

Cooperatively developing a transportation plan for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in Kootenai County.



Kootenai



KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION • 221 W. FIRST, SUITE 310 • SPOKANE, WA • 1-800-698-1927

Roundtable Update

The Public Transportation Roundtable group met in early January to talk about a variety of public transportation issues. The Roundtable is a subcommittee of KMPO. Its purpose is to promote coordinated planning and development of public transportation services within and through Kootenai County.

Two guest presenters attended the meeting. Heather Wheeler of Community Transportation Association of Idaho who spoke about a new project the public will be hearing about soon to support, coordinate, and promote mobility in Idaho. Kelli Fairless of Valley Ride talked about the experience of starting a Regional Public Transportation Authority in the Treasure Valley area of Idaho.

Also on the agenda was an update on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Construction of a Transit Center is still on hold while a site is decided upon but acquisition of new vehicles for Citylink and Kootenai Area Transportation System using stimulus money is moving right along.

Six vehicles were initially funded as part of the ARRA request. Eight more are being purchased using the \$720,200 shifted from the Transit Center construction.

In addition, the Roundtable supported the City of Harrison's request to get some form of public transit to Harrison and voted to keep the same Chair and Vice Chair as 2009, Pearl Bouchard and John Austin, respectively.

Check the KMPO Blog for Transportation Happenings

Don't forget to check out the KMPO blog to keep up on all the latest local and national transportation happenings.

Recent topics on the blog include the possibility of a second round of stimulus funding, the possibility of creating a regional public transportation authority in our area, the City of Coeur d'Alene making its own winter street de-icer, and the possibility of paying a tax in the future on how much you drive instead of a gas tax.

The KMPO blog is at www.kmpo.blogspot.com. While browsing, feel free to make a comment on what you see there or what you would like to see. The blog has lots of readers but needs more people to comment to get a good, informative public dialogue going.



KMPO Model Update

The KMPO Board approved the new 2030 travel demand forecast model at the January Board meeting. Both the build and no-build versions of the model, were reviewed by members of the Kootenai County Area Transportation Team (KCATT) before recommending to the board that they be adopted.

KMPO's Mission Statement:

"Cooperatively developing transportation plans for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in Kootenai County."

Check out www.kmpo.net for all KMPO's latest activities

RPTA Feasibility Being Studied

KMPO is investigating the feasibility of forming a Regional Public Transportation Authority, or RPTA, for Kootenai County and possibly other nearby counties.

A RPTA is a local transit authority that addresses public transportation issues.

The advantage of forming a RPTA is that the agency's focus would be solely on public transportation, allowing for better coordination and management of all public transportation services. Under a RPTA, grant money is closely monitored and there is a unified effort to secure funding through federal, state, and local sources.

Currently, several Kootenai County agencies have formed a collaboration to cover planning, funding, and operations regarding public transportation. No single agency specializes in public transportation though, creating cooperation and coordination difficulties on occasion.

A RPTA would be governed by a board of local elected and appointed officials. It would be funded through the Federal Transit Administration, local match money, and voluntary contributions from jurisdictions within the RPTA.

A subcommittee of the KMPO Board has been formed to look into the feasibility of forming such an agency. If it is decided to move forward, a proposal would be put on a future ballot. More information on the possibility of forming a RPTA is available at www.kmpo.net. There is a link on the home page.

Bus Bench Project Wrapping Up

A project to place benches at area Citylink bus stops is in the final phase.

A subcommittee of KMPO's Public Transportation Roundtable group has been working over the past year to recruit sponsors for the benches and to get them installed. The last of the 24 benches are being installed this month. There are 18 benches countywide with another six in midtown Coeur d'Alene.

One of the issues that arose concerning this project was how to fund maintenance of the benches. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe has solved that problem by getting a \$300,000 grant for a maintenance vehicle that will be used to service disabled buses and maintain bus stops.

The tribe is also looking into placing shelters at bus stops on the reservation.

New KMPO Board Member

The KMPO Board has a new member, but it's a familiar face. Dick Panabaker was elected to the Hayden City Council in November and will represent the city on the KMPO Board.

Panabaker has a long history of civil service, serving as mayor of Hayden from 1988 to 1994 and county commissioner from 1995 to 2005.

The KMPO Board meets the first Thursday of each month at the Post Falls Council Chambers, 408 N. Spokane St. 2010 KMPO Board meeting dates can be found at www.kmpo.net. There is a link from the home page.

The Kootenai County Area Transportation Team (KCATT) meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Idaho Transportation Department District 1 Office, 600 W. Prairie Ave. in Hayden. KCATT meeting dates are also posted at www.kmpo.net.

Upcoming Important Dates:

Feb. 4: KMPO Board meeting

Feb. 15: Presidents' Day
(KMPO Open)

Feb. 23: KCATT meeting

May 16-22: Bike to Work
Week

May 31: Memorial Day
(KMPO Closed)