



COMPASS  
COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION  
of Southwest Idaho

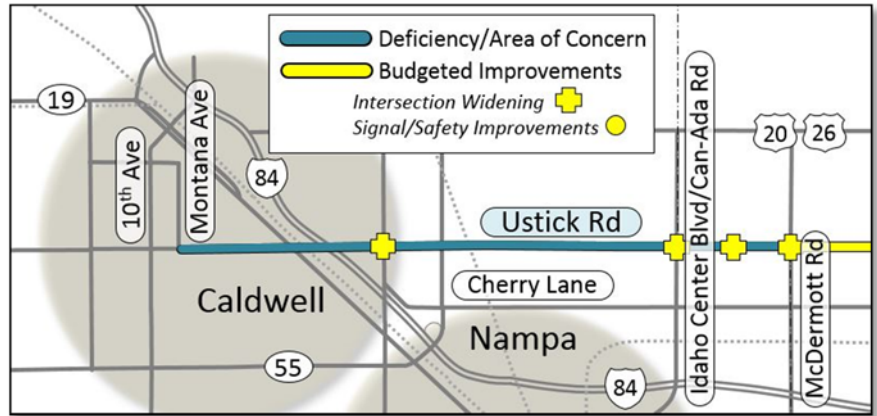
## Ustick Road Montana Avenue to McDermott Road

### Priority 9

#### Background

Ustick Road runs east-west, connecting Ada and Canyon Counties. In this area of concern, it passes through suburban areas of Caldwell and rural areas east of Interstate 84.

Ustick Road is one of the longest continuous roads in the region, running 35 miles from the Snake River in Canyon County to Curtis Road in Ada County. The corridor changes in character between rural, suburban, and urban areas in the two counties. It's currently only two lanes wide from Montana Avenue to McDermott Road. Tremendous growth is expected in the surrounding areas in the near future, which will put increased pressure and cause congestion on this portion of Ustick Road.



#### The Corridor at a Glance

- Mostly two lanes through Canyon County and western Ada County
  - Five lanes wide from 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Montana Avenue, just west of the area of concern
- No sidewalks, bike lanes, or transit services on this stretch of the roadway; however, much of the corridor (west of Can-Ada Road) is within the large service area for Flex Bus Route #57
- Points of interest in this part of the corridor (west to east)
  - Terrace Drive-in Theatre and retail development at Cleveland Boulevard
  - Union Pacific Railroad crossing (double track), Indian Creek, and I-84 overpass
  - Caldwell Industrial Airport
  - Sage Valley Middle School and Desert Springs Elementary

#### Problem

Development is currently extending to this portion of Ustick Road from Nampa on the east side of I-84 and from Caldwell on the west. Tremendous future growth is anticipated near the Nampa-Caldwell Boulevard and Star Road intersections, which will contribute to dramatic traffic changes in the area:

Current and Future <sup>1</sup>	2013	2040
Population	11,908	27,547
Households	3,726	10,092
Employment	2,230	11,622

- Montana Avenue to Caldwell-Nampa Boulevard: Traffic is expected to increase from 9,000 vehicles per day in 2013 to more than 20,000 per day in 2040.
- Caldwell-Nampa Boulevard to Franklin Road: Traffic is expected to increase from 6,000 vehicles a day in 2013 to 24,000 per day in 2040.
  - This is similar to current traffic levels on US Highway 20/26 (Chinden Boulevard) west of State Highway 55 (Eagle Road), or Idaho Center Boulevard north of I-84.
- Franklin Boulevard to McDermott Road: Traffic is expected to increase from 4,000 vehicles a day in 2013 to 18,000 per day in 2040.

<sup>1</sup> Population, housing, and employment in downtown Nampa.



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## Ustick Road Montana Avenue to McDermott Road

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### Vehicles per Day, Caldwell-Nampa Boulevard to Franklin Road in thousands

2013	2040 Funded*	2040 Funded Plus Unfunded**
	<i>capacity/congestion***↑</i>	

\* 2040 Funded reflects the 2013 regional transportation system and all the expansion/improvement projects that are funded in agencies' approved budgets or capital improvement plans, listed in CIM 2040 (Chapter 6, Tables 6.2 and 6.3).

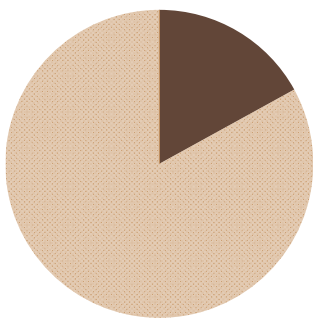
\*\* Unfunded projects/improvements includes all the unfunded needs discussed in this summary and listed in CIM 2040 (Chapter 6, Table 6.5).

\*\*\* This is an approximate level where there is too much traffic for the road to carry and speeds will get slower as congestion gets worse. Each road's capacity depends on a number of variables, including truck traffic, number of driveways, and road conditions.

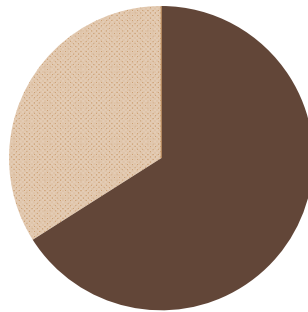
Travel time between Montana Avenue and McDermott Road is likely to increase from 10 minutes in 2013 to 35 minutes in 2040. For longer commutes, travel time between Montana Avenue and Curtis Road is likely to increase from 35 minutes in 2013 to 65 minutes in 2040. However, if Ustick Road widening—as well as the other unfunded needs listed in CIM 2040 (Chapter 6, Table 6.5)—could be funded, those future travel times could increase to just 25 minutes and 50 minutes, respectively.

### Drive Times, 2013 vs. 2040, Montana Avenue to McDermott Road

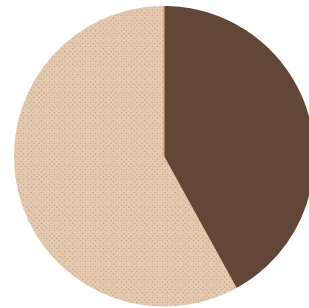
Each pie chart represents one hour. Drive times are in dark brown.



2013



2040 Funded\*



2040 Funded Plus Unfunded\*\*



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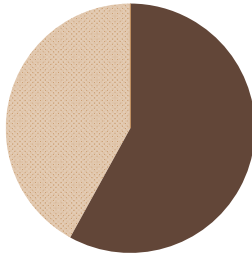
**Ustick Road**  
*Montana Avenue to McDermott Road*



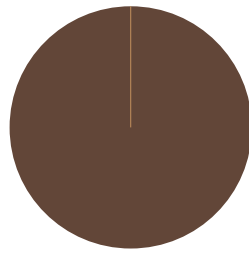
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**Drive Times, 2013 vs. 2040, Montana Avenue to Curtis Road**

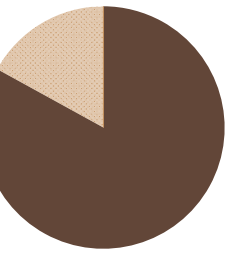
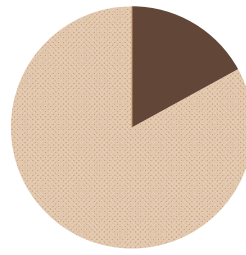
Each pie chart represents one hour. Drive times are in dark brown.



**2013**



**2040 Funded\***



**2040 Funded Plus Unfunded\*\***

\* *2040 Funded* reflects the 2013 regional transportation system and all the expansion/improvement projects that are *funded* in agencies' approved budgets or capital improvement plans, listed in CIM 2040 (Chapter 6, Tables 6.2 and 6.3).

\*\* *Unfunded* projects/improvements includes all the *unfunded* needs discussed in this summary and listed in CIM 2040 (Chapter 6, Table 6.5).

The roadway will become congested and unable to accommodate the expected level of traffic unless it is widened. When a road, transit line, bikeway, or other part of the transportation system is improved, it can accommodate more traffic and, therefore, it attracts more users. Even with more traffic, traveling conditions will be better with the improvements.

**Other Considerations**

**Roadway Users**

Most of the analysis to identify the increased traffic issue is based on cars, the main mode of transportation on streets and highways. Pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles such as freight trucks, farm equipment, and buses may also share the road.

**Environmental Issues**

Changes to a roadway can impact the surrounding environment as well as the people who live nearby. Before major road projects are built, their potential effects are analyzed to make sure they meet environmental regulations as well as provide for "environmental justice," ensuring all people can be involved and are treated fairly.<sup>2</sup>

There are a number of sensitive areas to consider in this corridor:

- The section east of I-84 is primarily within prime, irrigated farmland.
- Multiple sections of the road provide direct access to single-family houses that may be within the necessary right-of-way.
- Sage Valley Middle School fronts Ustick Road east of Middleton Road.
- Indian Creek and the Union Pacific Railroad cross Ustick Road.
- The corridor includes areas with minority populations, mainly within the City of Caldwell.

<sup>2</sup> See federal environmental justice definitions at [www.epa.gov/region07/ej/definitions.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region07/ej/definitions.htm).



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## Ustick Road *Montana Avenue to McDermott Road*

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## Budgeted Projects

### Roadway:

- The City of Caldwell is improving the intersection of Ustick Road and Middleton Road with a roundabout. The project is currently in the preliminary development stage, meaning construction is six or more years away. The project will total almost \$1 million.
- ACHD's *Capital Improvements Plan*<sup>3</sup> includes several intersection improvement projects for this part of Ustick Road. The cost of these improvements at Can-Ada, Star, and McDermott Road intersections, including costs estimated for Canyon County agencies, totals \$6.72 million. The cost of widening the road between these intersections is not included.

## Unfunded Future Needs

**Roadway:** Ustick Road could be widened from Montana Avenue to McDermott Road to provide a continuous east-west arterial in Caldwell and Nampa. This portion of the roadway currently falls under the jurisdiction of the City of Caldwell (Montana Avenue to Midland Boulevard) and the Nampa Highway District (Midland Boulevard to McDermott Road).

**Bus Service/Park and Ride:** The regional transit services plan, *valleyconnect*, calls for the following in the near- to medium-term:

- Bus Route #47, an employer express transit route connecting the College of Western Idaho transfer center to downtown Boise. Employer express routes serve limited stops and run every 30 minutes during peak hours.
- A park-and-ride lot at the intersection of Ustick and McDermott.

**Walking/Biking:** Bike lanes are generally added when a street or intersection is improved or widened, and most new developments include sidewalks or pathways along adjacent streets. A few specific projects are planned for Ustick Road with ACHD and the Cities of Meridian and Nampa:

- ACHD's *Roadways to Bikeways Master Plan* includes bike lanes on Ustick Road through Meridian, connecting to Nampa in the medium-term.<sup>4</sup>
- Nampa's *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* proposes bike lanes on Ustick Road from 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue eastward.<sup>5</sup>
- The *Meridian Pathways Master Plan* proposes pathways that would cross Ustick Road along canals and other waterways.<sup>6</sup>

**Operations, Management and Technology Projects:** Aside from road widening, other actions such as improving driveways or changing the traffic signals can help improve traffic conditions. The regional Intelligent Transportation System plan<sup>7</sup> includes a number of traffic signal timing improvements in the corridor.

<sup>3</sup> [www.achdidaho.org/Departments/ROWDS/CIP.aspx](http://www.achdidaho.org/Departments/ROWDS/CIP.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> [www.achdidaho.org/Projects/PublicProject.aspx?ProjectID=77](http://www.achdidaho.org/Projects/PublicProject.aspx?ProjectID=77)

<sup>5</sup> <http://issuu.com/nampaparksandrecreation/docs/cityofnampabicyclepedestrianmasterplan>

<sup>6</sup> [www.meridiancity.org/parks\\_rec.aspx?id=2667](http://www.meridiancity.org/parks_rec.aspx?id=2667)

<sup>7</sup> Final Report: *Treasure Valley Transportation System: Operations, Management, and ITS* can be found online at [www.compassidaho.org/prodserve/cms-intro.htm](http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserve/cms-intro.htm).