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## **I-84 work priority; study will start soon**

### **Getting there: Huge project will resurface, expand freeway lanes**

By Dan Black - Idaho Press-Tribune  
CANYON COUNTY — Commuters, start your engines.

With \$70 million in construction projects slated for Interstate 84 from Caldwell to Meridian, the drive will dramatically change in the next few years. Even with funding now in place, crews won't start work for a while. But highway officials understand the urgency.

"We would like to get this built as soon as possible," Idaho Transportation Department spokesman Mike Maller said.

First, engineering studies need to examine the roadway's base and shape, and the department needs to study sound pollution and conduct public hearings.

As a result, Maller said it's too early to say exactly when work on the interstate widening will begin.

The interchange at Ten Mile Road, however, is now being designed and construction will likely start in late 2008 or early 2009, Maller said.

In its closing days, the Legislature approved floating GARVEE bonds to pay for major roadwork. Those bonds will be paid for with future federal highway money.

The I-84 project is complex because it includes repaving existing lanes as well as adding lanes between Nampa and Meridian. The existing overpasses can accommodate one additional lane in each direction, Maller said.

"There are problems to solve," he said. And engineers will want "to keep traffic disruptions to a minimum."

Engineers have to review the shape and base of the existing road before making any plans.

"We have to look at what's there," Maller said.

The Transportation Department also will study how much noise will be generated and how that will impact area neighborhoods.

### **Comments requested**

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho is collecting public opinion on plans to expand I-84 between Meridian Road and Garrity Boulevard from two to three lanes in each direction.

Ultimately, the freeway will be widened to three lanes in each direction from Caldwell to Meridian.

The agency will accept comments until June 24.

COMPASS has updated its Transportation Improvement Plan to include projects funded by the 2006 Idaho Legislature. Comments can be sent to COMPASS, 800 S. Industry Way, Suite 100, Meridian, ID 83642 or to [ttisdale@compassidaho.org](mailto:ttisdale@compassidaho.org)