



May 4, 2021

TO: KMPO Board Members  
FROM: Glenn F. Miles, Executive Director  
SUBJECT: Huetter Right of Way Map Update

**Recommendation: KCATT at their April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting voted unanimously to recommend approval of the 2021 Updated Huetter Corridor Right of Way Needs Map Exhibit, Updated Typical Cross-Section, Traffic Forecasts, and Update the Federal Functional Classification System to reflect the revised alignment of NHS Route 7248.**

**Staff Request: The KMPO Staff requests authorization to open a 30 day public comment period to receive public comments on the recommended update to the Huetter Corridor Exhibits presented to the Board.**

**Background:**

With ITD nearing completion of the combined SH-53 and U.S. 95 Single Point Urban Interchange, it became necessary to update the Huetter Corridor Right of Way map to reflect an alternate alignment that was included within the original study. The alternate alignment moves further southeastward as it passes Lancaster Road to align with U.S. 95 in the proximity of Boekel Road. This alignment provides the necessary distance requirement between interchange locations and includes an access at Ramsey Road to address the growing population and employment that is emerging and which is expected to continue growing for the foreseeable future. The City of Hayden has recently adopted the alignment as both the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and their update Transportation Plan. The revised alignment has also been coordinated with Lakes Highway District staff and the Idaho Transportation Department District 1 Office. Kootenai County is also currently developing an overlay zone of the corridor to better inform land developments of the corridors foot print.

This update then is necessary to adapt to changes in the Huetter Corridor since the April 2009 adoption.

**May Board Update:**

Ruen-Yeager Associates (RYA) was given the notice to proceed on February 18, 2021. KMPO held a project kickoff meeting at RYA on Monday February 22, 2021 to go over the scope of work and address questions along the corridor. A copy of the minutes were sent to ITD, local agencies and jurisdictions staff on February 24<sup>th</sup> to provide an opportunity to comment on the parameters and timeline of the work effort. KMPO received comments back from ITD and City of Hayden. In addition KMPO staff met with city administrators on February 26<sup>th</sup> to provide an update on the effort, the schedule, and answer questions.

The first delivery was provided on March 1<sup>st</sup> which was a draft typical profile for internal review. KMPO staff met with RYA on March 3<sup>rd</sup> to go over the typical section and address design parameters at interchanges, cross-overs, and on the main-line. The revised typical sections were sent out for agency review the week of March 8<sup>th</sup>, which was followed up with the updated right of way needs map on the week of March 22<sup>nd</sup>. ut March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Local jurisdictions and agencies provided their feedback on the draft documents by April 9<sup>th</sup>

In the interim, KMPO staff has placed the materials on the KMPO website, as well as met and had discussions with several land owners and with interested parties. During the months of March and April these meetings were set up to discuss the northern alignment change; locations of interchanges and cross-overs; as well as how the corridor will tie in to both I-90 and U.S. 95. While some were skeptical of the corridor moving forward, since it's been on the plans and discussed for over 15 years, everyone understood the need for the corridor to be built and the reason for the alignment change. This was even with the recognized impact the corridor would have on their property or business interests.

**Topics raised during the meetings included:**

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## Item 7 a.

1. The Huetter Corridor connection to I-90 and U.S. 95. The connections to I-90 and U.S. 95 would be system to system interchanges; therefore no direct access to the local roads would be provided at these locations.

### May Update Continued:

2. The locations of interchanges to access local arterials would be limited to no less than 1 mile spacing (which is an urban design); however cross-overs could be constructed over the corridor at locations to ensure local traffic movements. These avoid the need for local traffic to travel through an interchange location. Such as Mullan, Honeysuckle, Atlas

3. A question was raised whether Boekel Road access to U.S. 95 should or needed to be closed. This would be a design related issue that would be evaluated during preliminary engineering. It appears that either option would be viable.

4. A question was raised whether the interchange location a Ramsey Road and its connection to the local arterials was in a fixed location. Since the revised typical section is a "Tight Diamond", the right of way width does not change. As a result the actual interchange location at Ramsey Road could be located during preliminary engineering and design, in consultation with stakeholders and local agencies.

5. A question was raised whether there could be other options besides a "Tight Diamond" for an interchange. Yes, a Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) could also work within the right of way footprint.

6. The 2009 corridor plan showed the corridor below ground level (below grade) from I-90 to just north of Wyoming and then at-grade from Wyoming to U.S. 95. The question was raised whether this was necessary. The corridor is on the Prairie, which is relatively flat. There is also currently higher density housing developments on the east side of existing Huetter Road from Pole Line to Prairie. Placing the facility below ground level, provide ample sight/visual and sound mitigation to existing land uses in the area. Interchanges would not extend up above the surrounding area, so noise exposure from vehicle acceleration and deceleration at ramp locations would not travel longer distances across the Prairie mitigating potential impact existing to nearby land uses.

7. A question was raised regarding the potential for additional access points to the corridor. The corridor, as currently adopted would be a controlled limited access facility. Access to the corridor would only be permitted at the designated interchange locations. Adjacent properties would be accessed by either existing local roads or a frontage road.

8. A question was raised about who would ultimately own the Huetter Corridor. While currently a right of way preservation effort, the intent has always been for the Huetter Corridor to become designated as U.S. 95 North. The high speed, limited access four-lane facility is consistent with the existing State Highway System. It would remove regional, intra-state and interstate traffic from existing stop and go traffic on signalized arterials, and provide resiliency for occasions when other facilities have closures due to traffic incidents, weather, and other closure events.

9. A question was raised about what would happen to U.S. 95 from Appleway to Boekel Road. In all likelihood, this part of existing U.S. 95 would revert to the local jurisdictions and/or highway district. It could have a transition period in the transfer and provide new opportunities for growth and development in the corridor.

10. A question was raised about what happens to the traffic patterns with the Corridor constructed. Generally speaking;

U.S. 95 from Appleway to Boekel Road would see approximately 10% reduction in traffic. This is generally because existing land uses along this stretch attract vehicle trips caused by retail, commercial, light industrial, and medical service activities.

SH-41 from I-90 to Boekel can expect to see between a 30% to 40% decline in traffic volumes, as trips destined to Rathdrum, Hayden, Spirit Lake, Athol and the west side of Coeur d' Alene can avoid SH-41 and its traffic signal controlled intersections.

Connecting east-west arterials such as Pole Line, Prairie, Hayden, Wyoming, Lancaster, and Ramsey to the Corridor also provides uniform spacing to disburse traffic both east and west

11. A prevailing question has been how long before the corridor gets underway and how will the right of way get purchased. The first answer is when funds become available to begin acquiring right of way.

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As far as acquisition, there are two ways, subject to available funds, the right of way can be purchased from land owners.

*a. Early Acquisition Program:* Federal Highway Administration allows for the purchase of land through its “Early acquisition” rules. These acquisitions are based on fair market value with a willing seller and a willing buyer. They require an environmental approval of the property; the corridor to be contained the MPO long range plans; however, do not require a project to be programmed for construction.

### **May Board Update Continued:**

*b. Traditional Land Acquisition Program:* A project is included in the MPO long range plan; included in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); has completed its environmental evaluation; and follows the Federal Uniform Acquisition and Relocation Assistance provisions during the land acquisition process.

The Early Acquisition Program is relatively new, with only a few instances within the State of Idaho. The traditional land acquisition program is the most common in the State of Idaho. It is typically conducted as part of a programmed project, after preliminary engineering and environmental approvals have been completed. It is my understanding this is currently ITD Board Policy.

As you can see, many of the questions are focused on how the corridor will interact with other areas on the Prairie and in the region. Some are about the logistics of acquiring the land, so impacted property owners are not in transitional limbo. There is little doubt today that the corridor is needed. So the primary question becomes when more than how.

### **Setting the Stage:**

Efforts are currently underway to set the stage for advancing the Huetter Corridor from an alignment on a Right of Way Needs Map, to a project within the KMPO Transportation Improvement Program and the ITD Idaho Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) Preliminary Development Phase. In order to advance the Huetter Corridor from planning to programming, the following steps will need to occur:

1. The KMPO Board will need to complete the Huetter Corridor Alignment Update process with adoption of the Updated Right of Way Exhibit, Updated Right of Way Exhibit, Updated Traffic Forecasts, and Updated Federal Functional Classification System to reflect the alignment modifications to NHS route 7248.
2. The KMPO 2021-2027 TIP will need to be amended to change the name of a currently programmed project entitled KN 19344 Huetter Corridor Early Preservation and Acquisition Program to Huetter Corridor Project Preliminary Development – Preliminary Engineering and Environmental
3. The KMPO Board would need to release the project and the related funds to the Idaho Transportation Department, subject to ITD Board approval to place the project into ITD’s Preliminary Development Program.
4. The ITD begin preliminary engineering and environmental evaluation in Federal Fiscal Year 2022 (October 2021).

### **Summary:**

The Huetter Corridor has been discussed in various forms for decades. The 2009 Corridor Plan and Right of Way Needs map has successfully provided opportunities to guide a protect the corridor through developer and annexation agreements, as well as extensive conversations with the Coeur d’ Alene Airport. This update refresh’s the 2009 exhibits to reflect current conditions and a path toward implementation in a manner that significantly reduces the prior right of way needs; aligns with the City of Hayden’s recently adopted Comprehensive and Transportation Plan; and provides an opportunity to connect to U.S. 95 that is compatible with the recently constructed SH-53 Interchange. The attached exhibits are attached for your review and Board consideration.