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KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Kootenai Metropolitan Area Public Transportation Feasibility Study

Service Alternatives, Organization and Funding Plan

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Overview

The Kootenai Metropolitan Area Public Transportation Feasibility study marks an important step in the development of a multi-purpose, multi-modal transportation system in Kootenai County. This planning study provides the baseline for the implementation of a new public transportation network that will support resident needs for reliable and convenient alternatives to automobile travel. Today, travel in Kootenai County is primarily by private car and will continue to be so in the future. However, as the population grows congestion will worsen and the diversity of trips by purpose and time of day will increase. As these events unfold, other transportation solutions will become more and more important. As part of an efficient transportation system, transit can do more than provide just a transportation alternative. A strong transit network can improve the quality of life in Kootenai County by connecting people with jobs and services, as well as attracting new jobs and services to the region. A solid countywide transit infrastructure will make it easier for people to transition from welfare to work and will help attract major employers to the region.

Building from a minimal funding base and lifeline transit network, this plan provides both short-term (five-year) and long-term (20-year) recommendations for meeting public transportation needs. Implementation of the plan is dependent on new local funding to expand service and to match available Federal Transit Administration grant funding. Governance, organization and staffing strategies are included to create a stable and reliable authority to promote funding and development of public transportation programs in Kootenai County.

The Plan Process

The Kootenai Metropolitan Area Public Transportation Feasibility study commenced in January 2004. The first deliverable, called *Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment*, assessed existing services and unmet transit needs in Kootenai County. This report included details on operations and ridership for existing services, as well as data on land use patterns, current development activity, and other contextual information. The findings were based upon inputs from a range of stakeholders, agency and provider staff, policy makers and interest groups.

This *Service Alternatives, Organization and Funding Plan* is the second major deliverable. This report presents two service scenarios: (1) a short-term (five-year) scenario that assumes no growth in funding during the first year and marginal growth over the next four years; and (2) a long-term scenario that envisions an optimal public transportation network for Kootenai County. In addition, the plan discusses the best governance structure and service

delivery model to support these services. It also details available funding needs and opportunities for raising new funds.

A Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC) was formed to guide plan development and provide feedback to the consulting team. The SAC included representatives from Kootenai County, local cities and Chambers of Commerce, the Area Agency on Aging, North Idaho College, Kootenai Medical Center and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. Four key meetings were held with the Strategic Advisory Committee during the project. The committee convened to discuss:

- Project initiation, background and key transportation issues;
- Existing public transportation services, peer system operations, demographic and transportation trends, and identified public transportation needs;
- Short- and long-term service alternatives developed by Nelson\Nygaard during an extended stay in Kootenai County; and
- Refinements to service plan recommendations as well as organizational, governance, and funding recommendations.

Engaging the Public

A Core Focus Group consisting of 15 randomly selected Kootenai County residents was formed at the outset of the study process and met at three key junctures during the feasibility study. The Core Focus Group provided an opportunity for in-depth, facilitated discussions with community members about strengths and weaknesses of the existing transportation network, public transportation needs, relative importance of transit versus other public services, and willingness to fund future improvements. Input from this group contributed to several key refinements to the plan. A summary of each of the three Core Focus Group meetings is included in Appendix A to this report.

On December 2nd, 2004 a public open house workshop was held to solicit input from members of the general public throughout Kootenai County. Following the public open house, a public comment period commenced with copies of the plan available throughout the community. The comment period continued through December and officially closed on January 11, 2005. Each comment received during the open house and the public comment period is listed in Appendix B. Responses and clarifications are provided in the appendix where appropriate.

Survey of Existing Conditions

The *Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report* is a qualitative and quantitative review of existing public transportation services and unmet needs in Kootenai County. The report provides evidence that there is a significant level of latent demand for public transportation, although it is important to note that many residents feel a strong

psychological barrier to using public transit and that the private automobile will continue to be the primary mode for residents who can drive. The report models ridership demand and considers prevailing local attitudes assessed through a random household telephone survey.

The following dominant themes arose during the existing conditions review:

- New fixed-route service in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls is a highly desired public transportation improvement. Approximately 48 percent of respondents to a countywide survey indicated that they or someone in their household would use a fixed-route system if it provided service near their home.
- Survey respondents who indicated that members of their household would use public transportation typically felt they would use it frequently. Over 75 percent said they would use transit services one or more times per week.
- Better public transit alternatives are needed for commuters and medical patients traveling to Spokane. Over 8,000 commuters travel from Kootenai County to the Spokane area daily, mostly making single-occupant automobile trips. Additionally, there appears to be a significant demand for travel to Kootenai County from Spokane. Survey respondents strongly supported intercounty bus connections as well as the development of park-and-rides in Kootenai County to support van and carpool activities.
- There are a number of seasonal transportation needs associated with the tourism industry, both for visitors and for the influx of seasonal labor needed to support this industry.
- Job access is a major challenge for many low-income residents and agencies that work to place residents in stable job environments. Increasing housing costs in the urban area have forced many low-income residents to move to rural areas where housing is less expensive, but transportation challenges are much greater.
- There appears to be significant unmet need among low-income groups, the youth population, and commuters who would like to use transit, but are discouraged by the lack of reliability of the existing system.

Section 1 of this report presents estimates of ridership potential for future fixed-route and demand-response transit services.

Service Scenarios

Two service concepts are detailed in Section III (Service Scenarios) of this report. The two scenarios, developed during an iterative planning process, include: (1) a short-term scenario that recommends improvements that can be made given no growth in financial resources and (2) an optimal scenario designed to meet county-wide transit demands over the next five to twenty years.

Scenario One: Status Quo

This scenario proposes to make the existing system more efficient and reliable for a greater number of patrons by structuring the management of current on-road supply. It also plans a phased increase in total service over five years, with the gradual increase in the number of buses and total service hours to support marginal increases in service levels during years two through four of the plan.

In the first year of the plan (FY2005-06) KATS/NICE will continue to operate urbanized-area services with its four-bus fleet, allowing approximately 9,800 annual hours of service. Since other short-term services will require additional resources and vehicles, it is recommended that they be implemented at later years of the plan.

Recommended procedural, service policy and design changes designed to make service more efficient and equitable include:

- **Booking, Scheduling and Dispatch Procedures**
  - Active negotiation of pick-up and drop off times
  - Establishment of an "open booking list" for trips that cannot be assigned through negotiation at the time the request is made
  - Implementation of a "will-call" trip request for return medical trips
  - Establishment of a paratransit taxi contract to complement the dial-a-ride program

- **Zoned Service Concepts – Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls**
  - Service in Coeur d'Alene would be structured in a series of four quadrants. One flex route bus would travel clockwise through the zones, while another would travel counter-clockwise. Bi-directional service would be provided in each of the four zones. A map illustrates this concept in Section III of the report.
  - Additional service capacity would be used to provide more traditional one-to-one trips that cannot be accommodated on flex route services. In Post Falls, demand-response service would be provided for local circulation at scheduled times and would provide connections to Coeur d'Alene every two hours.

- **Zoned Service Concepts – Countywide**
  - Service between rural areas of the County and Coeur d'Alene - Post Fall would only be available during certain times of the day. Four zones would be established, including: the I-90 corridor; a corridor branching north from Post Falls to Rathdrum, Spirit Lake and Athol; a Highway 95 Corridor continuing north to Sandpoint; and a south county corridor that would serve the Highway 95 corridor south of Coeur d'Alene.

Figure ES-1 and ES-2 present summary level operating and capital costs for Scenario 1. As mentioned earlier, Scenario 1 assumes no new revenues are available during the first year of the plan, with minimal growth in service hours over the subsequent four years. The only capital costs associated with Scenario 1 are the purchase of three new service vehicles and the replacement of the existing four-bus fleet.

Figure ES-1 Summary of Operating Costs for Scenario 1

	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Hours of Service	*9,800*	*12,250*	*14,700*	*17,145*	*17,145*
Total Fleet size	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Operating Costs					
Turnkey Operator (1)	$269,500	$323,400	$504,504	$612,132	$636,617
Administration (2)	$33,800	$35,152	$36,558	$38,020	$39,541
Total	**$303,300**	**$358,552**	**$541,062**	**$650,152**	**$676,158**

1) $27.50 per service hour in FY 2005, $33.00 per service hour FY 2006 on
2) half-time executive director

Figure ES 2 Summary of Capital Costs for Scenario 1

	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
Buses Required	0	1	1	1	4
Bus Purchase	$0	$78,000	$81,120	$84,365	$350,958
Local Match Funds @ 20%	0	$15,600	$16,224	$16,873	$70,192
Section 5307 Funds @ 80%	0	$62,400	$64,896	$67,492	$280,766

Revenues to cover these costs are expected to come from a combination of Federal grant funds, local cash and in-kind matching funds and fare revenues.

Scenario Two: Optimal Service Scenario

Scenario 2 builds upon the strategies presented in Scenario 1, but offers a network of local and intercity fixed routes, flex routes and complementary dial-a-ride services. The scenario provides a menu of options that can be implemented, depending in part on the availability of funding. Fully implemented, operating seven days a week at 60-minute frequencies on the urban routes, the scenario provides 53,814 service hours. This is over six times the amount of service on the street in Kootenai County today and is projected to cost $3.2 million per year to operate.

Fixed Route Service

Seven fixed-route services are proposed in Scenario 2, focused on the higher-density portions of the urbanized area. Four serve Coeur d'Alene, one serves Post Falls, and two serve inter-city routes. The system will have more frequent services in the corridors where

high-ridership service is possible. Routes are designed so that they will divide evenly into an hour (such as every 30 or 60 minutes). In addition, Intercounty service is provided to Sandpoint and into Spokane County where connections could be made to Spokane Transit Authority buses.

Flex Route Service

In Scenario 2, the zone dial-a-ride concept from Scenario 1 is carried forward to smaller pockets of the urban service area, as well as rural areas. The flex routes are designed to provide structured demand-responsive transit service in suburban areas where development patterns do not support fixed routes, but require regular transit service throughout the day. Flex services are an effective strategy for rapidly growing suburban areas and can lead to the development of more established fixed route services as development densities increase.

Operating Costs and Revenues

Annual operating costs for Scenario 2 vary based on the level of service provided. The following table presents annual operating costs in 2004 dollars for the 30-minute and 60-minute frequency options.

Figure ES-3 Summary of Operating Costs for Scenario 2

Operating Costs	30 minute	60 minute
Operations	$3,954,298	$3,175,026
Administration	$247,000	$247,000
Total	$ 4,201,298	$3,422,026

The full implementation of Scenario 2 will be reliant on the creation of a dedicated local options revenue source for public transportation. This future source would need to make up between 60 and 75 percent of total operating revenues, supplemented by fares and local match contributions from Kootenai area jurisdictions.

Transit Facilities, Stops and Park-and-Rides

Scenario 2 requires the development of three transfer facilities to provide appropriate connections between intercity and local transit services. The centers are located in downtown Coeur d'Alene, at the Silver Lake Mall and at Wal-Mart in Post Falls. As a fixed-route system, there will also be marked, fixed bus stops with standard bus stop signs. More heavily used stops will have additional amenities such as a shelter and a bench.

A park-and-ride system is proposed to support commuters traveling within Kootenai County and those traveling to Spokane or Bonner Counties. Major park-and-rides are located adjacent to I-90 on the west side of Coeur d'Alene and near Pleasant View, west of Post

Falls. Additionally, smaller park-and-ride locations are proposed to allow commuters to connect to local bus services. These will be particularly important for people traveling to downtown Coeur d'Alene or North Idaho College where parking is in high demand.

Capital Costs and Revenues

Capital needs for Scenario 2 are significantly more extensive than for Scenario 1. Not only does this option require more buses, but a fixed-route system also requires the investment in bus stops, transfer centers, and park-and-ride facilities. The following table provides a summary of these costs spread over a period of time. For the purpose of this evaluation we assume that capital costs, with the exception of park-and-rides, are spread over the first five years of system implementation. Park-and-Rides are projected to be debt financed with costs spread over 20-years.

Figure ES-4 Summary of Capital Costs

Capital Summary	30 minute	60 minute
Buses	$700,000	$525,000
Bus Stops	$36,800	$36,800
Transfer Centers	$12,900	$12,900
Park and Ride	$129,000	$129,000
ANNUAL COST (for 5 Years)	**$878,700**	**$703,700**
5-YEAR TOTAL	**$4,393,500**	**$3,518,500**
20-YEAR TOTAL	**$6,328,500**	**$5,453,500**

The plan assumes that Federal Transit Administration grants will be a key source of capital funding for the implementation of the Optimal Service Scenario, since local match requirements are lower for capital uses than operations.

Governance and Organization

Section IV of this report sets a groundwork for developing a governance and administrative structure that most effectively supports the implementation and ongoing provision of public transportation services recommended in Section III: Service Scenarios.

The section also reviews various alternatives for the delivery of services recommended in this plan. A recommended model is presented based on the evaluation of benefits and costs associated with service delivery options most common in the industry.

Governance

This section proposes a strategy for creating a sustainable and effective lead agency for public transportation in Kootenai County. Specific recommendations include:

- A **Kootenai County Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA)** should be formed to govern public transportation services and funding. The RPTA structure provides a single, consolidated face for transit that will be helpful in building public confidence in the system. It also provides a formalized structure that can help to encourage new local funding for transit and creates an audit trail for public transit finances. Other important benefits of RPTA formation are discussed in Section IV of the report.
- An **RPTA Policy Board** should be formed pursuant with Idaho Code Section 40-2106. Since the Idaho Code calls for a board structure nearly identical to the existing KMPO Board, we recommend the appointment of existing representatives to the RPTA Board. Short-term demands on the RPTA Board should be limited, but this structure would allow the Boards to hold back-to-back meetings, saving time and resources for Board members and staff.
- An **Advisory Council** consisting of representatives of key interest groups should be formed to provide additional direction to the policy board. Representatives on this group could include: riders, social service agency staff, disability advisory group members, local government representatives, highway district staff and other key stakeholders. This should be a newly established group, but could draw from both the existing Kootenai County Area Transportation Team and/or the Stakeholder Advisory Committee formed for the purpose of this Public Transportation Feasibility Study.

Organization

Once Kootenai County voters have approved an RPTA and an appointed policy board is in place, a clear action plan is needed to ensure that service delivery potential is optimized and administrative staffing is in place to support service implementation. Detailed recommendations are presented in Section IV of the report and summarized below.

Service Delivery

The following actions for delivery of public transportation services in Kootenai County are recommended:

- **Short-Term:** Once the Kootenai RPTA is formed, an RFP should be developed for the provision of public transportation services in Kootenai County. The RPTA should conduct a competitive bid process in accordance with FTA regulations. Detailed attention should be given to contract requirements, as carefully crafted incentives programs can be invaluable in ensuring high levels of service quality and efficiency.
- **Long-Term:** If a countywide dedicated funding source for public transportation is realized in the future, the Kootenai RPTA should revisit the benefits/costs of the turnkey service delivery model versus in-house provision. A detailed study should

be undertaken to assess this issue before new services funded by local dedicated source revenue are added.

Staffing

The formation of an RPTA will require administrative staff to support RPTA activities. This section projects short-term staffing needs, which assume the continued contracting of service provision, and long-term needs to support the implementation of the Optimal Service Scenario (see Section III: Service Scenarios).

The following table describes short- and long-term staffing needs:

Figure ES-5 Short- and Long-Term Staffing Requirements

Staffing Need	Position	Number of Full Time Employees (FTE)	Cost Per Year (Total Salaries + Benefits @ 30% of Salary)
SHORT TERM			
Executive Management, Finance, Planning, Marketing, Outreach, etc.	Director	0.5	$32,500
Total Short Term	→	**0.5**	**$32,500**
LONG TERM			
Executive Management (Includes coordination with MPO on transit planning issues)	Executive Director	1	$65,000
Finance (Includes contract oversight)	Finance Manager	1	$58,500
Marketing & Outreach	Marketing Director & Outreach Coordinator	1	$45,500
Administration	Administrative Assistant/Payroll	1	$39,000
Support Staff	Office Manager	1	$39,000
Total Long Term	→	**5**	**$247,000**

Note: Costs provided are in 2004 dollars. Actual salaries at time of implementation should be adjusted to reflect inflation.

SECTION I. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

This Report's Role in the Study

The first deliverable for the Kootenai Public Transportation Feasibility Study, called *Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment,* assessed existing services and unmet transit needs in Kootenai County. This first report included detail on operations and ridership for existing services, as well as data on land use patterns, current development activity, and other contextual information. The findings were based upon input from a range of stakeholders, agency and provider staff, policy makers and interest groups.

Based on the *Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report*, Nelson\Nygaard conducted an intensive on-site service planning session during the week of July 26, 2004. During this session Nelson\Nygaard planners spent several days surveying the study area and developing preliminary service concepts for Kootenai County. These concepts were presented to the Strategic Advisory Committee and the project focus group, which consists of members of the general public. Committee and focus group participants were largely supportive of the service concepts, but did suggest minor refinements to routing and service area coverage. Those changes are included in this report and a summary of the public focus group meetings is included in Appendix A.

This report details the service concepts developed during this planning process. Specifically, two scenarios are presented: (1) a short-term scenario that recommends improvements that can be made given no growth in resources and (2) an optimal scenario designed to meet county-wide transit demands over the next five to twenty years. It also discusses the proposed structure for both scenarios and describes key planning considerations that will be crucial in shaping Kootenai County services.

The final sections of this report discuss the governance and organizational framework needed to support public transportation services and a financial strategy for implementing short- and long-term service scenarios.

Key Findings from Needs Assessment and Existing Conditions Report

The *Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report* provides a qualitative and quantitative review of unmet public transportation needs in Kootenai County. The report provides evidence that there is a significant level of latent demand for public transportation, although it is important to note that many residents feel a strong psychological barrier to using public transit and that the private automobile will continue to be the primary mode for residents who can drive. It is important to consider measurable demand as well as prevailing local attitudes and perceptions in the development of a successful transit system.

A qualitative summary of unmet public transportation needs and issues was developed through interviews with stakeholders, a focus group, and a general public survey. The following were dominant themes from the review:

- New fixed-route service in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls is a highly desired public transportation improvement. Approximately 48 percent of survey respondents indicate that they or someone in their household would use a fixed-route system if it provided service near their home.
- Survey respondents who indicated that members of their household would use public transportation typically felt they would use it frequently. Over 75 percent said they would use transit services one or more times per week. When compared with current levels of use this represents a significant latent demand.
- Better public transit alternatives are needed for commuters and medical patients traveling to Spokane. Over 8,000 commuters travel from Kootenai County to the Spokane area daily, mostly as single-occupant auto trips. Additionally, there appears to be a significant demand for travel to Kootenai County from Spokane. Survey respondents strongly supported intercounty bus connections as well as the development of park-and-rides in Kootenai County to support van and carpool activities.
- There are a number of seasonal transportation needs associated with the tourism industry, both for visitors and for the influx of seasonal labor needed to support this industry.
- Job access is a major challenge for many low-income residents and agencies that work to place residents in stable work environments. Increasing housing costs in the urban area have forced many low-income residents to move to rural areas where housing is less expensive, but transportation challenges are much greater. Several social service agencies representatives indicated that Kootenai County has a high percentage of adults and troubled youth who do not have driver's licenses and are challenged in returning to productive work environments.

- There appears to be significant unmet need among low-income groups, the youth population, and commuters who would like to use transit, but are discouraged by the lack of reliability of the existing system.

Ridership Potential

The *Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Report* also presents a quantitative review of ridership potential — the level of ridership that a robust system serving all of Kootenai County would attract. Ridership in rural areas and small cities is typically more difficult to predict than in major urban areas, because transit use is more responsive to site-specific need than overall land use density. A peer review was completed because the most effective means for predicting ridership is to examine areas with developed public transportation systems that have comparable demographics, land use patterns and socio-economic characteristics.

Figure 1 examines several important performance measures for a number of peer communities or counties that are comparable to Coeur d'Alene and/or Kootenai County, but have more developed public transportation systems. Measures examined include (1) passengers per revenue hour of service and (2) passenger trips per capita.

Figure 1 Passengers Per Revenue Hour and Per Capita for Peer Communities

Peer	Primary Service Type	Urban Area Population	Annual Revenue Hours	Annual Ridership	Passengers Per Revenue Hour	Passenger Trips Per Capita
Pocatello, ID	Fixed Route	62,498	37,000	502,000	13.6	8.0
Lewiston, ID	Fixed Route	50,317	13,000	101,000	7.8	2.0
Nampa-Caldwell, ID	Fixed Route	95,909	9,500	63,200	6.7	0.7
Klamath Falls, OR	Fixed Route	42,000	18,870	262,128	14	6.2
Wenatchee, WA	Fixed Route	55,425	40,000	582,200	14.6	10.5
AVERAGE		**61,230**	**23,674**	**302,106**	**11.3**	**5.5**
Idaho Falls	Demand Response	66,973	12,000	37,000	3.1	0.6
Bend, OR	Demand Response	57,525	25,900	95,600	3.7	1.7
Carson City, NV	Demand Response	52,457	11,365	34,095	3.25	0.7
Ridgecrest, CA	Demand Response	24,927	9,300	60,000	6.4	2.4
AVERAGE		**50,471**	**14,641**	**56,674**	**4.1**	**1.4**

Based on this review, we estimate that a fixed-route system operating exclusively in the Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls area could achieve:

- **10 – 12 passenger boardings per revenue hour of service.** This assumes a route network designed to serve the corridors with the densest population and employment activity. Productivity of service is relative to the amount of service deployed and the extent of the total service area served. For example, a single route that travels frequently along the densest corridors in Coeur d'Alene could exceed 12 boardings per hour, but would not achieve significant geographic coverage. Conversely, a route structure that reaches every part of the community with the same number of revenue hours would operate at a low frequency and would carry significantly fewer passengers per hour of service.
- **5 – 6 passenger boardings per capita per year.** Given an urban area population of 74,000 this approximates between 370,000 and 440,000 passenger trips per year.

KATS currently operates demand-response service in the Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls area, providing a working indicator of the demand levels. However, our service review indicates that there may be substantial unmet demand and that many potential passengers are not using the service due to perceived unreliability. Therefore, existing ridership may be a poor indicator of the potential that exists for an efficient demand-response service.

We estimate that a demand-response system operating exclusively in the Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls area could achieve:

- **3 to 4 passenger boardings per revenue hour of service.** This assumes a general public demand response service with resources focused on serving the Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls urban area. Demand-response service to rural areas is intrinsically able to carry fewer passengers per hour of service. As more resources are transferred to rural service and away from service in the urban area, productivity (passengers per hour of service) will decline.
- **Between 1 and 2 passenger boardings per capita.** Given an urban area population of 74,000 this is equal to approximately 74,000 to 148,000 passenger trips per year.

Rural area ridership is not expected to increase substantially, as new services would most likely be focused in the denser urban areas of the County.

This yardstick measurement of transit demand shows that if a public transportation system were designed to include a relevant and responsive mix of services, possibly including fixed route, it would carry substantially more trips than current services. Even at the low-end estimate of ridership potential, we can predict a greater than 300 percent increase in transit ridership from current levels. This suggests that it is well worth exploring the options and costs of developing and implementing a more extensive, relevant public transportation system in Kootenai County.

SECTION II. SERVICE OVERVIEW

This section provides detailed descriptions of the proposed bus services for Kootenai County. Service alternatives are based on:

- Information about travel origins and destinations patterns in Kootenai County;
- An analysis of demographics and ridership on the current transit services;
- Existing transit services and the locations they serve;
- Input provided by the stakeholders, community residents, and collected via interviews and telephone surveys; and
- Current and future land uses in the Kootenai urbanized area.

Service Considerations

Service scenarios were developed within the framework of the existing and planned road network. They are impacted by the geography and demographics of the community. Kootenai County is faced with some obstacles to providing highly productive transit service. These challenges include:

- The street network and development patterns in the urban core — Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls, Dalton Gardens, Hayden and Hayden Lake — have resulted in low-density growth and areas in which pedestrian access is limited.
- The limited road network between communities results in few good options for providing transit connections between these communities. There are very few north-south connections in the Post Falls area, significantly reducing local circulation for both automobiles and transit.
- Continuing growth on the outskirts of Post Falls and on the northwest side of Coeur d'Alene will create new travel patterns that cannot fully be anticipated for the long-term.
- Increasing traffic congestion reduces roadway speeds in some areas at varying times of day, and can affect transit schedule reliability.
- Small clusters of auto-dependent residents in Athol, Spirit Lake, Worley and other small communities limit the viability of regular transit services in these communities. Also, very low-density residential development in unincorporated areas throughout the County is difficult to serve effectively by transit.

Given these challenges, the alternatives focus primarily on addressing transit demand in the denser, more urban communities, while providing some connections, often as limited lifeline services, between communities.

Financial Capacity

Two scenarios are presented (in Section III) that address both service demands and fiscal constraints. It would not be prudent to provide service scenarios that are unconstrained with regard to operating cost, regardless of the estimated level of demand. The first scenario is a constrained scenario, assuming no increase in the operating budget in the first years of the plan, with an option for minimal growth should additional local match funding become available. The second scenario is constrained only in that certain elements of the scenario can be implemented at lower frequencies or reduced service spans, or not implemented at all, to reflect the availability of operating funds. A more detailed financial plan is presented in Section V of this report (Financial Plan).

Service Standards

Monitoring system performance and designing the "right" services remain important tasks for transit operators. In addition to the financial constraints described above, measures and standards provide a consistent framework for the effective management, evaluation and planning of public transit services.

While efficiency standards and operations standards are typically developed before implementing a new transit system, it is valuable to establish some efficiency standards early in process of planning services. They provide guidelines for service development, ensuring that each proposed service would meet minimal standards.

Efficiency standards cannot be measured until the service is actually operational. They use operational data to measure the performance of a transit system. Recommended efficiency standards for services in Kootenai County will need to be developed as part of the recommended service plan; they can include such measures as operating cost per passenger, operating cost per revenue hour and the revenue to non-revenue hour ratio. Two measures are particularly useful in planning a new transit network in Kootenai County: passenger boardings per revenue hour and farebox recovery.

Passengers per Revenue Hour

Passengers per revenue hour is calculated by dividing the total number of passengers (unlinked trips) by the total number of vehicle revenue hours provided. The number of passengers per hour is a good measure of service productivity and critical to the establishment of design standards and benchmarks, particularly for the expansion of transit service. Passengers per revenue hour should be calculated for each individual service and for different time periods, such as peak, midday, Saturday, Sunday, and evening.

Every public transportation provider must measure the performance of its services against some minimum level of return (typically in ridership) on investment of public dollars to

ensure responsible use of resources. As an initial guideline we recommend the following standards, which are typical of the industry:

- For urban fixed-route services in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls: $>=10$ boardings per hour
- For rural fixed-route services, connecting Kootenai County communities: $>=$ 8 boardings per hour
- For demand-response services: $>=3$ boardings per hour

These measures do not assume that new services will meet these standards immediately, but that after a reasonable period of time (typically, six months to one year), the service will achieve **at least** this level of ridership.

Farebox Recovery Ratio

For the rural transit-operating environment of Kootenai County, a minimum 10 percent farebox recovery ratio is recommended. The farebox recovery ratio is calculated by dividing total farebox revenue by total operating and administrative costs. Farebox recovery evaluates both system efficiency (through operating costs) and productivity (through boardings). Farebox recovery ratio benchmarks are critical to the establishment of passengers per revenue hour benchmarks and benchmarks for design standards.

All transit services should establish a farebox recovery minimum. Generally, a minimum farebox recovery standard is set for system-wide operations. Higher performing services can average out the lower performing services so that off-peak and community service coverage can be justified. However, once service is implemented, it will be important to look at individual route performance. If poorly performing services are having a critical impact on the system-wide farebox recovery ratio, not allowing the system to meet the 10 percent target, then these services can be reviewed for improvement or reduction.

SECTION III. SERVICE SCENARIOS

This section presents two alternative service scenarios. Each provides a different approach to addressing mobility needs in Kootenai County. The first scenario focuses on utilizing existing resources to provide service coverage more effectively. The approach is to essentially maintain the current service hours, but use vehicles and operate buses with a higher level of efficiency, building ridership and increasing customer satisfaction. This scenario also includes options for expanding services as additional local match funds become available. The second scenario addresses all of the elements that should be in place to develop a comprehensive public transit network, without regard to existing funding limitations, but assuming some constrained level of funding and that services must meet the *passengers per hour* and *farebox recovery* service standards described above.

For both alternatives, there is a discussion of the service concepts, service characteristics and key operational needs.

Scenario One: Status Quo

Scenario 1 addresses the question, "Given current limits on public transportation resources in Kootenai County, what can be done to improve service and the customer experience?" The Existing Conditions Report shows that (1) over one-half of Kootenai County residents do not know that a public transportation system exists, (2) residents who have tried to use public transportation have stopped because they find the service highly unreliable, and (3) the current system caters largely to a small group of transit-dependent residents who use the system regularly.

Assuming no growth in operating resources, options for improving service are limited. The Status Quo scenario assumes that general public demand-response bus service will continue to be the only available service in Kootenai County, as the addition of more resource-intensive fixed-route service would force reductions in service area coverage. While the overall service delivery model remains the same as current operations, some procedural and service policy changes could help to make services more efficient and equitable for Kootenai County residents. Incremental growth options are laid out through the five-year plan building on opportunities to increase existing services, grow ridership and provide new service that is relevant to Kootenai County residents.

Booking, Scheduling and Dispatch Procedures

Without resources to put additional bus service on the street, booking, scheduling and dispatch policies are among the primary tools available to ensure the availability and reliability of transit for Kootenai County residents. The following incremental improvements can help to increase reliability and efficiency of demand-response services:

- **Actively negotiate pick-up and drop-off times.** When demand on a dial-a-ride system reaches the point where capacity is constrained, developing parameters for trip negotiation can help manage ridership and passenger loads. This approach will increase service productivity, but should be adopted cautiously due to the potential impact on rider convenience.

  Where space is not available at the requested time, the scheduling agent should negotiate an alternative pick up or drop off time within 60 minutes of the passenger's requested time, resulting in higher vehicle utilization. This will also allow more grouping of trips between larger Kootenai County communities (i.e., Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls) as service expands. As a first step, the booking agent should begin negotiating trip times during the peak periods, paying careful attention to the desired drop-off times in order to avoid late arrivals at appointments.

- **Establish an "open booking list" for trips that cannot be assigned through negotiation at the time the request is made.** This practice can increase cost efficiency, service productivity and farebox revenue recovery.

  This model requires overbooking the system in a manner similar to the airline industry. The volume of requests "overbooked" is based on the booking agent's knowledge of trip cancellation trends (volume and general times). Experienced dispatchers can establish ceilings for the number of trips that can be placed on an open booking list by time of day or day of week.

  The agent will assign open booking list trips on the day of service as cancellations become apparent.

  Open booking list trips that cannot eventually be assigned to an established route could be assigned to a supplemental taxi contractor.

- **Implement a "will-call" trip request policy for return medical trips.** A will-call trip request policy is a common practice among dial-a-ride providers to reduce no-shows and the need to send a bus back when the customer is not ready following a medical appointment. A "will-call" trip request policy can improve service efficiency and productivity.

  Under this policy, customers pre-book their trip to a medical appointment and leave their return trip time open. They would call and request a pick-up when their appointment is complete or when they know they will be ready. A common will-call practice is to pick up the person within 60 minutes or less of his/her call.

  Coordinators know how many open return trips they have to accommodate and have a rough estimate of when the return trip requests will be made. Buses can have a layover at Kootenai Medical Center or area clinics during gaps in their schedules to be available for "will-calls". A supplemental taxi contractor can also be used to handle will-calls.

- **Establish a supplemental taxi contract to complement the dial-a-ride program.** A couple of taxi providers operate in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls and they can be approached to discuss their interest in such an arrangement. A supplemental taxi service provider would provide service backup (support for breakdowns or late service) and provide additional capacity to handle any open booking list trips that cannot be accommodated on the regular runs, as well as provide additional capacity during off-peak, low-demand evenings and early mornings. This could save putting an additional hourly paid bus out for short demand spikes and eliminate the need for a floater (extra bus roaming to deal with surplus trips).

  Since the majority of dial-a-ride passengers do not use a wheelchair, there would be no requirement for a wheelchair-accessible taxi service. Only ambulatory trip requests would be assigned or reassigned to the supplemental taxi service, while passengers using a wheelchair would be assigned to the regular accessible van service.

  The supplemental taxi service should be operated under a contract between the Kootenai County transit operator and the taxi firm(s). The local provider would assign trips to the taxi firm based on:

  - A calculation of cost (taxis can cost less than using a regular in-service vehicle, such as using a regular dial-a-ride vehicle with one passenger for a long intercity trip);
  - Lack of vehicle availability (not being able to accommodate a trip from the open booking list);
  - Backup for a vehicle falling behind schedule (maintaining on time performance), or taken out of service because of a breakdown, accident or onboard incident.

  Guidelines would have to be established for the dispatcher's discretionary use of the taxis. Budget ceilings would also be established to control use.

Service Concepts

Even with no new resources available to expand service levels or coverage area, there are ways to make more efficient use of the buses that are on the street. The concept of "Zone Service" is one in which vehicles are relegated to certain geographical areas at certain times during the day, moving in set patterns from zone to zone. While this limits customers' ability to be picked up at the exact time they desire, it ultimately provides a much higher level of reliability as passengers are forced to make reservations within a specific time window. This allows the provider to group trips more effectively, increasing productivity, and to develop standing routes when several passengers are picked up en route to a major destination.

We recommend that variations of the zone-routing concept be applied in Coeur d'Alene and the remainder of the County.

Zone Routing

A zone-routing system combines the door-to-door attributes of a taxi service with the formal structure and fixed schedule of fixed-route service to serve more riders than the present system can without significant additional operating cost or the need for more vehicles than are presently used. The basic route structure is anchored to either formal time points at a shopping center, senior center or medical clinic, for example, or timed windows in specific areas such as downtown Coeur d'Alene or the greater Hayden area. These zone routes have inbound and outbound trips and adhere to a schedule. That means that if a bus were headed toward the hospital, a passenger would not be able to request a trip that would require the bus to head in the opposite direction. This structure keeps all trips flowing in a prescribed direction, which in turn improves efficiency and productivity.

A zone-routing system is demand-responsive service that picks riders up at their door or curb. It travels through defined service areas according to a published timetable in a defined window of time. So, for example, if a resident at Dalton and Ramsey wants to go to the Kootenai Medical Center, that person will be picked up during a specific window of time, not necessarily exactly when the caller wants. That same vehicle might pick up neighbors going to downtown or the senior center and each one would be dropped off as defined by the route of the vehicle. Riders would still have to call to reserve the service, but they could do it on the day of service with a reasonable lead-time of one or two hours. As this example illustrates, routes would be built around key destinations such as the Kootenai Medical Center, North Idaho College and Silver Lake Mall. Key stops can be designated based on use as the system develops. Some areas or trips that go outside of designated zones would still need to be served by regular dial-a-ride with advance call-ins, but this system would minimize that.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Zone routing, sometimes called flex routing, has advantages and disadvantages. As discussed, this system will lead to increased vehicle productivity; that is, more riders in a vehicle in a given time. KATS currently provides about 2.5 trips per hour of service, just slightly below average for a demand-responsive system. A zone system could increase productivity to one and a half times that level. While the statistic itself may not mean much, what it does mean is that the system will have the ability to serve more people on any given day without significant additional costs. Another advantage of this system is that, although riders will still need to schedule a ride in advance, they may be able to do so on the same day with reasonable assurance they will get a ride. This system will also mean that scheduling will take less time, thereby freeing up the telephones without adding additional staff.

On the other hand, those Coeur d'Alene riders who are already enjoying single-ride service on KATS, similar to taxi service, will have to adjust to a schedule not of their own making. They may have to adjust appointments to coincide with the bus schedule. And because buses travel routes that make stops in different areas, trip lengths and time may increase for some riders. This may be a serious inconvenience for frail riders. Some trips may be more difficult to schedule because they are not within the defined service areas. Both this issue and that of longer trips can be remedied by continuing to provide some door-to-door or curb-to-curb service for those living in or going to places outside the defined service areas or for those who are too frail to sit for long periods of time. A final disadvantage may be the need to back-up existing service for will-calls with taxi service. This will create an additional cost, if it is needed.

Urban Service (Coeur d'Alene – Post Falls)

In Coeur d'Alene, service under Scenario 1 would be structured in a series of four quadrants divided north-south by Government Way and east-west by Appleway Avenue. One flex route bus would travel between the zones in a clockwise direction and another would move counterclockwise through the zones. This would eliminate the need for passengers to travel significantly out of direction during one leg of a round trip, a problem caused by serving an area in a one-way loop configuration. Pick-up and drop-off times in each zone would be scheduled during a 15-minute window (some flexibility is available based on demand), providing residents with hourly service in each direction. This would require two vehicles.

Additionally, we propose that one vehicle operate along the Government Way corridor between downtown and Silver Lake Mall. The focus of this service would be on shopping destinations in and near downtown and along the Government Way and Highway 95 corridors; it would also serve Kootenai Medical Center. The route would deviate to provide curbside service within one-half mile of Government Way. The route would not have a formal fixed-point schedule, but would reach its endpoint at the mall at the same time each hour. The bus would not travel out of direction for passengers, allowing booking agents to more effectively group trips by providing customers with available travel time parameters. As demand patterns form, staff can begin to schedule set time pickups at key locations such as Fred Meyer or Costco.

Additional service capacity would be utilized to provide more traditional one-to-one trips for passengers who lie outside zone boundaries or those who cannot be accommodated on the flex route services. These services would take passengers to and from Hayden and Hayden Lake and other areas near Coeur d'Alene but not served by the Zone Routes. Booking agents should continue to focus on grouping standing trip reservations to create informal "routes" whenever possible, even when serving areas outside the four zones (i.e., TESH, Atlas Road corridor).

Figure 2 shows a basic diagram of zone/flex route service circulation within Coeur d'Alene.

In Post Falls, general public demand response service would be provided at certain times every two hours. This service would be provided by the same vehicle covering the I-90 corridor in the countywide service concept described in the next section. This vehicle would be scheduled to depart Coeur d'Alene every two hours. After making outbound drop-offs it would provide local circulation in Post Falls during a 45-minute period before returning to Coeur d'Alene with passengers bound for destinations there.

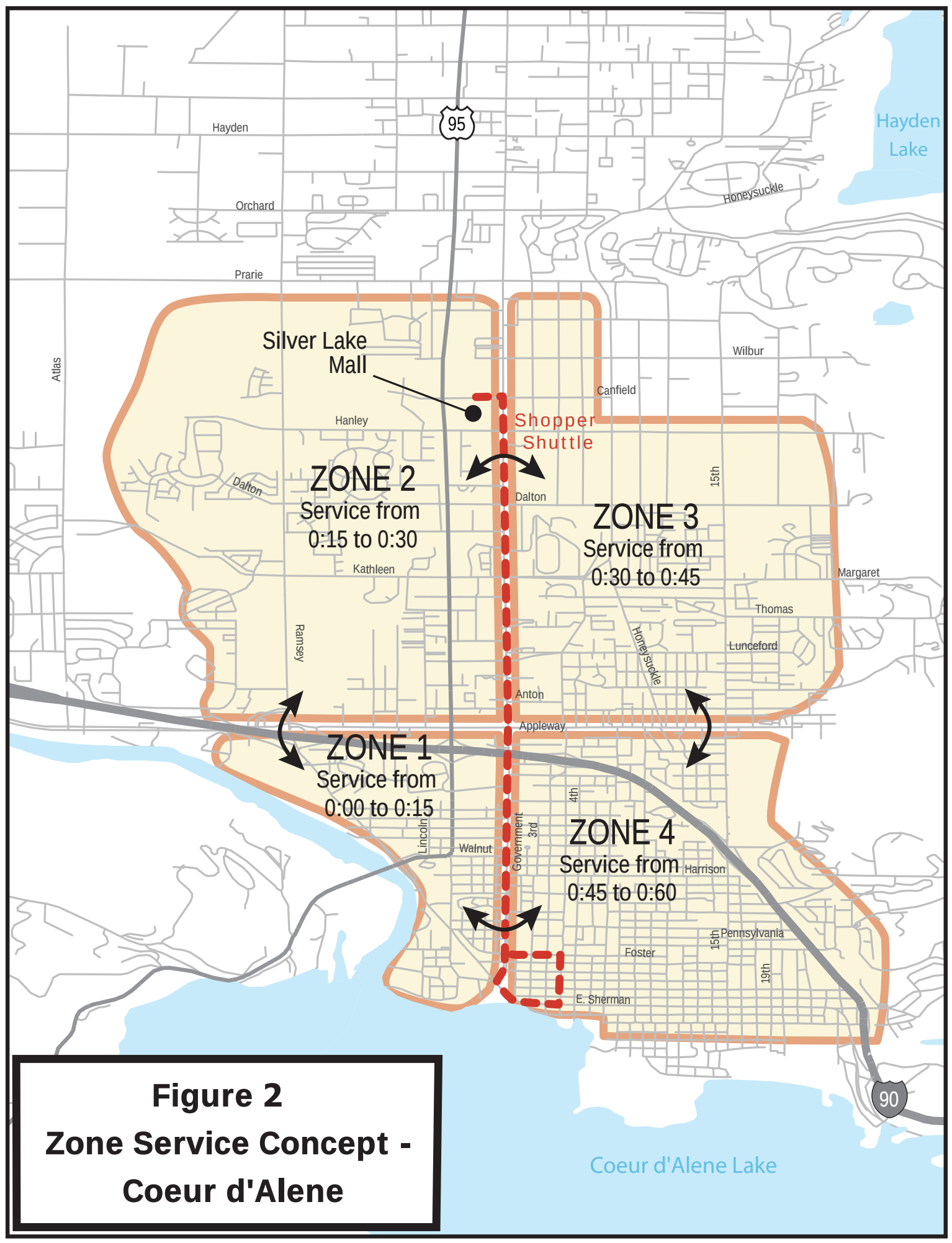

Figure 2
Zone Service Concept - Coeur d'Alene

Countywide Service

NICE currently provides demand-response service on a first-come, first-served basis for all residents of Kootenai County. While a large percentage of these trips are standing reservations, which allow for efficient trip-sharing practices, NICE provides a number of individual trips. In some cases, a single passenger can occupy a vehicle for an hour or more at extreme cost to NICE and to the detriment of other passengers who are trying to schedule trips.

Once again, we recommend a zone-service model, which would limit the availability of service in certain areas to certain times of the day. This allows rural residents to travel to destinations in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls as they do now, but only during designated service times. Zone service promotes trip sharing and saves operating dollars by increasing productivity (passengers per service hour) on rural services. To some degree this is already done with subscription trips to major destinations, such as TESH. Subscription trips that carry four or more passengers should be excluded from the established time zones, as long as fleet resources are available. This means that several existing high productivity runs could be grandfathered in and a standard be set that new subscription runs to or from a specific destination can be established if there are four or more interested passengers.

The geographical boundaries of Kootenai County present three somewhat linear zones, which are described below. Each zone merits somewhat different treatment and a different level of service, but all would be served on the basic principle that a vehicle would be available in each zone only during certain times. Customers calling to make reservations would be provided with a list of times that the bus is available in their zone and pick-up times would be established. If no trips are requested during a scheduled run to any of the zones, the bus would stay in Coeur d'Alene and provide additional local capacity.

The zone service concept is described below:

- **The I-90 Corridor including Huetter, Post Falls, State Line and Hauser.** The bus serving this corridor would travel on Seltice and/or I-90, making deviations on demand to pick-up or drop-off passengers as far west as State Line. Hauser would also be included in this zone. This would require one all-day bus.
- **I-90 to Post Falls, extending north to Rathdrum, Spirit Lake and Athol.** This zone is designed to serve passengers traveling between northern Kootenai County communities of Rathdrum, Spirit Lake and Athol and the cities of Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene. The bus serving this zone would travel west from Coeur d'Alene on I-90, stopping at the Wal-Mart in Post Falls before traveling north to Rathdrum. The service would continue north to Spirit Lake and/or Athol upon request. The bus would then travel the same route in the reverse direction. Four daily trips would be provided in each direction requiring one all-day bus.
- **Coeur d'Alene to Worley.** This zone would provide daily service between Coeur d'Alene and Worley in southern Kootenai County. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe is

currently in the process of developing a service proposal that would provide general public service connecting these two cities and stops between. The Coeur d'Alene Tribal Casino would be an important stop on this service and the route would provide service to casino patrons as well as the many casino employees who live in the County's northern cities. This service is dependent on the Coeur d'Alene Tribes ability to underwrite operations and capital funding.

- **Coeur d'Alene to Sand Point.** The plan assumes that NICE would continue to provide twice daily service between Coeur d'Alene and Sandpoint. It is important to note that this service would not be funded by FTA funds received for the Kootenai Metropolitan Area and would need outside funding.

Summary and Phasing of Scenario 1 Services

Figure 3 provides a summary of services proposed under Scenario 1. Figure 4 shows total revenue hours for the scenario (17,100). Once again, these changes assume no growth in available operating funds and can be accommodated within the existing KATS/NICE fleet capacity. Since this is a higher number of revenue hours than is currently provided by KATS/NICE, we recommend that the implantation of services be phased.

In the first year of the plan (FY2005) KATS/NICE will continue to operate urbanized area services with its four-bus fleet, allowing approximately 9,800 annual hours of service. Since other short-term services will require additional resources and vehicles it is recommended that they be implemented at later years of the plan.

- 2005-06: Status Quo. No service changes are proposed for the first year of the plan as Governance and Organizational changes are realized.
- 2006-07: Implement Coeur d'Alene Urban Area Zone Route (2 Vehicles), Coeur d'Alene – Post Falls General Demand Response (1 Vehicle), I-90 – Post Falls Local Circulation (1 Vehicle) and Post Falls/Rathdrum/Athol/ Spirit Lake Zone (1 Vehicle).
- 2007-08: Implement additional Coeur d'Alene – Post Falls General Demand Response Vehicle
- 2008-09: Implement Shopper Shuttle (1 Vehicle)

Figure 3 Summary of Scenario 1 Services

Service	Description	Vehicle Requirement	Hours of Service	Implementation Year
Coeur d'Alene Urban Area Zone Routing	Clockwise and counterclockwise routes serve four quadrants. Makes curbside pickup within allotted time.	2 Vehicles (one for each travel direction)	7:00 AM to 5:00 PM	2006-07
Coeur d'Alene Shopper Shuttle	Demand-responsive spine route traveling N-S along Gov't/Hwy 95. Deviates within ½ mile of route and serves major shopping and medical services between downtown and Silver Lake Mall.	1 Vehicle	7:00 AM to 5:00 PM	2008-09
Coeur d'Alene – Post Falls (Hayden & Hayden Lake) General Demand Response	Traditional demand-response service for one-to-one trips that cannot be accommodated on the flex route/zonal service.	2 Vehicles	7:00 AM to 5:00 PM	1 Vehicle in 2006-07 & 1 Vehicle in 2007-08
Post Falls Local Circulation	Demand-response service for Post Falls intracity trips and pick-ups/drop-offs for Post Falls – Coeur d'Alene service	0.5 (combined with I-90 Intercity Zone Service)	Every other hour between 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM	2006-07
I-90 Zone	General public demand-response service between Coeur d'Alene, Huetter, Post Falls, State Line and Hauser.	0.5 (combined with Post Falls local circulation)	Service every two hours in each direction	2006-07
Post Falls/Rathdrum/Athol/ Spirit Lake Zone	General public demand-response service between Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls continuing north to Rathdrum, Spirit Lake and Athol. This bus terminates in downtown Coeur d'Alene with a northern terminus variable based on demand.	1 Vehicle	4 trips in each direction	2006-07
SandPoint & Hwy 95 North Zone	This scenario assumes daily service is continued on the Coeur d'Alene – Sandpoint route. *Intercounty service will require outside funding.*	1 Vehicle (not counted, assumes use of existing Intercounty vehicle)	2 trips per day in each direction	Existing Service
Highway 95 South Zone	General public service between South County and Coeur d'Alene	1 Vehicle (Coordinated with Coeur d'Alene Tribe casino shuttle service)	According to schedule set by Coeur d'Alene Tribe	2006-07
TOTAL		8 Vehicles		

Figure 4 Summary of Scenario 1 Vehicle Needs and Revenue Hours

		WEEKDAY							
Proposed Route Number	Proposed Route Name (Corridor)	VEHICLES Peak	VEHICLES Base	VEHICLES Eve	HRS/WEEKDAY Peak	HRS/WEEKDAY Base	HRS/WEEKDAY Eve	Weekday Revenue Hours	Annual Revenue Hours
	Coeur d'Alene Urban Area Zone		2.0			10		20.0	5,080
	Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls Demand Response		2.0			10		20.0	5,080
	Post Falls Local Circulation		0.5			10		5.0	1,270
	Coeur d'Alene Shopper Shuttle		1.0			10		10.0	2,540
Intercity	I-90 Zone		0.5			10		5.0	1,270
Intercity	I-90/Post Falls/Rathdrum/Spirit Lake/Athol Zone		1.0			7.5		7.5	1,905
Intercity	Coeur d'Alene - Worley (Highway 95)		1.0			8		8.0	
Intercity	Coeur d'Alene - Sandpoint (Highway 95)		1.0			4		4.0	

Notes: Coeur d'Alene - Worley and Coeur d'Alene - Sandpoint service are not calculated in final revenue hour total as they wil require outside funds.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribal Elder Board would like assist in the provision of general publict transportation service to southern Kootenai County.

No new vehicle requirement assumed for Coeur d'Alene - Sandpoint. Existing intercounty vehicles would be used.

At least one new vehicle would be required for the Coeur d'Alene - Worley run to ensure that this general public service is ADA accessible.

Peak Vehicle Requirement	**8.0**
Required Weekday Revenue Hours	**79.5**
Total Annual Revenue Hours	**17,145**

Scenario Two: Optimal Service Scenario

Scenario 2 builds upon the strategies presented in Scenario 1, but offers a network of local and intercity fixed routes, flex routes and complementary dial-a-ride services. This scenario was developed to address demands for transit service beyond what can be served by the zonal and demand-response services described in the first scenario. This scenario is actually a number of different scenarios, because it is designed to be implemented over time, depending on the availability of needed resources. In a sense, it provides a menu of options that can be implemented, depending on several factors, including the following:

- Availability of funding;
- Coordination with transit partners, such as North Idaho College and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe;
- Support for and participation by Kootenai County jurisdictions;
- Long-term land use and development patterns; and
- Community preferences regarding service span and service days.

Principles Guiding Service Design

Certain guiding principles were considered as part of the development of this scenario. This scenario addresses Kootenai County's emphasis on integrating current services and building ridership through a network of regular fixed routes. The following are service design principles that were considered in the development of this scenario:

- Minimal duplication between routes
- Routes that are simple, straight and easy to understand
- Limited reliance on transfers within the urban service area and single-transfer connections between communities, to the extent feasible without creating duplication
- Convenient, fast transfers between routes to serve origin-destination pairs that cannot be served with a single bus – this is especially important for less frequent routes, because most passengers on these routes will rely on connections in downtown Coeur d'Alene or at Silver Lake Mall to reach their ultimate destinations
- Two-way service on all route segments, so that transit is competitive for a trip in both directions
- A service design focused on the higher-density portions of the urbanized area, since these are the areas that generate trip demand in sufficient volume to support transit service – in practice, this requires focusing on apartments, and to a lesser extent on mobile home parks, duplexes, and older neighborhoods with higher densities

- More frequent services in the (relatively few) corridors where high-ridership service is possible, with minimal service for coverage to parts of the County where current development will not generate high transit demand
- Simplicity in service design, so that it is easy to learn the system, not just for the trip you make routinely, but also for trips anywhere in the service area
- A consistent pattern of route schedules, with route frequencies that divide evenly into an hour, such as every 30 or 60 minutes, so customers can remember the schedule easily and timed connections between routes are feasible

In addition to the principles guiding the service design, several assumptions were made regarding supportive policies that should be put in place to ensure the success of the new transit system. These assumptions primarily focus on capital improvements that must be made to adapt the operating environment to a transit-friendly one, but also include programmatic improvements to support transit service. These are discussed in the following sections.

Transfer Facilities: Multiple Transfer Points

Three transfer facilities are assumed to provide appropriate connections between intercity and local transit services and to facilitate transit access to major destinations in Kootenai County. Multiple transfer points are not unusual. Many transit systems have transfer locations at two or more regional activity centers – typically in downtown areas and at a regional mall or a college. The challenge in the Kootenai urbanized area is that activity is not concentrated in one or two locations, and jobs and services are scattered throughout the region.

- **Downtown Coeur d'Alene.** Downtown Coeur d'Alene is an important activity center in Kootenai County, with some of the area's highest residential densities, the NIC campus, and a mix of business and social service land uses. Based on the level of pedestrian activity and the proximity of downtown Coeur d'Alene to a variety of services, a transfer terminal somewhere in the downtown area is assumed. For Kootenai County and the City of Coeur d'Alene, which have focused on building a viable, safe and pedestrian-friendly downtown center, transit can be a valuable tool. It can reduce demand for parking, enhance the pedestrian environment (so large pedestrian-unfriendly parking lots can be reduced), and provide access to new jobs. A downtown Coeur d'Alene transfer location will provide benefits to transit users and the community. A new facility should be centrally located in the downtown area, preferably somewhere in close proximity to the 3rd and 4th Street couplet to ensure efficient access to the routes serving the downtown area.
- **North Coeur d'Alene: Silver Lake Mall.** In addition to the downtown area, Silver Lake Mall is an important activity center in the Coeur d'Alene-Hayden area. Survey respondents named it one of the most important locations to serve by transit, including the various big-box retailers on its periphery. The mall is logical location

for a northern transfer facility, and is currently served by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's casino shuttle and buses to Sandpoint.

- **Post Falls: Wal-Mart.** Unlike Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls does not have a pedestrian-oriented urban center. Although the city has made a number of enhancements to its downtown area, a significant concentration of activity in the downtown is still many years in the future. Downtown Post Falls is unlikely to challenge the activity levels of some of the shopping areas, particularly Wal-Mart. Based on the results of the survey and the area's activity levels, Scenario 2 assumes Wal-Mart should be the primary transfer location between intercity and local service in the Post Falls area.

Fixed Bus Stop Policy

The scenarios assume the establishment of marked, fixed bus stops to serve the proposed fixed routes. While there are no specific rules for locating a stop (primarily because every situation is different), certain guidelines should be considered for each stop. These guidelines are listed below.

- **Stop spacing.** Stops should be placed no more than ¼ mile apart in urban areas and every ½ mile in more suburban areas. Most of central Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls, along with major arterials in the area, would be considered "urban."

- **Safety.** Stops should be located in areas where the vehicle is not significantly blocking traffic flow. Depending on the speed of traffic, the vehicle should not block traffic for more than a few seconds during normal boarding and alighting. Stops where there is heavy boarding and alighting should be removed from the traffic lane entirely, either by the removal of on-street parking or by providing a vehicle pullout.

  Pedestrian access to and from a bus stop is another important issue. With fixed bus stops, ADA requirements need to be considered, as well as access for seniors and other types of passengers. Sidewalks should be continuous, wide enough to allow safe pedestrian access, and connected to well-marked crosswalks.

- **Stop placement.** Stop locations can be located either before an intersection (near-side stop), after an intersection (far-side stop) or in the middle of a block (mid-block stop). There are advantages and disadvantages to each situation, which should be considered for each stop along a route. Some of the issues to consider before locating a stop near an intersection, include: traffic patterns and delay, sight lines around vehicles, traffic signals and restricted turning lanes, the location of crosswalks, the angle of streets that enter the intersection, and the location of nearby driveways.

  Bus stops should only be located where the vehicle can safely pull out of traffic, re-enter traffic and make certain turning movements required by the route's alignment. For example, it is not advisable to locate a stop shortly before the vehicle is required

to make a left-hand turn (unless traffic conditions do not present a problem), or along a segment of the street where cars cannot safely pass while passengers board or alight the vehicle. In either case, the stop should be located where the vehicle can safely re-enter traffic and is not entirely blocking traffic. Stop location assumptions were considered as these route alternatives were identified.

- **Stop design.** In situations where it is not possible to place a stop on the curb, it may require a vehicle turnout or the removal of some on-street parking spaces to accommodate a bus stop. For example, along Government Way between Appleway and Silver Lake Mall many stops might end up in driveways or unpaved gravel areas unless stop locations are incorporated into the road-widening and sidewalk project that is planned. Another concept would be a sidewalk extension, or bulb-out. If implemented in downtown Coeur d'Alene, fewer parking spaces would be lost, but additional costs would be incurred to extend the sidewalk. Whatever the configuration may be, bus stops should be clearly marked with bus stop signs that show which route(s) make the stop, service hours, and the telephone number in case people waiting for the bus have questions about the service. Ideally, heavily used bus stops would include amenities such as a shelter and bench.

Locating and developing stops would be a task for implementation later in the transit system design effort. Nevertheless, consideration should be given to this important element of a fixed-route transit system at this stage in the planning process because the route configuration may suggest the need for significant capital improvements along the recommended roadways.

Park-and-Ride Development

The development of park-and-ride facilities will be an important element of a successful public transportation system in Kootenai County. Since much of the County is rural and residential densities are relatively low throughout, it is impossible to provide convenient service near everyone's door. Several key park-and-ride sites should be developed to support intercity travel, both within Kootenai County and to neighboring counties, particularly Spokane. As illustrated in Figure 6 later in this section, the plan recommends the development of two major park-and-ride facilities that would serve I-90 express service to Spokane:

1. At the western edge of Coeur d'Alene near Interstate 90. City owned land near the intersection of Appleway and Ramsey presents an excellent opportunity for a Coeur d'Alene serving park-and-ride.

2. A west county park-and-ride located near the intersection of Pleasant View and Interstate 90. This area captures travelers from much of the County traveling west to Spokane and is proximate to most Post Falls residences. The extension of Pleasant View through to Highway 53 also makes this a key point of convergence for north county residents traveling westbound to Spokane.

In addition, the plan recommends three secondary park-and-ride sites that are served by local services.

1. A Post Falls site south of I-90 and west of Spokane Street. This site is not recommended in this plan, as it would add an additional five minutes or more of running time to an intercity bus route between Coeur d'Alene and Spokane. The ability of this service to compete with the private automobile will rely on competitive travel times between Kootenai County and Spokane and minimizing stops is key to reducing travel time.

2. A Seltice Way park-and-ride located between Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene. This would be a small local park-and-ride designed to serve workers and students who did not want to drive into downtown Coeur d'Alene or to North Idaho College where parking is limited.

3. A Silver Lake Mall park-and-ride. The location of park-and-ride capacity near the Mall Transfer Center would need to be negotiated with Mall management. There is excess parking capacity available at the Mall on weekdays, with the possible exception of the week preceding the Christmas holiday.

Pedestrian Environment

One of the broadest challenges to public transportation in Kootenai County will be the quality of the pedestrian environment. Most customers access transit on foot. Their ability to access stop locations, safely cross major transit-carrying streets or arterials, and wait safely and comfortably for vehicles to arrive is crucial to functionality of the transit system. Transit supportive streets require:

- **Convenient and direct pedestrian connections.** Sidewalks should be incorporated into the design of all streets, parking facilities and public spaces.
- **Interconnected street network.** An interconnected network of streets distributes traffic among all streets, rather than concentrating it on arterial roads. Such a system improves the mobility of pedestrians and bicyclists by providing multiple travel routes, in addition to allowing more efficient transit routing.
- **Quality bus stop facilities for users.** This is discussed in the previous section.
- **Pedestrian friendly access to retail/commercial facilities along major corridors.** Many major retail centers are designed solely for automobile access, forcing pedestrians to cross parking lots or major ingress/egresses to reach the storefront. In these cases improved pedestrian access is a function of design and transit stop location.
- **Well-designed pedestrian crossings on major arterials.** Crossing four to six lanes of traffic on US-95 can be daunting, even for young, able-bodied individuals. Well-marked crossing facilities with pedestrian signals are crucial to pedestrian safety

near transit stops. Median curbs or planter strips can provide a safe spot for pedestrians to stop and wait if they are unable to cross both travel directions in one signal cycle.

- **Well-timed crossing signals at major intersections.** Long cycle times on busy arterial streets often encourage pedestrians to take risks in crossing, because they know if they don't make a signal they will be required to wait through another long cycle. Reducing cycle times can reduce unnecessary "risks" taken by pedestrians.

Establishing the infrastructure to support Kootenai County's investment in public transit is assumed for the implementation of Scenario 2.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Impacts

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires paratransit service within 3/4 mile of any fixed bus route. For any fixed-route service in the urban area that does not deviate upon request or for any intercity service that does not operate under a closed-door policy, complementary paratransit service will be required.

Flex route services, which are proposed in the lower density areas of Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, and around Rathdrum would not require complementary paratransit services. ADA law does not require that complementary paratransit service be provided in areas served by demand-responsive general public service, such as flex route. Intercity routes that do not make regular stops between termini are also exempt from providing complementary paratransit service.

Marketing and Public Information

The service plan assumes sufficient investment in marketing and the provision of public information about the transit services in Kootenai County. The implementation of a fixed-route system with regularly scheduled service and bus stops would provide Kootenai County a better opportunity to disseminate transit information throughout the service area.

A consistent and easily recognizable visual brand, and potentially more specific brands for various services, is essential to the success of the system. Currently, KATS and NICE buses come in different shapes, colors and logos. Service branding is an important tool – one that integrates service design, marketing, and other policies – to help potential customers more easily recognize what services are likely to be useful to them, and to attract specific groups or types of riders to service designed primarily for them.

Summary of Routes/Services for Scenario Two

Following are descriptions of the recommended routes and services in Scenario 2. In the presentation of service alternatives, preliminary route names and numbers are used to describe the services. A numbering system is used, whereby local routes in Coeur d'Alene are identified as single-digit numbers, intercity routes have two digits and begin with the number 1, and local routes in Post Falls is two digits and begins with the number 2.

Intra-County Fixed Routes

Intra-county fixed routes provide local circulation in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls, as well as scheduled connections between communities within Kootenai County.

- **Route 1: Appleway-Government Way.** Route 1 provides a north-south connection between Silver Lake Mall, North Idaho College, and downtown Coeur d'Alene. The goal of the route is to serve key commercial corridors and major retail and employment centers. On the northbound run from North Idaho College, the bus serves the downtown transit center, traveling outbound on Foster/Milwaukee to Lincoln, serving apartment buildings, Kootenai Medical Center and Ironwood Square. The bus travels east on Appleway to Fourth Street to provide access to the large Coeur d'Alene Town Center shopping center, returning to Government Way (via Anton) for northbound service to Silver Lake Mall. At Kathleen, the route may provide limited scheduled or deviated service to Fred Meyer, which stakeholders and other community members identified as an important destination. The bus travels in the reverse direction inbound. The route serves several large retailers either along or adjacent to Government Way, in some cases providing "back door" access to businesses along US 95. Major retailers include Safeway, K-Mart, Costco and Office Depot near W. Neider and Home Depot at Kathleen. This route, as well as Routes 2 and 3, serves Target, Ross, Office Max and other businesses adjacent to Silver Lake Mall.
- **Route 2: Ironwood-Ramsey.** This bi-directional route serves the concentration of medical offices and other businesses along Ironwood in Coeur d'Alene, apartments and new development in West Coeur d'Alene, and Silver Lake Mall. Buses would connect Coeur d'Alene's older retail development in the midtown area (traveling Fourth Street outbound and Third Street inbound) with the downtown transit center. Outbound, from Fourth and Locust, the bus would serve Ironwood Square via Government Way and then travel through the heart of the medical corridor, serving Kootenai Medical Center and the many adjacent medical buildings. Southeast of the Coeur d'Alene Golf Club, a number of apartment buildings house residents with a mix of incomes. Route 2 would serve the apartment complexes along Golf Course (where there is also an assisted living facility), Fairway and W. Appleway. Route 2 serves N. Ramsey and Courcelles Parkway through the growing Coeur

d'Alene Place development. It passes Lake City High School at Ramsey and Hanley, continuing east and serving a rapidly developing area near Pinegrove and Canfield before reaching the Silver Lake Mall.

- **Route 3: Honeysuckle.** Like Routes 1 and 2, Route 3 is a bi-directional route that connects downtown Coeur d'Alene with Silver Lake Mall, but serves the mostly residential areas on the city's east side. Outside of the downtown area, Route 3 travels portions of Foster, Eleventh and Ninth streets, serving a mix of low- and moderate-income households and providing a connection to downtown for residents in this area. North of Appleway/Best, the route follows Honeysuckle through a mostly low- and medium-density residential neighborhood, serving Coeur d'Alene High School at Dalton, and businesses along Government Way north of Dalton.
- **Route 4: East Sherman.** Route 4 provides a critical east-west connection though downtown Coeur d'Alene, providing service on the west end to North Idaho College. Buses along this route travel E. Sherman Avenue, through downtown Coeur d'Alene and to the downtown transit center. East of the transit center, buses continue along E. Sherman serving small storefronts and social services, the IGA and several hotels. The bus would travel eastbound under Interstate 90, turning right on Theis, left on Lakeview, and left on Sherman Drive before returning inbound along E. Sherman. As the satellite Lewis and Clark and University of Idaho campus develops to the north of North Idaho College, once the mill is gone, Route 4 could be extended to serve this area.
- **Route 11: Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls via Seltice Way.** Route 11 provides an intercity fixed route connection between North Idaho College, downtown Coeur d'Alene, Kootenai Medical Center and the Wal-Mart store in Post Falls. Outbound to Post Falls from North Idaho College the bus would serve the downtown Coeur d'Alene transit center to allow for connections between this intercity route and the local routes in the Coeur d'Alene area. From the transit center, Route 11 travels along Government Way to Ironwood, past Ironwood's many medical and professional buildings, to Ramsey and then along Seltice Way. There are few significant destinations along Seltice Way between Ramsey and State Highway 41, making most of this route an "express" run. The bus would follow Highway 41 north to Mullan and to the Wal-Mart Store. Route 11 is through-routed to Route 21, the local route serving Post Falls, so riders can remain on the bus to continue their trip to a local destination in Post Falls. Riders can also transfer here to the flex route to the Rathdrum area.
- **Route 12: Coeur d'Alene-Worley.** Route 12 is an intercity connection between downtown Coeur d'Alene and southern Kootenai County, particularly the community of Worley. This route would provide a connection to Coeur d'Alene for residents in an area of the County that has among the lowest level of income, the highest rate of unemployment and very few public services. Since this route covers a significant stretch of unpopulated territory, greatly reducing its ability to meet set

productivity standards, cooperation with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe would be essential to the feasibility of this route. This would likely entail operating fund subsidies from the Tribe or other forms of resource sharing. The casino would be a high use stop along proposed Route 12 for patrons and employees, many of whom live in the Coeur d'Alene – Post Falls area. The casino would most likely provide route level marketing opportunities, similar to what would be expected for locations like the Silver Lake Mall, Downtown Coeur d'Alene or Wal-Mart.

This route would also provide an important opportunity to extend to the community of Plummer, which lies just south of the Kootenai County line. Plummer residents rely largely on Kootenai County services and would benefit from the short extension of a Coeur d'Alene – Worley route. The formation of an RPTA with the authority to expand to other North Idaho counties could make this and other important intercounty services possible.

- **Route 21: Post Falls Shuttle.** Route 21 provides local bus circulation around Post Falls, serving the major businesses, medical offices and residential areas. As a local circulator, the route is designed to travel within one-half mile of key destinations. The bi-directional route begins and ends at the Post Falls Wal-Mart, with every other bus traveling either clockwise or counter-clockwise. In a counter-clockwise direction, leaving Wal-Mart, the route follows Mullan to Idaho, where it provides access to the Super 1 store and other businesses that front Seltice. Along Mullan, the bus serves Kootenai Medical Center's Post Falls Health Park. The bus travels Idaho to 21st Street, serving medium-density residential development and returns south along Spokane Street, accessing apartments, some businesses at Seltice, City Hall and small shopping centers. The route follows Third Street, providing access to the Food Bank, Senior Center and several housing developments, crossing the railroad tracks at Bay Street to continue east on E. Seltice. The route provides access to jobs and small businesses along E. Seltice. It also follows a small loop through the concentration of apartment buildings near Ross Point Road and Second Street. The bus returns north on Highway 41 and follows Mullan to Wal-Mart, where it is through-routed with Route 11 to Coeur d'Alene or to the flex route to Rathdrum.

Intercounty Fixed Routes

Intercounty services are recommended from Silver Lake Mall in Coeur d'Alene to Sandpoint, a service that is currently provided by NICE, and downtown Coeur d'Alene to Spokane Valley Mall and the STA Transit Center there. Just as in Scenario 1, the service between Coeur d'Alene and Sandpoint can deviate in Athol to provide local access to the intercity route. Spirit Lake would be served on demand by an extension of the route connecting Post Falls and Rathdrum.

These are the most important regional connections and would address the needs of commuters, primarily, but also persons traveling outside of Kootenai County for medical services and for social/recreational/shopping purposes. Service to Spokane Valley Mall, or

ideally to downtown Spokane, would also provide a public transit connection to STA for persons traveling around Spokane or to Spokane International Airport, the only commercial airport in the region and the primary airport for Kootenai County. These intercounty services would operate during peak commute hours, but midday services could be added if demand warrants them. The route could also stop at one or more Post Falls park-and-ride lots to allow for a connection to the Post Falls Shuttle.

There are a number of other smaller markets in Northern Idaho that could support occasional service. For example, a short connection to Plummer in Benewah County (described above) may not generate significant ridership, but would provide a critical lifeline connection for low-income or disable residents located there.

ADA Service

In compliance with ADA requirements, ADA paratransit service would operate in and around the fixed-route service area, within ¾ mile of the urban fixed routes during same hours and days that the fixed-route services operate. These ADA services could be developed based on the alternatives discussed in Scenario 1. Individuals would be required to complete an application to be considered eligible for ADA service. Two additional vehicles are assumed to provide service that meets ADA requirements.

Flex Route Services

Scenario 1 discusses zonal dial-a-ride service areas. In Scenario 2, this concept is carried forward for smaller pockets of the urban service area, as well as rural areas. The flex routes are designed to provide demand-responsive transit service in low-density suburban areas where there is not sufficient demand to support productive fixed-route transit service.

General public dial-a-ride is generally practical for low-density areas with widely dispersed demand. As demand becomes more concentrated around key destinations, zonal services or flex routes are introduced. This progression is discussed in Scenario 1. If demand in the flex areas becomes more concentrated along corridors, travel time may become more critical, and if demand eventually exceeds the capacity of small buses, fixed route services can be introduced in these areas. Flex route services are suggested as follows:

- **Hayden and Hayden Lake Flex Routes.** Using a minibus, the Hayden and Hayden Lake area north of Silver Lake Mall would receive service via a structured flex route alternating between two zones – one west of US 95 and one east of US 95. The flex bus would pulse out of the Silver Lake Mall transit center every 30 minutes to provide 30 minutes of service coverage in each zone each hour. During each 30-minute time slot, the flex route would serve origins and destinations within each zone and be timed to make connections with Routes 1, 2, and 3 at the mall. Passengers could walk on the flex route at Silver Lake Mall or make telephone reservations for service within the zones. The service could be set up to operate

curb-to-curb or to set street intersections in the service area. Alternatively, a series of specific flex route boarding locations could be identified in the area.

- **West Coeur d'Alene Flex Route.** Like the Hayden and Hayden Lake flex routes, this flex service would operate in the area to the north and west of the Coeur d'Alene Golf Club. The flex service would provide a connection to the downtown Coeur d'Alene transit center for transfers to other bus routes in the system. Alternatively, the only very significant transit destination in this area is TESH Inc., a workforce-training center, so a subscription bus service could be provided that is designed to serve the TESH, Inc. facility.
- **Northeast and West Post Falls Flex Routes.** Two flex services are also proposed for the Post Falls area. The first is designed to serve the rapidly growing Prairie area northeast of Post Falls. The recently constructed Post Falls High School is at the heart of this area, located on Poleline just east of Greensferry. The flex area would extend as far north as Prairie, east to Ross-Point Rathdrum Highway and west to Syringa. A second flex service is envisioned to serve western Post Falls. From the transfer center at Wal-Mart, the route would travel west on Seltice, going into flex mode only upon reaching McGuire. The route would make pickups at fixed stops along Seltice. The primary focus of this route would be the developed areas on Pleasantview between the river and Seltice, but the route would be available to make pickups and dropoffs in a larger area. Both Post Falls Flex routes would connect to the local and regional system at the Wal-Mart transfer center on Mullan. Since demand is likely to be relatively low in both of these areas, the two routes could share one bus. Travel times are such that the bus could provide service to each area once during every hour.
- **Rathdrum Flex Route.** Limited local flex route service around Rathdrum is recommended, with an intercity connection to the Post Falls Wal-Mart to allow for connections to the intercity route to Coeur d'Alene. This route would continue on demand to Spirit Lake.

Scenario 2 services are summarized in Figures 5 through 8. Figure 5 provides a brief summary of the scenario, while Figure 6 presents a map of the routes. Figures 7 and 8 show the total number of service hours provided and vehicles required to implement the services described in this scenario. Fully implemented service operating seven days a week, at 60-minute frequencies on the urban routes in Coeur d'Alene provides 53,814 service hours at an operating cost of approximately $3.17 million.[1] This is over 300 percent more total revenue hours than Scenario 1 provides.[2] The fully implemented service includes:

[1] Assumes $59 operating cost per revenue service hour.
[2] If the same fixed operating cost were applied to Scenario 1, the total operating cost would be nearly $900,000. We believe this higher per-hour cost represents a more accurate costing scenario for the service alternatives than the current operating costs.

- Weekday service hours on local buses, including flex routes would be from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM or 5:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
- Saturday service would be from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Service hours could be modified to begin much earlier, like current KATS Saturday service hours.
- Sunday service would be available 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- The Coeur d'Alene-Sandpoint service would operate three trips per day, weekdays only.
- The Coeur d'Alene-Spokane Valley route would operate four trips per day, weekdays only.
- The Coeur d'Alene-Worley route would make four round-trips per day, Monday through Sunday.

A total of 4,732 service hours or $280,000 could be saved by not operating on Sunday, and even more service hours would be saved by reducing weekday service hours or the Saturday service span. For comparative purposes, Figure 8 illustrates the same service plan, but with urban routes in Coeur d'Alene operating at 30-minute headways on weekdays. The result is 67,022 annual revenue service hours, more than 25 percent more hours than with urban buses operating at 60-minute headways.

In addition to numerous combinations of frequency and service span, the scenario allows KMPO to consider which elements of the Scenario 2 plan might be implemented in the short term versus the long term. For example, providing only urban service or only rural service would significantly reduce the total resources required. These issues will be evaluated and discussed as the Strategic Advisory Committee and KMPO Board members review these transit service options and identify funding goals.

Figure 5 Summary of Scenario 2 Services

Route Number	Route Name	Service Description
Route 1	Appleway-Government Way	Coeur d'Alene fixed route service. Minimum frequency is 60 minutes; optimal frequency is 30 minutes.
Route 2	Ironwood-Ramsey	Coeur d'Alene fixed route service. Minimum frequency is 60 minutes; optimal frequency is 30 minutes.
Route 3	Honeysuckle	Coeur d'Alene fixed route service. Minimum frequency is 60 minutes; optimal frequency is 30 minutes.
Route 4	East Sherman	Coeur d'Alene fixed route service. Minimum frequency is 60 minutes; optimal frequency is 30 minutes.
Route 11	Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls	Regular service between Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls. Operates at 60-minute frequency.
Route 12	Coeur d'Alene-Worley	Four round-trips per day between Coeur d'Alene and Worley, also serving the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Casino with transfer options to Spokane. Demand responsive zone service provided as needed.
Route 21	Post Falls Shuttle	Post Falls fixed route service. Provides 60-minute frequency in both directions.
Coeur d'Alene-Sandpoint Route		Intercounty route provides three weekday (daily) trips with option to deviate en route.
Coeur d'Alene-Spokane Valley Mall Route		Intercounty route provides four weekday commute (daily) trips between Coeur d'Alene and STA Transit Center in Spokane Valley, with intermediate stops in Post Falls.
Hayden Flex Route 1		Provides flex route service on west side of US 95, with hourly connection to Silver Lake Mall.
ADA Service		ADA paratransit service would be provided in the urban fixed route service area.
Hayden-Hayden Lake Flex Route 2		Provides flex route service on east side of US 95, with hourly connection to Silver Lake Mall.
West Coeur d'Alene Flex Route		Provides flex route service to west side of Coeur d'Alene, with connections to downtown.
Rathdrum Flex Route		Provides flex route service to Rathdrum area, with connections to Post Falls Wal-Mart every 90 minutes. This route would also extend north on demand to serve Spirit Lake.
Post Falls Flex Route 1		Provides flex route service to rapidly growing northeast area of Post Falls, including Post Falls High School. Connects to other local and intercity routes at Wal-Mart.
Post Falls Flex Route 2		Provides flex route service to West Post Falls via Seltice, including Outlet Malls and other development along Pleasant View. Connects to other local and intercity routes at Wal-Mart.

Figure 6
Scenario 2:
Transit Service Alternatives

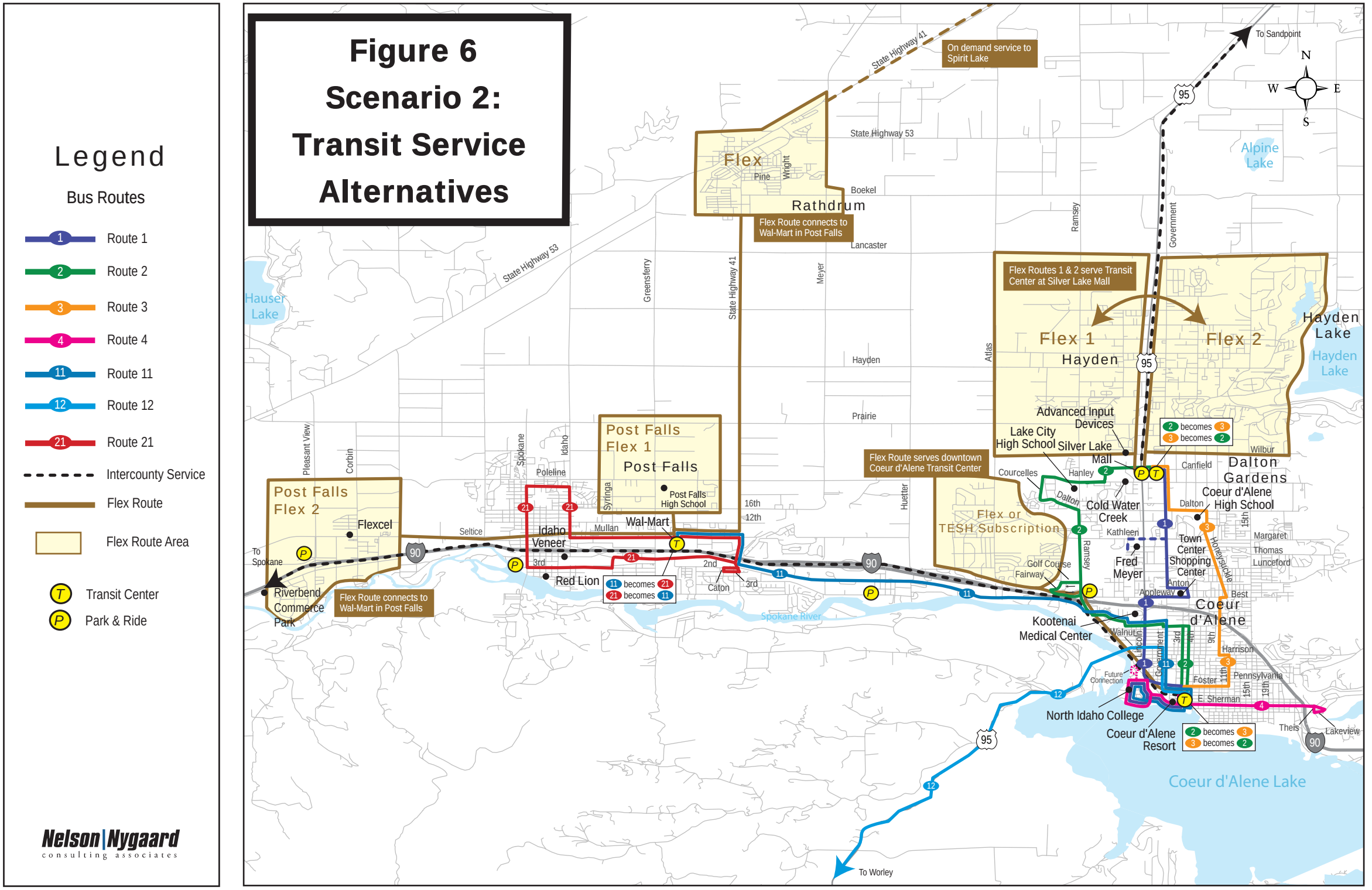

Figure 7 Summary of Scenario 2 Vehicle Needs and Revenue Hours:

Assumes 60-Minute Frequencies on Urban Routes in Coeur d'Alene

		WEEKDAY													SATURDAY											SUNDAY												
Proposed Route Number	Proposed Route Name (Corridor)	RND TRIP TIME			FREQUENCY			VEHICLES			HRS/ WEEKDAY			Weekday Revenue Hours	RND TRIP TIME			FREQUENCY			VEHICLES			HRS/ SATURDAY			Saturday Revenue Hours	RND TRIP TIME			FREQUENCY			VEHICLES			HRS/SUNDAY			Sunday Revenue Hours	Annual Revenue Hours
		Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve		Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve		Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve		
1	Appleway - Government Way	47	47		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		47			60			1.0			9		9.0		47			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
2	Ironwood - Ramsey	60	60		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		60			60			1.0			9		9.0		60			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
3	Honeysuckle	30	30		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		30			60			1.0			9		9.0		30			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
4	East Sherman (Downtown/NIC Shuttle)	30	30		60	60		0.5	0.5		6	7		6.5		30			60			0.5			9		4.5		30			60			0.5			7		3.5	2,060
11	Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls via Seltice Way	50	50		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		50			60			1.0			9		9.0		50			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
12	Coeur d'Alene - Worley	106			60			2.0			8			16.0		106			60			2.0			9		18.0		106			60			2.0			7		14.0	5,700
21	Post Falls Shuttle	45	45		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		45			60			1.0			9		9.0		45			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
Flex	Rathdrum	30	30		90	90		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		30			90			1.0			9		9.0		30			90			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
Flex 1 & 2	Hayden & Hayden Lakes	60	60		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		60			60			1.0			9		9.0		60			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
Flex	West Coeur d'Alene	25	25		60	60		0.5	0.5		6	7		6.5		25			60			0.5			9		4.5		25			60			0.5			7		3.5	2,060
Flex 1 & 2	Post Falls	25	25		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		25			60			1.0			9		9.0		25			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
	ADA Service							2.0	2.0		6	7		26.0								2.0			9		18.0								2.0			7		14.0	8,240
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Spokane Valley Mall	42						1.0			4			4.0													0.0												0.0	1,016
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Sandpoint	80						1.0			7			7.0													0.0												0.0	1,778

Peak Bus Requirement	15.0
Base Bus Requirement	11.0
Evening Bus Requirement	0

Base Bus Requirement	13.0

Base Bus Requirement	13.0

Total Rev Hrs **53,814**

Required Weekday Revenue Hours	170.0

Required Satuday Revenue Hours	117.0

Required Sunday Revenue Hours	91

Figure 8 Summary of Scenario 2 Vehicle Needs and Revenue Hours:

Assumes 30-Minute Frequencies on Urban Routes in Coeur d'Alene

		WEEKDAY													SATURDAY												SUNDAY											
Proposed Route Number	Proposed Route Name (Corridor)	RND TRIP TIME			FREQUENCY			VEHICLES			HRS/WEEKDAY			Weekday Revenue Hours	RND TRIP TIME			FREQUENCY			VEHICLES			HRS/SATURDAY			Saturday Revenue Hours	RND TRIP TIME			FREQUENCY			VEHICLES			HRS/SUNDAY			Sunday Revenue Hours	Annual Revenue Hours
		Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve		Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve		Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve	Peak	Base	Eve		
1	Appleway - Government Way	47	47		30	30		2.0	2.0		6	7		26.0		47			60			1.0			9		9.0		47			60			1.0			7		7.0	7,422
2	Ironwood - Ramsey	60	60		30	30		2.0	2.0		6	7		26.0		60			60			1.0			9		9.0		60			60			1.0			7		7.0	7,422
3	Honeysuckle	30	30		30	30		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		30			60			1.0			9		9.0		30			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
4	East Sherman (Downtown/NIC Shuttle)	30	30		30	30		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		30			60			0.5			9		4.5		30			60			0.5			7		3.5	3,711
11	Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls via Seltice Way	50	50		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		50			60			1.0			9		9.0		50			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
12	Coeur d'Alene - Worley	106			60			2.0			8			16.0		106			60			2.0			9		18.0		106			60			2.0			7		14.0	5,700
21	Post Falls Shuttle	45	45		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		45			60			1.0			9		9.0		45			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
Flex	Rathdrum	30	30		90	90		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		30			90			1.0			9		9.0		30			90			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
Flex 1 & 2	Hayden & Hayden Lakes	60	60		30	30		2.0	2.0		6	7		26.0		60			60			1.0			9		9.0		60			60			1.0			7		7.0	7,422
Flex	West Coeur d'Alene	25	25		30	30		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		25			60			0.5			9		4.5		25			60			0.5			7		3.5	3,711
Flex 1 & 2	Post Falls	25	25		60	60		1.0	1.0		6	7		13.0		25			60			1.0			9		9.0		25			60			1.0			7		7.0	4,120
	ADA Service							2.0	2.0		6	7		26.0								2.0			9		18.0								2.0			7		14.0	8,240
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Spokane Valley Mall	42						1.0			4			4.0													0.0													0.0	1,016
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Sandpoint	80						1.0			7			7.0													0.0													0.0	1,778

Peak Bus Requirement	19.0
Base Bus Requirement	15.0
Evening Bus Requirement	0

Base Bus Requirement	13.0

Base Bus Requirement	13.0

Total Rev Hrs **67,022**

Required Weekday Revenue Hours	222.0

Required Saturday Revenue Hours	117.0

Required Sunday Revenue Hours	91

SECTION IV: GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

Overview

This section provides groundwork for developing a governance and administrative structure that most effectively supports the implementation and ongoing provision of public transportation services recommended in Section III: Service Scenarios. Various alternatives are reviewed, benefits and costs of each described, and action items are recommended.

The section also reviews various alternatives for the delivery of services recommended in this plan. A recommended model is presented based on the evaluation of benefits and costs associated with service delivery options most common in the industry.

Governance

Since public transportation services are funded with a mix of federal, state and local funds, providers must be accountable to the taxpaying public. That is, a board of elected or appointed representatives is required to oversee the management and delivery of public transportation services. Two primary governance models are employed in the state of Idaho: (1) a Regional Public Transportation Authority is formed and a governing policy board is appointed to oversee public transportation programs or (2) a local city or county government controls the program and the City Council or County Commission acts as the governing policy board. Regardless of the structure, the board must set and adopt policy, hear public comment and serve as the final decision-making body. These responsibilities are separate and distinct from the day-to-day business of running a transit system.

The following section discusses these two governance structures and recommends actions for adopting a structure that will best facilitate the implementation of service improvements and funding development required to meet the transportation needs of Kootenai County residents. A third structure that positions the KMPO as lead agency is also reviewed in brief.

Current Governance Structure

The Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO) is a 10-member board of local elected officials from the major cities and the four highway districts. The KMPO Board consists of representatives from the Cities of Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, Post Falls, Rathdrum, the East Side Highway District, the Idaho Transportation Department, Kootenai County, Lakes Highway District, Post Falls Highway District, and the Worley Highway District.

Prior to the formation of KMPO, Kootenai County acted as program manager and governing body for public transportation services in the County. After the MPO was formed, Kootenai County agreed to continue its management role via a third party contract. The Board of Commissioners passed a resolution on June 17, 2003 for KMPO to apply for FTA Section 5307 funds. While the County is directly responsible for distributing funds and managing the NICE contract, the KMPO Board is the acting governing body responsible for public transportation policy and program development. The KMPO Board has the ultimate authority to adopt or reject recommendations set forth in this Public Transportation Plan.

Historically an advisory committee called the Kootenai County Area Transportation Team has advised Kootenai County on issues related to public transportation. After the formation of KMPO, the Board agreed that the Kootenai County Area Transit Team would become its technical advisory committee. The committee was formed by a mix of regional government and stakeholder interests and has traditionally been staffed by the Panhandle Area Council.

Governance Options

There are several other Idaho public transportation systems operating in small urban areas. Two primary governance models are most commonly employed in these other small urban areas:

1. Governance by Regional Public Transportation Authority

2. Governance by a City Council (typically of the largest city) or County Commission

This section examines these governance models, details relevant policies from the Idaho State Code, and provides preliminary recommendations for formation of a permanent governance structure.

The advantages and disadvantages of assigning lead responsibility to an RPTA, the City of Coeur d'Alene, and Kootenai County are summarized in Figure 9. An additional option, governance by the Kootenai MPO is also described in the Figure 9, but is not detailed in the text. This figure focuses on three primary areas of evaluation:

- **Administration:** An appropriate lead agency will be able to assume administrative responsibility for public transportation. It is important that the organization formed or selected has the ability to provide administrative support and supply or retain qualified staff.
- **Accountability:** The formation of a countywide, and possibly multi-county, public transportation system requires a lead agency that is accountable to a number of jurisdictions and stakeholder groups. The lead agency must appropriately represent the interests of all parties involved.

- **Ease of Implementation:** A lead agency must be able to assume oversight responsibility with relative ease. This area looks at whether political and staffing structures need to be in place to for that organization take over governance of public transportation.

Figure 9 Kootenai County Public Transportation Lead Agency Alternatives

	Lead Agency Alternatives	Areas of Evaluation		
		Administration	**Accountability**	**Ease of Implementation**
Best Short-Term Alternatives	New Agency – RPTA	Very Good – Is expected to be most appropriate because staff focus is strictly public transportation. Also provides best structure for expansion beyond County lines.	Very Good – Very accountable because Policy Board would include representatives from multiple jurisdictions	Moderately Challenging – Would require new structure, but KMPO board could double as RPTA board in short-term
	City of Coeur d'Alene	Good – Has skill and knowledge of local service administration	Challenging – Would be good representative of City's needs, but not other Kootenai County jurisdictions	Challenging – Would require additional staffing and city appears to have limited interest or investment in transit
	Kootenai County	Good – Has experience administering other programs and is contract administrator for public transportation	Challenging – Would be good representative of unincorporated County's needs, but not other Kootenai County jurisdictions. Unincorporated County population is small percentage of Kootenai total	Relatively easy – May require additional staffing but has contract management capabilities in-house
Other Alternatives	Kootenai MPO	Moderately Challenging – Relatively new organization with limited experience administering service programs. However, staff is experienced and focused on transportation.	Good – Very accountable because Policy Board includes representatives from multiple jurisdictions	Moderately Challenging – Would require some organizational change and additional staffing. KMPO may not be ready to take this on as it is a very new agency.

Regional Public Transportation Authority

A Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) is a single governmental agency oriented entirely toward public transportation needs within a county or region. An RPTA must be formed in accordance with Idaho Code Section 40-2104 which defines an authority as a "political subdivision of the state of Idaho under the supervision of and directly responsible to local governments, which shall provide public transportation services, encourage private transportation programs and coordinate both public and private transportation programs, services and support functions."

Policy Board Structure

Idaho Code Section 40-2106 dictates that an RPTA Board of Directors be formed, consisting of not less than five members selected as follows: two members representing each board of county commissioners; one member representing highway district commissions wholly or partially contained within the region; two members representing each city with a population of 25,000 or more; and one member representing each city with a population of less than 25,000. Board members are to be appointed by resolution by each of the represented government agencies.

At the first meeting of a newly appointed RPTA board, members are required to elect a chairman and a vice chairman from their membership and appoint a secretary and a treasurer. The latter two positions do not need to be members of the board.

Board composition for a Kootenai County RPTA would be almost identical to the existing KMPO Board. The recently formed Targhee Regional Public Transportation Authority in the Idaho Falls area has a Board composition identical to the Bonneville MPO, with the exception of one position, which was declined by a rural community. In the short term, demands on a Kootenai RPTA Board's time would be very limited. It may make sense to have KMPO Board members act as the RPTA Board, allowing for joint meetings.

Powers and Authority

Idaho RPTAs have the authority to: provide, or contract for, the provision of a wide variety of services as long as they are open to the general public; set fares; and to establish, fund, and control rolling stock, facilities and other capital needed to operate public transportation services.

An RPTA board must adopt an annual budget and call a public hearing to review the budget before it is approved.

Unlike most states, Idaho RPTAs do not have the power to levy a local or regional tax for the purpose of funding public transportation services. A 2004 Interim Legislative Committee was formed to examine the need to grant local and regional public transportation providers dedicated funding authority. The Interim Committee is working to

craft an Idaho State Public Transportation Policy that will recommend that the Legislature grant RPTAs local funding authority. Until such time, the lack of local funding authority significantly weakens the role of the RPTA, since local and regional public transportation funding falls back on city and county general fund contributions.

The RPTA structure has several critical strengths that should be considered in determining whether it is a viable governance structure for Kootenai County's transit services. These include the ability to:

1. Provide a coordinating body for public transportation. This is most relevant in large, multi-jurisdictional regions such as the Treasure Valley. With the formation of an RPTA, the MPO continues to be responsible for regional transportation planning.

2. Create an organizational mechanism for the provision of public transportation services. Ultimately, the Targhee RPTA was formed because efforts to bid service to a private contractor failed.

3. Create a single and separate face for public transportation. This provides an important opportunity to reestablish public trust in public transportation in Kootenai County.

4. Provide equitable regional representation through the appointment of a Board of Directors.

5. Provide a separate and distinct audit trail for Federal Transit Administration funding and other federal, state or local source funding.

6. Provide the opportunity to expand services beyond Kootenai County. This could be very important for meeting regional transportation needs, as Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls serves as a key hub for the five county area of Northern Idaho.

Creation of an Authority

To create a countywide authority, a city or a county may call for a resolution to call for an election to establish a regional public transportation authority. A ballot question must then go before the voters clearly describing the boundaries and purpose of the authority. The entire geographical area of the County must be included within the authority and final determination is made by simple majority of votes cast by registered voters within the County. A multi-county RPTA can be formed simply by extending boundaries and adding board representation. The Treasure Valley RPTA serves both Ada and Canyon County and has Board members from both County Commissions, local officials from cities in both counties and representatives from Ada and Canyon County Highway Districts.

Funding

Participating counties, cities, and highway districts are not required to contribute financially to the RPTA. However, some form of local dues is often extracted from each community served by the authority, based on population or other equitable measurement. In the Treasure Valley, all communities within the RPTA pay $0.60 annually for each official resident. This sum typically contributes to planning and administrative functions. Many communities also contribute directly from their general funds to support transit services that either operate within their community or connect their residents to regional destinations.

Any short-term expansion of public transportation services will rely on increased funding from local jurisdictions. A key responsibility of a newly formed RPTA would be to solicit funds from area jurisdictions to support public transportation programming and to encourage financial and service coordination with other regional transportation providers. The latter function will be important in the short-term as local cities may have difficulties finding additional general funds to support transit.

At such time as the Idaho Legislature grants local funding authority, a Kootenai RPTA could develop a ballot measure to solicit dedicated source funding for transit. The exact method of tax levy would need to be determined at that time based on a public outreach campaign.

Examples of Idaho RPTAs

Treasure Valley RPTA (ValleyRide), the RPTA for Ada and Canyon Counties, was created in 1998 to bring coordinated public transportation services to residents of the Treasure Valley region. The Treasure Valley (Ada and Canyon Counties) is home to more than 500,000 residents, three-quarters of whom live in one of 14 incorporated communities, of which Boise is the largest with a population over 200,000.

Shortly after its inception, ValleyRide took over operation of Boise Urban Stages ("THE BUS"), the city-run transit service for Boise and Garden City. The formation of ValleyRide also brought all other public transportation services, including local bus service in Nampa and Caldwell under its jurisdiction. Private or nonprofit providers operate these services under contracts with ValleyRide. While Treasure Valley Transit (Nampa-Caldwell) and Treasure Valley Metro (intercounty commuter), still operate under different names, all regional services will soon be consolidated under the ValleyRide name. ValleyRide recently let a Request for Proposals to hire a contractor to operate the Canyon County and intercounty commuter services. The ValleyRide Board also approved a recent recommendation to contract Boise area services, currently provided in-house.

ValleyRide was formed in large part to coordinate public transportation services throughout the two-county area, including fixed route, rideshare services, park-and-ride, paratransit and other alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle. ValleyRide is the recipient and administrative body for all public transportation funds in the two-county region. In

addition to federal funds, the authority receives annual funding from a number of local communities and the county highway districts. All service area jurisdictions also contribute annual dues amounting to $0.60 per resident.

The **Targhee Regional Public Transit Authority (TRPTA)** was formed to provide public transportation services in Bonneville County. Prior to the formation of TRPTA, public transportation services were provided by a private contractor under the governance and administration of the City of Idaho Falls. Concerns about the contract service provider forced a reshuffling of responsibilities within the region. The decision was made to form an RPTA when both the City and the MPO declined to take over governance and administration of public transportation services. TRPTA initially let a bid to select a private contractor to provide transit services in Idaho Falls and Ammon. However, all bids were rejected due to compliance failures or cost quotes that exceeded available funding levels. Based on the failure of this bid process, the RPTA Board elected to bring the provision of service in house.

Municipal or County Government

Municipal or county governance of public transportation is another possible option for transit service in Kootenai County. The Kootenai County Commission has presided over public transportation policy decisions for many years. However, the County has indicated that it is not interested in continuing this as a permanent role. Several Idaho cities manage and govern public transportation systems. The City of Pocatello is the most prominent example. Here the City is the political subdivision designated to receive federal funding and the City Council acts as governing body for public transportation in Pocatello, Bannock County and several neighboring counties. The City of Idaho Falls played a similar role until the recent formation of an RPTA in that region.

Municipally run systems typically form around the interest of providing public transportation services in a single city, often the largest city in a region. However, municipal providers can and do provide service to other areas through the establishment of a Joint Powers Agreements. For example, Pocatello Transit operates service to a number of smaller communities and rural areas through established funding agreements with local city and county governments.

Municipally governed regional transit operations present a number of challenges, which are described in the following sections. Sometimes, a city or county governance structure limits regional representation and can lead to imbalanced funding and service priorities.

Policy Board

Were a city or the County to be appointed lead agency for the regional public transportation system in Kootenai County, its governing board (a city council or the County Commission) would decide policy for the regional public transportation system. An advantage of such an arrangement is that these are standing policy boards, so a new policy

board would not be required. A potential disadvantage would be that some jurisdictions within the county would perceive this as an unbalanced representation of interests, as a city council or the County Commission is formed to set policy for its jurisdictional area, and may not be structured to equitably represent all countywide interests.

Powers and Authority

Under a municipal or county governed system, regional powers and authority would need to be established through inter-jurisdictional agreements. Many public transportation providers around the country operate under joint powers agreements. These provide the lead agency authority to set policy and administer services, but typically set clear agreements that a specified type, amount and/or level of service will be provided in exchange for annual operating fund contributions and/or capital match funds.

Funding

As discussed in previous sections, public transportation funding in Idaho is reliant on local jurisdictions to provide matching funds (50% for urban and 20% for rural services) to access federal dollars or to provide any services not covered by federal funds. If a local jurisdiction were designated as the federal fund recipient for the region, it would also be required to collect local fund contributions from other area jurisdictions. Once again, inter-jurisdictional agreements would need to be put in place to ensure equitable distribution of federal funds to those jurisdictions providing matching funds.

Operating as a transit department of city/county government or under a department such as public works puts transit in direct competition for local general funds. While an RPTA would need to request local funds from the various jurisdictions it serves, the authority structure provides a degree of separation from local budget processes. Transit systems operating under a department of local government are often put in the tenuous position of competing directly with critical services such as police and fire.

Examples of Municipally Run Systems in Idaho

The City of Pocatello is the public transit provider in Pocatello and has established intergovernmental agreements with Bannock County and other regional jurisdictions to operate intercity and rural services. While transit has traditionally received strong support from the City, it has struggled to maintain consistent service levels due to fluctuating annual budget allocations.

Governance Recommendations

This section provides recommendations for governance of future public transportation services and programs in Kootenai County. These reflect forthcoming recommendations regarding administration and service delivery (see the following section).

Primary recommendations are as follows:

- A **Kootenai County Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA)** should be formed to govern public transportation services and funding. To some extent, Idaho RPTAs are weak organizations since they do not have legislative authority to seek dedicated funding. However, the RPTA structure does provide a single, consolidated face for transit that will be helpful in building public confidence in the system. It also provides a formalized structure that can help to encourage new local funding for transit and creates an audit trail for public transit finances. Another important feature of an RPTA is that it provides a structure that could be expanded to serve a broader multi-county area.
- An **RPTA Policy Board** should be formed pursuant with Idaho Code Section 40-2106. Since the Idaho Code calls for a board structure (see section above) nearly identical to the existing KMPO Board, we recommend the appointment of existing representatives to the RPTA Board. Short-term demands on the RPTA Board should be limited, but this structure would allow the Boards to hold back-to-back meetings, saving time and resources for Board members and staff.
- An **Advisory Council** consisting of representatives of key interest groups should be formed to provide additional direction to the policy board. Representatives on this group could include: riders, social service agency staff, disability advisory group members, local government representatives, highway district staff and other key stakeholders. This should be a newly established group, but could draw from both the existing Kootenai County Area Transportation Team and/or the Stakeholder Advisory Committee formed for the purpose of this Public Transportation Feasibility Study.

The final recommendation is dependent on state legislative action:

- Once the Idaho State Legislature has granted RPTAs the authority to seek local dedicated source funding, the Kootenai RPTA should study the feasibility of a regional tax assessment for transit. This study should include representative polling of residents from throughout the County to determine willingness to support such a measure, viability of various assessment mechanisms and sensitivity to various assessment levels. If public support exists, the RPTA should develop a ballot measure to seek a regional options tax to support public transportation.

Organization: Administration and Service Delivery

The formation of an RPTA will require a shift in administrative staffing for public transportation issues. RPTA responsibilities will include contract oversight; analysis of system performance; capital improvement programming; development of grant applications; and federal and state reporting requirements. This section discusses short-

term organizational capacity needs and projects longer-term needs based on the full implementation of the Optimal Service Scenario. The organizational evaluation focuses on two key issues:

- Determination of an optimal service delivery model; and
- Projecting short- and long-term administrative staffing needs.

Overview of Organizational Structure

Currently, all general public transportation services provided in Kootenai County are contracted to a private nonprofit organization. The contract operator for these services is North Idaho Community Express (NICE), a local nonprofit company. Services in the Coeur d'Alene – Post Falls urbanized area now operate under the name Kootenai Area Transportation Service (KATS). Intercity services between Coeur d'Alene and Sandpoint continue to operate under the NICE name.

The Kootenai Board of County Commissioners is the grantee for Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 Urbanized Area Funds for public transportation. The County provides contract management for the NICE service contract through a third party arrangement with KMPO. The County itself has a limited investment in public transportation since it governs the land area with the lowest population densities.

The current contract was signed into effect in April 2003 for a 12-month period and extended again through March 31, 2004. One additional 12-month extension is available under the terms of the existing contract. The County reserves the right to renegotiate the terms of the contract at the end of each 12-month cycle.

Kootenai County also has executed Letters of Agreement with North Idaho Community College and Kootenai Medical Center. The stated purpose of these agreements is to provide for the coordination of public transportation services within the Kootenai Urbanized Area. These organizations provide in-kind matching funds through the provision of public transportation service to students, staff and medical patients.

As a newly designated "Urbanized Area," KMPO is now responsible for all regional transportation planning functions, including public transportation. Since its formation, the KMPO Board has contracted with Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC), the MPO for Spokane County, WA, for administrative staffing needs. SRTC staff responds directly to the KMPO Board. The SRTC Executive Director also serves as Director for KMPO and one staff planner is dedicated to providing staff support for all KMPO planning functions, including public transportation, roadway planning and transportation modeling. If an RPTA is formed, regional planning functions will remain under KMPO authority and there will be a need for close coordination between the RPTA and KMPO.

Service Delivery Options

A number of local factors influence transit agencies' decisions to contract all or elements of fixed-route and paratransit services. Overall contracting is much more popular for paratransit services than fixed route. However, many agencies, particularly small properties, are moving to contract arrangements for all or a portion of fixed-route services. According to a 2001 study conducted by the Transportation Research Board, 60 percent of all transit providers nationwide contract all or part of their service delivery to a private or nonprofit organization.

Deciding whether to contract or operate transit services in-house should be a local decision, as the benefits and downfalls of a contracted service delivery arrangement are highly dependent on local factors and cost drivers such as labor contracts and service area characteristics.

Benefits and Costs of Service Delivery Models

This section examines the benefits and costs of two service delivery models for Kootenai County: (1) continued turnkey contracting and (2) in-house service provision. The decision to bring services in-house or continue to contract out will not be relevant until more sustainable funding is available to support the implementation of the Optimal Service Scenario.

Figure 10 provides a brief summary of benefits and cost/disincentives to both models and is followed by a more thorough explanation of these tradeoffs.

Figure 10 Cost and Benefits of Service Delivery Models

In-House Model		Contracted Service	
Benefits	**Costs/Disincentives**	**Benefits**	**Costs/Disincentives**
• More direct control over operations • More efficient coordination of marketing, outreach and service provision functions • Direct control over driver training and safety procedures	• Likely to have higher operating costs over long-term • Possibly difficult to find and retain qualified operations management staff • Difficult to quickly add staff and capital resources necessary for large service increases expected in the Optimal Service Plan • Capital facility development and vehicle purchasing process may be slower	• Likely to have slightly lower operating cost • Creates competition & more efficient operations management • Contractors bring extensive operations experience • Contractors bring institutional management practices and monitoring systems • Contractors can draw from nationwide labor and expertise pool • Allows for development of monetary penalties/incentives for performance & service quality • Ability to quickly bring on line new vehicles and garage facilities	• RPTA has less direct control over customer service • May require some duplication of staffing (or higher staffing levels) for contract and service performance monitoring • Less flexibility to respond directly to customer concerns about services or operators • May be difficult to solicit competitive bids for small system

The following paragraphs provide more detailed discussion of key issues related to service delivery model selection and tie each issue to local considerations relevant to Kootenai County.

Cost Efficiency

There is a common perception in the transit industry that contracted service delivery leads to significant cost savings for transit providers. A 2001 survey conducted by the Transportation Research Board showed that two of the top three reasons that agencies chose to contract services were to improve cost-efficiency and reduce costs. These benefits typically apply only to agencies that do not operate under union labor contracts or have institutionally contracted services. The cost efficiency of a turnkey service contract is also dependent on the presence of local service providers or the attractiveness of the site to a national service provider. Kootenai County's relative proximity to Spokane and to major urban areas in Western Washington supports a competitive bid process.

Service Quality

The impact of contracting on service quality is a heavily debated issue. In a survey of general managers from around the United States conducted by the Transportation Research Board (TRB), service quality was not cited as a significant issue when choosing between in-house versus contract service delivery. Of the over 100 general managers who responded to the survey, slightly more cited service quality benefits for contracted service than for in-house provision.[3] On related issues, general managers were relatively ambivalent about differences in staff time demands and employee morale.

Hiring a private service provider with national experience can provide the benefit of drawing on a broader pool of transit operations management expertise that is often unavailable in a smaller metropolitan area. Most major contract service providers can bring experienced operations management staff from other comparable sites around the region or country. In addition, local managers can rely on national networks for management support and training. Local contractors draw from a much smaller labor pool and are more likely to have difficulty attracting experienced staff.

Labor Management and Labor Productivity

General managers surveyed in the TRB study indicated that labor-management relations typically improved or remained the same under a turnkey service contract model vs. in-house operations. Likewise, labor productivity often increased under a turnkey contract. Institutionalized management practices and experience in operations management provided by contract service providers are the primary reasons for improvement in these areas.

[3] Transportation Research Board Report: *Contracting for Bus and Demand-Response Transit Services.*

Service Levels and Amount of Service

A desire to leverage more on-street service by keeping operating costs as low as possible is often a key reason to contract services. A detailed evaluation of local market conditions, prevailing wage rates and labor policies would be required to determine the exact benefit/cost ratio of contracting service vs. retaining in-house operations. However, we do know that driver wages and benefits typically comprise 75 percent to 80 percent of transit operating costs. Without existing union contracts inflating labor rates, there is likely little difference in the levels or amount of service that can be leveraged under the two models. National contractors have the bargaining power to leverage better prices for employee benefits, an area where costs have and are expected to continue to rise sharply. However, current per hour costs for services provided by NICE are very low in comparison with peer system averages and it is very unlikely that these costs will go down in the future.

Responsiveness To Service Growth

The Optimal Service Scenario presented in the Service Plan outlines a transit network designed to serve Kootenai County at projected land-use buildout for the 20-year period. This expansion is not likely to happen all at once and 20-year land use patterns are subject to change in ways that we cannot project. Therefore, it is important that a Kootenai RPTA be organized in way that can respond to growth. If a regional funding authority is approved, a significant amount of service will likely be added in a short period of time. Hiring well-trained and experienced staff to fill management and operations supervisory positions is a challenge for transit providers throughout Idaho. Hiring to fill a number of new positions from within the local labor pool could be a significant challenge. Contract management companies have the advantage of pulling experienced career track managers from other locations to fill new openings or providing long-term incentives to attract staff from a national market.

Organizational Recommendations

Once Kootenai County voters have approved an RPTA and an appointed policy board is in place, a clear action plan is needed to ensure that service delivery potential is optimized and administrative staffing is in place to support service implementation. The following sections provide short- and long-term recommendations in both these areas.

Service Delivery

Based on the research and industry experience discussed above, we recommend that the Kootenai RPTA maintain a contract service delivery model. In addition to the benefits of cost, management experience and service quality, most major service contractors have the ability to have service up and running within a few months and often bring new vehicles and equipment that may take years to procure through a local process. While turnkey contracts to national providers sometimes elicit complaints of providing jobs to outsiders, these contracts typically lead to little imported labor. Contract language can be developed

to ensure that local drivers are offered operator positions and typically only the executive management position is recruited from outside the area.

Of course, local providers such as NICE will also be eligible to bid on a service provision RFP. While they may not be able to provide benefits such as national management networks, local nonprofits are often able to keep operating costs lower than national competitors. Current per hour operating costs for NICE provided services are very low and are unlikely to be matched by any out of County provider. The development of a Request for Proposal for service provision will need to carefully balance evaluation requirements including cost, management experience, service record, fleet management, maintenance and other critical elements.

We recommend the following actions for delivery of public transportation services in Kootenai County:

- **Short-Term:** Once the Kootenai RPTA is formed, an RFP should be developed for the provision of public transportation services in Kootenai County. The RPTA should conduct a competitive bid process in accordance with FTA regulations. The service contract between the RPTA and the selected provider should:
  - Require the contractor to provide all general public services within Kootenai County and out-of-county services funded in part by Kootenai County local contributions or federal funding allocations.
  - Have a minimum three-year lifespan with an option to extend to five years.
  - Include a clause allowing for expansion of service should additional funds become available.
  - Set specific service hour minimums rather than requesting on-demand service for a lump sum fee. This will ensure that a lower limit of service is on the street daily and promote greater service reliability.
  - Provide incentives to contractor for achieving certain levels of productivity (riders per hour) and penalties for failing to meet certain service parameters (i.e., on-time pick-ups, no show rate, etc.).
- **Long-Term:** Once a dedicated funding source is approved, the Kootenai RPTA (or current governing authority) should revisit the benefits/costs of the turnkey service delivery model. A detailed study should be undertaken to assess this issue before new services funded by local dedicated source revenue are added. For the purpose of this study we conclude that the continuation of a turnkey service management contract is appropriate.

Staffing

The formation of an RPTA will require administrative staff to support RPTA activities. This section projects short-term staffing needs, which assume the continued contracting of

service provision, and long-term needs to support the implementation of the Optimal Service Scenario (see Section III Service Scenarios).

The following describes short and long-term staffing needs:

- **Short-Term:** Initially one half-time staff person would be needed to act as RPTA Director. This position would include a number of other responsibilities including service and contract monitoring, finance, and marketing and outreach activities. This position would be responsible for the development of a Request for Proposal for contract services, contractor selection, contract development and oversight, financial management, policy development and coordination with MPO transportation planning efforts. The Kootenai RPTA Director would report directly to the RPTA Board of Directors.

  As soon as funding is available, this position should be increased to full-time. This will allow for expanded marketing, provide staff more time to develop coordinated transportation programs and to solicit financial participation and resource sharing opportunities.

- **Long Term:** Long-term service delivery recommendations support the continued contracting of transit service management (operations), but call for increased staff responsibilities in other functional areas. Primary organizational staffing components that the Kootenai RPTA will need to fill once the Optimal Service Scenario is implemented include:

  - Executive Management – focus on RPTA management, policy development and Board management and interaction;
  - Operations - focus on the delivery of multiple services through service management contracting;
  - Planning - focus on public transportation service planning, programming, and technology. Regional transportation planning is an MPO function and should be closely coordinated with transit planning efforts;
  - Market Development and Community Outreach – focus on marketing services, providing outreach efforts for planning activities, and responding to customer concerns; and
  - Administration – focus on contract management, human resources, and finance.

Figure 11 provides a more detailed breakdown of administrative staffing needs in the short-term and for full implementation of the Optimal Service Plan (Long-Term).

Figure 11 Short- and Long-Term Staffing Requirements

Staffing Need	Position	Number of Full Time Employees (FTE)	Cost Per Year (Total Salaries + Benefits @ 30% of Salary)
SHORT TERM			
Executive Management, Finance, Planning, Marketing, Outreach, etc.	Director	0.5	$32,500
Total Short Term	→	**0.5**	**$32,500**
LONG TERM			
Executive Management (Includes coordination with MPO on transit planning issues)	Executive Director	1	$65,000
Finance (Includes contract oversight)	Finance Manager	1	$58,500
Marketing & Outreach	Marketing Director & Outreach Coordinator	1	$45,500
Administration	Administrative Assistant/Payroll	1	$39,000
Support Staff	Office Manager	1	$39,000
Total Long Term	→	**5**	**$247,000**

Note: Costs provided are in 2004 dollars. Actual salaries at time of implementation should be adjusted to reflect inflation.

SECTION V: FINANCIAL AND FUNDING PLAN

Overview

The Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO) was formed in 2003 to oversee planning and federal funding for transportation projects in the County. The KMPO receives direction from a 10-member board of local elected officials representing the metropolitan area cities and highway districts. KMPO's adopted mission statement is as follows:

> *To cooperatively develop a transportation plan for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in Kootenai County.*

The designation of the Coeur d'Alene - Post Falls Urbanized Area means it is no longer eligible for rural transit funding; in its place Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 (Small Urbanized Area Formula) funds are available for public transportation operations and capital improvements. The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution on June 17, 2003 for the KMPO to apply for FTA Section 5307 funds. The Coeur d'Alene - Post Falls area is eligible to receive approximately $750,000 in Section 5307 funding annually. The MPO is required to provide 50 percent local match for operating funds and 20 percent match for all funds used for vehicle acquisition or other capital projects. Meeting match requirements is a major hurdle for small urban areas in Idaho where there is no local options taxing authority.

This *Kootenai MPO Public Transportation Feasibility Study* provides a baseline evaluation of public transportation needs in the Kootenai metropolitan area and recommends fiscally guided alternatives for meeting these needs. The plan will also bring the KMPO into compliance with the Federal Transit Administration requirement that a 20-Year Public Transportation Plan be put in place to guide the use of Section 5307 funds.

This financial and funding analysis provides:

- An overview of current public transportation funding in the Kootenai metropolitan area;
- A summary of the costs of potential future service alternatives;
- Potential funding sources for service alternatives;
- An analysis of the benefits of providing public transportation services in the Kootenai metropolitan area; and
- A sustainable funding strategy for the next five years.

Funding Overview

Public transportation services in the Kootenai metropolitan area are supported primarily with FTA Section 5307 Urbanized Area Funds with in-kind and cash match from the five cities in the urbanized area, Kootenai Medical Center, the Agency on Adult and Aging Services and North Idaho College. The Section 5307 program requires a 50 percent local match for all funds used to directly operate service. Capital and planning dollars received through the program require a 20 percent local match.

Kootenai County is responsible for submitting an annual application to the Federal Transit Administration for the receipt of Section 5307 funds. In this role the County acts as the primary distributor of public transportation dollars to the various providers. The total projected FY04-05 budget for public transportation in the County is $498,526. Approximately 58 percent of this funding comes directly from the FTA's Section 5307 program.

Figure 12 Public Transportation Revenues (Federal and Local Match)

		Contract Amount	FTA 5307		Local Match	
			Amount	%	Amount	%
Demand Response:						
KATS	Operating	$ 172,546	$ 86,273	50%	$ 86,273	50%
KATS	Capital - Bus	52,800	42,240	80%	10,560	20%
KATS	Capital -Fac.	15,400	12,320	80%	3,080	20%
KATS	Prev. Maint.	11,280	9,024	80%	2,256	20%
	SUBTOTAL	**$ 252,026**	**$ 149,857**		**$ 102,169**	
Other:						
Kootenai Medical	Operating	$ 125,000	$ 62,500	50%	$ 62,500	50%
North Idaho College	Operating	36,500	18,250	50%	18,250	50%
PAC	Operating	25,000	12,500	50%	12,500	50%
PAC	Planning	60,000	48,000	80%	12,000	20%
	SUBTOTAL	**$ 246,500**	**$ 141,250**		**$ 105,250**	
	TOTAL	**$ 498,526**	**$ 291,107**		**$ 207,419**	

Cash and In-Kind Match

Five cities in the Kootenai metropolitan area, Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls, Hayden, Dalton Gardens and Huetter, are expected to contribute a total of $3,919 in cash (as opposed to in-kind services) for the 2004-05 fiscal year, equivalent to their previous year contribution. Aging adult services provides a cash match of $30,000. All other local match is provided by in-kind services.

Figure 13 Source of Local Match

Revenue Source (type)	FY 04-05
KMC (In-Kind)	$125,000
NIC (In-Kind)	$36,500
Aging/Adult Services (Cash)	$30,000
KMPO Cities (Cash)	$3,919
PAC (In-Kind)	$12,000
Total	$207,419

Potential Section 5307 Funding

Under its current designation as a Small Urban Area, the KMPO is eligible to receive up to $750,000 per year from the Section 5307 program. This means that only 39 percent of total available funds federal funds for public transportation are being leveraged. Since these funds have significant local match requirements, new local sources will need to be identified to take advantage of the full allocation. Given that Idaho, unlike most other states, does not currently allow localities to tax themselves to support transit, it is likely that a change in state law will be required to allow Kootenai County to take full advantage of available federal transit dollars.

Costs and Revenues of Future Service: Scenario 1

Operating Costs

Scenario 1 was designed as a "status-quo" system using existing transit resources with no identified new local funding sources to allow significant expansion. As such, it identifies only operational changes to the existing dial-a-ride system to allow more efficient operation and begin to grow transit ridership in Kootenai County.

In this scenario, it is assumed that the service will be expanded gradually during the first five years of operation, dependent on the availability of resources. Initially, the current contract with NICE to provide service will be maintained. At the end of the current contract, it is assumed that a new contract will be awarded (to NICE or another bidder) at a somewhat higher cost for a heightened level of service. (We note that the current cost of $27.50 per vehicle hour of service is very low by industry standards). Over the course of the contract, the fleet size will be increased from the current four vehicles to eight, and service hours provided will increase from 9,800 to 17,145.

The only other cost for the system will be for a half-time executive director of the proposed Kootenai RPTA, which will oversee the contracted services.

Figure 14 Summary of Operating Costs for Scenario 1

	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Hours of Service	*9,800*	*12,250*	*14,700*	*17,145*	*17,145*
Total Fleet size	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Operating Costs					
Turnkey Operator(1)	$269,500	$323,400	$504,504	$612,132	$636,617
Administration (2)	$33,800	$35,152	$36,558	$38,020	$39,541
Total	**$303,300**	**$358,552**	**$541,062**	**$650,152**	**$676,158**

1) $27.50 per service hour in FY 2005, $33.00 per service hour FY 2006 on
2) half-time executive director

Capital Costs

The only capital requirements for Scenario 1 are new buses. It is assumed that the current four-bus fleet used by NICE will be gradually augmented and replaced during the first five years of operation. One expansion vehicle purchase is programed in each of years 2006 through 2008, and four new buses will be added in FY2009 to replace older buses in the fleet. At the end of the period, the fleet will total eight.

The lift-equipped sixteen passenger cutaways suggested for this service cost approximately $75,000 a piece in 2004 dollars and have a useful life of five to seven years depending on use. This analysis assumes that these buses are purchased on a pay as you go basis, and that Section 5307 funds are used to cover 80 percent of the cost of these purchases, as allowed for capital projects.

Figure 15 Scenario 1 Capital Costs

	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
Buses Required	0	1	1	1	4
Bus Purchase	$0	$78,000	$81,120	$84,365	$350,958
Local Match Funds @ 20%	0	$15,600	$16,224	$16,873	$70,192
Section 5307 Funds @ 80%	0	$62,400	$64,896	$67,492	$280,766

Operating Revenues

Operating Revenues for Scenario 1 will be generated by fare revenues, contributions from local jurisdictions and agencies, and by Section 5307 matching funds. Figure 16 presents the assumptions for the five-year projection period, along with the annual surplus or deficit in relationship to capital costs summarized in Figure 15 above.

Figure 16 Scenario 1 Operating Revenues

Operating Revenues	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
Fare Revenue	91,000	111,977	152,887	195,696	240,471
Aging/Adult Services	30,000	20,000	10,000	0	0
KMPO Jurisdictions	10,000	20,000	40,000	65,000	95,000
5307 Operating Match	207,545	209,667	237,829	271,444	256,301
Total Revenues	338,545	361,644	440,716	532,140	591,772
Surplus or (Deficit)	**$35,245**	**$3,092**	**($100,346)**	**($118,012)**	**($84,386)**

Fare Revenue

This scenario assumes that total passengers will increase hand-in-hand with increased provision of service. Based on the analysis of peer services summarized in the Transit Service Alternatives section, we have assumed that an increase from one to two passengers per resident of the Kootenai urbanized area is reasonable, given the projected service improvements. Since no service improvements are made during the first year, no ridership increases are projected. Throughout the remainder of the five-years we assume that ridership increases to 1.5 trips per resident. This will result in total annual ridership growing from 52,000 to 137,700 during the five-year projection period.

Figure 17 Fare Revenue

Fare Revenue	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
Projected Population	83,317	85,316	87,364	89,461	91,608
Passengers/Capita	0.62	0.75	1	1.25	1.5
Total Passengers	52,000	63,987	87,364	111,826	137,412
Average Fare	$1.75	$1.75	$1.75	$1.75	$1.75
Total Fare Income	$91,000	$111,977	$152,887	$195,696	$240,471

For this fare revenue projection, it is assumed that fares within the urban areas of Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls are $1.50 for full fares and $1.00 for discounted (elderly, youth and ADA), while longer distance trips to unincorporated county areas are $4.00 for full fares and $2.50 for discounted fares. This fare structure is similar to current fares, although it assumes a change to mandatory fares from the current practice of collecting "suggested donations". This analysis assumes no fare increases during the five-year projection period.

Local Agency Contributions

This scenario assumes that cash contributions from Aging and Adults Services will continue for the first three years at decreasing amounts.

The contributions of KMPO jurisdictions are predicted to increase during the period, once the changes to governance of the system are put in place. As service levels increase, and confidence in the system is developed, local jurisdictions will also increase their contributions from less than $4,000 currently to $95,000 in FY 2009. This is a significant increase in local funding; however, it should be noted that the City of Coeur d'Alene has contributed as much as $36,000 to public transportation during past years.

FTA Section 5307 Funds

FTA Section 5307 funds will continue to provide major support for the operations of transit in Kootenai County. As discussed earlier, Kootenai MPO is currently unable to access the entire $750,000 match potential of these funds due to the lack of local match funds. For the projection period, we assume that the same level of local match funds are available as currently (including in-kind donations from Kootenai Medical Center, North Idaho College and the Panhandle Area Council), with the exception of greater local agency contributions as discussed above.

Because capital projects are matched 80 percent federal to 20 percent local, and operating support is only matched 50/50 percent, Kootenai MPO will first utilize available local match to support bus purchases, as that will leverage the most overall federal funds to the area. Planning funds are also matched 80/20, so the current match to the Panhandle Area Council will be maintained. Any local match remaining will be used to support operating costs. Section 5307 operating support therefore varies during the period depending both on how much local match is available, and how much spending is required for bus purchases. . Funds are projected to provide as much as $264,000 annually in operating support during the five-year period. The total projected Section 5307 draw down increases from nearly $250,000 in FY 2005 to nearly $578,000 in FY2009.

Figure 18 Section 5307 Funds

Section 5307 Funds	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
Operating	$201,500	$203,560	$230,902	$263,538	$248,836
Planning	$48,000	$48,000	$48,000	$48,000	$48,000
Capital	$ 0	$62,400	$64,896	$67,492	$280,766
Total	**$249,500**	**$313,960**	**$343,798**	**$379,030**	**$577,602**

Costs and Revenues of Future Service – Scenario 2

Scenario 2 proposes a full fixed-route and demand-response transit service that can only be implemented with significant additional public funds. Most likely, this scenario can only be fully implemented if two conditions are met:

- The State of Idaho allows local tax options to support public transit; and
- A local options tax passes in Kootenai County.

Given that the time of either or both of these actions is not possible to project currently, we have used a "snapshot" year for the future system to project costs and revenues. These costs and revenues are presented in current (2004) dollars. This snapshot assumes that all capital requirements of an enhanced system (bus stops, transfer centers, etc.) will be phased-in over a 5-year period or debt financed over a 20-year period. Annual operating costs are provided based on full implementation of the Optimal Service Scenario (Scenari0 2).

There are two operating scenarios within Scenario 2. The first option assumes thirty-minute headways on fixed routes in Coeur d'Alene, a level considered optimal for the most urban area of the County. A second option tests a maximum 60-minute headway on fixed routes, considered the minimum for urban routes. The second option carries a lower cost and could act as an interim phase in the development of the Optimal Service Scenario (Scenario 2).

Operating Costs

Operating Costs for Scenario 2 are projected to total between $3.4 and $4.2 million per year, significantly more than Scenario 1 costs of less than $1 million per year. As with Scenario 1, there are only two basic costs for this system, a contract cost for a turnkey operator, and costs of the new Kootenai Public Transportation Authority to administer the system.

Figure 19 Summary of Operating Costs

Operating Costs	30 minute	60 minute
Operations	$3,954,298	$3,175,026
Administration	$247,000	$247,000
Total	$ 4,201,298	$3,422,026

Contract Operations

This scenario assumes that an RFP will be written for a contractor to operate and maintain a much-enhanced system, incorporating a fixed-route and demand-response system with more than five times the service of the current service. In early years of the system, the operator may also be required to provide some of the transit vehicles used in the fleet until the public agency is able to acquire sufficient vehicles for operations. The operator will be required to acquire a vehicle storage and maintenance facility, and will also be required to maintain fixed-route facilities such as bus stops and transfer centers. Due to this enhanced level of service expected from the operator, this analysis conservatively assumes that the cost per vehicle service hour will be significantly more than the $27.50 per hour of the current demand-response service in Kootenai County. To attract an operator to perform to this standard, we have conservatively estimated that the cost will be closer to an Idaho industry standard of $59 per hour. The 30-minute option would provide 67,022 annual service hours and will cost $3.9 million, while the 60-minute option will require 53,814 hours and will cost 20 percent less at $3.2 million.

Administration

To administer a larger system effectively, the RPTA will require additional staff. For either of the 30-minute or 60-minute options, it is estimated that the system will require five full time staff as indicated below:

Figure 20 Administration Costs

Position	Number of Full Time Employees	Cost per Year (Salaries and Benefits) in 2004 dollars
Executive Director	1	$65,000
Finance Manager	1	$58,500
Marketing Director / Outreach Coordinator	1	$45,500
Administrative Assistant /Payroll	1	$39,000
Office Manager	1	$39,000
TOTAL Staffing	**5**	**$247,000**

Capital Costs

Capital Costs for Scenario 2 are significantly more extensive than for the Scenario 1 Status Quo Option. Not only does this option require more buses, but a fixed-route system also requires investment in bus stops, transfer centers, and other facilities. Total annual capital costs required during the start up of the Scenario 2 fixed-route system will total between $704,000 and $879,000 depending on the service option chosen. For the purpose of this "snapshot" evaluation we assume that capital costs, with the exception of park-and-rides,

are spread over the first five years of system implementation. Park-and-Rides are projected to be debt financed with costs spread over 20-years.

Figure 21 Summary of Capital Costs

Capital Summary	30 minute	60 minute
Buses	$700,000	$525,000
Bus Stops	$36,800	$36,800
Transfer Centers	$12,900	$12,900
Park and Ride	$129,000	$129,000
ANNUAL COST (for 5 Years)	**$878,700**	**$703,700**
5-YEAR TOTAL	**$4,393,500**	**$3,518,500**
20-YEAR TOTAL	**$6,328,500**	**$5,453,500**

Buses

The only difference between the 30- and 60-minute options in Scenario 2 is the number of buses needed to implement the service. The 30-minute service requires 19 buses, while the 60-minute service requires 15. Preliminarily, it is assumed that all new bus purchases will be of 30-foot vehicles appropriate for fixed-route service. These heavy duty vehicles cost $350,000 a piece, significantly more than vehicles currently required for demand response service, but they carry more passengers and have a useful life of 10-12 years. They are therefore a more cost-effective option for the heavier passenger loads assumed for the expanded service.

This analysis assumes that a stabilized acquisition schedule of two vehicles per year will be required for the 30-minute service, and 1.5 vehicles per year for the 60-minute service. During a phase-in of a fixed-route service, it is possible that some of the existing system vehicles will be able to be maintained for the demand response and flex routes in the system, but it is also likely that some thirty-foot vehicles will need to be obtained on a temporary basis (probably through a contract operator) until the public agency can purchase all that are required to fully implement the fixed route service.

Bus Stops

Conversion from a flag-stop to a fixed-stop system will require the installation of bus stops. The following table identifies the estimated number of new stops required, assuming a stop spacing of approximately 1000 feet in the service area. Four hundred dollars is allocated at each stop to install a pole and sign. At a limited number of higher patronage stops (enhanced), a shelter and bench will also be installed at a total estimated cost of $4,500.

The total cost to install bus stops for the fixed-route system will total $184,000. For the purposes of estimating a "snapshot" year, we have assumed that these costs will be incurred over the first five years of system development.

Figure 22 Bus Stop Capital Costs

Type	Simple	Enhanced
Cost	$400	$4,500
Number needed	235	20
Total Cost	$94,000	$90,000
Grand Total		**$184,000**
Annual Cost (five years)		**$36,800**

Transfer Centers

The proposed system will include three transfer centers. In downtown Coeur d'Alene, an on street transfer center will incorporate four bus bays. Special paving and street treatments, as well as shelters, benches and landscaping will be used to highlight this facility and make it useful for transit patrons. At Silver Lake Mall and Wal-Mart (Post Falls) simpler transfer centers will be designed to serve fewer buses and patrons. The estimated cost of these facilities is indicated below. As with bus stops, in order to generate an annual cost it is assumed that these facilities will be developed over a five-year period, at an annual cost of approximately $12,900.

Figure 23 Transfer Center Capital Costs

Transfer Centers	Cost
Coeur d'Alene	$50,000
Silver Lake	$10,000
Wal-Mart	$4,500
Total	$64,500
Annual Cost (five years)	**$12,900**

Park and Ride Facilities

The proposed system will also incorporate park and ride facilities in two locations in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls, primarily to provide intercept parking for intercity commute service serving Spokane. A total of 175 spaces is projected at an industry average cost of $10,000 per space, including land purchase. At a total cost of $1.75 million, it is unlikely that the Kootenai Public Transit Authority could absorb the local component of these costs in a few years, so for these facilities we have assumed that the project will be paid for over 20 years through bonded indebtedness at an annual cost of $129,000.

Figure 24 Park and Ride Capital Costs

Park and Ride	
Total spaces required	175
Cost per space	$10,000
Total	$1,750,000
per year over 5 years	$350,000
annual cost if bonded	**$129,000**

Bond costs assume 20 year term, 4% interest rate

Revenues for Future Service

As with Scenario 1, the projected funding for Scenario 2 consists of fare revenue, support from local jurisdictions and agencies, and FTA Section 5307 funds. The major difference is that Scenario 2 assumes, as a precondition, that another source of local funds will be available through the ability of Kootenai County to establish a local tax to support public transit.

Figure 25 Operating Revenues for Scenario 2

Revenues	30 minute	60 minute
New local source	$2,789,576	$2,113,632
Fare Revenue	$1,407,462	$1,130,094
Aging/Adult Services	$4,260	$30,000
KMPO Jurisdictions	$0	$9,260
5307 Operating Match	$0	$139,040
Total Revenues	$4,201,298	$3,422,026

New Local Source Funds

A dependable new local source of funds will be required to expand service to the full extent anticipated in Scenario 2. Several potential sources exist, so long as the State of Idaho makes it possible for localities to develop locally elected taxes to fund public transit. Polling would be required to determine what, if any local taxes, would be politically feasible. Sources that would generate between $2 and $3 million annually, the amount required to cover the operating costs of Scenario 2, could include the following options among others:

- Fuel tax – a 3 cent per gallon tax on fuel;
- Fuel tax – a 2% tax on fuel;
- Automobile registration tax – an additional $20 annual fee on vehicle registrations;

- Vehicle property tax - .2% tax on autos (assumes average value of approximately $10,000); or
- Sales tax – an additional .25% tax on retail sales

Fare Revenue

As with Scenario 1, realistic patronage of Scenario 2 was estimated by an investigation of peer systems, which determined that 10-12 passengers per revenue hour are typical of Kootenai peers with fixed-route bus systems (see Section I – Background and Introduction). The total passengers that can be expect for the expanded system therefore total between 646,000 and 804,000. At an average fare per passenger of $1.75, total fare income totals between $1.1 million and $1.4 million annually.

Figure 26 Fare Revenue Scenario 2

Fare revenue	30 minute	60 minute
Revenue Hours	67,022	53,814
Passenger/Rev Hour	12	12
Passengers	804,264	645,768
Fare per passenger	$1.75	$1.75
Total Fare Income	$1,407,462	$1,130,094

Other Local Funds

Local jurisdictions and public agencies (Aging and Adult Services) provide a minor portion of local funding for operations. This analysis assumes that Aging and Adult Services provides the same $30,000 base funding per year as in Scenario 1, and that KMPO jurisdictions provide a total of $150,000 per year. However, most of the available funding is used to provide local match for capital expenditures, as described later in the text. Local agency operating support is therefore limited to $4,260 for the 30-minute option, and $39,260 for the 60 -minute option. Since the latter option has somewhat lower capital requirements, more of local agency funds are therefore dedicated to operations.

Section 5307: Operating Funds

Similar to local funds, the use of Section 5307 funds to support operating costs is limited in Scenario 2 because most of the available $750,000 is used to support capital costs. Since capital costs are matched 80 percent federal to 20 percent local, and operating costs are only matched 50 percent on the dollar, it should be the RPTA's priority to use valuable federal funds for capital, and thus conserve local funds to help support operating costs.

In Scenario 2, Section 5307 funds do not support operations at all for the 30-minute scenario, as the capital needs of the system fully commit the total $750,000. In the 60-minute option, $139,000 in Section 5307 funds is used to support operations.

Section 5307: Capital Funds and Local Match Funds

As discussed earlier, it is assumed that funds from local jurisdictions and agencies are used first to provide the local match for the capital purchases required for the fixed-route bus system. It should be noted that, for this scenario, we have assumed that in-kind contributions from Kootenai Medical Center and North Idaho College are no longer counted as local match for FTA purposes.

Figure 27 Capital Funding

Capital	30 minute	60 minute
KMPO Jurisdiction	$150,000	$140,740
Local Options Revenue	$25,740	0
Section 5307 @ 80%	$702,960	$ 562,960
Total Capital	**$878,700**	**$703,700**

KMPO Jurisdictions are projected to provide a maximum of $150,000 in local funding for this scenario. In the 30-minute option, all of it is needed to support the 20 percent local match, along with an additional $25,740 from the $30,000 of local options revenue. In the 60-minute option, which has a somewhat smaller capital funding requirement due to fewer total buses, less local match is required.

FTA's Section 5307 is estimated to contribute between $563,000 and $703,000 on an annual basis to purchase a modern bus fleet for the proposed Kootenai RPTA.

Unused Section 5307 funds accumulate for three years and are available to the Urbanized Area to draw down at any point during that time frame. After three years funds a reverted to a state funding pool and reallocated to other needs, typically rural public transportation. Given the availability of local match, the RPTA (or lead agency) will have an opportunity in early years to access over $1 million in federal funds. Since match requirements for facilities purchase or development are substantially better than for operations, the RPTA should look to use resources on the development of transit supportive facilities development. Even before the proposed transit network is implemented, Section 5307 could provide funding for park-and-ride development.

Total Section 5307 Support

With the additional capital needs of Scenario 2, as well as the additional local support provided by a dedicated local tax for transit, Kootenai County can leverage the entire

$750,000 in FTA Section 5307 funds currently available to it. It should be noted that this is a conservative figure, as federal funding levels should rise by the time this Scenario is put into place.

Figure 28 Total Section 5307 Funds

Section 5307 funds	30 minute	60 minute
Operating @50%	-	$139,040
Capital @ 80%	$702,960	$562,960
Planning @ 80%	$47,040	$48,000
Total 5307 Funds	$750,000	$750,000
Total Local Match required	$187,500	$291,780
Local Match Percentage	20%	28%

Other Potential Future Funding Opportunities

The purpose of this section is to identify new and enhanced funding sources that could be available to Kootenai County to support expanded transit services and help pay for capital improvements. Kootenai County currently relies on a limited number of funding programs that provide ongoing operating support and one-time grants for capital improvement projects. Though most of these revenue sources will continue to provide funding for Kootenai County, the level of funding is not guaranteed, particularly for capital discretionary funds. Traditional funding sources such as local General Fund contributions and FTA Section 5307 grant funds are not reviewed in the following section. This section focuses primarily on new funding sources that could potentially provide the capital and operating resources to help Kootenai County move more quickly toward the implementation of Scenario 2.

Figure 29 provides a summary of these opportunities. The funds are grouped in the following three categories:

1. Federal Sources
2. State Sources
3. Private Sector Initiatives

Federal Sources

In addition to the sources listed in Figure 29, the $50 billion (transit component for six years) reauthorization of TEA21 now under consideration by Congress could create new

funding opportunities for small urban and rural areas such as Kootenai County. Three specific proposals could lead greater access to federal funding:

- Ability to use certain federal source dollars as local match against FTA funding program.
- Ability to match FTA 5307 Small Urbanized funds through local and or federal "coordination" efforts.
- Maintain match requirements for transit funding comparable to highway funds (federal local match requirements of up to 93/7 have been discussed). This is only a proposal and would apply specifically to Idaho and a limited number of other states where local dedicated source options are currently unavailable.

While the details of these proposals remain uncertain at this time, it is encouraging that considerations are being made to lessen the local burden in matching available federal transit funding. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and FTA Region 10 (Idaho, Washington, Oregon and Alaska) have forwarded a recommendation to the FTA in Washington, D.C., to seek funding in the new Reauthorization for coordinating services between federal agencies, and allowing some federal dollars to match the FTA Section 5307 dollars. If any of these proposals were in place, it could decrease the need for Kootenai to secure a new local tax to fund all of the services proposed in Scenario 2.

Figure 29 Summary of New Funding Opportunities

FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDING PURPOSE	USE OF FUNDS	APPLICATION/ APPROVAL PROCESS	EST. ANNUAL YIELD	LEAD TIME	COMMENTS	LIKELIHOOD FOR SUCCESS
Federal Programs							
Transportation and Community System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP)	Available for transit projects that coordinate transportation and land use	Capital projects only	Federal application process	$25 M /year nationally for FYs 2000 through 2003	1 - 2 years	TEA-21 program that favors projects with public/private sector partnership.	Highly competitive
Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA)	Small-scale non-routine projects (e.g., Ped/bike/ transit)	Capital projects only	Application process through DOT	Unknown	1 -2 years	Under TEA-21, program designed for alternative transportation projects without other funding sources.	Highly competitive
Welfare to Work (Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)	To provide transportation services to welfare recipients and low-income persons traveling to and from jobs	Capital and operating costs	Application process through the FTA	Approximately $75 and $150 M per year nationally	1 year	50% match requirement, although unlike other Federal funds, can be matched with Federal dollars (TANIF, CDBG)	Highly competitive
FTA Section 5309	Discretionary Funds for large scale capital projects	Capital projects only	Congressional Earmark	Varies tremendously	1 year	20% match requirement	Highly competitive
State Programs							
State Transportation Improvement Program		Transit capital projects, excluding revenue vehicles	Application process through DOT	Unknown	1 year	Securing these funds for transit is highly competitive	Highly competitive
Regional and Local Programs Private Sector Initiatives							
Employer Contributions	Large employers do not currently subsidize employee passes.	Capital project or operating support	Negotiations with interested employers	Unknown but assumed to be small amounts.	Ongoing	Excellent opportunity to help fund new services	Only attractive once a fixed-route system is in place.
Retail and Hospitality Contributions	No revenues currently available	Primarily capital projects	Negotiations with associations and individual companies	Unknown	1 – 2 years	Merchants may be interested to fund small scale amenities such as bus benches or shelters, large retailers may provide space for transfer centers.	Difficult and requires significant ongoing effort and cooperation.
Coeur d'Alene Tribe	Augment existing service	Tribal Elder Board desires to provide service to south end of Kootenai County.	Negotiations with tribe	Unknown	1-2 years	Tribe currently provides shuttles for employees, patrons of casino, and area residents for unique trips to Spokane and Coeur d'Alene.	Good chance of success based on Tribal Elder Board Directive and active participation of Tribe.

Benefits of Transit

This section summarizes the benefit of providing transit in the Kootenai area. While the benefits of a given investment in transit are difficult to precisely quantify, there are a number of measures by which transit can be shown to benefit the Kootenai metropolitan area, and these measures will become more profound as the metropolitan area continues to grow.

Transit as a realistic transportation option is beneficial for the following reasons:

Consumer Benefits

A multimodal transportation system that includes public transportation accommodates a wider range of needs than a system reliant on private automobile travel. It provides travel options that allow consumers to save money, reduce stress and avoid the need to chauffer non-drivers. It is particularly important for lower-income households in which a safe and reliable vehicle may be difficult or impossible to afford. Transit allows such households the opportunity to access work and other important destinations at an overall cost savings to car ownership. In many cases, reliable transit may also provide the difference between a household needing one car or two, again at a substantial economic savings.

Studies have found that in automobile dependent US urban regions, households devote more than 20 percent of their expenditures to surface transportation (over $8,500 annually), while in communities with transit system, households spend less than 17 percent (under $5,500 annually). [4]

Equity

Transit can help provide basic mobility to those who cannot use a car. There are many in our society who cannot use vehicles for a variety of reasons. These include youth under the age of 16 who cannot obtain a license, as well as many seniors who cannot or should not drive. It also includes those whose disabilities, such as blindness or severe handicap, make it impossible for them to drive. Without transit, all of these individuals have to depend on others to transport them. Transit provides them with a measure of independence.

Option Value

Even people who don't normally use transit benefit from its existence as an option. For instance, when a normally able person becomes temporarily disabled (breaking a leg for instance), transit can provide crucial mobility for a short period of time. Similarly, when

[4] Barbara McCann, Driven to Spend; The Impact of Sprawl on Household Transportation Expenses, STPP (www.transact.org), 2000.

someone's car breaks down and needs to be repaired, transit can provide an option for transportation in the interim.

Efficiency

Increasing transportation options tends to create a more efficient transportation system because it allows each mode to be used for what it does best. It can help reduce traffic congestion, facility costs, road risk, environmental impacts and consumer expenses in the most cost-effective manner. This is particularly true in denser urban areas where the cost of widening a road may be higher than the cost of improving transit infrastructure to carry the same number of people, for instance. However, even in Kootenai County examples can be found where transit investments will increase overall system efficiency.

Economic and Tourist Development

Transit tends to provide for more efficient land use over time, as less land needs to be provided for parking and more land can be productively put to use for housing and employment. In addition, transit can be a significant benefit for tourists if well designed. Shuttles connecting prime tourist destinations such as hotels, airports, downtown retail areas, casinos, and historic sites can help market a community and increase and diversify tourist spending.

Pollution

As long as transit vehicles are used consistently by multiple passengers, they will decrease total air pollution by decreasing individual automobile trips. This is particularly true in cases where buses have converted to clean fuel technologies.

Safety

Public transportation is on average safer than private auto transportation for both transit patrons and other drivers. The avoidance of automobile crashes is both an economic and safety benefit of increased transit usage. This is particularly true when people who should not drive (the frail elderly, for instance) are diverted from driving to transit.

Congestion Relief

In Kootenai County, it is unlikely that transit will provide broad, measurable congestion relief. However, some localized areas, such as around schools and hospitals may see benefits.

A Sustainable Funding Strategy

Scenario 1 presents a realistic and sustainable funding strategy for the next five years. We recommend that the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization pursue that funding strategy, in concert with governance and service changes suggested in previous sections. We believe that together, these recommendations present a realistic way to increase the quality of transit service provided in Kootenai County within current budgetary constraints. The success of this funding strategy is reliant on governance and organizational changes recommended in Section IV of this report. For example, the ability to capture additional local match funds from local jurisdictions, private or nonprofit organizations may be reliant on having dedicated staff to market this benefits of an expanded public transit system and lobby for additional funding.

We also suggest that the KMPO continue to coordinate with other urbanized areas in Idaho to press for changes to state law necessary to allow more local funding options for transit. With a well functioning demand-response system in place, and increasing trust and value at a local level, it may be possible to pass a local measure providing dedicated transit funding. Such funding is necessary to create a comprehensive fixed-route transit system as envisioned in Scenario 2 – Optimal Service Scenario.

Appendix A: Summary of Core Focus Group Meetings

KMPO's Public Transportation Plan

Focus Group Meeting #1 Summary

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

Purpose of Focus Group Process:

- **The primary purpose of a focus group is to hear a discussion and to probe beyond initial answers to questions to get at the underlying reasoning.**
- **In the three KMPO Public Transportation Plan focus groups, we wanted to learn average citizen's opinions about:**
  - Current Kootenai County transit services
  - The strengths and weaknesses of the current system (transportation network)
  - What might be done to develop more effective services for the community?
  - Opinions on proposed services and importance of those services to the community?
  - Opportunities for marketing and sharing key information related to public transportation.
  - Future funding alternatives and their potential for passing in a local ballot measure process?

Meeting Participants (randomly recruited participants who attended one or more meetings):

Elisabeth Anderson
Linda Ashcraft
George Babcock
Howard Bourne
Patty Carter
Randi Currey
Mike Curry
Joanne Delano
Kevin Hanson
Dan Herby
Richard Livingston
Robert Riddle
Sherie Smith
Sharron Sweeney

Meeting Highlights:

- **Do you drive? The number of cars per household:**
    - Everyone in the group drove, and had at least one car in their household.
    - Twelve of the attendees had more vehicles than adult drivers.
    - Ten attendees had three or more vehicles per household.

- **Twelve people out of the group of 14 had at one time used bus service.**
- **Two out of 14 had taken the bus in Kootenai County.**
- **Opinion about public transportation in Kootenai County:**
    - Some people were confused over the extent and service of NICE, the area public transportation service – where it runs and if there are other transportation services.
    - Some say it's difficult to get a reservation.
    - One member mentioned his coworker, who did not want to drive her car during the winter, was charged for a full month's service.
    - Participants struggled to offer opinions because they didn't know much about the service.

- **Visibility of public transportation in the community:**
    - Not visible at all.
    - Seen often on the North Idaho College campus and Lakewood shopping center in Rathdrum and Coeur d'Alene.
    - Seen occasionally, some said twice in a week, others said every day, but majority said it is not very visible.

- **Opinions of public transportation in Kootenai County:**
    - The area is not set up for public transportation, the area has too much sprawl, and a bus would make too many stops for convenience. But a link between Coeur d'Alene and Spokane would be useful.
    - The western attitude of individualism and attachment to one's vehicle must change to make public transportation viable. Participants want personal mobility.
    - Public transportation must be subsidized.

- **The personal importance of public transportation in Kootenai County:**
    - Transportation would enable children and senior citizens to have more mobility.
    - Public transportation would help save on gas and downtown parking fees.
    - The area would not support a public transportation system.

- **The importance of public transportation for the community:**
    - The majority of meeting participants expressed that public transportation is important to the community.
    - It is important to provide mobility for low-income families and senior citizens, enabling them to get medical attention, and it broadens their options for recreation.
    - Public transportation is important from a business standpoint – businesses look at factors like public transportation when opting to develop in areas. A viable system would lure businesses locally.
    - As the area is developing, roads are getting paved, and transportation would be welcomed as reducing pollution – something that should be on people's minds now.

- **Reliability of current services:**
    - Not at all.
    - Taxi services are independent but not reliable either.
    - People don't know about the bus system, very few people use NICE.

- **Opinion about who uses public transportation:**
    - Mostly seniors and children, perhaps through contracts with nursing homes and schools.
    - Public transportation is for people who can't or won't use their car.
    - College students and instructors.

- **Opinion about congestion:**
    - Huge problem that seemed to develop overnight.
    - Public transportation would eventually help. Portland has great public transportation, but some of the worst traffic jams.
    - A signalization system could help move cars.

- **Eight of the 14 attendees answered they would use public transportation with a reliable fixed route, only one male raised his hand.**

- **Places public transportation should serve:**
    - Spokane – downtown, the airport.
    - All over north Idaho – especially to assist children.
    - Ski mountains.

- **Opinions of who would use public transportation:**
    - Children, students and seniors.
    - Low-income families.
    - Workforce and health care recipients.
    - Special event participants.

- **Opinions about a fixed route service.**
    - It's the only way to make system viable, but it should have dependable times to make a reliable system.
    - Should begin discussing costs.
    - Opinions varied – some thought a fixed route was necessary, others didn't think it was successful.
    - Some questioned whether there was enough urban density.

- **Needed frequency of fixed routes:**
    - At least every half hour.
    - "We need to change our behavior to fit the schedule."
    - On the hour would be the minimum.
- **Bus should run in the evenings and on weekends.**

- **What would it take for you to use public transportation?**
    - Public transportation is limited with urban sprawl, no sidewalks in front of houses, and houses being five acres apart limits the centrality of a system.
    - Main (east and westbound) thoroughfares are difficult to cross.
    - Must link the little communities together, and to Coeur d'Alene as some sort of hub.

- **One deciding factor to make public transportation something to use.**
    - Reliability and convenience.
    - Access between communities.
    - Affordable system.

- **How to communicate public transportation to the community.**
    - Jazzy commercials running in other areas don't give good information about the bus system or schedule.
    - Newspapers, mailings, posting something in a grocery store, phone book and cable television ads.
    - Internet access to print routes and schedules.
    - Confusion of current marketing system, and admittance system is not marketed well.

- **Funding the system.**
    - Pay for transit with gas tax. (0.01 cent per gallon.) Or implement a luxury vehicle tax. Concern voiced about increasing the taxes, and losing revenue with economic slumps. Also concerned about public support of public transportation when attempting to pass voter-approved taxes. Not okay with increasing property taxes.
    - Federal funding, like with grants and multiple sources.
    - Finding the initial funding of capital purchases, like vehicles, is a lot easier to come by than ongoing operational costs.

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Focus Group Meeting #2 Summary

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Recap of last meeting:

- No participants had used transit since our last meeting. One participant had a more direct experience with the system as her father had started using it. She indicated that the KATS/NICE system had been effective and reliable for her father.

What would you or your family want to get out of a transit system?

- Alternative transportation option in bad weather
- Would have to be convenient and predictable
- Many people in this county want nothing to do with transit

What specific services do you envision that would meet your needs?

- Service to key destinations including: Ironwood corridor, North Idaho College, Silver Lake Mall, Kootenai Medical Center, Shopko, etc.
- Service between Coeur d'Alene and Hayden
- Way for my kids to get around Coeur d'Alene
- I need to be mobile, so I would never use it

Would you feel safe on the bus or letting your kids ride the bus?

- Some participants would feel perfectly safe using a local system
- Others indicated feeling unsafe at the transit center in downtown Spokane or on other systems and suspect they would feel the same in Kootenai County
- Some feel there is only so much you can do about safety and it shouldn't be a barrier

Do you think the pedestrian environment is safe? Where are there problems?

- Highway 95 is unsafe for pedestrians
- Pedestrian facilities on Government are not good, but are being improved
- General consensus is that pedestrian facilities need to be improved significantly

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Presentation: Optimal Service Scenario

- Nelson\Nygaard provided detailed description and map of Optimal Service Scenario to focus group participants

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Are there things you think we missed in this service design?

- Several think that overall concept looks good and does a good job meeting needs
- Some questions were asked about the Flex areas, but people responded positively to the idea once they understood how it would operate
- Several people were concerned about the lack of service to Poleline, and specifically the High School, in Post Falls
- Several people commented about the lack of service to west Post Falls. Some thought there was a need for service to the Outlet Malls and the Pleasant View area
- One participant indicated that he would not support any service option that did not break even, or make back it's operating costs in fare revenue. It was explained that no public transit system in the United States recovers all operating costs through fares
- There was a discussion of fare levels. People indicated that they would be comfortable paying $1.00 for a one-way trip. Some agreed they would pay more for intercity trips or longer rural trips. Some thought that all trips should have the same fare.
- Participants support the recommended Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls transfer center locations
- There was a suggestion that the Post Falls local route be split into two separate services. It was discussed and determined this would be difficult to do because of the lack of north-south connections.
- One participant felt that the service design focused too many resources on Coeur d'Alene
- It was suggested that a triangular route be created using 41 to Rathdrum, 53 to West Post Falls, returning to the Post Falls transfer center on Seltice/Mullan.
- Suggestion that Spirit Lake and Athol be served as extension of Rathdrum route
- Participants indicate they want bike racks at transfer facilities and bike racks on buses as well
- There is a consensus that standards should be set for the proposed Worley service to ensure that a significant percentage of the passengers are general public passengers to ensure that public subsidies are not supporting casino goers.

Where should Park-&-Rides be sited in Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene?

- Agreement among the group that site at Ramsey and Appleway is ideal for Coeur d'Alene
- There is disagreement about preferred site in Post Falls. Some feel that Pleasant View is too far to the west and drivers would choose to stay in their cars. Some participants prefer a site west of Post Falls and south of I-90.

What are your overall impressions of proposed service plan?

- Post Falls is underserved
- A few participants indicated a desire to eliminate service to rural areas and focus first on denser urban areas where transit can be most successful (in terms of ridership)
- The majority of participants feel that it is crucial to maintain lifeline coverage throughout the county
- If faced with the choice of frequency in urban areas vs. maintaining coverage to entire county, most participants side with the latter
- The majority of participants feel that service to Spokane is more important than high frequency service in Coeur d'Alene
- There was little support for weekend service among participants
- Less than half the participants felt that evening service is important

Marketing

What is the best way to disseminate information about public transportation to the residents of Kootenai County?

- Cable access television
- Mailing with schedules in print or on CD to use with computer
- Information kiosks at stops and key locations such as doctors offices
- A good brochure
- Map in the phone book
- Reader board signs inside and outside buses to tell people where they are going

Importance of Focus Groups

One participant asked how much credence is given to the focus groups in the study process.

- Glenn and Tom answer that focus groups provide an important anecdotal source for the study. We hold focus groups to get input from the "average" citizen who would not otherwise come to a public meeting.

KMPO's Public Transportation Plan

Focus Group Meeting #3 Summary

Wednesday, November 10, 2004

Purpose of Meeting:

- To review and receive input on updates to service plan.
- To assess funding potential and what components of the service plan are most critical to the public.
- To assess the importance of public transportation improvements versus other key public services.

Presentation of Changes to Service Plan Since Last Meeting.

- Thomas Brennan of Nelson\Nygaard made 10-minute presentation to update group on service plan changes. Including a description of how previous focus group input influenced plan updates.

Topic #1: Changes to Proposed Service

Do you think the proposed scenario is improved with these changes?

- Focus group participants agreed that additional services in Post Falls were a positive improvement and would be important as rapid population growth continues in the Post Falls area.
- Focus group residents felt that the Optimal Service Scenario was a very good plan for the 10-year horizon, but that there would be a need for more service in areas between Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene beyond the 10-year horizon.

Do you have any other suggestions for service improvements?

- Several participants felt that a future service between Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene on Prairie would be crucial as development along that corridor is likely to be substantial. Participants also felt that transit operating on alternative corridors to I-90 would be important in the future.
- Participants felt that the Optimal Service Scenario proposed all needed service, but that the priority of implementation would be crucial to their success. There was debate about whether fixed route service should be implemented first or if there was a need for balanced countywide service implemented at the same time.

Topic #2: Importance of Service to Kootenai Households

Do you think implementing the proposed services would be important to Kootenai County households for reasons of:

- **Environmental quality**: participants almost universally agreed that environmental quality was not a key concern of Kootenai residents.

- **Meeting daily needs of residents and visitors**: participants felt that this would be a convincing factor for residents to support a public transportation system.
- **Direct benefits to commuters, shoppers, students:** This was identified as a top priority.
- **Providing access to jobs**: This was seen as marginally important by participants.
- **Slowing or mitigating increasing congestion**: This was seen as marginally important by participants.
- **Saving money for commuters**: This was identified as a top priority.
- **Providing back-up transportation in times of need:** This was identified as a top priority.

See Tally Sheet on following page for totals participant responses to each of these factors.

Topic #3: Local Funding Options

Do you believe there is local support for funding public transportation in Kootenai County?

- Most focus group participants felt that Kootenai County voters would not support a local options tax measure to support public transportation.
- Participants indicated that a property tax measure was most likely to fail and that other alternatives such as a fuel tax or vehicle registration fee would be more likely to pass.

What do you think would be the right amount of support annually to provide these services?

- Participants quoted figures between $60 and $100 per year as reasonable.
- Many participants felt that a sales tax or other taxing method that tapped visitor spending would be more likely to pass.

Do you believe a broader transportation bill that included roadway and transit projects would be better supported?

- Most participants felt that this would improve the potential for a public transportation funding measure to pass.

Topic #4: Features of a Propose Transportation Measure

What features of the proposed system or others not proposed do you think would be needed in order to see public support local funding options? (ie, local service in Coeur d'Alene, intercity service to Spokane, etc.)?

- Several participants felt that the Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls local fixed route

services are the most critical components of the plan and would need to be included in a service plan connected to a successful local funding measure.

- Others stressed that intercity express service to Spokane was critical.
- A smaller number of participants felt that rural flex route services were important. However, most participants agreed that it would be difficult to pass a countywide measure without at least the proposed level of service to the smaller communities and rural areas of the County.

What features of the proposed system do you think the public would NOT receive SUPPORT?

- Several participants indicated that the Coeur d'Alene – Worley service was not needed or that it would be perceived as a subsidy to the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Casino. After it was explained that the route was dependent on a subsidy from the Tribe and that service would not be focused on the Casino, participants were more supportive of the idea. However, several reiterated that community perceptions were likely to be negative if it was not made abundantly clear that this service was being subsidized and was not in competition with other local needs.

Topic #5: Public Transportation vs. Other Public Service

Would you say the following local government services are "important" or "not important" to your household?

- Results from this question are presented on the Tally Page at the end of this section.

Do you think that maintenance and improvement of the following transportation services/improvements should be a high, medium or low priority for the residents of Kootenai County during the next five years?

- Results from this question are presented on the Tally Page at the end of this section.

Appendix B: Responses to Public Comments and Questions

APPENDIX B: Public Comments on Draft Final Public Transportation Feasibility Study

Following the Kootenai MPO Board meeting on December 2nd, an open public comment period for the Draft Public Transportation Feasibility Study was commenced. The review period continued through December and officially closed on January 11, 2005.

Two comments were received during the open comment period. Each comment is printed in full below with a response/clarification from the consultant team. Additionally, all written comments from the December 1st, 2004 Public Open House and a summary of discussion at the December 2nd, 2004KMPO Board meeting are provided.

Comment #1:
Received January 10, 2005

I have the following comments regarding the proposed transportation plan for Kootenai County:

I support public transportation, park and ride, more pedestrian friendly routes, etc as outlined in your report, but I feel that the transportation plan must include or recognize that incentives are needed for people to use transportation alternatives (other than their own vehicles). I believe there is currently a stigma in the U. S. associated with riding buses (especially) in our culture (especially in the western U. S.), or other alternative transportation means (e.g. walking, bicycling). Taking the bus is viewed as a means of transportation only for those who can't afford their own vehicle. Those who can afford to take their car everywhere will not give up that luxury without some kind of incentive (e.g. financial or otherwise), or some type of "penalty" for contributing to traffic gridlock, air pollution, etc.

It would be nice to see plans for additional bicycle routes throughout the city and for buses that are capable of transporting bicycles.

Anything that would make things more pedestrian friendly is needed. It is difficult to walk many places, including to major shopping areas and to cross major streets (e.g. highway 95) without fear of being hit, waiting for extended periods for the "walk" sign, etc.

Our culture is based on driving our own cars everywhere we go, and we see pedestrians and bicyclists as "getting in our way". Possibly some kind of [sentence unfinished].

Response to Comment #1:

Bicycle route planning is not an element of this study; however, the relationship between transit and bicycles is important and should be considered as future fixed routes are implemented. Increasingly, fixed-route transit systems throughout the United States are adding front-mount bicycle racks to their vehicles, allowing passengers to quickly load and unload bicycles before boarding and after they alight. Newer rack designs allow passengers with bikes to board and alight without causing significant delays for bus operators. Sportsworks of Woodinville, Washington is the leading manufacturer of commercial bus bike racks and is responsible for the easy-load design for bike racks used by most major bus companies in the United States.

While trips less than two miles in total distance are often completed faster on a bicycle, safe facilities are not always in place for cyclists to make desired trips. Likewise, transit cannot serve all parts of a community. Bike racks on public transportation vehicles allow travelers to make a portion of their trip by bicycle, whether this be commuting from home to a bus stop or completing the work end of trip, while using transit for the main trip segment or to simply bypass unsafe sections of roadway. The installation of bike racks on fixed-route transit vehicles should be considered at the time of vehicle purchase and service commencement.

Bike racks are typically not installed on demand-response vehicles, as service is designed to carry passengers directly from their origin to final destination.

We recommend that facilities for bicycle parking be included in the design of all major transit centers and transfer facilities. Individual stops do not need to include bike racks, but benefit from placement near safe bicycle parking.

The comment above also mentions financial incentive programs for commuters choosing to use alternative modes. Such programs are common throughout the United States and can offer a range of financial, tax or compensation incentives. Well-designed incentive programs can be very effective in attracting passengers to fixed route transit services. Incentives programs are often part of broader Transportation Demand Management programs designed to encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel. The level of employer and business buy-in needed to develop successful local or regional TDM programs typically requires established fixed route bus service. It is unlikely that Kootenai County would be able to establish a successful incentive program until after fixed route services described in Scenario 1 have been implemented. In the short-term, cooperation with Spokane Transit Authority rideshare programs could help to decrease SOV trips on the Highway 95 corridor.

Comment #2:
Received December 15, 2004

The study thus far provides a broad framework in which more detailed analysis can be made. As a member of the KMPO board, I would like to see a comparison of different route alternatives, short- and long-term. I would like to see the routes compared in terms of age groups and economic groups served, and the estimated costs and revenues.

We also need to determine the goals of this transportation system, and what statistics would be used to measure its progress.

Response to Comment #2:

This comment raises excellent questions about the viability of proposed route structures and ongoing measurement and monitoring of services against adopted benchmarks.

Comparison of Route Alternatives

We do not compare Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 route structures, as they are not alternatives to one another. Scenario 1 provides a series of recommendations that could be implemented to maximize the use of limited existing resources. In almost every way, Scenario 2 is preferable to 1; however, it requires substantially higher levels of operating and capital funding to implement and may, therefore, take significantly longer to realize.

While comparisons of individual routes or services to specific demographic and income variables are marginally useful in determining the potential ridership within a specific corridor or area, overall density of population and employment is a much better indicator of performance potential. Nelson\Nygaard has conducted regression analyses on over 40 variables contributing to ridership demand, including: income, race, household size, age, disability, etc. These analyses consistently show that two variables, population density and employment density, do more to predict ridership demand than all other variables combined. During the Exiting Conditions process, Nelson\Nygaard mapped and analyzed residential (population) density throughout Kootenai County. Residential densities are displayed in Figure 10 on page 19 of the Existing Conditions report. Since employment data for Kootenai County was not available in Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ) or census tracts for evaluation, we identified top employment sites and documented their location. This information can be found in the Existing Conditions Report on page 14. Age and income demographics were evaluated by community within the service area and are documented on pages 13 through 15 of the Existing Conditions Report.

Operating Costs By Route or Service

While systemwide operating costs are documented in Figures 16 (Scenario 1) and 19 (Scenario 2), the report does not break down operating cost by individual service. Because a well-designed transit system requires the integration of route services, it is often deceiving to show route level costs. On the other hand, the implementation of Scenario 2 (Optimal Scenario) may well take place over time and it will be useful for policy makers to understand the costs associated with individual route services. The following tables provide a summary of annual operating costs for each route or service proposed in Scenario 2 (both 30-minute and 60-minute headway scenarios). These figures assume a fully allocated operating cost of $59 per revenue hour of service is constant across the system (see page 74 of the Service Alternatives Report for further detail on operating costs estimates).

All estimates are in 2004 dollars.

Scenario 1 (30-Minute Headways) Cost Per Route or Service

Proposed Route Number	Proposed Route Name (Corridor)	Weekday Hours	Saturday Revenue Hours	Sunday Revenue Hours	Annual Revenue Hours	Annual Revenue w/o Weekend	Cost Per Revenue Hour	Annual Operating Cost By Route/Service	Annual Operating Cost w/ No Weekend Service
1	Appleway - Government Way	26.0	9.0	7.0	7,422	6,604	$59	$437,898	$389,636
2	Ironwood - Ramsey	26.0	9.0	7.0	7,422	6,604	$59	$437,898	$389,636
3	Honeysuckle	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
4	East Sherman (Downtown/NIC Shuttle)	13.0	4.5	3.5	3,711	3,302	$59	$218,949	$194,818
11	Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls via Seltice Way	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
12	Coeur d'Alene - Worley	16.0	18.0	14.0	5,700	4,064	$59	$336,300	$239,776
21	Post Falls Shuttle	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
						0	$59	$0	$0
Flex	Rathdrum	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
Flex 1 & 2	Hayden & Hayden Lakes	26.0	9.0	7.0	7,422	6,604	$59	$437,898	$389,636
Flex	West Coeur d'Alene	13.0	4.5	3.5	3,711	3,302	$59	$218,949	$194,818
Flex 1 & 2	Post Falls	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
	ADA Service	26.0	18.0	14.0	8,240	6,604	$59	$486,160	$389,636
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Spokane Valley Mall	4.0	0.0	0.0	1,016	1,016	$59	$59,944	$59,944
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Sandpoint	7.0	0.0	0.0	1,778	1,778	$59	$104,902	$104,902

Scenario 1 (60-Minute Headways) Cost Per Route or Service

Proposed Route Number	Proposed Route Name (Corridor)	Weekday Hours	Saturday Revenue Hours	Sunday Revenue Hours	Annual Revenue Hours	Annual Revenue w/o Weekend	Cost Per Revenue Hour	Annual Operating Cost By Route/Service	Annual Operating Cost w/ No Weekend Service
1	Appleway - Government Way	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
2	Ironwood - Ramsey	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
3	Honeysuckle	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
4	East Sherman (Downtown/NIC Shuttle)	6.5	4.5	3.5	2,060	1,651	$59	$121,540	$97,409
11	Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls via Seltice Way	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
12	Coeur d'Alene - Worley	16.0	18.0	14.0	5,700	4,064	$59	$336,300	$239,776
21	Post Falls Shuttle	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
						0	$59	$0	$0
Flex	Rathdrum	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
Flex 1 & 2	Hayden & Hayden Lakes	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
Flex	West Coeur d'Alene	6.5	4.5	3.5	2,060	1,651	$59	$121,540	$97,409
Flex 1 & 2	Post Falls	13.0	9.0	7.0	4,120	3,302	$59	$243,080	$194,818
	ADA Service	26.0	18.0	14.0	8,240	6,604	$59	$486,160	$389,636
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Spokane Valley Mall	4.0	0.0	0.0	1,016	1,016	$59	$59,944	$59,944
Intercounty	Coeur d'Alene to Sandpoint	7.0	0.0	0.0	1,778	1,778	$59	$104,902	$104,902

The cost to implement a service must also be measured against its return in terms of passengers who will use the service. Some routes will be more productive (carry more passengers per hour of service) than others and therefore return more fare revenue and social benefit. While this report does not provide route level ridership projections, we can provide a sense for which routes will create the most ridership:

- Coeur d'Alene Local Routes 1, 2, 3 and 4 will produce the highest levels of ridership. Of these Route 1 and Route 4 will most likely see the highest levels of productivity, as they serve dense commercial corridors, the Silver Lake Mall and North Idaho College.
- The Coeur d'Alene – Post Falls Intercity Route (11) and the Post Falls Shuttle (Route 12) are likely to be the next highest ridership services.
- The Coeur d'Alene – Spokane Valley Mall

Performance Measurement

As the proposed route structure is implemented it will be necessary to develop a clear and useful set of performance standards and measures. The following is a summary list of common industry standards useful in tracking the performance of fixed route transit services.

The most useful measures for transit planning and operations are almost always ratios of one value to another. Productivity (boardings/revenue hour), for example, is a near-universal measure in the industry. Even if a measure is not expressed as a ratio, there is usually a ratio hiding in it. Thus "Miles between Accidents" is really the ratio of Miles/Accident. Accidents/Million Miles is another way to express the same thing, inverting the ratio and moving the decimal point so that it becomes a manageable number.

A series of standards is simply a set of ratios that combine, mathematically, in a logical sequence that generates some more comprehensive ratio. The series illustrated in the figure below defines the most all-encompassing question that one might plausibly ask about transit performance: "For the subsidy we put into the transit system, what benefits do we get in return?" The front end of the sequence is subsidy, as it goes into the "black box" of transit. What comes out at the other end are the benefits.

Series of Ratios Used to Measure Transit Performance

Measure	Ratio	Transit Provider Action Area	City/County Action Area	Significance	Other Measures Within this Step
Subsidy					
	Farebox Return (Fares/Operating Budget)	Fare Policy		A "circular" item, since it feeds the process that it measures.	
Operating Cost					
	Cost / Vehicle Hour	Budget, Operations, Scheduling and Labor Relations.	External regulation affecting any of the factors listed at left.	Dominant factor here is labor. Scheduling is relevant only in efficiency of driver shifts.	Pay Hours / Vehicle Hour. FTE / Vehicle Hour
Vehicle Hours					

	Deadhead (Revenue Hours /Vehicle Hours)	Service Design, Scheduling, and Facilities Planning.		Time spent running to and from the operations base.	Average Deadhead per pullout (for facility siting)
Revenue Hours					
	Layover (Revenue Hours / Service Hour)	Service Design, Scheduling		Time spent on driver breaks. Should be 10%, but can become excessive.	
Service Hours					
	Speed (Rev Miles / Revenue Hours)	Service Design, Capital Planning, Operations.	Roadway Design; Street Classification	Speed encourages ridership, but it's also a direct factor in overall measures of cost-effectiveness.	Average operating speed / average auto speed. Average operating speed / speed limit. Stop spacing.
Revenue Miles					
	Boardings / Revenue Mile **And** **Boardings / Revenue Hour**	Service Design, Public Information, Marketing, Operations, Capital Planning	Land Use Plans and Approvals, Pedestrian and Transit Element of Transp. Plans	The core measure of consumption, influenced by most agency functions and also by land use and pedestrian environment.	Boardings / Catchment Population (service quality issues other than design)
Boardings					
	Transfer Rate (Person Trips / Boarding)	Service Design, Fare Policy, Pubilc Information, Marketing.		Boardings are easy to measure, but person trips are the basis for most benefits of transit.	
Person Trips					
	Passenger Miles/Revenue Mile	*Service Design, Public Information, Marketing, Operations*		*Better measure for very long trips.*	*Many other ratios involving Passenger Miles.*

This study does not propose specific ratios to measure these performance categories. These should be developed at the time service is implemented and updated at least every two to three years to reflect changes in operating conditions.

Appendix C provides further discussion of the benefits public transportation brings to Kootenai County, its communities and individual residents.

KMPO Board Meeting
Comments
December 2, 2004

Tom Brennan and Joey Goldman gave a presentation of the Transit Feasibility Study. Members of the Board and some members of the audience provided comments or asked questions. Comments are as follows:

Gus Johnson asked about the process for making comments. He expressed concern that forming an RPTA adds another layer of government and the potential for more taxes. This is something he does not want to see.

James Mangan said he felt like the Board was being forced to adopt a transportation plan. He said if you go for the largest number of riders on transit, it assumes that all transportation needs are of the same value. He said we should focus on higher priority transportation needs and that the study should provide information on which populations are going to be served by the different alternatives.

Glenn Miles offered a clarification that the telephone survey looked at key destinations. He also said that in providing transit service, a transit agency cannot discriminate based on trip purpose. One trip purpose cannot be favored over another trip purpose.

After a discussion with Glenn and members of the Board, it was determined that KMPO will collect feedback from Board members and members of the public for a 30-day period. All comments will be included with the report as an addendum. Glenn noted that the public would also have many more opportunities to give input in the future because public hearings would need to be held before implementation of any of service recommendations.

Members of the audience offered some comments. Kent Propst from NIC said the college supports both the short-term and the long-term recommendations of this study. He conceded that there is a parking problem at the college and that an effective transit system will help address it.

Cindy Hammond, representing Lewis and Clark State College said transit will be important for them to consider. She asked to continue the dialogue with the KMPO Board because Lewis and Clark will be expanding, but right now they don't know where they will be.

David Pafford (citizen in attendance) said many factories are coming in but we don't know where they are going to be. In the planning process employers can help get people out of their cars and subsidize transit service in the county. Tom Brennan added that typically it requires that good fixed route transit service be in place to attract employer funds.

Lynn Humphries echoed Gus' comments and expressed concern about whether we need another government agency. He said we don't want to have another STA! He directed everyone to submit comments to Glenn in the next 30 days.

Kootenai Metropolitan Area Transit Feasibility Study
Comments from Public Open House
December 1, 2004

Comment Forms

Only three attendees completed comment forms:

1. How did you find out about this meeting?
   - 0 Flyer on bus
   - 0 Announcement on radio
   - 1 Notice in newspaper
   - 2 Other. Please specify: (1) telephone call from consultant (2) another attendee

2. Was this open house useful to you?
   - 3 Very useful
   - 0 Somewhat useful
   - 0 Not very useful

3. What is the best way to get information about services to you?
(Please check all that apply.)
   - 2 Newspaper. Which one(s):Cd'A Press; Senior Paper
   - 1 Radio. Which station(s): KGA
   - 1 Internet
   - 0 Other

Comments:
Good Job
Need some taxes? State action? Bus tax?

Comments Provided by Open House Attendees

The following comments and questions were provided at the open house:

The alternative looks really good. Both Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 would provide a much better transit system for seniors.

I just want to make sure it doesn't become another STA. If you expand too fast, you might have to cut back on service.

I didn't even know that Coeur d'Alene currently had public transit service.

This study should have looked at the potential for historic streetcar service. A rail line between Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls, and serving the northern area, would be

a better solution than the bus and would result in higher property values. Streetcars have been very successful in other cities.

The zone concept makes sense. It sounds like the bus would come more often than it does now.

The current donation requested for service is not really a donation. You are required to donate.

Right now, people who go to the doctor have a hard time making the return trip. The service is so unreliable.

It seems like the cities should be able to put more money into public transit than they are doing right now. It's such a paltry amount.

Seeing the bus routes on the map makes Coeur d'Alene look like a real city.

There should be a balance between fixed route service aimed at serving "the most riders" and services to rural areas of the county where people rely on them.

It looks like a great plan, but how are you going to get people to pay for it. A local tax measure won't fly here.

Appendix C: Answering Common Questions and Myths about Public Transportation

APPENDIX C: Answers to Common Myths and Perceptions about Public Transportation and Its Costs/Benefits

This appendix is adapted from a White Paper that Nelson\Nygaard developed for the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho in 2004. The appendix helps to address key questions about the value of public transportation to Kootenai County and its communities and responds to some common questions and myths about public transportation, some of which we heard during the public outreach process in Kootenai County.

Public Transportation

Many Americans think of *public transportation* as a big city phenomenon that consists of large buses and trains moving large numbers of people on fixed routes and schedules. While this is part of it, public transportation encompasses a much broader range of services that are relevant to cities, small towns and rural areas alike. In Idaho, public transportation options include fixed route buses, door-to-door minibus service, complementary van service for disabled residents qualifying under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), vanpools, carpool matching services and facilities, social and human service transportation, over-the-road coaches connecting Idaho cities to neighboring states, and many other key mobility services for Idaho residents. Historically, Kootenai County has had very limited levels of demand response service available for the general public.

For years policy makers viewed public transportation as a direct competitor with the automobile and roadway development; federal, state and local funding decisions often played out as battles between the transit and roadway advocates. The passage of the Intermodal Transportation Systems Efficiency Act of 1991, commonly known as the ISTEA (reauthorized as the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century – TEA21) brought a new line of thinking, promoting the idea that a mix of transportation investments is necessary to create a functional transportation system. This approach recognizes that multimodal transportation system are necessary to effectively get people to work and goods to market, and to provide access to shopping, social, cultural and recreational opportunities for every American.

We show in the following sections that without the transit component, Kootenai County's transportation systems will start to break down, or at very least have a competitive disadvantage in accommodating future growth. We'll also see that dollars invested in public transportation can pay a healthy return on investment to the taxpayer, to local businesses, to special needs populations, to working citizens, and even to the motorist who never uses transit.

Transit and its benefits are often misunderstood. It is common to hear questions such as, "I don't use public transportation so why should my tax dollars pay for it?" "Why should we have transit, we're not a big city?" or "Why should transit operations be subsidized when driving a car isn't?" The following section sheds some light on these questions and addresses a few of the most common myths about public transportation.

Common Myths About Public Transportation

The public transportation industry has undergone major shifts in policy direction, funding practices and technology over the past 40 years, often creating varying and false perceptions about its services, operations and role in urban and rural transportation networks. Misperceptions repeated frequently enough become known as facts, when in reality they are myths rooted in rhetoric and misunderstanding. This section looks at some of the most common myths about public transportation and provides a reality check, helping to put public transportation in a clearer perspective. Other sections deal more specifically with public transportation and congestion, senior mobility and the economic development benefits of transit.

Myth 1: *Empty buses equate to inefficient service and are waste of taxpayer dollars*

Reality: *Even in highly productive systems, it is natural, even logical, that buses will be empty at certain times.*

People often ask, "*If transit's so valuable, why do I see empty buses*?" A bus size has to reflect the maximum demand that it will need to accommodate during the day. This means the busiest point on the route, and the busiest time of day. Obviously, the bus will have lower loads the rest of the day, and on less-busy parts of the route, so it will look relatively empty.

"*Even so, aren't empty buses wasteful*?" No! Transit's operating costs are almost 80% labor. The cost of the driver's time swamps all the other cost factors such as fuel, insurance, etc. Driver wages and benefits don't vary much with vehicle size, so it costs about as much to run a large bus as to run a small one.

O.K. then, why not put out smaller buses when the demand is lighter? Again, it's the cost of the driver. The time required to take the bus back to the garage and get a different one is much more expensive than the fuel savings from running a smaller bus some of the time.

Also, Federal funding sources for fleet will not fund buses that are used only at off-peak times. The Federal priority is to help develop fleets that are useful all day, including peak hours when demand is heaviest.

Myth 2: *Transit is only effective in large metropolitan areas.*

Reality: *Public transportation is vital for residents of small communities and rural areas.*

The lack of reliable public transportation can pose more of a hardship for rural residents than for people in urban areas. In rural areas travel distances are greater and options for walking, cycling or getting a ride with friends of family are often limited. Transportation is often a crucial obstacle to getting off public assistance; welfare-to-work programs have dealt with this issue routinely, and have found that public transportation is an important part of the solution (see below).

In the Lewiston area and across the border in Asotin County, Washington, increasing numbers of residents are turning to public transportation to travel to work and appointments. There a new fixed route system has boosted ridership by 46 percent over the previous dial-a-ride system in just the first year and a half of operation. In Moscow, a new fixed-route system serving the community and the University of Idaho opened in January 2004. In its first six months of operation ridership on this service has significantly exceeded projected levels.

Small towns and rural areas that have attempted to quantify the benefits of public transit show remarkable numbers. In Brockton, Massachusetts, a community of 90,000, a recent study found that the $6.5 million annual transit budget (comparable to ValleyRide) contributes $73.3 million annually to the statewide economy, creating and sustaining nearly 1,000 jobs.[1]

Myth 3: *Only the poor, seniors, and the disabled ride public transportation.*

Reality: *Nationwide, transit carries a higher percentage of work trips than do highways. Additionally, 82.8% of transit riders nationally are between the ages of 18 and 65*[2].

For all kinds of work trips, public transportation plays an especially large role. According to the National Personal Transportation Survey, only about 17.7% of trips which Americans make are simple (home-work-home) commute trips. Indeed, about 70% of the trips on America's freeways and roads have nothing whatsoever to do with work.[3] While transit does play an important role in regional and local social

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[1] *"Dollars and Sense: The Economic Case for Public Transportation in America,"* Donald H. Camph. 1997. Community Transportation Association of America.

[2] "Americans in Transit: A Profile of Public Transit Passengers," American Public Transit Association, December, 1999, Table 4.

[3] "Understanding Trip Chaining," James G. Strathman, Ph.D. and Kenneth J. Dueker, Ph.D., National Personal Transportation Survey, Special Reports on Trip and Vehicle Attributes, 1990 NPTS Report Series, Table 3.

service transportation, the American Public Transportation Association records that over half the trips taken on transit are for the purpose of "making a living."

With the advent of welfare reform, transit is providing the essential transportation link so that people can move off welfare and into jobs. Studies in a number of cities nationwide have shown that the lack of affordable and reliable transportation is a major impediment to breaking the poverty cycle in both urban and rural settings. In the household telephone survey of Kootenai County residents conducted for this study, citizens identified a need for public transportation to access jobs. In Kootenai County many of those who would most benefits from a regional transit system are young adults who are having difficulty accessing jobs because they are unable to drive or have unreliable personal transportation. This need is not isolated to Kootenai County, as the highest percentage of trips on all Idaho transit providers are a combination of work and school trips.

Myth 4: *Only those who ride transit benefit from its existence.*

Reality: *Like many other public services, benefits to motorists and other residents exist in addition to direct benefits to users.*

A statewide study in Virginia shows that taxpayer spending on public transit provides an economic return on that investment that is at least three to one.[4] Other nationwide studies conducted by the Transit Cooperative Research Program have quantified economic returns on transit investment as high as six to one. Public transit adds capacity to existing roadways, limits roadway construction and maintenance costs, provides more capacity for growth, encourages job growth and bolsters business by providing reliable access to a larger workforce.

> *"The availability of effective, reliable public transportation is a significant factor for most major employers and businesses interested in locating in Boise and will become increasingly important as the area grows and traffic increases."*
>
> *-Boise Metro Economic Development*

Myth 5: *Transit is highly subsidized, while personal auto travel is not.*

Reality: *Both are subsidized, but transit's economic benefits exceed the subsidy.*

While drivers pay to operate their own vehicles, they do receive public subsidy for the expensive roadways and highways that are constructed and maintained for their use. In fact, federal and state funds pay for more than 95 percent of Idaho's highway construction and more than 90 percent of highway maintenance, yet less than 80 percent of public transit facility costs and under 50 percent of operating costs.

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[4] "Myths and Realities about Public Transportation" Virginia Transit Association, 2004. http://www.vatransit.com/benefits/myths.htm

Transit fares make up only a percentage of the total cost to operate any transit system. The remaining costs are subsidized by federal, state and local funds. The question often arises as to the value of providing this low-cost mobility. David Lewis and Michael O'Connor conducted a study to quantify the economic value that transit patrons derive from subsidized mobility. Their 1993 findings showed that overall economic benefits people derive from transit topped $30 billion and that the net economic return to the nation was over $17 billion, more than double the investment.[5] This does not account for a host of other benefits including:

- Reduction in congestion costs;
- Parking cost savings;
- Safety benefits;
- User costs from reduced vehicle use; and
- Social program efficiencies.

According to the Congress' Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), motor vehicle users pay for only 53% to 69% of the social (public plus private) costs of motor vehicle use.[6] When this study was conducted in the mid 1990s the OTA estimated the overall subsidy for motor vehicle use ranged from $449 billion to as much as $899 billion per year, dwarfing public transportation subsidies.

Myth 6: *People with cars won't use transit.*

Reality: *When quality service is provided, some people will choose to leave their cars in the garage.*

There is a direct nexus between investment in service frequency and the ability to attract a broader range of passengers, including "choice riders." Systems in small urban and rural communities have shown significant growth in ridership when they've invested in offering quality service. For example, from 1985 to 1995, ridership increased by 61% in Kitsap County, Washington and 52% in Eugene-Lane County, Oregon.[7] In Boise, where population growth outpaced both these areas, but no transit improvements were made, ridership remained stagnant.

Many households value having transit as a second alternative or as a cost saving replacement for a second car. During the three focus group meetings held in Kootenai County as part of this study, a number of residents indicated

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[5] "Economic Value of Affordable Mobility," David Lewis and Michael O'Connor. Presented to the Transportation Research Board, 1997 Annual Meeting.

[6] "Saving Energy in U.S. Transportation," Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress, July, 1994, p. 109.

[7] *"Dollars and Sense: The Economic Case for Public Transportation in America,"* Donald H. Camph. 1997. Community Transportation Association of America.

that they would like to have transit as an alternative commute mode, especially when weather conditions are bad.

Again, for households on the economic margins, or transitioning off of welfare, it can be a huge financial benefit to own only one car per couple, especially because large car costs occur up-front (e.g. purchase, insurance) rather than per-mile. Often, it makes the difference between moving out of poverty as opposed to just scraping by. Rising fuel prices are also making public transit more attractive.

Myth 7: *Land use densities in Idaho communities are not high enough to support successful public transportation systems?*

Reality: *Transit systems can be as relevant in small communities and rural areas as big cities.*

Small city and rural transit systems provide residents access to worksites, medical facilities, shopping and other crucial facilities, also common destinations on urban systems. Services are simply scaled back to meet lower demand and land use patterns. Often smaller vehicles and more flexible route structures are employed to serve these areas efficiently. In Idaho Falls a recent switch to a deviated route system, where buses make curbside pick-ups on demand, has been successful in covering a broader area with no new resources and has attracted many new riders. This model is similar to the Flex route services proposed in Scenario 2 (Optimal Service Network).

Small city and rural transit systems must be measured against different standards than large urban systems, but benefits are just as high if not higher. Rural residents using public transportation are much more likely to have no other travel options, meaning that the availability of service has a significant impact on their quality of life. The gradual decline of rural, resource based economies in Idaho and other northwest states have created greater demand from rural residents to access work opportunities in neighboring cities or even across state lines. In addition, rising housing costs in cities such as Coeur d'Alene and Boise have forced lower income residents to move to more rural areas and commute to work. Many residents of Bonner and Kootenai counties now travel to Spokane County, Washington to work and to access shopping and medical facilities.

A recent study to assess transit demands in the Coeur d'Alene - Post Falls area showed that just 30 percent of all public transportation demand was being met. This is representative of the latent demand that exists in many rural areas. In Bend, Oregon, a traditionally conservative, auto-oriented

community, several recent transit service expansions have been immediately utilized to capacity.

Benefits of Transportation Options

From 1990 to 2000, the population of Idaho increased by almost 30%, more than double the national growth rate. Idaho ranked as the 5th fastest growing state in the nation, ahead of popular Sunbelt states such as Texas and Florida. In fact, the census data indicate that the growth is dispersed throughout the state. Kootenai is among the fastest growing of Idaho counties along with Teton, Boise, Ada, Canyon, and Blaine, all of which experienced over a 40% population increase, with Boise County growing by more than 90% from 1990 to 2000.

As the population continues to grow, Idaho is looking closely at the issues of mobility and how its residents will continue to access key work, medical, and shopping facilities. How will the current transportation infrastructure accommodate the state's growth?

- **Idahoans want more transportation choices**. A recent public opinion survey commissioned by the Idaho Transportation Department found that "reducing traffic congestion" and "the need for more transportation options" ranked as two of the most important transportation issues in the state.

Currently 26 counties in Idaho offer some form of public transportation, including seasonal shuttle services, dial-a-ride service, and multi-route fixed-route systems. However, as the population continues to grow across the state, more transportation options will be needed so Idahoans do not have to depend solely on the roadways. Public transportation services in rural and urban communities offer alternatives to driving that benefit the entire community and offers transportation choices to commuters, students, seniors, disabled persons, and anyone just trying to get from point A to point B.

- **The cost of congestion continues to rise.** The financial cost of traffic congestion has ballooned from $14 billion annually in 1982 to $63 billion annually in 2002 according to a recently released study by the Texas Transportation Institute. The same study found that the average urban traveler spends 46 hours a year stuck in traffic, a 187% increase from 1982.

Public Transportation's Role in Mobility for Senior Citizens and Disabled

Meeting the transportation needs of seniors and the disabled residents is an essential community objective as well as a national goal. Transportation planning supported with an investment in transit alternatives can help communities more effectively and

efficiently meet the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities, ensuring they can live successfully and function within their community.

- **Seniors and disabled persons lack transportation options**. Without the mobility provided by public transit, the elderly and disabled are more likely to lose their independence. Over 54 million Americans have disabilities. Nearly 35% of those people say they are uninvolved in their communities, and the lack of effective transportation options contributes to an unemployment rate of approximately 75%. By 2020, 40% of the U.S. population will be senior citizens; many will be unable to drive. In fact, one-fourth of today's 75+ age group does not drive.

Through a combination of fixed-route and paratransit (dial-a-ride) services, transit providers and community organizations can offer mobility options to seniors and persons with disabilities. For example, Pocatello Regional Transit operates fixed-route and a door-to-door paratransit service called Access in Pocatello and Chubbuck; the service provides transportation options for persons with disabilities and seniors who are unable to use the fixed-route system. In 2003, Access carried 23,000 passengers including 4,000 wheelchair boardings.

CARTS, the local transit provider in Idaho Falls, provides flexible route service that allows fixed route buses to deviate for disabled persons living within a certain distance of the regular route. The service provides more flexibility for the transit provider allowing the drivers to make shorter trips and serve more passengers with limited resources while still connecting riders to the destinations they need to access.

- **Senior population rising in Idaho**. Idaho's senior population has grown by almost 7% from 2000 to 2003, about three times faster than the national rate. The senior population growth shows no signs of slowing as retirees are attracted to the natural beauty and lower cost of living in the Western United States.

Future transportation planning in the state must take the growing senior community into consideration. Communities throughout the state will be challenged by their ability to serve the special needs of their senior populations. Although most older Americans can still take regular fixed-route service, some depend on door-to-door programs to get them to medical appointments and to the grocery store. Treasure Valley Transit (TVT) works with local senior centers in Canyon County to help to fill gaps in their transportation service. The Mayor of Parma and the Parma Senior Center leaders found that by helping to fund TVT services, they were maximizing their Older Americans Act dollars and Senior Center participants were getting enhanced services.

TVT estimates that eight percent of its services are for seniors. The programs and services offered by TVT have allowed older persons in Canyon County to become more independent and mobile.

Several states around the county have begun to consider the fiscal impacts of not serving growing populations of non-driving seniors; many estimating future costs in the 100s of millions annually.8 Without mobility, the elderly are more likely to become prematurely reliant on services that are costly to the individual and state, including: home meals, home health care, adult health care, and personal care nursing.

Public Transportation's Role in Regional Economic Development

Public transportation is an essential part of building and maintaining a vibrant business community and economic climate.

Public transportation creates jobs. A total of 370,000 people nationwide are directly employed by the public transportation industry and thousands of other people are employed in the related engineering, construction, and manufacturing industries. Public transportation is a growth industry in most rapidly growing states, particularly those that tie funding to local sales, property or income taxes.

Federal and state public transportation funds help to create new job opportunities at the local and regional levels. According to a transportation study, every $10 million invested in transit capital project generates 300 jobs, and the same amount invested in transit operations generates 600 jobs. The direct economic of a transit system has been quantified in a study by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). APTA found that about 7,000 workers in the San Diego area would not be able to access their jobs without transit services. Their direct contribution to the local economy is $140 million and their spending supports an additional 3,200 jobs.[9]

Public transportation attracts businesses. More employers are looking for the availability of transit before selecting a new location. Not only does transit provide transportation to worksites, it also helps to open the workforce to more people who would not otherwise have access to some job locations. Almost half of the Fortune 500 companies in the United States have their headquarters in transit-intensive cities.

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[8] "Independence and Mobility for the Elderly and Disabled" Virginia Transit Association, 2004. http://www.vatransit.com/.

[9] "The Benefits of Public Transportation - An Overview." American Public Transportation Association (APTA), 2003. Retrieved 09/09/04.

Businesses located near public transportation experience high worker retention and less absenteeism. In Lafayette, IN, businesses in the surrounding areas pay for the cost of employee bus commutes because of the connection to willing workers. And in Oakland, CA, AC Transit operates an all-night OWL service to meet critical transportation needs of shift workers. In Dallas, proximity to DART light rail was found to be the key factor in the location decisions of businesses. Other successful programs such as the FTA's Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program provide grants to fund programs that operate transit service from innercity neighborhoods to exurban job sites. Smaller communities, such as Missoula, Montana have been successful in leveraging federal funds to operate fixed vanpool services that make regular stops at park-and-rides in rural feeder corridors. Vans provide safe travel throughout the year for employees traveling to Montana State University, government jobs and several major manufacturers in Missoula.

Public transportation reduces investment required for expansion of the roadway network. Public transportation use can reduce roadway related costs by as much as $1.7 billion per year. By reducing the number of cars on the road, transit helps to alleviate the need to continually increase the capacity of highways and roads, thus saving state and federal funds normally used to build more lanes and maintain existing roadways.