



Working together to plan for the future

News Release

January 3, 2018

Media Contact: Amy Luft, 208/475-2229

COMPASS Board Continues to Advocate for Additional Transportation Funding Options

Meridian, ID – The Board of Directors of the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) has announced its priorities for the 2018 Idaho Legislative session, which begins on Monday, January 8, 2018. The priorities, identified in five position statements, primarily focus on the need for additional funding for transportation infrastructure.

The COMPASS Board of Directors is comprised primarily of local elected officials representing COMPASS member agencies – cities, counties, highway districts, and other government entities in Ada and Canyon Counties.

COMPASS 2018 Idaho State Legislative Positions:

1. Transportation Revenue

The COMPASS Board of Directors supports increasing and diversifying dedicated revenue for state and local transportation systems, including for transit and alternative transportation modes.

Idaho's current transportation funding level remains inadequate to address the state's needs. While there have been recent funding enhancements by the legislature, state and local transportation entities still face critical funding shortfalls for maintenance and expansion projects. A functional transportation system is critical to accommodate the population growth and economic development of the Treasure Valley and the state of Idaho.

2. Local Option Sales Tax Authority

The COMPASS Board of Directors strongly supports local option sales tax authority legislation.

Such a tool will provide local units of government the ability to request necessary supplemental infrastructure revenue for specific transportation projects, as approved by local voters, through a local sales tax. The Board supports the concept of allowing such funds to be used for roadway and/or transit projects. Local option sales tax can provide a tool for local units of government to address local transportation challenges.

3. Regional Public Transportation Authority Funding Alternatives

The COMPASS Board of Directors supports a property tax funding mechanism for Idaho's Regional Public Transportation Authorities (RPTA). The Idaho Legislature, in 1994, authorized the formation of RPTAs stating "the total mobility needs of commerce and people cannot be met solely with highway and road systems..." While a mechanism to create and govern RPTAs was authorized, a mechanism to provide a reliable source of funding remains absent. The COMPASS Board supports granting RPTAs statutory authority to levy a property tax, as approved by voters, to support their operations.

4. High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

The COMPASS Board of Directors supports statutory authority to allow utilization of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on state and local highways. Current statutory language restricts locations in which HOV lanes may be utilized.

5. Safe Routes to School

The COMPASS Board of Directors endorses state support for safe, community-oriented, non-motorized transportation. Safe community and neighborhood bicycle and pedestrian options and education programs such as Safe Routes to School should be a priority for the state.