

Public Transportation Roundtable Meeting Notes
July 23, 2009
Coeur d'Alene Public Library

Attendees:

Chair, Pearl Bouchard, Area Agency on Aging
Marv Lekstrum, LHD/KMPO
Chris Riffe, City of Rathdrum
James Hail, Citizen at Large
Bob Spalding, CDA Tribe
Laurie Hassell, Citizen at Large
Al Hassell, City of Coeur d'Alene
Vice Chair, John Austin, PAC
Walter Porter, Citizen
Linda Wilhelm, Post Falls City Council
Bill Brannan, Northwest Trailways
Helen Stephens, NICE
Andrew Murphy, Citylink
Craig Wilcox, D.A. Davidson
Rod Mitchell, Citylink
Don Davis, ITD
Donna Montgomery, Citizen

KMPO Staff:

Ryan Stewart
Jenny Wash
Tiara Schmidt

1. Welcome and Introductions

Pearl Bouchard welcomed attendees and thanked them for attending. Ms. Bouchard asked those attending to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of the April 21, 2009 Minutes

Laurie Hassell made a motion to approve the April 21, 2009 meeting minutes. Bill Brannan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

3. Public Comments

No public comments were given.

4. Old Business

a. Transit Center Location Study Update/Presentation

Ryan Stewart, KMPO Senior Transportation Planner, updated and presented to the group the three preferred site locations for the Transit Center. He stated the Transit Center Location Study is coming very close to wrapping up. The schedule of the study consisting of an in-depth analysis and detailed work will be

complete by the end of this month. A Technical Memorandum 2 will be distributed to the group, KCATT and KMPO Board once more of the detailed work is complete. There will be a final draft report that will be distributed for comment which will be offered on KMPO's website; an announcement will be sent via email.

Mr. Stewart explained the staff has issued a Technical Memorandum 1 which described the process KMPO and the consultant have gone through to identify a number of different sites throughout the area, not just in Coeur d'Alene, but in Post Falls and throughout the greater metropolitan area of Kootenai County. He stated there were pieces of analysis done based on the feedback of the Steering Committee and priorities that were identified which were all lined out in the first memorandum. At this stage based on all the sites ranked on criteria that was developed, the consultants/committee came down to the three top sites all in the Coeur d'Alene area. All sites follow in close vicinity of each other; Ramsey Rd, Appleway, and the Riverstone development.

Mr. Stewart asked the group to review the information that has been presented at this point and time and informed the group that The Land Group/KMPO will be going to KCATT next Tuesday with a recommendation that the Board identify one of these three locations as its preferred site so the project can proceed with funding and with finalization of the in-depth analysis for the final report.

Mr. Stewart presented and described the three site locations going over the positives and negatives of each location. He stressed that each of these site plans are very conceptual and not meant to identify a specific parcel or design. The site plans were developed for a public meeting that was held in June as well as for the Steering Committee to review.

The Riverstone location Mr. Stewart described first is near the vicinity of Seltice Way and Riverstone Drive, a high activity emerging center. There is some excellent development that has already occurred here and is in close proximity to other trip generators and close to the Prairie Trail., which was one of the biggest priorities. The placement of the Transit Center should be in a location where there is strong connectivity for all modes of transportation. This location is also close to I-90 and some of the other major corridors. The property owners and developers of the property have met and they are all motivated to see this center happen. Mr. Stewart stated that this is the most ideal site.

The Appleway site location is just to the west of Ramsey Road on Appleway. Mr. Stewart described the location as being adjacent to the Conoco station and has more size constraints. It is a smaller piece of property that may not allow further expansion. There is question on some right-of-way that is adjacent to the I-90 on-ramp and they are still researching the availability. There are some grade issues as well. Access is pretty good but a bit more constraining than the Riverstone site and there would be some need for further improvements to insure

connectivity over to the Prairie Trail. Pedestrian and bicycle safety are also concerns.

The last location site described was the Ramsey site location north of the Appleway site; northwest corner of Appleway and Ramsey. Mr. Stewart explained that this site has some significant grade differences between the existing roadways and where the site would be located causing more of an expense. This location is part of a piece of property that is owned by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. He mentioned also that access to the property is a little difficult. There are some locations where there would be only right in, right out access. Mr. Stewart emphasized again, this is conceptual without going through the proper review with the city to determine access. This site is the largest for potential property purchase.

There was discussion on these three site locations among the group and questions about timeline on this project.

Mr. Stewart responded that there is no time frame for completion for any of these sites. The next phase of this project after the site location study is done would be to finalize funding for acquisition of the piece of property. A large sum of stimulus funding is available for construction, which is why this preferred site needs to be identified and acted on by the Board in order to allow John Austin at PAC to finalize or amend the grant with the Federal Transit Administration so the money is secured. He stated that there is a fiscal year 2010 appropriations request submitted earlier this year for two-million dollars to not only develop the intermodal or transit facility but also be used potentially for servicing or maintaining vehicles in the greater Coeur d'Alene area. This would not necessarily be at the same location but the two-million dollars would be a spring board for allowing the next phase of either purchasing or leasing the site. An environmental review would be required, preliminary engineering and final design, and construction. An aggressive time frame would be seen as completed/constructed at the end of construction year 2010.

Mr. Stewart emphasized the parcels are not final; discussion with all the property owners would need to proceed on a final parcel, re-platted and purchase. The design being conceptual, the building is envisioned to house dispatch, administration functions, but also some other storage space, restroom, passenger waiting area, etc. Consultants have come up with some preliminary numbers on that particular building and their estimation for 150 parking spaces, and a 5,200 square foot (sf) building. The cost, based on local conditions, would be approximately \$990,000. The cost for purchase of property is an on-going discussion, which will need the KMPO Board approval on a preferred site and the final report to be complete. The prices range from \$9 per sf to \$13.50 per sf. A 2-acre bare minimum would be needed for the transit center.

Ryan Stewart stated these exhibits and specific details on the top site locations would be included in the second technical memorandum. Based on the additional analysis that has been done, feedback from the Steering Committee, discussions with the property owners and developers as well as from the public open house, staff is recommending that the Riverstone location be the preferred location. These other two locations will be recommended as alternate locations in case the preferred location cannot be secured. KMPO welcomes feedback from this group to provide to KCATT.

Mr. Stewart explained that Stan Griswold was not present to review the materials because three architects from CTA are in town to donate their time to help get more specific numbers for the study which will be included in the final report. He also mentioned that the consultants met with Mayor Sandi Bloem and city staff on Monday and they were favorable of the transit center and the Riverstone location.

John Austin made a motion to recommend to KCATT the recommendation of Riverstone as the preferred site. There were 11 yeas and 2 nays. The motion carried to recommend the Riverstone location to KCATT as the preferred site location.

Mr. Stewart stated that there is a KCATT meeting on Tuesday, July 28 at 8:00 a.m. The committee will be reviewing this recommendation and Public comments are welcome. At the August 6 KMPO Board meeting, KMPO anticipates taking the recommendations from this group and KCATT to the Board identifying Riverstone as the preferred site location with the other two locations as alternates. At the September Board meeting, the final report will be recommended for approval.

b. ARRA (Stimulus) Transit Projects Update

John Austin provided an update on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funding for transit projects. The first phase of funding came through for six vehicles; two buses, one maintenance vehicle and one para-transit vehicle for Citylink, and two vehicles for the Kootenai Medical Center's medical shuttle service which came to total worth of \$577,000. \$720,200 has been set aside for constructing the transit center. Once the process has been completed and the KMPO Board has made a recommendation, PAC will amend the current grant to include these funds and have it ready to apply this fall.

John also commented on the redistribution of stimulus funds and the importance of having projects ready to acquire the funds needed, otherwise the funds will be lost.

c. IMAP Update

Chair Pearl Bouchard announced she was not able to attend the most recent IMAP meeting in July. Robert Spaulding, who was able to attend, mentioned that the meeting was under-attended, but the local mobility manager network representatives did update ITD on the needs and strategies that have been identified in the past. The next IMAP meeting will be Tuesday, August 25. Pearl Bouchard mentioned that Michelle Porter an Avista member will be conducting an informal public survey asking the public what they feel the needs are. They hope to have something presented at the October meeting.

d. Bench and Shelter Committee Update – Andrew Murphy/Craig Wilcox

Craig Wilcox stated that the first round of 10 benches is being powder coated and eight others have been paid for and are ready for powder coating once a request for funds is made to the KMPO Board who is holding the collection of sponsor money for this project.

Andrew Murphy reported that the bench contract previously approved by the cities of Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls was presented to the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Council for ratification. The tribal leadership expressed concern that wording within these documents might infringe upon tribal sovereignty. Consequently, they asked that the agreement be reevaluated. Tribal attorneys are working directly with the municipal lawyers involved to reach an agreement acceptable to both parties.

Laurie Hassell asked who has sponsored benches so far. Craig Wilcox announced that: Helen Stephens, Disability Action Center, Dock Marketing, D. A. Davidson, Family Home Care, Harmony House, Camelot Estates, and himself who have sponsored benches.

e. Non-Motorized Plan Update

Project Manager, Tiara Schmidt provided an update on the Non-Motorized Plan. She announced that the Non-Motorized Public Workshop was held May 19 at the Trailhead Pavilion, Q'emiln Park in Post Falls to help identify future needs for the region. She provided a summary of the workshop which included maps, comments, and survey results. Tiara explained the purpose of the workshop was to assess what the public sees as future needs, stating that most were concerned with connectivity and safety as well as interest in connecting non-motorized transportation with other modes of transportation. She also announced that staff is in the process of planning for the next Community Advisory meeting scheduled for September 17 at Hayden City Hall in hopes of to help identify funding and implementation strategies.

5. New Business

a. Citylink Routes Discussion

Andrew Murphy stated that a more detailed discussion is necessary for placing bus routes and assessing comments. He felt Roundtable meeting would be a good forum to discuss these issues and procedures. Mr. Murphy also mentioned having someone from the Chamber of Commerce participate in the discussions would be beneficial. So far, the route placement has been done by Citylink staff and city engineers. Ryan Stewart offered the assistance of KMPO staff to help Citylink derive a policy and process for an organized formal methodology for receiving comments and formally going through a review of existing services and stop locations on an annual or semi-annual basis. This policy will be drafted, reviewed by the Tribe, and then provided to the Roundtable to review and comment on the service performance overall.

b. Discussion of the Mobility Manager Position

John Austin explained the Mobility Manager position to the group. This position will be funded for one year through the ITD 5711 stimulus funds (rural funds) and will provide service to the five county areas of Shoshone, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah, and Boundary. PAC is working with ITD to identify the scope of work for the position and hope to have it advertised in late August or the first part of September. After the first year, John stated that PAC hopes to have this position funded through ITD's regular 5311 funding. The group asked that the scope of work be distributed to the Roundtable members for review.

6. Good of the Order

Andrew Murphy introduced Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning for Spokane Transit Authority (STA).

Ryan Stewart announced there was an informal meeting with Susan Meyer, CEO of STA, Karl Otterstrom, Randy Kyrias, Director of Public Transportation Division for ITD, Citylink and KMPO staff to briefly discuss the history and background on the attempts to create service between Spokane and Idaho, including the challenges that are involved, such as funding. Karl Otterstrom commented briefly that STA is working on a comprehensive plan that will include a high performance transit network which will included the Spokane to Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene corridor.

Laurie Hassell mentioned that the University of Idaho is working on a program dealing with the corridor impact between Coeur d'Alene and Spokane. She stated there may be some experts on some of these auxiliary areas that may relate to service between the two states.

John Austin stated that the 2010 Census may identify a Spokane/Coeur d'Alene corridor justification in combining these cities into one Metropolitan Planning Organization and asked if there have been any discussions on this matter. Ryan Stewart reported that there has not been any decision, but that Jeff Selle, Manager of Government Affairs, and SRTC's GIS department are working closely on census issues and monitoring this matter. He also stated that preliminary discussions at the Federal level on the next transportation authorization bill emphasize increasing the roles of MPO's in transportation planning in regions, but it is still unclear at this point.

Ryan Stewart followed up with an update of the RPTA white paper. He stated that KMPO is on the agenda for Mayor Bloem's Council of Mayors; however, there has not been a date set for this meeting as of yet.

Bill Brannan, Northwestern Trailways, announced ITD hired a consultant to do an intercity bus study throughout the State of Idaho.

7. Action Items for Next Quarter

Ryan Stewart reviewed the action items to be addressed next quarter:

1. Citylink routes discussion continued
2. Mobility Manager position follow-up

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50.