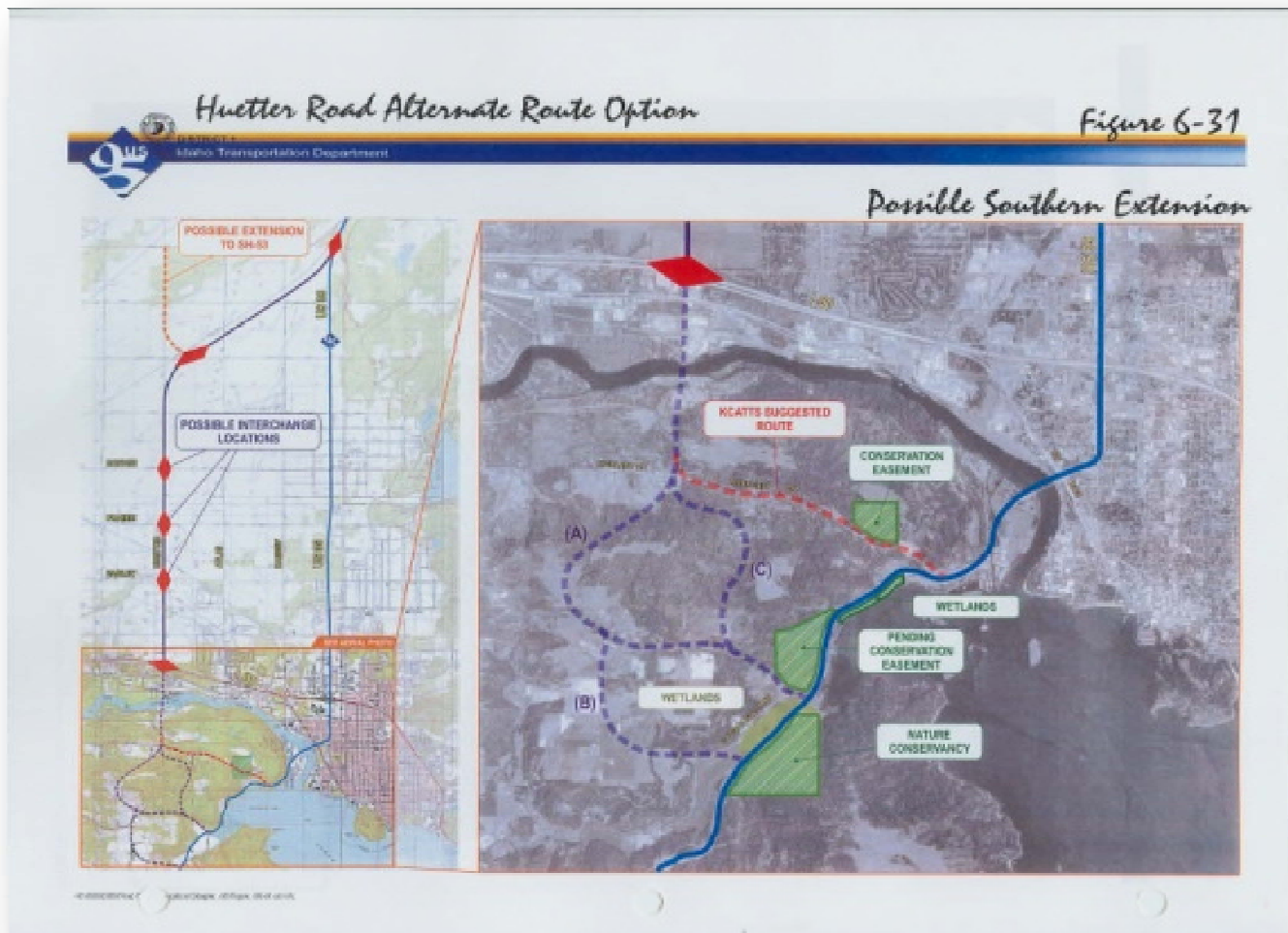


II. HUETTER ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY PROCESS

This chapter introduces the project's sponsor, provides a project history, and establishes the context for which the Right of Way Needs Map is completed.

PROJECT SPONSOR

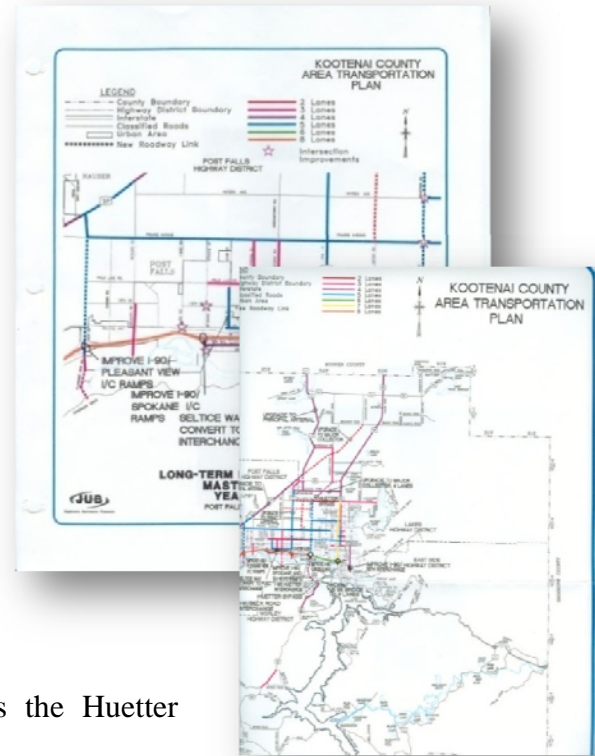
The Huetter Road Corridor Study's sponsor is the Kootenai County Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO). The KMPO Board is the agency responsible for transportation planning and travel demand modeling at the regional level within Kootenai County and serves as a coordinator of all multi-modal planning within the County. The KMPO provides a coordinated planning effort between the public, cities, small towns, Highway Districts, County, state, transit providers, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. The KMPO Board consists of representatives from the Cities of Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, Post Falls, Rathdrum, Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), Kootenai County, East Side Highway District, Lakes Highway District, Post Falls Highway District, and Worley Highway District. The KMPO has a technical advisory transportation committee, Kootenai County Area Transportation Team (KCATT). The KCATT meets monthly to discuss and advise the KMPO Board on technical transportation issues. The KCATT also served as the Strategic Advisory Committee for the study.



PROJECT HISTORY

The corridor has been considered as a viable future transportation route in Kootenai County for a number of years. The project has been included in prior study efforts:

- Project was first formally considered and adopted in *Kootenai County Transportation Plan (KCATT)*, 1997 – 2017.
 - Plan development included public involvement efforts.
 - KCATT Plan recommended an upgraded facility connecting US 95 at SH 53, to Interstate 90 in the Huetter Road area, and south across the Spokane River connecting to US 95.
- Included in the *US 95 Corridor Plan* as the Huetter Bypass or Alternate Route for US 95.
 - Study started in Summer 2000.
 - Plan included extensive public involvement process.
 - Recommended as a study ‘Short Term Improvement’ to preserve right of way along Huetter Road.
 - Recommended as a study ‘Long Term Project’ to construct a high-speed facility along existing US 95 or an alternate route.
- Current Huetter Corridor Study is a continuation of prior efforts.

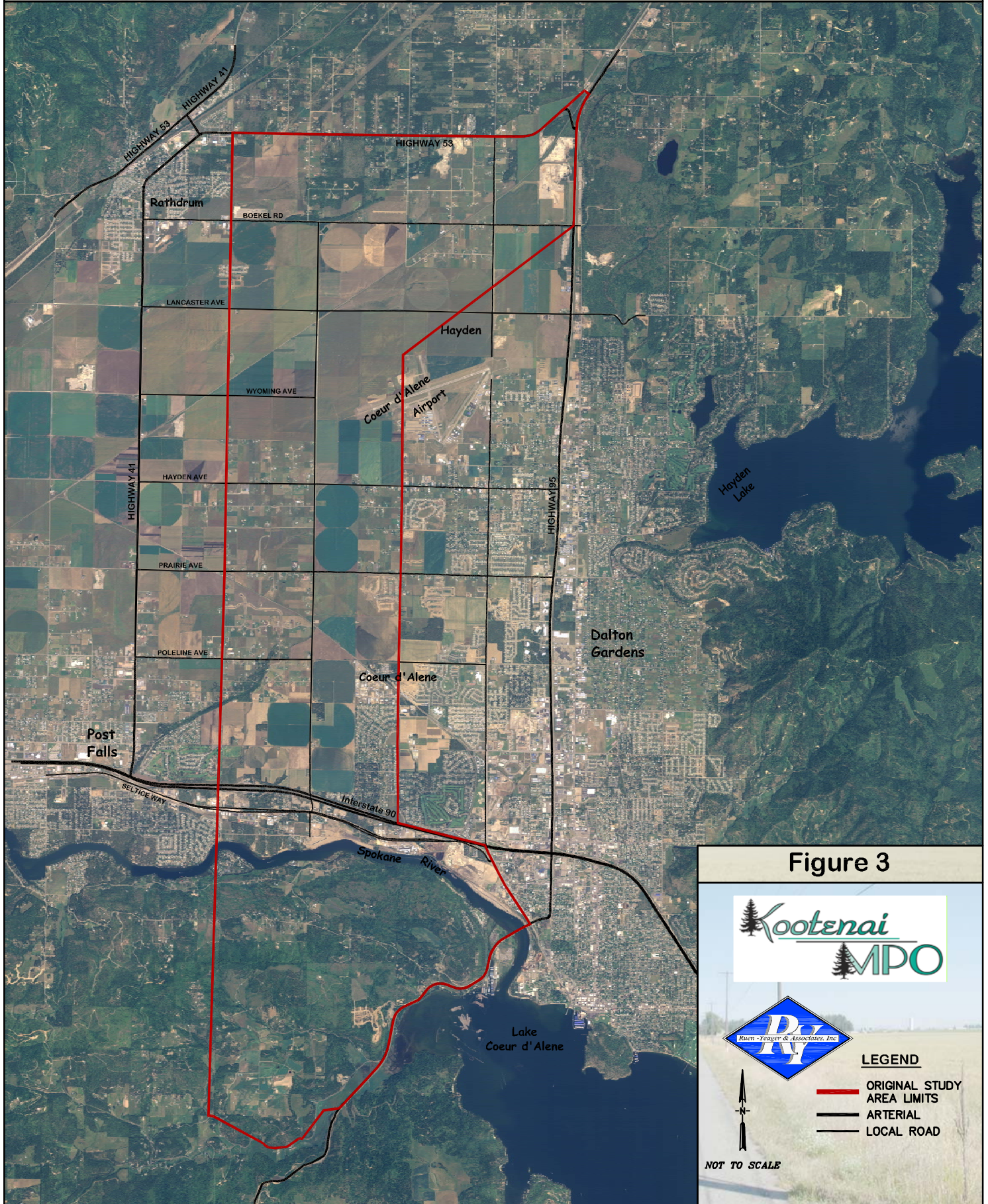


The Huetter Corridor Study provides the foundation for the Right of Way Needs Map. Current and forecast travel demands were used from the regional travel demand model maintained by KMPO. The model’s results illustrate that future traffic volumes and system capacity deficiencies cannot be accommodated without additional transportation system improvements. These findings from the travel demand model, which support the project’s purpose and need, have led to the development of a Right of Way Needs Map.

STUDY AREA

As stated in the project’s goals, the study provides an alternate route for some of the US 95 and SH 41 traffic to meet regional mobility needs. Therefore, at the inception of the Huetter Road Corridor study, a wide breadth of north and south travel within Kootenai County was examined. As illustrated in Figure 3, the project’s original Study Area was generally bounded by Meyer Road on the west, SH 53 on the north, Atlas Road on the east, and US 95 south of the Spokane River. Originally, the study would have included a facility extension over the Spokane River connecting to US Highway 95 in the Cougar Gulch area or further south.

Huetter Corridor Original Study Area



Initial analysis of the Study Area south of the Spokane River yielded many obstacles to providing a route that by-passed much of the congestion at the Interstate 90 and US 95 interchange. These obstacles include locating a feasible and community endorsable location for a new Spokane River crossing, developing a new facility over difficult and significant vertical grades and terrain found south of the river, and avoiding potentially large impacts to existing private properties and existing conservation easements. Thus, it was determined by KMPO to exclude, at this time, the area south of the Spokane River and focus corridor planning efforts north of Interstate 90. Figure 4 illustrates the revised Corridor Study Area.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The study included an extensive public involvement effort with several formal and informal presentations, open house meetings, and opportunities for comments from local jurisdictions, the KMPO, and local developers and landowners. In addition to the public meetings, project information was posted to the KMPO website and was updated regularly to include project related information. These meetings were instrumental in gathering background information regarding future growth and future facility needs. Comments received helped guide the development process and form the final Right of Way Needs Map. Conducting individual agency meetings as well as a number of KMPO Board meetings served as a venue for public input and discussion of the study. A “Frequently Asked Questions” paper was also developed for the study.



Public Open House in Post Falls

The dates and agencies presentations are listed below:

| Date | Participant |
|-------------------|---|
| January 12, 2006 | Associated Highway Districts of Kootenai County |
| January 24, 2006 | KCATT |
| February 2, 2006 | KMPO |
| February 3, 2006 | City of Post Falls |
| February 3, 2006 | Post Falls Highway District |
| February 9, 2006 | City of Coeur d’Alene |
| February 10, 2006 | City of Hayden |
| February 10, 2006 | Lakes Highway District |
| February 10, 2006 | Kootenai County |

The Frequently Asked Questions paper and summaries of Public Comments received are included in the Appendices of this report.

Huetter Corridor Refined Study Area

