

TRANSPORTATION

Community Vision 2028

“Because we place such high value on our natural surroundings, we responsibly plan for, manage, and mitigate the impacts of growth on those surroundings.” —Kezziah Watkins Report

The Regional Highway Participants and the Process

The five jurisdictions that oversee road networks within the County are the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and the four local highway districts: East Side, Lakes, Post Falls, and Worley. The highway districts were established in the early 1970s when numerous smaller districts were consolidated into the existing four districts. The highway districts are funded from various sources, including the State of Idaho, property taxes, and vehicle registration. ITD controls the state highway system, which comprises 5,000 of the 60,000 miles of roads in Idaho and accounts for 54% of the state’s vehicle miles of travel.”

In the 1980s the highway districts teamed up with adjoining cities in Kootenai County to create a regional forum for transportation projects. This consortium was called the Kootenai County Area Transportation Team (KCATT). After the results of the 2000 U.S. Census were published, it was apparent that the combined population of the cities of Coeur d’Alene, Post Falls, Hauser, Hayden, Huetter, Fernan, and Dalton Gardens and a portion of the County’s population exceeded 50,000, triggering the federal designation of an “urbanized” area and the requirement to form a Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The Kootenai County Planning Organization (KMPO) was formed in February 2003. Governor Dirk Kempthorne designated KMPO as the agency responsible for regional transportation planning in the County. The KMPO Policy Board includes one elected official from 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, and the Coeur d’Alene Tribe. In

addition, the Board includes one representative from ITD, District 1. Smaller cities in the County have KMPO representation via their adjacent highway districts. KMPO must approve federal aid funding priorities within the County, but does not implement public transit services or roadway projects.

ITD provides technical expertise to the local highway districts when requested. The Idaho transportation board (appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate) establishes state transportation policy and guides its planning and development.

The local highway districts and ITD remain in charge of operations, construction, and maintenance of the roads. Kootenai County has no jurisdiction over road building, but has the duty to plan overall growth and land use for the County. Coordination of efforts has been difficult.

This Plan reflects the County’s intent to provide the path by which transportation agencies can coordinate and ultimately follow Kootenai County’s direction to plan for the overall growth of the County.

The Plan has incorporated data from the 20-year Kootenai County Transportation Plan developed by KMPO for years 2007–2030, where computer traffic models were created to predict future traffic volumes and impacts and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), outlining planned improvements in the County over the next 20 years. The KMPO Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) identifies projects where funding has already been secured and projects are expected to be implemented within the next six years. (The documents referred to herein are available from KMPO and at www.KMPO.net).

The following specific data has either been collected or developed during the preparation of this Plan from the responsible agencies:

1. The Functional Classification System (network of roadway eligible for federal funding);

2. Average weekday daily traffic (AWDT) with peak hour volumes, percent trucks, and directional splits;
3. Roadway geometrics (number of lanes, speeds, parking, etc.); intersection geometrics (lane used, traffic control, lane widths, turning lane lengths, etc.);
4. Intelligent Transportation System (ITS); deployment
5. Accident location data;
6. Truck routes;
7. Non-motorized trails and rail corridors;
8. Land use characteristics (present and future);
9. Population and employment forecasts; and
10. Home Interview Survey for trip-making characteristics.

Ultimately, it is critical that the many independent agencies, plans, and funding mechanisms be coordinated to reduce waste and to provide a transportation system based on the projected movement of people and goods through the County, the State of Idaho and beyond. Data on traffic patterns, congestion, future growth/development, public safety, funding, and other considerations must be shared by the relevant parties to determine appropriate new areas of County development and protection for existing communities concerned about burgeoning traffic.

Other Transportation Networks



Rail Service in Northern Idaho

Rail traffic still plays an important part in Kootenai County's transportation network, but it is changing. The Burlington Northern line is used

for both passenger and freight service. The passenger service, Amtrak, has stations in Spokane and Sandpoint. The "Bridging the Valley" initiative is a partnership between Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF), the Union Pacific Railroad, and numerous governmental agencies in both Kootenai and Spokane counties that will relocate the existing Union Pacific main line into the BNSF main line corridor, after which overpasses and under-crossings for railroad traffic will be constructed. When completed, the plan is projected to add rail traffic mobility, increase safety at railroad crossings, and promote economic growth in the County.

Communities in Kootenai County have contributed to the development of the Centennial Trail, a non-motorized trail stretching from the Washington state line to Higgins Point on Lake Coeur d'Alene. Bikers, walkers, joggers, and in-line skaters all use the Trail, both for recreation and as a safe way to commute (commuters would avoid busy roadways such as I-90). In addition, and although not yet connected to an overall County-wide non-motorized pedestrian system, there have also been other smaller scale bike and pedestrian paths constructed that primarily provide localized recreational opportunities for county residents.

Public Transportation

Currently, public transportation is the least available and least utilized transportation option in the County. During the past three years, local jurisdictions have teamed up with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe to implement the Citylink service, which provides the only fixed-route bus service in the County's urbanized areas. Ridership has seen a steady increase from 5,000 boarding's per month to 18,000 boarding's per month in the past two years. The latest demand for public transportation was identified in the adopted Public Transportation Plan, and is only now being tapped by improved routes, schedules, and coordination with paratransit providers.

Kootenai County is currently the federal grant recipient for public transportation funding in the urbanized area, channeling federal funds to

the current mixed route system (Citylink). ITD handles federal public transportation grants for non-urbanized areas and channels monies to other transportation providers. As our population continues to grow, it will be important to consolidate public transportation planning, funding and operations under a single public transportation agency. There are a number of paratransit organizations operating in the County, including KATS/NICE, White Tail Transportation, and the Kootenai Medical Center Shuttle. Charter services are available from Omnibus, Inc., which primarily serves the Coeur d'Alene Airport. Greyhound operates an intercity bus service between Coeur d'Alene and Spokane, Washington.

Providing a safe and efficient public transportation system for all residents in the Kootenai metropolitan area has no obvious solutions. Given the limited funding resources available to address the regional and local transportation needs, and the absence of a central public transportation planning and funding agency, this Plan has no definitive strategies to correct this gap in the transportation system. Instead, it points out the problem and seeks cooperation from the municipalities, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, and other relevant entities to pursue solutions together.



'Coeur d'Alene/Pappy Boyington' Airport in Kootenai County

Air Transportation

The County owns and operates the Coeur d'Alene Airport (surrounded mostly by the City of Hayden) which maintains an "Airport Master Plan". In 2007, the airport field was renamed to "Coeur d'Alene Airport/Pappy Boyington Field" in honor of local World War II flying hero Gregory "Pappy" Boyington. The airport

encompasses over 1,100 acres and offers a full instrument landing system (ILS) approach, with an on-site weather observation system. It is an on-and-off ramp for the national air transportation system and a certified weather alternate for the Spokane International Airport in Spokane, Washington. Currently, the airport accommodates predominately small, private aircraft, but landings include all types of aircraft from helicopters to DC-9's. There are approximately 300 daily takeoff and landing operations currently recorded at the airport, with more use planned and anticipated. Land use in the proximity to the airport must be carefully managed to protect the safety of the public, the aircraft operators, and the surrounding neighborhoods. The airport is a transportation and economic asset to commerce and industry, providing jobs and stimulating development. Airport compatible zoning and land use controls allow the County to guide development that benefits the Airport, County and region as a whole.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies in this chapter are intended to articulate the community vision toward the region's transportation system and not to be regulatory, but provide specific guidance for the adoption and implementation of development regulations which will ensure conformity with the Plan.

GOAL 1: Encourage a properly funded and efficient transportation system that protects and enhances the County's economy, environment, neighborhood quality, and cultural and scenic values, while facilitating the movement of goods and people.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

T-1 A. Participate with KMPO, ITD, and the local highway districts in multilateral planning on an ongoing basis. Coordinate with the County and all affected parties when planning new roads and development. Coordinate with KMPO and other funding authorities to ensure adequate capital is planned for in areas where the Plan promotes growth.

- T-1 B. Encourage transportation agencies to address inadequacies and congestion in the existing transportation network.
- T-1 C. Promote alternative transportation options such as public transportation, carpooling, and bicycle paths.
- T-1 D. Coordinate with road agencies in the development of regulations which require the design and construction of road and access points to fit the environmental, topographic and geologic characteristics of the site.
- T-1 E. Encourage state and federal agencies to analyze and utilize data to determine if proposed development will impact highways inconsistent with the Plan's intent to promote efficient flow of traffic.
- T-1 F. Coordinate future acquisition of rights-of-way and the dedication of additional rights-of-way with local highway districts, KMPO, and ITD to ensure proper expansion of the road system.
- T-1 G. Develop regulations that require all new development to create roads that are in compliance with emergency medical service and fire rescue requirements.
- T-1 H. Coordinate the development of emergency services transportation or facility needs checklist with local emergency service providers and transportation districts to assist analysis of new development impacts on emergency services providers' operations.
- T-1 I. Support the adoption of impact fees to mitigate costs of transportation needs connected to new development.
- T-1 J. Encourage one member of the County Board of Commissioners to continue to participate as an active member of the KMPO Policy Board and provide information to the other two Commissioners and the County Planning and Zoning Department as to current projects, plans, and funding of proposed road projects.

GOAL 2: Work with KMPO, IDT, and local highway districts to maintain transportation facilities, corridors, and sites to ensure the safe, efficient movement of people and goods.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

- T-2 A. Collaborate with KMPO, ITD, and local highway districts to develop access control strategies that complement the land use goals and policies of the County.
- T-2 B. Develop regulations which establish land development patterns that minimize direct access onto collector and arterial roads.
- T-2 C. Encourage land use patterns and design standards such as mixed-use developments that reduce average daily trips, overall dependence on the automobile, and encourage alternatives such as public transit, bicycling, walking, carpools, and vanpools.
- T-2 D. Coordinate with KMPO to update and adjust transportation plans, including functional classification of routes and future system expansion plans, to adhere to this Plan.
- T-2 E. Provide updated population and land use data to KMPO annually to assist inaccuracy and coordination of future transportation planning.
- T-2 F. Encourage the local highway districts, KMPO and ITD to utilize the Plan and land use regulations in current and future transportation planning.

GOAL 3: Consider the impact of proposed development on existing and proposed transportation routes.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

- T-3 A. Develop regulations which promote the connection of streets systems, sidewalks, parking facilities, trails, bicycle paths, and pedestrian paths.
- T-3 B. Consider LOS ratings as relevant data to assist the County in making decisions about the overall impacts and potential mitigation measures of proposed development.
- T-3 C. Propose development regulations which require new development to incorporate relevant transportation needs, such as alternate transportation modes such as public transit, bicycles and pedestrian.
- T-3 E. Develop regulations which require developers to bear the cost of new development infrastructure for roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- T-3 F. Develop regulations, that approximate and mitigate any excessive construction impacts of building projects.
- T-3 G. Encourage expansion and funding for the fixed-route and paratransit public transportation systems.

- T-7 C. Communicate with the federal, state, and county transportation agencies to encourage preservation of railroad rights-of-way.

GOAL 4: Work with local and state agencies to coordinate and cooperate in transportation planning and improvement of the transportation network.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

- T-4 A. Work with local and state agencies to provide for attractive landscaping on both public and private properties located along entrance corridors to the County.
- T-4 B. Develop regulations which strike a balance between the use of transportation facilities and size requirements; minimize needed rights-of-way as deemed appropriate.
- T-4 C. Promote development regulations which incorporate traffic calming techniques in urban areas.
- T-4 D. Promote road names that accurately portray the County and its historical heritage whenever possible.
- T-4 E. Collaborate with local and state regulating/legislative entities to, establish compatible and consistent transportation planning and implementation laws and policies.

GOAL 5: Protect the operation of the Coeur d’Alene Airport/Pappy Boyington Field and facilitate orderly and safe expansion. *(See Goal 24 of the Land Use Chapter for related Policies and Implementation Strategies)*

GOAL 6: Pursue opportunities to preserve and, where possible, acquire existing railroad rights of way for future use in public transit, pedestrian access and open space connections.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

- T-7 A. Promote the protection, preservation and/or acquisition of unused or underused railroad rights-of-way throughout the County.
- T-7 B. Investigate the use of land use setbacks specific to railroad rights-of-way.