Plan in the works to bring pathways to Eagle Road

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MERIDIAN -- The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho, also known as COMPASS, is working with the city of Meridian, the city of Boise and the Idaho Transportation Department to put together a plan for new pathways along both sides of Eagle Road.

Eagle and Fairview Avenue is the busiest intersection in Idaho, with more than 6,000 drivers passing through during rush hour.

COMPASS planners say these new, 10-foot wide pathways designed for cyclists and pedestrians would give people more options to get to nearby businesses and restaurants.

"There's a lot of opportunity on Eagle Road," said Tom Laws, an associate planner.

The goal is to create more connectivity and increase safety for people walking or riding a bike along Eagle from Overland Road all the way to Chinden Boulevard.

Planners have been studying the five-mile stretch and they've identified four segments of Eagle Road that have the most immediate need.

Those areas include the west side of Eagle Road from Ustick Road to River Valley Street, River Valley down to Fairview Avenue and Fairview to East Pine Avenue, in front of Blue Cross.

The 10-foot pathway would be separated from lanes of traffic.

The fourth segment that has been outlined in the early stages of the project is along the east side of Eagle Road from East Pine Avenue to Franklin Road, in front of RC Willey.

"The long-term goal then is once those four are complete, to move on to the next four critical sections and continue working our way with the city of Boise, with the city of Meridian and ITD to make the network continuous," added Laws.

Detailed planning reports are currently in the works and are expected to be completed this fall. At that point, COMPASS with work with the cities involved in the project to apply for funding.
"I think that's a great idea," said Sierra Bush of Boise. "Especially around these shopping districts and areas. It will give people a chance to do something other than driving."

There's no timeline for completion of the project and Laws says the cost estimate for the first four segments of path is around $500,000 each.

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