



COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION  
of Southwest Idaho

## Transit Improvements

### Priorities 11, 16, and 29

#### Background

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) created the *valleyconnect* plan as a vision of the area’s comprehensive alternative transportation system. It takes into account Treasure Valley growth projections as well as regional and local land use and road plans.<sup>1</sup> The alternative transportation options identified in *valleyconnect* build off of the existing transit system.

*Valleyconnect* does not specify time frames for implementing its proposed alternative transportation projects, primarily because funding is limited. While budget estimates have been developed for operating and capital components of the *valleyconnect* plan, a more specific implementation timeline and budget will be established should a dedicated funding source become available.

For the purposes of CIM 2040, *valleyconnect* elements were broken into near- and medium-term categories for implementation. Additionally, a long-term improvement category includes proposals that would accommodate transit-supportive densities, based on development patterns in the approved CIM 2040 Vision.

#### Problem

The Treasure Valley’s alternative transportation system does not meet the current needs of the region. As the region grows, the need for alternative transportation options will continue to increase.

The table below reflects the region’s current transit system, as well as what it could look by 2040 should funding become available for any or all of the near-term, medium-term, and long-term priorities proposed in CIM 2040.

#### Population, households, and jobs within one-quarter mile of bus stops

Demographic Served	Today’s Transit System	Future Transit System, per 2040 Vision		
	Existing System 2013	Near-Term 2040 <sup>2</sup>	Medium-Term 2040	Long-Term 2040
Population	35%	28%	44%	51%
Households	40%	33%	48%	55%
Employment	63%	51%	69%	74%

<sup>1</sup> [www.valleyregionaltransit.org/PROJECTSSTUDIES/VALLEYCONNECT/tabid/185/Default.aspx](http://www.valleyregionaltransit.org/PROJECTSSTUDIES/VALLEYCONNECT/tabid/185/Default.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> The near term improvements do not expand the system, but add more frequent service: the near term coverage/service area would be the same as the 2010 system.



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#### Transit Functional Classification

VRT developed the following functional classification descriptions to define existing and future transit service in Ada and Canyon Counties.

Transit Type	Transit Features
Premium Service	Every 10 to 30 minutes all day. Dedicated right of way. Limited stops.
Express Service	Every 15 to 30 minutes during peak hours, every 30 to 60 minutes midday. Limited stops.
Employer Express Service	Every 30 minutes during peak hours
Primary Service	Every 15 to 30 minutes during peak hours, every 30 to 60 minutes midday. Frequent stops.
Secondary Service	Every 30 to 60 minutes all day. Frequent stops.
Rural Service	Every 60 minutes all day. Frequent stops.
Flex Service	Up to 60 minutes all day. Deviates from set route.
Demand Response	By reservation.
Intercity Services	Services that extend beyond Ada and Canyon County. Frequencies vary.

#### Near-Term Improvements (Priority 11)

Near-term projects would expand service *frequencies* within the existing transit network (2013 routes). No new routes are being added to the existing network, but some route numbers may change. Frequency upgrades are defined in the *valleyconnect* plan.<sup>3</sup>

Within Ada County:

- Ten transit routes will continue to operate with similar service frequencies.
- Seven routes will be upgraded from secondary service to primary service.

Within Canyon County:

- Four of the existing secondary service routes will be changed to flex services.
- One existing secondary service route will be upgraded to primary service.
- One existing flex service area and one existing secondary service route will remain the same in the Canyon County system.

Intercounty (running between Ada and Canyon Counties):

- Three routes will be consolidated, but the overall service will increase.
- Two routes will be upgraded from employer express service to express service

<sup>3</sup> [www.valleyregionaltransit.org/PROJECTSSTUDIES/VALLEYCONNECT/tabid/185/Default.aspx](http://www.valleyregionaltransit.org/PROJECTSSTUDIES/VALLEYCONNECT/tabid/185/Default.aspx)



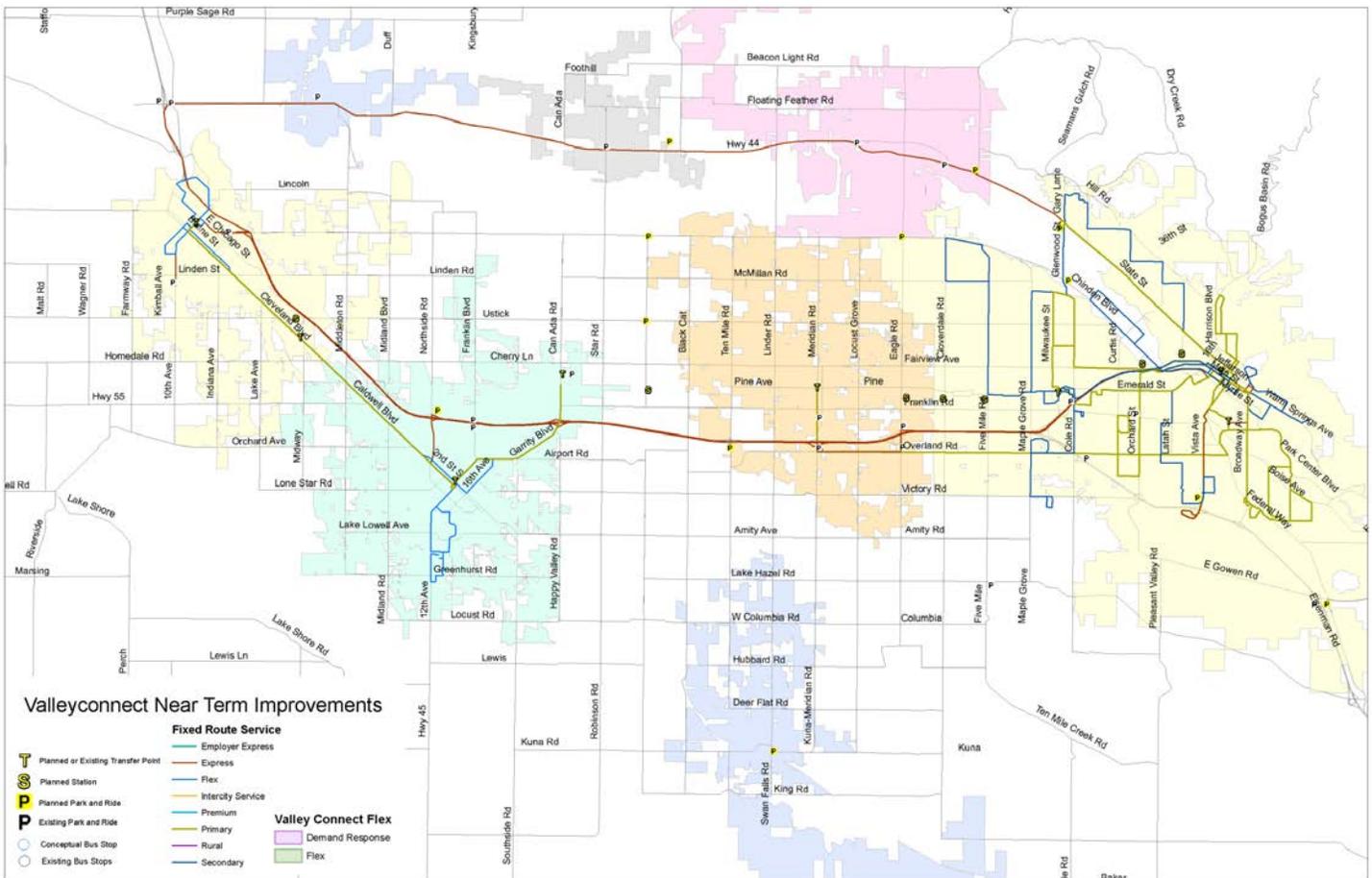
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Transit stations will be developed as appropriate to the service changes, and where funding is available. In January 2014 the estimated cost to implement the near-term improvements, increasing services on existing routes and developing transit stations, was \$846.9 million; of that amount, \$487.1 million is not yet funded.

See the *valleyconnect* plan for more information on proposed services.<sup>4</sup>



**Near-term improvements: increased frequencies on the existing route system**

### Medium-Term Improvements (Priority 16)

Medium-term projects add new routes to the near-term transit network.

Within Ada County:

- Five secondary service routes and two primary service routes will be added.
- Four new flex service areas and one employer express service route are included.

Within Canyon County:

- Two new secondary service routes and two new rural service routes will be added.

<sup>4</sup> [www.valleyregionaltransit.org/PROJECTSSTUDIES/VALLEYCONNECT/tabid/185/Default.aspx](http://www.valleyregionaltransit.org/PROJECTSSTUDIES/VALLEYCONNECT/tabid/185/Default.aspx)



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## Transit Improvements

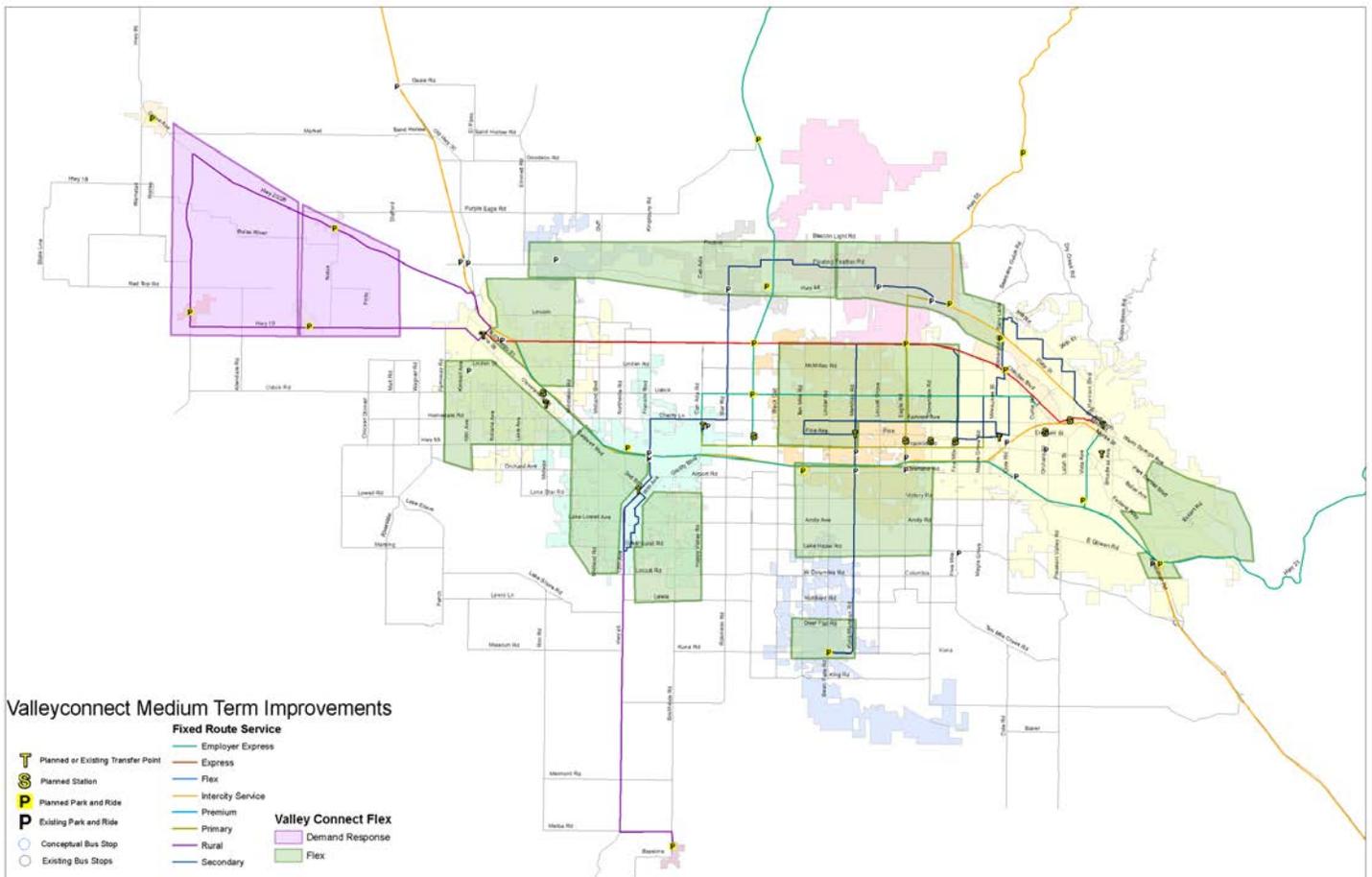
### Priorities 11, 16, and 29

#### Intercounty:

- Five new employer express service routes and one additional express service route are included between Ada and Canyon counties.
- Five new intercity routes will be added that connect other counties to Ada and Canyon Counties.

Transit stations will be developed as appropriate to the service changes, and where funding is available. In January 2014 the estimated cost to implement the medium-term improvements, adding approximately 20 new routes to the near-term improvements, was \$470.6 million.

See the *valleyconnect* plan for more information on proposed services.



**Medium-term improvements build upon near-term improvements (existing routes not shown)**

### Long-Term Improvements (Priority 29)

COMPASS and VRT worked together to identify the transit services and expansion necessary to support the CIM 2040 preferred growth scenario.

The long-term transit evaluation considered the following factors:

- the number of dwelling units per acre
- job density: the number of jobs per acre by traffic analysis zone
- landmark destinations: major destinations, including hospitals, universities, and employment centers
- connection/feeds to high-capacity corridors: linking bus services to potential high-capacity corridors



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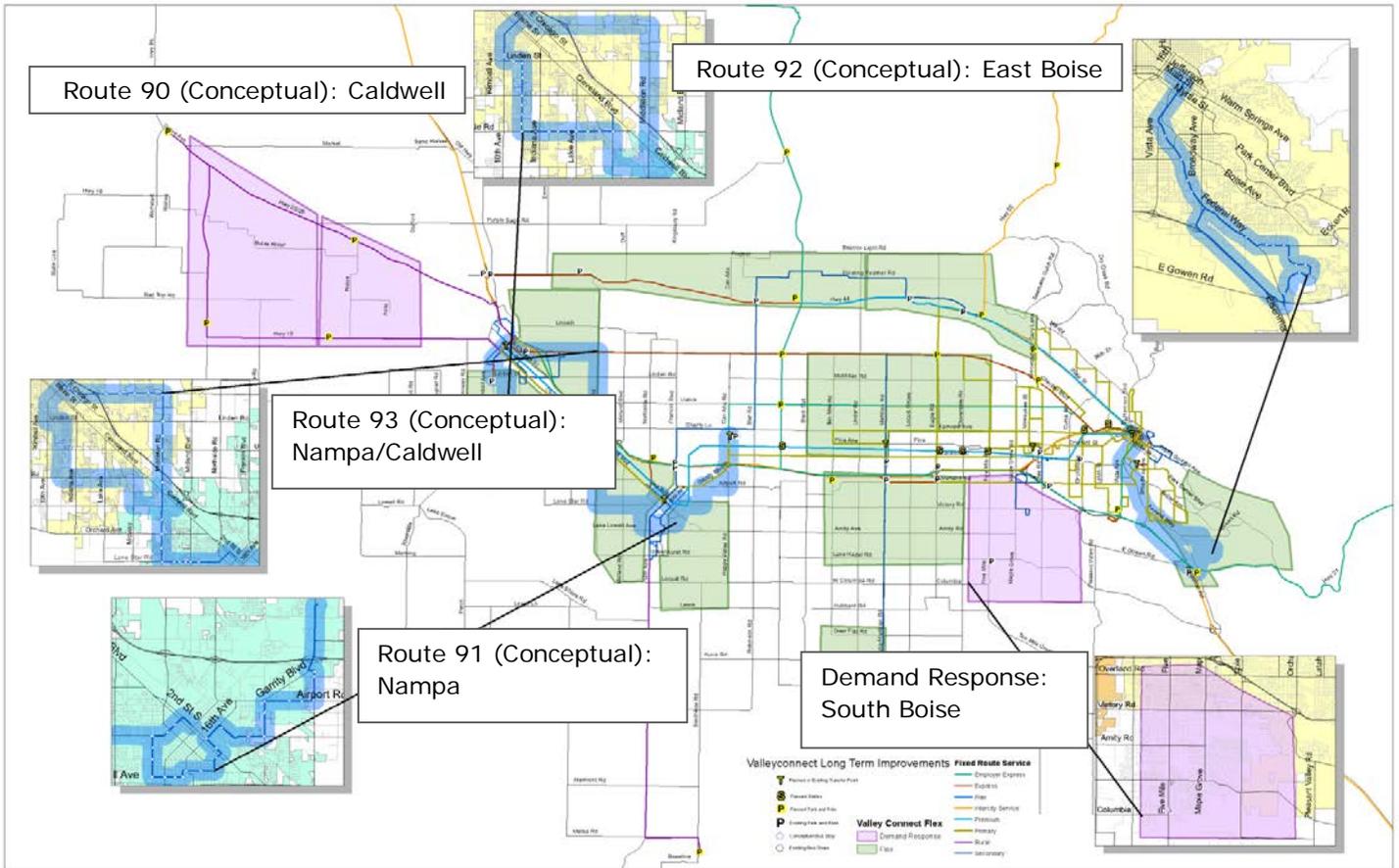
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The evaluation resulted in recommendations for long-term improvements to the ValleyRide bus system:

- In Ada County, upgrade seven routes from secondary services to primary services.
- In Ada County, add a secondary service route and a demand-response area.
- In Canyon County, add three new secondary service routes.

In January 2014 the estimated cost to expand the near- and medium-term improvements with more frequent services, and adding new service routes, was \$295.1 million.



Long-term improvements: New routes identified in map insets (all routes shown)

### Transit Centers

Transit centers are locations where a significant number of transit routes come together so that passengers can transfer between buses or other modes of transportation. They must be large enough for several buses to pull in simultaneously and have parking for customers. Currently, there are four transit centers, and *valleyconnect* calls for three more. An additional center is in development at the Happy Day location on Caldwell-Nampa Boulevard near Laster Lane in Caldwell. Also, the downtown Boise transit (multimodal) center is being relocated to improve traffic flow and provide parking at the facility. Transit station upgrades and expansions would be developed as appropriate to the service changes, and where funding is available. (High-capacity stations are referenced in the *valleyconnect* plan, but will be prioritized separately given the magnitude of the proposed projects.)



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Transit Center	Status
Downtown Boise Multimodal Center	In development
BSU Transfer Center	Existing
Caldwell Transfer Center	Proposed in <i>valleyconnect</i>
College of Western Idaho Transfer Center	Existing/Improvements in development
Happy Day Transfer Center	In development
Meridian Transfer Center	Proposed in <i>valleyconnect</i>
Nampa Transfer Center	Proposed in <i>valleyconnect</i>
Towne Square Mall Transfer Center	Existing

### Operations, Management and Technology Projects

The following general categories of investments are proposed for the Treasure Valley transit system:

- technology that helps passengers, such as improved traveler information, a one-stop call center, trip planning, and coordinated fare structure
- technology that improves operations and safety, such as traffic signal priority, security surveillance, and fiber optic network connections for communications
- planning technology, such as passenger counters, emergency management planning, and asset management planning

Updated July 2014