



News Release

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COMPASS Board Sets State Legislative Priorities Board also approves federal appropriation request

Meridian – The Board of Directors of the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) approved four legislative priorities and position statements for the 2007 Idaho Legislature:

Public Transportation Local Option Tax Authority Legislation

The COMPASS Board of Directors strongly supports legislation providing regional public transportation authorities within the State of Idaho with the ability to request necessary revenue from the citizens through a local option sales tax. The proposed legislation is the recommendation of the Coalition for Regional Public Transportation, a coalition of business and elected leaders of the Treasure Valley.

Second Year Funding Approval of GARVEE Bonding Program

The COMPASS Board of Directors strongly supports the Idaho Transportation Department's proposed GARVEE-related project and funding package. The GARVEE program is a critical tool in Idaho's efforts to meet the challenges and demands of a growing economy and population. While the GARVEE program is not the solution to all of Idaho's transportation needs, it does allow the Idaho Transportation Department to expedite critical projects in a cost efficient manner with limited available revenue. Construction of the transportation corridors in Ada and Canyon Counties as originally identified in the Connecting Idaho program need to remain a priority for GARVEE funding.

Transportation Revenue

The COMPASS Board of Directors strongly supports the introduction of legislation increasing revenue for the transportation system including transit and alternative transportation in the State of Idaho. The Forum on Transportation Investment identified a \$200 million per year shortfall for critical local and state transportation projects over the next 30 years. A functional transportation system is critical to accommodate the population growth and economic viability of the Treasure Valley and State of Idaho.

Treasure Valley Air Quality Council Recommendations

The COMPASS Board of Directors supports locally based proactive measures to protect the Treasure Valley's air quality. COMPASS will monitor recommendations from the Treasure Valley Air Quality Council to the Idaho Legislature. COMPASS will support and advocate for proactive strategies having the best potential to significantly reduce overall emissions and, thus, improve and protect air quality in the region.

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The COMPASS Board also endorsed the following road and transit projects for the Federal FY 2008 Annual Appropriations request, which will be submitted to the Idaho Congressional delegation in February 2007.

A. Roadway projects:

1. Three Cities River Crossing (\$5 million)
2. I-84/Exit 29 Caldwell local improvements (\$2 million)

B. Transit projects

1. Section 5339 Alternatives Analysis (Alternative to I-84 Corridor – Rail Corridor) (\$1-2 million)
2. Rail corridor right-of-way acquisition strategy and associated studies (up to \$1 million)

COMPASS selected these projects based on:

- a. Need
- b. Public support
- c. Local political support
- d. Ability to identify and secure local match requirement
- e. Previously federally funded project
- f. Realistic possibility of success

END