify the positive end result to the residents, we only discovered that this might not be the case.

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Current traffic flow and Prescott-Russell Trail crossing originating from many growing communities east of EUC

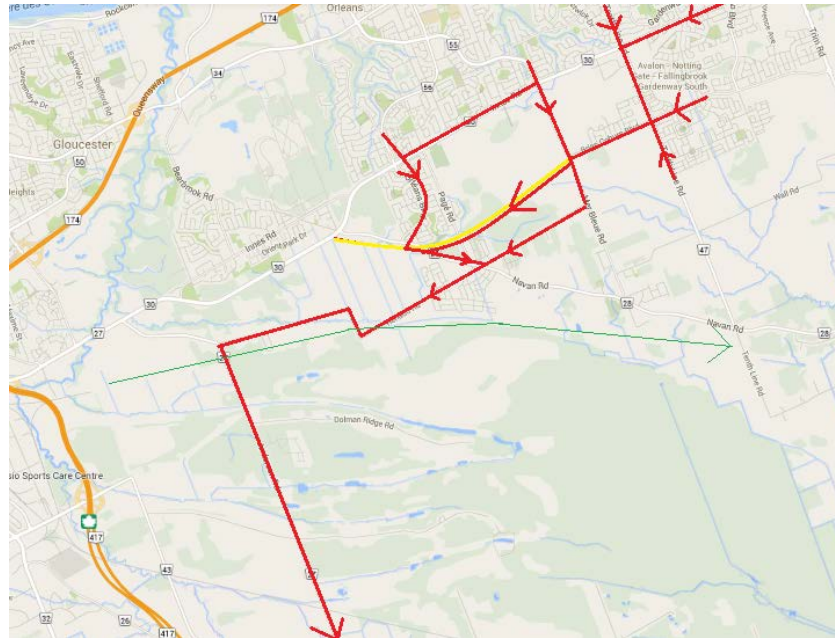


Plan for the Brian Coburn Extension (yellow dots 2015-2016 construction)

No east-south commuter options creating a funnel at Renaud Rd

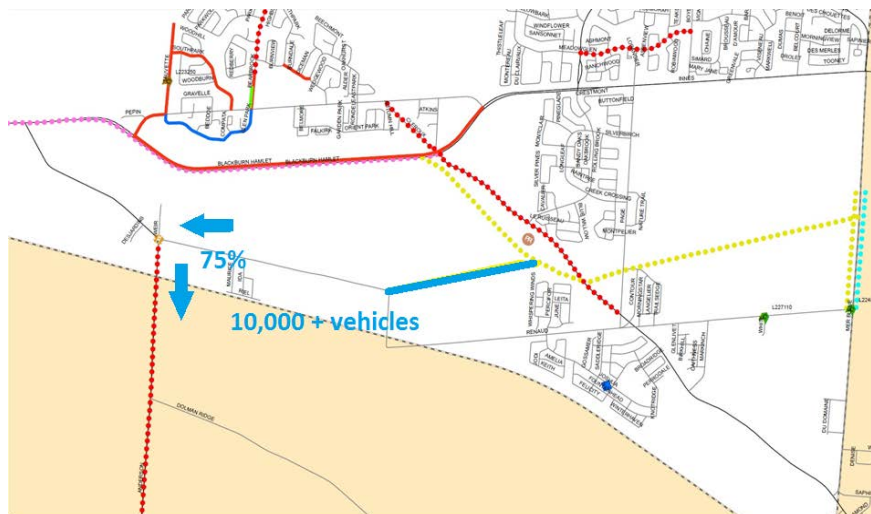
After examining a City Traffic Study at Anderson Road and Renaud Road from September 27th, 2012, we discovered that the majority of traffic travelling along Renaud Road continues south on Anderson Road

during peak hours. The future Brian Coburn Extension that will link the eastern portions of Orleans with the Blackburn Bypass at Navan Road is intended to alleviate this flow. However, the current traffic patterns and flow demonstrate that the majority of the 10,000/day vehicles will continue to use Renaud Rd as the optimal alternate route to the south of the city. In recent weeks, a road closure on Anderson Road from Renaud Rd to Ridge Rd demonstrated a remarkable reduction in traffic volume, further substantiating our observations on east-south traffic flow.



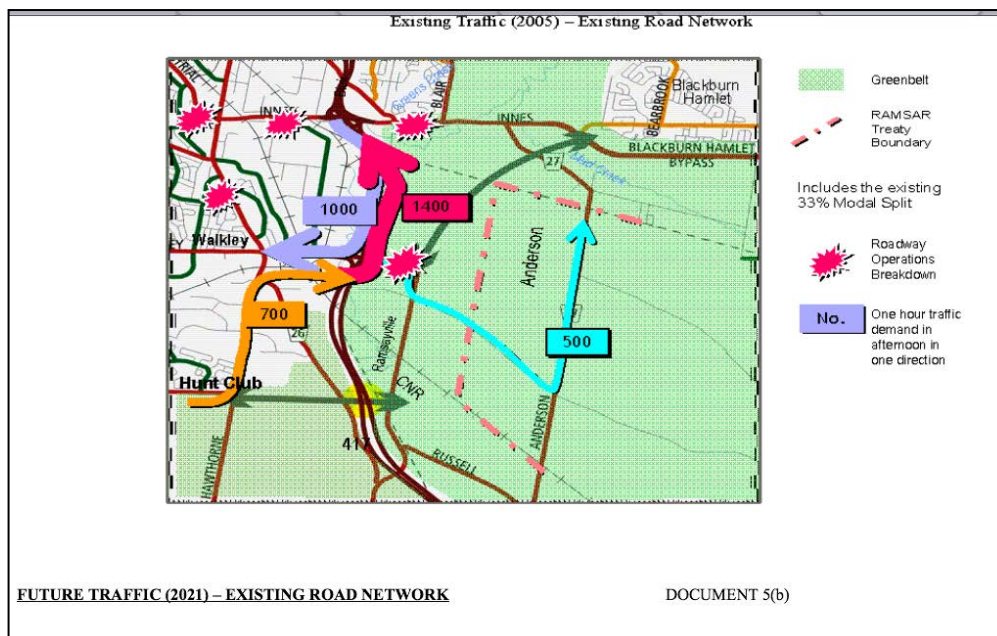
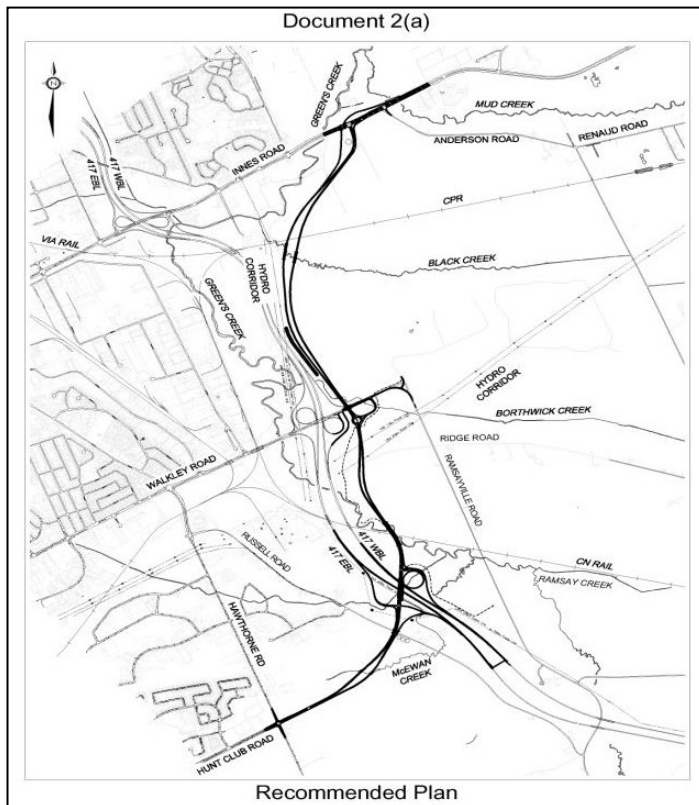
Likely traffic flow after Brian Coburn Extension (yellow line) construction

We believe the NCC and the City of Ottawa should reconsider the value of the planned Brian Coburn Extension and consider a land exchange that would effectively redirect traffic to a road that would continue from the Brian Coburn Extension at Navan Road to the northern 90 degree curve of Renaud, containing the traffic along the existing Hydro corridor, and eliminating the damaging and dangerous curves and reducing the current three crossings of Mud Creek to only one.



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We also believe that the City and NCC should revisit the Hunt Club-Walkley-Innes extension to better meet the irrefutable needs of east-south commuters who will continue to use Renaud/Anderson/Ramsayville roads despite their being qualified as incapable of supporting a capacity that since 2007 has increased twentyfold and more as new developments occur, to realign the extension as shown in the “Existing Traffic (2005) – Existing Road Network” diagram below.



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We hope that this will reopen the dialog between the City of Ottawa and the NCC to reevaluate the verifiable traffic patterns and their resulting impact on the environment, the surrounding neighbourhoods, and the recreational benefits of the area.

We welcome any opportunity to discuss this matter with you further, and invite you to visit the area to see the impact and the damage first hand.

Sincerely,

Yasmine Fathers

President of the Bradley Estates Community Association

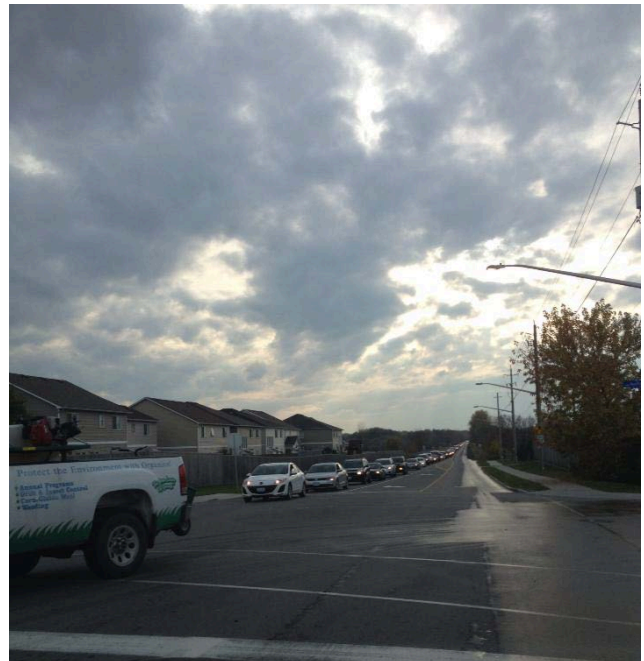
Kristy Achter

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Traffic Volume on Renaud Road in Greenbelt and at entrance to Greenbelt



May 2014

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Damage to creek and land adjacent to Renaud Road, vehicle residue, contamination



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Weekly unreported accidents, regardless of driving conditions, weather, visibility, and the multitude of adequate signage

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Access to the Prescott-Russell Trail on Renaud Road

