



City of Coeur d' Alene
City of Post Falls
City of Hayden
City of Rathdrum
Coeur d' Alene Tribe
East Side Highway District
Idaho Transportation Department
Kootenai County, Idaho
Lakes Highway District
Post Falls Highway District
Worley Highway District

3d.

Cooperatively Developing a Transportation System for all of Kootenai County, Idaho

Board Memorandum

TO: KMPO Board members
FROM: Glenn F. Miles, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Huetter Corridor Right of Way Needs Study
DATE: November 2, 2006

Recommendation:

The KMPO Board accepted comments as part of today's presentation on the results of the public involvement process and then directed the consulting firm to complete the summary of public comments and develop a response to those comments for the KMPO Board to consider as part of their deliberation process.

Background:

Since at least 1997, the concept of developing an alternate or additional transportation route for better north/south travel between the Garwood area and Interstate 90, has been in the public discussion. Part of this discussion has also focused on improving the east-west connections on the Rathdrum Prairie. The 1997 Kootenai County Area Transportation Team (KCATT) Plan specifically identified the Huetter Corridor as an area that should be considered for further transportation development. This was again evaluated in the 2001-2003 time frame when the Idaho Transportation Department conducted the U.S. 95 Corridor Study to address increasing congestion on U.S. 95 north of Interstate 90. Both efforts had significant public involvement programs in which the Huetter Corridor was specifically called out as part of a long-term potential solution to address both increased traffic congestion on S.H. 41 and U.S. 95 as well as rapid residential growth on the Rathdrum Prairie.

After the creation of the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO), local elected officials on the KMPO Board recognized a need to protect future transportation corridors. The Board directed staff to develop a scope of work that would address how to protect Huetter Road as a future transportation corridor and identify the future right of way needs to protect the corridor from adverse land use encroachment.

KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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In March 2005 the KMPO Board requested an area be defined for the Huetter Road Corridor Study to address concerns for the cities of Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene in regards to defining the Areas of City Impact (ACI). In April 2005 the KMPO Board received a presentation from the consultant team defining the corridor study area, including some conceptual alignment alternatives.

In addition, the KMPO Board in April discussed the purpose and need for an upgraded facility on Huetter Road. The Purpose and Need that was established is as follows:

"The purpose of the Huetter Road Corridor Study will be to determine the need for an improved roadway to existing transportation facilities within the corridor to address improved mobility needs in Kootenai County. Previous studies and current development patterns within the County have identified future travel demand primarily north of Interstate 90 connecting to U.S. 95. Growth within the area will result in future capacity issues on the transportation network, and will require preservation of right of way for future facilities."

The goals of conducting the analysis were:

- A. Protect future transportation investments through the identification of long-range right of way needs and implementation controls.
- B. Provide an alternate route for some U.S. 95 and S.H. 41 traffic to meet regional needs.
- C. Through intergovernmental coordination, address regional transportation issues and future land use needs.
- D. Enhance traffic operations to improve safety through roadway design, traffic controls, and access management within the corridor.
- E. Alleviate future operational deficiencies on parallel corridors through additional parallel arterial capacity.
- F. Consider multi-modal needs through the alternatives analysis and linkages to existing and planned facilities and services, such as bike, pedestrian and transit improvement.
- G. Enhance regional freight and goods movement within Kootenai County for economic development in the vicinity of the Coeur d'Alene Airport.
- H. Provide access management controls along the corridor and roadway improvements to promote traffic safety and efficient operations.
- I. Through a collaborative process with corridor stakeholders, the public, and agencies of jurisdictions within Kootenai County seek to determine project and regional needs and develop appropriate solutions.

With these goals established, the consultant team, which was initially The Transpo Group and later transferred to Ruen-Yeager, discussed with the KCATT and KMPO Board the three levels of possible facilities that could be considered to try and address future north/south capacity needs. Those options included:

1. Controlled Access Facility (High Speed to High Speed): Design speeds of 60 miles per hour with grade-separated interchanges at key connections (I-90, Prairie, and U.S. 95), with limited access frontage roads.
2. Managed Access Facility (High Speed to Mid Speed): Design speeds of 45 miles per hour, principal arterial with managed access, interchanges located at 1 mile spacing within the corridor
3. Urban Principal Arterial (High Speed to Low Speed): Design speeds of 35 miles per hour, at grade facility, no direct parcel access, and traffic signal controlled intersecting streets.

The KMPO Board, based on recommendations from KCATT directed the consultant team to develop alternatives that create a controlled access facility with interchanges located at 1-mile intervals where practical and feasible, including a frontage road on the west side of the facility.

Between April and October 2005, the consultant team in coordination with KMPO staff began conducting travel demand modeling for various alternatives consistent with the purpose and need, facility type, and goals of the study. The initial finding from the travel demand analysis confirmed that without a highway being developed in the Huetter Road corridor, S.H. 41, Ramsey Road, U.S. 95, and Government Way would have critical congestion issues.

In February 2006 Ruen-Yeager gave a presentation to both KCATT and the KMPO Board on an update of the preliminary right of way needs discussion based on previous direction from the Board. That discussion focused on facility assumptions for location/alignment, main line right of way widths and standards, presence of frontage roads, and the types of directional interchanges that could connect I-90 to the corridor. Based on the technical recommendations from KCATT and comments from the Board, Ruen-Yeager was directed to draft the Right Of Way Needs Map Report. The report was presented to KCATT in May 2006 and requested local jurisdiction comments no later than July, so the KMPO Board could take action to release the document for public comment.

In July 2006 the KMPO Board authorized the KMPO staff to release a public draft of the Right Of Way Needs Map Report, subject to addressing comments received after completion of the local jurisdiction review. On August 3, 2006 the consultant team gave an update to the KMPO Board on the draft report and the changes that had been made based on comments they had received from local agencies and jurisdictions. Ms. Fueston reported the public meetings would be scheduled within the upcoming six weeks. Public meetings were held as follows:

September 14, 2006 Coeur d'Alene Police Department
September 20, 2006 Centennial Distributing (Hayden)
September 28, 2006 City of Post Falls City Council Chambers

The public comment period remained open until October 12, 2006. A summary of the public comments are attached.

The Board can expect to receive a large number of comments at the November 2, 2006 meeting based on the contacts received to date. It is the staff recommendation that KMPO provide an opportunity for Ruen-Yeager to respond to the public comments and modify the report and the proposed alternative(s) on the draft map, where it is deemed appropriate, for the Boards consideration.

Huetter Corridor Public Comments Summary
KMPO Meeting
11/02/06

Per Big Sky

- **Public Open Houses**
 - Coeur d'Alene – 12 attendees
 - Hayden – 22 attendees
 - Post Falls – 30 attendees
 - Total 64 attendees

- **Presentations**
 - Coeur d'Alene Chamber
 - Coeur d'Alene Airport

- **Comments**
 - Written comments at Public Open House – 16
 - Petition Signatures – 64
 - Letters / Emails – 10
 - Blogs – 15

- **Support / Opposition**
 - Favor – 15
 - Favor with Changes – 8
 - Opposed – 80

In Favor of the Project Issues

- Favor yellow option
- Huetter Corridor location is most logical option
- Include grade separated interchanges
- Include within right of way enough area for pedestrian/bicycle facilities and light rail
- Keep Huetter Road open
- Shift alignment to the west between Hayden Avenue and Lancaster Road
- Shift alignment to the east for the entire corridor
- Provide a frontage road between Hayden Avenue and Lancaster Road on the east side of the facility
- Split Huetter Corridor alignment on railroad right of way
- No extension south of river
- Extend south of river
- Increased noise levels
- No Poleline Avenue connection
- Begin land acquisition immediately

- Add more Seltice Way access points
- Fast track projects to limit cost increases
- Proceed with the Huetter Corridor project, but also improve US 95

Against the Project Issues

- Improve SH 41 and US 95 instead
- Improve SH 41 with interchanges at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Lancaster Road
- Alignment east of Huetter Road
- Favor yellow option
- No extension south of the river
- Higher noise levels
- Impacts existing homes
- No Poleline Avenue interchange
- Reduced facility speed in residential areas
- Keep Poleline Avenue as a two lane road
- Improve US 95 connection to the south across the river
- Improve US 95 with frontage roads
- Change alignment north of Lancaster Road – shift to the east of Ramsey Road to connect to US 95
- Use SH 53 instead from Stateline to US 95
- Improve SH 41 and add a roadway connection to US 95 using the railroad right of way
- Project will increase crime and accidents

Other Issues

- Signalize Huetter Road and Seltice Way intersection
- Use the railroad right of way for a pedestrian/bicycle path when abandoned

City	Support	Support with exceptions	Oppose	HUETTER CORRIDOR PUPPET AND AGENCY COMMENTS	BLOG	Email	Attent Open H.	Received Letter
Athol	X			I think this is THE most important issue in our area. A north/south corridor should be our top priority. I work in Post Falls and live in the Athol area so I deal with Highway 95 congestion everyday. The summer is the worst. So many cars and large trucks are just trying to get from I-90 north towards Sandpoint. We need to get them off of the CDA/Hayden section of US 95.			1	
Coeur d'Alene				No comment cards filed.			16	
Dalton Gardens				No comment cards filed.			1	
Hayden				No comment cards filed.			9	
Post Falls				No comment cards filed.			12	
Rathdrum				No comment cards filed.			1	
Spokane				No comment cards filed.			1	
Petition			64	Signatures opposed to Huetter Corridor, mostly residing in Brickert Country Estates and Big Sky.				Petition
Post Falls			2	My husband and I reside in Brickert Country Estates, our property is greatly affected by this project. We strongly oppose Highway 95 being routed through Huetter Road. This would decrease the value of our home we planned to use for future retirement. The bypass proposal has already hurt the value of our home, we can't sell without disclosing future bypass plans, now our future is uncertain, we sit in limbo. Do we continue to fix up our place to have it bought and destroyed? I feel like our hands are tied till you make a decision. How long will it take? We have no answers. We only know our future is in your hands.				
Post Falls		X		Prefer the yellow (ITD) highlighted option to decrease effect on Brickert Estates. Keep Huetter Road open. Need bike trail from neighborhoods connecting to main trail. Why couldn't SH 41 be made into more lanes instead of creating a new highway? If the Huetter corridor happens, it should be on the east side of Huetter where it passes Brickert Estates due to homes already being there.			1	
Post Falls		X		I don't think the Poleline interchange is necessary. Can easily get on the Prairie I/C. Overall "NO!" but: Please keep Huetter Road in the current position. Keep the North-South route east of Huetter. Much prefer the I-90/Huetter interchange to include the ITD option shown on maps. Agree high speed to high speed is best for community as a whole. No Poleline interchange.			1	

City	Support	Support with exceptions	Oppose	HUETTER CORRIDOR PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS	BLOG	Email	Attended Open House	Received Letter
Post Falls		X	X	1) Green option takes out too many existing homes, why not go farther east into what is now farmland. Stop approving new developments along Huetter. 2) Keep speed limit down through current residential areas, increase speed north past Prairie where there are currently no homes. Cars can cross from SH 41 to new highway on Poleline, Prairie, etc. 3) Yellow ITD Option yellow would be my preference if this highway goes in. Green option takes out too many homes. 4) Noise level is a huge concern as is my children's ability to bike safely to CDA and Post Falls. 5) You are breaking up existing neighborhoods.			1	
Post Falls		X	X	1) I do not think interchange/on-ramps at Poleline are necessary, in fact, most freeways do not have exchanges closer than 2-3 mile intervals. Please consider Prairie and Hayden or Wyoming as the interchange and use Huetter Road as a frontage Road access from Poleline. Please do not turn Poleline into a major 4-lane thoroughfare! 2) Consider reworking US 95 as a high speed highway with frontage road and overpasses instead of Huetter Road. 3) Huetter Road solution is not wise since it ends at I 90 going south. A better solution is US 95 straight through for N/S traffic.			1	
		X	X	I am writing concerning the proposed Huetter Bypass. It seems to me that the Huetter Bypass is a very poor choice unless it is to go across the Spokane River and connect with US 95. Unless this is the plan for a Huetter Bypass there is still the problem of how US 95 will cross the river. Another major highway redesign and construction with major expense will be required and this will come about sooner rather than later. If one of these bypass proposals is going to be done anyway, the latest preferred option is definitely the best of those proposed.				X
			2	My wife and I live in Brickert Estates and are both against using Huetter as a highway route. It is a peaceful place to live and would be ruined by all the noise and traffic. We will be at any advertised meetings opposing it.		X		
	X			North on Huetter - starting south of Wyoming rounded curve to east crossing Lancaster 1/2 mile east of Atlas Road. Crossing Ramsey Road approximately 3/4 mile north of Lancaster Road - flowing with curve across Boekel Road into Highway 95 This is all open ground - which would be cheaper way to go. Run a bicycle trail on the railroad right of way - when and if abandoned.		X		
			X	We feel Huetter is a poor and expensive bypass. It will never connect to US 95 south of Coeur d'Alene, therefore if a bypass is needed to move people from I 90, the best route is to use is Highway 41 with Prairie, Hayden, and Lancaster Roads interchanges to reconnect with US 95 north of Coeur d'Alene.		X		
				We feel a light is needed at Huetter Road and Seltice Way, as it's very difficult and dangerous to get on Seltice or off Huetter Road any time of the day.			X	

City	Support	Support with exceptions	Oppose	HUETTER CORRIDOR PURPOSE AND AGENCY COMMENTS	BLOG	Email	Attend Open House	Received Letter
	X			I have three comments: First, make sure the Huetter Highway north of the Spokane River is built like an interstate with overpasses and on and off ramps, and within the corridor make provision for other modes of transportation (bicycles, light rail). With the fuel shortages looming, the use of autos may be limited. Second, reconsider running this corridor from US 95 along Highway 53 to Rathdrum and along Trent corridor. An interchange would be built in the Spokane Valley and the motorist would choose either to drive east on I 90 or northeast on the new corridor. Why continue chopping up more land? Third, I own a 160-acre conservation easement south of the Spokane River. It would be a shame if, at some future time, this Huetter Corridor was extended south of the river across this conservation easement and others existing around Cougar Bay.		X		
	2			We agree something needs to be done. We agree that Huetter is the most logical option.			X	
			X	I'm against the development of Huetter Road as a high traffic corridor because it would divide any community growth and encourage further commercialization and unwanted development into precious open space. I support the improvement and expansion of the existing traffic corridors: SH-41 and US-95. Precious and irreplaceable for quality of life here in Kootenai County. Thank you.		X		
	X			I think the Huetter bypass should be done first, now. I think they put the north/south route in they should buy the right of way between Huetter and Atlas Roads so they can buy fences instead of homes, barns, shops, etc. Buy plenty of rights of way for the future like 50 years or so.		X		
			2	We are not in favor of Huetter becoming an expressway. We reside in Brickert Estates and bought for that reason that it was in the country. We were not aware that there were any plans to make Huetter an expressway. There are no businesses along Huetter Road thereby labeling it an industrial area of any sort. If this road is for the benefit of industry, it would make sense to put it where the industry is i.e. Atlas Road or even stop traffic before it gets to Post Falls and make the road closer to the Washington Stateline or even use the exit that already exists at Pleasantview. In the diagrams that are currently proposed, at least four homes, if not more would have to be moved to the cost of over 2 million dollars. This doesn't even include the homes that will be built along Huetter Road and Poleline Avenue. That seems to be a big expense to taxpayers when even SH 41 could be used as an expressway. Or for that matter why could we not just leave US 95 like it is. Take away the signal lights, add frontage roads and make roads under US 95 for access to the frontage roads.				X

City	Support	Support with exceptions	Oppose	HUETTER CORRIDOR PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS	BLOG	Email	Attended Open House	Received Letter
				The more practical/less expensive approach would be to 1) widen SH 41 from Rathdrum to I 90; 2) add a clover leaf I/C at SH 41 and I 90; 3) extend a connecting roadway from SH 41 to US 95 to parallel the railroad tracks. Going up Huetter is unnecessary the way plans show it. Land where no houses are built seems a much better place to put a freeway.				
	X			There is a definite need for a high speed, limited access freeway to alleviate the stop and go traffic on Highway 95. As population increases, this will be even more important. Now is the time to plan and start implementing the plan.		X		
		X		Instead of taking all the right of way from the north side, to be fair it should be split between north and south sides of the railroad right of way.		X		
			X	Opposed to Huetter Corridor. Without a viable comprehensive plan in place Kootenai County it seems premature to be proposing a future north/south corridor; one that only considers Huetter Corridor. The scope should be expanded to include other n/s roads in the county. The high speed to high speed roadway is excessive.				X
	X			Coeur d'Alene Chamber letter of support for economic development. Also, should consider options which will increase freight transportation accessibility. Project would enhance commerce and economic viability of the region.				
	X			I am in favor of this project and suggest the bypass go south along the railroad tracks to Huetter Road and then directly south to I 90. A freeway type road would probably be best. Also, land acquisition should begin immediately.		X		
		X		City of Coeur d'Alene letter. The decision to consider only a high-speed controlled access facility should be made only after other options have been objectively evaluated by traffic modeling, environmental considerations, etc. The current option has significantly greater R/W, environmental, and cost impacts. A multi-lane road with signalized access at the arterial intersections every mile, even with a frontage road, could be much less impact and provide the capacity needed for future growth. The typical sections will need to be referenced to the existing section line so that each jurisdiction will know how much r/w to reserve. The report needs to address the south end of the existing Huetter Road, need for frontage road, local trail planning efforts, and railroad crossing details.				
	X			Letter from support from Post Falls Highway District.				
	X			Letter from Lakes Highway District. Need to identify adequate R/W, consider wider travel lanes, and separate utility and drainage corridors.				
	X			I am all for it. It should have been done 5 years ago.			X	
	X			Huetter corridor looks good and has my support.		X		

City	Support	Support with exceptions	Oppose	HUETTER CORRIDOR PLAN AND AGENCY COMMENTS	BLOG	Email	Attend Open House	Received Letter
		X		The original straight through north-south plan connecting to US 95 south made more sense. What happens when a need for traffic flow south is needed? A need for more access points for Sellice is apparent.		X		
			X	We are not in favor of the project: 1) disruption of existing versus future properties. With Huetter, you displace existing homes and lower property values. Locating the corridor farther east of Huetter Road would create less impact on existing property owners, where the property is mainly farmland with future build out plans; 2) the current study format of presentation and promotion creates an unfair situation for those property owners, who will lose their property to the R/W acquisition, if and when the project moves forward. With the direction this study is going, we will be unable to sell our property without disclosure. Unfortunately, with the major cost of this project and the unknown of when the project were to be started, the property owner would be stuck with a property that they would be unable to market, therefore imprisoning them to their property until such time the project happens or is removed from the ITD list of projects and cancelled.				
	X			Unfortunately I will be unable to attend one of the upcoming open houses regarding the Huetter by-pass, but wish to get my oar in the water with this letter. 1) Am I in favor of the by-pass? An emphatic yes! 2) It should have been built a couple of years ago and finished by now. 3) Can we get it on a fast track so as to limit cost increases resulting from delays? 4) It will relieve the pressure on US 95, which will still need major improvements. Our population will continue to explode as folks in the southwest flee the illegal alien problem that Congress seems to be unwilling to address. The longer we wait, the higher the cost.		X		
			X	We live in Brickert Country Estates. When we purchased our property, we were aware of the possibility of Huetter Road being expanded. However, Huetter Road turning into a major freeway comes to us a complete shock. Nobody expected this to effect established neighborhoods and homes along the west side of Huetter, as the east side of the road has until of late been undeveloped farm fields. The preferred route as explained to me would potentially remove four to five residences from our neighborhood. This makes no sense when you consider the land to the east of Huetter at Poleline is still undeveloped. ITD RW Sub-Option is the sensible route. Furthermore, a major I/C at Huetter and Poleline seems unnecessary as a direct connection to the east toward US 95 is not realistic with pre-existing developments. We envision increased traffic, noise pollution and crime. Another concern is the proposed speed limit. I am in favor of the biking lanes and walkways along this route that would lead to the Centennial Trail.				X edited

City	Support	Support with exceptions	Oppose	HUETTER CORRIDOR PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS	BLOG	Email	Attended Open House	Received Letter
			2	<p>Why such bypasses is hard to understand. None of them resolves the basic problem of a 4 lane highway for US 95 through the Coeur d'Alene area. These byways seem to be a patch up solution to temporarily solve a traffic problem knowing that another solution with great additional expense for taxpayers is in the future, very probably in the not very distant future at that. Therefore, we believe you need to face the problem and design a highway solution which will be useful as the major route for US 95 for many years. Back to the various proposed Huetter bypasses, it is our understanding none of these would extend south beyond I 90. In other words, they do not hook up with US 95. Of the bypass choices, the "preferred route" as shown on the draft is the best. It results, as all bypass alternatives do, in running another big highway across the Rathdrum Prairie which is already being cut up by highways. Therefore, we oppose such bypasses for damage they do and for the cost to the tax payers who will still face another construction project for the solution of the route of US 95.</p>		X		
Hayden	X			<p>I applaud the efforts to provide a viable alternative for the north/south thoroughfare through our community and I believe the Huetter Bypass is the most effective solution I have heard yet. On behalf of the Coeur d' Alene Airport, we support all efforts to make this project a reality. When discussing the project with the consultants, I had suggested a corridor alignment farther west in the area of our instrument approach to provide for adequate safety separation from approaching aircraft from the highway. The corridor alignment should be west of the current Huetter Road alignment in the area between Lancaster and Hayden. Further, I suggest that the community would benefit from moving the local access road from the west side of the Huetter corridor to the east side, which would put the local access road closer to the movement of commercial and residential areas and also provide a bypass route around the Airport.</p>				X