



Rebecca W. Arnold, President
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Vacant, Subdistrict 4 Commissioner

Carol A. McKee
Chairman
COMPASS
700 NE 2nd Street
Meridian Idaho 83642

Dear Ms. McKee,

RE: Communities in Motion (CIM) Scenario Planning- ACHD Comments



On May 23, 2012 ACHD Staff reviewed with the Commission the land use scenarios developed in the recent COMPASS planning workshops. In the work session, indicators applicable to transportation were also discussed. The ACHD Commission does not specifically endorse any one scenario, however we encourage the COMPASS board to consider a scenario, or blend of scenarios that accomplishes the following:

- Manages the job/housing balance, striving for a ratio of “one.” The jobs/housing balance indicator is a good measurement of the reduction of commute trips and overall vehicle miles traveled. Linking jobs and housing has a significant potential to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Concentrating different land uses in a comparably small area, such as within activity nodes, accommodates increased walking, bicycling and transit usage- contributing to the cities’ economic and social vitality.
- A scenario that results in the lowest overall vehicle hours of delay and congestion would rank best from a transportation perspective.
- A scenario with good walkability and increased population near transit would be positive as it would encourage multiple modes of transportation and be responsive to regional and community needs- priorities of the ACHD.
- Overall, when we look at the percentage of lane miles over capacity compared to the number of miles in the entire system the number does not appear overwhelming, but the key concern is the location. In Ada County, policy decisions have been made with our land use partners to allow some of our roadways to be over capacity (for example roadways with topographical constraints, roadways in built environments, or in downtown settings). To be able to discern the differences between the scenarios , we would have the following questions:
 - Are the congested routes the same on all the scenarios?
 - Are the congested routes already constrained by policy?
 - Are the congested routes under State or local jurisdiction?
 - Which routes or corridors are 20% over capacity vs 40% over capacity?
 - Which over capacity roadways are regional mobility corridors?

- As the preferred scenario is further developed, ACHD would encourage COMPASS to work with the cities to identify areas for economic development and creation of a “sense of place”. This investment and preparation for future growth will need to be specialized to the vision of each community, but seems necessary to personalize the scenarios to match the comprehensive plans of the jurisdictions.

Additional Comments

All the scenarios to some degree appear to be in conflict with existing city and county comprehensive plans. If the land use agencies do not make adjustments after CIM is adopted, or if the land use jurisdictions have differing visions in their comprehensive plans, a real conflict develops. The implementation of needed transportation projects will follow the reality on the ground. Assuming cities follow their comprehensive plans when approving development, they are the most effective guide to future land use. Regardless of city action or inaction, ACHD will still need to provide the appropriate transportation system, and the follow on steps after CIM adoption will be important.

Existing entitlements also do not appear to be included in the scenarios. For the plan to be realistic they must be included in the final land use assumptions. These are especially important where there have been joint land use transportation plans adopted such is the Northwest Foothills Plan, Southwest Boise Plan, and South Meridian Plan.

All of the scenarios do include the increase in density to reach the approved control total; however most of them appear to reach this density primarily through redevelopment, again not recognizing the large existing entitlements. It may be worthwhile to ensure the cities are committed to this density through redevelopment and that it is consistent with the comprehensive plans. Again the transportation will follow the land use and if the land use assumptions are flawed, the transportation planning will be flawed as well. As the transportation model is also based on the demographic assumptions set in CIM it is very important to get this piece of the planning correct and have all partners committed to its implementation in subsequent decisions.

Thank you for the ability to comment on the scenarios. We intend to stay actively involved both in the planning and leadership teams as Communities in Motion moves into transportation analysis and writing the Plan. If you have any questions please contact me or Sabrina Anderson on my staff at (208) 387-6156.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Arnold
President
ACHD Commission

Cc: COMPASS Board
Matt Stoll, COMPASS Executive Director
ACHD Commission
Bruce Wong, ACHD Director