

# Bowmont/Kuna-Mora Road

Kuna-Mora is vital to the region due to its potential role as an alternate to I-84.



## WHY THIS CORRIDOR MATTERS

Today, some might not see the importance of this corridor. The road is lightly traveled and passes through agricultural areas and sagebrush; its length and undeveloped status, however, establish its importance as a future east-west route. When connected to SH 45 via Bowmont Road and improved in other sections to a better two-lane highway, Kuna-Mora Road can begin to offer travelers in Ada and Canyon counties an alternative route. While slated for minor improvements during the next twenty-five years, Kuna-Mora Road should be preserved to allow for an expressway with potential grade-separated interchanges.

Current volumes along the corridor range from 800 on Bowmont Road in Canyon County to 2,000 near Cloverdale Road. In 2035, the corridor is forecasted to carry just 5,000 to 9,000 trips per day. The region should consider long-term travel alternatives to I-84, and proposed and potential development may preclude Kuna-Mora as a future expressway unless right-of-way and access management are implemented. Travel forecasts with some of the planned communities proposed in area would push traffic on Kuna Mora over 80,000 near I-84.

The corridor covers nearly twenty-five miles between its western terminus at SH 45 (via Bowmont Road) and its connection with I-84 south of Boise. Much of the western end of the corridor is irrigated farmland. Between SH 45 and McDermott Road, over eighty homes are within a quarter mile of the corridor. Bureau of Land Management property breaks the continuity between McDermott and Swan Falls Roads. Farmland is irrigated from the Mora Canal, south of Kuna. While much of the land is held in larger parcels, there are many one- to five- acre parcels along the road, with many owner-occupied homes in the area. Subdivisions are increasing in number.

Further east, land along the corridor turns into non-irrigated land and scattered non-residential uses, including a gun club and a model airplane flight area. The Bureau of Land Management owns a small lake and wetlands near I-84.

## Goals for *Communities in Motion* (CIM)

**Connections:** Provide options for safe access and mobility in a cost-effective manner for the region.

**Coordination:** Achieve better inter-jurisdictional coordination of transportation and land use planning.

**Environment:** Minimize transportation impacts to people, cultural resources, and the environment.

**Information:** Coordinate data gathering and dispense better information.

## Recommendations for Bowmont/Kuna-Mora Road Corridor to meet CIM goals:

- ❖ Kuna-Mora corridor from McDermott through to I-84 (Blacks Creek interchange) is recommended to be preserved as an expressway. From SH 45 to McDermott is recommended to be a four- or five-lane arterial.
- ❖ Alignment studies are needed within one to two years to evaluate options to connect Bowmont with Kuna- Mora around the BLM land near McDermott. This study should include an evaluation of a future connection with McDermott as an expressway. An alignment study is also needed to consider alternatives from Eagle Road to Cloverdale. Interchange locations and footprints need to be established within one to two years.

## Recommendations for Bowmont/Kuna-Mora Road Corridor Public Transportation:

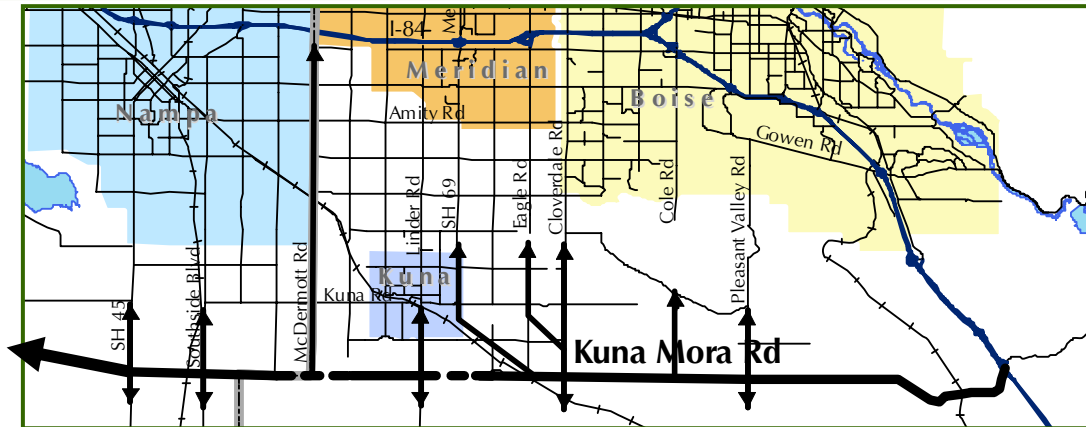
- ❖ This corridor is a likely candidate for major fixed-route services such as, commuter bus service, given its regional connections.
- ❖ Park-and-ride facilities should be considered near the major intersections.

## Land use decisions needed to implement the plan:

- ❖ To maintain the right-of-way to construct a future expressway and interchanges, local governments along the corridor should stipulate a minimum setback of 100 feet from the centerline of Kuna -Mora. At the intersections of Kuna-Mora with major roads, setbacks should be negotiated to preserve future interchanges.
- ❖ Direct connections to Kuna-Mora should be conditioned as temporary pending establishment of future backage and frontage roads.



# Regional Connection



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Kuna-Mora Road’s rural character is its challenge and its opportunity. Some believe that this rural road should be left alone until it is really needed. The issue is that development has already been proposed along the corridor, meaning that it could be far more expensive – and perhaps impossible – to create the kind of expressway facility that can offer a true alternative to I-84. As with any major road, future land uses along the corridor need to be planned with an eye toward regional needs—not just reacting to the immediate market.

East of Cloverdale there are few environmental or social challenges except for the tank trail from Gowen Field to the training range. This non-traditional intersection will need special attention in the future. Between SH 45 and Swan Falls there are as many as one-hundred fifty homes near the corridor. BLM land lies in the corridor south of Kuna-Mora Road, and the Mora Canal interrupts the continuity from Swan Falls Road to Eagle Road.

While preservation of the corridor seems prudent, construction of an expressway or even preservation of right-of-way is not funded in the 2035 funded plan. This improvement would be very costly. Many planning issues such as jurisdiction, access management, and corridor preservation will need to be addressed. It is also important to note that upgrading this facility to an expressway does not make sense without the north-south connection to I-84. (See the McDermott Road description.)

Past and Current Investments through 2015	Funded Investments through 2035	Unfunded Improvements through 2035
<p>In 2002 the COMPASS Board agreed that Kuna-Mora Road should be the future east-west arterial.</p> <p>Several studies have been conducted related to the corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kuna Mora Phase 1<sup>1</sup></li> <li>Southwest Boise Transportation Study</li> <li>Kuna Mora Phase 2 (on hold)<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Western Canyon Arterial Study<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<p>Extend Bowmont Road. Estimated Cost: \$6,000,000</p>	<p>Study alignments of Kuna-Mora Road as future expressway, including interchange locations. Evaluate alternatives outside the current alignment due to existing development.</p> <p>Establish future rights-of-way needs and access plan.</p> <p>Medians may be warranted in the section due to forecasted traffic demand.</p>

<sup>1</sup> This study can be found at <http://www.achdidaho.org/Projects/ProjectsPast.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Information on Phase 2 can be found at <http://www.achdidaho.org/Projects/PublicProject.aspx?ProjectID=127>

<sup>3</sup> Materials on the Western Canyon Arterial Study can be found at [http://www.nampahighway1.com/index\\_files/CANYONCOUNTYWESTERNROUTE.htm](http://www.nampahighway1.com/index_files/CANYONCOUNTYWESTERNROUTE.htm)