

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



Kootenai



KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Rail Symposium

In June, KMPO and its 'sister' agency, Spokane Regional Transportation Council, hosted a Rail Symposium as the first topic in KMPO/SRTC's 'Transportation Learning Series.' National freight experts Arthur Shoener, Avery Grimes, and John Ficker were guest speakers. All three have spent several decades in the rail industry and have backgrounds in virtually all disciplines of railroad planning and operations.

The presenters spoke on the continuing evolution of the railroad and its effect on the economics of the region. Each related their experiences in areas of logistics, service design, supply chain strategies, regional economics, business development, and safety and security issues.

For those who were not able to attend the symposium, the Power Point presentation is available on the KMPO website at www.kmpo.net. It is posted on the home page under the 'News and Notices' heading.

2010 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

KMPO staff is in the process of updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for Kootenai County. The MTP is a comprehensive, multimodal "blueprint" for transportation systems and services aimed at meeting the mobility needs of Kootenai County through the year 2035. It includes information on key policy issues, existing conditions, predicted future conditions, financial conditions, and planned projects.

The MTP is required by the federal government to be updated every four years, but KMPO strives to review and update it every year in an effort to be proactive. This year's update is extensive, with every section of the plan being overhauled. The update process is expected to be wrapped up sometime in August.

The draft MTP will go out to the KMPO Board and Kootenai County Area Transportation Team (KCATT) for review and editing in August, then be available to the public for input in the fall. The MTP is expected to go to the KMPO Board for adoption near the end of the year.

If you would like to view a draft of the MTP when it becomes available, please email kmpo@kmpo.net with a note saying you would like to be added to a distribution list to receive the draft MTP by email.

Public Transportation Roundtable Meeting

KMPO's Public Transportation Roundtable meets in late July to discuss a variety of issues. The meeting is Wednesday, July 28 from 1-2:30 p.m. at the Coeur d'Alene Public Library, 702 E. Front St.

The purpose of the Roundtable is to promote coordinated planning and development of integrated public transportation services within and through Kootenai County. The Roundtable meets quarterly.

The July agenda includes an update on the effort to acquire property for a transit center, the latest on projects financed by last year's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and an update from the District 1 Mobility Manager focusing on I-way and urban/rural transportation coordination.

Everyone is welcome at Roundtable meetings so feel free to attend.



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

Phase 2 of IPH Project Starts Soon

Phase 1 of the Inland Pacific Hub (IPH) project has recently wrapped up. Phase 2 is expected to get underway soon. The IPH is a project to establish the Inland Pacific Region (a total of 19 counties in Washington and Idaho) as a multi-modal global gateway to increase domestic and international commerce.

Phase 1 was an outreach and research effort aimed at collecting information about freight activity levels, supply chain structures, and opinions on transportation services in the Inland Pacific Hub region.

KMPO and its sister agency, Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC), have been working with several other agencies on this project. The Idaho Transportation Department is an integral partner in the IPH effort. The Washington State Department of Transportation was the lead for Phase 1 of the project. SRTC will lead Phase 2.

This latest phase of the project is aimed at determining strategies for implementation of transportation enhancements that will support increased domestic and international commerce. Project staff is working on the development of the Phase 2 scope. A request for proposals will be released within the next two months to hire a consultant to assist in the latest portion of this project.

All documents and reports from Phase 1 are available on the IPH website at www.inlandpacifichub.org/documents.html.

Check Out The KMPO Blog

With construction going on, summer is a busy time in the transportation industry. That's why you may want to check the KMPO blog at <http://kmpo.blogspot.com/> to keep up with what is happening.

Not only are all construction and street closure notices posted there, but we also post articles related to local and national transportation issues, announcements of emphasis patrols in the area, local events that could impact your commute, and some fun videos and articles you might not see in the mainstream media.

If you have questions or comments regarding local or other transportation, this is also a good place to address them. We welcome comments on all blog threads.

RPTA Update

KMPO has been working with other local jurisdictions and agencies on the possibility of forming a Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) for Kootenai County.

An RPTA is a regional transit authority that addresses public transportation issues. The advantage of forming an RPTA is that the agency's focus would be solely on public transportation, allowing for coordination and management of transportation services.

The RPTA would be a central source of information for all public transportation services in the region: bus, paratransit, medical, vanpool, and carpool.

Currently, several Kootenai County agencies have formed a loose collaboration to fill gaps in the planning, funding, and operations process when it comes to public transportation. No single agency specializes in public transportation, which creates occasional coordination difficulties.

Local support is growing for the formation of an RPTA. If Kootenai County Commissioners place the issue on the ballot of a future election, the public would vote to approve the formation of the RPTA. An RPTA has no taxation authority, thus the formation of an RPTA would not result in an increase in taxes to the public.

More information on the possibility of forming a RPTA can be found at www.kmpo.net/rpta.html.