

SECTION 1

Overview and Key Policy Issues

The Regional Transportation Planning Process

Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO) is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Kootenai County. The purpose of KMPO is to coordinate transportation planning among the various agencies operating within the County.

Prior to the formation of KMPO in 2003, the various roadway jurisdictions in Kootenai County were independently responsible for their own transportation planning. Although there was no federal requirement for these jurisdictions to engage in cooperative planning before 2003, highway districts in Kootenai County teamed up with adjoining cities and the Idaho Transportation Department in the 1980s to create a forum, Kootenai County Area Transportation Team (KCATT) for regional coordination of transportation projects.

KMPO was formed in 2003 to meet a federal mandate that was triggered when the areas of Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls and Hayden exceeded a combined population of 50,000. According to federal statute, areas with populations greater than 50,000 are required to form an MPO to coordinate regional transportation planning. Although only the urban portion of Kootenai County is required to participate in an MPO, at the time of its formation, elected officials chose to shape KMPO as a county-wide transportation planning body. This is in large part due to the history of successful countywide coordination brought about through KCATT.

KMPO is overseen by a Board of Directors, which includes one elected official from each of the following:

- Kootenai County
- City of Coeur d'Alene
- City of Post Falls
- City of Hayden
- City of Rathdrum
- Lakes Highway District
- Post Falls Highway District
- East Side Highway District
- Worley Highway District
- Coeur d'Alene Tribe

In addition, the Board includes one representative from the Idaho Transportation Department District 1. Smaller cities in Kootenai County have KMPO representation through their respective highway districts. KCATT was also retained by the KMPO Board as a technical advisory committee.

KMPO Planning Area and Funding Complexities

As stated above, KMPO was established as a county-wide MPO; the agency's planning area extends across rural areas in addition to the areas designated as "urban areas" by the latest Census Bureau information. Figure 1.1 shows KMPO's planning area and the current urban area boundary. The urban area of Kootenai County includes Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls, Hayden, Dalton Gardens, Hayden Lake, Huetter, and Fernan along with adjoining portions of the unincorporated county.

KMPO Responsibilities

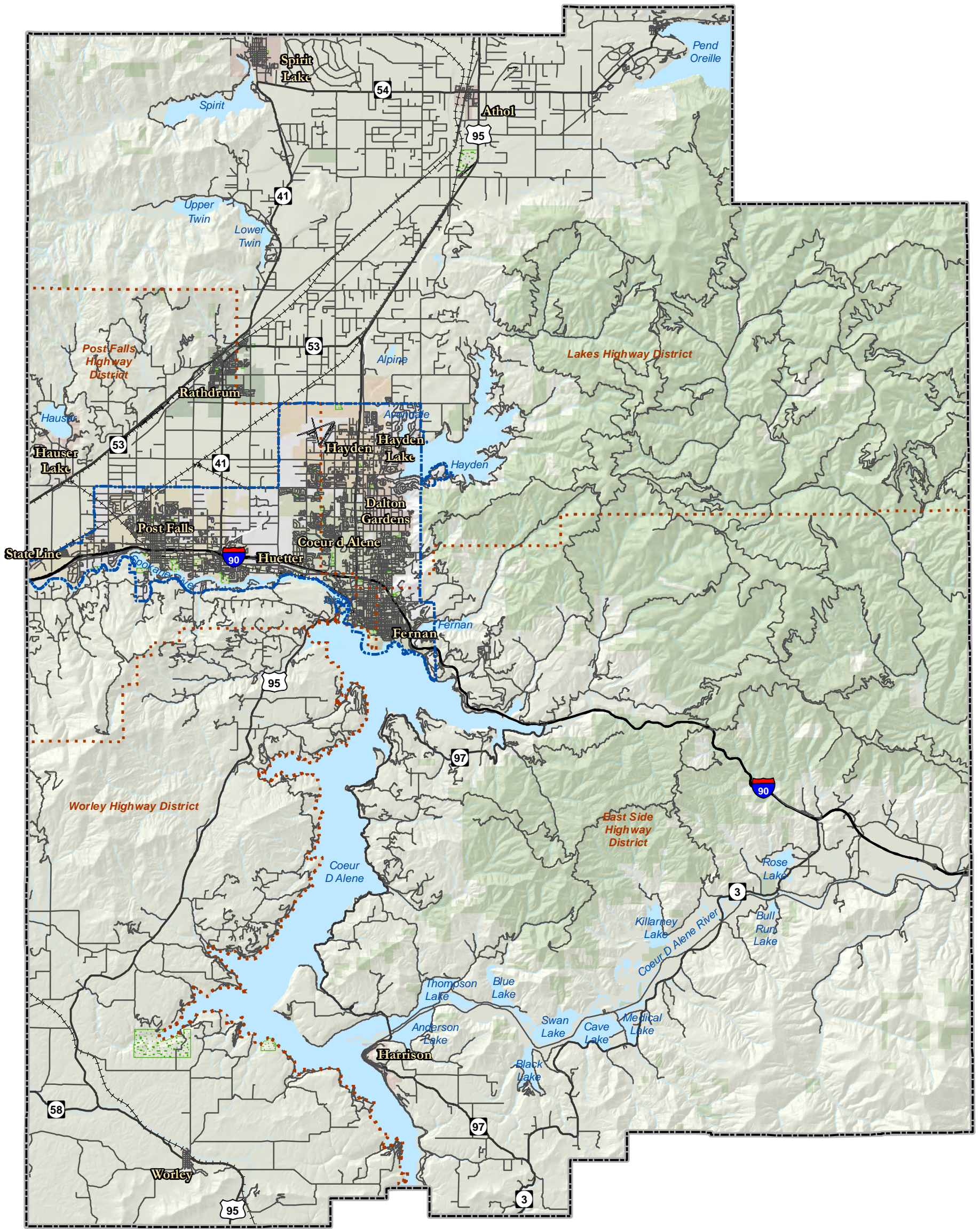
This document fulfills one of KMPO's main responsibilities listed above: creating and maintaining a long-range transportation plan. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a comprehensive "blueprint" for regionally-significant transportation projects and investments planned within Kootenai County through the year 2035.

There are five core functions of an MPO*:

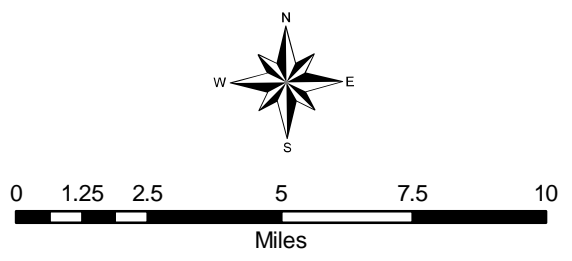
- Establish a setting. Establish and manage a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision-making in the metropolitan area.
- Identify and evaluate alternative transportation improvement options. Use data and planning methods to generate and evaluate alternatives. Planning studies and evaluations are included in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
- Prepare and maintain a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Develop and update a long-range transportation plan for the metropolitan area covering a planning horizon of at least twenty years that fosters (1) mobility and access for people and goods, (2) efficient system performance and preservation, and (3) good quality of life.
- Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Develop a short-range (four-year) program of transportation improvements based on the long-range transportation plan; the TIP should be designed to achieve the area's goals, using spending, regulating, operating, management, and financial tools.
- Involve the public. Involve the general public and other affected constituencies in the four essential functions listed above.

A county-wide approach to regional transportation planning helps ensure policies are consistently applied; however, it also carries added complexities due to the structure of federal transportation funding.

* *The Transportation Planning Process Key Issues: A Briefing Book for Transportation Decision-makers, Officials, and Staff.* U.S. Department of Transportation. A Publication of the Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program. (2007).



**Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization
Planning Area**



Planning Related Boundaries

- Planning Area/County Boundary
- Urban Area Boundary

Physical Characteristics

- Highway Districts
- Interstate
- US/State Highways
- Local/Seasonal Roads
- Railroad
- National Forests
- Water Features
- Parks

*Data based on best available information. *Data for illustrative purposes only.

Figure 1.1

Federal Funding in Rural and Urban Areas

- Federal rural highway funds in Idaho are restricted for use in rural areas and cities with populations less than 5,000.
- Federal urban highway funding may be spent for projects anywhere within a metropolitan planning organization's planning area. Since KMPO's planning area encompasses the entire County, this would theoretically allow urban highway funds to be spent on rural projects. However, as a matter of policy, KMPO allocates urban highway funding primarily to projects within the urban area.
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 ("Rural and Small Areas") funding is restricted for use outside the urban area. FTA Section 5307 ("Urban Area Formulation Program") funding may be used only within the urban area.

Major Policy and Planning Issues

KMPO focuses primarily on transportation facilities that are considered regionally significant. As a general rule, roadway projects are included in the MTP if they are functionally classified as a collector or higher on the federal aid system. Likewise, other modal facilities and projects (bicycle, pedestrian, transit) are included if they represent a significant element of the regional system.

It is expected that all local jurisdictions will consider the elements of the regional non-motorized transportation plan as referenced in the MTP, when planning transportation projects for all uses; pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicles and freight.

Major policy and planning issues discussed below set the stage for future development of the transportation system.

Capital Investment Strategies

Because the need for future capacity can generally be expected to outpace available funding, the funding that is available should be optimized through concerted coordinated planning efforts. KMPO has embraced several strategic initiatives intended to maximize the use of available funding, mitigate the public cost of private development, leverage private-public partnerships, control future costs by preserving transportation corridors for future regional facilities, and improve modal choices for the citizens of Kootenai County:

- Priority corridors for capacity improvements
- Developer-funded traffic impact mitigation
- Huetter corridor right of way preservation
- Bridging the Valley rail crossing program
- Citylink transit service
- Non-motorized transportation alternatives

Priority Corridors

The greatest public benefit from transportation investments can only be realized if agencies work together to develop cross-jurisdictional corridors. Using this approach, congestion problems may be curtailed and significant accomplishments in regional mobility can be realized over time despite funding limitations.

KMPO has identified several priority transportation corridors where Federal-aid funding for major capacity improvements (additional lanes) will be focused over the next 20 years:

North-South Corridors:

- Pleasantview Road
- Greensferry Road
- SH41
- US95 Huetter Bypass
- Ramsey Road
- Government Way

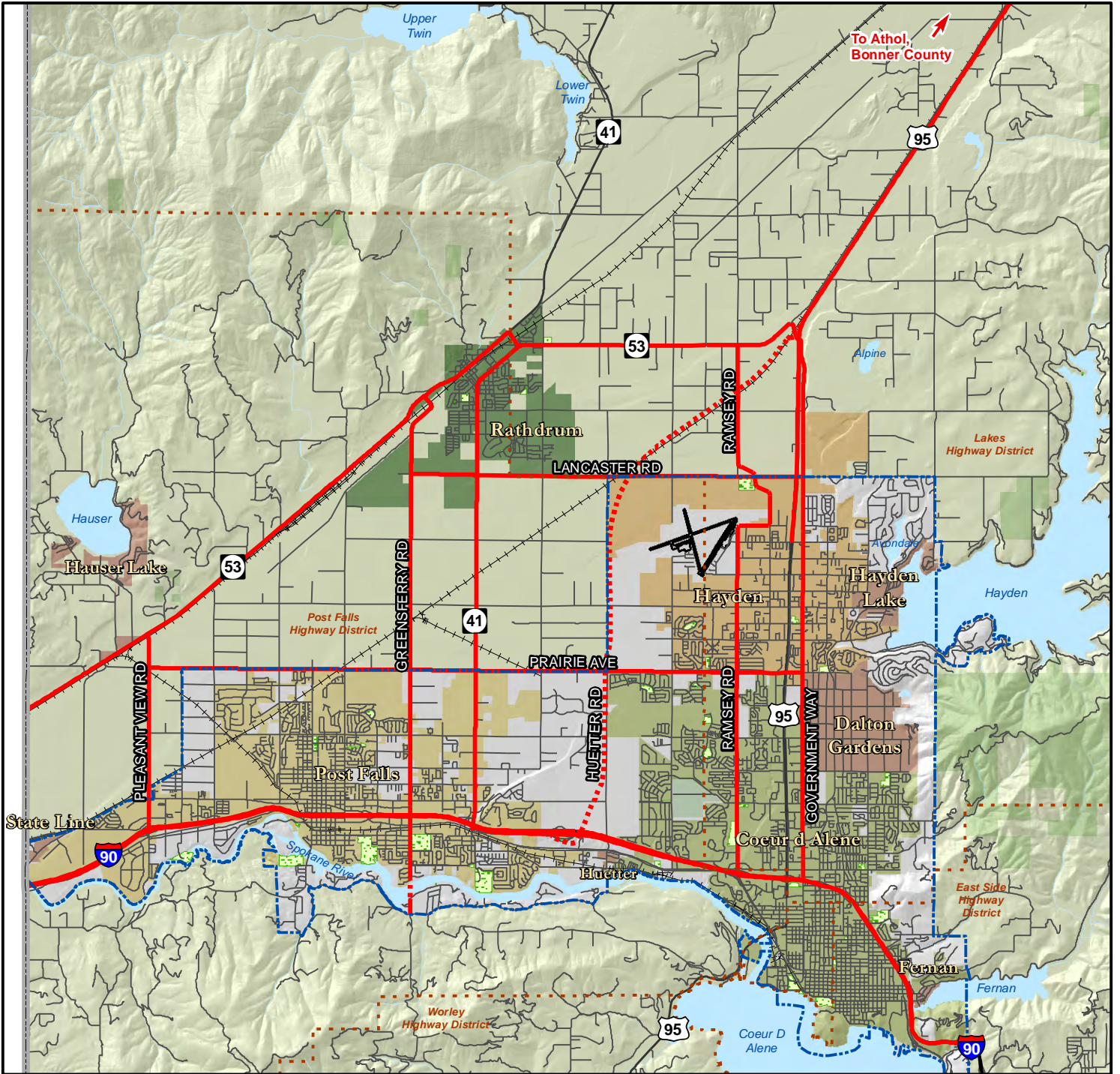
East-West Corridors:

- I90
- Prairie Avenue
- Lancaster Avenue
- SH53

Priority corridors are shown in Figure 1.2.

This strategy does not preclude the use of Federal-aid funding for other complimentary roadways in the network, nor is it meant to imply that only these roads will receive capacity improvements. KMPO also intends to assign Federal-aid funds for safety and operational improvements throughout the planning area over the next 20 years. Also, projects to add capacity to other roadways may be developed using non-federal funding sources.

KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN
2010-2035



Kootenai MPO
KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN
2010-2035

KMPO - Priority Corridors

Priority Corridors	Physical Characteristics	
— Existing	- - - Highway Districts	County Boundary
- - - Proposed	Interstate	Urban Area Boundary
	US/State Highways	National Forests
	Local/Seasonal Roads	Water Features
	Railroads	Parks

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Development-Related Traffic Impacts

When large-scale developments are proposed, most local agencies in Kootenai County work with development proponents to finance specific transportation improvements. The goal is to limit the amount of public funds expended by having private developers mitigate congestion and safety issues that may be induced or worsened by development. KMPO does not dictate local agency policy with respect to development, but strongly encourages this practice.

For smaller, incremental development activities, most cities within the planning area have developed impact fees, however an impact fee policy for rural areas of the County does not yet exist. KMPO member agencies are working cooperatively to develop a County-sponsored impact fee policy, which should establish a new source of funds to mitigate public costs and impacts associated with incremental development in rural areas.

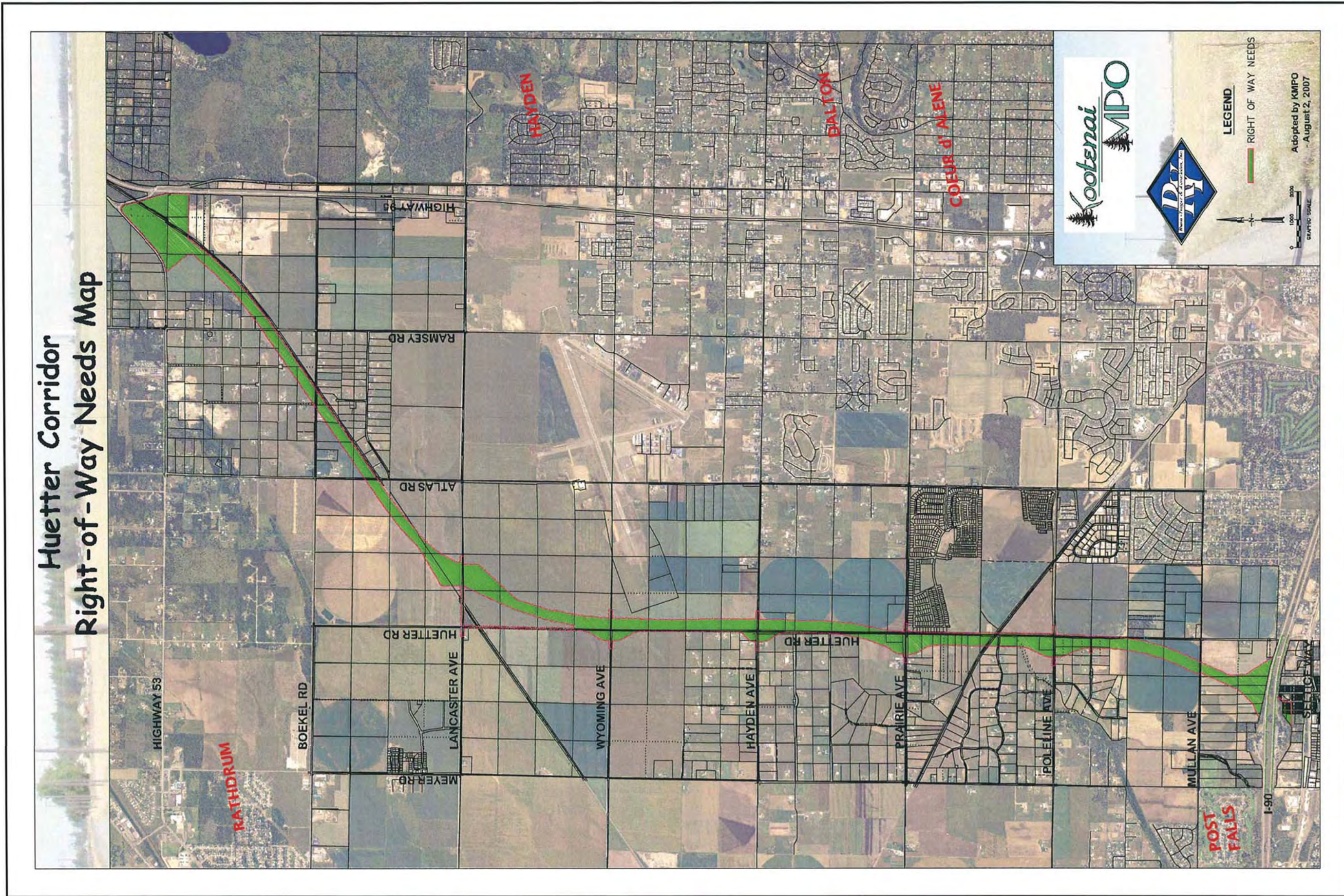
Huetter Corridor

The KMPO Policy Board has identified the need for a future high-speed north-south transportation facility between US95 and SH41, to serve anticipated growth on the Rathdrum Prairie and regional mobility needs. The Huetter Road area has long been discussed as a potential corridor for a new major route, and KMPO has adopted an alignment in anticipation of a future project.

A Huetter Corridor Alignment Study was undertaken in 2007 and 2008, to determine a preliminary location and conceptual design for a future freeway. Figure 1.3 shows a map of the proposed Huetter Bypass alignment, and additional information on this study is available from KMPO.

Affected local agencies have adopted specific land use policies designed to protect the right of way needed in the Huetter corridor from development. A combination of building set back requirements, zoning requirements, right of way dedication through annexation, and property acquisition is expected to secure the corridor for the future.

Figure 1.3



Rail Crossings - Bridging the Valley

With 75 roadway/rail crossing locations between Spokane, Washington and Athol, Idaho, rail crossing safety is a serious concern in the region. As the residential and commercial land use increases on the Rathdrum Prairie in Kootenai County, so does the potential for conflicts between automobiles and locomotives.

The “Bridging the Valley” initiative is a partnership between the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad, the Union Pacific Railroad and numerous governmental agencies at the state and local level in both Kootenai and Spokane counties. This partnership has resulted in plans for strategic actions that will separate vehicle traffic from train traffic in a 42 mile corridor between Spokane and Athol, significantly improving rail and highway safety on the Rathdrum Prairie.

The concept involves relocating the existing Union Pacific mainline into the BNSF main line corridor, and then constructing overpasses and undercrossings for roadway traffic on the combined rail corridor. In addition to significant safety enhancements, the proposal will improve rail freight mobility and traffic mobility, and abate train whistle noise.

Figure 1.4 shows an overview of the Bridging the Valley plan. Detailed exhibits are provided in Appendix A, and further information is available from KMPO.

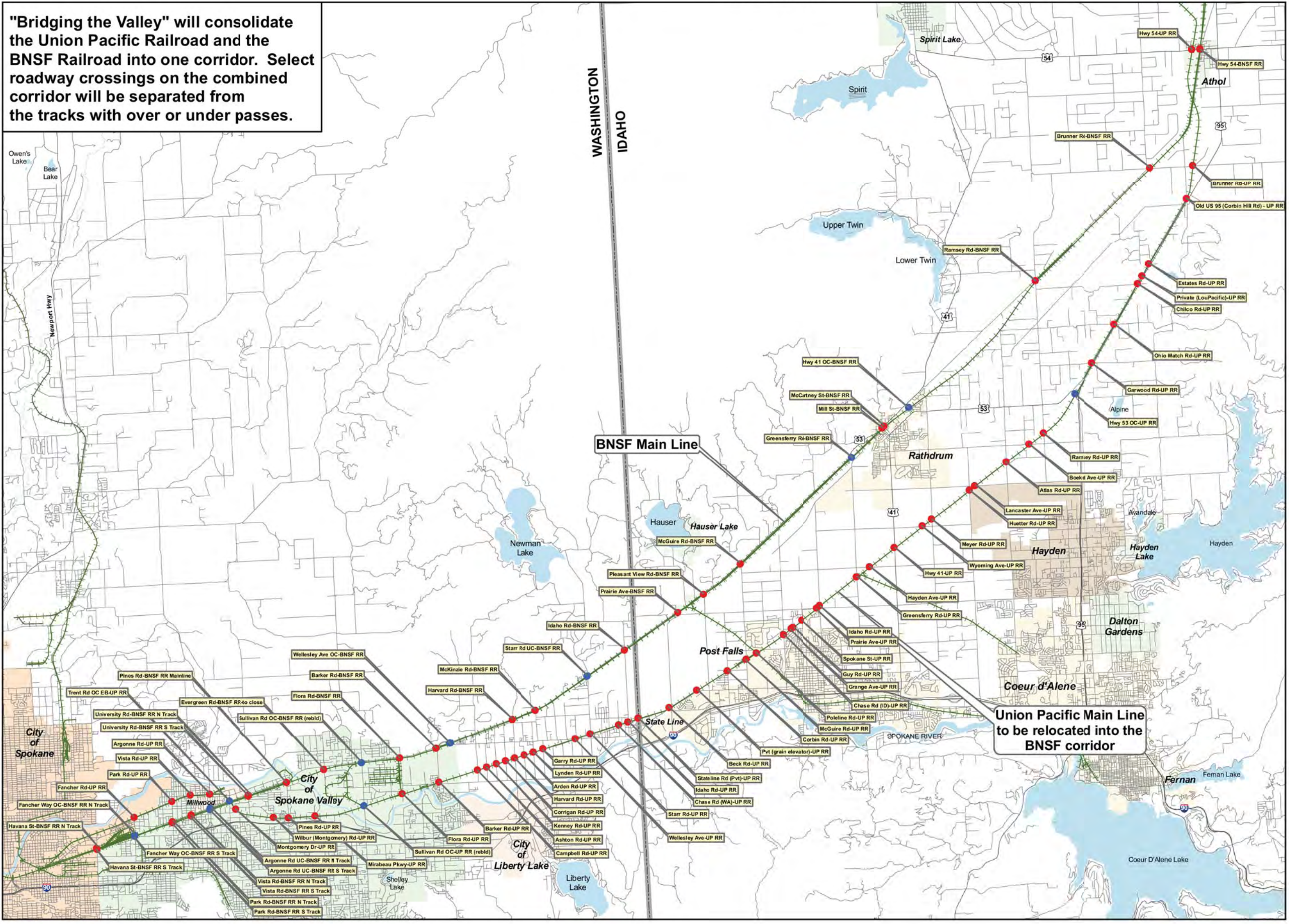
Citylink

The Citylink fixed-route transit service is a unique and creative partnership between the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, Kootenai County, Kootenai Medical Center, and KMPO that began in November, 2005. The partnership leverages the Tribe’s existing transportation resources in order to provide urban, intercity and rural fixed route service in Kootenai County. The partnership also makes creative use of existing medical transport services as matching funds for Federal Transit Administration funding. The coordinated effort has received national attention as a best practices model.

KMPO is committed to the continued improvement of public transportation service in Kootenai County, and also recognizes that funding limitations will likely influence the rate of system expansion. The Public Transportation Roundtable, a forum for coordination between Citylink operators and other public transportation and paratransit providers, is charged with exploring cost-effective ways of improving service and access to transit information for customers, and maximizing available funding through coordinated programs.

KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2010-2035

"Bridging the Valley" will consolidate the Union Pacific Railroad and the BNSF Railroad into one corridor. Select roadway crossings on the combined corridor will be separated from the tracks with over or under passes.



SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON
KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO

BRIDGING THE VALLEY

Railroad Consolidation Study

LEGEND

- Existing At-Grade Railroad Crossings
- Separated Railroad Crossings
- Railroads
- Major Highways
- Roads
- Water Features
- Spokane
- Spokane Valley
- Other Jurisdictions - Washington
- Coeur d'Alene; Post Falls; Rathdrum
- Hayden
- Other Jurisdictions - Idaho (Over or Underpass)



*Data based on best available information.
*Data for illustrative purposes only. Map produced July 2008

Operational and Management Strategies

Adding lanes and constructing intersection improvements on an existing route are not the only strategies available to address congestion. In addition, both capacity expansions and the development of new routes are expensive and often cost prohibitive. As our population grows and traffic increases, KMPO will be seeking means to prolong the service life of existing facilities and accommodate demand on the system.

In transportation industry jargon, “Access Management”, “Transportation System Management” (TSM) and “Transportation Demand Management” (TDM) are strategies that attempt to extend the life of the existing transportation system by improving operational efficiencies. As KMPO looks to the future, all three of these will play a role in the planning process.

Access Management

The number of driveways and other access points allowed on a street has a direct impact on the volume and speed of traffic that the street can safely carry.

For example, the intent of a “higher” function facility, such as a principal arterial, is to provide for regional mobility rather than access to private property. Higher speeds are associated with arterial routes, and in order for traffic to flow efficiently on an arterial, it is necessary to limit the number of driveway and street intersection access points.

Conversely, a “lower” function facility, such as a collector, has a different focus. The job of collector roads is to collect and distribute traffic to neighborhoods, employment centers and service areas. Speeds are typically lower on collector routes and, while access must still be carefully managed, more access points can be safely permitted.

KMPO does not dictate access policies for each roadway jurisdiction, but does encourage member agencies to adopt access management policies that are consistent with the intended functional classification of each roadway. An important exercise for each local planning department and highway district is to review the functional classifications of their roadways for compatibility with current and future adjoining land uses.

Transportation System Management (TSM)

Transportation System Management (TSM) focuses on improving efficiency through the use of operational strategies such as computerized traffic signal control systems, surveillance control and driver information systems, channelization or intersection reconfiguration, freeway ramp metering, signal timing progression, incident response teams, transportation management centers, etc. These techniques reduce overall delay on the system and can help minimize adverse effects associated with accidents.

KMPO encourages coordination between member agencies to implement TSM strategies.

Travel Demand Management (TDM)

Travel Demand Management (TDM) are strategies used to affect the travel patterns of transportation system users. One such strategy is to increase the number of options available, for example through carpool and vanpool programs, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, increased transit service, and workplace programs for tele-working and flexible work schedules. TDM strategies focus primarily on the work commute trip, due to the routine nature of commute trips having the highest probability of being affected.

Improvements to the Citylink system are the most significant TDM efforts to be implemented in Kootenai County in recent years. System ridership monitoring indicates Citylink bus service is growing in popularity. According to Citylink ridership reports, annual systemwide ridership in 2009 was 460,570. This amounts to a 107% increase over 2007 ridership levels (222,256) and 15% over 2008 levels (399,239). Ridership in 2010 appears to be continuing the growth trend, with average monthly trips between January and May outpacing 2009 monthly averages by roughly 15%.

KMPO encourages coordination between transit providers and companies that benefit from transit service for their employees and customers. A great example is the Greenstone complex in Coeur d'Alene, where the developer has purchased two shuttle buses to transport riders between Greenstone, downtown and the Kroc Center. Another excellent example is the City of Post Falls' requirement for construction of a park and ride facility near Beck Road as a condition of development approval in that area.

The adoption of the Regional Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (RNMTP) by KMPO's Board in 2009 is another significant asset for travel demand management. By creating a region-wide prioritized list of bicycle, pedestrian and transit access improvements, the RNMTP serves as an important step towards making non-motorized travel a safe and attractive choice.

As KMPO looks to the future, TDM efforts will continue to play an increasingly important role in reducing congestion in the urban area.

Environmental Considerations

To ensure that projects recommended through the planning process may ultimately be implemented, KMPO endeavors to anticipate environmental issues that may arise later during project design.

Regional and corridor-level planning studies undertaken by KMPO typically include an environmental scanning effort. To the extent possible, future construction projects are scoped during the planning process with an eye toward minimizing environmental impacts, or avoiding them altogether if possible.

Environmental considerations include:

Noise	Airport airspace intrusion
Access and travel pattern changes	Visual and aesthetic impacts
Neighborhood impacts	Prime farmland
Economic disruption	Hazardous materials risks
Minorities and low-income populations	Wildlife/fish habitat and movements
Displacements	Threatened/endangered species
Federally protected lands - 4(f) and 6(f)	Air quality impacts
Historic and archaeological sites	Stream alterations
Flood plains and floodways	Navigable waters
Wetlands	Aquifer issues
Water quality and stormwater runoff	

Of these, two primary areas where KMPO may have regional influence are air quality and stormwater quality.

Air Quality

The federal Environmental Protection Agency has established national ambient air quality standards for states to use in monitoring air quality. Areas with persistent air pollution problems are designated as “non-attainment areas”, which means that the area does not meet the national standards for outdoor air quality.

Carbon monoxide and dioxide, ground-level ozone, and other vehicle-related emissions as well as roadway dust from unpaved roads and winter sanding activities are serious concerns. At the present time, Kootenai County has been fortunate to avoid designation as a federal “non-attainment” area for air quality; however we must continue to be vigilant in order to stave off this designation in the future.

Recent Idaho legislation related to motor vehicle inspection and maintenance (i.e. emissions testing) may impact Kootenai County in the future. KMPO has worked with the Idaho DEQ to assess the potential impacts and benefits of the emissions testing laws, and to explore options for alternative measure with greater effectiveness.

Member agencies have been progressive about using Office of Highway Operations and Safety at ITD funding programs to pave existing gravel streets, improve transit services, obtain non-sand deicing materials and purchase street cleaning equipment. KMPO strongly encourages ITD to continue allocating funds to this program.

Surface and Ground Water Quality

Storm water runoff from roadways can carry pollutants that end up in our lakes, rivers and streams. Additionally, roadway runoff may enter the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer through recharge areas.

The Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer was designated a "sole source" for drinking water by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1978. This designation provides special protection under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, and requires all federally assisted

projects to use aquifer protection measures. In 1980, the aquifer was further designated as a Special Resource Water in Idaho, which resulted in increased protections for this critical resource.

KMPO is committed to addressing the impacts of any regional initiatives sponsored by KMPO on surface and ground water quality. Additionally, KMPO encourages the use of stormwater best management practices recommended by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for all construction projects. IDEQ's *Catalog of Stormwater BMPs for Idaho Cities and Counties* is available online at www.deq.idaho.gov.

Figures 1.5 through 1.9 identify locations of some of the current environmental concerns in Kootenai County, including air quality monitoring locations, waste remediation sites, impaired lakes and open mitigation sites.

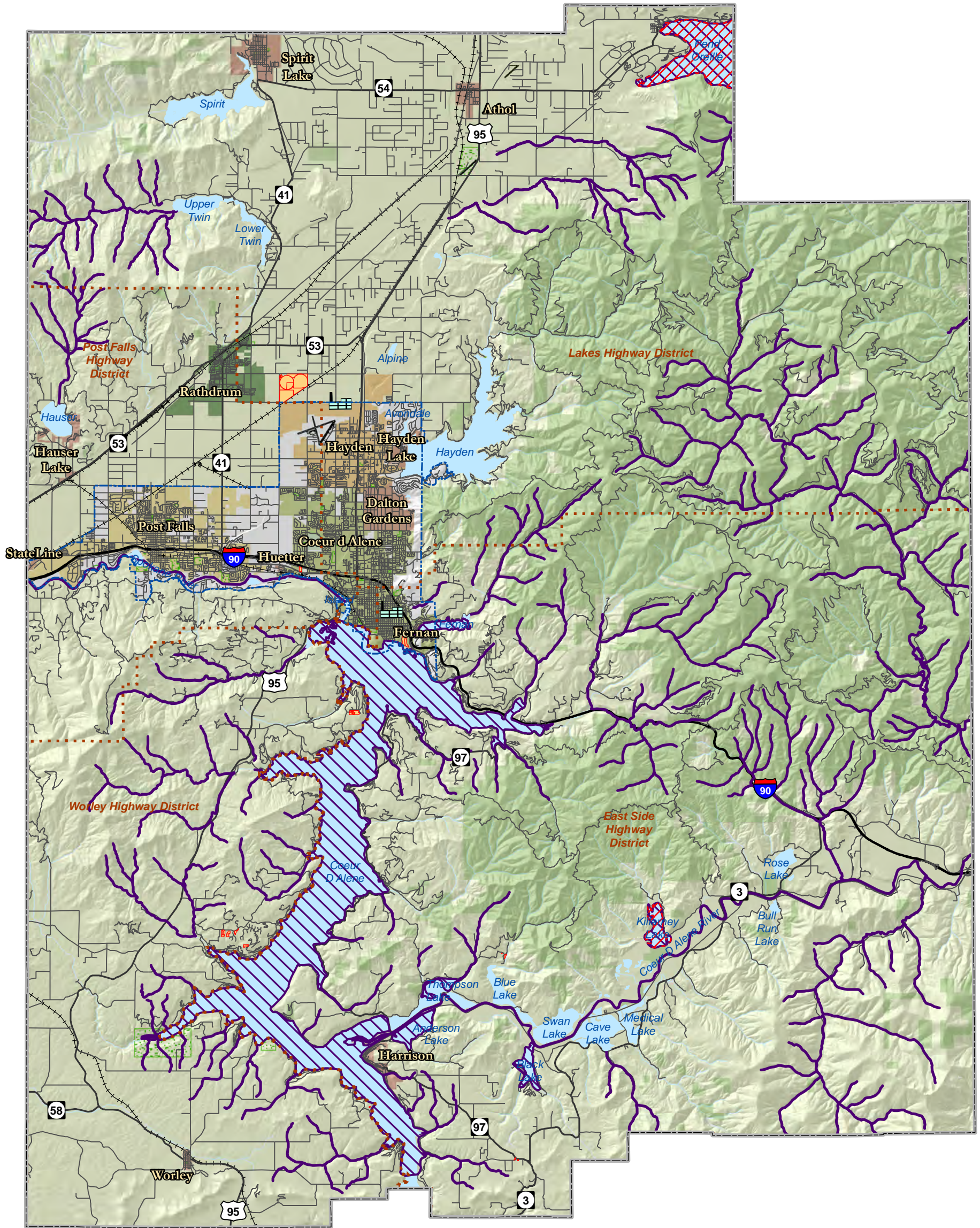
Safety

Metropolitan Transportation Plans are encouraged to be consistent with the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) and other transit safety and security planning and review processes, plans and programs.

The Idaho Transportation Department's SHSP is available through the State Highway Operations and Safety Department at ITD by calling (208) 334-8557. There are ten emphasis areas in the State's SHSP, targeted at reducing traffic-related deaths, life-altering injuries and the related economic losses on Idaho's roadways:

- Aggressive Driving
- Commercial Vehicles
- Emergency Medical Services
- Highway-Railroad Grade Crossings
- Impaired Drivers
- Mature Drivers
- Occupant Protection
- Road Related Crashes
- Vulnerable Users
- Young Drivers

KMPO is specifically targeting the emphasis area related to highway-railroad grade crossings through the Bridging the Valley proposal. Many of the other projects recommended for funding in Section 5 will consider the ten emphasis areas during project development and construction.



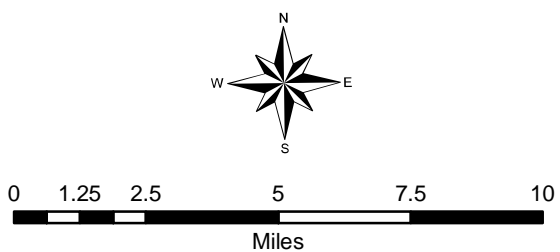
ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION, RURAL, KOOTENAI COUNTY

Environmental Sensitivities

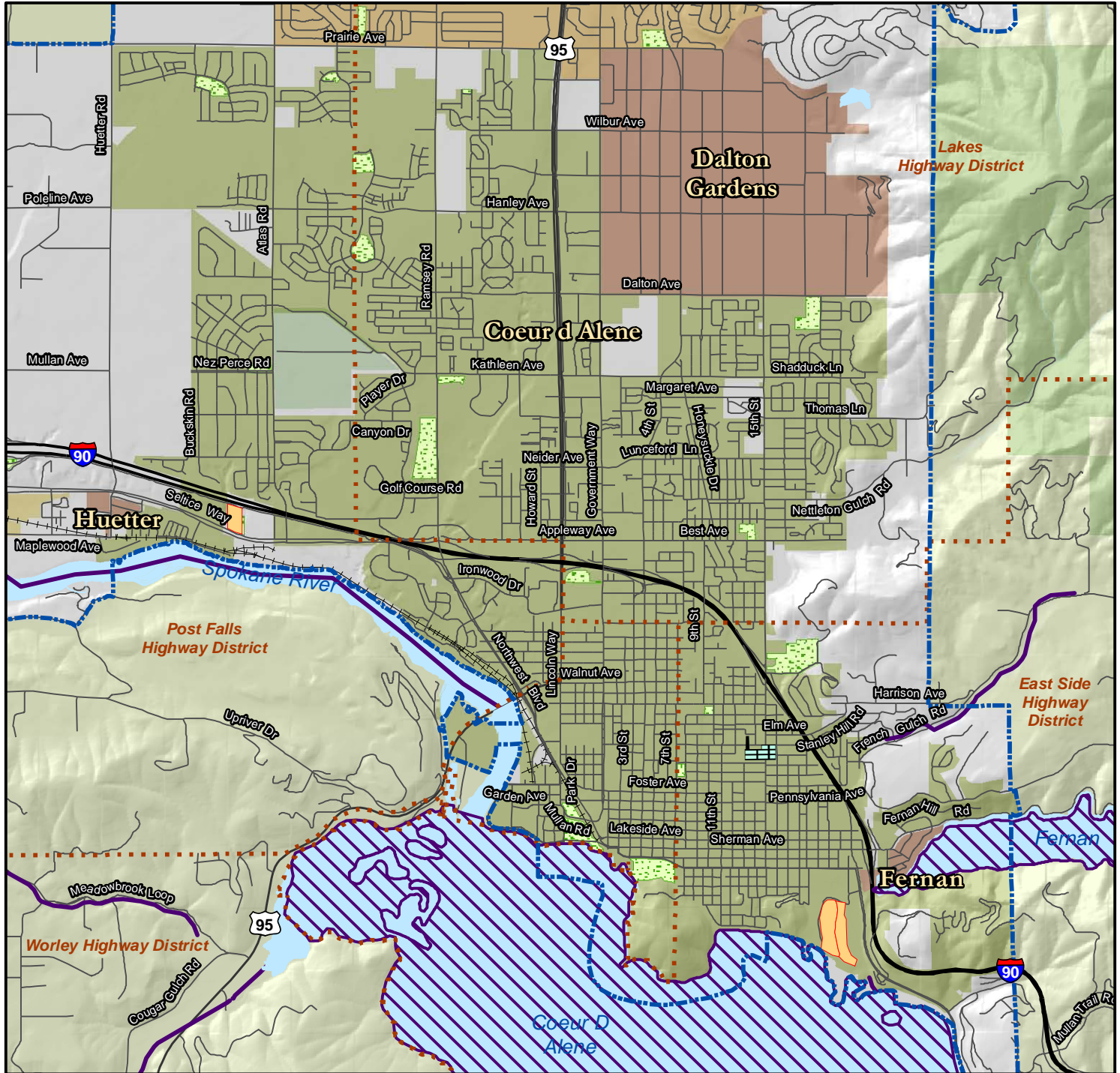
- AQ Monitoring Locations
- Wastewater Lagoon Locations
- Wastewater Land Locations
- Impaired Lakes
- Mercury Impaired Lakes
- Impaired Streams

Physical Characteristics

- Highway Districts
- Interstate
- US/State Highways
- Local/Seasonal Roads
- Railroad
- County Boundary
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- National Forests
- Water Features
- Parks



KOOTENAI METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN
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**ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION,
URBAN, COEUR D'ALENE**

Environmental Sensitivities

Physical Characteristics

AQ Monitoring Locations

Highway Districts

County Boundary

Wastewater Lagoon Locations

Interstate

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Impaired Lakes

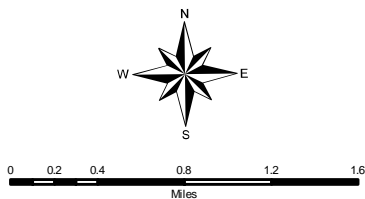
Local/Seasonal Roads

Parks

Mercury Impaired Lakes

Railroads

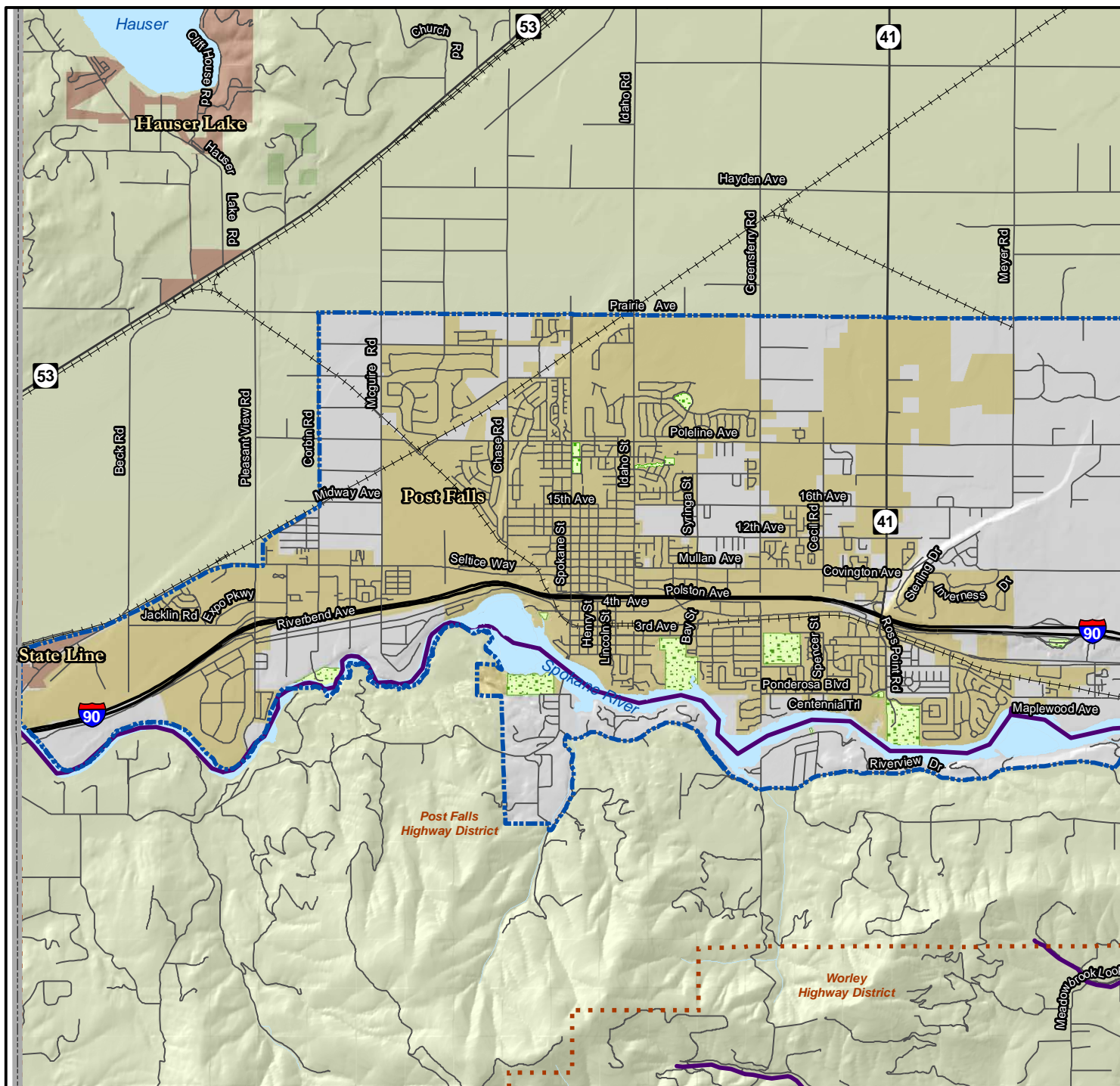
Impaired Streams



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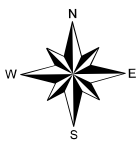
**ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION,
URBAN, POST FALLS**

Environmental Sensitivities

Physical Characteristics

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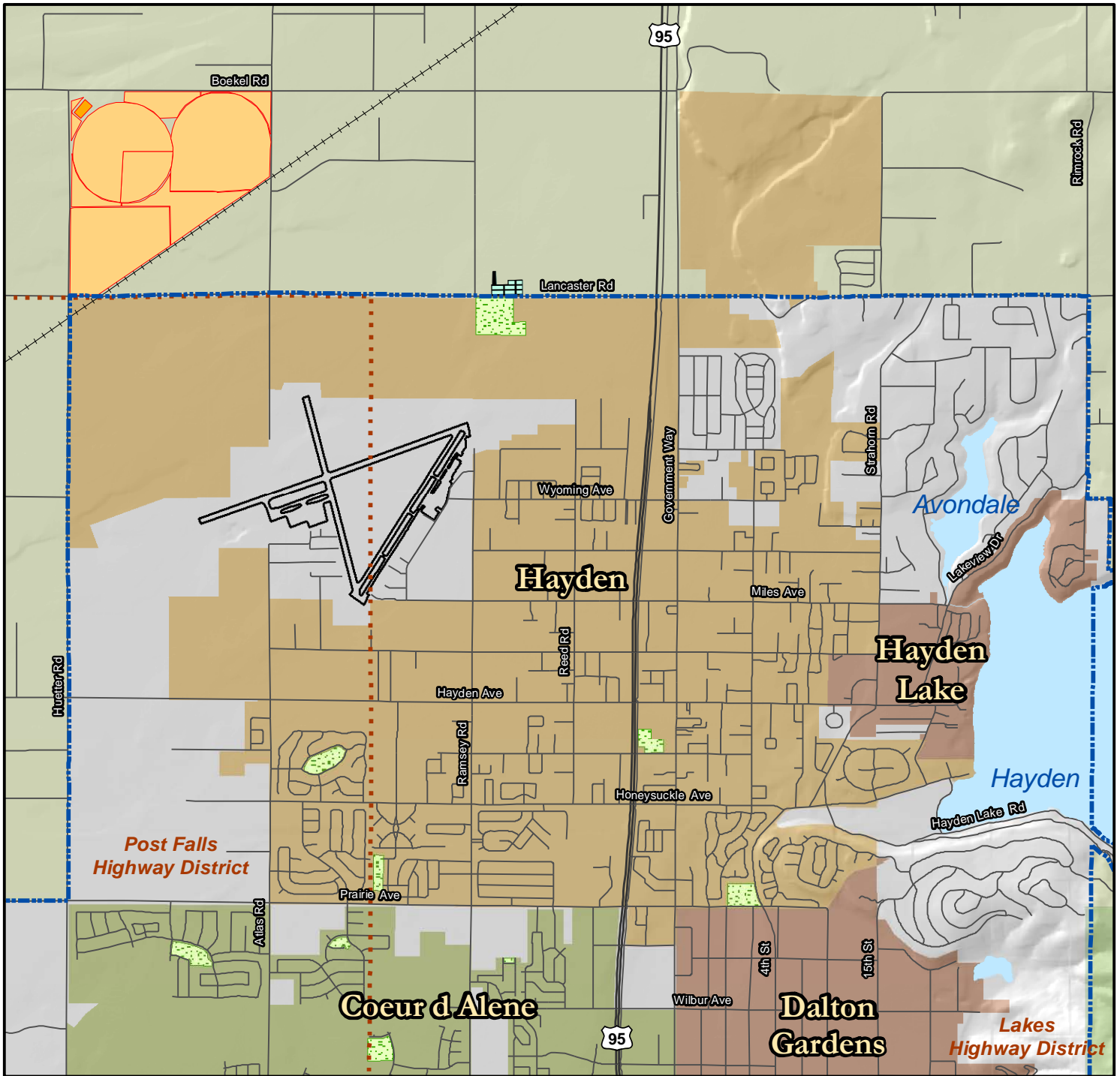
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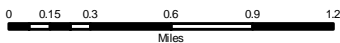
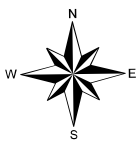
**ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION,
URBAN, HAYDEN**

Environmental Sensitivities

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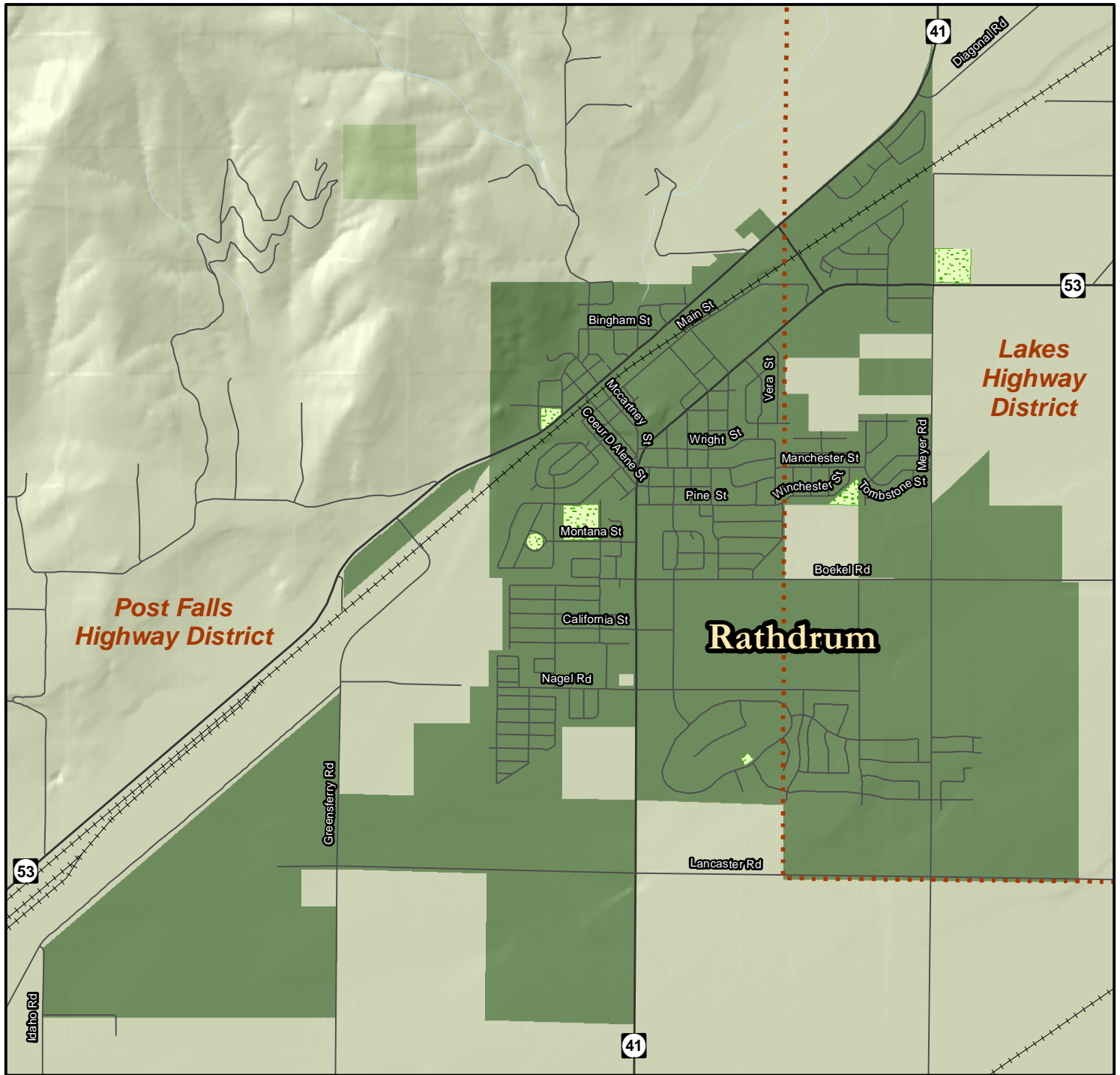
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**ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION,
RURAL, RATHDRUM**

Environmental Sensivities

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Transportation System Security

Following a renewed national focus on homeland security, federal guidelines for MPO's were changed to require consideration of transportation system security in the long-range planning process. Several agencies have developed emergency preparedness plans that may be used to address the possibility of emergencies on roads in our planning area.

The Idaho Transportation Department has a variety of security and emergency preparedness plans. Depending on the severity of the emergency, plans are available to deal with everything from catastrophic conditions requiring restricted travel to resuming business after an incident has been dealt with:

- ITD's *'Emergency Highway Traffic Regulation Plan'* sets forth policies, responsibilities and procedures for the regulation and use of the highway network within the State of Idaho during an emergency.
- The *'Idaho Emergency Plan, Emergency Support Function #1'*, assists state and local government agencies and voluntary organizations requiring transportation capacity to perform response missions following a major disaster or emergency. It also serves as a coordination point between response operations and restoration of the transportation infrastructure.
- The *'Idaho Hazardous Materials Incident Command and Response Support Plan'* provides effective, coordinated emergency support to local government by state, federal, and private agencies for incidents involving the release or potential release of hazardous materials in the State of Idaho.
- The *'Transportation Incident Management Plan'* provides effective, coordinated emergency response support at transportation incidents on the State of Idaho highway system.

For reasons of security, some of these plans may not be available for public distribution. For more information on security and emergency preparedness plans, ITD's Emergency Programs office can be reached at (208) 334-8414.

Kootenai County also has a division dedicated specifically to safety and security. The County's Emergency Preparedness Plan covers a number of possible emergencies and natural disasters, and has an entire section dedicated specifically to transportation and transportation facilities. The County's plan outlines steps to follow to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters, including:

- Coordinating task forces responsible for implementing mitigation plans.
- Assisting with local funding sources for mitigation projects.

- Designing and conducting multi-agency training exercises that test emergency plans.
- Activating the Kootenai County Emergency Operations Center to provide interagency coordination for managing disaster response and recovery.
- Obtaining and allocating necessary manpower, equipment, and supplies needed for emergency response.
- Facilitating public meetings for local, state, and federal agencies to discuss recovery and post-disaster mitigation assistance for citizens and businesses.

For more information on Kootenai County's Emergency Preparedness Plan, contact the Kootenai County Office of Emergency Management at (208) 446-1775.

Another agency concerned with security on the roads is The Coeur d'Alene Tribe's Citylink bus service. Citylink addresses potential security threats through its 'Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan' (SSEPP) and its 'Threat and Vulnerability Assessment.'

While problems have been rare to date on Citylink buses, if a problem *does* develop, the agency's managers take a personal approach to solving the problem and will either ride the problematic route themselves, or follow it to gauge the problem and determine how to deal with it. While dropping off and picking up riders at the Coeur d'Alene Casino, drivers can contact casino security to deal with problems. While on the road, they are instructed to call in a code over the CB radio and the dispatch center will send law enforcement to the location to remove disruptive passengers or address other problems. The same applies for medical emergencies. Drivers are also instructed to watch for suspicious packages brought or left on-board.

Further information on Citylink's Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan can be obtained by calling the Citylink offices at 1-877-941-RIDE.

Public Involvement in the MTP Process

Citizen participation is fundamental to good transportation planning. An assertive outreach program helps to ensure that policies and projects that are consistent with the actual needs of the people to be served by them. KMPO's goal is to provide complete and transparent information to the public, and to provide a fair and open process for citizen involvement in transportation decision-making. KMPO's process of citizen involvement allows everyone the chance to be heard, and affords the KMPO Board the opportunity to make reasonable and responsible adjustments to proposals before they are adopted.

Throughout development of the MTP and its sub-components, KMPO has used a variety of techniques to involve the public, in compliance with KMPO's Public Involvement policies (See Appendix B).

Those techniques have included:

- Meeting with area jurisdictions involved in the MTP update process;
- Updates sent to a distribution list (included as Appendix C of this Plan) of agency employees and interested citizens;
- Holding a public comment period of 30 days;
- Advertising the public comment period through public access channels, paid advertising, press releases, and on the KMPO website;
- Hosting a public meeting to collect public comment on the MTP during the public comment period; and
- Providing copies of the MTP to several media outlets that requested it in order to do stories on the Plan.