

Communities in Motion 2035

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

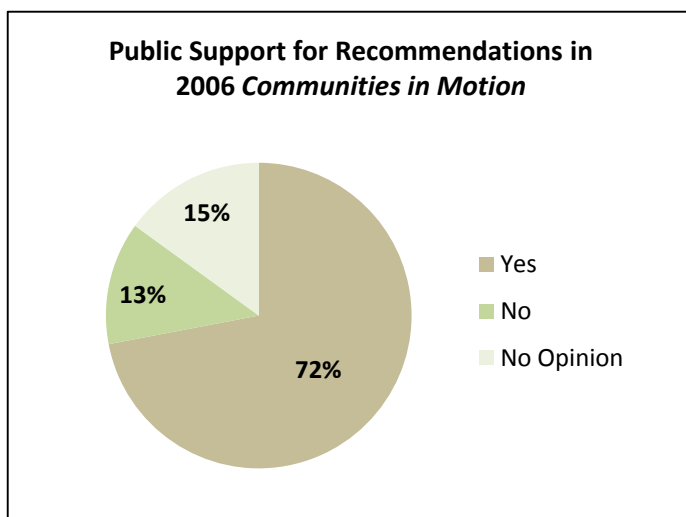
DEFINING THE VISION

We envision a Treasure Valley where quality of life is enhanced and communities are connected by an innovative, effective, multi-modal transportation system.

Communities in Motion is the regional long-range transportation plan for Ada and Canyon Counties, Idaho, and includes high level information for Boise, Elmore, Gem, and Payette Counties as well. It provides regional transportation solutions for the next 20-plus years for southwest Idaho. *Communities in Motion* evaluates projected population and employment growth, current and future transportation needs, safety, financial capacity, and preservation of the human and natural environment.

Communities in Motion offers a vision for land use, known as “Community Choices,” and addresses:

- How land use affects transportation
- How investments in transportation influence growth
- What the transportation system is supposed to achieve
- How transportation projects are selected
- How transportation projects serve regional needs



In 2006, the *Communities in Motion* planning process identified a broad vision, community goals, objectives, and measurable tasks. This was accomplished by engaging people early in the process. Over 2000 residents, stakeholders, and elected officials participated in developing the plan.

Of those who reviewed and commented on the plan, 72 percent supported the key recommendations.

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) is responsible for producing the region's long-range transportation plan. COMPASS outlined these guidelines when beginning the planning process:

- Projects from prior plans would not be carried over automatically.
- Projects would be selected by a rational evaluation process.
- Land use preferences would start the planning process.
- Regional perspectives and broad corridor-level projects would be the focus.
- Public transportation would be considered in a meaningful way.
- The plan would be financially constrained and include only projects that could be funded with existing levels of revenue over the next 25 years.

***Communities in Motion* supports:**

- Balance between housing and jobs
- Choices in housing types
- Choices in transportation and shorter commuting distance
- Connectivity through higher densities
- Preservation of open space and farmland

***Communities in Motion* Goals:**

Connections

Provide options for safe access and mobility in a cost-effective manner in the region.

Coordination

Achieve better inter-jurisdictional coordination of transportation and land use planning.

Environment

Minimize transportation impacts to people, cultural resources, and the environment.

Information

Coordinate data gathering and dispense better information.

Growing Our Region

Community Choices encourages growth inside city “areas of impact,” and emphasizes higher densities and mixed-uses with jobs, shopping and services closer to housing. If growth and development do not follow Community Choices and instead follow the current pattern (known as “Trend”), it will be possible to drive through southwest Idaho and not be able to tell when you’ve left one town and entered another because residential growth will have blurred the boundaries.

More and more people commute to Ada and Canyon Counties from Gem, Payette, Boise and Elmore Counties every day. For example, more than half of Boise County’s working population and 37 percent of Gem County’s commuted to Ada and Canyon Counties in 2000 according to the U.S. Census, and the percentages keep growing. Other travel pressures exist as well. Recreational travel affects Boise County, while Payette County faces heavy truck traffic along U.S. 95.

But the traffic problems of today will pale in comparison to the problems in 2035, due in part to population growth. In 2000, the two-county region had slightly over 400,000 residents; by 2035, the population may swell to over 1 million. The location of jobs to support this growing population will be critical. Growth and what it means for the future of our region is the reason for *Communities in Motion*.

The *Communities in Motion* planning process looked at how the region might develop. Using input from public workshops, local governments, stakeholders, and elected officials, COMPASS developed the growth scenario — **Community Choices** — on which the plan is based.

Community Choices is still the preferred scenario for the 2010 update and offers a vision for a more cost-effective, multi-modal transportation system. To support this vision, funding for public infrastructure must be directed to areas of growth consistent with those outlined in *Communities in Motion*. If done, new growth patterns will mean that our region will:

- Consume less land
- Save more open space
- Offer more housing choices
- Foster the use of public transportation
- Cut one million daily vehicle miles of travel
- Ease traffic congestion
- Reduce fuel consumption

Designing the Future

Communities in Motion identifies the need for roads and transit for the region through 2035. With an anticipated population of over 1 million in 2035, and even with significant investment, the roadway system will still be over capacity. Just five percent of the roads were over capacity in 2006. A road's capacity is related to traffic volumes and effects on travel time and delay for users: as a road nears its maximum capacity, travel times increase sharply. For example, consider travel time on I-84 at 5:30 am in comparison with travel time at 7:30 am. As volumes increase, travel speeds become more erratic, meaning stop-and-go conditions. Without this investment, the system will be over capacity even more.

Communities in Motion recommends a transit system more than ten times the size of the system today. The state of Idaho, however, neither provides funding for transit nor an option for communities to tax themselves to pay for expanded transit, so this expanded transit system is unfunded in the plan. Getting the funding for transit is a high priority for implementation.

Communities in Motion does not preclude local governments from approving development that is not consistent with the location, nature, and amount of growth shown under the Community Choice scenario. Public funding, however, would not be available for transportation infrastructure to serve such growth.

Roadways

Roadway improvements identified in *Communities in Motion* focus on regional corridors. This focus means *Communities in Motion* does not include “minor” improvements such as intersections, traffic signals, and shorter-length roadway projects. Many of the corridors cross multiple jurisdictions and several of these roadways connect county to county. Each corridor is described in Chapter 5 and includes:

- Regional importance
- Characteristics and use
- Recommendations to meet *Communities in Motion* goals
- Land use decisions required to implement *Communities in Motion* goals (actions needed to occur to preserve the corridor for the future improvements)
- Opportunities and challenges
- Past, current, or programmed improvements
- Recommended investments in the funded portion of *Communities in Motion*
- Additional desired improvements (illustrative) or other actions needed in the future—perhaps beyond 2035

The needs for an optimal transportation system simply outweigh the amount of money the region has available over the next 20-plus years. Financial assumptions resulted in the decision to move many corridors labeled as “funded” in 2006 from the “funded” category to “unfunded.” These changes in funding status are not related to the prioritization of the corridors themselves. Changes were based on a conservative approach: corridors with substantial existing funding commitments, via a capital improvement plan or other budget document, were deemed as “funded.”

The corridor improvements shown in the following tables are subject to amendment by the COMPASS Board based on new financial situations. Projects, including new transit services, shown as unfunded may be moved into the funded list if more dollars are provided via local, state, or federal actions over the next four years.

**Ada and Canyon Counties – Funded Corridors
In Alphabetical Order**

ID	Corridor	Status in 2006 CIM	Funded Amount
1	Amity Road: Southside Blvd.-Cloverdale Road. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Funded	\$67,528,000
2	Cloverdale Road: Lake Hazel Road-Chinden Blvd. Widen from two lanes to five lanes. Includes widening of overpass at I-84.	Funded	\$71,729,000
3	Fairview Avenue: Meridian Road-Orchard. Widen from five lanes to seven lanes.	Funded	\$53,359,000
4	Franklin Road: <u>Idaho Center</u> Road-Linder Road. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Funded	\$34,740,000
5	I-84: Garrity Interchange-Meridian Interchange. Widen from four lanes to eight lanes. Includes reconstruction of Garrity interchange and existing over/underpasses.	Funded	\$286,044,000
6	Bowmont Road-a three-mile section. Funding shown is only to construct a two-lane section	Illustrative	\$7,807,000
7	Meridian Road: Waltman Drive - Ustick Road. Complete corridor improvements to five lanes. Includes partial couplet involving Main Street and Meridian Road.	Funded	\$16,524,000
8	Ten Mile Road: Lake Hazel - Chinden Blvd. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Funded	\$51,941,000
9	Ustick Road: Caldwell/Nampa Blvd.-Curtis Road. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Funded	\$134,275,000
			\$723,947,000

**Ada and Canyon Counties – Partially Funded Corridors
In Alphabetical Order**

ID	Corridor	Status in 2006 CIM	Funded Portion	2009 Cost	Programmed or Planned Funding	Unfunded Amount
1	I-84: Cole/Overland Interchange-Isaacs Canyon Interchange. Widen from four lanes to eight lanes. Includes interchange reconstruction at Orchard, Vista, Broadway and Gowen.	Funded	Orchard Interchange Vista Interchange Vista - Broadway widening	\$381,228,000	\$136,151,000	(\$245,077,000)
2	I-84: Exit 29-Garrity Interchange. Widen from four lanes to six lanes. Includes reconstruction of Franklin and Nampa Blvd. interchanges and existing over/underpasses.	Funded	Franklin Blvd – Garrity	\$668,514,000	\$286,044,000	(\$382,470,000)
3	Lake Hazel Road: Happy Valley - Eisenmann Road (including Gowen Road Realignment)	Funded	Locust Grove to Pleasant Valley - construct to 5 lanes	\$135,589,000	\$45,300,000	(\$90,289,000)
4	Linder Road: Kuna Mora Road-Ustick Road. Widen/construct to five lanes. Includes a rail crossing in Kuna and an overpass at I-84.	Unfunded	Franklin to Chinden – Construct	\$100,876,000	\$28,000,000	(\$72,876,000)
5	Linder Road: Ustick Road-Beacon Light Road. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Unfunded	Franklin to Chinden – Construct	\$92,400,000	\$52,400,000	(\$40,000,000)
6	SH 16: Ada/Gem line-I-84. Construct limited access highway with interchanges and overpasses at SH-44, US 20/26, Ustick, Franklin and I-84. Other interchange and overpass locations would be evaluated.	Funded	SH 44 to US 20/26 - construct to 4 lanes with river crossing	\$314,688,000	\$119,457,000	(\$195,231,000)
7	SH 44 (State Street): SH 55 (Eagle Road) to downtown Boise (Multi-Modal Center)	Funded	Glenwood to 36th Street - construct to 7 lanes	\$57,041,000	\$36,700,000	(\$20,341,000)
				\$1,750,336,000	\$704,052,000	\$2,454,388,000

**Ada and Canyon Counties – Unfunded Corridors
In Alphabetical Order**

ID	Corridor	Status in 2006 CIM	2009 Cost
1	Beacon Light Road Extension: Purple Sage Road-SH 16. Construct new two-lane road.	Unfunded	\$4,033,000
2	Beacon Light Road: SH 16-SH 55. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Unfunded	\$48,701,000
3	Black Cat Road: Franklin Road-Chinden Blvd. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Unfunded	\$38,123,000
4	Cherry Lane: Middleton Road-Ten Mile Road. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Funded	\$63,885,000
5	Greenhurst Road: Middleton Road-Happy Valley Road. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Funded	\$34,740,000
6	Happy Valley Road (five-lane) – from Flamingo to Locust Lane	Unfunded	\$40,907,000
7	I-84: Future SH 16 Interchange: (vicinity of McDermott). Construct new interchange with ramps to connect with Franklin	Funded	\$95,762,000
8	I-84: Ustick Road Interchange. Construct new interchange.	Unfunded	\$32,528,000
9	Kuna Mora - Bowmont Expressway Corridor	Unfunded	\$290,000,000
10	McDermott Road: I-84-Lake Hazel Road (including RR overpass at Hubbard Road). Widen from two lanes to five lanes. Access management to preserve future expressway.	Unfunded	\$45,019,000
11	Meridian Interchange	Funded	\$35,000,000
12	Middleton Road: Greenhurst Road-SH 44. Widen from two lanes to five lanes.	Unfunded	\$83,532,000
13	Robinson Road: Greenhurst Road-Cherry Ln. Widen from two lanes to five lanes north of I-84, three lanes south of I-84.	Unfunded	\$48,792,000
14	SH 44: I-84-Ballantyne Road. Widen from two lanes to four-lane limited access highway. Includes a new alternate route around Middleton.	Funded	\$108,773,000
15	SH 45: Deer Flat Road-Locust Lane. Widen from two lanes to four-lane limited access highway.	Unfunded	\$13,792,000
16	SH 55 (Eagle Road), I-84 to River Valley Street	Funded	\$19,517,000
17	SH 55: Beacon Light Road-Brookside. Widen from two lanes to four-lane limited access highway.	Unfunded	\$1,822,000
18	SH 55: Sunnyslope curve to Karcher Interchange. Widen from two lanes to four-lane limited access highway.	Unfunded	\$58,420,000
19	SH 69 Connection: Kuna Mora Road-Kuna Road. Build new road parallel to the Union Pacific rail (north side) to connect SH 69 to Kuna Mora. Broaden to include potential of a rail crossing option to Kuna Mora.	Unfunded	\$22,509,000
20	Three Cities River Crossing: SH 44-Chinden Blvd. Construct new roadway at four/five lanes and new bridge.	Funded	\$105,359,000
21	US 20/26: Exit 29-Eagle Road. Widen from two lanes to four-lane limited access highway.	Funded	\$264,036,000
			\$1,455,250,000

Transit

Communities in Motion supports transit, walking, and biking. Both fixed-guideway systems and a scheduled fixed-route service are options for transit. A fixed-guideway system can be light rail, commuter rail, streetcars, or bus rapid transit services, all of which offer higher-speed transportation on separate travel ways — a real benefit when the streets are congested.

Scheduled fixed-route services, such as a buses operating on specific streets, are important for linking into guideway systems as well as serving more local trips and lower density corridors.



The proposed system would need another \$2.7 billion over the next 25 years to be implemented. The transit system in the Treasure Valley will not improve much beyond what we have today without a local funding source.

The proposed transit system would have:

- Fifteen minute frequency during peak hours
- Expanded service on evenings and weekends
- Commuter bus services expanded to Elmore, Payette, Gem and Boise Counties
- Rail or other fixed-guideway service between the cities of Caldwell, Nampa, Meridian, and Boise
- Bus rapid transit service between the cities of Eagle and Boise

To obtain local funds for transit, the Idaho Legislature needs to provide local governments the option to ask citizens to tax themselves – locally – to pay for the optimal system.



Finding the Money

There is not enough money to complete all the corridors included in the optimal transportation system. The region will have slightly over \$6.2 billion available for roads and perhaps \$1.4 billion for transit between 2010 and 2035, and most of it will be used for operations and maintenance. We need another \$3.9 billion for roadways and \$2.7 billion for transit, or \$6.6 billion total for road and transit together.

What do these large numbers mean for a resident of our region? The total shortfall in 2010 could be met with additional revenues of less than \$430 per household. Funding for transportation comes from three general sources: federal funds, state highway distribution account, and local funds. Funding is not equally available. In some counties, there are very few resources in place to build new major roadways or offer transit services.

Major Changes in This Plan

There are some major changes in this version of *Communities in Motion* compared to what was adopted in 2006. These include:

- Chapter 1 provides a broad introduction to *Communities in Motion*.
- Chapter 2 provides some background information on regional history and issues and discusses what has happened since 2006.
- Chapter 3 provides the goals and policies, most of which are unchanged from the 2006 plan.
- Chapter 4 contains information about new growth forecasted through 2035. While the overall preferred land use pattern remains Community Choices, population is forecasted to reach 1.046 million by 2035 versus the 825,000 forecasted for 2030 a few years ago.
- Chapter 5 discusses roadways and shows a number of roadway corridors that were deemed funded in 2006 and are unfunded or partially funded in this plan.
- Chapter 6 is a new section dealing with transportation choices—public transportation, walking, biking, and other modes.
- Chapter 7 is also new and discusses ways to make more efficient use of the current transportation system.
- Chapter 8 is new and presents an overview of environmental issues and strategies related to transportation.
- Chapter 9 is new and addresses security issues such as natural disasters in terms of their transportation issues.

- Chapter 10 is new and presents safety issues such as rail, bicycle, and other accident categories drawn from the *Strategic Highway Safety Plan* created by the Idaho Transportation Department.
- Chapter 11 discusses freight issues.
- Chapter 12 provides expanded information on transportation costs and financing.
- Chapter 13 addresses new issues dealing with sustainability.
- Chapter 14 presents the implications of building out the area's comprehensive plans.

Some the new chapters are required under federal rules instituted after 2006, but the inclusion of issues such as safety, system security, and the environment into *Communities in Motion* is really sound planning. These are integral parts of transportation and the community. As discussed in the plan, truly sustainable communities consider resource consumption and environmental effects on future generations.

Putting *Communities in Motion* into Action

A plan is not a solution. It is a guidebook. Where do we want to be? How might we get there? What are the opportunities and costs? Implementing the plan is essential. Between now and the next update in 2014, COMPASS and its members will focus on putting the vision and goals for *Communities in Motion* into effect. If we fail to move forward with the plan, it means we are willing to accept current development patterns. What steps do we take to ensure a brighter future?

- Search and ensure funding streams
- Protect corridors for future needs
- Develop guidelines for how transportation routes function, look, and feel
- Refine how projects are selected
- Track changes in plans and ordinance and work with local governments to encourage a more compact and diverse pattern of development where appropriate
- Actively engage and encourage citizen involvement



Capitol Building, Boise

The future community envisioned in *Communities in Motion* is a metropolitan area of at least 1.046 million people in Ada and Canyon Counties with another 150,000 people in the surrounding counties. The area will have more congestion, but well-designed streets, an effective transit system, and a mixture of housing and business can result in a vital future for southwest Idaho.