



# Outreach and Public Participation

The goal of any planning process is to develop a plan that meets the needs of the people impacted by that plan. While much of the planning process involves technical analyses conducted by knowledgeable professionals, the only way to truly know if a plan meets residents' needs is to involve them in the planning process.

COMPASS' *Integrated Communication Plan*<sup>1</sup> coordinates all of COMPASS' communication and public outreach activities under one guiding document and includes COMPASS' *federally required*<sup>2</sup> Public Involvement Plan. Chapter 2 of the Integrated Communication Plan specifically addresses public involvement relating to its long-range transportation plan, *Communities in Motion*.

## OUTREACH FOCUS AREAS

*Communities in Motion 2040 2.0* (CIM 2040 2.0) retains many of the same tenets and policies of CIM 2040: the horizon year, goals, land-use vision, planning elements, and implementation policies have remained the same, and the updated lists of funded projects and unfunded priorities identified in CIM 2040 have been refined for this update. COMPASS engaged stakeholders and the public extensively from 2012 to 2014 on each of these issues.

COMPASS centered its CIM 2040 2.0 outreach on 1) the planning process in general; 2) the new focus on four transportation components (bicycle/pedestrian, freight, public transportation, and roadways); and 3) the transportation funding shortfall. For each of these three areas, COMPASS sought public input via social media campaigns, educational presentations, and other outreach activities.

### Planning Process

COMPASS conducted ongoing efforts to inform the public and stakeholders about progress on the implementation of CIM 2040 and the development of CIM 2040 2.0.

### Social Media Campaign

COMPASS used its social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Executive Director's blog, and YouTube channel) to raise awareness of the issues addressed in CIM 2040 2.0 and share progress in meeting CIM 2040 goals. The social media campaign consisted of weekly posts from October 2016 to September 2017, with each month focusing on a different topic.

### 2017 Education Series

Each year, COMPASS coordinates an *education series*<sup>3</sup> that brings regional and national experts to the Treasure Valley to present on transportation, funding, land use, and related topics of interest to COMPASS member agencies, stakeholders, and the public. The goals of the series are to spur discussion, keep abreast of innovations and best practices, and learn from what others are doing around the nation—both successes and challenges. Each year's series is based on a different theme.



The 2017 education series<sup>4</sup> focused on “what’s next?” in transportation planning:

- March 2017: Using conservation easements in transportation planning
- April 2017: Risk and resilience in transportation planning
- May 2017: Active transportation and economic development
- September 2017: Technology trends in transportation

### Website

During its development, CIM 2040 2.0<sup>5</sup> was featured prominently on the COMPASS website, along with related content highlighting the four transportation components, performance-based planning, the *Treasure Valley: On the Go!* photo contest (see below), and CIM implementation. These web pages were updated frequently throughout the planning process to ensure the most current information on CIM 2040 2.0 was readily available.

The CIM 2040 2.0 plan is comprised of a series of user-friendly web pages with links to more detailed documents,<sup>6</sup> such as this one. The web-based format was designed to provide a more user-friendly format than a traditional “report.”

### Quarterly Emails

In 2012, COMPASS began sending quarterly email updates regarding CIM 2040, and continued to do so throughout the development of CIM 2040 2.0. These updates highlight what occurred in the past quarter and what is planned for the next quarter related to the planning process, plan implementation, and outreach. Over 1,400 individuals receive the updates each quarter; all updates are also available on the CIM 2040 2.0 webpage.<sup>7</sup>

### Additional Outreach

Additional outreach regarding CIM planning, process, and implementation included displays at public locations and community events throughout the Treasure Valley and over 70 presentations to a variety of groups, including realtors, chambers of commerce, students, service organizations, advocacy groups, elected officials, and more.

### Transportation System Components

One of the most significant differences between CIM 2040 and CIM 2040 2.0 is the increased focus on four transportation system components. Past plans focused largely on roadways, followed by public transportation, with less consideration of freight or bicycle/pedestrian networks. COMPASS used a variety of outreach methods to raise awareness of the new emphasis on all transportation components and how they work together to comprise a complete system.

### Component Workgroups

COMPASS convened five workgroups<sup>8</sup> to provide input into the four transportation system components:

- Active Transportation Workgroup (bicycle/pedestrian component)
- Rails with Trails Workgroup (bicycle/pedestrian component)

- Freight Advisory Workgroup (freight component)
- Public Transportation Workgroup (public transportation component)
- Regional Operations Workgroup (roadway component)

These workgroups included stakeholders representing experts, providers, and users of the different components. They provided input throughout the planning process and continue to provide input into implementation. In addition to these “component” workgroups, other workgroups also provided input and expertise into CIM 2040 2.0, including the Environmental Review, Demographic Advisory, and Public Participation Workgroups.

### **Social Media Campaign**

For one year, from October 2015 to September 2016, COMPASS conducted a social media campaign to raise awareness of the focus on the four transportation system components in CIM 2040 2.0. Information on each component was featured in a weekly social media post for three months.

### **2016 Education Series**

The [2016 education series](#)<sup>9</sup> highlighted issues relating to the four transportation system components:

- March 2016: Fundamentals of Freight Data
- May 2016: Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety: Getting to Vision Zero
- May 2016: Achieving Green and Sustainable Streets
- September 2016: The 21st Century Public Transportation System

### **Treasure Valley: On the Go! Photo Contest**

To further raise awareness of the four components, COMPASS sponsored a year-long photo contest, [Treasure Valley: On the Go!](#),<sup>10</sup> from August 2015 to July 2016. Residents were asked to submit photos showing the four components around the Treasure Valley. One hundred-sixteen photos were submitted.

Promotion of the contest itself brought significant attention to the four components. In addition to monthly social media posts (specific to the contest; separate from the campaign described above), COMPASS staff distributed over 15,000 flyers, set up a display at 7 locations, sent 11 email blasts to over 1,400 people, and gave 3 presentations promoting the contest.

Once the window for submissions closed, COMPASS invited the public to vote to select the winning photos, thus again increasing exposure of the four components.

The [winning photos](#)<sup>11</sup> were compiled into a 2017 calendar, which was distributed widely throughout the valley. All submitted photos can be found in [a photo album on the COMPASS Facebook page](#)<sup>12</sup> and will continue to be used in CIM 2040 2.0 and other COMPASS outreach materials.

### **Transportation Funding Shortfall**

The region’s significant transportation funding shortfall emerged as the primary issue in CIM 2040, with the knowledge that it would also be the primary issue affecting CIM 2040 2.0. To focus the public’s attention on the shortfall, COMPASS conducted an educational campaign from January 2015 to April 2017.



### Social Media Campaign

COMPASS used its social media channels to highlight transportation funding issues with weekly “Did you know...?” social media posts for two years, from October 2014 to September 2015.

### 2015 Education Series

The 2015 education series<sup>13</sup> focused on transportation funding issues:

- February 2015: Creating a business case for funding transportation
- February 2015: Investing in transportation safety
- March 2015: Navigating the maze of transportation funding
- May 2015: Idaho’s legislative efforts to increase transportation funding
- September 2015: Vehicle mile of travel tax
- February 2016: Local option taxing authority (held in 2016, but a continuation of the 2015 series)

### Additional Outreach

COMPASS also conducted an extensive public awareness campaign regarding transportation funding consisting of:

- 13 blogs<sup>14</sup> from the COMPASS Executive Director
- 5 opinion pieces submitted to local newspapers by COMPASS Board members and the Executive Director
- 3 three-month radio campaigns (2015, 2016, 2017)
- A freestanding display placed at public locations throughout 2015
- Earned media exposure

## PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS

### Public Comment on CIM 2040 Amendments

CIM 2040 was amended six times during work on the CIM 2040 2.0 update. Public comment was sought on each of these proposed amendments prior to action by the COMPASS Board of Directors. While these amendments and the related public comments were for CIM 2040, and not CIM 2040 2.0, they are discussed here as they affect the funded projects and unfunded priorities in CIM 2040 2.0.

- **Amendment #1, June 2016**
  - o Public comment period: May 9–23, 2016
  - o Approve funding to modify the I-84/Karcher Road interchange and provide a second southbound through lane on Midland Boulevard
  - o Number of comments received: 9
  - o [Link to public comments](#)<sup>15</sup>

- **Amendment #2, June 2017**
  - Public comment period: April 28–May 14, 2017
  - Approve funding to widen Interstate 84 between the Karcher Road (Midland Boulevard) interchange and the Franklin Boulevard interchange in Nampa
  - Number of comments received: 801
  - [Link to public comments](#)<sup>16</sup>
- **Amendment #3, September 2017**
  - Public comment period: August 27–September 11, 2017
  - Approve funding to conduct an environmental study on I-84 between the Karcher Road Interchange and the City of Caldwell
  - Number of comments received:
    - The public comment period was held in conjunction with public comment on changes to the draft FY2018–2022 Regional Transportation Improvement Program update; therefore, not all comments received were regarding the proposed amendment to CIM 2040
    - Total comments received: 7
    - Comments received regarding the proposed CIM 2040 amendment: 1
  - [Link to public comments](#)<sup>17</sup>
- **Amendment #4, October 2017**
  - Public comment period: July 17–August 15, 2017
  - Approve multiple changes: add funding for all of two and parts of four previously unfunded projects, remove funding from six previously funded projects, and change the scope of four funded projects. [Link to details](#).<sup>18</sup>
  - Number of comments received:
    - The public comment period was held in conjunction with public comment on the draft FY2018–2022 Regional Transportation Improvement Program update; therefore, not all comments received were regarding the proposed amendment to CIM 2040.
    - Total comments received: 57
    - Comments received regarding the proposed CIM 2040 amendment: 28
  - [Link to public comments](#)<sup>19</sup>



- **Amendment #5, February 2018**
  - Public comment period: January 9–23, 2018
  - Approved funding for three projects:
    - Widen Interstate 84 from the City of Caldwell to Karcher Interchange in the City of Nampa
    - Begin preliminary engineering on the extension of State Highway 16 from I-84 to US 20/26 (Chinden Boulevard)
    - Begin design and environmental work on a transit oriented development in the City of Nampa
  - Number of comments received: 544
  - [Link to public comments](#)<sup>20</sup>
- **Amendment #6, October 2018**
  - Public comment period: August 1–30, 2018
  - Approve funding to conduct an environmental study on State Highway 55 in Canyon County south of the City of Nampa.
  - Comments received: The public comment period was held in conjunction with public comment on the draft FY2019–2023 Regional Transportation Improvement Program update; therefore, not all comments received were regarding the proposed amendment to CIM 2040.
    - Total comments received: 78
    - Comments received regarding the proposed CIM 2040 amendment: 17
  - [Link to public comments](#)<sup>21</sup>

### **Public Comment on Draft CIM 2040 2.0 Plan**

COMPASS requested public comment on the draft CIM 2040 2.0 plan from September 21 to October 21, 2018. The public was invited to comment on any or all portions of the plan, but specific questions focused on regional unfunded priorities.

COMPASS publicized and provided opportunities to comment via:

- Advertising and promotion
  - Print ads (16)
  - Radio ads (9 English-speaking stations; 2 Spanish-speaking)
  - Targeted digital ads (34,000 impressions)
  - ValleyRide bus billboards (8 buses)
  - Email blasts (4)
  - Social media (68 posts)
  - News release (1)
  - Community calendars
  - Flyers (posted in public locations and handed out at meetings)
- Website
  - All comment materials and plan online



- Open houses (3)
  - Library! at Hillcrest Shopping Center, Boise
  - Hispanic Cultural Center of Idaho, Nampa
  - COMPASS Office, Meridian
- Presentations to community groups (12)
- Comment materials at libraries and other public locations (21)

### Who responded?

Respondents using the comment form were asked for their zip code to help COMPASS identify geographical gaps to assist in future public comment periods (Figure 1).

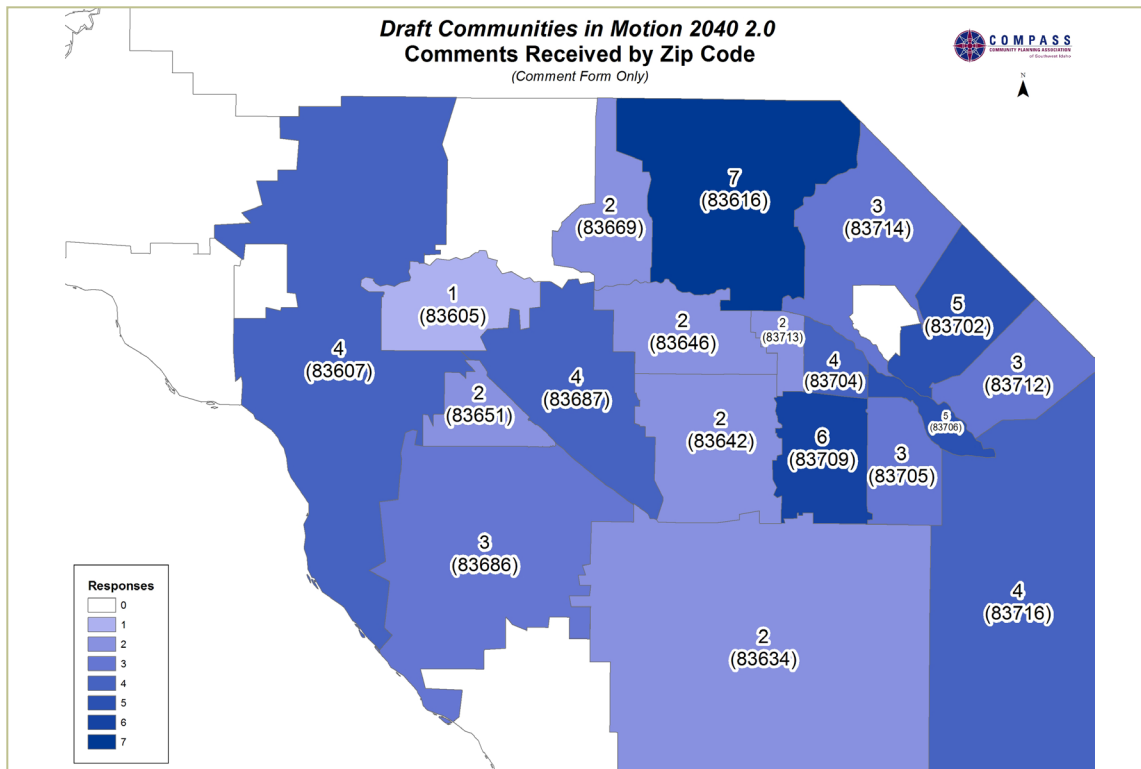


Figure 1. Geographic distribution of respondents (comment form only)

Additionally, respondents using the comment form were asked optional questions concerning demographic characteristics and how they learned of the opportunity to comment, again to assist COMPASS in future outreach efforts (Figure 2).

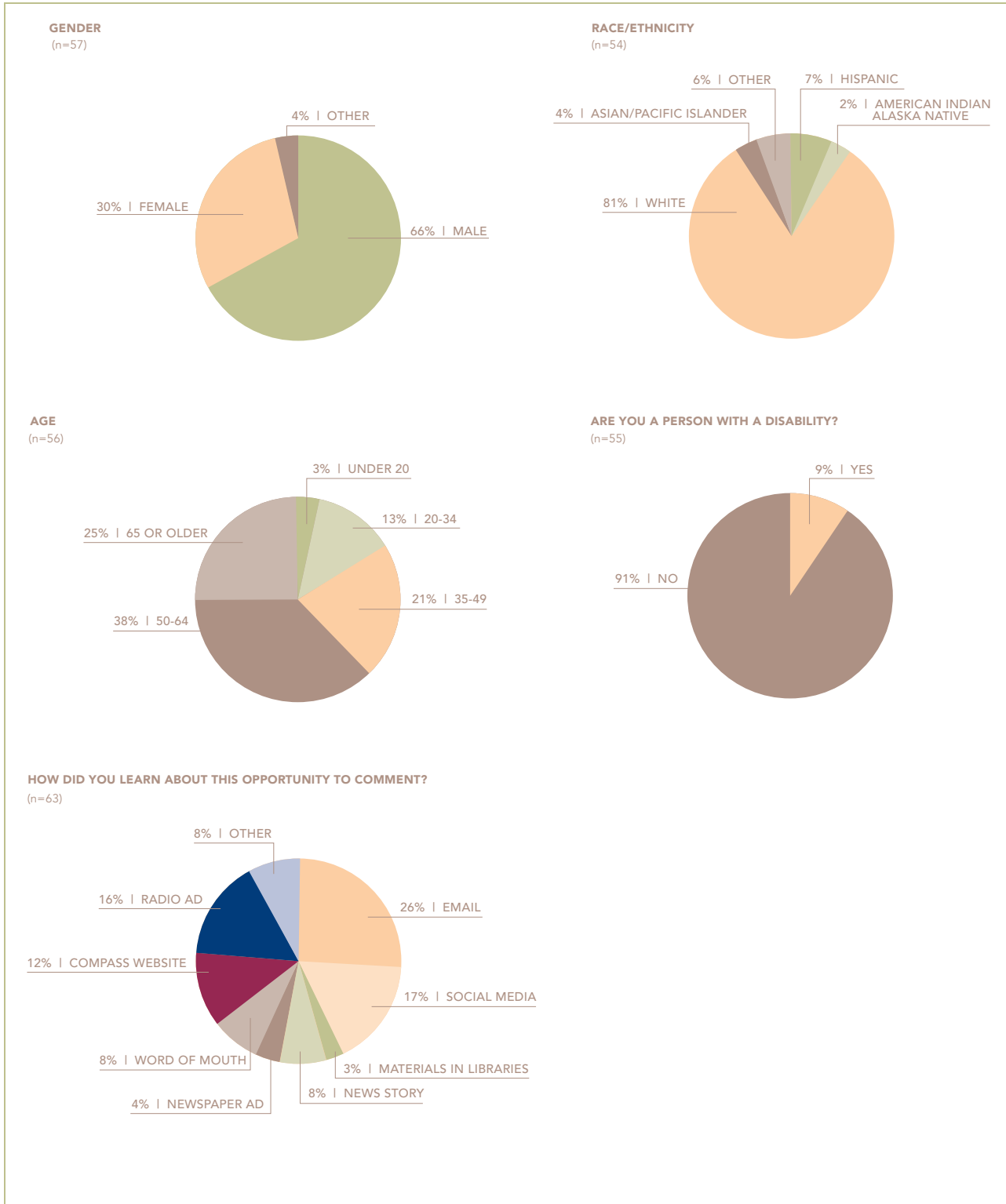


Figure 2. Demographic responses (comment form only)



**What did we hear?**

Comments were received from 81 individuals and organizations. Those responding via the comment form were specifically asked to indicate their agreement with the three lists of unfunded priorities<sup>22</sup> (Figure 3). Responses covered the spectrum from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”

Open-ended comments varied greatly, but the following general themes emerged:

- Request for more focus on public transportation (often coupled with “disagree” responses on the roadway priorities)
- Request to reduce the focus on road widening (often coupled with “disagree” responses on the roadway priorities)
- Support for rail
- Support for adding a beltway
- Concern that the planning is not forward-thinking enough

Many comments advocated for and against specific projects on the unfunded lists, with support for State Highway 16 receiving the most comments of any specific roadway.

The comments received included letters from Valley Regional Transit, the Federal Highway Administration, the City of Boise, and the Canyon County Commissioners.

All comments, with responses, were provided to the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee and the COMPASS Board of Directors, and posted [online](#).<sup>23</sup>

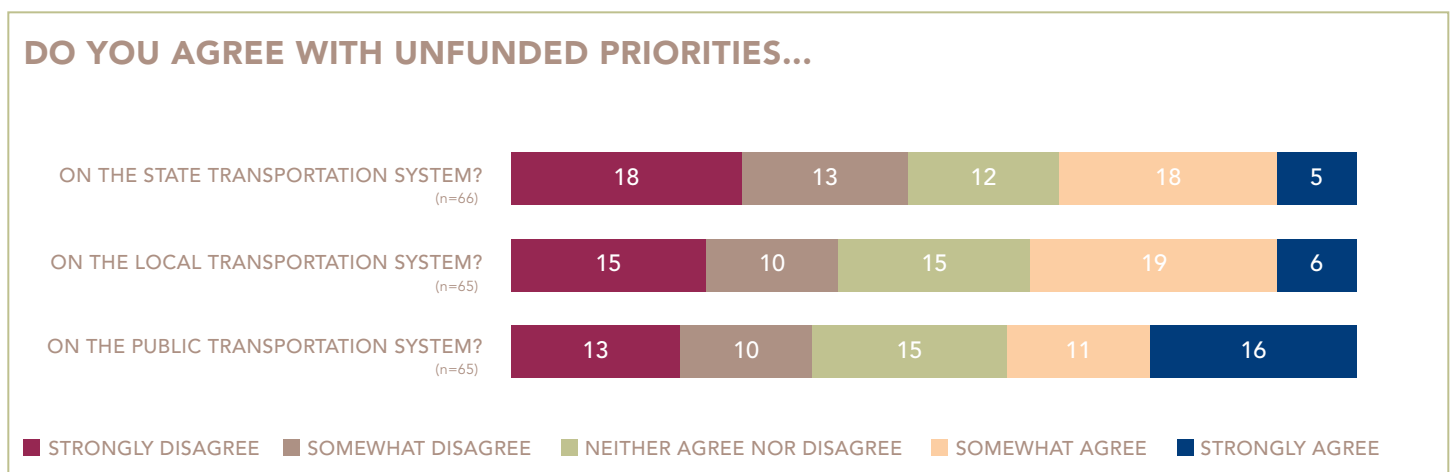


Figure 3. Level of agreement with the three lists of unfunded priorities (comment form only)



## What changes were made?

Changes made to the draft plan based on public and agency feedback included:

- **Funded/unfunded project lists**
  - Updated project descriptions to reflect the most current information and to include bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure in the descriptions where it was included in the project but missing from the description
  - Updated cost estimates to reflect the most current information available
- **Active Transportation technical document**
  - Clarified that the proposed regional bikeway network is in the conceptual stage and that future design considerations will be aligned with the COMPASS Complete Streets Policy (to be updated in FY2019)
- **Prioritization Process technical document**
  - Added more detail regarding how funded and unfunded projects were identified and prioritized
- **Financial Plan technical document**
  - Added a summary table showing transportation funding sources and their legal uses
  - Added an explanation of how the Congestion Management Process was used to develop CIM 2040 2.0 and select projects for funding in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program
  - Added more discussion regarding the likely consequences of a loss of bus services due to a funding shortfall for public transportation (also added this to the *Public Transportation* technical document)
  - Added information from Valley Regional Transit about the costs of owning and operating a private vehicle
  - Updated the financial outlook—needs, funding, and shortfall—based on updated cost estimates; carried these updated figures throughout the plan
- **Public Transportation technical document and web page**
  - Updated public transportation system maps to reflect service types and to show State Street as a high-capacity corridor in all maps of the future public transportation system
  - Added more discussion about the consequences of funding shortfall for public transportation
- **Outreach and Public Participation technical document**
  - Updated this technical document and corresponding web page to reflect the final public comment period

Additional updates were made for clarification and consistency.



### Public Comment on Changes to the Draft Plan

After public comment on the draft CIM 2040 2.0 plan was complete, portions of two of the unfunded priorities identified in the draft plan were proposed for funding by the Idaho Transportation Board. As these were significant changes to the draft plan originally presented for public comment, COMPASS requested comment a second time, from November 5 to 19, 2018, focusing on the two proposed funded projects.

COMPASS publicized and provided opportunities to comment via:

- Advertising and promotion
  - Print ads (8)
  - Email blasts (2)
- Website outreach
  - All comment materials and plan online
- Open houses (1)
  - COMPASS participated in an open house hosted by the Idaho Transportation Department and requested comments on the proposed new funded projects
- Presentations to community groups (3)
- Social media (13 posts)
- News release (1)

### Who responded?

As with the first public comment period, respondents were asked for their zip code and optional demographic information (Figures 4 and 5).

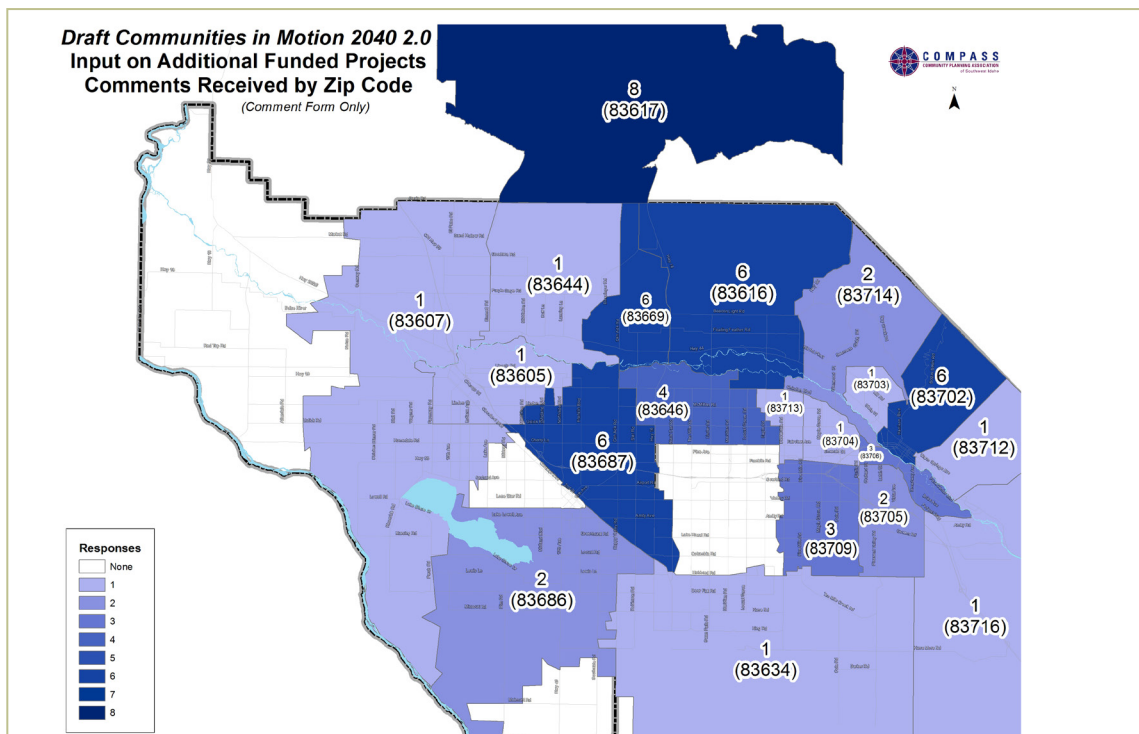


Figure 4. Geographic distribution of respondents—second comment period (comment form)

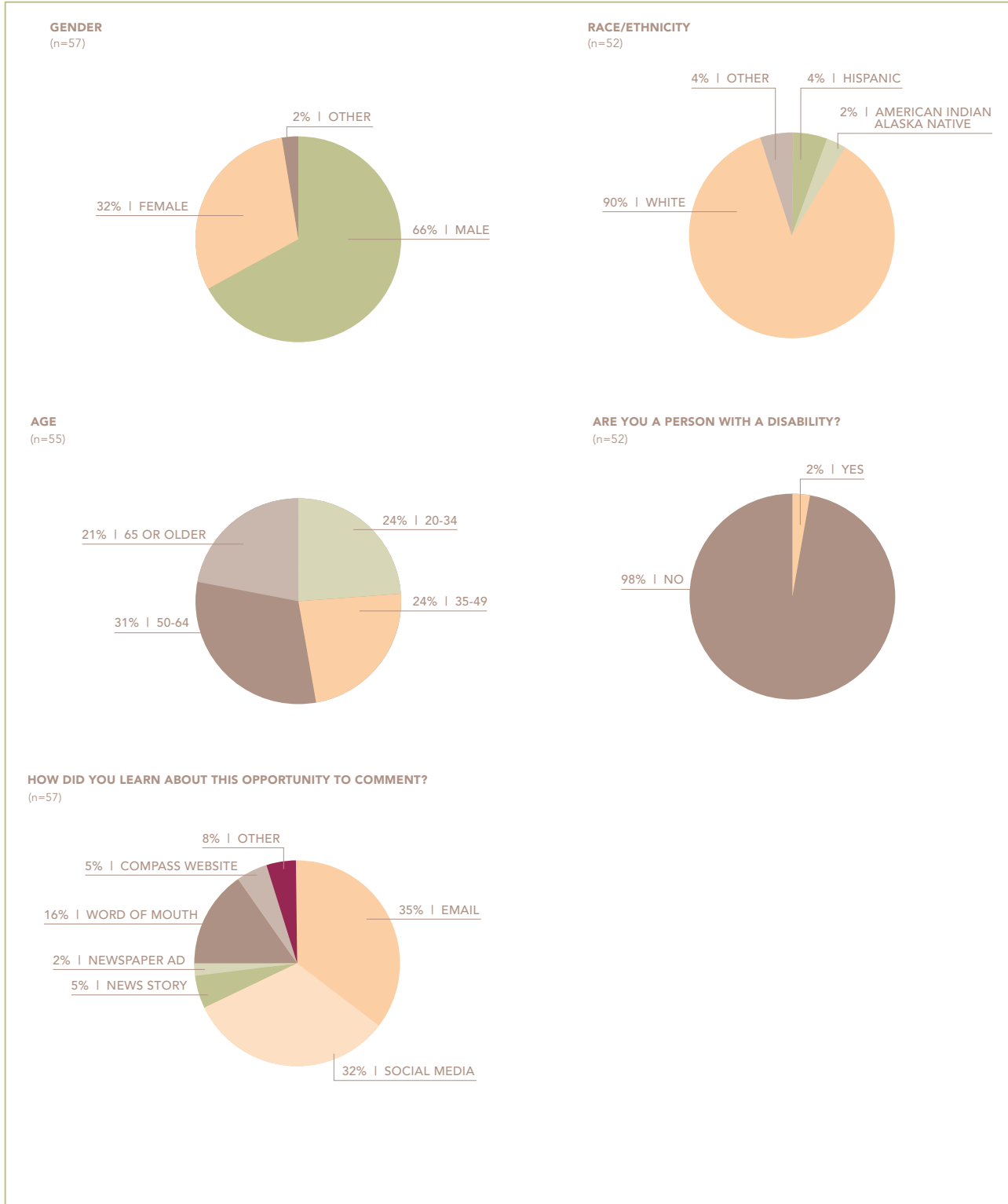


Figure 5. Demographic responses—second comment period (comment forms)



**What did we hear?**

A total of 75 comments were received. Individuals responding via the comment form were specifically asked whether or not they support the two proposed changes to funded projects (Figure 6).

Most open-ended comments focused on the proposed changes, but some also provided feedback on the overall draft plan. Comments varied widely, but primarily were in support of the addition of the projects. The comments included letters from the Idaho Transportation Department and Caldwell Chamber of Commerce.

All comments, with responses, were provided to the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, COMPASS Board of Directors, and posted [online](#).<sup>24</sup>

Based on feedback received, COMPASS added the two additional projects to the “funded” project list in the draft plan.

**SHOULD THE DRAFT LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND FIVE-YEAR BUDGET OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS BE REVISED TO FUND A PROJECT TO...**

WIDEN US 20/26 FROM INTERSTATE 84 TO MIDDLETON ROAD TO SIX LANES?  
(n=57)



PURCHASE RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR EVENTUAL EXTENSION OF STATE HIGHWAY 16?  
(n=58)



■ NO ■ UNSURE ■ YES

Figure 6. Support for the two proposed funded projects

**CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

Throughout the development of CIM 2040 2.0, COMPASS conducted outreach to highlight the planning process, the transportation funding shortfall, and the four transportation components that are the focus of CIM 2040 2.0. COMPASS kept community leaders, stakeholders, and the general public up-to-date through its website, quarterly email updates, social media, a photo contest and resulting photo calendar, and more. In addition, stakeholders were actively engaged in the planning process through issue-specific [workgroups](#).<sup>25</sup>

As this plan was an update to the CIM 2040 plan, and retained many of its same tenets and polices, the focus of public comment during the planning process and on the draft plan was on unfunded project priorities.

With the adoption of CIM 2040 2.0 in December 2018, the time comes to implement the plan, guided by CIM 2040 2.0 [implementation policies and programs](#).<sup>26</sup>



## NOTES

- 1 "Public Involvement Plans," COMPASS, <http://www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm>
- 2 "Planning assistance and standards." *Code of Federal Regulations*. Title 23, 450.316. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title23-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title23-vol1-sec450-316.pdf>
- 3 COMPASS public events, <http://www.compassidaho.org/comm/publicevents.htm>
- 4 2017 education series, [http://www.compassidaho.org/comm/publicevents\\_2017\\_ed\\_series.htm#educ2017](http://www.compassidaho.org/comm/publicevents_2017_ed_series.htm#educ2017)
- 5 *Communities in Motion 2040 2.0*, [http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cim2040\\_2.0.htm](http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cim2040_2.0.htm)
- 6 *Communities in Motion 2040 2.0* web plan, <http://compassidaho.org/CIM2040-2.0>
- 7 CIM 2040 2.0 email updates, [http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cim2040\\_2.0.htm#archives](http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cim2040_2.0.htm#archives)
- 8 "COMPASS Workgroups," COMPASS, <http://www.compassidaho.org/people/workgroups.htm>
- 9 2016 education series, [http://www.compassidaho.org/comm/publicevents\\_2016\\_ed\\_series.htm](http://www.compassidaho.org/comm/publicevents_2016_ed_series.htm)
- 10 *Treasure Valley: On the Go!* photo contest, [http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cim2040\\_2.0.htm#tvotg](http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/cim2040_2.0.htm#tvotg)
- 11 *Treasure Valley: On the Go!* winning photos, [http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/CIM2040\\_2.0/photocontest.html](http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/CIM2040_2.0/photocontest.html)
- 12 *Treasure Valley: On the Go!* Facebook photo album, [https://www.facebook.com/pg/COMPASSIdaho/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=10154452519011093](https://www.facebook.com/pg/COMPASSIdaho/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10154452519011093)
- 13 2015 education series, [http://www.compassidaho.org/comm/publicevents\\_2015\\_ed\\_series.htm](http://www.compassidaho.org/comm/publicevents_2015_ed_series.htm)
- 14 Executive Director's blog, <http://compassidaho.blogspot.com>
- 15 Public comments on CIM 2040 Amendment #1, June 2016: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Comments/CIM\\_Comments\\_Received.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Comments/CIM_Comments_Received.pdf)
- 16 Public comments on CIM 2040 Amendment #2, June 2017: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Comments/CIM\\_TIP\\_PublicComment\\_I84\\_VERBATIM.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Comments/CIM_TIP_PublicComment_I84_VERBATIM.pdf)
- 17 Public comments on CIM 2040 Amendment #3, September 2017: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/final/Amend3\\_commentCanyonHD.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/final/Amend3_commentCanyonHD.pdf)
- 18 CIM amendment fact sheet: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/PublicComment/CIM\\_Amendment\\_FactSheet.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/PublicComment/CIM_Amendment_FactSheet.pdf)
- 19 Public comments on CIM 2040 Amendment #4, October 2017: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/I84Amend/Public\\_Comments\\_Verbatim\\_CIMOnly.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/I84Amend/Public_Comments_Verbatim_CIMOnly.pdf)
- 20 Public comments on CIM 2040 Amendment #5, February 2018: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Comments/COMPASS\\_Amend5\\_VerbatimPubComments.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Comments/COMPASS_Amend5_VerbatimPubComments.pdf)
- 21 Public comments on CIM 2040 Amendment #6, October 2018: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Final\\_CIMOnly\\_Public\\_Comments\\_Received.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040/Final_CIMOnly_Public_Comments_Received.pdf)
- 22 "Unfunded Needs," CIM 2040 2.0, <http://compassidaho.org/CIM2040-2.0/unfunded-needs>
- 23 Public comments on CIM 2040 2.0, September and October 2018: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040\\_20/TechDocs/CIM2040\\_2\\_0\\_Public\\_Comments\\_Verbatim.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040_20/TechDocs/CIM2040_2_0_Public_Comments_Verbatim.pdf)



- 24 Public comments on proposed additional CIM 2040 2.0 projects, November 2018: [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040\\_20/TechDocs/Public\\_Comments\\_VerbatimRd2.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040_20/TechDocs/Public_Comments_VerbatimRd2.pdf)
- 25 See note 8.
- 26 *Implementing the Plan*, CIM 2040 2.0, [http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040\\_20/TechDocs/Implementation.pdf](http://www.compassidaho.org/documents/prodserv/CIM2040_20/TechDocs/Implementation.pdf)