



# News Release

June 20, 2006

Contact:  
Terri Schorzman, 855-2558, ext 231

## ***COMPASS Board Extends Transportation Plan Deadline Extension allows more time to review public comment on Communities in Motion: Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan***

Meridian – The Board of the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS), at their monthly meeting on June 20, 2006, agreed to extend the deadline to adopt ***Communities in Motion: Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan*** for up to 60 days – through September, 2006. ***Communities in Motion*** is the six-county, 20+ year plan that will address issues on the regional transportation system, evaluate the needs for future corridors, and address the effects of growth on transportation

The plan was to be adopted at the July 16, 2006 meeting of the Board, but due to the quality and quantity of public response during the comment period on the draft plan in May, the Board agreed with the project team that more time is needed to review, analyze, and consider input for inclusion.

### ***Summary of Comment Received***

The final comment period began April 18 and ended May 19, 2006. The event for gathering comment, "Communities in Conversation," was the focus from May 5 – 18, 2006. The results concluded that ***72% of respondents favor the plan***. Four major themes emerged from the public comments received:

1. Strong support for a regional transit system with walking and biking paths.
2. Strong support for the new growth scenario, particularly keeping jobs, services and homes closer together.
3. Willingness to support increased taxes, especially for public transportation.
4. Support for improving regional corridors.

### ***How Comment was Gathered***

The focus of the comment period was a special event, "Communities in Conversation." This was a new approach for gathering public comment about transportation issues in the region and for COMPASS in particular. Rather than presenting the draft ***Communities in Motion: Regional Long Range Transportation Plan*** to the community in a typical open house setting, residents were asked to host a meeting with their friends, peers and/or colleagues to review and discuss the plan. Meetings were held in homes, places of work, and community centers. Meeting hosts picked the date, time and location of their meeting. The purpose of the meetings was to provide the public with an opportunity to review and provide input on the draft plan, try a new public involvement activity, and give people a way to channel their concerns about the future of the region.

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800 S. Industry Way, Ste 100

Meridian, ID 83642

P. 208.855.2558

F. 208.855.2559

[www.compassidaho.org](http://www.compassidaho.org)

### *How Many People Participated*

Slightly over 200 bags of meeting materials were distributed to almost 170 people and/or organizations in the six counties comprised of Ada, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Gem and Payette; of these "hosts," i.e., those who received a bag of materials, 47 held meetings. A total of 600 people signed-in as participants in these meetings, 370 submitted comment forms; also many submitted comments who did not attend a meeting but reviewed the material individually. Staff has no idea how many other people reviewed the materials (ideally the other 123 "hosts" who received materials, as well as those with whom they shared the contents of the bag). A number of groups advertised meetings in the local newspaper, thus inviting the wider community.

Summary comments, transcribed full comments, and a summary booklet with an overview of the public involvement process and evaluation of "Communities in Conversation" are located at: [www.communitiesinmotion.org/conversation06](http://www.communitiesinmotion.org/conversation06) or call Terri at 855-2558, ext. 231 for copies.

### *Other COMPASS Board Actions*

At the June meeting, the COMPASS Board approved release of the draft FY2007-2011 Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) for Northern Ada County and the Nampa Urbanized Area for public comment. The public comment period on these TIPs will run from July 6 through August 3, 2006.

The next COMPASS Board meeting will be held on July 16, 2006, at the Ada County Courthouse.

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