



TREASURE VALLEY HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT STUDY
DOWNTOWN POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, 3:30 P.M.
Monday, January 12, 2009
LOCATION: Capital City Development Corporation, Conference Room
121 N. 9th Street #501, Boise, Idaho

AGENDA

Item	Speaker	Action Needed	Time/ Documentation
1. Review Minutes – September 8, 2008 <i>Pages 2-4</i>	Kelli Fairless	Approval	5 Minutes Information Attached
2. Downtown Multimodal Center a. Site H Update * <i>Pages 5-13</i> 1) Environmental Assessment Documents 2) Revised Site Design 3) Bus Operations Assessment * 4) November Multimodal Center Strategic Planning Session 5) November Bellevue Transit Center Tour b. Alternative Site Location Framework * 1) Sequence of events memorandum * <i>Pages 14-17</i>	Bob Post Kelli Fairless	Review	40 Minutes <i>Information Attached</i>
3. Downtown Streetcar a. Project Update b. Next Steps	Jon Cecil	Review	20 Minutes
4. Priority Corridor Pre-Alternatives Analysis * <i>Pages 18-20</i>	Charles Trainor	Review	10 Minutes <i>Information Attached</i>
5. Future Meetings	Kelli Fairless	Review	10 Minutes



**Treasure Valley High Capacity Transit Study
Downtown Policy Advisory Committee
September 8, 2008 Meeting Minutes
Capital City Development Corporation Conference Room
Boise, Idaho**

Attendees:

- Rebecca Arnold, Commissioner, Ada County Highway District
- A.J. Balukoff, Community Planning Association Representative
- Ed Dahlberg, Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce Representative
- David Eberle, Councilman, City of Boise
- Dale Higer, Private Sector Representative – At Large
- Rob Hopper, Councilman, City of Caldwell, Valley Regional Transit Representative
- Cheryl Larabee, Capital City Corporation Board of Directors
- Monte McClure, Idaho Transportation Board
- Jim Tomlinson, Downtown Boise Association Representative
- Paul Woods, Commissioner, Ada County

Others:

- Nancy Brecks, Community Planning Association
- Jon Cecil, Capital City Development Corporation
- Andy Daleiden, Kittelson & Associates
- Kelli Fairless, Valley Regional Transit
- Miguel Gaddi, HDR
- Mike Hall, Capital City Development Corporation
- Kathleen Lacey, City of Boise
- Carter MacNichol, Shields Obletz Johnsen
- Bob Post, URS Corporation
- Charles Trainor, Community Planning Association

Call to Order

Chair Higer called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. Review June 9, 2008, DPAC Meeting Minutes

A.J. Balukoff moved and Rob Hopper seconded approval of the June 9, 2008, DPAC meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Rebecca Arnold was not present for the vote on the Consent Agenda. Prior to the meeting she requested via email, that her vote on Agenda Item 3, be changed from "no" to "abstain." She stated in her email, "I voted no on the motion because I felt it was inappropriate for me, as an ACHD commissioner, to vote "yes" on the motion when the agency responsible for the right of way - ACHD - had not reviewed and acted on the motion. I probably should have abstained rather than voting no." The June 9, 2008, meeting minutes were amended to reflect the request from Rebecca.

2. Review Downtown Circulator

Bob Post stated that the circulator portion of the TVHCTS is in the process of transitioning from the current leadership of COMPASS and VRT to the City of Boise and CCDC. As an element of the transition, a Conceptual Design Report for a streetcar option was presented to DTAC and DPAC on June 9, 2008. As a follow up to the Conceptual Design report, the consulting team was requested to produce a series of technical memorandums that would include the planning phase of the project. The memorandums also serve to complete the original project scope of work on the circulator by defining both the streetcar and bus option.

Bob reviewed the technical memorandums with the Committee, which are intended to help address questions that may arise regarding the concept design of the streetcar option and assist in focusing the initial portion of the design phase on project elements that can most significantly impact projects costs and schedules:

- Streetcar Concept Design Update
- Opportunities and Constraints
- Traffic Review
- Environmental Review
- Mode Assessment
- Bus Circulator Option

After discussion, **David Eberle moved and Cheryl Larabee seconded acceptance of the technical memorandums as completion of URS' work on the circulator project and recognize the transfer of the circulator oversight to Boise City and CCDC. Motion passed unanimously.**

3. Review Federal Funding Issues for Streetcars

Bob Post reviewed FTA's funding programs for "fixed guideway" transit projects. The overall program is referred to as the New Starts Grant Program, which is a discretionary and competitive program. The Boise Circulator would fall under the "Small Starts" Program. The time required to address the FTA requirements in that category would likely fall into the range of six to eight years with no guarantee the end result would be favorable to the funding of a project. Within the last four years, no streetcar/rail projects have been approved, and it would need a strong push from the Congressional Delegation. Staff recommendation under the current circumstances is to explore the possibility of securing sufficient local funding for the proposed project.

4. Review Downtown Multimodal Center

Bob Post provided an overview of the June 26-27, transit tour of Portland, Salem, Eugene and Springfield, Oregon taken by representatives of Valley Regional Transit, Capital City Development Corporation, Ada County Highway District and the Downtown Boise Association.

Bob said that a conference call has been scheduled for September 9, 2008, with FTA to review their comments on the Site H NEPA documents.

5. **Schedule and Next Steps**

The next meeting of DPAC is tentatively scheduled for October 13, 2008, subject to change if FTA doesn't act before then.

Adjournment

David Eberle moved and Monte McClure seconded adjournment at 5:05 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

January 12, 2009

Topic: 2a. Update; Multimodal Center Site H

Summary:

Since the last project update provided in a November 5, 2008 memorandum, a number of activities have occurred related to advancing the Site H preferred multimodal center alternative towards completion of the process of securing from the Federal Transit Administration approval to initiate site acquisition and the subsequent project implementation. The following is a brief description of the key activities that have occurred since early November.

Conceptual Design – Based on the indication that the preferred type of on-site joint development is a parking structure and that the long-term accommodation of bus service in the downtown would include two transit centers, the previously developed site concept designs were modified. The earlier designs reviewed with the DTAC and DPAC were based on accommodating an office tower above the multimodal center and a single downtown multimodal transit facility at Site H accommodating eleven to thirteen bus bays. The revised conceptual design reflects the reduced number of permanent bus bays required under the dual transit center concept as well as the impact of providing vertical auto access into a parking structure located above the multimodal center. In particular, the revised design requires the accommodation of eight to nine permanent bus bays verses the eleven to thirteen bays previously planned. The attached schematic drawings, site plan and first (ground level) floor plan illustrate how the revised definition of the multimodal center and parking structure could be accommodated on Site H.

November 4, Strategic Implementation Workshop – On November 4, a strategic workshop focused on the identification of the steps required to implement the Site H multimodal center was held at the Boise City Hall. The session was attended by representatives of VRT, COMPASS, City of Boise, CCDC, ACHD and ITD. The workshop reviewed the current status of the project, the objectives for the multimodal center, the anticipated challenges in implementing the project and the specific strategic actions that would be required to successfully complete the project. For the strategic actions identified, expectations were developed as were specific assignments and schedules. Although some of the items have advanced, others have been suspended pending resolution of the current consideration of other alternatives for location of the multimodal center.

Bus Operations Assessment – With the change towards an eventual dual downtown transit center concept, it was necessary to undertake a detailed assessment of how the bus system might function during an interim period when only a west (Site H) site is available as the only downtown facility. Nelson/Nygaard was commissioned to undertake a line-by-line review of the bus system operations during the period that a Site

H facility would be available but the planned east end facility was yet to be developed. An initial work session was held in Boise to explore a range of potential solutions. A detailed technical memorandum was then produced outlining the evaluation of four options/alternatives for assignment of bus layovers under the assumption eight or nine bus bays will be made available within the Site H multimodal facility. The remaining three or four layover locations not able to be accommodated on-site would need designated layover locations within the downtown until a permanent east-end facility could be developed. The four options considered in this detailed review included; (1) Site H plus four designated interim layover bays on the east side of 11th Street, (2) Site H plus four designated layover bays at the current Main Street Transit Center, (3) Site H plus four designated layover bays on Bannock between 9th and 10th Streets, and (4) Site H plus four designated layover bays on 11th between Main and Idaho. Each alternative was evaluated in detail regarding the impact on bus operations and routings, ease of transfers between lines, access for trips destined to the east end of the downtown, overall efficiency and any land use conflicts. The study concludes that the best overall solution from a transit/transit user perspective is the first options listed above, Site H with eight or nine internal bays with the remaining three or four bays located on the east side of 11th Street directly adjacent Site H.

Environmental Assessment – The revised Environmental Assessment has been completed in draft form. Included is the required separate submittal to the SHPO, a revised FTA Joint Development checklist reflecting the change in the development proposal, and the Environmental Assessment document. If the decision is to pursue the Site H option, the Draft documents will be forwarded to the FTA after a final review and editing.

November 12, Bellevue Transit Center Tour – The Bellevue tour offered the opportunity to view a transit center that is surrounded by a combination of existing and under construction commercial and office development. A summary of the tour will be given at the January 12, meeting.

Staff Recommendation / Request:

This report on the Site H Multimodal Center is intended to bring the DTAC and DPAC up to date on the current status of the project as well as work undertaken to advance the project towards receipt of the required FTA approvals.

Implication (policy and/or financial):

Site H has been both recommended and adopted as the locally preferred alternative for the location of a downtown multimodal transit center. Work has continued to advance the Site H alternative towards implementation. Current efforts to review other location options will be discussed at the January 12, meeting of the DTAC and DPAC.

Highlights:

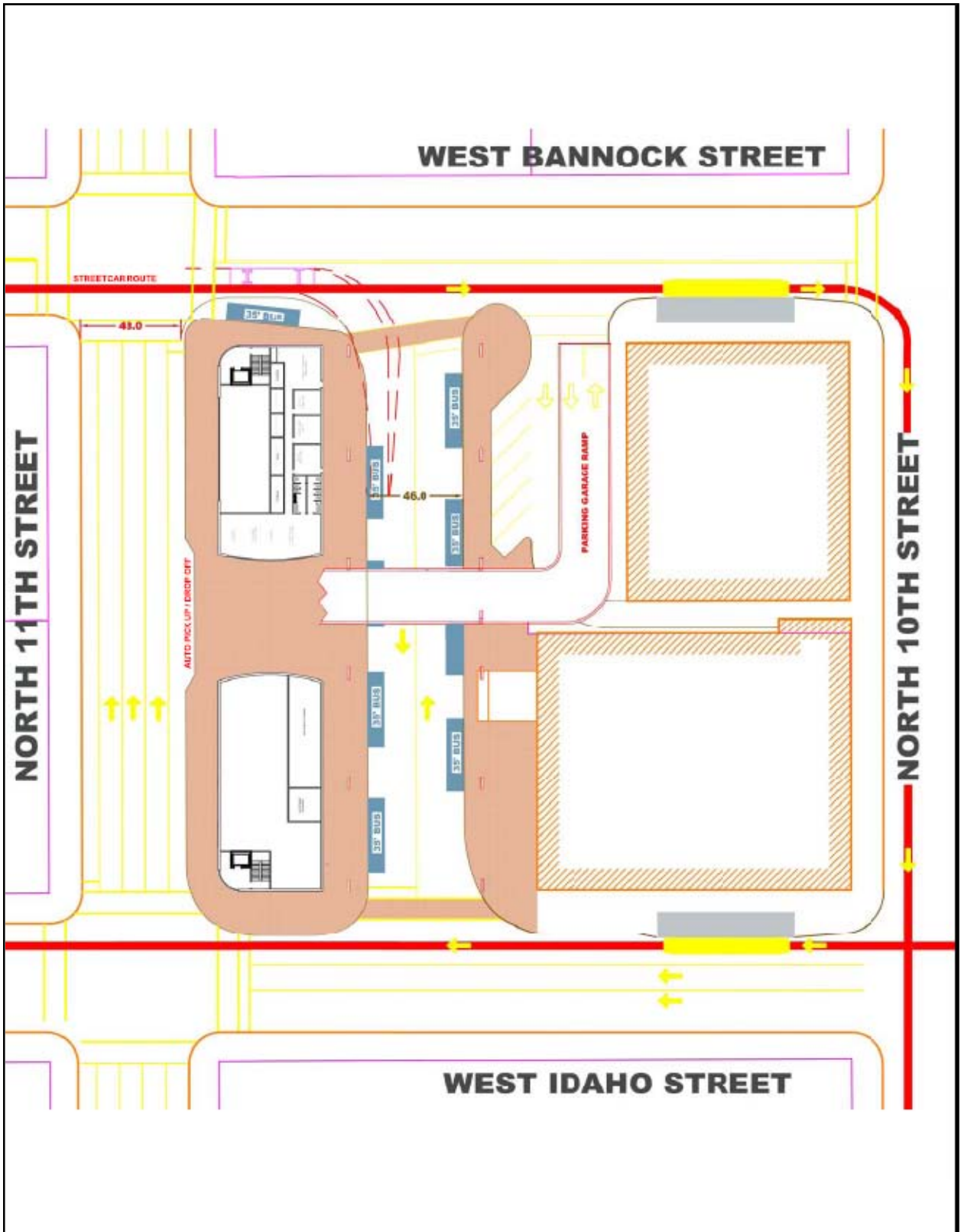
- Completion of the Site H draft Environmental Assessment documents
- Completion of an updated set of site conceptual design documents
- Recommendation of an interim bus operating plan

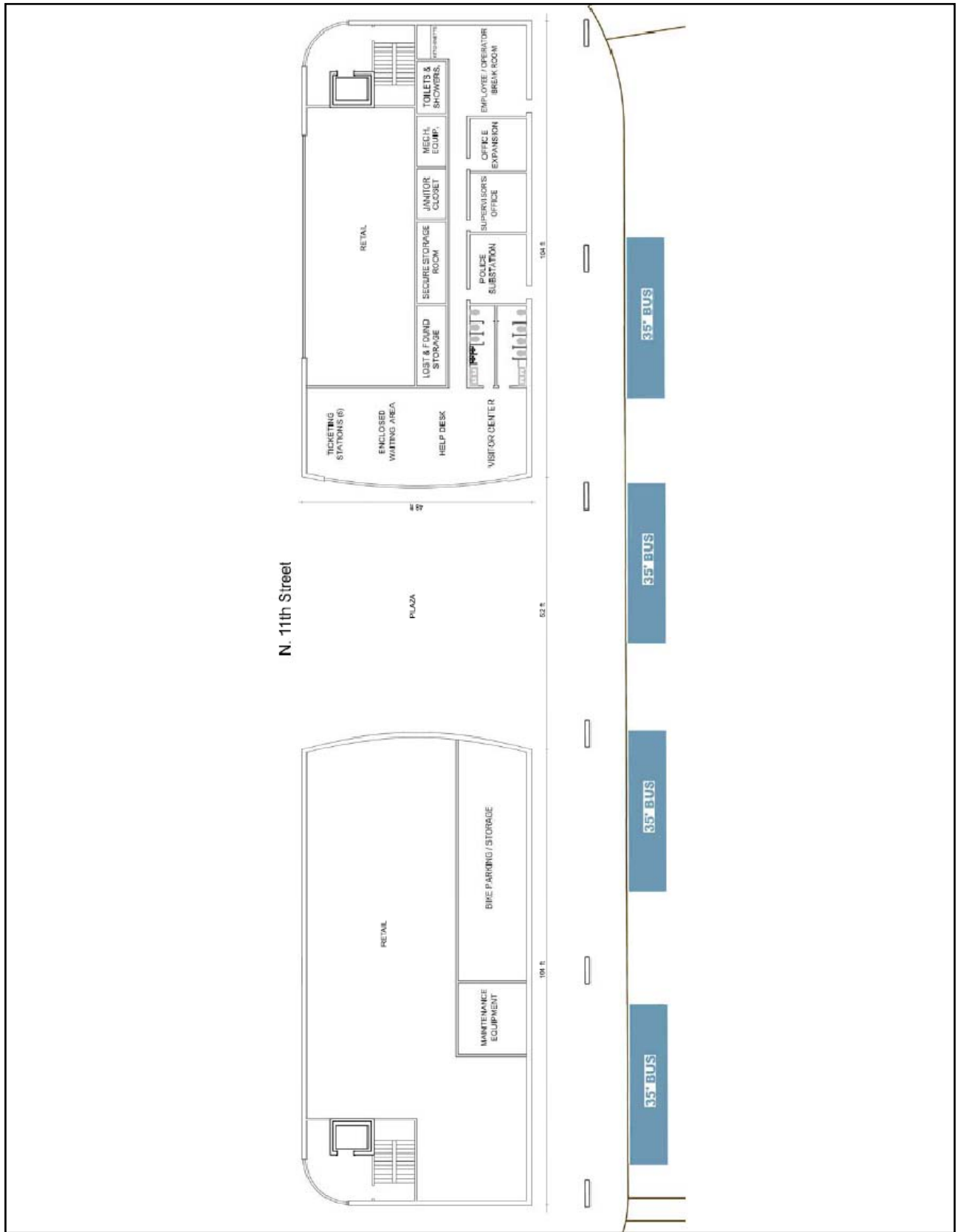
More Information / Attachments:

Attachments - Revised Site H concept designs

Contact - Bob Post, URS Project Manager at 503 948-7230

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TREASURE VALLEY HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT STUDY

Site H Multi Modal Center

Review of Operating Alternatives

Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates

December 15, 2008

Summary

This summary has been extracted from the full report of 27 pages prepared by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates. The full report can be requested from COMPASS by contacting Charles Trainor at ctrainor@compassidaho.org.

The figure below presents a summary of each service option/alternative relative to the goals identified in this memorandum. The first three goals have a direct impact on passenger convenience: facilitating transfers, focusing amenities at one transit center and reducing confusion for transferring riders; and providing access to destinations on the eastside of downtown without inconvenient transfers. The fourth goal addresses the efficiency and cost of operations. This can also impact passengers when poor reliability makes buses run late. The final goal addresses the impacts that bus operations and layovers have on neighboring developments.

Option/Alternative	Transfers	Ease-of-Use	Access to Eastside	Efficiency	Land Use Conflicts
Option 1 (MMC)	↑↑	↑↑	↔	↓	↑
Option 2 (MMC + Main)	↓↓	↓	↑	↓	↑
Alternative A (MMC + Bannock)	↔	↔	↔	↓↓	↓
Alternative B (MMC + 11 th S. of Idaho)	↑	↑	↔	↓↓	↑

Note: Option 1 Land Use Conflicts are rated the same as the current downtown transit center due to constraints on the size of the MMC

Legend: Strongly Beneficial Beneficial Neutral Adverse Strongly Adverse
 ↑↑ ↑ ↔ ↓ ↓↓

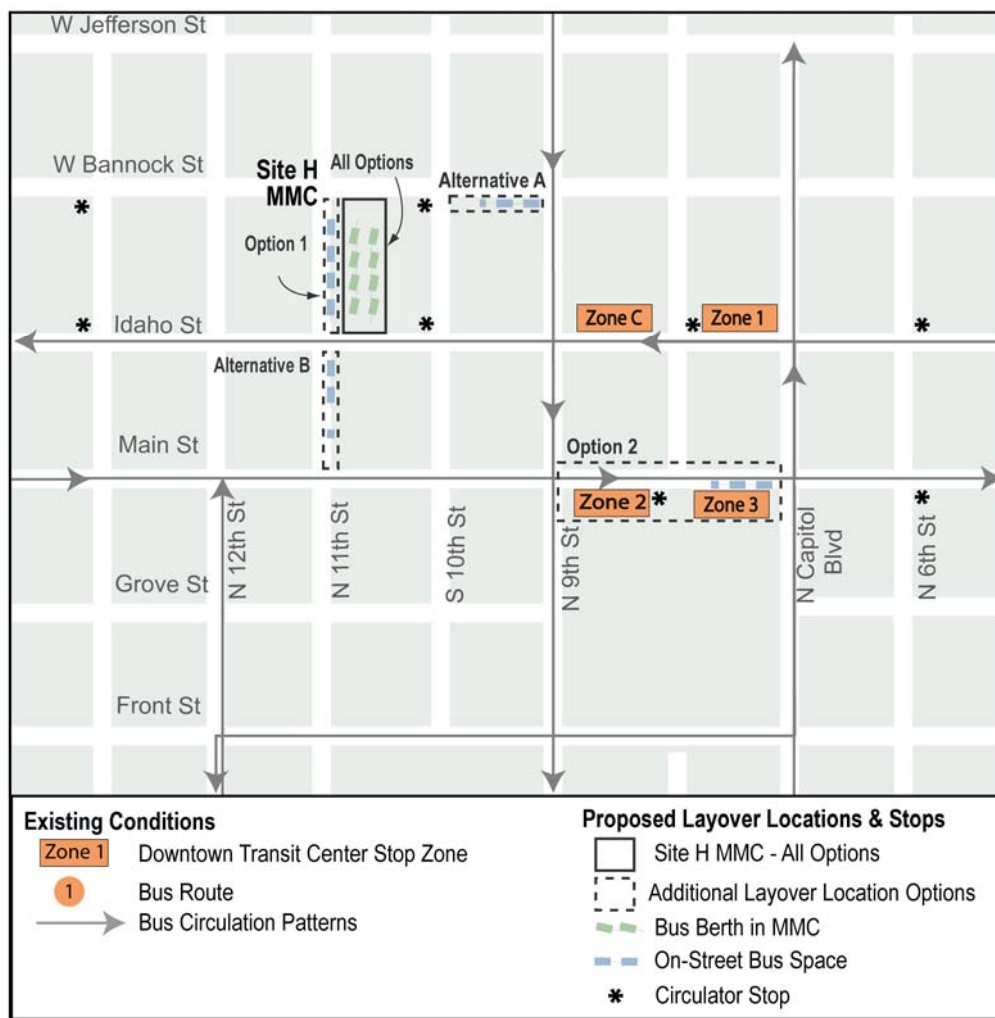
While all service scenarios are functional from a transit operations standpoint, the viability of each alternative must ultimately be viewed by putting the passenger first. This means that configurations must meet a minimum level of convenience and safety for all passengers, including those who are disabled or who move slowly.

- VRT's current downtown operations are less than ideal due to the need for passengers to cross multiple streets and navigate transfers where buses are out of the sightline of deboarding passengers.
- Option 1 is optimal from a passenger perspective and provides the highest level of convenience, intuitive wayfinding and passenger safety.
- Option 2 is unacceptable in that passengers would be required to travel long distances, cross multiple streets and transfer to buses that are "out of sight." While this replicates the current condition, it is even more severe in terms of the distances involved.

- Option 2A is better than 2, but has similar issues.
- Option 2B is the most acceptable version of Option 2 because it provides passengers with direct line-of-sight from off-site bus bays (on 11th) and minimizes the need for street crossings.

In addition to the alternatives reviewed in this memorandum, there is an opportunity to review other transit center alternatives that rely on existing street ROW to accommodate vehicle layover and provide high quality passenger facilities while meeting the operational efficiency and land use goals.

Figure 1 Proposed Bus Layover Locations



Nelson | Nygaard
consulting associates

GIS Data Source: ESRI, Tiger

- Note: Map indicates 8 bus berths on site at MMC. This could be 8 or 9 in all alternatives based on final design.

DOWNTOWN BOISE MULTI-MODAL CENTER - Evaluation Criteria**Selection of a Preferred Location*****Transportation***

- *Provides for an effective consolidation of local and regional transit services at a single downtown location*
- *Provides direct access to the Downtown Circulator and Primary Corridor alignment alternatives*
- *Convenient pedestrian access to downtown destinations*
- *Presence of Bicycle network access*
- *Minimizes the traffic impacts on adjacent streets and intersections*
- *Minimizes route deviation for existing and planned transit services*

Site Design

- *Site size accommodates the desired functions*
- *Site configuration and effectiveness in accommodating facility desired functions*
- *Minimizes conflicts with adjacent development/streets*
- *Ability to provide security through visibility from major streets and activity centers*
- *Ability to efficiently accommodate transit user transfers*

Land Use and Development

- *Favorable land use and zoning designations*
- *Site ownership and availability*
- *Site compatibility with downtown planning and development objectives*

Environmental and Impacts

- *Number of displacements*
- *Ability to utilize an abbreviated environmental clearance process*
- *Avoids significant/known environmental issues*

Costs and Financing

- *Site acquisition costs*
- *Order of magnitude capital cost estimate*
- *Facility operating cost impacts*
- *Availability of local funding options*
- *Potential for public-private partnerships and/or in-kind matching contributions as methods to reduce local financial requirements*

Implementation Considerations

- *Site constructability*
- *Permitting requirements and timelines*
- *Schedule and schedule impediments*

Item 2b.1 – Sequence of Events

The following is an outline of a process designed to add a new Downtown Boise Multimodal Center project alternative for consideration as the preferred alternative to be advanced for federal funding. The process will need to fit within a timeframe of having a NEPA document in the hands of FTA and a final environmental approval completed and in place by mid-Summer 2009.

Summary of Key Tasks

- I. Completion of the Site H Environmental Assessment
(this document has been completed and is being held pending a final site selection decision)
- II. New Project Alternative
 - Define and describe the Alternative
 - Revise as necessary the project Purpose and Needs statement and Goals and Objectives
 - Review the listing of mandatory functions and modify as necessary
 - Develop a project statement of purpose (rationale – the primary audience is the FTA)
 - Develop a project concept design consistent with the level of detail included in the final Site H design
 - Conduct a revised bus operations assessment
 - Conduct a comparative evaluation and provide documentation suitable for inclusion in the FTA NEPA document (see note on next page)
 - Public Processes
 - Introduce a new option to DTAC & DPAC
 - conduct a public open house and provide public information on the new option (mid-to-late February timeframe)
 - review and redefine if necessary the project decision processes (ie, what other opportunities the public has to access the decision process)
 - Refine the project design concept and cost estimate
 - Based on above steps and input, finalize the concept design consistent with the level of detail included in the final Site H concept designs
 - develop a project order-of-magnitude cost estimate
 - FTA and NEPA
 - Schedule an early meeting with FTA
 -Review current project status and the new alternative
 -Develop agreement on process going forward
 -Discuss DCE vs EA (assume EA for planning purposes)
 - Develop Draft Environmental Assessment & SHPO submittal

Multimodal Center

Key Points of Discussion:

- When is the earliest a decision can be finalized regarding the preferred alternative
- FTA will continue to insist on a description of how the preferred alternative was selected...including a comparison of the selected option against other options as well as the existing Idaho/Main Transit Center. Do we compare a new site alternative against Site H...or Site H and Site A
- In theory, both the currently adopted Site H and a new alternative could be incorporated into a single EA document. The nature of the EA document would change, focusing more on a detailed comparison of the alternatives. It would also become a more complicated document and would have the effect of deferring a decision until the NEPA document was completed. This approach would likely require more time to complete the environmental document and therefore the FTA approval processes. It would appear an option of have the EA document addressing both alternatives would be an advantage only if we believe a decision is not forthcoming in the near-term or the decision-makers will want a more detailed vetting of the advantages/disadvantages of the two (or three) options

T:\FY09\600 Projects\631 TVHCTS\Meetings\DTAC\Agendas-Packets\1-12-09\TVHCT MMC Option Outline 1-1-09.doc

January 2, 2009

Topic: 4. Priority Corridor Pre-Alternatives Analysis Study

Summary:

The Treasure Valley High Capacity Transit Study includes three major elements:

- The downtown Boise multi-modal center site selection and NEPA analysis;
- Identification of an alignment and mode for a downtown Boise circulator service, and;
- A preliminary alternatives analysis (AA) for the Treasure Valley Priority Corridor (see attached corridor area) which will lay the ground work for a full alternatives analysis.

Work to date has focused on the first two elements. In late November 2008, the consulting team initiated work on the third element. This memo summarizes the intent of the work and describes the review process.

One purpose of evaluating transit alternatives in the Treasure Valley Corridor is to position the corridor to potentially compete for federal New Starts funding. New Starts is a transit capital grant program overseen by FTA to provide capital grants to meritorious transit projects throughout the country. The New Starts program (officially known as the Section 5309 Capital Investment Grant Program) was established by Congress to assist local agencies in funding transit capital projects (including light rail, commuter rail and bus rapid transit). New Starts is a discretionary and competitive grant program, and over the years FTA has established guidance for applications that include extensive requirements regarding system planning, alternatives analysis and technical analysis. The FTA process is aimed at demonstrating the merits of the various projects and providing data and analysis with which to compare competing projects from across the country.

A full AA could cost as much as \$2 million, based on experiences in other regions. This pre-AA is intended to lay out the general issues, evaluate the basic alignment and modal options, and provide an initial evaluation of ridership and system benefits. This study includes the following elements:

- Definition of the study corridor
- Assessment of demographic and political context of the corridor
- Creation of an understanding corridor travel markets
- Assessment of potential corridor transit markets
- Definition and evaluation of potential HCT modes
- Definition and evaluation of potential HCT alignments
- Preparation of a draft problem statement for the corridor
- Preparation of draft evaluation criteria
- Recommendation of technical methods for the AA

The review process for the Pre-AA Study will require involvement by a broader group of agencies than involved in the Downtown Boise Multi-modal Center and Circulator elements. The process needs to involve land use and transportation entities in the general study area which connects between Caldwell and Boise. This would require the following agencies to participate:

- Boise
- Garden City
- Meridian
- Nampa
- Caldwell
- Ada County
- Canyon County
- Ada County Highway District
- Nampa Highway District
- Canyon Highway District No. 4
- Idaho Transportation Department

Rather than creating new committees, the Pre-AA Study will be reviewed by two existing groups. The Valley Regional Transit Ways and Means Committee will provide the policy guidance, while the COMPASS Regional Technical Advisory Committee will be used for technical guidance and recommendation. Some of the current members of the Downtown Technical Advisory Committee already sit on the RTAC, and all of the above agencies are represented on RTAC.

Staff Recommendation / Request:

No action is recommended.

Implication (policy and/ or financial):

This task will draw upon approximately \$170,000 designated under the TVHCTS budget for the Priority Corridor. Results will provide information for future studies, specifically a full AA, for which earmark funds may be requested.

Highlights:

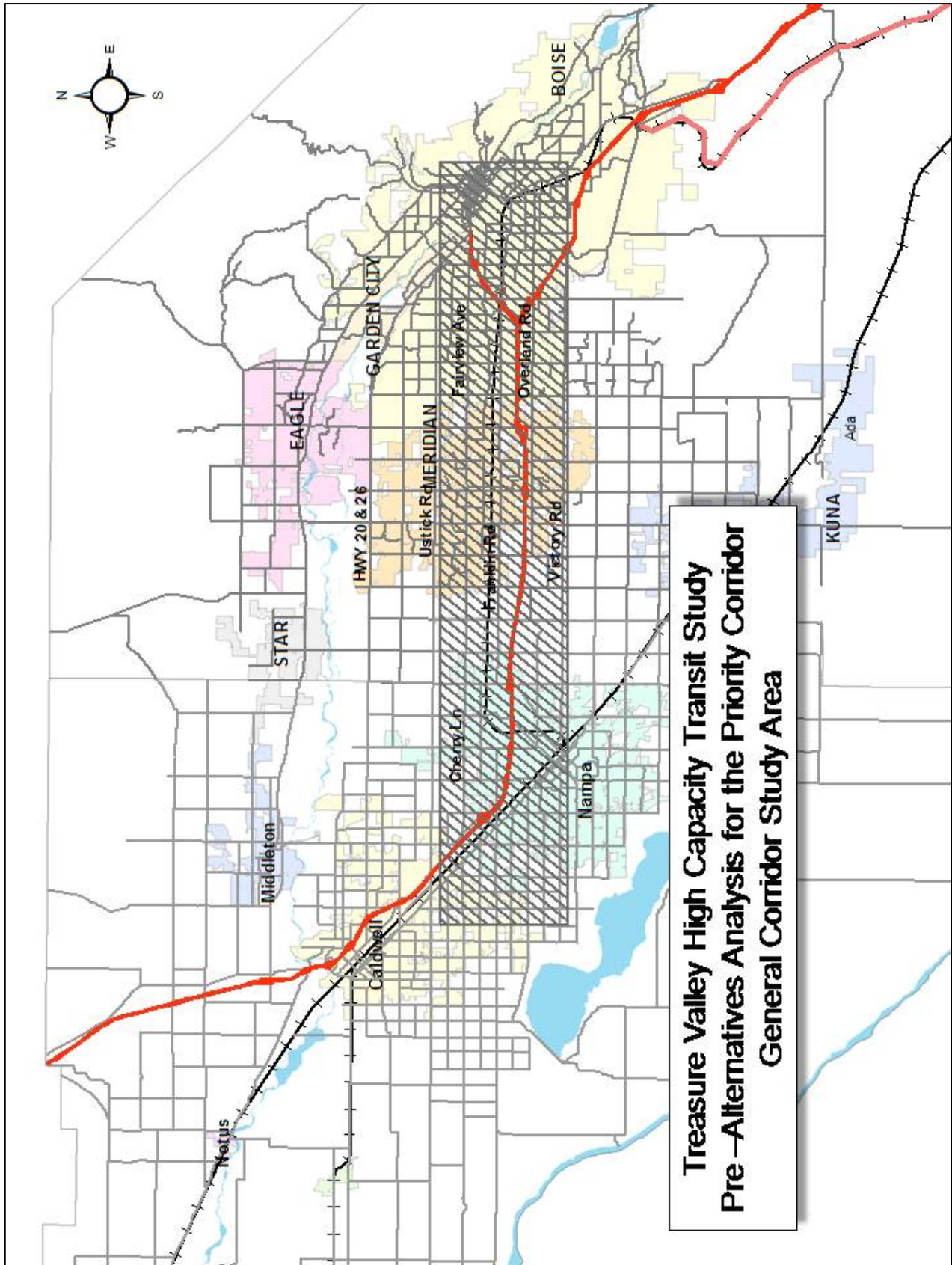
The Pre-AA will establish the “purpose and need,” compile land use and transportation information, evaluate alignment alternatives, assess modal alternatives (commuter rail, light rail and bus rapid transit), and develop preliminary ridership and benefits. The Study Area contains 1/3 of the current population of the region and 2/3 of the jobs.

More Information / Attachments:

Attachment 1 – General Study Area for Pre-AA

For information contact Charles Trainor at 855-2558 ext. 232 or ctrainor@compassidaho.org.

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**Treasure Valley High Capacity Transit Study
Pre-Alternatives Analysis for the Priority Corridor
General Corridor Study Area**