



Transportation Planning Certification Review
COMPASS Planning Area
(Ada and Canyon Counties, Idaho)
September 16-18, 2009

Final Report
April 2010

Prepared by
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration

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Executive Summary:

This review has two purposes; *first*, for the reasons described in the “Introduction” section of this report, the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) is required to review and evaluate the transportation planning processes of transportation management areas (TMAs) no less than once every four years. The review, which was conducted by a team of representatives from FHWA and FTA, consisted of an examination of the MPO’s documented practices, procedures, guidelines and activities; a field review consisting of meetings with the MPO management and staff and a public input session; and a follow up assessment and report on the findings and recommendations of the Review Team and a joint statement of certification by the FHWA and the FTA.

In May of 2009, the Review Team provided the COMPASS with a preliminary list of questions and documentation needs corresponding to the major topics of interest in the review. These questions and documentation requests, which reflect current regulatory requirements for metropolitan planning programs, were intended to assist both the Review Team and COMPASS by framing the issues and subject areas to be covered in the review. In follow up, the COMPASS Office provided detailed written responses to the Review Team’s questions as well as hard copies or internet links to the requested documents.

On September 16-18, 2009 the Review Team conducted the on-site visit portion of the review. Also participating in the various field activities were the MPO staff and management, the local transit provider, State and local government staff, an MPO Board member, and members of the general public at large.

The body of this report is intended to document the findings, commendations, recommendations, corrective actions, and comments as determined by the Review Team. **“Findings”** are simply a statement of the conditions found on a given subject area during the course of the review. **“Commendations”** highlight elements of the MPO’s program that demonstrate innovative, highly effective, well-thought-out practices and procedures for implementing the planning requirement. **“Recommendations”** are comments that the MPO should address to enhance processes. **“Corrective actions”** concern areas which the MPO currently fails to fully meet the intent of the Federal requirements and which, if left unaddressed, could result in restrictions being imposed on the MPO’s program. **“Comments”** include clarifications, specific follow up commitments and general observations and input judged appropriate to include with the report. A summary of the findings, commendations, recommendations, corrective actions, and comments for this review is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: 2009 Certification Review of COMPASS

Feedback and Follow Up on Program Elements

Program Elements	Commendations, Recommendations, Corrective Actions and Comments
Study Area and Organizational Structure	Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We reiterate our view that having a single MPO to address the planning program for a two-county, two urbanized area is preferable to having two MPOs.• As the TMA grows, COMPASS may want to reevaluate the current Board structure in the interest of effectiveness.• We are pleased to hear that the intra-county voting option is rarely utilized.
Metropolitan Planning Boundaries	Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 2010 census update will prompt the need to reevaluate the planning boundaries. This additional work is anticipated in COMPASS' 2010 UPWP.
Agreements and Contracts	Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Satisfactory
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Commendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The UPWP continues to be an excellent document, particularly in terms of its comprehensive yet concise manner of outlining the activities and budget for COMPASS.
Transportation Planning Process	Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• COMPASS' planning process reflects a strong commitment to multi-modal transportation as illustrated by its planning activities and decisions and the effective partnership it maintains with Valley Regional Transit.

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Feedback and Follow Up on Program Elements

Program Elements	Commendations, Recommendations, Corrective Actions and Comments
Regional (Long Range) Transportation Plan Development	<p>Commendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We commend COMPASS for its work in the development of its long range transportation plan; Communities in Motion. • We commend COMPASS for its ongoing tracking performance measure data for the Long Range Plan and annual reporting of this information in its Performance Monitoring Report. <p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan update should more specifically address the subjects of Security, Environmental Mitigation and Consultation, and Systems Operation and Management. • COMPASS’ plan to update Communities in Motion by the August 2010 deadline will be a challenge. We request a timeline for the update process. <p>Corrective Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All project and program costs and revenues are to be presented in a “year of expenditure” (YOE) convention (See Financial Planning / Fiscal Constraint comments, below). <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We concur with COMPASS’ decision to place particular focus on financial and transportation land-use issues.
Congestion Management Process (CMP)	<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope and application of the CMP should be expanded to provide for the evaluation of alternative modes of transportation (e.g., bus TSM/TDM measures, walking, and biking). Included as part of this effort will be the need to develop associated performance measures and evaluation processes. • The CMP should be further refined to provide a more objective approach for identifying and evaluating traffic management and operations strategies. • The master document describing the CMP should elaborate further on how the CMP is used in conjunction with the identification and prioritization of projects in the TIP and Long Range Plan.

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Feedback and Follow Up on Program Elements

Program Elements	Commendations, Recommendations, Corrective Actions and Comments
TIP	<p>Corrective Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The TIP’s fiscal constraint demonstration must show that the TIP is fiscally constrained for each program year.• All project and program costs and revenues are to be presented in a “year of expenditure” (YOE) convention (See Financial Planning / Fiscal Constraint comments, below).• Total project costs (not just phase costs) must be presented. <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We acknowledge COMPASS’ support for the administrative modifications tool added to the TIP process with SAFETEA-LU. In that regard, FHWA and FTA commit to provide further guidance and assistance.• We concur with COMPASS’ plans to update its project prioritization process for the TIP.• FHWA and FTA commit to provide further guidance and assistance concerning the allowances and limitations to programming and subsequent implementation of “illustrative projects” in the TIP.
Financial Planning/Fiscal Constraint	<p>Corrective Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further work is needed on the financial plans and demonstrations of fiscal constraint for both the Long Range Plan and the TIP. <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FHWA and FTA acknowledge the need for ITD to provide COMPASS with more extensive information on revenue projections for its planning area.• FHWA and FTA commit to provide further guidance and assistance to COMPASS and ITD concerning the Federal expectations for demonstrating fiscal constraint in the TIP.
Air Quality	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• COMPASS’ plays a key role in the planning and analysis of air quality issues and its work in this area is consistently sound and well documented.• COMPASS should anticipate that the emerging air quality issues a new air quality emissions model (MOVES) and the prospect of further lowering of the 8-hour ozone standard will present new challenges to its planning program including technical and resource demands upon its staff.
Self Certification	<p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Satisfactory

Table 1: 2009 Certification Review of COMPASS

Feedback and Follow Up on Program Elements

Program Elements	Commendations, Recommendations, Corrective Actions and Comments
Public Outreach (and Visualization)	<p>Commendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We commend COMPASS for its proactive and innovative strategies for generating public participation and input in conjunction with the development of its various products and activities. <p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We support COMPASS' plans to update its Public Participation Policy [adopted December 21, 2009]. Please incorporate FHWA's comment on to more explicitly identify in the policy how it will seek input from minority and low income groups and individuals [reflected in adopted plan].
Title VI	<p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	<p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory
List of Obligated Projects	<p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory
Environmental Mitigation (and Consultation, coordination)	<p>Commendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We commend COMPASS for its ongoing work to coordinate with resource and regulatory agencies to identify environmental resources and mitigation strategies.
Management and Operations	<p>Corrective Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMPASS must include details on how it will evaluate and plan TSM/TDM activities in its pending Long Range Plan update.
Safety	<p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMPASS needs to expand and formalize its consideration of safety in its planning process. In particular, the program development processes for the Plan and TIP should clearly address how safety is considered in the identification and selection of projects. <p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We acknowledge that ITD coordination and assistance will be essential to involving COMPASS and other MPOs in the execution of the State's Strategic Highway Safety Program (SHSP).

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Feedback and Follow Up on Program Elements

Program Elements	Commendations, Recommendations, Corrective Actions and Comments
Security	Recommendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We request that COMPASS address Transit Security issues in its update to the long range plan.
Freight	Recommendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We encourage COMPASS to further advance its freight work by next identifying facility specific needs for the planning area. Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We acknowledge COMPASS' initial efforts on freight with completion of its freight inventory study.
Travel Demand Modeling	Commendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• COMPASS is commended for its continued expansion and refinement of its modeling capabilities and particularly for the addition of transit (mode split) to the modeling capabilities of their process.

Of particular importance in TMA Certification Reviews are the “Recommendations” and the “Corrective Actions”. Recommendations concern technical improvements that would enhance existing processes and procedures, but that are not specifically required. Corrective actions concern situations in which an element of the MPO’s planning program, specifically required by Federal laws or regulations, is judged to be inadequate and, therefore, must be addressed to avoid triggering restrictions to the program.

A summary of the corrective actions identified in the review and requested timeframes for implementing necessary follow actions is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Corrective Actions Implementation Schedule for the 2010 COMPASS Certification Review	
Corrective Action	Milestone Date
Regional (Long Range) Transportation Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All project and program costs and revenues must be presented in Year of Expenditure 	2010 Long Range Plan Update
Transportation Improvement Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of fiscal constraint for each program year • All project and program costs and revenues must be presented in Year of Expenditure • Total project costs (not just phase costs) must be presented 	2010 TIP Update
Financial Planning/Fiscal Constraint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The financial plans in both the Long Range Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program require further details and refinement. 	2010 Long Range Plan and TIP Update
Management and Operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional details are needed to explain how the MPO will evaluate and plan TSM/TDM activities in the Long Range Plan update. 	2010 Long Range Plan Update

Based on the findings of this review and, in consideration for the above noted corrective actions, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration have determined that:

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho’s transportation planning program substantially meets the Federal planning requirements of 23 CFR Part 450 and, therefore, is Certified With Conditions for a period of four years per Section 450.334(b)(1)(ii).

Please note that resolution of the above identified corrective actions is necessary, both to maintain COMPASS’ certification status and to enable FHWA and FTA to include the COMPASS program in future STIP updates.

Introduction (*23 CFR 450 Subpart C*)

A Transportation Management Area (TMA) is a designation assigned by the Secretary of Transportation for metropolitan areas having an urbanized population of over 200,000 persons. In Idaho, the urbanized portions of the Treasure Valley along with the surrounding lands included in their established metropolitan planning area constitute a TMA, and the organization designated by the State's Governor to carry out the Federally funded transportation planning activities for this TMA is the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS).

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning processes for each Transportation Management Area (TMA) no less than every four years to determine if those processes meet the requirements of *23 CFR Part 450, Subpart C - Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming*. In addition, in TMAs that are non-attainment or maintenance areas for transportation related pollutants, the review must also evaluate the metropolitan planning organization's (MPO) processes to ensure that they are adequate to ensure conformity of plans and programs in accordance with procedures contained in *40 CFR Part 51- Air Quality: Transportation Plans, Programs, and Projects*.

Upon completion of the review and evaluation, FHWA and FTA must take one of the following actions:

1. Jointly certify that the transportation planning process meets or substantially meets the requirements of *23 CFR 450 Subpart C*;
2. Jointly certify the transportation planning process subject to certain specified corrective actions being taken;
3. Jointly certify the transportation planning process as the basis for approval of only certain categories of programs and projects or;
4. Withhold certification and the approval of certain apportionments and projects.

All Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) projects funded under *Title 23, U.S.C. (Highways) or Chapter 53 of Title 49 U.S.C. (Transportation)* must be selected from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) produced by the State Department of Transportation. In order for projects located within MPO boundaries to be included in the STIP, they must be consistent with the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and be included in the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

In TMAs, projects funded under the National Highway System (NHS), Bridge, and Interstate Maintenance programs are selected for implementation from the TIP/STIP by the State, in consultation with the MPO and any affected transit operators. Most other projects are selected by the MPO in consultation with the State and transit operator. In all cases, FHWA and FTA must jointly certify that the transportation planning process in a TMA meets or substantially

meets Federal planning regulations before recognizing the RTP and TIP. Thus failure to certify is significant as it can result in the withholding of USDOT funds.

Study Area Organizational Structure (23 CFR 450.310)

Regulatory Basis:

Federal legislation (23 USC 134(b); Section 49 USC 5303)) requires the designation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 individuals. The policy board of the MPO shall consist of (A) local elected officials, (B) officials of local agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the area, and (C) appropriate State officials.

This designation remains in effect until the MPO is redesignated. The addition of jurisdictional or political bodies into the MPO or members to the policy board generally does not constitute a redesignation of the MPO.

As a result of TEA-21, 23 USC 134(b)(2) was modified with respect to Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). Upon designation of a MPO as a TMA (rather than only when the MPO itself is designated/re-designated), the policy board shall be structured to include (A) local elected officials, (B) officials of local agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the area, and (C) appropriate State officials.

Findings:

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) serves as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Ada and Canyon Counties. COMPASS is organized and operates under a joint powers agreement between local governments and Bylaws. COMPASS has several standing committees established through its bylaws to advise the Board of Directors on relevant issues. The standing committees are as follows: Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Regional Technical Advisory Committee, Demographic Advisory Committee, and Transportation Model Advisory Committee. With the exception of the Executive Committee, each standing committee has its own bylaws outlining roles and responsibilities. Additional details on the COMPASS organizational structure are as follows:

- Governor Designation of MPO:
The MPO for the Boise urbanized area was first designated by then Governor John V. Evans on April 27, 1977.
- The Boise urbanized area in Ada County was determined through the 2000 Census to have a population in excess of 200,000 and as a result the area was designated as a Transportation Management Area (TMA) on July 8, 2002.
- The Nampa area in Canyon County (including the cities of Nampa, Middleton, and Caldwell) was identified as having an urban population in excess of 50,000 in the 2000 Census and therefore was identified as an urbanized area on May 1, 2002.

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- The COMPASS Board formally approved the expansion of COMPASS to serve as the MPO for both Ada and Canyon Counties and their associated urbanized areas in March 2003. This expanded planning area also constitutes the new limits of the TMA.

 - MPO membership consists of :
 - 16 regular (voting) members representing cities, counties and highway districts within the planning area;
 - 7 special (voting) members representing schools, universities, State government, and the local transit authority; and
 - 3 ex-officio (non-voting) members representing special districts and the Governor's Office.

 - Included among the features of the bi-county MPO is a provision allowing for intra-county voting when the subject of consideration is principally an interest of the members of one county. Concerning this feature, it was pointed out that intra-county voting has been invoked on only a couple of occasions and that the MPO by and large does function as a truly unified regional organization.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- We reiterate our view that having a single MPO to address the planning program for a two-county, two urbanized area is preferable to having two MPOs.
- As the TMA grows, COMPASS may want to reevaluate the current Board structure in the interest of effectiveness.
- We are pleased to hear that the intra-county voting option is rarely utilized.

Metropolitan Planning Boundaries (23 CFR 450.312)

Regulatory Basis:

Federal legislation (23 USC 134(c): 49 USC 5303(d) requires boundaries of a metropolitan planning area to be determined by agreement between the MPO and the Governor.

Each metropolitan planning area shall encompass at least the existing urbanized area and the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20 year forecast period; and may encompass the entire metropolitan statistical area or consolidated metropolitan statistical area, as defined by the Bureau of the Census.

Findings:

The Boise Metropolitan Area began transportation planning in July 1958, but was not officially designated an MPO until 1977. The organization has undergone many name changes: Boise Transportation Planning Organization, Boise Metropolitan Transportation Study, Ada Council of Governments, Ada Planning Association, and finally the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS).

In 1978, the planning area was expanded beyond the City of Boise and consecutive suburbs due to air quality non-attainment status for carbon monoxide and total suspended particulates, and subsequently coarse particulate matter (PM₁₀). The new planning area for the Boise Urbanized Area to this day includes all of Northern Ada County, which consists of the entire county north of the “Boise Baseline.” The Boise Baseline is a horizontal line across the county seven miles south of Kuna. Ada County acquired air quality “maintenance” status in December 2001 for carbon monoxide and December 2002 for PM₁₀.

The COMPASS planning area changed again through the results of the 2000 Census. The Nampa area was not identified as an urbanized area in the 1990 Census, and grew to the point of being the second largest urbanized area in the State of Idaho in 2000. Officials from the Nampa Urbanized Area decided that COMPASS should provide the MPO services for the area in March 2003, thus providing a regional agency for transportation planning. The Nampa Urbanized Area planning boundary is based on a slightly larger area than the Census urbanized area designation.

By the 2010 Census, technical analysts believe that the Boise Urbanized Area and Nampa Urbanized Area will likely merge together due to the extremely high growth rates in the region. Additional details on the COMPASS area boundaries are as follows:

- Several boundaries exist within the COMPASS area. They include:
 - Transportation Management Area planning boundary
 - Air quality planning boundary
 - FHWA adjusted urbanized area boundary
 - US Census designated urbanized area boundary

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- Approvals of the various boundaries are current.
 - There are no formally recognized Tribal lands within the COMPASS planning area boundary.
 - There are Federal lands within the COMPASS planning areas boundary.
 - It is anticipated that the 2010 Census likely will result in the Boise urbanized area and the Nampa/Caldwell/Middleton urbanized area being merged into a single urbanized area.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- The 2010 census update will prompt the need to reevaluate the planning boundaries. This additional work is anticipated in COMPASS' 2010 UPWP.

Agreements and Contracts (23 CFR 450.314)

Regulatory Basis:

Federal legislation (23 USC 134) requires the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to work in cooperation with the State and public transportation agencies in carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) metropolitan planning process. These agencies determine their respective and mutual roles and responsibilities and procedures governing their cooperative efforts. Federal regulations require that these relationships be specified in agreements between the MPO and the State and between the MPO and the public transit operators. The regulations also require an agreement between the MPO and any other agency responsible for air quality planning under the Clean Air Act. A single agreement should be executed among the MPO, State, transit operators, and designated air quality regulations “to the extent possible.” 23 CFR 450.314(a).

Findings:

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) currently has four agreements and contracts in place. These consist of:

- The Memorandum of Understanding Operation and Financing of the Metropolitan Planning Organization in the Boise and Nampa Urbanized Areas. This Memorandum of Understanding is reviewed annually with the Idaho State Transportation Department. The MOU was adopted on April 9, 2004 and modified on November 1, 2005.
- The Memorandum of Understanding Transit Planning Responsibility and Coordination within Ada and Canyon Counties Regarding Metropolitan Planning. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to identify and define the process by which COMPASS and Valley Regional Transit (formerly known as ValleyRide) will coordinate and conduct public transportation planning within the two counties. A Planning Agreement between COMPASS and Valley Regional Transit was originally signed on December 20, 2001. The Planning Agreement was expanded to the current Memorandum of Understanding which was adopted September 1, 2004 and modified on April 20, 2009.
- The Air Quality Planning Memorandum of Understanding. Parties include State of Idaho, Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Environmental Quality and COMPASS (formerly Ada Planning Association). The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to coordinate the participating parties by outlining agency responsibilities for air quality planning. This MOU was adopted March 17, 1995 and remains in place.
- The Memorandum of Understanding between the Idaho Transportation Department, Community Planning Association, Bannock Planning Organization, Bonneville Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Local Highway Technical Assistance Council

regarding State distribution of the Surface Transportation Program-Urban Funds. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to create a cooperative method of the distribution of Surface Transportation Program – Urban dollars throughout the state. This MOU was adopted September 20, 2001.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- Satisfactory

Unified Planning Work Program (23 CFR 450.308)

Regulatory Basis:

23 CFR 450.308 identifies the requirements for unified planning work programs (UPWPs) to be prepared in Transportation Management Areas. 23 CFR 420.109 governs how FHWA planning funds are distributed to the MPOs. 49 USC 5303(h) allocates FTA assistance to MPOs.

MPOs are required to develop the UPWPs in cooperation with the State and public transit agencies [450.308(c)].

Elements to be included in the UPWP are:

- Discussion of the planning priorities facing the metropolitan planning area
- Description of all metropolitan transportation planning and transportation-related air quality planning activities anticipated within the next 1 or 2 year period, regardless of funding source or agencies conducting activities, indicating:
 - *Who* will perform the work
 - *Schedule* for completion of the work, and
 - Intended *products*;
- Include all activities funded under Title 23 and the Federal Transit Act.

Findings:

The development of the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho's (COMPASS) UPWP is guided by the requirements of the Federal Regulations and the commitments of the established agreements. Currently COMPASS staff develops the list of projects with input and requests from member agencies.

First and foremost, the UPWP is developed to reflect and meet state and Federal requirements. It is also developed to meet the work and priorities identified through Communities in Motion, the region's long-range transportation plan.

The Regional Technical Advisory Committee (RTAC), made up of member agencies, submits requests they would like COMPASS to incorporate in the UPWP.

The Finance Committee, a standing committee of the COMPASS Board, reviews the financial information contained in the UPWP and presents a recommendation to the COMPASS Board.

Projects administered by Valley Regional Transit, the public transportation authority for Ada and Canyon Counties in southwest Idaho, are included in the Transportation Supplement section within the document. Projects and funding sources are described in this section.

Other agency planning activities being performed in the Treasure Valley are listed in the Other Transportation Studies section.

Upon completion of all the sections, the UPWP is presented to the full board for adoption. With formal adoption, the UPWP is then forwarded to the Idaho Transportation Department who reviews, recommends approval, and forwards to FHWA/FTA for approval.

The current UPWP document including its format, content, and the practices and procedures followed in the administration of the program through this document have proven most satisfactory to FHWA and FTA since the last certification review.

Commendations:

- The UPWP continues to be an excellent document, particularly in terms of its comprehensive yet concise manner of outlining the activities and budget for COMPASS.

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Transportation Planning Process (23 CFR 450.306, 316 & 318)

Regulatory Basis:

Federal regulations 23 CFR 450.306 and 450.318 define the scope of the metropolitan transportation planning process and the relationship of corridor and other subarea planning studies to the metropolitan planning process and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. In addition, 23 CFR 345.316 (c)(d) and (e) address the need for participation by Federal lands management agencies and Tribal governments in the development of key products in the planning process.

Key provisions of 23 CFR 450.306 are related to required planning factors, coordination, and consistency with related planning processes, asset management, and possible differences in requirements for TMAs and non-TMAs.

Planning Factors

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency
- Increase the safety of the transportation system
- Increase the security of the transportation system
- Increase the accessibility and mobility for people and freight
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight
- Promote efficient system management and operation
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system

Failure to consider any of the factors cannot be reviewed by any court in any matter affecting a Metropolitan Transportation Plan, TIP, project or strategy, or Certification.

Coordination and Consistency with Related Planning Processes

- The metropolitan planning process must be coordinated with the Statewide transportation planning process.
- Development of the required public transit-human services Transportation Plan (49 U.S.C. 5310, 5316, and 5317) should be coordinated and consistent with the metropolitan transportation planning process.

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- The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be consistent with regional ITS architecture to the maximum extent “practicable.”
 - The metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and with transit safety and security planning processes and programs.

Corridor and Sub-area Planning Studies

The regulations governing corridor and sub-area planning studies [23 CFR 450.318] require consultation with or joint participation in the studies by the metropolitan planning process agency partners to the extent practicable. The regulations also state conditions under which documents produced in conjunction with the studies may be incorporated in the NEPA review process. Among these conditions is that reasonable opportunity for public comment be provided during the metropolitan transportation planning process and development of the studies and that FHWA and FTA review the studies. (Additional information explaining linkages between transportation planning and the project development/NEPA process is provided in Appendix A of the metropolitan planning regulations.)

Participation by Federal Public Lands Agencies and Indian Tribal Governments

- In metropolitan areas with Federal public lands or Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall involve appropriate Federal public lands management agencies or Indian Tribal governments in development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the TIP.

Applicability to Certification

Major components of the regulations address:

- Incorporation of the SAFETEA-LU planning factors in products of the metropolitan planning process (i.e., Metropolitan Transportation Plan, TIP, UPWP)
- Procedures for coordination of metropolitan and Statewide planning, and evidence of the results of such coordination in the products of the planning process
- Consistency of metropolitan transportation planning with related planning activities (i.e., Strategic Highway Safety Plan and transit safety and security plans and programs)
- Demonstration of coordination of public transit-human services Transportation Plan development with the metropolitan transportation planning process
- Demonstration of consistency between products of the metropolitan planning process and regional ITS architecture
- Evidence of the application of asset management principles and techniques in the planning process.

Findings:

The Transportation Planning Process is the cumulative program of activities and processes that the MPO works on. One of the key regulatory requirements of the planning process is that it consider the planning factors identified in 23 CFR 450.306. While it is difficult to judge the extent to which a program is satisfactorily considering these factors or if any of these factors may have been overlooked all together, COMPASS has simplified this task both for themselves and for oversight agencies or any other interested parties by providing a matrix in the UPWP which identifies all of the tasks in their annual program and the Federal planning factors that each task applies to.

In addition, a comprehensive review of COMPASS' program was conducted in 2007 to identify any deficiencies to the program that would need to be addressed before it would be determined to be SAFETEA-LU Compliant. In conjunction with that effort supplements to COMPASS' Long Range Plan and process were developed and submitted to FHWA and FTA for review. The specific planning considerations addressed with these supplements were:

- Environmental mitigation and consultation
- Security
- Safety
- Operational management

Through that effort, the COMPASS program was found to be fully SAFETEA-LU Compliant.

The additional discussions on the scope and content of COMPASS' program and the practices and procedures following in carrying out this program further supported this earlier determination.

One observation from the Field Review meetings that is worthy of particular mention is the apparent strong partnership and spirit of cooperation between COMPASS the major public transportation provider of the area, Valley Regional Transit. This strong relationship is essential to the MPO's ability to promote a multi-modal transportation system.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

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- COMPASS' planning process reflects a strong commitment to multi-modal transportation as illustrated by its planning activities and decisions and the effective partnership it maintains with Valley Regional Transit.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Development (23 CFR 450.322)

Regulatory Basis:

Federal regulations require the development of a MTP as a key product of the metropolitan planning process:

The metropolitan transportation planning process shall include the development of a transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon. ... the transportation plan shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand. [23 CFR 450.322]

The MTP is to be updated every four years in nonattainment and maintenance areas and every five years in attainment areas to ensure its consistency with changes in land-use, demographic, and transportation characteristics.

The regulation also identifies a number of required elements that must be addressed in the MTP, including:

- Demand analysis [23 CFR 450.322(f)(1)]
- Congestion management strategies [23 CFR 450.322(f)(3), (4), and (5)]
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle facilities [23 CFR 450.322(f)(8)]
- System preservation [23 CFR 450.322(f)(5)]
- Design concept and scope descriptions of all existing and proposed transportation facilities, in sufficient detail to permit conformity determinations in nonattainment and maintenance areas [23 CFR 450.322(f)(6)]
- A discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities [23 CFR 450.322(f)(7)]
- Consultation with State and local agencies responsible for land-use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation, involving comparison of Transportation Plans with State conservation plans or maps or comparison of Transportation Plans with inventories of natural or historic resources [23 CFR 450.322(g)(1) and (2)]
- Transportation and transit enhancements [23 CFR 450.322(f)(9)]
- A financial plan that demonstrates how the adopted Transportation Plan can be implemented [23 CFR 450.322(f)(10)]

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- Provision of public agencies, citizens, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Transportation Plan in accordance with the requirements of 23 CFR 450.316(a) [23 CFR 450.322(i)]
 - Conformity determination in nonattainment and maintenance areas [23 CFR 450.322(l)]
 - Provision of copies to FHWA or FTA [23 CFR 450.322(c)]

Findings:

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is one of the major documents required of an MPO. Since designation of COMPASS, then known as the Ada Planning Association, in 1977 there have been seven updates to the MTP.

In spring 2003, COMPASS staff began planning for a new long-range transportation plan for the region – *Communities in Motion* (<http://www.communitiesinmotion.org/>). This plan merged long-range transportation planning for Ada and Canyon Counties. By late summer 2003, ITD started discussions regarding merging *Communities in Motion* with planning efforts they were beginning for the rural counties surrounding Ada and Canyon Counties.

Negotiations with ITD resulted in an expanded planning area to include Ada, Canyon, Boise, Elmore, Gem, and Payette Counties, with an emphasis on Ada and Canyon Counties. The additional counties are referred to as “partnering counties.” These counties were chosen based upon a high percentage of commute traffic coming into Ada and Canyon Counties on a daily basis, as well as expectations of high percentages of population growth over the next 25-30 years.

The COMPASS Board wanted the *Communities in Motion* process to look at multiple land use and transportation system scenarios, provide innovative outreach opportunities, and consider public transportation alternatives. The desire was to avoid starting with a list of transportation projects; instead, the process would emphasize the desired outcomes of the community in terms of policies. The projects could then be evaluated in terms of their contribution to attaining the desired outcome. ITD was very supportive of a project selection criteria process to support the funding decisions.

Communities in Motion concluded the land use scenario process, which was phenomenally successful. Over 950 people participated in a total of seven meetings held in November 2004 and February 2005. Open house meetings in fall 2005 and an innovative “Communities in Conversation” (also known as “meeting in a bag”) public comment session in May 2006 resulted in more participation, with 2,000 people attending one or more events. The COMPASS Board adopted *Communities in Motion* in August 2006. Since then COMPASS has been working to get *Communities in Motion* adopted by land use and transportation agencies. A separate effort, titled Blueprint for Good Growth, is underway in Ada County. Blueprint for Good Growth is a consortium of local governments that has been working to implement the “Community Choices” scenario from *Communities in Motion* and better coordinate land use and transportation decision-making. COMPASS has participated in the Blueprint for Good Growth process since 2004; starting last year (2008), COMPASS also provides administrative support. Blueprint for Good Growth does not involve Canyon County entities at this time. (See <http://www.blueprintforgoodgrowth.com/>.)

Since its adoption, the only notable change to Communities In Motion has been addition of the following additional sections to address the SAFETEA-LU Compliance requirements in conjunction with the 2007 release of updated Planning Regulations:

- Environmental mitigation and consultation
- Security
- Safety
- Operational management

Currently, COMPASS is initiating an update to Communities In Motion to address the Federal requirement that long range plans be updated at least every four years. Specific items to be addressed in this update include:

- Updating of the above noted supplements to the 2006 plan.
- Updating of the financial plan.

Commendations:

- We commend COMPASS for its fine work in developing its current long range plan; Communities In Motion.
- We commend COMPASS for its ongoing tracking performance measure data for the Long Range Plan and annual reporting of this information in its Performance Monitoring Report.

Recommendations:

- The Plan update should more specifically address the subjects Security, Environmental Mitigation and Consultation, and Systems Operation Management.
- COMPASS' plan to update Communities in Motion by the August 2010 deadline will be a challenge. We request a timeline for the update process.

Corrective Actions:

- All project and program costs in both the Plan need to be presented in a "year of expenditure" (YOE) convention (See Financial Planning / Fiscal Constraint comments, below).

Comments:

- We concur with COMPASS' decision to place particular focus on financial and transportation land-use issues.

Congestion Management Process (CMP) (23 CFR 450.320)

Regulatory Basis:

An effective CMP is a systematic process for managing congestion that provides information on transportation system performance and on alternative strategies for alleviating congestion and enhancing the mobility of persons and goods to levels that meet State and local needs. The CMP results in serious consideration of implementation of strategies that provide the most efficient and effective use of existing and future transportation facilities. In both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, consideration needs to be given to strategies that reduce SOV travel and improve existing transportation system efficiency. Where the addition of general purpose lanes is determined to be an appropriate strategy, explicit consideration is to be given to the incorporation of appropriate features into the SOV project to facilitate future demand management and operational improvement strategies that will maintain the functional integrity of those lanes. *23CFR 450.320(b)*

TMA in non-attainment areas are required, under *23CFR 450.320*, to develop a Congestion Management Process (CMP). Specific requirements and conditions, as specified in the regulations, include:

- “In TMAs designated as non-attainment for ozone or carbon monoxide, Federal funds may not be programmed for any projects that will result in a significant increase in carrying capacity for single occupant vehicles...unless the project results from a CMP...”
- “In TMAs, the planning process must include the development of a CMP that provides for effective management of new and existing transportation facilities through the use of travel demand reduction and operational management strategies.
- “The effectiveness of the management systems in enhancing transportation investment decisions and improving the overall efficiency of the metropolitan area’s transportation systems and facilities shall be evaluated periodically, preferably as part of the metropolitan planning process.”

The CMP shall include:

- Methods to monitor and evaluate the performance of the multimodal transportation system, identify the causes of congestion, identify and evaluate alternative actions, provide information supporting the implementation of actions, and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of implemented actions;
- Definition of parameters for measuring the extent of congestion and for supporting the evaluation of the effectiveness of congestion reduction and mobility enhancement strategies for the movement of people and goods. Since levels of acceptable system performance may vary among local communities, performance measures and service thresholds should be tailored to the specific needs of the area and established

cooperatively by the State, affected MPO(s), and local officials in consultation with the operators of major modes of transportation in the coverage area;

- Establishment of a program for data collection and system performance monitoring to define the extent and duration of congestion, to help determine the causes of congestion, and to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of implemented actions. To the extent possible, existing data sources should be used, as well as appropriate application of the real-time system performance monitoring capabilities available through Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies;
- Identification and evaluation of the anticipated performance and expected benefits of appropriate traditional and nontraditional congestion management strategies that will contribute to the more efficient use of existing and future transportation systems based on the established performance measures. The following categories of strategies, or combinations of strategies, should be appropriately considered for each area: Transportation demand management measures, including growth management and congestion pricing; traffic operational improvements; public transportation improvements; ITS technologies; and, where necessary, additional system capacity.
- Identification of an implementation schedule, implementation responsibilities, and possible funding sources for each strategy (or combination of strategies) proposed for implementation; and
- Implementation of a process for periodic assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of implemented strategies, in terms of the area's established performance measures. The results of this evaluation shall be provided to decision makers to provide guidance on selection of effective strategies for future implementation. *23 CFR 109(b)(1-6)*.

Findings:

In 2003, the Treasure Valley Congestion Management System (CMS) was developed by the COMPASS Regional Technical Advisory Committee (RTAC) subcommittee - the Congestion Management Team. This subcommittee was charged with developing, reviewing, and maintaining the Treasure Valley CMS and its elements. The subcommittee was made up of staff from:

- Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) local office
- Idaho Transportation Department (ITD)
- Ada County Highway District (ACHD)
- Association of Canyon County Highway Districts (ACCHD)
- Valley Regional Transit
- Planners from the cities of Boise, Nampa, and Caldwell and Ada and Canyon Counties
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Idaho Smart Growth
- Other transportation experts

The Treasure Valley CMS was designed to identify recurrent congestion as it applies to principal arterials and interstates in the urban areas.

Fundamentally, a management system is a framework used to develop a plan, implement the plan, monitor the results of the plan, and take corrective action to improve the performance of the

plan. Commonly, this framework is referred to as a “Plan-Do-Check-Act” cycle and is used as the basis for quality and environmental management systems throughout the world.

With the passage of SAFETEA-LU, the Congestion Management System was renamed the Congestion Management Process (CMP). Along with that name change came some modifications to the concepts and process of the earlier CMS. Among these is the need to provide a more multi-modal assessment of the transportation system.

Also, there is a need to more clearly identify the link between the CMP and the programming documents that it is used for; the long range plan and the TIP.

In reviewing and discussion COMPASS’ CMP, it is concluded that the current process is well thought out and is effectively serving the MPO. However, it has its limitations, particularly in the multi-modal sense and, therefore, it is time to reexamine the process and explore how it might be improved.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- The scope and application of the CMP should be expanded to provide for the evaluation of alternative modes of transportation (e.g., bus TSM/TDM measures, walking, and biking). Included as part of this effort will be the need to develop associated performance measures and evaluation processes.
- The CMP should be further refined to provide a more objective approach for identifying and evaluating traffic management and operations strategies.
- The master document describing the CMP should elaborate further on how the CMP is used in conjunction with the identification and prioritization of projects in the TIP and Long Range Plan.

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (23 CFR 450.324, 326 & 328)

Regulatory Basis:

The MPO is required, under 23 CFR 450.324, to develop a TIP in cooperation with the State and public transit operators. Specific requirements and conditions, as specified in the regulations, include:

- The TIP shall cover a period of at least four years, must be updated at least every four years, and must be approved by the MPO and the governor. If the TIP is updated more frequently, the cycle must be compatible with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) development and approval process. [23 CFR 450.324(a)]
- In nonattainment and maintenance areas subject to conformity requirements (see Section 2.8), FHWA and FTA must jointly make a conformity determination with the MPO on any updated or amended TIP. The TIP shall give priority to eligible TCMs identified in the STIP, and projects included for the first two years shall be limited to those for which funds are available or committed. [23 CFR 450.324(i)]
- There shall be reasonable opportunity for comment by all reasonable parties in accordance with 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1) and (3); in nonattainment TMAs, there must be an opportunity for at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process. [23 CFR 450.324(b)] In addition, the TIP must be published or otherwise be made readily available for public review, including in electronically available accessible formats, to the maximum extent practicable.
- The TIP shall comprise capital and noncapital surface transportation projects, including bicycle facilities and pedestrian walkways proposed for funding under U.S.C. Title 23 and 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, including transportation enhancements; Federal Lands Highway projects; and safety projects included in the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Although not required, the following may be included: safety projects funded under 23 U.S.C. 402 and 49 U.S.C. 31102; emergency relief projects; planning and research activities funded by the National Highway System (NHS); STP or Equity Bonus funds, which may be excluded at the discretion of the State and the MPO; and some national research and project management oversight projects. All regionally significant transportation projects for which FHWA or FTA approval is required should also be included and, for informational purposes, so should all regionally significant projects to be funded from Federal sources not administered by FHWA or FTA as well as non-Federal sources [23 CFR 450.324(c)]. The TIP should include only projects that are consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. [23 CFR 450.324(g)]
- The following information shall be provided for each project included in the TIP: sufficient descriptive material to identify the project or phase; estimated total cost; amount of Federal funds proposed to be obligated during each program year; proposed source of Federal and non-Federal funds; identification of funding recipient/project

sponsor; in nonattainment and maintenance areas, identification of TCMs and sufficiently detailed description for conformity determination. [23 CFR 450.324(e)]

- The TIP shall be financially constrained by year and shall include a financial plan identifying projects that can be implemented using current revenue sources and projects requiring proposed additional sources. The State and the transit operators must provide the MPO with estimates of Federal and State funds available for the transportation system serving the metropolitan area. [23 CFR 450.324(h)] Additional information on financial constraint of the TIP is provided in Section 2.7 of this Handbook.
- Projects that the State and the MPO do not consider to be of appropriate scale for individual identification in a given program year may be grouped by function, geographical area, and work type. [23 CFR 450.324(f)] In nonattainment and maintenance areas, classifications must be consistent with the exempt project classifications contained in the EPA conformity requirements. [40 CFR Part 51]
- Suballocation of STP or Section 5307 funds to individual jurisdictions or modes shall not be used unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the distribution is based on considerations addressed as part of the planning process. [23 CFR 450.324(j)]
- As a management tool for monitoring progress in implementing the MTP, the TIP shall identify the criteria and process for prioritizing the implementation of MTP elements through the TIP, list major projects implemented from the previous TIP, and identify significant delays in implementation. [23 CFR 450.324(l)(1) and (2)] FHWA and FTA must jointly find that the TIP is consistent with the MTP. [23 CFR 450.328]
- In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the TIP shall describe progress in implementing required TCMs in accordance with Title 49 Chapter 53. [23 CFR 450.324(l)(3)]
- MPOs may prepare an interim TIP consisting of projects that are eligible to proceed under a conformity lapse. [23 CFR 450.324(m)]
- Projects included in the first four years of the TIP may be advanced in place of another project, subject to project-selection requirements specified in 23 CFR 450.330 (see below).

Several other regulations govern different aspects of TIP development and implementation:

- 23 CFR 450.326 addresses modification of the TIP, stating that the TIP can be modified at any time, subject to the following conditions:
- In nonattainment or maintenance areas, the adding or deleting of projects that affect emission levels requires a new conformity determination.
- Changes that affect fiscal constraint require amendment of the TIP.

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- Public involvement opportunities are provided consistent with requirements for complete information, timely notice, full public access to key decisions, and other relevant provisions; however, these procedures are not required for administrative modifications.
 - After approval by the MPO and the governor, the TIP shall be included without change in the STIP.
 - 23 CFR 450.330 addresses project selection from the TIP as follows:
 - The first year of an approved TIP constitutes an “agreed to” list of projects unless Federal funds available are significantly less than authorized amounts or there is significant shifting of projects between years. [23 CFR 450.330(a)]
 - In TMAs, all Title 23 and Federal Transit Act-funded projects not included in the first year of the TIP as an “agreed to” list of projects (except for NHS projects and those funded under bridge, interstate maintenance, and Federal Lands Highway programs) shall be selected from the approved metropolitan TIP by the MPO in consultation with the State and transit operators. [23 CFR 450.330(c)]
 - In nonattainment and maintenance areas, project-selection procedures shall give priority to the timely implementation of TCMs included in the applicable SIP. [23 CFR 450.330(e)]

Findings:

The COMPASS TIP is updated annually. The procedures, criteria, and other requirements associated with these updates and amendments thereto are detailed in COMPASS’ TIP guidance document entitled, “Policy and Procedures Guide for the TIP”.

Collaboration between the State, the MPO, and the transit authority occurs at several points during the TIP update process. The State provides a schedule for the STIP, after which COMPASS prepares a coordinated TIP schedule to ensure State deadlines are met. The State provides COMPASS an initial list of projects to insure coordination with development of the preliminary TIP project list and the air quality conformity analysis. The transit operator, Valley Regional Transit, also provides their project list to COMPASS to ensure its inclusion in the preliminary TIP. Both the State and Valley Regional Transit participate in the public review of the proposed TIP. The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) Office of Transportation Investment provides COMPASS with program funding estimates to ensure that TIP development is fiscally constrained.

The TIP shows *Section 5309* Federal Transit Administration funding committed to the area in the first year of the TIP. At the request of FTA, anticipated *Section 5309* funds are no longer shown in subsequent years. (They are added by amendment after they become available.)

COMPASS' TIP Policies and Procedures Guidebook contains the sets of criteria used to rank proposed projects. Criteria have been established for 1) roadway and ITS projects, 2) alternative modes projects, and 3) transportation-related studies. Separate criteria have also been established for ranking projects proposed for Transportation Enhancement funding. All ranked projects are then included in the proposed TIP subject to fiscal constraints by fiscal year.

The determination as to whether projects are consistent with the Plan is based on the project either being explicitly listed in the Plan or is judged to clearly advance goals and policies of the Plan.

The COMPASS TIP historically includes project programming for a five-year period and an additional year for Preliminary Development (PD).

The COMPASS TIP contains:

- All the transportation projects to be funded under *Title 23, U.S.C.*
- All regionally significant transportation projects, regardless of funding source.
- Cost estimates.
- Project phase and implementation status.
- The amount of federal funds proposed to be obligated during each program year.
- Proposed source of federal and non-federal funds.

TCMs are not required in the COMPASS area and therefore are not included in the TIP.

The TIP is financially constrained by year according to the MPO. However the financial plan for the TIP does not provide sufficient details or explanation to allow the reader to draw any conclusions on this point.

The TIP does include a separate table of projects that are priorities for discretionary funding. COMPASS has not historically received this type of funding, but has increased efforts in the past years to have projects included in the upcoming federal transportation reauthorization bill.

The TIP Guidebook describes how public involvement is incorporated. The projects are solicited annually in writing and at a series of open meetings between COMPASS and member agencies' transportation committees, City Councils, or other groups designated by the member agency. Once the preliminary TIP is drafted, a 30-day comment period is held, during which an all-day public open house is hosted by COMPASS. COMPASS publicizes this meeting using direct mailing to stakeholders, website notice, legal notice, display advertisements in the region's two largest newspapers, and press releases. Any comments received and their disposition are provided to the COMPASS Board in the staff report when they adopt the final TIP in August and are also provided to ITD prior to their adoption of the STIP.

ITD incorporates, without modification, directly or by reference, the “final” approved TIP into the STIP.

The MPO follows the Federal procedures included in the STIP to determine when a TIP amendment is necessary and the level of additional public involvement. All TIP amendments are brought to the Regional Technical Advisory Committee for a recommendation, after which the item is placed on the COMPASS Board agenda for action. If public involvement is required, COMPASS hosts an open meeting and provides a 30-day comment period prior to Board action on the amendment. Once approved by the COMPASS Board, COMPASS forwards the amendment to ITD requesting that the amendments be included in the STIP.

The TIP is provided on the COMPASS website and available in hard copy. It does not include an ongoing list of current year’s obligations but it does include a list showing the status of projects from prior years (e.g., committed, delayed, or completed).

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- The TIP’s fiscal constraint demonstration must show that the TIP is fiscally constrained by year.
- All project and program costs in the TIP need to be presented in a “year of expenditure” (YOE) convention (See Financial Planning / Fiscal Constraint comments, below).
- The project costs identified in the TIP must include the total project costs.

Comments:

- We acknowledge COMPASS’ support for the administrative modifications tool added to the TIP process with SAFETEA-LU. In that regard, FHWA and FTA commit to provide further guidance and assistance.
- We concur with COMPASS’ plans to update its project prioritization process for the TIP.
- FHWA and FTA commit to provide further guidance and assistance concerning the allowances and limitations to programming and subsequent implementation of “illustrative projects” in the TIP.

Financial Planning/Fiscal Constraint (23 CFR 450.322 & 324)

Regulatory Basis:

The requirements for financial plans are contained in 23 CFR 450.322(f)(10) for the MTP and 23 CFR 450.324(e, h–k), for the TIP. Separate financial plans demonstrate how the adopted MTP and TIP can be implemented.

The requirements related to the MTP include the following:

- Revenue estimates are cooperatively developed by the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators. (Note: The procedures for this must be spelled-out in the MPO Agreement.)
- Revenue estimates include public and private sources that are committed, available, or reasonably expected to be available within the timeframe anticipated for implementation of the project.
- Revenue estimates may include recommendations for new funding sources, which should be supported by identified strategies for securing their availability.
- System-level estimates of operation and maintenance costs for Federally-supported facilities and services are taken into account to determine resources remaining available for capital expenditure.
- Cost and revenue estimates incorporate inflation rates reflecting constant year dollars and expressed in a future worth (year of expenditure) convention.
- The quality of cost estimates is important in the MTP (and TIP). Cost estimates should be reviewed and the process and methods (and any assumptions) for determining costs should be documented.
- Cost estimates in the MTP should be reviewed and periodically updated, at least as frequently as each MTP update.
- In air quality areas, include specific financial strategies to ensure the implementation of required air-quality projects like Transportation Control Measures (TCMs).
- Cost estimates for the period beyond the first 10 years can be expressed in terms of ranges or “bands,” as long as sufficient future funding sources are reasonably expected to be available. See <http://knowledge.fhwa.dot.gov/cops/tdx.nsf/b/KMMM788PLC> for more information on cost banding.
- If a revenue source included in an MTP is determined to be fiscally constrained and is subsequently removed or reduced, FHWA and FTA will not approve future updates or amendments of the MTP that do not reflect the change in revenues.

The requirements related to the TIP include the following:

- Demonstrate and maintain financial constraint by year.
- Identify projects to be funded with current and available revenues.
- Identify estimated total project cost, which may extend beyond the four years of the TIP.
- System-level estimates of operation and maintenance costs for Federally supported facilities and services are taken into account when estimating resources remaining available for capital expenditure.
- Cost and revenue estimates incorporate inflation rates to reflect constant year dollars.
- The quality of cost estimates is important in the TIP (and MTP). Cost estimates should be reviewed and the process and methods (and any assumptions) for determining costs should be documented.
- Cost estimates in the TIP should be reviewed and periodically updated, at least as frequently as each TIP update.
- Only projects or phases of projects if full funding can reasonably be expected to be available for the project within the time period anticipated for completion of the project.
- Only projects for which construction or operating funds can reasonably be expected to be available.
- In air quality areas, projects included in the first two years of the TIP shall be limited to those for which funds are available or committed.
- Eligible TCMs identified in the SIP have priority in the TIP, which shall provide for their timely implementation.
- Revenue estimates are cooperatively developed by the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators, as set forth in the MPO Agreement.
- Revenue estimates include public and private sources that are committed, available, or reasonably expected to be available.
- Revenue estimates may include recommendations for new funding sources and strategies for securing their availability.
- The amount and category of Federal funds proposed to be obligated during each program year for each project.
- Includes all projects receiving Federal funding and all regionally significant projects that are not Federally-funded.

Findings:

The financial constraint of the TIP has been easier to demonstrate, with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) providing conservative financial estimates to COMPASS. Especially in the last few years, funding for all programmatic categories is carefully defined, and proposed projects must fall within the estimated amounts for each year.

Tracking of surface transportation program (STP) accounts for local projects (non-ITD system) has been accommodated through Urban and Transportation Management Area Balancing Committees that consists of local and state representatives. ITD ensures that no obligation authority is lost, and the balancing committee meets periodically to check project status and move funds among qualifying projects.

On the local side, funding evaluations by the Ada County Highway District (ACHD) have been very detailed, with ACHD staff working through its own processes to develop revenue and expenditures. In contrast, the local jurisdictions of Canyon County do not have nearly the level of detail for transportation revenues and expenditures.

For the longer-range MTP, financial evaluations have been more difficult. ITD does not prepare long-range revenue forecasts and potential regional marks for use in the MTPs, although COMPASS has used broader studies prepared by ITD, notably the 2004 *Forum on Transportation Investment* (<http://itd.idaho.gov/info/ti.forum/>) that evaluated statewide long-term financial outlooks. COMPASS also makes use of financial records maintained by ITD, including Highway Distribution Account funds, vehicle registration data, fuel sales, etc.

For roadways, a major challenge for all levels is the cost of right-of-way and the level of maintenance funding needs. ACHD estimates that for some urban projects, right-of-way costs now equal the construction costs. Pavement monitoring is done to varying levels but has just started in Canyon County agencies. Erratic energy prices and dramatic increases in construction costs have added to the complexity.

Transit forecasts remain problematic. Lacking a dedicated revenue source, transit has been dependent on discretionary funding at the local level. If a city funds transit, it does so out of general revenue sources such as property taxes or distributions of sales taxes by the State of Idaho. However, these are funds for which other services compete: police, fire, parks, libraries, etc. Also, many cities provide little or no funding for transit. During the 2007, 2008, and 2009 state legislative sessions, COMPASS and Valley Regional Transit sought legislative action on a local option sales tax dedicated to transportation. These efforts were widely supported but failed when state legislative leaders added provisions that were not acceptable to many local officials.

Federal transit operating funds have been difficult due to the way that Congress authorizes and appropriates funding. Robust authorization levels are not always matched by appropriations. Discretionary funding under Section 5309 is sometimes held up by Congress. There is also concern that waivers regarding the use of federal funds for operating costs may not be continued. COMPASS commissioned a financial outlook report in 2009 that attempts to deal with the complex and contradictory nature of revenue and financing. (See <http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cim2035-update.htm>, *Funding Local Roadway Needs...*”)

Financial plans for the long range transportation plan (RTP) and TIP have been limited in scope and detail for a number of reasons.

RTP Revenues and Costs:

The RTP’s financial plan has primarily been based on data provided by ACHD to identify historic revenue sources; develop acceptable and reasonable forecasts of these sources; assess current and projected costs; and assess the amount of future funding that may be available after accounting for current and future systems maintenance. ACHD has a sizeable body of information on revenues, general expenses, project costs, and pavement/bridge management systems. Revenue forecasts have been prepared, based on tying future revenue streams to population or vehicle increases. Cost forecasts have also been prepared using ACHD data. Breaking out maintenance costs has been problematic, even for ACHD, due to the way in which reconstruction costs are often included in capacity-expansion projects. The biggest challenge has been to isolate the costs of maintaining a future system separately from the initial capital costs of building new highway capacity.

ITD has not provided similar long-range revenue estimates for use in the RTPs, although COMPASS has used broader studies prepared by ITD. COMPASS also makes use of financial records maintained by ITD, including Highway Distribution Account funds, vehicle registration data, fuel sales, etc. ITD is now engaged in a Forum on Transportation Investment that is evaluating long-term financial outlooks. This information is not likely to be available in time for *Communities in Motion*.

Financial capacity evaluations were prepared for the Canyon County plan in 2003, but, as with the Ada County plan, there were no estimates of costs for maintaining a future system.

Financial forecasts for transit activities have proven difficult for Idaho. Lacking a dedicated revenue source, transit has been dependent on discretionary funding at the local level. If a city funds transit, it does so out of general revenue sources such as property taxes or distributions of sales taxes by the State of Idaho. However, these are funds for which other services compete: police, fire, parks, libraries, etc. Also, many cities provide little or no funding for transit.

Federal transit capital funds have been difficult to forecast, due to the limited experience with discretionary funding until the last few years. Federal Transit Administration staff has indicated that projecting future FTA funding increases might be questionable unless there are new sources of local matching funds. Without a historical basis, it is difficult to estimate what is reasonable.

Over the past several years, however, local transit providers have been successful in obtaining Section 5309 funds, primarily for bus acquisition.

TIP Revenues and Costs:

COMPASS works with its member agencies and ITD to establish the reasonableness of the estimated revenues. ITD, COMPASS and other agencies participate in a “balancing committee” with statewide representation to monitor use of STP funds. ITD also provides feedback on the amount of Section 5307 and other Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. ACHD has its own financial staff to monitor available funds. With respect to costs, COMPASS has good information on projects costs but has little if any information available to it on operating and maintenance costs of highway facilities.

Reasonableness Checks of Revenues and Costs:

COMPASS ensures that RTP and TIP financial plan costs and revenues are based on data reflecting the existing situation and historical trends by using the best information available at the time. Past efforts have gone back 10 years to establish cost and revenue trends. Forecasting both costs and revenues has proven difficult for COMPASS, especially for revenues where the amount is tied to policy changes such as State legislative actions on Idaho’s gas tax.

The financial plans for the RTP and TIP propose new revenue/revenue sources, but do not make any distinction as to the reasonableness of such new sources or likelihood that they might ultimately be available.

Maintenance Costs:

Cost estimates in conjunction with the RTP and TIP financial plans have been difficult for COMPASS to establish since many maintenance projects are mixed with roadway expansions. Historic maintenance costs may or may not indicate maintenance needs are being met at that level, since many agencies have not established a pavement management system with long-term tracking of system performance.

New Revenue Sources:

The financial plan for the RTP and the TIP proposes new revenue/revenue sources, but does not guarantee such sources will be available. Local governments have almost no power to approve new taxes without specific enabling legislation. Most funding tools, especially those related to new/increased taxes or debt, require not only enabling legislation but also are often tied to voter approval. The Governor of Idaho has recently approved a bill allowing the State to use Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEE) bonds for a variety of projects around the state.

Financial Plan Checks in Conjunction with RTP and TIP Amendments:

RTP amendments have been rare, and so the issue has not been a concern. TIP amendments typically involve corrective actions or project exchanges within available funding limits as provided by the ITD Office of Transportation Investment.

Summary:

While it is evident that COMPASS has made significant strides forward in the financial plans for its Plan and TIP since the 2005 Certification Review, further work is still necessary. In particular, the follow specific items require attention:

- All project costs and program revenues for both the Long Range Plan and the TIP need to be presented in a future worth (year of expenditure) convention.
- Additional details and clarification are needed in both the Long Range Plan and the TIP to explain the assumptions and methods used to identify and analyze program costs and revenues.
- The financial plans for the RTP and TIP must include strategies to ensure any new funding sources identifies are available as planned.

Moreover, it is clear from COMPASS' comments that further guidance is needed from FHWA and FTA concerning what is expected of them on this subject and greater involvement and input is needed from ITD; particularly in providing estimates on Federal and State funding.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- Further work is needed on the financial plans and demonstrations of fiscal constraint for both the Long Range Plan and the TIP. Specifically, the following items must be resolved with the next updates to the Long Range Plan and TIP:

Long Range Plan	TIP
23 CFR 450.322(f)10(iv): ...revenue and cost estimates that support the metropolitan transportation plan must use an inflation rate(s) to reflect year of expenditure dollars based on reasonable financial principles and information developed cooperatively by the MPO, State and public transportation operator(s).	23 CFR 450.324(h): ... revenue and cost estimates that support the TIP must use an inflation rate(s) to reflect year of expenditure dollars based on reasonable financial principles and information developed cooperatively by the MPO, State and public transportation operator(s).
23 CFR 450.322(f)10(ii) For purpose of developing the metropolitan transportation plan the MPO, public transportation operator and State shall cooperatively develop estimates of funds that will be available to support metropolitan transportation plan implementation as required under 450.314(a). All necessary financial resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be made available to carry out the transportation plan shall be identified.	23 CFR 450.324(h):... In developing the TIP the MPO, State and public transportation operator shall cooperative develop estimates of funds that are reasonably expected to be available to support TIP implementation, in accordance with 450.314(a). Only projects for which construction of operating funds can reasonably be expected to be available may be included.
23 CFR 450.322(f)10(iii): The financial plan shall include recommendations on any additional financial strategies to fund projects and programs included in the metropolitan transportation plan. In the case of new funding sources, strategies for ensuring their availability shall be identified.	23 CFR 450.324(h):... In the case of new funding sources, strategies for ensuring their availability shall be identified.

Comments:

- FHWA and FTA acknowledge the need for ITD to provide COMPASS with more extensive information on revenue projections for its planning area.
- FHWA and FTA commit to provide further guidance and assistance to COMPASS and ITD concerning the Federal expectations for demonstrating fiscal constraint in the TIP.

Air Quality (23 CFR 450.314, 320, 322, 324, 326, & 334)

Regulatory Basis:

Section 176 (c)(1) of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) states: "*No metropolitan planning organization designated under section 134 of title 23, United States Code, shall give its approval to any project, program, or plan which does not conform to an implementation plan approved or promulgated under section 110.*" The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 subsequently included provisions responsive to the mandates of the CAAA.

Implementing regulations have maintained this strong connection.

Provisions governing air-quality-related transportation planning are incorporated in a number of metropolitan planning regulations rather than being the primary focus of one or several regulations. For MPOs that are declared to be air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas, there are many special requirements in addition to the basic requirements for a metropolitan planning process. These include formal agreements to address air-quality-planning requirements, requirements for setting metropolitan planning area boundaries (MPAs), interagency coordination, MTP content and updates, requirements for the CMP, public meeting requirements, and conformity findings on MTPs and TIPs. Sections of the metropolitan planning regulations governing air quality are summarized below.

- An agreement is required between the MPO and the designated agency responsible for air quality planning describing their respective roles and responsibilities (see *Metropolitan Planning Agreements* topic area). [23 CFR 450.314(c)]
- In a metropolitan area that does not include the entire nonattainment or maintenance area, an agreement is required among the State DOT, State air-quality agency, affected local agencies, and the MPO providing for cooperative planning in the area outside the metropolitan planning area but within the nonattainment or maintenance area. [23 CFR 450.314(b)] In metropolitan areas with more than one MPO, an agreement is required among the State and the MPO describing how they will coordinate to develop *an overall MTP for the metropolitan area*; in nonattainment and maintenance areas, the agreement is required to include State and local air-quality agencies. [23 CFR 450.314(d)]
- The MPO is required to coordinate development of the MTP with the State Implementation Plan (SIP) development process, including the development of TCMs (see *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* topic area). [23 CFR 450.322(d)]
- In TMAs designated as nonattainment areas, Federal funds may not be programmed for any project that will result in a significant increase in carrying capacity for SOVs, unless the project results from a CMP meeting the requirements of 23 CFR 450.320(d) and (e).
- The MTP shall identify SOV projects that result from a CMP meeting Federal requirements. [23 CFR 450.322(f)(4)] and shall include design-concept and scope descriptions of all existing and future transportation facilities to permit conformity determinations. [23 CFR 450.322(f)(6)] FHWA, FTA, and the MPO must make a

conformity determination on any new or revised MTP in nonattainment and maintenance areas (see *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* topic area). [23 CFR 450.322(l)]

- In nonattainment and maintenance areas, FHWA, FTA and the MPO must make a conformity determination on any new or amended TIP. [23 CFR 450.324(b) and 450.328(b)]
- In nonattainment TMAs, there must be an opportunity for at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process. [23 CFR 450.324(b)]
- In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the TIP shall identify projects designated as TCMs in the applicable SIP. [23 CFR 450.324(d)(5)]
- In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the TIP shall include all regionally significant transportation projects proposed to be funded with Federal and non-Federal funds [23 CFR 450.324(d)] as well as projects identified as TCMs in the SIP. [23 CFR 450.324(d)(5)] Projects shall be specified in sufficient detail to permit air-quality analysis in accordance with EPA conformity requirements. [23 CFR 450.324(e)(1)]
- In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the TIP shall describe the progress in implementing required TCMs [23 CFR 450.324(l)(3)] and shall include a list of all projects found to conform in a previous TIP that are now part of the base case used in the air-quality conformity analysis. [23 CFR 450.324(l)(2)]
- In nonattainment or maintenance areas, if the TIP is amended by adding or deleting projects that affect transportation-related emissions, a new conformity determination will be required. [23 CFR 450.326(a)]
- In TMAs that are nonattainment or maintenance areas, FHWA and FTA will review and evaluate the transportation planning process to determine that it is adequate to ensure conformity of plans and programs in accordance with procedures contained in 40 CFR Part 93. [23 CFR 450.334 (b)]

Findings:

Air Quality issues in the COMPASS Planning Area:

Northern Ada County is designated as a maintenance area in attainment of the carbon monoxide (CO) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). A violation of the CO NAAQS has not been recorded since 1987. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) submitted the *Limited Maintenance Plan and Request for Redesignation to Attainment for the Northern Ada County Carbon Monoxide Not-Classified Nonattainment Area* to the EPA in December 2001. The EPA approved the Plan and subsequently redesignated the area in December 2002.

Northern Ada County is also designated as a maintenance area in attainment of the coarse particulate matter (PM₁₀) NAAQS. No violation of the PM₁₀ NAAQS in Northern Ada County has been recorded since 1991. Prior to March 12, 1999, Northern Ada County was designated as a

nonattainment area for PM₁₀. On that date the EPA Administrator signed a revocation of Northern Ada County's nonattainment designation. This ruling was challenged in the Ninth District Circuit Court. On January 31, 2001, the U.S. Department of Justice approved a settlement agreement for the Idaho Clean Air Force et al. v. EPA et al. lawsuit. A major component of the settlement agreement required an update to Northern Ada County's PM₁₀ SIP. In September of 2003, the EPA approved the *Northern Ada County PM₁₀ SIP Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request*.

Exceedances of the 24-hour PM₁₀ NAAQS in Northern Ada County have occurred during severe wintertime air stagnation events. These events, known as atmospheric inversions, are caused when cold, stagnant air is held close to the valley floor by warmer air aloft. During these events, particulates form in the atmosphere out of such gaseous pollutants as nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC). Thus, both NO_x and VOC are considered precursors of PM₁₀. As a result, the PM₁₀ Maintenance Plan contains approved PM₁₀, NO_x, and VOC motor vehicle emissions budgets.

Within the past few years, exceedances of both the 24-hour fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and the 8-hour ozone NAAQS have occurred in both Northern Ada County and neighboring Canyon County. However, the exceedances have not led to violations of the NAAQS. Thus Northern Ada County and Canyon County are designated as attainment for both ozone and PM_{2.5}.

Air quality monitoring in the COMPASS planning area shows it to be within the limits of the existing standards for the criteria pollutant, ozone. However, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued a proposed rule making that would lower the 8-hour primary ozone standard from the current 0.075 parts per million (PPM) to somewhere in the range of 0.060 to 0.070 PPM. The projected timeline for the change in the standard is August 31, 2010 with the effective date of any resultant non-attainment designations being August 2011.

Based on recent air quality monitoring results, it is entirely possible that some portion of the COMPASS planning area will be designated non-attainment for ozone if the anticipated reduction of the standard is enacted.

Agency Designation for Air Quality Planning:

Responsibilities under Section 174 of the Clean Air Act are delegated between MPOs and the Idaho DEQ, per state administrative rules. Specific to Northern Ada County, DEQ is the lead agency for preparing and submitting State Implementation Plans (SIPs), with the exception of the CO SIP. COMPASS (formally the Ada Planning Association) was designated as the lead planning authority for CO. However, DEQ must review and approve any SIP prior to submission to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). COMPASS is also designated as the lead agency for interagency consultation.

Incorporation and Implementation of Air Quality Goals:

Unified Planning Work Program development:

Resources for the transportation conformity process (including interagency consultation) are

dedicated in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). COMPASS' Board approves the UPWP. In addition, air quality studies and projects being managed by or involving COMPASS are included in the UPWP. Therefore, any TCM implementation projects requiring COMPASS resources would be listed in the UPWP.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development:

The Northern Ada County Interagency Consultation Committee on Air Quality (ICC), meets regularly to discuss and approve the assumptions used to assess the regional air quality impacts associated with programmed projects. In addition, roadway projects being planned for "out-years" (years beyond the five years of the TIP) are incorporated into the regional emissions analysis. However, COMPASS' regional emissions analyses do include impacts from programmed projects not required in the analysis by 40CFR93. Once the project lists (or model networks) are approved by the ICC, a regional emissions analysis is completed by COMPASS and a draft conformity demonstration made available for public comment. After the public comment period, the TIP, along with its conformity demonstration, is adopted by the Board. The TIP, with the associated conformity demonstration, is then submitted to the FHWA, FTA, and the ITD for inclusion into the STIP.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) development:

COMPASS uses the same conformity demonstration process for the MTP as for the TIP.

Public participation in MTP and TIP conformity:

A 30-day public comment period is established for every conformity demonstration prior to the adoption of a TIP or MTP. Comments made on the conformity demonstration are addressed as applicable and included in an appendix to the demonstration. Additionally, meetings of the ICC are open to the public and noticed 30-days prior to the meeting date per state administrative rules.

Financial plans for constrained MTP and TIP:

"Regionally significant" or federally funded projects are assessed for regional impacts on air quality using modeling tools before placed in the TIP for funding. Projects listed in the MTP are those qualifying as "Regionally Significant" per the ICC's current working definition. This list, along with other long-range project lists, like the Ada County Highway District's Capital Improvements Plan, are used to assess the air quality impacts associated with the roadway network that is planned, assuming the same fiscal constraints that were incorporated to produce each list. Ultimately, ICC approves the project list used for regional emissions analyses.

SIP development and development of TCMs:

DEQ is the designated lead agency for SIP development for all pollutants, with the exception of CO. DEQ is responsible for the evaluation and documentation of TCMs in SIPs. Both the SIP and TCM development processes would involve, to some degree, the ICC, as motor vehicle emissions budgets and TCMs should be assessed for their reasonableness.

Timely implementation of applicable SIP TCMs:

Currently, no TCMs are in need of implementation in any of the Northern Ada County's maintenance plans. If/when TCMs are required, they will be included in the SIP, UPWP, TIP, and/or MTP. COMPASS is designated as the lead agency for implementation of TCMs, which would be accomplished via the TIP and MTP processes as applicable. This may involve working with local governments to adopt ordinances. The ICC monitors the progress towards meeting any implementation schedules. Should action be needed to implement TCMs, the ICC would identify the appropriate action and work to see that action was taken by the appropriate agency.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- COMPASS' plays a key role in the planning and analysis of air quality issues and its work in this area is consistently sound and well documented.
- COMPASS should anticipate that the emerging air quality issues a new air quality emissions model (MOVES) and the prospect of further lowering of the 8-hour ozone standard will present new challenges to its planning program including technical and resource demands upon its staff.

Self-Certifications (23 CFR 450.334)

Regulatory Basis:

Self-Certification of the metropolitan planning process, at least once every four years, is required under 23 CFR 450.334. The State and the MPO shall certify to FHWA and FTA that the planning process is addressing the major issues facing the area and is conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of 23 CFR 450.300 and:

- 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 and Sections 174 and 176(c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act (if applicable)
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each State
- 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity
- Section 1101(b) of SAFETEA-LU and 49 CFR Part 26, regarding involvement of DBE in U.S. DOT-funded planning projects
- 23 CFR Part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts
- ADA and U.S. DOT regulations governing transportation for people with disabilities [49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38]
- Older Americans Act as amended, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age
- Section 324 of Title 23 U.S.C., regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and 49 CFR Part 27, regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities
- All other applicable provisions of Federal law (e.g., while no longer specifically noted in a self-certification, prohibition of use of Federal funds for “lobbying” still applies and should be covered in all grant agreement documents (see 23 CFR 630.112).

A Certification Review by FTA and FHWA of the planning process in TMAs is required at least once every four years, in addition to the required self-certification by the MPO and State.

Findings:

The annual self-certification for the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) is completed annually, signed by the Executive Director and forwarded to the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) for approval and signature. Completed certification is included in the Unified Planning Work Program and Budget (UPWP).

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Public Outreach (23 CFR 450.316, 322 & 324) and

Visualization Techniques (23 CFR 450.316)

Regulatory Basis - Public Outreach:

The requirements for public involvement are set forth primarily in 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(2)(3) and (b) which addresses elements of the metropolitan planning process (see also *Transportation Planning Process* topic area). Public involvement also is addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 450.322(g)(1)(2), (i), and (j) and with the TIP in 450.324(b); participation and consultation requirements, which pertain to the MTP and the TIP, also are included in 450.322 (f)(7) and (g)(1)(2), (i), and (j) and in 450.324(b),

Requirements related to the planning process generally are summarized in 450.316(a)(1)(2)(3) and (b) as follows:

- Development and use of a documented participation plan providing for . . . reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan planning process.
- Adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points.
- Timely public notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.
- Visualization techniques to describe MTPs and TIPs.
- Public information and meeting available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as World Wide Web.
- Public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.
- Explicit consideration and response to public input received.
- Seeking out and considering the needs of people traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems.
- Providing additional opportunities for public comment if the final MTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment. Coordination with Statewide public involvement and consultation processes.
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
- Provide a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of significant written and oral comments received.

-
- A minimum public comment period of 45 days before adoption or revision of the public involvement process.
 - Consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation or coordinate the planning process with such planning activities.

The requirements pertaining to the MTP (450.322) also include provisions addressing public outreach (450.322(f)(7) and (450.322 (g)) as follows:

- A discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities. The discussion shall be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and Tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies.
- Consult as appropriate with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the MTP. The consultation shall involve, as appropriate (1) comparison of MTPs with State conservation plans or maps, if available, or (2) comparison of MTPs with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

TIP Requirements [450.324(b)]:

- All interested parties shall have a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP as required by 450.316(a). In addition, in nonattainment TMAs, an opportunity for at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process; the circumstances of the public meeting should be addressed through the participation plan described in 450.316(a).

Regulatory Basis - Public Outreach:

The requirements for the use of visualization techniques in metropolitan plans and TIPs can be found as part of 450.316 - Interested parties, participation and consultation. The specific section is 450.316(a)(1)(iii), and the reference reads as follows:

The participation plan shall describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for: Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;

Effective date: for all MPOs, including TMAs - March 16, 2007

Findings – Public Outreach:

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) developed a policy for public involvement in 1994; the policy is reviewed every three years. It was last amended in 2006. The primary goal is to offer an active public involvement process that provides

comprehensive information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing plans.

A second goal is to consider and implement the principles of equality for all citizens as formulated in Title VI and the Executive Order for Environmental Justice to the extent reasonably possible.

COMPASS achieves these goals by:

- Hosting public meetings, workshops, public hearings, focus groups, surveys, and ad hoc committees and task groups and by providing comprehensive information such as posting meetings (dates, sites, agendas, summaries), and major documents on website;
- Offering presentations to organizations identified as stakeholders;
- Holding joint public meeting and other events with similar agencies;
- Notifying the public in a timely manner through paid advertisements, news releases, public service announcements, and legal notices;
- Providing full access to key decisions by publicizing meeting dates and sites, providing options for making comments, making draft documents and informational materials available, holding open house meetings to discuss projects/plans;
- Encouraging stakeholders (interested groups, businesses, neighborhoods, elected officials, agency staffs, and citizens) to offer continual feedback;
- Providing summary transcripts of public comments to elected officials prior to their decisions;
- Distributing citizen comments, staff recommendations, and board decisions to appropriate venues (website, libraries, etc).

COMPASS provides individuals and groups with timely information through a number of means, including news releases/news features, display ads, legal notices, newsletters (including project specific newsletters, agency partners, member agencies, associations, etc), postcards, e-mail distribution, and websites.

Information is available to the public both in hardcopy and on the internet. The public receives notice of the availability of this information during general project notification (website announcement, email, legal notices, news release), by contacting COMPASS staff, and by searching the COMPASS website.

The public is invited to comment on key decision points:

- *Planning:* during visioning/goal setting, during the transportation improvements/components phase, and during the draft plan
- *Programming:* COMPASS staff works with local groups to select projects for the TIP; the public is invited to review and comment on the TIP annually in July for one month, including a daylong public meeting (8:00 am – 8:00 pm).
- *Project Development Phases:* COMPASS participates in the public involvement process with other agencies involved with project development, such as with the Ada County Highway District for the “Three Cities River Crossing” project, or those with the Idaho

Transportation Department (ITD). As COMPASS begins to manage corridor studies and similar projects, there will be more opportunity for public involvement during project development phases.

COMPASS staff prepares an evaluation of each public involvement effort, along with notebooks containing notification samples, media response, public comment, and such. We can determine the level of effectiveness in assuring full and open access by the amount of publicity received, the placement of ads, the number of people attending and/or providing comment, and the level of interest raised.

COMPASS considers the underserved population by including the offer of Spanish translation in its newsletters and notifications, by offering a translator at public meetings/hearings, by locating public meetings in areas accessible by alternative transportation, and by distributing information through a variety of media, including Spanish language radio and newspapers, churches, and support groups.

Unless significantly and substantially altered, COMPASS does not go back to the public with revisions for an additional comment period. If such occurs, COMPASS will place a notice on the website and in local newspapers, and will contact via email those who made comment, to review the revised document.

COMPASS works closely with ITD to advertise public comment period and public open houses for the TIP, and to have staff and materials supporting the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) at the meeting. COMPASS also invites other transportation agencies to have staff and materials available at public meetings.

Entities with particular interest in transportation such as Commuteride, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Boise Airport are familiar with and involved in COMPASS' public involvement activities through their membership in COMPASS.

Currently COMPASS is in the process of updating its Public Involvement Policy. In that regard, FHWA has reviewed the draft update and found it to be satisfactory subject to follow up on one comment concerning the need to more explicitly identify in the policy how it will seek input from minority and low income groups and individuals [*reflected in final plan adopted December 21, 2009*].

Findings – Visualization:

COMPASS uses visualization techniques as a matter of routine throughout its planning and public involvement processes. These techniques range from the very simple, such as photos, maps, and simple graphs/charts, to the complex, such as growth simulations and animations. The use of these tools can be found throughout COMPASS publications, presentations, displays, etc.

The decision of when to use visualization techniques and which techniques to use are based on the information we need to convey and on the audience. We choose the tools that are best suited to helping the specific audience understand the message we want to convey.

COMPASS makes use of graphs, charts, photos, drawings, maps, animation, simulations, etc. to visually display information. A few samples are discussed below.

- Pie charts showing percentage of roads projected to be over capacity under different scenarios
- Line graphs showing the effect of inflation in transportation dollars
- Digitally manipulated photos showing the benefits of controlling access
- Animated simulation video showing projected population growth in the Treasure Valley. One such video was used at venues such as the Idaho Green Expo, in conjunction with the COMPASS display on the regional long-range transportation plan. (See Public Outreach section, above.)
- Local photos and maps to demonstrate how different types of density have been successfully developed in the Treasure Valley

Commendations:

- We commend COMPASS for its proactive and innovative strategies for generating public participation and input in conjunction with the development of its various products and activities.

Recommendations:

- We support COMPASS' plans to update its Public Participation Policy [*adopted December 21, 2009*]. Please incorporate FHWA's comment on to more explicitly identify in the policy how it will seek input from minority and low income groups and individuals [*reflected in adopted plan*].

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

TITLE VI and Related Requirements (23 CFR 450.334)

Regulatory Basis:

It has been the U.S. Department of Transportation's (US DOT) longstanding policy to actively ensure non-discrimination under *Title VI* of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. *Title VI* states that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance". *Title VI* bars intentional discrimination as well as disparate impact discrimination (e.g. neutral policy or practice that has the effect of a disparate impact on protected groups. The planning regulations [23 CFR 450.334(a)(3)] require consistency with *Title VI*; the *Title VI* assurance executed by each State adds sex and physical handicap to characteristics protected against discrimination.

Executive Order 12898, issued in 1994, further amplifies *Title VI* by providing that "each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations." In compliance with *Executive Order 12898*, the US DOT Order on Environmental Justice was issued in 1997.

23 CFR 450.334(a)(3) requires the FHWA and FTA to certify that the "planning process... is being conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of... *Title VI* of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the *Title VI* assurance executed by each State under 23 U.S.C 324 and 29 U.S.C. 794."

Findings:

COMPASS has adopted a *Title VI Plan* that the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) compiled for metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) throughout the State of Idaho. This plan addresses all aspects of Title VI and Environmental Justice.

COMPASS' Title VI Policy is also included in the *Employment Procedures Manual* Section 4.0 Anti-Discrimination. Sign-in sheets are kept for all public meetings. We request voluntary information to be completed by the attendee that documents gender, disability, and race. The form also notes that COMPASS complies with *Title VI* and provides for instruction on filing a complaint if an attendee feels COMPASS has violated the policy. In March of 2009 ITD adopted an updated Title VI Plan. COMPASS is in the process of working with ITD to adopt their approved Title VI, LEP and DBE plans collectively. Until that occurs the current Title VI Plan is available online at <http://www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm>; the applicable section of the *Employment Procedures Manual* is attached.

COMPASS conducts personnel practices in compliance with applicable federal and state laws

regarding religion, race, color, gender, age, physical or mental disability, national origin, or veteran status. The personnel practices include hiring, wages and benefits, promotions, termination of employment, and all other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

COMPASS created a database and map of Environmental Justice consideration areas – those areas by Census Block Group that have high populations of low-income and/or minority persons for consideration during the development of the MTP and other projects. The database also includes percentages at the Census Block Group level for populations of persons who are elderly or disabled. The Block Group is shown as a consideration area when *either* above 30% in minority population and/or contains 50% or more low-income.

- “Minority” is everyone who does not consider themselves as “white alone.”
- Low-income is defined as 60% of Median Household Income.

Ada County has 20 consideration areas for minority/low-income populations – although all of these include only low-income populations. Canyon County has 21 consideration areas for minority/low-income populations. An Environmental Justice Consideration Area map can be found at <http://www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm>.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Intelligent Transportation Systems (23 CFR 940)

Regulatory Basis:

The FHWA Final Rule and FTA Policy on Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture and Standards were issued on January 8, 2001, to implement *Section 5206(e)* of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). This Final Rule/Policy requires that all ITS projects funded by the Highway Trust Fund and the Mass Transit Account conform to the National ITS Architecture, as well as to USDOT adopted ITS Standards. The Final Rule on ITS Architecture and Standards is published in *23 CFR Part 940*.

23 CFR Part 940 states that:

- Regions implementing ITS projects at the time the Final Rule/Policy was issued must have a regional ITS architecture in place by April 8, 2005. Regions not implementing ITS projects at the time the Final Rule/Policy was issued must develop a regional ITS architecture within four years from the date their first ITS project advances to final design.
- All ITS projects funded by the Highway Trust Fund (including the Mass Transit Account), whether they are stand-alone projects or combined with non-ITS projects, must be consistent with the Final Rule/Policy.
- Major ITS projects should move forward based on a project level architecture that clearly reflects consistency with the National ITS architecture.
- All projects shall be developed using a systems engineering process.
- Projects must use USDOT adopted ITS standards as appropriate.

Compliance with the regional ITS architecture will be in accordance with USDOT oversight and Federal-aid procedures, similar to non-ITS projects.

Findings:

Between 2000 and 2009, over \$9.5 million dollars have been invested on 23 Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) projects in Ada County on the local and state system. The City of Nampa (in Canyon County) has also invested in ITS projects—four signal interconnect projects and two video/coordination projects totaling \$350,000 (all local dollars). No new ITS projects have been solicited for funding through CMAQ funds since 2009 due to the funding constraints. Ada County is designated as a maintenance area; therefore, ITD is not required to fund the CMAQ program. Roadway agencies are continuing to seek other funding sources for ITS projects.

An ITS implementation plan (*Treasure Valley Intelligent Transportation Systems [ITS] Strategic Plan*) was developed in September 2006. This plan identifies short, medium, and long-range ITS

projects in both Ada and Canyon Counties. ACHD and COMPASS staff have discussed and researched the IDAS software for use in alternative's analysis of ITS projects. Decisions regarding IDAS are pending further research, funding availability, staff time, training, and data needs.

COMPASS' involvement in ITS has been fairly seamless due to the unique nature of the single-county highway district, ACHD. ACHD has also been coordinating ITS on the state systems; therefore, providing a single-source for information. Staff from all relevant agencies will continue to work together and outline roles in the near future.

ITS Responsibilities at COMPASS:

This responsibility is typically assigned to one of the principal planners. Duties include working with the county-wide highway district (ACHD) and transportation agencies in Canyon County to keep apprised of ITS projects, being involved in project prioritization, and updating the ITS architecture plan for COMPASS.

ITS Implementation Plan and Regional ITS Architecture:

ITS Implementation Plan (*Treasure Valley Intelligent Transportation Systems [ITS] Strategic Plan*, September 2006): COMPASS provided data to the consultant team developing the plan, reviewed draft versions, and consults the plan for the prioritization of projects (projects in the plan get higher priority).

Regional Architecture Plan: COMPASS is actively working with a local consultant to update the regional ITS architecture plan, integrate a newly developed regional transit ITS architecture plan in it, and train MPO staff on how to maintain regional architecture using Turbo Architecture.

Maintaining the regional ITS architecture:

Once it is complete, COMPASS staff and ACHD staff will continue to work together to ensure consistency.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

List of Obligated Projects (23 CFR 450.332)

Regulatory Basis:

CFR 450.332 requires that the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators cooperatively develop a listing of projects for which Federal funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S. C. Chapter 53 have been obligated in the previous year. The listing must include all Federally funded projects authorized or revised to increase obligations in the preceding program year and, at a minimum, the following for each project:

- The amount of funds requested in the TIP
- Federal funding obligated during the preceding year
- Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years
- Sufficient description to identify the project or phase
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project or phase

The listing of projects, including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, must be published or otherwise be made available in accordance with the MPO's public participation criteria for the TIP within 90 calendar days of the end of the program year. Further, cooperative procedures among the State, the MPO, and transit operators to submit the fund-obligation information necessary for this report should be set forth in the MPO Agreement [CFR 450.314(a)].

Findings:

COMPASS includes a list of obligated projects from the previous year in the annual update of the TIP. The list of obligated projects is intended to make the public aware of the progress or delay of federal or regionally significant projects so they are more easily tracked.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Environmental Mitigation (23 CFR 450.332) and
Consultation and Coordination (23 CFR 450.316 and .322)

Regulatory Basis – Environmental Mitigation:

The specific requirements for environmental mitigation are set forth in connection with the MTP in 450.322(f)(7). However, the basis for addressing environmental mitigation is detailed in sections addressing consultation (450.316(a)(1)(2)(3) and (b) – Interested parties, participation, and consultation; 450.322 (g)(1)(2), (i), and (j) – Development and content of the metropolitan transportation plan).

Requirements related to environmental mitigation are as follows:

- The MTP shall include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities.
- The discussion:
 - should include activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the MTP.
 - may focus on policies, programs, or strategies, rather than addressing the project level.
 - shall be developed in consultation with Federal, State, and Tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies.

The MPO may establish reasonable timeframes for performing this consultation.

Regulatory Basis - Consultation and Coordination:

The requirements for consultation are set forth primarily in 23 CFR 450.316(b-e) which calls for consultation in developing the MTP and TIP. Consultation also is addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 450.322(g)(1)(2) and in 450.322 (f)(7) related to environmental mitigation. (see also *Transportation Planning Process* topic area)

In developing MTPs and TIPs, the MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies as described below:

- Should to the maximum extent possible, consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities (State and local growth, economic development opportunities, environmental protection, airport operations or freight movements) that are affected by transportation or coordinate the planning process with such planning activities.
- Consider other transportation services that are provided to recipients under 49 U.S.C. 53, 23 U.S.C. 204, and non-profit organizations that provide non-emergency transportation services with assistance from Federal agencies other than U.S. DOT.
- When the MPA includes Federal Tribal Lands, shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in development of the plan MTP and TIP.

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- When the MPA includes Federal Public Lands, shall appropriately involve Federal land management agencies in development of the plan MTP and TIP.

In developing the MTP, the MPO shall consult as appropriate with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. The consultation shall involve, as appropriate (1) comparison of the MTP with State conservation plans or maps, if available, or (2) comparison of the MTP with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available.

In developing and considering potential environmental mitigation to restore and maintain environmental functions affected by the MTP, the MPO shall consult with Federal, State, and Tribal land management, wildlife, and regulatory agencies. See Section 2-15 for more detailed guidance on environmental mitigation.

Findings – Environmental Mitigation:

In preparation for updating the MTP, COMPASS initiated an environmental review and consultation process with federal, state and local agencies in 2008. The goals of the process were to establish an ongoing process for engaging environmental and resource agencies early in transportation planning at a regional level, provide a venue for sharing environmental and resource information and data among agencies, and identify “trigger points” for involving appropriate agencies in specific transportation projects.

Eighteen 18 environmental and resource agencies are actively participating in COMPASS’ environmental review and consultation process. Some of the agencies also participate in COMPASS committees, but the ongoing consultation process with a broad range of federal, state, and local agencies provides a more focused discussion of environmental issues, concerns, and resources, as well as broad mitigation strategies that inform regional, long-range transportation planning.

Findings – Consultation and Coordination:

The existing consultation processes has been enhanced by including environmental and resource agency representatives active in COMPASS committees, in addition to participants from environmental and resource agencies not represented in other processes. The process, which was developed by COMPASS staff, provides an ongoing plan and process for coordination and consultation with participating agencies.

Commendations:

- We commend COMPASS for its ongoing work in coordinating with resource and regulatory agencies to identify environmental resources and mitigation strategies.

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Management and Operations Considerations (23 CFR 450.322)

Regulatory Basis

Federal statute 23 U.S.C. 134 (h)(1)(G), requires the metropolitan planning process to include the consideration of projects and strategies that will:

promote efficient system management and operation;

Federal statute 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(D), which provides the basis for 23 CFR 450.322(f)(3), specifies that:

Operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods;

Additionally, 23 CFR 450.322(f)(10)(i) further requires that the financial plan for the MTP – and per the 23 CFR 450.324(h), the financial plan for the TIP – must include:

For purposes of transportation system operations and maintenance, the financial plan shall contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation.

Findings:

COMPASS' planning and programming process has focused on more regional needs and projects, and evaluation and programming of M&O level projects has been reduced at the direction of the COMPASS Board. In part, this direction was made to focus limited resources available to COMPASS on those areas deemed most relevant to a regional planning agency. The new policy direction under SAFETEA-LU to expand consideration of M&O calls for additional effort in this area.

Operation of the Transit Network:

Two efforts are underway to evaluate transit networks that incorporate multimodal approaches and/or signal pre-emption. Both are included as projects in the MTP. One project is the State Street bus rapid transit, which involves Valley Regional Transit, the cities of Boise, Garden City and Eagle, the Ada County Highway District, Idaho Transportation Department, and COMPASS. The second project focuses on the I-84 corridor and will consider signal treatments and bus rapid transit as part of the options.

Steps Taken to Ensure Transit Operations are Discussed:

COMPASS has partnered with Valley Regional Transit to engage in “mobility management” planning that addresses transit, para-transit, walking, biking, and other non-single-occupancy vehicle modes. Two full-time staff members are committed to these tasks.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- COMPASS must include details on how it will evaluate and plan TSM/TDM activities in its pending Long Range Plan update.

Comments:

- No

Transportation Safety Planning (23 CFR 450.306 and .322)

Regulatory Basis:

SAFETEA-LU requires MPOs to consider safety as one of eight planning factors. As stated in 23 CFR 450.306, the metropolitan transportation planning process provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. Safety was identified in TEA-21 as a planning factor, in combination with security. SAFETEA-LU emphasized the importance of safety by separating safety and security into individual considerations in the planning process, thus highlighting the importance of each issue.

In addition, SAFETEA-LU established a core safety program called the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) (23 U.S.C. 148), which introduced a mandate for [Strategic Highway Safety Plans](#) (SHSPs) that are collaborative, comprehensive and based on accurate and timely safety data. An SHSP is a Statewide coordinated safety plan that provides a comprehensive framework for reducing highway fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The SHSP strategically establishes Statewide goals, objectives, and key emphasis areas developed in consultation with Federal, State, local, and private sector safety stakeholders, as well as operators of other modes. SHSPs will undoubtedly lead to further collaboration among transportation planners, traffic engineers, safety stakeholders, and others. Metropolitan and Statewide transportation planners must be an integral part of the SHSP process. The goals, objectives, and strategies of the SHSP should be integrated into Statewide and metropolitan transportation plans as well as TIPs to place safety on par with other planning factors, particularly in choosing or evaluating new and continuing projects and initiatives. These types of best practices have the added benefit of helping to satisfy the safety-planning factor required for the transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.306 (h) states that the metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the SHSP, and other transit safety and security planning and review processes, plans, and programs as appropriate.

23 CFR 450.322 (h) encourages the inclusion of a safety element in the MTP that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures, or projects for the MPA contained in the SHSP, as well as (as appropriate) emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans and strategies and policies that support homeland security (as appropriate) and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users.

Safety also appears in the Metropolitan Transportation Planning rule as a consideration in the CMP (450.320), Development and Content of the MTP (450.322), and Development and Content of the TIP (450.324).

Findings:

Safety Considerations Reflected in COMPASS Program:

- *Communities in Motion* includes a number of grade-separated rail crossings on several corridors, including Linder, Lake Hazel, Kuna/Meridian (SH 69) and McDermott Roads.
- Consideration of the Boise Cut-off between the Nampa railyard through Boise for commuter services will entail review of the crossings, with a strong likelihood that any implementation of services will require most or all crossings to be equipped with gates.
- Access management along arterial roads is a high priority in *Communities in Motion*. One benefit of access management is the reduction in the number of conflict points at intersections.
- *Communities in Motion* also recommends some major corridors be evaluated and developed as expressways, with grade-separated intersections at the major traffic crossings.
- A policy in *Communities in Motion* calls for the evaluation of high-volume intersection designs that can improve traffic flow and reduce accidents. This study was completed in April 2008. See <http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/specialprojects-hvis.htm>.
- *Communities in Motion* includes a policy that maintenance and safety projects should have priority over new construction or widening. The project prioritization process incorporates consideration of safety benefits.
- The plan emphasizes multi-modal transportation and the prioritization process includes points for projects that promote/enhance walking, biking, and transit. Where projects would promote pedestrian or bicyclist safety via measures such as audible signals, embedded crosswalk flashers, and other features, additional points would be granted.

While the above examples demonstrate COMPASS' consideration of safety in its program activities, there is as yet, no active coordination or interaction between COMPASS' planning program and the State's Strategic Highway Safety Program.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- COMPASS needs to expand and formalize its consideration of safety in its planning process. In particular, the program development processes for the Plan and TIP should clearly address how safety is considered in the identification and selection of projects.

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- We acknowledge that ITD coordination and assistance will be essential to involving COMPASS and other MPOs in the execution of the State's Strategic Highway Safety Program (SHSP).

Security in the Planning Process (23 CFR 450.306)

Regulatory Basis

Federal legislation has separated security as a stand-alone element of the planning process (both metropolitan and Statewide planning). Prior to SAFETEA-LU, safety and security were combined into one planning factor. Decoupling the two concepts in SAFETEA-LU signified a heightened importance of *both safety and security* to transportation decision-making.

Metropolitan Planning Factors: 23 CFR 450.306(a)(3)

The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors:

(3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users:

Statewide Planning Factors: 23 CFR 450.206(a)(3)

Each state shall carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors:

(3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;

The regulations also state that the degree and consideration of security should be based on the scale and complexity of many different local issues.

The MTP should include:

“(as appropriate) emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans and strategies and policies that support homeland security (as appropriate) and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users.” 23CFR 450.322(h)

The inclusion of the “as appropriate” language suggests standards and security planning needs are different for each MPO. Each MPO and State DOT is challenged to develop a holistic approach based on area-specific assets, resources, and environment.

Findings:

Defining Security Planning for the Region:

The primary mechanism was reviewing existing emergency management plans from local and state entities. These were incorporated in a supplement to the MTP (see http://www.communitiesinmotion.org/Documents/datareports/CIM_CompSupp_approved.pdf).

Transportation-related elements from the emergency management plans were detailed.

MPO or State DOT collaboration with Regional, State or National Security Professionals:

Respective emergency preparedness agencies within Ada and Canyon Counties were contacted to obtain key documents. Additional documentation was obtained from the Idaho Homeland Security agency, although this information was of limited utility due to the generality of the identified issues. There is no on-going process to involve these entities in plan implementation or programming. COMPASS did assist the Ada County emergency preparedness office with mapping and data to support an exercise and discussed research to identify concentrations of “sensitive” populations that could need special assistance in the event of an evacuation. Some of this work is now being done as part of the mobility planning effort in concert with Valley Regional Transit.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- We encourage COMPASS to address transit security issues in its update to the long range plan.

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Integrating Freight in the Transp. Planning Process (23 CFR 450.322)

Regulatory Basis

SAFETEA-LU legislation specifically calls for the need to address freight movement as part of the transportation planning process (Reference: 23 U.S.C. §134 and 23 CFR §450.306 - Metropolitan transportation planning):

§ 134 (a) Metropolitan transportation planning section indicates that:

It is in the national interest to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight and foster economic growth and development within and between States and urbanized areas, while minimizing transportation related fuel consumption and air pollution through metropolitan and Statewide transportation planning processes identified in this chapter; and encourage the continued improvement and evolution of the metropolitan and Statewide transportation planning processes by MPOs, State departments of transportation, and public transit operators as guided by the planning factors identified in subsection (h)(as shown below) and section 135(d).

Three of the eight SAFETEA-LU planning factors identified within title 23 U.S.C. include freight-related provisions that should be addressed as part of the metropolitan and Statewide transportation planning process as follows (Reference: 23 U.S.C. §134(h) and §450.306):
(h) SCOPE OF PLANNING PROCESS—

- *IN GENERAL.—23 CFR 450.306(a) The metropolitan planning process for a metropolitan planning area under this section shall provide for consideration of projects and strategies that will...—*
 - (1) Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;*
 - (4) Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;*
 - (6) Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;*

As part of the MPO participation planning requirements under title 23 U.S.C., the SAFETEA-LU consultation requirements were expanded in order to include freight shippers, who are providers of freight transportation services, as interested parties that should be provided a reasonable opportunity to comment on MTPs and TIPs (Reference: 23 U.S.C. 134 and §450.316 See Interested parties, participation, and consultation).

23 CFR 450.316(a) - Interested Parties , Participation, and Consultation—The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process of providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, FREIGHT SHIPPERS, PROVIDERS OF FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transport, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and

other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

23 CFR §450.316(b) - In developing MTPs and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, MTPs and TIPs shall be developed with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area...

New freight-related terms and definitions were included in the planning regulations.

23 CFR § 450.104 - The definition of “freight shippers” was added to mean any business that routinely transports its products from one location to another by providers of freight transportation services or by its own vehicle fleet.

23 CFR § 450.104 - The definition of “Provider of freight transportation services” means any entity that transports or otherwise facilitates the movement of goods from one location to another for others or for itself.

Findings:

COMPASS conducted the first comprehensive truck freight data collection project for the Treasure Valley in fall 2007. This study collected travel data from local establishments, truck freight traveling in and out of the area, and a non-intercept external survey for a sense of through trips. Reports summarizing the process and data are available on the COMPASS website at <http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/specialprojects-tvtfhs.htm>.

COMPASS staff is working on how to best integrate the data collected from the freight study into the MTP and TIP and how to best use it to forecast truck trips in our area. The study showed most freight traffic is destined to or originated from our area. This seems logical since Boise is about 340 miles from Salt Lake City, UT (closest intermodal station) and 430 miles from Portland, OR.

Commendations:

- No

Recommendations:

- We encourage COMPASS to further advance its freight work by next identifying facility specific needs for the planning area.

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- We acknowledge COMPASS' initial efforts on freight with completion of its freight inventory study.

Travel Demand Modeling (23 CFR 450.322)

Regulatory Basis

Federal transportation planning legislation requires each MPO to develop an MTP as part of its planning process (23 U.S.C. 134(i) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(i)). This plan must cover at least a 20-year planning horizon and “shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.” [23 CFR 450.322(b)].

An MTP requires valid forecasts of future demand for transportation services. These forecasts are frequently made using *travel demand models*, which allocate estimates of regional population, employment and land use to person-trips and vehicle-trips by travel mode, route, and time period. The outputs of travel demand models are used to estimate regional vehicle activity for use in motor vehicle emissions models for transportation conformity determinations in nonattainment and maintenance areas, and to evaluate the impacts of alternative transportation investments being considered in the MTP.

The Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning Regulations provide a degree of specificity on the analytical capacity of the MPO to prepare the MTP, as follows: “The MPO, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) shall validate data utilized in preparing other existing modal plans for providing input to the transportation plan. In updating the transportation plan, the MPO shall base the update on the latest available estimates and assumptions for population, land use, travel, employment, congestion, and economic activity. The MPO shall approve transportation plan contents and supporting analyses produced by a transportation plan update.” [23 CFR 450.322(e)]. And, the regulation goes further to state that “The metropolitan transportation plan shall, at a minimum, include (1) The projected transportation demand of persons and goods in the metropolitan planning area over the period of the transportation plan....” [23 CFR 450.322(f)].

The Transportation Conformity Rule established a regulatory requirement that includes minimum specifications for travel models used to forecast vehicle activity for regional emission analyses in conformity determinations in certain nonattainment and maintenance areas. [40 CFR 93.122(b) and (d)]. However, these minimum specifications apply only to metropolitan planning areas with an urbanized area population over 200,000 that are also serious, severe, or extreme ozone or serious carbon monoxide nonattainment areas. All other nonattainment or maintenance areas must continue to meet the minimum specifications for travel models established in the Conformity Rule to the extent that those procedures have been the previous practice of the MPO.

Similarly, each TMA must develop a CMP [23 CFR 450.320], and the CMP brings with it a host of analytical requirements. CMPs shall include provisions for “Identification and evaluation of the anticipated performance and expected benefits of appropriate congestion management strategies that will contribute to the more effective use and improved safety of existing and future transportation systems based on the established performance measures.” [23 CFR 450.320(C)(4)].

While there are no explicit requirements for a particular model formulation, it is clear that the MPO must have the analytical capability to forecast the future usage and performance of transportation facilities. The capability should also address the range of policy issues and modal options under consideration within the 20-year horizon of the MTP.

Thus, there is firm legal basis for the travel forecasting methods used by an MPO to be addressed in the Certification Review to ensure that they adequately support the applications for which they are being used. These applications can vary considerably from one MPO to another, depending on such factors as nonattainment status, regional population and economic growth, and the types of strategies/investments being considered in the MTP.

Findings:

COMPASS uses a traditional four-step modeling process (trip generation, trip distribution, mode split, and trip assignment) to develop estimates of average weekday traffic (ADT) for each link of its network based on current and future demographic/growth assumptions. In addition to ADT, the travel demand model produces daily vehicle miles travelled (VMT) forecasts and congested network speeds. COMPASS uses Citilab's Cube/Voyager software to run the regional travel demand model. COMPASS' model is regularly maintained and updated to include all completed roadway projects. Future-year model networks include anticipated widening and new roadway projects. The network modeled consists of interstate, principal and minor arterials, most collectors, and select local roads in Ada and Canyon Counties. The trip types included in the modeling process are home-based work, home-based shopping, home-based social, home-based school, home-based other, and non-home-based.

COMPASS' travel demand modeling activities are performed under the oversight and review of the MPO's Transportation Model Advisory Committee (TMAC), a technical committee formed by the COMPASS Board of Directors. TMAC is made up of local experts, technical staff, from COMPASS' member agencies, and local traffic engineers from both the public and private sectors. Along with the COMPASS staff, TMAC work to periodically calibrate and validate the travel demand model to reflect the actual patterns and behaviors in the Treasure Valley. COMPASS' travel demand model is based on data from a 2002 household survey. An update to the household data is scheduled for 2010.

Traffic input data is based upon traffic volume counts collected and reported by the Idaho Transportation Department and other member agencies collecting such data (e.g., Ada County Highway District).

Demographic input data is based on the official population and employment projections for the Treasure Valley assuming the "preferred growth" scenario developed in the COMPASS Long Range Plan. COMPASS has established a Demographic Advisory Committee (DAC) to develop the population and employment projections. The DAC is composed of demographers, developers, and representatives from local industries and governments.

COMPASS' modeling process was peer-reviewed in 2007 through FHWA's Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP). TMIP is a multi-year, multi-agency program sponsored by

USDOT and EPA, with the mission of supporting and empowering planning agencies through leadership, innovation and support of travel analysis improvements, to better meet current and future mobility, environmental, safety and security goals.

Commendations:

- COMPASS is commended for its continued expansion and refinement of its modeling capabilities and particularly for the addition of transit (mode split) to the modeling capabilities of their process.

Recommendations:

- No

Corrective Actions:

- No

Comments:

- No

Appendix A

Public Input

September 17, 2009 Public Meeting

The public meeting for the certification review was held at the Meridian City Hall in Meridian, Idaho. The facility was chosen for its central location to the COMPASS planning area; both geographically and population-wise. Those in attendance consisted of both citizens from the area and representative from Federal, State, and local government (including COMPASS and Valley Regional Transit). Total attendance (excluding the Federal review team) was approximately ten. Of that number, only three were citizens not affiliated with Federal, State or local government or the COMPASS staff.

In addition, one email was received from a citizen who was not able to attend the meeting but wished to offer comments.

The meeting consisted of a fifteen minute overview of the purpose for the certification review followed by an opportunity for those in attendance to share their comments and questions on COMPASS and its transportation planning process. Specific questions posed to the public and the corresponding responses received to these questions are presented on the next page.

FHWA/FTA PUBLIC INPUT MEETING ON
COMPASS' TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM

September 17, 2009
Meridian City Hall

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) is responsible for coordinating and conducting metropolitan transportation planning activities in the Treasure Valley area. The COMPASS planning program and many of the projects implemented through this program are supported by Federal transportation funds. As representatives of the agencies from which these Federal funds originate, we welcome your input on how COMPASS is doing.

We are particularly interested in your views and insights concerning the following:

1. How familiar are you with COMPASS and the transportation planning program and process that they provide?
 - R1. Very
 - R2. As an alternative transportation advocate I have educated myself about what COMPASS is and what it does. However, it has taken me 2 years and there are still times when I'm not sure I understand its political and functional relationship to our state transportation department or our city's public works department.

2. Do you feel that adequate information on the transportation planning program is available to you?
 - R1. Yes, but it is very complex.
 - R2. Yes, now that I have made contact with the organization and attended various focus groups and opportunities for public input.

3. Do you have internet service reasonably available to you?
 - R1. Yes
 - R2. Yes
 - a. If yes, do you ever check the COMPASS website? How often?
 - R1.
 - R2. Yes. Once or twice per year.

 - b. If yes, have you every received email (e.g., notices, announcements or other information) from COMPASS?
 - R1. Yes
 - R2. Yes

(Note: COMPASS website is www.compassidaho.org).

-
4. Do you feel that COMPASS' transportation planning process adequately solicits and addresses input from the public?
 - R1. No
 - R2. Yes, as much as is possible. I don't think the average person has a clue what COMPASS is or what it does.

 5. Do you have any specific praise for or concerns with COMPASS' transportation planning process?
 - R1.
 - R2. All of the public input, focus groups, and planning sessions I have attended have been extremely well run and organized. The purpose for the event was clear and we were made to feel that our comments, thoughts, and ideas were valued.

My only concern would be what I have already expressed and that is that the relationship between COMPASS and our government is really confusing at times. Following the creation of the regional transportation plan I asked one COMPASS employee what the next steps would be and the response was, "it's in the hands of the politicians and depends on how much political will they have to implement the recommendations". Based on that response I have come to assume that the only real purpose that COMPASS serves is to spend lots of money to continually create and update plans that the state and local governments can then choose to ignore. Is COMPASS simply window dressing so that our community meets Federal requirements to receive transportation funding that can be used, once it is received, on anything it wants, regardless of all the plans that COMPASS has created?

Is it part of COMPASS' responsibilities to educate and communicate the plans and recommendations to local, city leadership? Should COMPASS plans and recommendations be considered by city planners? If not, then please disregard the following comments.

If so, I would say there needs to be more done on this front. I attend city council meetings and am on speaking terms with most of the city council. I don't sense that Nampa's Mayor (even though he served as a COMPASS board member for a time) or our city council regard the COMPASS plan or its recommendations as something that is binding or a consideration at all when it comes to city planning decisions. City leadership does not seem to have the vision (which could be due to personalities and attitude as well as lack of information) to see how their decisions impact and fit in with regional transportation decisions.

□

Appendix B

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AQ	Air Quality
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
CMP	Congestion Management Process
CMS	Congestion Management System
CPI	Continuous Process Improvement Manual
DA	Division Administrator
DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DOT	Department of Transportation
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GIS	Geographic Information system
HRPDC	Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LRTP	Long-Range Transportation Plan

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHI	National Highway Institute
NHS	National Highway System
NTI	National Transit Institute
PDIT	Program Delivery Improvement Tool
PEA	Planning Emphasis Area
PIP	Project Implementation Plan
PL	Metropolitan Planning Funds
PPP	Public Participation Plan
RA	Regional Administrator
RTIP	Regional Transportation Implementation Plan
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
SHA	State Highway Administration
SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SOV	Single Occupancy Vehicle
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
STP	Surface Transportation Program
TAZ	Transportation Analysis Zone
TCM	Transportation Control Measure

TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
Title VI	Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TMIP	Travel Model Improvement Program
TPCB	Transportation Planning Capacity Building program
TSP	Transportation Safety Planning
U.S.C.	United States Code
UAB	Urban Area Boundary
UMTA	Urban Mass Transportation Administration (now FTA)
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
UZA	Urbanized Area
VMT	Vehicle Miles of Travel

Appendix C

Certification Review Agenda

Wednesday 9/16/09	Topic	Lead	Target Participants
Location: COMPASS (large conference room)	Introduction: Purpose, Format and Schedule Recap of 2005 Review Focus of 2009 Review 9:00 a.m.	Scott	COMPASS Staff and Members
	COMPASS Overview: Mission, Vision, and Goals Emerging Transportation Issues COMPASS' Roles and Priorities 9:30 a.m.	Matt	
	Break 10:00 a.m.	Matt	
	MPO Structure and Process: Organizational Structure Planning Boundaries Agreements and Contracts 10:30 a.m.	Matt	
	Planning Process: Plan Development and Operation TIP Development and Operation 11:00 a.m.	Charles	
	Lunch 12:00 noon	Amy / Charles	
	Planning Process: (continued) Public Outreach and Involvement Transit-specific issues 1:00 p.m.	Amy / Charles	
	Break 3:00 p.m.	Matt/Jeanne	
	Regulatory Requirements: Fiscal Constraint UPWP Self Certification Title VI Considerations 3:15 p.m.	Matt/Jeanne	

	Adjourn		
4:30 p.m.			
Thursday 9/17/09	<i>TOPIC</i>	Lead	Target Participants
Location: COMPASS (large conference room)			
9:00 a.m.	<i>TECHNICAL AREAS TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS (CMP)</i>	Mary Anne	COMPASS Staff and Members
10:30 a.m.	<i>BREAK</i>		
10:45 a.m.	<i>TECHNICAL AREAS (CONTINUED) CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS TRANSPORTATION SAFETY TRANSPORTATION SECURITY FREIGHT VISUALIZATION</i>	Matt (and others)	
12:00 noon			
1:00 p.m.	<i>LUNCH</i>	Matt	
1:30 p.m.	<i>ARRA PROGRAM IMPACT PROCESS ADAPTATIONS LESSONS LEARNED</i>	Scott	
2:00 p.m.	<i>FUTURE EMPHASIS AREAS LIVABLE COMMUNITIES TRANSPORTATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE</i>		
2:15 p.m.	<i>MOVES EMISSIONS MODEL ADJOURN USDOT TEAM WORK SESSION PREPARE DRAFT FINDINGS</i>		
Location: Meridian	<i>PUBLIC MEETING</i>		

City Hall 6:00-8:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE</i> • <i>THE PLANNING PROCESS</i> • <i>PUBLIC INPUT: Q'S AND A'S AND COMMENTS</i> 	DOT Team	The Public
Friday 9/18/09	Topic	Lead	Target Participants
Location: COMPASS (large conference room) 8:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Closeout Session Comments and Initial Findings Adjourn	 Scott Frey	 COMPASS Staff and Members

Appendix D

Federal Review Team

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