



COMPASS
COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION
of Southwest Idaho

Working together to plan for the future

COMPASS Integrated Communication Plan

Report Number 09-2015
June 2015

Resolution 13-2015



RESOLUTION NO. 13-2015

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING THE COMPASS INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION PLAN, INCLUDING THE COMPASS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) has been designated by the Governor of Idaho as the metropolitan planning organization responsible for transportation planning in Ada and Canyon Counties;

WHEREAS, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, Title 23 United States Code Section 134, and Title 49 United States Code Section 5303 require that metropolitan planning organizations develop public involvement plans that provide reasonable opportunities for interested parties to comment on transportation plans;

WHEREAS, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, Title 23 United States Code Section 134, and Title 49 United States Code Section 5303 require that public involvement plans be developed in consultation with all interested parties;

WHEREAS, the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho has developed a Public Involvement Plan as part of a larger COMPASS *Integrated Communication Plan* in consultation with the COMPASS Public Participation Committee and other interested parties;

WHEREAS, the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho will consider and implement the principles of equality for all citizens as formulated in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Executive Order for Environmental Justice to the extent possible; and

WHEREAS, the public and stakeholders were invited to review and provide feedback on the draft Public Involvement Plan for 45 days, following all requirements and best practices outlined for public involvement in the draft Public Involvement Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho Board of Directors approves the COMPASS *Integrated Communication Plan*, including the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan.

DATED this 15th day of June 2015.

APPROVED:

By: Garret L. Nancolas

**Garret Nancolas, Chair
Community Planning Association
of Southwest Idaho Board of Directors**

ATTEST:

By: Matthew J. Stoll
**Matthew J. Stoll, Executive Director
Community Planning Association
of Southwest Idaho**

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Section I. Background

Chapter 1. Introduction

The Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) is an association of cities, counties, highway districts, and other governmental agencies who plan for the future of Ada and Canyon Counties, Idaho. The organization brings together regional leaders to coordinate decision-making and collaborate on shared goals. COMPASS helps shape the future of Ada and Canyon Counties – the “Treasure Valley” – by projecting how the region will grow and what it needs to be successful.

Plan Background

COMPASS’ communication and public outreach activities support excellence in all other aspects of COMPASS’ work. This *Integrated Communication Plan* is designed to coordinate all of COMPASS’ communication and public outreach activities under one guiding document and demonstrate how each of these activities can, and should, be used to augment the others.

In addition, Section II of this plan meets federal metropolitan planning organization (MPO) requirements for a Public Participation Plan. COMPASS has combined its Public Participation Plan with its other education and outreach activities into this *Integrated Communication Plan* to ensure all of these related activities are considered and planned as one complete program.

Plan Organization

This plan is organized into three sections:

- Section I (Chapter 1) provides an overall introduction to the plan.
- Section II (Chapters 2 – 6) serves as the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan.
 - Chapter 2 explains the overall organization of the Public Involvement Plan.
 - Chapters 3 – 6 are project-specific public involvement guides.
 - Public Involvement Plan (Chapter 3)
 - Long-range transportation plan (Chapter 4)
 - Regional Transportation Improvement Program (Chapter 5)
 - Other plans, programs, and projects (Chapter 6)
- Section III (Chapters 7 – 13) discusses the education, outreach, and marketing components of COMPASS’ communication program, how these are used in support of all COMPASS programs, and how success will be measured.

As a truly “integrated” communication plan, the different elements discussed throughout this plan support and complement each other. Figure 1 illustrates this relationship.

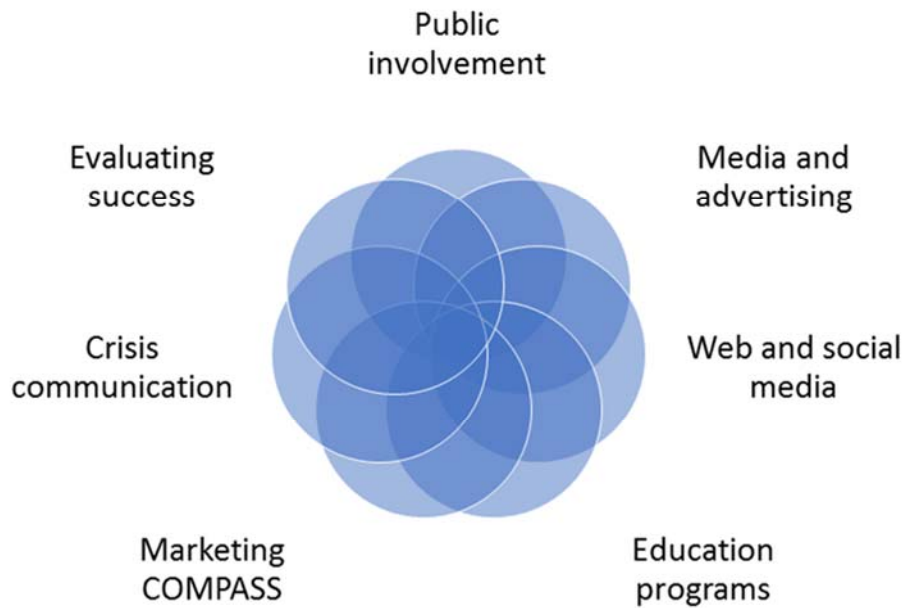


Figure 1. Interrelationship between COMPASS communication elements

Plan Development, Review, and Adoption

This plan was developed with assistance of a subcommittee of the COMPASS Public Participation Committee, and subsequently reviewed and recommended by the full Public Participation Committee in April 2015.

This entire *Integrated Communication Plan* was released for a 45-day public comment period from April 17 – May 31, 2015, following the requirements and recommendations for public comment on the COMPASS Public Participation Plan outlined in Chapter 3. Appendix A outlines the public involvement process used for this plan, summarizes comments received, and describes how comments were addressed; Appendix B lists all open-ended comments received, with responses.

The COMPASS Board of Directors adopted this plan in June 2015, with Resolution 13-2015. The plan is available online at www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm and is scheduled to be updated no later than September 2018.

Section II. COMPASS Public Involvement Plan

Chapter 2. Public Involvement Plan: Introduction and Federal Requirements

Section II (Chapters 2 – 6) of this COMPASS *Integrated Communication Plan* serves as the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan and is a guide to soliciting public participation and using public input into COMPASS plans, programs, and projects (Figure 2). This section fulfills federal requirements¹ for an MPO to develop an overarching Public Involvement Plan covering its entire planning program. Chapter 2 discusses how COMPASS fulfills federal Title VI, Limited English Proficiency, Environmental Justice, and related requirements; Chapters 3 – 6 serve as public participation guides for specific COMPASS plans, projects, and programs. These guides serve as a basis for internal project-specific public participation outlines for each public participation process.

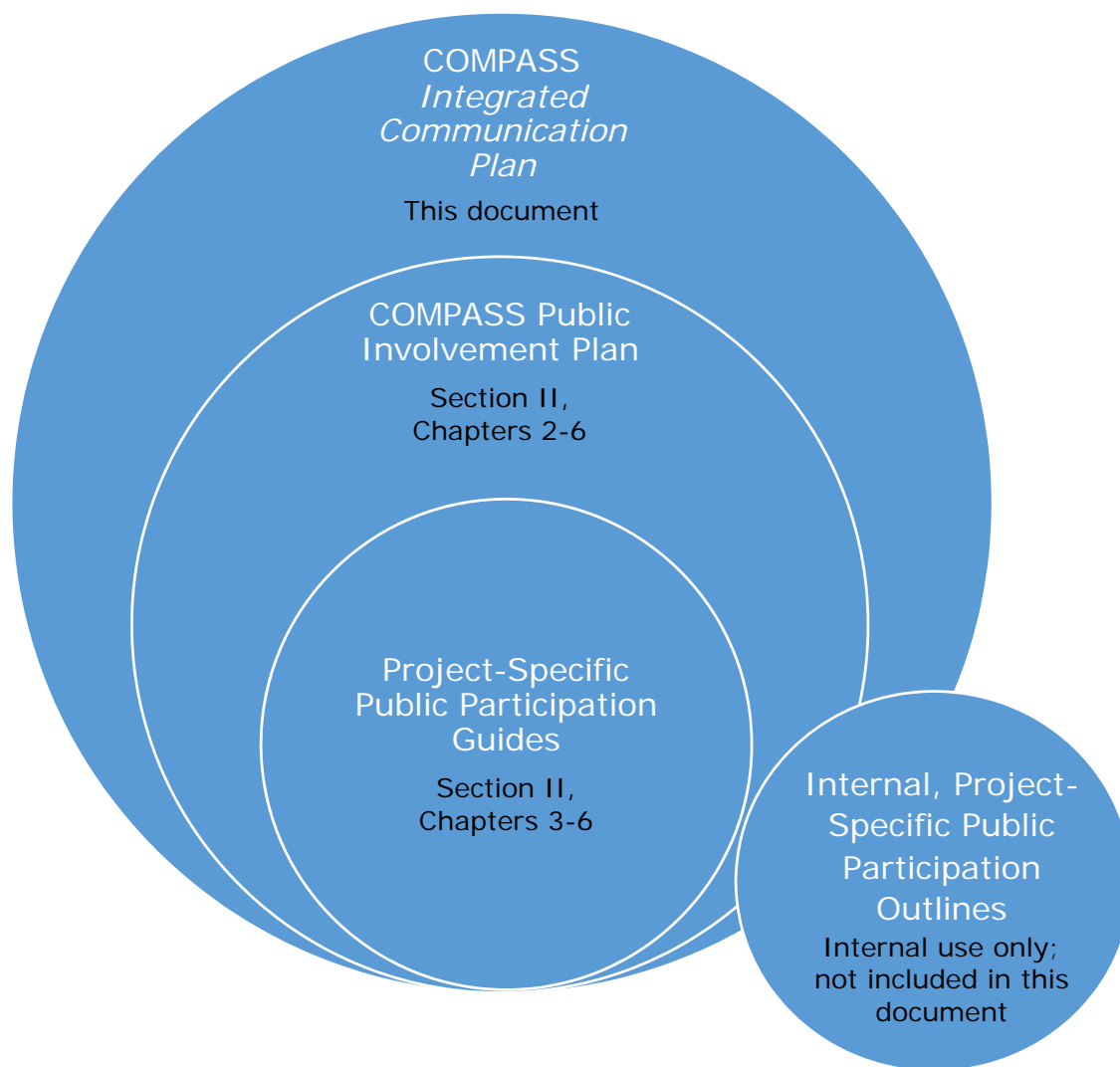


Figure 2. Organization of public participation plan (Section II of Integrated Communication Plan)

¹ <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title23-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title23-vol1-sec450-316.pdf>

This plan is designed to assist the public in understanding COMPASS' public involvement processes, including how and when public participation will be solicited, how the public can be involved in planning processes, and how public input is used. COMPASS strives to develop its plans, programs, and projects in a transparent manner; this Public Involvement Plan describes how COMPASS will fulfill this goal.

Through its public involvement processes outlined in Chapters 2 – 6, COMPASS will:

- ✓ Promote an active public involvement process
- ✓ Provide comprehensive information to put issues into context
- ✓ Provide timely public notice of public comment opportunities
- ✓ Provide the opportunity to comment on key decisions before they are made
- ✓ Support early and ongoing public involvement
- ✓ Gather and analyze available community demographics and use this information to best serve all affected communities, including traditionally under-represented populations such as ethnic/racial minorities, low income individuals, and individuals with disabilities
- ✓ Use visualization techniques (maps, photos, graphics, computer simulations, etc.) to describe the long-range transportation plan and other plans, programs, and projects, as appropriate
- ✓ Make public information available electronically in accessible formats on the COMPASS website
- ✓ Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times
- ✓ Explicitly consider and respond to public input received during public comment periods, as appropriate
- ✓ Seek out and consider the needs of traditionally underrepresented populations providing public comment opportunities, including minority and low income populations
- ✓ Provide additional opportunities to comment if the final plan, program, or project differs significantly from the draft version presented for public comment
- ✓ Coordinate with local, regional, and statewide agencies when soliciting public involvement, as appropriate
- ✓ Provide assistance, such as transportation, child care, and language translation, as requested, to reduce and eliminate barriers to participation.
- ✓ Review the effectiveness of the procedures in this plan every three years and update the plan accordingly

Within the COMPASS planning area, Latinos encompass 24% of the population in Canyon County and 7% in Ada County. In addition, the Boise area is a refugee resettlement community, home to a population of refugees of multiple ethnicities. In Canyon County, 16% of families have incomes below poverty level; 9% of Ada County families fall into this category. Minorities and low income populations receive special consideration as "Environment Justice" communities in compliance with Executive Order 12898 (see Page 7). In addition, COMPASS reaches out to other traditionally underrepresented populations including individuals with disabilities and the elderly.

This Public Involvement Plan, in conjunction with the overall *Integrated Communication Plan*, was developed with a subcommittee of the COMPASS Public Participation Committee, and reviewed by the entire Public Participation Committee. Per federal requirements and this Public Involvement Plan, the COMPASS *Integrated Communication Plan* was provided for public review and comment during a 45-day public comment period from April 17 – May 31, 2015. During this public review period, comments were explicitly requested from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Idaho Transportation Department, Valley Regional Transit (regional transit authority), local Tribal representatives, and members of traditionally underrepresented communities. A description of the public comment process for this plan can be found in Appendix A and a listing of all public comments received (with responses), can be found in Appendix B of this plan.

Federal Public Participation Requirements

COMPASS is committed to providing equal opportunity to participate in public participation activities to all residents and to fulfilling all federal requirements relating to equal opportunity, as outlined below.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

COMPASS is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. COMPASS assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any COMPASS service, program, or activity. COMPASS also assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations.

The COMPASS Title VI plan can be found online at www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm.

Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, public agencies are obligated to provide competent language assistance to limited-English-proficient individuals. The COMPASS Limited English Proficiency Plan has been prepared to address COMPASS' responsibilities as a recipient of federal financial assistance as related to the needs of individuals with limited English language skills.

The COMPASS Limited English Proficiency Plan can be found online at www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm.

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

COMPASS identifies Environmental Justice Consideration Areas by using Census and American Community Survey data to locate block groups with high minority population and tracts with low-income populations. COMPASS then uses this information to ensure that identified areas are not unduly impacted, or neglected, by transportation projects listed in the long-range transportation plan or Regional Transportation Improvement Program, and ensures that public comment opportunities are promoted and provided in these areas.

Environmental Justice Consideration Area maps can be found online at www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm.

Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments

While there are no federally recognized Indian reservations within the COMPASS planning area, COMPASS is committed to facilitating tribal involvement, consultation, and collaboration to ensure tribal input into transportation needs, projects, and plans within Ada and Canyon Counties, particularly as related to tribal lands and traditional areas.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

COMPASS is committed to involving all members of the community in public outreach efforts, including those with disabilities. COMPASS complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and facilitates public involvement by individuals with disabilities by providing all COMPASS materials online, holding public meetings in accessible locations, providing materials in alternate formats (e.g., braille or large print) as requested, and providing accommodations, as requested, to assist individuals with disabilities in fully participating in public involvement opportunities.

COMPASS' commitment to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to be heard and included is reflected in the footer of every page on its website, where a statement offering assistance is included in both English and Spanish, as shown. Similar statements shall be included on materials promoting COMPASS events, documents, and opportunities to comment or be involved with COMPASS programs or projects, as appropriate.

Those needing assistance with COMPASS events or materials, or needing materials in alternate formats, please call 208/475-2229 with 48 hours advance notice.

Si necesita asistencia con una junta de COMPASS, o necesita un documento en otro formato, por favor llame al 208/475-2229 con 48 horas de anticipación.

- COMPASS Website footer

Project-Specific Public Participation Guides

While COMPASS accepts public feedback at any time, the agency provides specific public comment opportunities for stakeholders and the general public to provide input into individual plans, projects, and issues as they are being addressed by COMPASS.

Project-specific public participation guides have been developed for those projects where COMPASS regularly requests public participation. These are provided in Chapters 3 (Public Involvement Plan), 4 (long-range transportation plan), and 5 (Regional Transportation Improvement Program); in addition, Chapter 6 provides guidance for other projects for which public comment may be solicited. Each of these sections includes a quick reference checklist of required and recommended (best practice) public involvement practices. Collectively, these project-specific public participation guides, combined with the overview of federal requirements found here in Chapter 2, comprise the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan.

A summary of public involvement practices covering all types of COMPASS work products is provided in Table 1 (pages 9-13); a summary of required elements and recommended best practices for each type of plan is provided at the end of each participation guide in Chapters 3 – 6.

Table 1. Required, Recommended Best Practices, and Optional Elements for Public Involvement

Activity	Public Involvement Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments	Regional Transportation Improvement Program Yearly Update	Transportation Improvement Program Amendments, as appropriate	Air Quality Transportation Conformity Demonstration	Other plans, programs, and projects, as appropriate
<i>R = Required BP = Recommended best practice O = Optional C = Determine on a case by case basis</i>							
Prepare for Public Comment							
Review federal Title VI, ADA, LEP, and Environmental Justice requirements to ensure public involvement activities meet or exceed all requirements	R	R	R	R	R	All public comment on the demonstration of transportation conformity will be held in conjunction with the long-range transportation plan or transportation improvement program for which conformity is being demonstrated.	R
Determine if/when coordination with other agencies should occur, and how	R	R	R	R	R		R
Develop internal project-specific public participation outline, delineating tasks (required and optional), timeline, and budget	R	R	O	R	O		R
Gather and analyze community demographics and use to determine how to best serve all affected communities, including traditionally under-represented populations	R	R	O	R	O		C
Identify stakeholders; compile stakeholder outreach matrix	R	R	O	R	O		R
Develop project-specific social media plan and implement	O	O	O	O	O		O

Table 1. Required, Recommended Best Practices, and Optional Elements for Public Involvement

Activity	Public Involvement Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments	Regional Transportation Improvement Program Yearly Update	Transportation Improvement Program Amendments, as appropriate	Air Quality Transportation Conformity Demonstration	Other plans, programs, and projects, as appropriate
<i>R = Required BP = Recommended best practice O = Optional C = Determine on a case by case basis</i>							
Share Information on Key Issues and Opportunities for Involvement							
Place information on the COMPASS website, including online comment opportunities as appropriate	R	R	R	R	R		R
Send emails	R	R	R	R	R		R
Place legal notices	R	R	R	R	R		C
Purchase paid advertisements (e.g., newspaper, radio, etc.)	BP	BP	BP	BP	O		BP
Cultivate earned media exposure (e.g., submit op-ed pieces, news releases)	BP	BP	BP	BP	O		O
Place displays/comment materials in public/at events to expand reach beyond minimum requirements	BP	BP	BP	BP	BP		BP
Use visualization techniques (all types)	O	R	BP	R	O		BP
Hold public meetings	O	R	O	R	O		O
Give public presentations	O	BP	BP	O	O		O

Table 1. Required, Recommended Best Practices, and Optional Elements for Public Involvement

Activity	Public Involvement Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments	Regional Transportation Improvement Program Yearly Update	Transportation Improvement Program Amendments, as appropriate	Air Quality Transportation Conformity Demonstration	Other plans, programs, and projects, as appropriate
<i>R = Required BP = Recommended best practice O = Optional C = Determine on a case by case basis</i>							
Solicit Feedback							
Hold formal public comment period(s)	R (minimum 45 days)	R (minimum 30 days)	R (minimum 15 days)	R (minimum 30 days)	R (minimum 15 days)		C
Consult on environmental issues	O	R	O	O	O		O
Consult with Tribes	R	R	R	R	R		C
Consult with advisory committees	R	R	R	R	R		C
Convene focus groups and/or special workgroups	O	O	O	O	O		O
Develop issue-specific comment forms	BP	R	BP	BP	O		BP
Use innovative public outreach techniques	O	BP	O	BP	O		BP
Provide opportunities to comment in multiple formats, including online, via email, via US mail, and/or in person, and at convenient and accessible times and locations	R	R	R	R	R		R

Table 1. Required, Recommended Best Practices, and Optional Elements for Public Involvement

Activity	Public Involvement Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments	Regional Transportation Improvement Program Yearly Update	Transportation Improvement Program Amendments, as appropriate	Air Quality Transportation Conformity Demonstration	Other plans, programs, and projects, as appropriate
<i>R = Required BP = Recommended best practice O = Optional C = Determine on a case by case basis</i>							
Post draft plan/materials on COMPASS website for review	R	R	R	R	R		R
Translate key documents, including web content, comment form, etc. into Spanish and/or provide in alternate formats, as appropriate; provide additional translations as requested	R	R	BP	R	O		BP
Offer and provide assistance, as requested, to overcome barriers to participation	R	R	R	R	R		R
Respond to Public Comment							
Respond to questions received during public comment, as appropriate	R	R	R	R	R		R (if a public comment period is used)
Provide all public comments, with staff responses and recommendations, if any, to COMPASS Board and other committees, as appropriate	R	R	R	R	R		R (if a public comment period is used)

Table 1. Required, Recommended Best Practices, and Optional Elements for Public Involvement

Activity	Public Involvement Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan	Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments	Regional Transportation Improvement Program Yearly Update	Transportation Improvement Program Amendments, as appropriate	Air Quality Transportation Conformity Demonstration	Other plans, programs, and projects, as appropriate
<i>R = Required BP = Recommended best practice O = Optional C = Determine on a case by case basis</i>							
Post all public comments and responses in or with final documents	R (in final document)	R (summarize in plan; post verbatim online, as "virtual appendix" to final document)	R (online, with final document)	R (in final document)	R (in final document)		R (if a public comment period is used)
Provide additional comment opportunities if significant changes made following original public comment period	R	R	R	R	R		R (if a public comment period is used)
Distribute final documents online and/or in hard copy, as appropriate	R	R	R	R	R		R
Review effectiveness of public involvement efforts; use results for continual improvement	R	R	R	R	R		R

Chapter 3. Public Participation Guide *for the* COMPASS Public Involvement Plan

As discussed in Chapter 2, COMPASS is committed to a robust public involvement process at all stages of its planning efforts. This begins with a robust, overarching Public Involvement Plan. A Public Involvement Plan is required for all MPOs², but much more than that, it is good policy, as it outlines expectations for the public and stakeholders and guides COMPASS staff on public involvement elements.

This chapter serves as the public participation guide for the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan; in essence, it outlines how COMPASS will encourage public participation with, and solicit public input into, the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan.

Public Involvement Plan: Development Process

COMPASS has had a Board-adopted public involvement policy since 1994, accompanied by project-specific public participation plans. In 2015, the policy and project-specific public participation plans are being replaced by Section II (Chapters 2 – 6) of this COMPASS *Integrated Communication Plan*. This Public Involvement Plan shall be updated and adopted by the COMPASS Board every three years. Following this 2015 plan, the next update shall occur in 2018.

This Public Involvement Plan has been developed by COMPASS staff, in coordination with the COMPASS Public Participation Committee. The Public Participation Committee is comprised of stakeholders and members of the general public who advise and assist COMPASS staff on methods to encourage public involvement. Committee members represent a broad cross-section of stakeholders, as well as the general public, and also provide expertise in outreach, education, and communication. The committee helps ensure COMPASS is transparent in its outreach processes and is reaching out to all members of the public in a timely manner and using appropriate methods.

Upon completion of a draft Public Involvement Plan, the Public Participation Committee shall review the full plan contents, make any additional changes, and following final review, shall recommend the draft plan to the COMPASS Board of Directors for adoption. Following the committee's recommendation, the plan shall be released for public and stakeholder comment for a 45-day (minimum) public comment period. (See Public Participation Process, below).

Following the public comment period, public comments will be provided to the committee, and any suggested changes will be reviewed with the committee and incorporated into the draft plan, as appropriate.

The Public Involvement Plan shall ensure that COMPASS meets or exceeds all federal laws and requirements for public involvement, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Public Involvement Plan: Public Participation Purpose and Goals

The **purpose** of involving stakeholders and the general public in developing, reviewing, and providing feedback on the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan is three fold:

² <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title23-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title23-vol1-sec450-316.pdf>

- Affirm COMPASS' commitment to an open, transparent public involvement process
- Ensure stakeholder and public needs regarding COMPASS' public participation processes are heard and addressed
- Outline COMPASS' public involvement processes and expectations to ensure all interested parties are aware of opportunities to be involved

Through public participation in development of the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan, COMPASS strives to fulfill two **goals**:

- Inform stakeholders and the general public that COMPASS has an overall Public Involvement Plan and public participation guides for individual plans and projects, and how to access and use those plans to be an active and engaged participant in COMPASS programs.
- Invite and use feedback and assistance from stakeholders and the general public, including traditionally underrepresented populations, to ensure that the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan, and all COMPASS public involvement processes, consider and provide for needs of all individuals.

Public Involvement Plan: Public Participation Process

As a first step in developing the Public Involvement Plan, COMPASS shall develop an internal public participation outline to meet the purpose and goals listed above. The internal public participation outline shall include the specific tasks, timelines, and budget necessary to achieve the stated purpose and goals and shall ensure that all required elements are included and describe which optional elements will be used.

As part of this process, COMPASS shall determine how to best coordinate with other agencies, review federal requirements, identify stakeholders (including Tribes, underrepresented populations, COMPASS member agencies, public transportation providers, and others), and compile a stakeholder outreach matrix to identify how COMPASS will reach out to each identified stakeholder group.

As representatives of the public, Public Participation Committee members are integral in ensuring that a plan is developed to meet public needs. Once the Public Participation Committee has reviewed and recommended Board approval of the draft plan, it will be provided to the public and specific stakeholders for a 45-day (minimum) public comment period. Required and recommended public outreach methods for the Public Involvement Plan are shown on page 18, and are also outlined in Table 1 (pages 9 – 13).

Public Involvement Plan: Public Feedback

During the public comment period, COMPASS shall respond to any specific questions raised by commenters. If a commenter provides his/her contact information, COMPASS will respond directly to that person and provide the same response with the list of public comments. If the person does not provide contact information, the response will be posted with the list of public comments.

All public comments will be provided to the Public Participation Committee, who will review and propose changes to the draft plan based on the comments, if warranted. If public comments lead to significant substantive changes to the draft Public Involvement Plan, COMPASS will re-release

the draft plan, with proposed changes noted, for an additional 15-day (minimum) public comment period. All public comments will be provided online and notice will be sent via email notifying stakeholders and the public that comments have been posted, with a direct link to the comments.

COMPASS will provide all comments, with responses, to the COMPASS Board of Directors for consideration prior to taking action on the Public Involvement Plan. Per federal regulations, the COMPASS Board must adopt the Public Involvement Plan for it to serve as the overarching COMPASS Public Involvement Plan.

The Board-adopted COMPASS Public Involvement Plan, including a description of the public comment process and all comments received (with responses) will be posted on the COMPASS website on the Public Involvement Plans web page (www.compassidaho.org/people/publicinvolvement.htm). The description of the public comment process for this plan, as well as a summary, analysis, and disposition of comments can be found in Appendix A of this plan. A list of all comments received (verbatim), with individual staff responses can be found in Appendix B.

Public Involvement Plan: Reviewing Effectiveness of Public Outreach

COMPASS will use four means to assess the effectiveness of the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan and all COMPASS public involvement and outreach efforts: outputs, outcomes, public survey data, and general feedback. COMPASS will analyze and report on this information, and use the information to improve this Public Involvement Plan as it is updated every three years, as well as the internal public participation outline for this plan. However, in many cases, the data and analyses can and will be put to use immediately to improve public participation processes without waiting for a formal plan update.

Outputs. “Outputs” are quantifiable outreach efforts related to a public involvement process, including the number and length of public comment periods, number of emails sent and number of recipients, number of news releases, locations of public comment materials, etc. (Figure 3).

COMPASS will track and report on the “outputs” of each public involvement process, including public involvement on the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan. Outputs will be described in, or with, the relevant plan or project. Outputs for this Public Involvement Plan are listed in Appendix A of this plan.



Figure 3. COMPASS tracks and reports on “outputs,” such as locations of public comment materials (Meridian Library District, Cherry Lane Library, May 2015)

Outcomes. Outcomes include input into a plan, media coverage, etc. that are a result of COMPASS outreach efforts (outputs). Outcomes include the number of public comments received during a comment period, the number of news stories and opinion pieces generated from COMPASS materials, etc. (Figure 4).

COMPASS shall request zip code and demographic information on its public comment forms and compare the demographics of participants with demographics of the region as a whole to determine if COMPASS is successful in reaching out to all populations to improve future public comment efforts.

Zip codes of participants are reported with each comment; all other demographics are tracked and reported only as aggregates. Comments are reported anonymously unless the commenter signs written correspondence or indicates on the comment form that she wishes to have her name/affiliation included with her comments. When a commenter includes an address or contact information with comments, this information is removed prior to publishing comments for privacy purposes.

COMPASS will track and report on the “outcomes” of each public involvement process, including public involvement on the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan. Outcomes will be described in, or with, the relevant plan or project. Outcomes for this Public Involvement Plan are listed in Appendix A of this plan.

Public Survey Data. In addition to outputs and outcomes for each public involvement process, COMPASS shall conduct a random household telephone survey of residents of Ada and Canyon Counties every three years. The survey will address residents’ awareness of COMPASS; its plans, projects, and programs; and opportunities to be involved; as well as opinions of COMPASS and its outreach programs, such as perceptions of COMPASS’ openness to public involvement and input and the extent to which COMPASS uses that input. A baseline survey shall be conducted in summer/fall 2015, upon completion of this plan; subsequent surveys shall be conducted the fall prior to the update of this plan³. This survey is described in more detail in Chapter 13, Evaluating Success.

Feedback. COMPASS shall also consider feedback it receives on the public involvement process for the Public Involvement Plan and use this feedback to improve future processes. This type of feedback can come in a variety of formats, from comments on comment forms to emails and phone calls, to questions received regarding how to participate. All types of feedback shall be considered and used to improve public involvement processes.



Figure 4. COMPASS tracks and reports on “outcomes,” such as news articles (Meridian Press, April 2015)

³ The baseline and following survey will be conducted two years apart (2015 and 2017) to allow time for results to be incorporated into the update of this plan. Subsequent surveys will be conducted on a three-year cycle.

Public Involvement Plan: Required and Recommended Public Involvement Elements⁴

Required:

- ✓ Review federal requirements
- ✓ Determine how to coordinate with other agencies
- ✓ Develop an internal project-specific public participation outline to include tasks, timelines, and budget
- ✓ Gather and analyze community demographics and use data to best serve all affected communities, including traditionally under-represented populations
- ✓ Identify stakeholders; compile stakeholder outreach matrix
- ✓ Hold 45-day (minimum) public comment period
- ✓ Post draft Public Involvement Plan on COMPASS website for review
- ✓ Send emails notifying of opportunity to review/comment
- ✓ Place legal notices
- ✓ Translate web content, comment form, and list of required elements into Spanish; provide additional translations as requested
- ✓ Consult with Tribes, Public Participation Committee, COMPASS member agencies, public transportation providers, and others as identified in the stakeholder outreach matrix
- ✓ Provide opportunity to comment online, via email, via US mail, and in person at the COMPASS office
- ✓ Offer and provide assistance to overcome barriers to participation
- ✓ Respond to questions received, as appropriate
- ✓ Provide additional opportunity to comment if significant substantive changes are made to the draft public involvement plan
- ✓ Provide all comments, with staff responses and recommendations, if any, to the COMPASS Board for consideration prior to action on the Public Involvement Plan
- ✓ Provide all comments in Public Involvement Plan appendix
- ✓ Post final Public Involvement Plan online
- ✓ Review effectiveness of public involvement efforts; use data to improve
- ✓ Update every three years; next update 2018

Recommended Best Practices:

- ✓ Send news release regarding opportunity to comment
- ✓ Create comment form; post online and provide as hard copy
- ✓ Place displays/comment materials at public events/in public places to expand reach beyond minimum requirements
- ✓ Purchase paid advertising to promote opportunities to comment

⁴ These public involvement elements are also outlined for all plans/projects in Table 1, pages 9 – 13.

Chapter 4. Public Participation Guide *for the* Long-Range Transportation Plan, Plan Amendments, and Associated Air Quality Conformity Demonstration

COMPASS develops, or updates, a long-range transportation plan for Ada and Canyon Counties every four years. The purpose of the plan is to forecast transportation needs at least 20 years into the future and develop a strategy for meeting those needs. The long-range transportation plan sets the stage for the projects budgeted in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (Chapter 5), in addition to setting regional goals, establishing performance measures and targets, and outlining specific tasks to meet those goals and targets.

Long-Range Transportation Plan: Development Process

As stated above, the long-range transportation plan is updated every four years, while the current plan is being implemented. Analysis of regional performance measures ties to plan implementation, and informs future updates. This creates a continuous feedback loop; therefore, the process to update the plan begins almost immediately after the plan is adopted by the COMPASS Board. A detailed scope of work is developed for each long-range transportation plan update; broadly, each scope includes:

- Developing a public participation plan and implementing that plan throughout the planning process
- Developing, or refining, a growth forecast and scenario for future growth
- Conducting a financial analysis
- Compiling baseline data, existing relevant plans and forecasts
- Analyzing performance trends
- Identifying future transportation system needs and priorities
- Conducting additional studies/gather additional data, as needed
- Developing a draft plan for public comment
- Revising the draft plan based on public comment and submitting it for COMPASS Board adoption
- Finalizing the regional long-range transportation plan

Long-Range Transportation Plan: Public Participation Purpose and Goals

The **purpose** of involving stakeholders and the general public in developing, reviewing, and providing feedback on the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan is to develop a long-range transportation plan that will serve the current and future needs of Treasure Valley residents.

Through public outreach and soliciting participation in the long-range transportation plan, COMPASS strives to fulfill two **goals**:

- Educate and inform the public of the existence of a long-range transportation plan, the plan's impact on Treasure Valley residents, primary issues addressed in the plan, and the right and responsibility of residents to be aware of and involved in plan development and implementation. To do this, COMPASS will:
 - Raise awareness that a long-range transportation plan exists, and how and why it is developed.
 - Educate the public on who is involved in the planning process, how the plan is used, and how the plan affects the Treasure Valley and its residents now and in the future.

- Educate the public on the primary issues addressed in the plan and how those issues can and will affect the future of the Treasure Valley and its residents.
- Generate awareness that all Treasure Valley residents have a right and responsibility to be involved in the planning process and educate residents on how to become involved.
- Continuously engage the public as active participants in planning and decision-making processes by gathering public input during plan development and on the draft plan and ensuring public input is considered throughout the planning process. To do this, COMPASS will:
 - Engage stakeholders and the general public, including traditionally underrepresented populations, as active contributors in the decision-making process (Figure 5).
 - Provide multiple and differing opportunities for the public to provide input into the plan.
 - Ensure the COMPASS Board, advisory committees, and COMPASS staff receive the input provided and respond as appropriate.
 - Ensure traditionally underrepresented populations have the opportunity to be involved and express their needs and priorities in a manner that best serves individual populations and that input is considered in planning and decision-making.



Figure 5. Stakeholders engaging in the planning process.

Long-Range Transportation Plan: Public Participation Process

As a first step in developing a long-range transportation plan, COMPASS shall develop an internal public participation outline to meet the purpose and goals listed above. The internal public participation outline shall include the specific tasks, timelines, and budget necessary to achieve the stated purpose and goals, as well as describe how required elements will be achieved and which optional elements will be used.

As part of this process, COMPASS shall determine how to best coordinate with other agencies, review federal requirements, identify stakeholders (including Tribes, underrepresented populations, COMPASS member agencies, public transportation providers, and others), and compile a stakeholder outreach matrix to identify how COMPASS will reach out to each identified stakeholder group.

As developing a long-range transportation plan is a three- to four-year process, the internal public participation outline may be divided into stages based on the scope of work, years, or other logical means of organization to best meet planning needs.

The internal public participation outline will be developed in coordination with the project manager for the long-range transportation plan, with assistance from the Public Participation Committee.

Required and recommended public outreach methods for the long-range transportation plan are shown on pages 24-26, and are also outlined in Table 1 (pages 9-13).

Long-Range Transportation Plan: Public Feedback

COMPASS shall solicit public and stakeholder input and active involvement in the planning process during the development of the long-range transportation plan and solicit public feedback on key items prior to Board action. COMPASS shall also solicit feedback on the entire draft plan prior to Board adoption.

During public comment periods, COMPASS shall respond to any specific questions raised by commenters. If a commenter provides his/her contact information, COMPASS will respond directly to that person and provide the same response in the list of public comments. If the person does not provide contact information, the response will be posted in the list of public comments.

All public comments will be provided to COMPASS advisory committee(s), who will review and propose changes to the draft plan based on the comments, if warranted. If public comments lead to significant⁵ substantive changes to the draft long-range transportation plan, COMPASS will re-release the draft plan, with proposed changes noted, for an additional 15-day (minimum) public comment period. All public comments will be provided online and notice will be sent via email notifying stakeholders and the public that comments have been posted, with a direct link to the comments.

The COMPASS Board of Directors will be provided all comments, with responses, for consideration prior to taking action on the long-range transportation plan. Per federal requirements, the COMPASS Board must adopt a new long-range transportation plan within four years of adoption of the previous plan, in order to continue to receive federal transportation funding.

The final long-range transportation plan will include a description of the public comment process, and a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments received, including all quantitative results and discussion of significant comments. In addition to the summary and discussion in the plan document, all verbatim comments, with responses, will be posted on the COMPASS website on the long-range transportation plan web page, linked from a "virtual appendix" from the plan, and prominently linked from the plan document where discussions of public comment occur. The "virtual appendix" will elevate the prominence of the verbatim comments through the inclusion in the Table of Contents and elsewhere.

Long-Range Transportation Plan: Reviewing Effectiveness of Public Outreach

COMPASS will use four means to assess the effectiveness of public involvement and outreach for the regional long-range transportation plan: outputs, outcomes, public survey data, and general feedback. COMPASS will then use that analysis to improve future outreach efforts by incorporating changes into this Public Involvement Plan as well as the internal long-range transportation plan public participation outline. As appropriate, improvements to the process will also be made as needed without waiting for updates to the Public Involvement Plan.

⁵ For the long-range transportation plan, "significant" is defined as any change that adds or removes projects from the list of projects "funded" through the plan. Changes to unfunded projects are not deemed "significant" to trigger additional public outreach unless a project is moved from an "unfunded" to a "funded" list in the plan.

Outputs. “Outputs” are quantifiable outreach efforts related to a public involvement process, including the number and length of public comment periods, number of emails sent and number of recipients, number of news releases, locations of public comment materials, etc.

COMPASS will track and report on the “outputs” of the long-range transportation plan public involvement process. The outputs, including a description of the overall public involvement process, will be described in the long-range transportation plan.

Outcomes. Outcomes include input into the plan, media coverage, etc. that are a result of COMPASS outreach efforts (outputs). Outcomes include the number of public comments received during a comment period, the number of news stories and opinion pieces generated from COMPASS materials, number of attendees at open houses and other events, etc.

COMPASS will also track and report on the “outcomes” of public involvement processes for the long-range transportation plan. Outcomes will be described within the plan document.

COMPASS shall request zip code and demographic information on its public comment forms and compare the demographics of participants with demographics of the region as a whole to determine if COMPASS is successful in reaching out to all populations to improve future public comment efforts (Figure 6).

Zip codes of participants are reported with each comment; all other demographics are tracked and reported only as aggregates. Comments are reported anonymously unless the commenter signs written correspondence or indicates on the comment form that she wishes to have her name/affiliation included with her comments. When a commenter includes an address or contact information with comments, this information is removed prior to publishing comments for privacy purposes.

Public Survey Data. In addition to quantifying the outputs and outcomes for the long-range transportation plan public involvement process, COMPASS shall conduct a random household telephone survey of residents of Ada and Canyon Counties every three years. A baseline survey shall be conducted in summer/fall 2015, upon completion of this plan; subsequent surveys shall be conducted the fall prior to the update of this plan⁶. The survey will address residents’ awareness of COMPASS; its plans, projects, and programs; and opportunities to be involved; as well as opinions of COMPASS and its outreach programs, such as perceptions of COMPASS’ openness to public involvement and input and the extent to which COMPASS uses that input. This survey is described in more detail in Chapter 13, Evaluating Success.

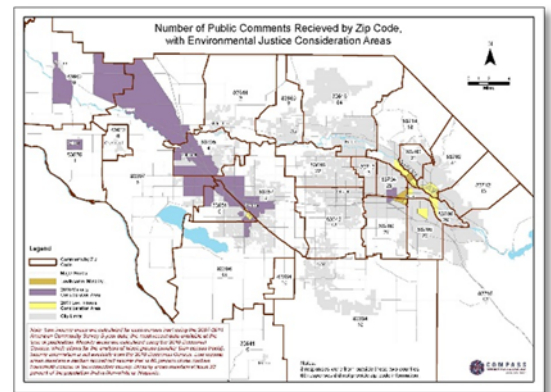


Figure 6. COMPASS maps comments received (by zip code) with Environmental Justice Consideration Areas (Communities in Motion 2040)

⁶ The baseline and following survey will be conducted two years apart (2015 and 2017) to allow time for results to be incorporated into the update of this plan. Subsequent surveys will be conducted on a three-year cycle.

Feedback. COMPASS shall also consider feedback it receives on the public involvement process for the long-range transportation plan and use this feedback to improve future processes. This type of feedback can come in a variety of formats, from comments on comment forms to emails and phone calls, to questions received regarding how to participate. All types of feedback shall be considered and used to improve public involvement processes.

Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments: Public Involvement Process

Generally, two circumstances necessitate amending a long-range transportation plan: new federal requirements that need to be addressed before the next scheduled plan update and significant changes⁷ to the list of projects funded in the plan.

As a plan amendment is usually very focused on a specific project or change to the plan, the public comment process is more focused as well. At a minimum, a 15-day (minimum) public comment period must be held and publicized, coordination with other agencies must occur as appropriate, and all federal requirements must be met. However, additional public outreach efforts may take place, and should be considered and used based upon the nature of the amendment (see page 26 for a list of required and recommended best practices).

Long-Range Transportation Plan Air Quality Conformity Demonstration: Public Involvement Process

COMPASS must demonstrate that projects funded through the long-range transportation plan do not cause the area to exceed air quality pollutant “budgets.” This demonstration is required in areas that have violated federal air quality standards. While the Treasure Valley is currently in compliance with all air quality standards, northern Ada County violated standards in the past; therefore, COMPASS plans must comply with this requirement.

The air quality conformity demonstration is conducted as a final step in developing the long-range transportation plan; therefore, public comment on the demonstration is not relevant prior to the draft plan being made available for public comment. Public comment on the air quality conformity demonstration will occur in conjunction with public comment on the draft plan; therefore, it is not addressed separately here.

⁷ For the long-range transportation plan, “significant” is defined as any change that adds or removes projects from the list of projects “funded” through the plan. Changes to unfunded projects are not deemed “significant” to trigger additional public outreach unless a project is moved from an “unfunded” to a “funded” list in the plan.

Long-Range Transportation Plan: Required and Recommended Public Involvement Elements⁸

Required:

- ✓ Review federal requirements
- ✓ Determine how to coordinate with other agencies
- ✓ Develop an internal project-specific public participation outline to include tasks, timelines, and budget
- ✓ Gather and analyze community demographics and use data to best serve all affected communities, including traditionally under-represented populations
- ✓ Identify stakeholders; compile stakeholder outreach matrix
- ✓ Consult with Tribes, COMPASS member agencies and advisory committees, public transportation providers, environmental agencies, and others as identified in the stakeholder outreach matrix throughout the planning process
- ✓ Use visualization techniques⁹
- ✓ Hold 30-day (minimum) public comment period on the draft plan and draft air quality conformity demonstration
- ✓ Post information on the COMPASS website throughout plan development; post draft plan and draft air quality conformity demonstration on COMPASS website for review during public comment period
- ✓ Send emails notifying of opportunity to review/comment
- ✓ Place legal notices
- ✓ Hold public meetings to share information and receive feedback
- ✓ Translate web content, comment form, and a plan summary/fact sheet into Spanish; provide additional translations as requested
- ✓ Provide opportunity to comment online, via email, via US mail, in person at the COMPASS office, and via other means as appropriate¹⁰
- ✓ Offer and provide assistance to overcome barriers to participation
- ✓ Create comment form; post online and provide as hard copy
- ✓ Respond to questions received, as appropriate
- ✓ Provide additional opportunity to comment if significant¹¹ changes are made to the draft plan
- ✓ Provide all comments, with staff responses and recommendations, if any to the COMPASS Board for consideration prior to action on the plan
- ✓ Summarize comments and their disposition in the plan; provide verbatim comments, and responses, online and link from plan
- ✓ Post final long-range transportation plan and air quality conformity demonstration online
- ✓ Review effectiveness of public involvement efforts; use data to improve

⁸ These public involvement elements are also outlined for all plans/projects in Table 1, pages 9 – 13.

⁹ "Visualization techniques" refer to all means of conveying information visually, from maps, photos, and graphics, to high tech computer simulations. Appropriate technique(s) shall be determined based upon the type of information to be conveyed.

¹⁰ COMPASS requests that all comments be submitted in writing to ensure comments are accurately recorded. However, COMPASS will accept oral comments when an individual is unable to submit comments in writing.

¹¹ For the long-range transportation plan, "significant" is defined as any change that adds or removes projects from the list of projects "funded" through the plan. Changes to unfunded projects are not deemed "significant" to trigger additional public outreach unless a project is moved from an "unfunded" to a "funded" list in the plan.

Recommended Best Practices:

- ✓ Distribute news releases and other means of cultivating earned media exposure
- ✓ Purchase paid advertising to promote opportunities to comment
- ✓ Provide additional opportunities to comment during plan development
- ✓ Use innovative outreach techniques
- ✓ Place displays/comment materials at public events/in public places to expand reach beyond minimum
- ✓ Give public presentations

Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments: Required and Recommended Public Involvement Elements¹²

Required:

- ✓ Review federal requirements
- ✓ Determine how to coordinate with other agencies
- ✓ Gather and analyze community demographics and use data to best serve all affected communities, including traditionally under-represented populations
- ✓ Consult with Tribes, COMPASS member agencies and advisory committees, public transportation providers, and others as identified in the stakeholder outreach matrix at appropriate time(s)
- ✓ Hold 15-day (minimum) public comment period
- ✓ Post proposed amendment, and reasons for the proposal, on COMPASS website for review
- ✓ Send emails notifying of opportunity to review/comment
- ✓ Place legal notices
- ✓ Provide opportunity to comment online, via email, via US mail, and in person at the COMPASS office¹³
- ✓ Offer and provide assistance to overcome barriers to participation
- ✓ Respond to questions received, as appropriate
- ✓ Provide additional opportunity to comment if significant substantive changes are made to the draft long-range transportation plan
- ✓ Provide all comments, with staff responses and recommendations, if any to the COMPASS Board for consideration prior to action on the long-range transportation plan
- ✓ Provide all comments online, with the final document
- ✓ Post final long-range transportation plan online
- ✓ Review effectiveness of public involvement efforts; use data to improve

Recommended Best Practices:

- ✓ Distribute news releases and other means of cultivating earned media exposure
- ✓ Create comment form; post online and provide as hard copy
- ✓ Purchase paid advertising to promote opportunities to comment
- ✓ Use visualization techniques¹⁴
- ✓ Translate web content, comment form, and summary of proposed amendment into Spanish; provide additional translations as requested
- ✓ Place displays/ comment materials at public events/in public places to expand reach beyond minimum requirements
- ✓ Give public presentations

¹² These public involvement elements are also outlined for all plans/projects in Table 1, pages 9 – 13.

¹³ COMPASS requests that all comments be submitted in writing to ensure comments are accurately recorded. However, COMPASS will accept oral comments when an individual is unable to submit comments in writing.

¹⁴ "Visualization techniques" refer to all means of conveying information visually, from maps, photos, and graphics, to high tech computer simulations. Appropriate technique(s) shall be determined based upon the type of information to be conveyed.

Chapter 5. Public Participation Guide *for the* Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), TIP Amendments, and Associated Air Quality Conformity Demonstrations

COMPASS develops a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) each year. The TIP is a short-range (3-5 year) capital improvement program, or budget, of all types of transportation projects – roads, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, planning, and more. Transportation projects must be consistent with federal regulations and area policies and strategies. The Idaho Transportation Investment Program (ITIP) is the state’s short-range capital improvement program. Projects in Ada and Canyon Counties are included in the ITIP through a reference to the COMPASS TIP.

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) is the designated recipient for public transportation urban formula funds provided through the Federal Transit Administration. VRT is required to make the annual federal program of projects, a listing of all projects in the region that are funded through the Federal Transit Administration, available for public comment. COMPASS solicits public comment on the federal program of projects on behalf of VRT through its annual TIP public comment period.

Transportation Improvement Program: Development Process

The TIP is developed by COMPASS through a cooperative process with local transportation agencies and the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD).

The TIP must be consistent with the current regional long-range transportation plan. The COMPASS Board of Directors adopted *Communities in Motion 2040*, the most recent version of the plan, in July 2014. Through *Communities in Motion 2040*, the COMPASS Board has directed that federal transportation funding be focused on maintaining the existing transportation system. Thus, most new federally funded projects added to the TIP in yearly updates will be maintenance, not capital, projects.

The TIP includes all federally funded projects and those non-federally funded projects in northern Ada County deemed “regionally significant” for air quality conformity purposes.¹⁵ Projects identified in the TIP are within the estimates of available funds from both federal and non-federal sources.

The involvement process for each TIP update begins approximately 14 months prior to its final approval. This effort includes requesting input from local governments throughout Ada and Canyon Counties, including comments collected by local governments from the general public.

¹⁵ A “regionally significant” project is a transportation project (regardless of funding source) that serves regional transportation needs, such as an improvement to an arterial roadway or a public transportation project that connects multiple jurisdictions. Inclusion of “regionally significant” projects in the TIP is based on violations of air quality standards. In the COMPASS planning area, only northern Ada County has violated air quality standards, so only projects in northern Ada County are included in the TIP based on regional significance. However, all federally funded projects in the COMPASS planning area are included in the TIP, regardless of regional significance. More information on air quality conformity and its relationship to the TIP can be found on page 31.

The process of developing the TIP involves extensive participation of the cities, counties, highway districts, and VRT. Some local governments have designated transportation task force committees that include staff, citizens, and, in some cases, an elected official. Where these committees exist, staff from COMPASS, ITD, VRT, and the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council meet with them to solicit input into the development of the annual TIP. Where task forces do not exist, staff meet directly with agency representatives to solicit input on their transportation needs.

The COMPASS Regional Technical Advisory Committee (RTAC) participates throughout the TIP development process. RTAC is comprised of technical experts representing counties, cities, highway districts, VRT, ITD, and other government agencies in Ada and Canyon Counties.

Requested projects are reviewed and prioritized using a paired comparison process. A paired comparison process works by comparing each project to every other project in consideration within a funding program. The application for each project is carefully reviewed in light of how the project meets the goals and performance measures outlined in the long-range transportation plan. This method allows for a full review of a project, with the flexibility to compare very different types of projects fairly with all other projects in the same funding category.

Valley Regional Transit's Regional Coordination Council (RCC) recommends project priorities for Federal Transit Administration funds. The RCC is made up of public transportation professional and users, who consider all facets of public transportation projects. These priorities are also reviewed and recommended by the VRT board. RTAC recommends project priorities for Federal Highway Administration funds.

The Regional Technical Advisory Committee makes the final recommendation of all projects to be included in the TIP. The TIP is then released for public comment, based on the projects recommended by RTAC. The COMPASS Board considers the RTAC recommendation and public comments before adopting the TIP, which is the final step in the TIP development process.

A detailed calendar is developed for each TIP update and can be found online at www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/transimprovement.htm.

Transportation Improvement Program: Public Participation Purpose and Goals

The purpose of involving stakeholders and the general public in developing, reviewing, and providing feedback on the TIP is to allow meaningful public involvement and comments on the budgeted projects before those projects are implemented.

Through public outreach and soliciting participation in the TIP, COMPASS strives to fulfill two goals:

- Educate and inform stakeholders and the general public of the existence and purpose of the TIP and the projects contained in it, as well as the right and responsibility of residents to be aware of and involved in development and implementation of the TIP.
- Invite and use feedback from stakeholders and the general public, including traditionally underrepresented populations, to ensure projects funded through the TIP meet public needs and expectations and are distributed equitably throughout the two-county area.

Transportation Improvement Program: Public Participation Process

As a first step in developing the yearly TIP update, COMPASS shall develop an internal public participation outline to meet the purpose and goals listed above. The internal public participation outline shall include the specific tasks, timelines, and budget necessary to achieve the stated purpose and goals, as well as describe how required elements will be achieved and which optional elements will be used.

As part of this process, COMPASS shall determine how to best coordinate with other agencies, review federal requirements, identify stakeholders (including Tribes, underrepresented populations, COMPASS member agencies, public transportation providers, and others), and compile a stakeholder outreach matrix to identify how COMPASS will reach out to each identified stakeholder group.

The internal public participation outline will be developed in coordination with the project manager for the TIP. Required and recommended public outreach methods for the TIP are shown on pages 33 - 34, and are also outlined in Table 1 (pages 9 - 13).

To specifically denote that the public comment requested on the TIP includes requesting comment on Valley Regional Transit's federal Program of Projects, COMPASS will include the following language, "the federal Program of Projects proposed for funding by Valley Regional Transit" where it lists the materials open for comment in legal notices, news releases, email blasts, and on the COMPASS website.

A minimum of a 30-day public comment period is required for the annual TIP update.

Transportation Improvement Program: Public Feedback

Stakeholders, such as cities, counties, highway districts, ITD, and VRT, will be involved in TIP development as described above. COMPASS will also solicit public feedback via a 30-day (minimum) public comment period on the entire draft TIP project list prior to Board adoption. The public is also provided with a list of major changes between the current (approved) TIP and the draft new TIP to aid in review. In preparation for the public comment period, COMPASS will update its TIP brochure. This brochure describes the TIP, how it is developed and used, and provides examples of projects proposed for the TIP update. The brochure will be posted online, available at the COMPASS office, and provided at all public comment venues throughout the public comment period.

During the public comment period, COMPASS will respond to any specific questions raised by commenters. If a commenter provides his/her contact information, COMPASS will respond directly to that person and provide the same response in the list of public comments. If the person does not provide contact information, the response will be posted in the list of public comments.

All public comments will be provided to COMPASS advisory committee(s), who will review and propose changes to the draft TIP based on the comments, if warranted. If public comments lead to significant substantive¹⁶ changes to the draft TIP project list, COMPASS will re-release the draft

¹⁶ A "significant" change to the draft TIP project list that would trigger additional public comment is defined as any change that would trigger public comment to amend an adopted TIP, per the COMPASS TIP Amendment Policy found online at <http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/transimprovement.htm#TIPAmendPol>.

TIP project list, with proposed changes noted, for an additional 15-day (minimum) public comment period. All public comments will be provided online and notice will be sent via email notifying stakeholders and the public that comments have been posted, with a direct link to the comments.

The COMPASS Board of Directors will receive all comments, with responses, for consideration prior to taking action on the TIP project list.

The final TIP document will include a description of the public comment process, and a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments received, including all quantitative results and discussion of significant comments. In addition to the summary and discussion in the body of the TIP document, all verbatim comments, with responses, will be included in an appendix of the document.

Transportation Improvement Program: Reviewing Effectiveness of Public Outreach

COMPASS will use four means to assess the effectiveness of public involvement and outreach for the TIP: outputs, outcomes, public survey data, and general feedback. COMPASS will then use that analysis to improve future outreach efforts by incorporating changes into this Public Involvement Plan as well as the internal TIP public participation outline. As appropriate, improvements to the process will also be made as needed without waiting for updates to the Public Involvement Plan.

Outputs. “Outputs” are quantifiable outreach efforts related to a public involvement process, including the number and length of public comment periods, number of emails sent and number of recipients, number of news releases, locations of public comment materials, etc. (Figure 7).

COMPASS will track and report on the “outputs” of the TIP public involvement process. The outputs, including a description of the overall public involvement process, will be described in the TIP document.

Outcomes. Outcomes (e.g., input into the TIP project list, media coverage, etc.) are a result of COMPASS outreach efforts, or outputs. Outcomes include the number of public comments received during a comment period, the number of news stories and opinion pieces generated from COMPASS materials, and the number of attendees at open houses and other events (Figure 8).

[View this in your browser](#)



Now Accepting Comments

COMPASS requests comments on the FY2015-2019 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

Comments are now being accepted on a proposed amendment to the [FY2015-2019 Regional Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#) to

Figure 7. COMPASS reports on various “outputs,” including the number of email blasts it sends to promote public comment periods (May 2015)

COMPASS will track and report on the outcomes of public involvement processes for the TIP. Outcomes will be described within the TIP document.

COMPASS shall request zip code and demographic information on its public comment forms and compare the demographics of participants with demographics of the region as a whole to determine if COMPASS is successful in reaching out to all populations to improve future public comment efforts.

Zip codes of participants are reported with each comment; all other demographics are tracked and reported only as aggregates. Comments are reported anonymously unless the commenter signs written correspondence or indicates on the comment form that she wishes to have her name/affiliation included with her comments. When a commenter includes an address or contact information with comments, this information is removed prior to publishing comments for privacy purposes.

Public Survey Data. In addition to quantifying the outputs and outcomes for the TIP public involvement process, COMPASS shall conduct a random household telephone survey of residents of Ada and Canyon Counties every three years. A baseline survey shall be conducted in summer/fall 2015, upon completion of this plan; subsequent surveys shall be conducted the fall prior to the update of this plan¹⁷. The survey will address residents' awareness of COMPASS; its plans, projects, and programs; and opportunities to be involved; as well as opinions of COMPASS and its outreach programs, such as perceptions of COMPASS' openness to public involvement and input and the extent to which COMPASS uses that input. This survey is described in more detail in Chapter 13, Evaluating Success.

Feedback. COMPASS shall also consider feedback it receives on the public involvement process on the TIP and use this feedback to improve future processes. This type of feedback can come in a variety of formats, from comments on comment forms to emails and phone calls, to questions received regarding how to participate. All types of feedback shall be considered and used to improve public involvement processes.

Transportation Improvement Program Amendments: Public Involvement Process

Changes to the TIP may occur at any time throughout the year and will be addressed through amendments or administrative modifications, as outlined in the TIP Amendment Policy, which can be found at www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/transimprovement.htm#TIPAmendPol.

Per the TIP Amendment Policy, public comment will be solicited on TIP amendments when it is proposed that a project be added or removed, or if the scope of the project changes significantly.



Figure 8. COMPASS tracks "outcomes," such as the number of attendees at open houses and visitors at informational booths (2011)

¹⁷ The baseline and following survey will be conducted two years apart (2015 and 2017) to allow time for results to be incorporated into the update of this plan. Subsequent surveys will be conducted on a three-year cycle.

However, some types of changes – primarily administrative changes, such as a change in the source of funding for a project – may be made without requesting public comment. In addition, certain types of safety and bridge-related projects can be added if they are funded with monies set aside specifically for those types of projects. A full description of what types of changes do and do not trigger public comment can be found in the TIP amendment policy at www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/transimprovement.htm#TIPAmendPol.

The public comment period for a TIP amendment must be a minimum of 15 days and notice shall be provided to the public and stakeholders. However, additional public outreach efforts may take place, and should be considered and used based upon the nature of the amendment (see page 33 for a list of required and recommended best practices).

Transportation Improvement Program Air Quality Conformity Demonstration: Public Involvement Process

COMPASS must demonstrate that projects funded through the TIP do not cause the area to exceed air quality pollutant “budgets.” This demonstration is required in areas that have violated federal air quality standards. While the Treasure Valley is currently in compliance with all air quality standards, northern Ada County violated standards in the past; therefore, COMPASS plans must comply with this requirement.

The air quality conformity demonstration is conducted as a final step in developing the TIP; public comment on the air quality conformity demonstration will occur in conjunction with public comment on the draft TIP project list, and with any amendment to the TIP that triggers a new air quality conformity demonstration. Therefore, it is not addressed separately here.

Transportation Improvement Program: Required and Recommended Public Involvement Elements¹⁸

Required:

- ✓ Review federal requirements
- ✓ Determine how to coordinate with other agencies
- ✓ Develop an internal project-specific public participation outline to include tasks, timelines, and budget
- ✓ Gather and analyze community demographics and use data to best serve all affected communities, including traditionally under-represented populations
- ✓ Identify stakeholders; compile stakeholder outreach matrix
- ✓ Consult with Tribes, COMPASS member agencies and advisory committees, public transportation providers, environmental agencies, and others as identified in the stakeholder outreach matrix throughout the planning process
- ✓ Use visualization techniques¹⁹
- ✓ Hold 30-day (minimum) public comment period on the draft TIP document
- ✓ Post information on the COMPASS website throughout the TIP public comment period
- ✓ Send emails notifying of opportunity to review/comment
- ✓ Place legal notices
- ✓ Hold a minimum of one public meeting to share information and receive feedback
- ✓ Translate web content, comment form, and a TIP summary/fact sheet into Spanish; provide additional translations as requested
- ✓ Provide opportunity to comment online, via email, via US mail, in person at the COMPASS office, and via other means as appropriate²⁰
- ✓ Offer and provide assistance to overcome barriers to participation
- ✓ Respond to questions received, as appropriate
- ✓ Provide additional opportunity to comment if significant²¹ changes are made to the draft TIP document
- ✓ Provide all comments, with staff responses and recommendations, if any, to the COMPASS Board for consideration prior to action on the TIP
- ✓ Summarize comments and their disposition in the document; provide verbatim comments, and responses, online and as an appendix in the TIP document
- ✓ Post final TIP document online
- ✓ Review effectiveness of public involvement efforts; use data to improve

Recommended Best Practices:

- ✓ Distribute news releases and other means of cultivating earned media exposure
- ✓ Purchase paid advertising to promote opportunities to comment
- ✓ Use innovative outreach techniques
- ✓ Develop an issue-specific comment form
- ✓ Place displays/comment materials at public events/in public places to expand reach beyond minimum requirements

¹⁸ These public involvement elements are also outlined for all plans/projects in Table 1, pages 9 – 13.

¹⁹ “Visualization techniques” refer to all means of conveying information visually, from maps, photos, and graphics, to high tech computer simulations. Appropriate technique(s) shall be determined based upon the type of information to be conveyed.

²⁰ COMPASS requests that all comments be submitted in writing to ensure comments are accurately recorded. However, COMPASS will accept oral comments when an individual is unable to submit comments in writing.

²¹ A “significant” change to the draft TIP project list that would trigger additional public comment is defined as any change that would trigger public comment to amend an adopted TIP, per the COMPASS TIP Amendment Policy found online at <http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/transimprovement.htm#TIPAmendPol>.

Transportation Improvement Program Amendments: Required and Recommended Public Involvement Elements²²

Required:

- ✓ Review federal requirements
- ✓ Determine how to coordinate with other agencies
- ✓ Consult with Tribes, COMPASS member agencies and advisory committees, public transportation providers, and others, as appropriate
- ✓ Hold 15-day (minimum) public comment period
- ✓ Post proposed amendment, and reasons for the proposal, on COMPASS website for review
- ✓ Send emails notifying of opportunity to review/comment
- ✓ Place legal notices
- ✓ Provide opportunity to comment online, via email, via US mail, and in person at the COMPASS office
- ✓ Offer and provide assistance to overcome barriers to participation
- ✓ Respond to questions received, as appropriate
- ✓ Provide additional opportunity to comment if significant²³ substantive changes are made following the original public comment period
- ✓ Provide all comments, and responses, to the COMPASS Board for consideration prior to action on the TIP document
- ✓ Provide all comments online, with the final document
- ✓ Post TIP document online
- ✓ Review effectiveness of public involvement efforts; use data to improve

Recommended Best Practices:

- ✓ Distribute news releases and other means of cultivating earned media exposure
- ✓ Create comment form; post online and provide as hard copy
- ✓ Use visualization techniques²⁴
- ✓ Translate web content, comment form, and summary of proposed amendment into Spanish; provide additional translations as requested
- ✓ Place displays/ comment materials at public events/in public places to expand reach beyond minimum requirements

²² These public involvement elements are also outlined for all plans/projects in Table 1, pages 9 – 13.

²³ A “significant” change to the draft TIP project list that would trigger additional public comment is defined as any change that would trigger public comment to amend an adopted TIP, per the COMPASS TIP Amendment Policy found online at <http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/transimprovement.htm#TIPAmendPol>.

²⁴ “Visualization techniques” refer to all means of conveying information visually, from maps, photos, and graphics, to high tech computer simulations. Appropriate technique(s) shall be determined based upon the type of information to be conveyed.

Chapter 6. Public Participation Guide *for* Other Plans, Programs, and Projects

As discussed in Chapter 2, COMPASS is committed to a robust public involvement process in all stages of its planning efforts. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 outline what this process shall look like for the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan, long-range transportation plan, and TIP. However, COMPASS' work is not limited to these three products; other COMPASS projects or plans also warrant public participation. This chapter outlines requirements and expectations for public participation into "other" COMPASS projects and plans, and describes other types of outreach that may be warranted, based on the type of plan or work product.

"Other" Projects: Development Process

Each year, as COMPASS develops the following fiscal year's Unified Planning Work Program and Budget (UPWP), COMPASS staff shall research and consider public involvement needs and requirements for projects as work plans are developed for inclusion in the UPWP. As a first step, the following questions must be answered and documented:

1. Are there stakeholder-specific and/or public participation/outreach requirements associated with the project? Check all federal or other appropriate regulations to determine any requirements.
2. Who will the project/plan affect, and how? Will it have an impact on specific stakeholders/populations and/or on the public as a whole? Are there any traditionally underrepresented populations who will be affected or have a specific interest in the project/plan?
3. Who has information that is needed to complete the project or plan?
4. Are there stakeholders or specific populations that have expressed an interest in the topic or issue? If so, who are they?

Once these questions have been answered, COMPASS staff can determine if public (or stakeholder-specific) outreach and involvement is required and/or needed. If it is determined that no public involvement is required or needed, COMPASS shall document this in the project work plan.

If it is determined that outreach/involvement is required and/or needed (if not required), a public involvement process shall be incorporated into the project's work plan, and an internal project-specific public participation outline shall be developed.

"Other" Projects: Public Participation Purpose and Goals

While public involvement activities for each individual plan or project will have a project-specific purpose and goals, the general **purpose** for public participation in any COMPASS project or plan should include involving stakeholders and/or the general public in developing, reviewing, and/or providing feedback on the project or plan. COMPASS shall strive to fulfill two general **goals** when involving the public and/or stakeholders in any project or plan:

- Inform and educate stakeholders and the general public of the work COMPASS is conducting regarding the project/plan.
- Invite and use feedback and assistance from stakeholders and/or the general public, including traditionally underrepresented populations, to ensure that the project/plan considers input from and provides for needs of all individuals.

“Other” Projects: Public Participation Process

As a first step in developing a project-specific public participation outline, COMPASS shall determine project-specific purpose and goal statements, similar to those above. The internal public participation outline shall include the specific tasks, timelines, and budget necessary to achieve the stated purpose and goals, ensure that all required elements are included, and describe which optional elements will be used.

As part of this process, COMPASS shall determine how to best coordinate with other agencies, review federal requirements, identify stakeholders (including Tribes, underrepresented populations, COMPASS member agencies, public transportation providers, and others), and compile a stakeholder outreach matrix to identify how COMPASS will reach out to each identified stakeholder group.

“Other” Projects: Public Feedback

COMPASS shall document all public and stakeholder outreach, including comments received and/or questions raised during formal public comment period, if any are held. If formal public comment periods are held, the comments received shall be provided to advisory committees, if appropriate, and the COMPASS Board of Directors prior to final actions. Public comments, with responses, shall also be published with the final product, either as part of a final document, and/or with other project-specific information on the COMPASS web site.

“Other” Projects: Reviewing Effectiveness of Public Outreach

COMPASS will use four means to assess the effectiveness of public involvement and outreach for “other” projects: outputs, outcomes, public survey data, and general feedback. COMPASS will then use that analysis to improve future outreach efforts by incorporating changes into this Public Involvement Plan as well as the internal public participation outlines. As appropriate, improvements to the process will also be made as needed without waiting for updates to the Public Involvement Plan.

Outputs. “Outputs” are quantifiable outreach efforts related to a public involvement process, including the number and length of public comment periods, number of emails sent and number of recipients, number of news releases, locations of public comment materials, etc.

COMPASS will track and report on the “outputs” of the public involvement processes. The outputs, including a description of the overall public involvement process, will be described in the final report of the relevant plan or program.

Outcomes. Outcomes (e.g., public comments, media coverage, etc.) are a result of COMPASS outreach efforts, or outputs. Outcomes include the number of public comments received during a comment period, the number of news stories and opinion pieces generated from COMPASS materials, and the number of attendees at open houses.

COMPASS will track and report on the outcomes of public involvement processes and will describe those in the relevant final plan or report.

COMPASS shall request zip code and demographic information on its public comment forms and compare the demographics of participants with demographics of the region as a whole to determine if COMPASS is successful in reaching out to all populations to improve future public comment efforts.

Zip codes of participants are reported with each comment; all other demographics are tracked and reported only as aggregates. Comments are reported anonymously unless the commenter signs written correspondence or indicates on the comment form that she wishes to have her name/affiliation included with her comments. When a commenter includes an address or contact information with comments, this information is removed prior to publishing comments for privacy purposes.

Public Survey Data. In addition to quantifying the outputs and outcomes for public involvement processes, COMPASS shall conduct a random household telephone survey of residents of Ada and Canyon Counties every three years. A baseline survey shall be conducted in summer/fall 2015, upon completion of this plan; subsequent surveys shall be conducted the fall prior to the update of this plan²⁵. The survey will address residents' awareness of COMPASS; its plans, projects, and programs; and opportunities to be involved; as well as opinions of COMPASS and its outreach programs, such as perceptions of COMPASS' openness to public involvement and input and the extent to which COMPASS uses that input. This survey is described in more detail in Chapter 13, Evaluating Success.

Feedback. COMPASS shall also consider feedback it receives on the public involvement process and use this feedback to improve future processes. This type of feedback can come in a variety of formats, from comments on comment forms to emails and phone calls, to questions received regarding how to participate. All types of feedback shall be considered and used to improve public involvement processes.

²⁵ The baseline and following survey will be conducted two years apart (2015 and 2017) to allow time for results to be incorporated into the update of this plan. Subsequent surveys will be conducted on a three-year cycle.

"Other" Projects: Required and Recommended Public Involvement Elements²⁶

Required:

- ✓ Review federal requirements (for ALL projects to determine if public involvement is required)

Required, if determined public involvement is needed:

- ✓ Develop an internal project-specific public participation outline to include purpose, goals, tasks, timelines, and budget
- ✓ Determine if/when/how to coordinate with other agencies
- ✓ Identify stakeholders; compile stakeholder outreach matrix
- ✓ Consult with Tribes, COMPASS member agencies and advisory committees, public transportation providers, and others as identified in the stakeholder outreach matrix
- ✓ Post information on the COMPASS website
- ✓ Send emails notifying of opportunity to be involved
- ✓ Provide opportunity to comment online, via email, via US mail, and in person at the COMPASS office
- ✓ Offer and provide assistance to overcome barriers to participation
- ✓ Respond to questions received, as appropriate
- ✓ Provide additional opportunity to comment if significant substantive changes are made after initial public comment (if a public comment period was used)
- ✓ Provide all comments, with staff responses and recommendations, if any, to the COMPASS Board for consideration prior to action
- ✓ Provide all comments (if a comment period was used) as part of a final document, and/or with other project-specific information on the COMPASS web site
- ✓ Post final project materials online
- ✓ Review effectiveness of public involvement efforts; use data to improve

Recommended Best Practices:

- ✓ Translate web content, comment form, and list of required elements into Spanish; provide additional translations as requested
- ✓ Purchase paid advertisements
- ✓ Use innovative outreach techniques
- ✓ Use visualization techniques²⁷
- ✓ Send news release regarding opportunity to comment
- ✓ Create issue-specific comment form; post online and provide as hard copy
- ✓ Place displays/ comment materials at public events/in public places to expand reach beyond minimum requirements

²⁶ This list only includes those items required for all projects where public involvement is sought. Note that many other outreach elements may be required or recommended on a case by case basis, depending on the project. See Table 1, pages 9 – 13.

²⁷ "Visualization techniques" refer to all means of conveying information visually, from maps, photos, and graphics, to high tech computer simulations. Appropriate technique(s) shall be determined based upon the type of information to be conveyed.

Section III. Other COMPASS Communication Programs

Chapter 7. Overview of COMPASS Communication Elements

The COMPASS communication program encompasses many interrelated elements, from public involvement in COMPASS plans and programs, as discussed in Section II, to media relations, the web and social media, education programs, crisis communications, marketing of the agency itself, and general communications from COMPASS to its member agencies, stakeholders, and the general public.

These different aspects of the COMPASS communication program build upon each other and support participation and outreach regarding COMPASS programs and plans. For example, educational programs help to create a more knowledgeable public, who are then better prepared to participate and comment on COMPASS projects and plans. Similarly, marketing of the agency increases the public's awareness of who COMPASS is and what COMPASS does, which, in turn, assists individuals in knowing who to contact regarding transportation plans and projects.

Section III of this *Integrated Communication Plan* addresses each of these elements of COMPASS' communication and education program and discusses how they work in tandem to help COMPASS achieve its mission to "...conduct regional planning, facilitate regional coordination and cooperation, and serve as a source of information and expertise on issues affecting southwest Idaho."

Several of these elements will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters:

- Chapter 8. Media relations and advertising
- Chapter 9. Web and social media
- Chapter 10. Education programs
- Chapter 11. Marketing COMPASS
- Chapter 12. Crisis communication
- Chapter 13. Evaluating success

The remainder of this chapter discusses general COMPASS communication elements that are not covered in their own chapters.

Correspondence

All communication between COMPASS staff and non-staff reflects on the integrity, professionalism, and credibility of COMPASS. All communication, oral and written, shall be conducted in a professional manner, with attention to grammar, format, and sensitive or confidential language or materials. Staff shall follow the internal procedures to determine the appropriate level of internal review for correspondence, including letters, emails, and Board and committee memos and packets. All written correspondence, including emails, are subject to Public Records Requests.

Information pertinent to the Board or committee/work group meetings, such as memos, related information, and attachments, are compiled in packets, which accompany the meeting agenda. Relevant attachments may be included in the packet (recommended if they are short documents) or linked to the packet (recommended if they are long documents). Attachments that are integral to the agenda item (e.g., a report to be approved) must be included on the COMPASS website with the packet itself, so that the packet as presented remains intact. Attachments that are not integral to the agenda item being discussed (e.g., additional background information) do not need to be included on the COMPASS website with the packet.

COMPASS maintains a database of email addresses to be used to distribute information pertinent to the individuals on the lists. The database includes individual lists for each COMPASS committee or work group, the COMPASS Board, and other specific COMPASS publications or projects. The database also includes a broad email list to promote general COMPASS activities, such as education series speakers and opportunities for public comment. COMPASS shall NOT provide contact information from its lists to individuals outside of the agency, but may, upon request and subsequent approval of communication staff, forward information to those on a COMPASS email list on behalf of another agency, when that information is deemed appropriate for the audience. All emails sent to a general email list (e.g., not project or committee specific) shall be sent via COMPASS communication staff using email marketing software and shall include an opportunity for the receiver to unsubscribe to the email list. COMPASS shall only add individuals to its email list(s) per a request from the individual or when an individual becomes affiliated with COMPASS, such as by serving on a COMPASS committee or workgroup.

Plans and Reports

COMPASS plans and reports are integral to documenting work completed, and in some cases, are required elements of a project or program. All COMPASS reports shall be reviewed according to internal review procedures and shall receive a report number, a COMPASS report cover, and be placed on the "Reports" page on the COMPASS website (www.compassidaho.org/reports.htm). Reports may also be linked from other, project-specific pages on the COMPASS website. In addition to project specific, hard-copy reports, COMPASS shall also produce an online, interactive annual report at the end of each fiscal year. This report (www.compassidaho.org/people/annualreports.htm) provides a brief summary of the previous year's accomplishments in each of COMPASS' major programs and links to program-specific web pages, for current information.

Reports or plans written by contractors/consultants *on behalf of* COMPASS (e.g., "ghostwritten") are subject to the same requirements as reports written by COMPASS staff, including COMPASS internal review. However, reports or plans written by contractors *reporting to* COMPASS are not subject to the above requirements; they do not receive a COMPASS report cover or number and are not placed on the COMPASS reports page.

COMPASS strongly discourages the development of "white papers" and other informal reporting mechanisms, as these are not numbered, tracked, or recorded as reports.

Other Documents

In addition to plans, reports, and correspondence, COMPASS produces other written documents, such as brochures, newsletters, surveys/comment forms, flyers, fact sheets, displays, and more. As with all other types of written materials, these shall be reviewed according to internal review procedures and written and formatted to the highest standards. Materials used for public outreach shall be developed by, or in conjunction with, COMPASS communication staff, and must receive communication staff approval prior to publication. Similarly, all materials produced by COMPASS communication staff must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate technical staff, or director, prior to publication.

Presentations

COMPASS staff shall actively seek opportunities to present information on COMPASS plans, projects, and products to public and/or professional audiences. This provides a public forum for

COMPASS to not only share its data and products, but, more importantly, to raise awareness of regional planning issues, the impact of those issues on the audience, and COMPASS' role in resolving those issues.

All COMPASS presentations, with the exception of COMPASS Board, committee or workgroup presentations, shall include introductory information on COMPASS. In addition, for any presentation using PowerPoint slides, COMPASS staff shall use a standard COMPASS slide format.

All COMPASS staff shall participate in required internal presentation training; staff are also strongly encouraged to participate in additional offsite presentation training as available. Prior to any presentation to the COMPASS Board, staff shall rehearse the presentation with the Communication Coordinator and a COMPASS director. Staff are strongly encouraged to rehearse other presentations with communication staff and others as well, and may be required to do so by a supervisor or on a case-by-case basis.

Displays.

COMPASS displays can be used for a variety of purposes, from marketing the agency, to raising awareness of specific issues, to encouraging involvement and comment on COMPASS plans and projects. When COMPASS acquires booth space at community events to promote COMPASS or specific issues, such as a public comment period, an event- or issue-specific display may be used, or COMPASS may use its standard COMPASS marketing display (see Chapter 11).

COMPASS displays may be staffed or may stand alone, depending on the nature of the event or message. In some instances, displays may be created to share information about COMPASS or an issue with a general audience and placed at public locations, such as libraries, for several weeks at a time.

All COMPASS displays will contain the COMPASS logo, website, and details on where or how to receive additional information. General COMPASS brochures and/or issue-specific COMPASS brochures or fact sheets may be placed with a COMPASS display. More information on COMPASS displays can be found in Chapter 11.

Chapter 8. Media Relations and Advertising

Media relations and advertising encompass exposure in print (newspaper) and broadcast (radio/TV) media in one of two ways: “paid” exposure (advertising) and “earned” exposure (news). This chapter describes how print and broadcast media can assist COMPASS in achieving goals, the audiences of different types of media, and how and when different types of paid and earned media should be used. Social media are discussed in Chapter 9.

Supporting COMPASS Programs

Print and broadcast media both serve important roles in support of COMPASS programs by raising awareness of an issue, program, opportunity, or event, and/or encouraging a citizen to take action relating to an issue or program. COMPASS will use both paid and earned media accordingly to reach its audience through targeted messages.

Reaching the Target Audience

Media exposure reaches a very broad audience – whoever may be listening to the radio at a certain time or reading the newspaper on a specific day. However, while COMPASS cannot control who will be reached, media placement can be targeted to reach certain demographics. For example, the *Idaho Statesman* has a very broad readership across the Treasure Valley and reaches a large audience, while local newspapers (e.g., the *Valley Times*) have a much smaller, but more specific, audience. Newspapers will often make the effort to place advertisements in “appropriate” sections of the newspaper to reach target audiences. For example, an advertisement for an open house is generally placed in a “community” (or similar) section of a newspaper, as opposed to the “international” section.

COMPASS will work with media representatives to ensure that radio ads/television spots are placed at peak times for its demographic (e.g., commute times, as people are more likely to be thinking about transportation as they drive to and from work than at other times). Similarly, ads shall be placed on specific radio stations (e.g., pop music vs news) and during specific television shows (e.g., news vs children’s programming), based on the target audience(s).

Social media has dramatically changed how individuals access and interact with what has traditionally been print media; for example, a person may not read a newspaper, but may receive news from a newspaper online or through an app. Social media and web-based communication will be discussed in Chapter 9, but this change in how society interacts with print media needs to be considered when choosing how and where to advertise in “print” media, including use of online and app-based ads.

Employing Media Relations and Advertising

Paid Media. Paid media refers to advertising or other exposure in print or broadcast media that COMPASS has paid for, such as a newspaper or radio advertisements, or public service announcements. Paid advertising is generally conducted in support of a specific COMPASS plan or project.

Print and online media advertisements (“display” advertisements) shall be used to promote COMPASS events, such as a speaker or an open house, and to promote opportunities to be involved with, or comment on, COMPASS plans or projects, as described in Section II. COMPASS

will use a template for its display advertisements (Figure 9) and strategically place advertisements prior to specific events. Advertisements will be placed in both the *Idaho Statesman* and *Idaho Press Tribune*, and may be placed in other local newspapers as appropriate. While there is not a local or regional Spanish language newspaper in the area, *Idaho Hispano* covers all of Idaho and is used by COMPASS to promote public comment periods, as appropriate.

COMPASS shall place legal (public) notices in the *Idaho Press Tribune* and *Idaho Statesman* to provide notice of public comment periods as described in Section II, as well as requests for proposals and contracts awarded, based on monetary thresholds. COMPASS may also use print media, as needed, to advertise job openings and for other administrative functions.

COMPASS shall use online “community calendars” to promote specific events. While these are free, they more closely align with the concepts of paid exposure, as COMPASS simply needs to submit the information and it is published, just as is done with a paid advertisement.

The purchase of advertising on broadcast media serves a different purpose than the purchase of advertising in print media. While print media advertisements generally focus on a specific event, as described above, broadcast media advertising is designed to raise awareness of an issue or provide notice of a public comment period.

Radio advertisements are most effective when purchased on multiple radio stations over a period of weeks or months. Owners of media “groups” (one company generally will own several radio stations) will provide suggested placement within their stations to match agency-specified target audiences and budget. The ads can be produced directly by the radio station, with talking points supplied by COMPASS. There is no charge for this production, and stations will frequently match paid ads with complementary ads, since COMPASS is a government agency. COMPASS generally works directly with the radio stations for advertising, and does not use a media buyer for this function.

COMPASS may also use television advertisements, or public service announcements, to raise awareness of an issue. Television is a more expensive medium than radio, and there generally is a cost for professional production of television spots. COMPASS practice is to use a media buyer to coordinate production and placement of television spots.

Earned Media. Earned media generally refers to a news story, or opinion piece, generated by COMPASS or for which COMPASS staff were interviewed or consulted. Earned media exposure is not purchased.

COMPASS will distribute news releases to share information with local news media on a variety of topics, from promoting public involvement opportunities, to announcing COMPASS achievements or milestones, to promoting events, to raising awareness on specific issues. In many cases, COMPASS will seek to generate both paid and earned media exposure on the same issue, through purchasing paid advertising and issuing a news release. The purchase of paid advertising,

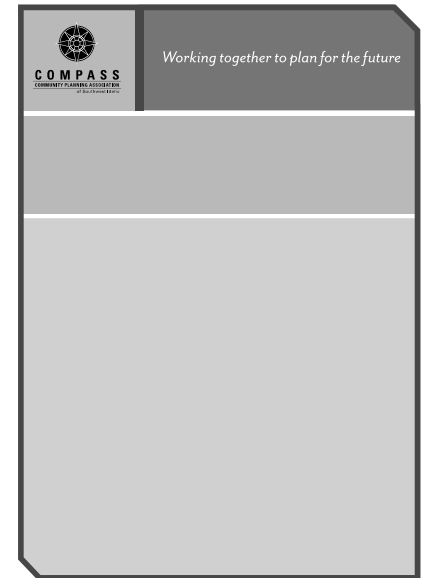


Figure 9. Display advertisement template

particularly with radio stations, is also often an opportunity to earn exposure through the radio station, such as being invited as a guest on a radio show.

In addition to news releases, COMPASS will develop guest opinion articles, from the perspective of Board members (usually the Board chair) and/or the Executive Director, to highlight issues of key importance to the region. Guest opinion articles shall be used sparingly, to maintain their focus on only those issues of greatest importance.

COMPASS is also a source of information for local media outlets, thus “earning” media exposure initiated by the media outlet itself. COMPASS is known as a key source of information regarding transportation and related issues in the Treasure Valley and staff will often be interviewed as a reporter is working on a transportation-related story. In addition, COMPASS data are often used in news pieces, even when interviews were not conducted. COMPASS shall continue to cultivate this relationship with the news media.

Policies and Practices for Use

All media relations, including paid and earned media, shall be coordinated through the COMPASS Communication Coordinator. Table 2 outlines examples of appropriate uses of different types of media. Chapters 3 – 6 provide details on what types of media are required for specific public participation opportunities.

Table 2. Uses of different types of media

	Promote public comment periods	Promote events	Highlight COMPASS planning efforts	Focus attention on regional issues
Paid Media				
Print display advertisement	✓	✓		
Legal notice	✓	✓		
Community calendar		✓		
Radio advertisement (public service announcement)	✓			✓
Television advertisement (public service announcement)				✓
Earned Media				
News release	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guest opinion				✓

Chapter 9. Web and Social Media

COMPASS manages its online presence through its website and social media accounts to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange. This chapter describes how maintaining an online presence assists COMPASS in achieving goals, the role of social media in COMPASS activities, and how and when different types of content should be used. The sections below discuss the COMPASS website, followed by social media, which is divided into the four platforms used by COMPASS: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and the Executive Director’s blog.

Supporting COMPASS Programs

The COMPASS website provides an abundance of information, including plans, maps, and links to related information and other websites, in support of the agency as a whole, as well as individual programs. COMPASS reports, archived documents, meeting materials, and opportunities for public input are also available on the COMPASS website.

COMPASS will employ social media in its planning processes to share information, promote events, raise awareness of regional issues, and to foster ongoing two-way communication between COMPASS and the general public. Additionally, each of the social media accounts will be used to drive traffic to the COMPASS website through promotion and strategic placement of links.

Reaching the Target Audience

The COMPASS website has the potential to reach a broad audience – anyone who performs a basic internet search for COMPASS, or has seen the web address referenced in a COMPASS document. While COMPASS publishes information on its website for all interested users, it is developed primarily for three audiences: COMPASS member agencies, stakeholders, and the general public.

COMPASS’ social media accounts reach a very broad and diverse audience across all four of its platforms. Specific target audiences for each social media platform are discussed in more detail in their individual sections, below.

Employing Web and Social Media

COMPASS website. The COMPASS website provides comprehensive information about all COMPASS work and planning activities and is a valuable tool for COMPASS outreach strategies. The website includes plans, reports, maps, and documents related to its programs and projects, and distinguishes large or ongoing projects and studies with topic-specific webpages within the overarching website. All documents on the COMPASS website are available in PDF format and can be made available in alternate formats and/or translated upon request, particularly for those needing assistance due to limited English proficiency and/or vision impairments. This service is noted throughout the COMPASS website. To improve access to information on the website, COMPASS will explore the possibility of incorporating an RSS feed with the most up-to-date content on the website.

The COMPASS homepage (Figure 10) has several navigation options available for viewers to locate the most recent, most visited, and most important information easily. These include the “Hot Topics,” “Quick Links,” and “Find it Fast” sections, as well as social media icons and a Google search bar.



Figure 10. COMPASS website homepage

COMPASS shall use the “Hot Topics” section to direct the user’s attention to timely items, such as public comment periods and upcoming events. Items shall be removed and replaced frequently to ensure this section is always up to date. In the “Quick Links” area, COMPASS shall provide links to key webpages. Links in this section often remain here for several years, or even permanently (e.g., the long-range transportation plan, the TIP, and the glossary of terms). While the content on these pages may change over time, the link will remain in the “Quick Links” section. COMPASS shall use the “Find it Fast” drop-down menu for information and webpages that are frequently visited. Items listed under “Find it Fast” shall be listed in alphabetical order. New or special items may be temporarily added to the top of the list, out of alphabetical order, as appropriate to draw attention to them.

The COMPASS website is designed for easy navigation by including “shortcuts” that appear on both the COMPASS website’s homepage and its subsequent webpages. These include social media icons, which are linked to their corresponding websites, a “What’s New” section, which provides brief explanations and links to current events occurring at COMPASS, and a Google search bar, which allows viewers to enter key words or phrases and receive results from within the COMPASS website. The social media icons, “What’s New” section, and Google search bar are permanent fixtures on the website.

Subsequent webpages are sorted by four categories: “People, Structure, & Committees,” “Products, Services, & Data,” “Communication & Public Awareness,” and “Planning & Collaboration.” These categories encompass the majority of information that COMPASS publishes

on its website. Webpages within these categories are updated frequently, according to additions or modifications in COMPASS work or current events. For example, under the “Communication & Public Awareness” category, the “Articles” page is updated several times per week with new information and links. Any information or COMPASS event that is “temporary,” such as a public event, shall be advertised on the correlating topic-specific webpage, as well as other appropriate webpages. For example, a speaker for the education series shall be advertised on the education series webpage, as well as on the COMPASS homepage, “What’s New” page, and web calendar.

People, Structure, & Committees. This portion of the COMPASS website includes meeting materials, lists of COMPASS committee members and member agencies, staff contact information, and COMPASS documents such as the Unified Planning Work Program and budget, annual report, and strategic plan. COMPASS shall post information regarding consulting or employment opportunities on the “Jobs and Contracts” webpage, which is also found under this category of the COMPASS website. COMPASS also provides links in this section for requests for general and specific types of information, including mapping services, general information requests, and Public Records Requests.

The COMPASS Board of Directors and each COMPASS committee have a dedicated webpage in which the list of members, meeting schedule, and meeting materials are posted. Meeting agendas and supplemental materials shall be posted on the Board/committee webpage one week prior to the meeting date, except in cases of emergency or other constrained circumstances. Following Board/committee meetings, COMPASS staff shall finalize and post the previous meeting’s approved minutes to the appropriate Board/committee webpage.

Products, Services, & Data. Much of COMPASS’ “work” is found in this section of the COMPASS website, including information and documents relating to the long-range transportation plan, TIP, air quality conformity demonstration, mapping, and more. COMPASS shall update and add new documents to the webpages in this section as needed.

The COMPASS Performance Dashboard is an online, interactive tool for the public to use to view or create data, maps, graphs, and tables to track progress toward long-range transportation plan goals. Updates to the data tool shall be made by COMPASS planners and Geographic Information System (GIS) staff. Other aspects of the COMPASS Performance Dashboard webpage will be updated and managed by communication staff, or other appointed staff.

Communication & Public Awareness. COMPASS uses its website to foster two-way communication between itself and the public. Individuals interested in becoming involved with COMPASS programs may rely on this section of the COMPASS website for information regarding public involvement and educational opportunities. COMPASS hosts several events throughout the year targeted to members of the public. Information about these events, including open houses, public comment periods, and educational programs, shall be posted on the webpage corresponding to the event. For example, information regarding an open house to discuss the long-range transportation plan will be posted on the public comment webpage as well as the long-range transportation plan webpage.

In an effort to share information with the general public, COMPASS publishes news releases, brochures, newsletters, and other COMPASS materials in this section as well. News articles from local and national sources pertaining to COMPASS work or goals will be compiled, at the discretion of communication staff, on the “Articles” webpage, and other webpages as appropriate.

Within the COMPASS website, viewers may use the “Calendar of Events” webpage to keep informed of upcoming COMPASS meetings or events. The calendar shall be updated regularly whenever an addition or cancelation is determined. All meetings and events, including Board and committee meetings, web conferences, public events, public trainings, open houses, public comment periods, workshops, and other events, will be posted on the COMPASS website calendar as soon as possible.

COMPASS shall make all public comment materials available on the COMPASS website on the start date of the public comment period. Public comment materials, including the items for comment, comment forms, and information on how to be involved, shall be posted on the appropriate topic-specific webpage as well as on public comment webpages. COMPASS shall notify the public of its public comment periods via the COMPASS website, emails, its social media accounts, and paid advertising. Public comments received during a formal public comment period will be recorded by the appropriate program manager, compiled, and posted online.

The COMPASS website features a “comment” section on select webpages, which invites viewers to submit a comment or question regarding the topic of that webpage. Comments are directed to the appropriate staff member, who will respond to the comment or question in a timely manner. In addition, as noted in the “People, Structure, & Committees” section, COMPASS provides links for requests for general and specific types of information, including mapping services, general information requests, and Public Records Requests.

Planning & Collaboration: COMPASS uses this section to provide links to the websites and plans of member agencies, other Idaho agencies involved with planning in the region, and state and federal resources. Information on COMPASS studies that are ongoing or have been adopted are also explained in this section of the COMPASS website.

Social Media. COMPASS will use social media as a public engagement and information sharing tool to build and nurture relationships in the online community. Because social media is widespread, easily accessible, and “social” by nature, COMPASS will benefit from relationships formed from a broad variety of viewers on a local, regional, and even national level. Figure 11 outlines a variety of audiences that COMPASS will reach through its strategic social media efforts. Each social media platform will address a slightly different target audience based on the nature of the social media platform, the types of messages shared, and COMPASS goals. For example, the Executive Director’s blog is used to share longer,

Social Media Target Audiences:

- ✓ General public
 - Residents of Ada and Canyon Counties
- ✓ Professionals in planning, transportation, and related fields
 - Local and national
 - Individuals, organizations, and companies
- ✓ Media
 - Local print and broadcast media
 - Individuals and organizations
 - Industry-specific media and blogs
- ✓ Elected officials
- ✓ Cities, counties, regions
- ✓ Local businesses and organizations
- ✓ Local colleges and universities
- ✓ Interest groups
 - Bike/pedestrian
 - Safety
 - Youth
 - Aging population
 - Public transportation users/commuters
- ✓ *And more...*

Figure 11. Social media target audiences

permanent messages, which appeal to a different audience than that of Twitter, which limits its messages to 120 characters and has a very quick replacement rate. The overall message may be similar among the two platforms, but the format and level of detail will be extremely different.

COMPASS will develop a “content calendar” to help ensure that all posts from COMPASS are consistent, well-written, and shared at the most opportune times and locations for the highest level of engagement. The posting schedule shall be determined based on platform-specific analytics reports. These analytics reports indicate important metrics for social media posts, including what types of content attract the most readers and generate the most unique page views and clicks, and what times of day and week are most popular for each social media platform.

The content calendar will outline what the message is, who will post it, which platform(s) it will be shared on, and the date and time it will be shared. If the content requires an accompanying attachment, such as a specific link, image, or video, the attached item shall also be provided in the content calendar.

COMPASS shall promote its events, accomplishments, and work when appropriate, while also seeking out and sharing industry-specific information from relevant and notable sources. COMPASS will make an effort to integrate a variety of relevant subjects and messages into its content calendar to provide a robust variety of content (i.e., content from outside sources that demonstrates value to the audience, but it still related to COMPASS’ work and goals).

Any original content posted from COMPASS’ social media accounts shall be relevant and timely. The “voice” of each social media account will vary slightly, but shall be consistently professional across all platforms. The “voice” used online represents COMPASS and shall reflect a professional, conversational, and informative personality. Establishing a “voice” that appeals to the majority of COMPASS fans/followers will personalize the agency and make COMPASS more approachable to its audience.

COMPASS shall use each social media account individually and collectively to promote ongoing COMPASS plans and projects such as the long-range transportation plan, education campaigns, and events, and to cross-promote its other online presences. For example, the Facebook “fanpage” shall be used to drive traffic to the COMPASS website, Twitter account, YouTube channel, and the Executive Director’s blog, to meet the overall goal of informing the public of what COMPASS does in Ada and Canyon Counties, and to provide opportunities for public involvement. Content that refers to specific COMPASS work shall include a link to the appropriate COMPASS webpage to ensure viewers have direct access to more information. Any posts that refer to the work or plans of member agencies and other organizations shall include a link to the agency website.

COMPASS shall prepare an annual social media audit to document the online “conversation” regarding COMPASS, as well as provide a framework for future social media strategies. The audit will evaluate each social media account, demonstrate the effectiveness of current and past strategies, provide insights into the demographics of COMPASS fans/followers, and help COMPASS determine what content is resonating most and on what platforms. The majority of the evaluation will be the result of analyzing measurable metrics from platform-specific analytics (described below with each platform), as the number of fans/followers alone does not determine the success of a specific social media account.

Facebook: The COMPASS Facebook “fanpage” is a business profile and shall be used as such; it shall be used to promote COMPASS work, materials, and events, as well as share original content

from or pertaining to its member agencies, colleagues, and the public. The COMPASS fanpage shall be used for two-way communication and information sharing with existing fans, raising awareness of who COMPASS is and what it does, and generating interest among the public regarding regional issues. The Facebook fanpage shall be managed by COMPASS communication staff; other roles will be delegated to other COMPASS staff as needed.

COMPASS will employ the use of “hashtags” as appropriate in its original content to further COMPASS “branding,” or for online search/grouping purposes.

“Facebook Insights” indicates the ideal time to post content to achieve high levels of “engagement” and “reach,” and determines the types of posts that resonate most with COMPASS fans. For example, Facebook posts that include a photo, video, or URL link will receive higher levels of engagement and reach because they offer an opportunity for the audience to interact with COMPASS, and because the Facebook News Feed algorithm best supports these types of posts. COMPASS staff shall use data provided by Facebook Insights to develop the Facebook content calendar.

The Facebook News Feed algorithm regulates every post that COMPASS publishes on its fanpage by choosing which posts to show specific COMPASS fans and how long the post will remain on their home feeds, based on a variety of factors. COMPASS shall consider Facebook algorithm factors when posting original content, and actively seek new information on the Facebook News Feed algorithm to stay informed on changes and updates which may affect future COMPASS Facebook posts.

COMPASS shall use the “events” tab of the fanpage to promote all COMPASS public events, including open houses, public comment periods, sponsorships, the COMPASS education series, trainings, presentations, and other public events.

Just as fans may choose to “like” COMPASS on Facebook, COMPASS can like other organizations and agencies. COMPASS shall engage with the Facebook pages of its member agencies, related organizations, local businesses, industry experts, and more, as appropriate. Engagement with other pages will increase COMPASS’ reach and expose COMPASS to the audience of the other page, which may generate more interest in COMPASS. For example, if COMPASS likes or comments on a post on the Ada County Highway District (ACHD) fanpage, all of ACHD’s fans are shown that activity, in addition to COMPASS’ fans.

To improve reach and promote COMPASS activities, COMPASS will explore the possibility of purchasing Facebook ads and/or using Facebook’s “boosted post” mechanism to increase visibility of specific posts.

Twitter: The COMPASS Twitter account, like its Facebook fanpage, is a public profile used to promote COMPASS work, materials, and events and to share related information from other organizations or individuals in similar industries. Twitter operates at a fast-paced rate of exchange (i.e., tweets are replaced almost instantly with new tweets on a person’s Twitter feed), depending on the number of accounts the individual follows. For example, if COMPASS follows 200 accounts and each account tweets regularly, each tweet may appear near the top of COMPASS’ feed for five minutes, but if COMPASS follows 1,000 accounts, each tweet will only be visible near the top of the feed for seconds at a time. For this reason, COMPASS shall tweet far more frequently and regularly in comparison with its other social media accounts to prevent its message from becoming “lost.”

Twitter restricts tweets to 120 characters or less, which includes the space used by images, replies, quoted tweets, Twitter handles, and links. Tweets are very short and therefore must be concise and share only information pertinent to the audience. As such, Twitter's feed functions very much like an RSS news feed with an abundance of information linked to websites or videos with more information. COMPASS shall craft all of its tweets to Twitter's format with consideration to maintaining the purpose and intent of the original message. COMPASS shall employ the use of "hashtags" frequently in its tweets to further COMPASS branding, and for online search/grouping purposes. The use of hashtags is imperative to success on Twitter, as it functions as a necessary link to related information when space is limited.

COMPASS shall actively seek out and follow Twitter accounts that provide valuable and relevant information to COMPASS, including the accounts of member agencies, federal transportation agencies, state departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, other related agencies and organizations. It is common practice within Twitter for two accounts to follow each other; the majority of follows on Twitter are established through this very common practice. For example, if the City of Meridian is notified that COMPASS has followed its account, the city will likely follow COMPASS back. COMPASS shall return the follows it receives from any appropriate account to maintain a cordial online relationship. COMPASS followers range from local citizens, media representatives/organizations, member agencies, businesses, and special interest groups to national and international industry leaders, organizations, and companies.

To improve "impressions" and engagement on Twitter, COMPASS will explore the possibility of purchasing Twitter Ads and/or using Twitter's "promoted accounts" mechanism to increase visibility of specific posts. COMPASS will also consider incorporating Twitter Chats into its public involvement practices on Twitter.

YouTube: The COMPASS YouTube channel is used for sharing original COMPASS videos and clips with the public and allows the audience to view, like, favorite, comment on, and/or share the videos. The COMPASS YouTube channel shall be used for two-way communication and information sharing with the public, raising awareness of what COMPASS is and what it does, and to generate interest among the public regarding regional transportation and related issues. COMPASS shall post videos of its education series speakers, whenever possible, to increase the reach of these presentations.

COMPASS shall edit and upload all appropriate videos to its YouTube channel in a timely manner and offer a full description for each video, including an explanation of the video, any relevant URL links to related information, keyword "tags" used to optimize its position on search engines, and the names of any speakers and/or locations featured in the videos. COMPASS shall also assign a custom video thumbnail to each video to improve the number of views it receives. In an effort to cross-promote its other online presences, COMPASS shall add annotations to each YouTube video that direct viewers to the COMPASS website, Facebook fanpage, Twitter account, and the Executive Director's blog.

Videos shall be organized into "sections" and "playlists" to simplify searching for specific videos. Figure 12 below shows an example of the organization of the COMPASS YouTube channel.

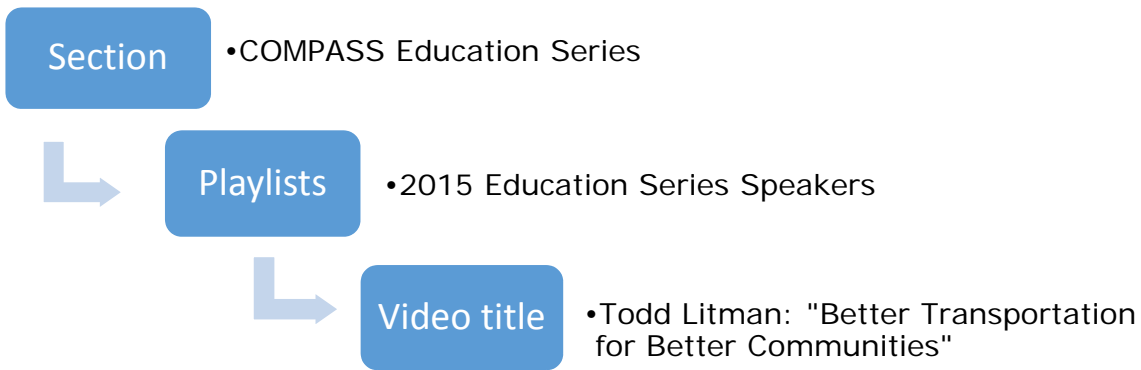


Figure 12. Organization of COMPASS YouTube channel

Videos will be uploaded to YouTube as they are generated, and as such are not incorporated into the social media content calendar. Occasionally, COMPASS will share a video that was produced in conjunction with COMPASS, or contains content relevant to COMPASS, on its other social media accounts. These types of posts shall be accounted for in the content calendar.

YouTube analytics are used to measure metrics, demographics, source referral websites, and more. COMPASS shall consider these data when adding text and tags to the video descriptions, and in planning how/where to share the video. For example, COMPASS can use this information to learn how the viewer was directed to the specific video (e.g., external website, social media, search engine, or YouTube search) and how long the video was viewed. COMPASS shall use this information to target its audience more accurately by understanding where viewers are spending their time online; and therefore, know where to best place the video for increased views.

Just as viewers may choose to like specific videos, or subscribe to the COMPASS YouTube channel, COMPASS can like and subscribe to YouTube channels owned by other organizations and agencies. COMPASS shall engage with the channels of its member agencies and related organizations as appropriate. Engagement with other channels will increase COMPASS' exposure, which can generate more interest in COMPASS.

To increase viewership and promote COMPASS activities, COMPASS will explore the possibility of purchasing YouTube video ads to increase awareness of COMPASS activities and viewership of specific videos. COMPASS will also explore the need for a "trailer video," or short introduction video, which will appear at the top of the COMPASS YouTube channel when nonsubscribers visit. This video will be used to inform new visitors of what COMPASS is and what it does, and increase subscriptions to the channel.

Executive Director's blog: The COMPASS Executive Director's blog targets a narrower audience than its other social media accounts, as it is heavily information-based and lengthy in content by comparison. However, COMPASS benefits from its blog because it allows for important messages to be shared from the perspective of the executive director rather than the agency as a whole. The COMPASS blog shall be used to promote COMPASS work, materials, and events and draw attention to regional issues in Ada and Canyon Counties. The COMPASS Executive Director's blog shall be accessed and managed by the Communication Coordinator, or other staff as needed.

Google Analytics indicates which blog posts resonate most with COMPASS fans, and shall be used to determine how best to write and share future posts (e.g., topic, length, format, day of week/month shared). COMPASS communication staff shall use the data provided by Google Analytics to plan blog content and determine the ideal time to post new entries.

To improve consistency and increase viewership, COMPASS will consider altering the design and format of the Executive Director's blog to match the COMPASS website and social media accounts. This will include the addition of separate "pages" on the blog (e.g., an "About" and/or "More Information" page) and the addition of social media "widgets."

Policies and Practices for Use

All web and social media updates shall be coordinated through COMPASS communication staff, or other appointed staff. Account access shall be restricted to the Communication Coordinator and Communication Assistant, unless otherwise provided to specific COMPASS staff members. All content published for the public to see shall be professional, free of spelling and grammatical errors, and accurate.

All content published on the COMPASS website and social media accounts shall be the original work of COMPASS, or cited with the appropriate information. COMPASS will obtain permission to use any photos online that are not the property (original or purchased) of COMPASS and shall cite the photographer. In some cases, additional permission to use the photo must be given to COMPASS before it can be used in any web, social media, or COMPASS reports and presentations that will be shared publicly (i.e., parental permission for the use of a photo of a child).

The COMPASS Facebook fanpage, Twitter feed, YouTube channel, and Executive Director's blog are all public profiles, and as such are subject to receiving private messages and public comments. Anyone, regardless of whether or not that person follows COMPASS on any of its social media accounts, can send a private message or post/tweet a comment that will be displayed on the social media account publicly, with the exception of the Executive Director's blog, which requires approval of all comments by COMPASS communication staff before they are posted publicly. When a response from COMPASS to a comment on a social media account is warranted, it shall be posted in a timely manner; comments will be addressed with a reply or the type of interaction specific to the platform (e.g., like, retweet, or favorite).

COMPASS may disable or delete comments left on most of its social media accounts; however, COMPASS shall allow the public to express their opinions for the sake of open communication and transparency, unless the comment is inappropriate (e.g., offensive, abusive, or profane). Inappropriate comments left on any COMPASS social media account will be deleted, blocked, reported, or banned immediately after COMPASS communication staff has become aware of it. During work hours, COMPASS communication staff shall regularly monitor comments left on its social media platforms.

While comments left on social media sites shall be evaluated to assist COMPASS in determining the success of its communication programs (see Chapter 13), these types of comments shall not be considered "public comments" submitted as part of a public comment period, unless COMPASS specifically requests comments be submitted in this manner.

All staff representing COMPASS online in their official capacities are representing the agency and shall maintain the same decorum and professionalism that they would if they were speaking on

COMPASS' behalf in person. When representing COMPASS, staff shall refrain from engaging in discussions of opinion to avoid false advocacy of any one position or belief.

COMPASS staff engaged in non-work social media activities shall exercise professionalism, integrity, and sound judgment when using personal social media accounts. COMPASS staff are permitted to associate themselves with the agency when posting, but they must clearly brand their online posts as personal and purely their own. COMPASS shall not be held liable for any repercussions the employees' content may generate.

Chapter 10. Education Programs

COMPASS provides education programs to educate Treasure Valley residents on planning, transportation, and related issues affecting the nation, state, and region. While print/broadcast and social media, discussed in Chapter 8 and 9, are used to raise awareness of issues, educational programming is designed to move beyond awareness to more in-depth discussions and hands on training. Below, we divide educational programs into two types: public lectures and professional workshops. These descriptions focus on programs delivered by individuals other than COMPASS staff. Workshops conducted by COMPASS staff are discussed in Chapter 7. In addition to the lectures and workshops described below, COMPASS may also support other agencies' programs as a sponsor.

Supporting COMPASS Programs

Educational programming supports COMPASS programs by moving beyond raising awareness or encouraging action to providing the public, professionals, and decision-makers with the knowledge and tools to become actively engaged in regional issues. Educational programming provides participants with the background to become educated, knowledgeable participants in regional decision-making.

Reaching the Target Audience

While all COMPASS educational programs are open to all interested participants, most programming is developed for one of two audiences: the general public and professionals working in a field related to the topic being discussed. Elected officials are not separated out in this context, as each individual's background and experience with the topic being presented will vary.

Employing Education Programs

Public lectures. Public lectures are designed to be high-level introductions to a specific issue for a general audience. These support other COMPASS programs by helping to raise the level of understanding of issues across the valley, thus assisting individuals in understanding regional issues and becoming better able to participate in COMPASS, and related planning processes, including submitting comments on projects or plans and participating in planning meetings. Public lectures are advertised broadly – through email, community calendars, flyers, display advertisements, news releases, and more. The COMPASS education series, which brings in regional and national experts as presenters, is COMPASS' primary mechanism for sponsoring public lectures.

Professional workshops. Professional workshops are designed to provide technical and in-depth instruction on planning, transportation, and other issues, and are designed for individuals working in a field related to the topic being presented. These workshops will vary from lecture-type presentations and discussions to hands-on, step-by-step tutorials of how to use a tool or program. While COMPASS hosts instructors for professional workshops as part of its education series (usually paired with a public lecture on the same topic), COMPASS also supports professional development workshops through hosting or sponsoring national or regional webinars and hosting trainers from other agencies, such as the US Census Bureau. COMPASS shall secure American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Certification Maintenance credits for professional workshops whenever possible.

These workshops provide COMPASS and member agency staff with access to new tools, trends, and technology to ensure the region is on the cutting edge of professional practices. While

members of the public are welcome to attend COMPASS professional workshops, promotion will be targeted at COMPASS member agencies and related professional staff, primarily via email.

Policies and Practices for Use

All education programs shall be coordinated through the COMPASS Communication Coordinator. COMPASS shall provide sign-in sheets for lectures and workshops. This information is used in reporting for Title VI to ensure the agency is reaching out to all individuals, including traditionally underrepresented populations. In addition, sign-in sheets from workshops approved for AICP credits must be kept as proof of attendance. Sign-in sheets will be kept for two years, in accordance with the approved COMPASS document retention policy.

Chapter 11. Marketing COMPASS

“Marketing” is an aspect of communication more often associated with the private sector, where one business or company is trying to position itself in relation to a competitor, than the public sector.

However, marketing of a public agency is critical to inform its constituents – the taxpayers – what it does, or can do, for them. A lack of marketing can tell the public that the agency is inaccessible and does not have an interest in serving “the public.”

Marketing an agency such as COMPASS is even more critical, because while most people are aware that their city or county government exists, and the general services it provides, the same is not always true for COMPASS. COMPASS must first make citizens aware that it exists, then market the services it provides to the region as a whole, through its member agencies, and to individuals directly.

Supporting COMPASS Programs

COMPASS’ marketing efforts center around three primary goals: raising awareness that COMPASS exists, raising awareness of COMPASS’ role in the region, and raising awareness of COMPASS products and services. If successful, COMPASS will be known as “the” agency to contact for regional data, mapping, transportation, and overall planning information.

Marketing efforts support all of COMPASS’ programs; without knowledge that COMPASS exists, its role in the region, and the types of services it offers, the public, and even member agencies, cannot avail themselves to all that COMPASS has to offer.

Many COMPASS plans and programs, including those described in Section II, rely on member agency and public involvement during their development and implementation. In addition, COMPASS provides services, tools, and expertise and to its member agencies and the public, such as mapping, the COMPASS Performance Dashboard, presentations and workshops, and a wealth of data and information available on the COMPASS website (See Chapter 9).

Reaching the Target Audience

There are three primary target audiences for the marketing of COMPASS and its products and services:

- COMPASS member agencies
- COMPASS stakeholders
- General public

Each of these has unique needs and will be discussed separately below.

COMPASS member agencies. COMPASS member agencies “are” COMPASS, and should be aware of who COMPASS is, its regional role, and the services it can provide. However, many member agencies are only aware of COMPASS services that they currently use or have recently used, and are unaware of other services that COMPASS can provide them; therefore, member agencies are a key audience for marketing COMPASS. In addition, as leadership and staff at COMPASS member agencies change, individuals may not be aware of COMPASS and its role with their agency, which also necessitates marketing to member agency representatives.

COMPASS stakeholders. COMPASS stakeholders are those individuals and agencies who are not COMPASS members, but whose interests intersect with those of COMPASS, such as agencies and individuals involved in transportation, housing, land use, health, and more. Stakeholders may or may not be aware of who COMPASS is and what it offers. The first goal in reaching members of this audience is to raise awareness that COMPASS exists and what it does, followed by raising awareness of what COMPASS has to offer stakeholders – from opportunities to be involved in COMPASS activities to technical services and data available, such as mapping and demographics.

General public. The general public has very little background knowledge of COMPASS, so the first step in marketing to the public is to raise awareness that COMPASS exists and increase name recognition, followed by describing COMPASS' role in the region. This initial foundation is necessary for COMPASS to begin to market its opportunities for comment, educational offerings, and public services.

Employing Marketing Programs

COMPASS shall use several coordinated efforts to market its existence, role, and services. Many of these types of efforts are described in more detail throughout this plan, and thus are only mentioned briefly below. While there is a great deal of overlap in how different types of marketing are used, the sections below are generally organized from those used for more broad to more targeted audiences.

Media and advertising. Media and advertising are very broad marketing strategies, as anyone, with or without any prior knowledge of COMPASS, or even a desire to learn about COMPASS, may be exposed to an advertisement or news story generated by COMPASS or including information on COMPASS and its activities. COMPASS uses media and advertising to promote specific programs or projects and not explicitly to market the agency. However, all media exposure raises awareness of COMPASS in general, and has the potential to drive people to the COMPASS website, attend a COMPASS event, or follow COMPASS on social media, all of which meet marketing goals of increasing the public's awareness of COMPASS, its role in the region, and its specific products and services. More information on media and advertising can be found in Chapter 8.

Website. Unlike an advertisement, news story, or display, where the public is exposed to information on COMPASS with little or no effort on their part, the COMPASS website, like any website, must be actively accessed, either through a direct link or URL or via an online search.

All audiences can be reached through the COMPASS website; however, most visits are from member agencies or stakeholders.

COMPASS will strive to continually optimize its search engine ranking to ensure it becomes and remains the first website listed for any related search, and thus, increases its reach to the general public.

The COMPASS website is frequently the first, and potentially only, interaction a member of the public may have with COMPASS and therefore is its primary marketing tool. It is imperative that the website accurately represent COMPASS, its regional role, and its products and services, to ensure visitors receive a complete picture of what COMPASS can do for them. COMPASS will also keep all information and data up to date and relevant, and continually improve website navigation, to ensure its website truly is the best place to find regional data and other information. More information on the COMPASS website can be found in Chapter 9.

Social media. COMPASS will use social media to increase awareness of the agency and promote name recognition through continually increasing the number of followers and level of engagement on social media platforms. Through social media exposure, followers will become aware of COMPASS' role in the region, its specific programs and projects, and be directed to the COMPASS website for more information. More information on social media can be found in Chapter 9.

Email database. COMPASS maintains a database of email addresses to be used to reach out to a broad audience. This shall be the primary means of reaching out to member agencies, stakeholders, and members of the general public who have already expressed an interest in COMPASS by requesting to be on the email list.

Email blasts are used to promote specific events, comment periods, and other topics of interest to the audience. However, by its nature, the email list is only effective in reaching out to those who are already familiar with COMPASS; it is not intended to be used to cultivate general awareness of COMPASS and its programs.

Although COMPASS will not add members of the public to a COMPASS email list unless requested, COMPASS shall provide the opportunity to make that request whenever possible, such as through a check box on comment forms and sign-in sheets at meetings. The use of the email database is described in more detail in Chapter 7, under "Correspondence."

Sponsorships. COMPASS sponsorship of others' events provides a platform to increase name recognition and raise awareness of who COMPASS is. COMPASS sponsors events that are related to its agency goals; therefore, the audience reached through a sponsorship generally consists of potential COMPASS stakeholders or member agency representatives.

COMPASS events. COMPASS events, such as education series presentations and public comment open houses, have the potential to attract member agency representatives, COMPASS stakeholders, and the general public, who may or may not be familiar with COMPASS prior to attending the event. While each COMPASS event will serve a specific purpose, each should also be used as an opportunity to market COMPASS and its role, products, and services through presentations, one-on-one discussions, and COMPASS materials, such as brochures.

Presentations. COMPASS staff are frequently requested to give presentations to a wide variety of audiences – from highly technical groups seeking detailed information on specific projects or programs, to very general community groups seeking to learn about COMPASS. Regardless of the audience or requested topic, all COMPASS presentations (excluding COMPASS committees or work groups) shall include background information on who COMPASS is, its role in the region, and COMPASS products and services, with particular attention to those projects, services, or issues that may be of use or interest to the audience. For consistency, and to increase name and logo recognition, all staff shall use a standard COMPASS slide format when using PowerPoint slides. More information on presentations can be found in Chapter 7.

Leadership in Motion awards. COMPASS presents Leadership in Motion awards each December to recognize businesses, individuals, and projects that have demonstrated leadership in supporting the goals and vision of the regional long-range transportation plan. While these awards are designed to recognize those who are supporting COMPASS, they also serve to market the agency, as they provide public, positive exposure to COMPASS and the long-range transportation plan. The call for nominations is promoted via email, social media, the COMPASS website, and a news release; winners are promoted in the same manner, as well as through purchased display

advertisements. A poster highlighting winners shall be displayed prominently in the COMPASS office to promote not only the winners, but to encourage others to submit nominations in the future.

Displays. COMPASS displays can be used to raise awareness of COMPASS and educate the public and specific stakeholders and member agencies on regional issues. COMPASS has a general marketing display (Figure 13) describing who COMPASS is and what it does, which shall be updated a minimum of every four years, upon update of the long-range transportation plan.

This general marketing display is used at public and stakeholder-specific events to raise awareness and interest in COMPASS and its programs and projects. This display may be staffed or it may stand alone, depending on the nature of the event. When used at public events, it serves as a mechanism to market the agency and its products and services to individuals unfamiliar with COMPASS.

In addition, COMPASS creates issue-specific displays to raise awareness of specific timely topics, such as the update of the long-range transportation plan, transportation funding issues, or growth. These may be created for a specific target audience and placed at a specific event, or created for a general audience and placed in a public location, such as a library. When used in this manner, the display is designed to stand alone, without a staff member present, and will generally remain in one location for several weeks before being moved to a new location. While issue-specific displays are designed to educate the public about a specific issue – as opposed to marketing the agency – their presence in the public realm also serves as a vehicle to market COMPASS. More information on displays can be found in Chapter 7.

Brochures. While COMPASS brochures are designed to stand alone, they are generally used in conjunction with other marketing tools – as a “take away” from a display, open house, presentation, or other event.

COMPASS shall maintain two standard brochures to market the agency — a general COMPASS overview and an overview of member benefits. The general COMPASS brochure is intended to describe COMPASS to a public audience and explain what COMPASS is, what it does, and how COMPASS impacts a member of the public, including a discussion of services available to the general public. This standard brochure shall be distributed with the COMPASS display, at all COMPASS events, and at other COMPASS-related events.



Figure 13. COMPASS general marketing display

The member benefits brochure is designed for existing and potential COMPASS members and explains what COMPASS is and describes benefits of membership. It shall be distributed as appropriate to the target audience.

COMPASS may also develop issue- or program-specific brochures. While these are generally not intended specifically as marketing materials, they, like any other COMPASS materials, shall include a general introduction to COMPASS and be used to increase name recognition and raise awareness of who COMPASS is and what it does. More information on brochures can be found in Chapter 7.

Policies and Practices for Use

Marketing of COMPASS shall be woven throughout all of COMPASS communication activities. An introduction to COMPASS, its regional role, and its products and services, as applicable to the audience, should be included in COMPASS communications whenever applicable. All COMPASS materials shall include the COMPASS logo and the URL of the COMPASS website, and shall follow consistent formatting for easy visual identification.

Chapter 12. Crisis Communication

Crisis communication often occurs in response to an unplanned, or even unforeseen, event. Although the nature and extent of a crisis may be unforeseen, advance planning for crisis communication ensures the agency is prepared to respond in any situation.

For the purposes of this chapter, a crisis may be the result of an ongoing issue that develops over time, or the result of a sudden, unexpected event.

Supporting COMPASS Programs

Crises have the potential to harm COMPASS' credibility and reputation, regardless of the truth or validity of the crisis. Therefore, a strong crisis communication plan supports all COMPASS programs and the agency as a whole. While the content of this chapter may be used to guide communication for all types of crises (e.g., a project or program-specific issue or crisis), the focus of this chapter is on large, programmatic issues that have the potential to negatively affect the agency as a whole.

Reaching the Target Audience

While the specific target audience will vary based on the type and magnitude of the crisis at hand, two audiences should always be addressed: the COMPASS Board of Directors and COMPASS staff. Most often, this will be followed by communication with the news media, and potentially directly with COMPASS stakeholders.

Employing Crisis Communications

All crisis communications shall be coordinated through the COMPASS crisis communication team, consisting of the following COMPASS staff:

- Executive Director
- Director of Operations
- Director of Planning
- Communication Coordinator
- Communication Assistant
- Other COMPASS staff as appropriate

COMPASS legal counsel and/or the COMPASS Board chair or other officers, may be added to this team, as appropriate.

Steps should always be taken to prevent a known, ongoing issue from becoming inflamed, and therefore escalating into a crisis, by addressing the cause of the matter before there is a need for crisis communication.

For example, if a Board member expresses concern over COMPASS' handling of financial issues, the concerns should be addressed with that Board member, and a resolution reached, *before* the Board member makes his or her concerns public, which then necessitates the need for crisis communication.

Once a crisis has been determined, there are typically tangible impacts caused by the crisis itself (e.g., embezzlement that leads to bounced checks) or caused by perceptions of the crisis (e.g., accusations of embezzlement lead to damage to COMPASS' reputation and/or members leaving the agency due to lack of trust).

In some cases, a crisis may be unanticipated. For example, an unanticipated crisis could occur if a COMPASS staff member were to run a stop sign driving a COMPASS staff car and be the cause of a fatal car crash.

Once it has been determined that crisis communication may be needed, COMPASS staff shall follow the crisis communication procedure, outlined on page 64.

COMPASS Crisis Communication Procedure

1. Notify the Executive Director immediately.
 - a. If the Executive Director is involved in the crisis or unavailable, notify the COMPASS Board chair instead.
2. The Executive Director shall notify the Board chair, other Board officers as appropriate, and the COMPASS crisis communication team of the nature and extent of the crisis. The crisis communication team shall consist of:
 - Executive Director
 - Director of Planning
 - Communication Assistant
 - Director of Operations
 - Communication Coordinator
 - Other COMPASS staff as appropriate
3. Crisis communication team members shall gather additional information, identify all traditional and social media coverage that has occurred regarding the issue, and, considering the questions listed in Figure 14, determine if the matter is truly a crisis.
4. If the issue is determined to NOT be a crisis, stop here, document all information gathered in Step 3, and continue to monitor the situation. If the matter is determined to be a crisis, or is likely to develop into a crisis, continue with Step 5.
5. If the matter involves potential legal action, **contact legal counsel.**
6. The crisis communication team shall immediately develop:
 - a. A “holding statement,” or initial statement, that sets forth the basic facts about the situation and lets the public know that COMPASS is actively dealing with the situation.
 - b. An internal crisis communication memo, which shall include the prepared holding statement, this crisis communication procedure, contact information and responsibilities of members of the crisis communication team, a list of key stakeholders to notify and procedure for notification, and a brief explanation of the situation.
7. The Executive Director shall brief the COMPASS Board of Directors and all COMPASS staff on the situation and provide a copy of the crisis communication memo. It is imperative that all staff are made aware of the situation to avoid an unaware staff member inadvertently making a statement or otherwise becoming involved in a situation without being aware of the circumstances. The appropriate level of detail provided to staff members shall be determined on a case by case basis.
8. All staff members shall be instructed to refer any questions to the crisis communication spokesperson noted in the memo. If a staff member is in a situation where a comment must be made, and cannot be referred to the spokesperson, that staff member shall use the prepared holding statement.
9. In response to media inquiries, the holding statement shall be used until a more detailed crisis communication plan has been established. (See step 10)
10. The crisis communication team shall develop an issue-specific crisis communication plan, using the checklist on page 66 (Figure 15).
11. COMPASS staff shall follow the issue-specific communication plan, with modifications as necessary to adapt to changing circumstances.

Note that this crisis communication procedure does not address the root cause of the crisis itself. A simultaneous process should occur to resolve the underlying issue.

Is crisis communication needed? *Consider the following:*

- Has the underlying issue been resolved?
- Does the issue involve potential legal action?
- Does the issue relate to how COMPASS operates as an agency?
- Does the issue affect COMPASS member agencies? If so, which ones and how?
- Is a COMPASS member agency involved in a crisis that could impact COMPASS? If so, what is the crisis and how could COMPASS be impacted?
- Does the issue stem from an outside accusation? If so, what is the relationship of the accuser to COMPASS?
- Has the issue emerged in social media and/or online chatter?
- Has the issue emerged in mainstream print and/or broadcast media?
- Could the issue affect the overall reputation or credibility of COMPASS in the community and/or its viability as an agency?

Note that whether COMPASS is “right” or “wrong” is not a consideration.

Figure 14. Is crisis communication needed?

Policies and Practices for Use

While every crisis will be different, and handled on a case-by-case basis, it is imperative that the above procedure be followed to ensure all matters are addressed appropriately. Unless specifically delegated otherwise, all crisis communication shall be coordinated through the Executive Director and/or Communication Coordinator. Upon resolution of a crisis, the crisis communication team shall evaluate the success of the crisis communication plan and activities and note suggested changes for future crises.

While not limited to crisis situations, public records requests often accompany crises. Note that ALL written documents, including email, are subject to public records requests and must be provided if requested. While public records requests may occur at any time, a crisis may spawn public records requests related to the crisis. Staff shall forward any public records requests during a crisis situation to the crisis communication team. All staff shall be aware of and follow the internal COMPASS public records request procedure for handling such requests at all times.

Issue-Specific Crisis Communication Plan Checklist

Once a crisis has been identified, the crisis communication team shall develop an issue-specific crisis communication plan. That plan shall contain:

- ✓ Holding statement
 - Develop immediately
- ✓ List of crisis communication team members
 - Include titles, names, contact information, and responsibilities
 - Include additional staff who may be needed, based on the type of crisis
 - Include legal counsel, if appropriate
- ✓ List of key stakeholders to be notified and procedures for notification
 - COMPASS Board members
 - Key media contacts
 - Other key stakeholders, as appropriate
- ✓ Internal crisis communication memo
 - Develop immediately
 - Include a brief summary of the issue
 - Include all items above
- ✓ Proactive media strategy, including the following elements:
 - Name and contact information of spokesperson
 - Key message(s)
 - Initial holding statement
 - Official COMPASS press statement (follow-up to holding statement)
 - Talking points for spokesperson
 - Target audience(s)
 - Target media
 - Timing of release of key messages
 - Types of communication methods to be used
 - News release(s)
 - News conference(s)
 - Individual interviews
 - Social media
 - Web postings

Figure 15. Issue-specific crisis communication plan checklist

Chapter 13. Evaluating Success

A key component of any program is evaluating success, or progress, and using that information to improve future efforts. COMPASS shall continually evaluate the success of its communication and public involvement efforts and use that information to improve ongoing and future communication efforts and inform future updates of this *Integrated Communication Plan*.

Supporting COMPASS Programs

COMPASS strives to support all of its programs, and the agency as a whole, with its communication and public involvement efforts; however, without consciously examining data and other feedback, it is impossible to gauge success. COMPASS will evaluate data and feedback, and compare results over time, to determine if COMPASS communication efforts, including the elements outlined in this *Integrated Communication Plan*, are truly supporting other COMPASS programs.

Reaching the Target Audience

The success of each individual communication project or program shall be evaluated according to its target audience. The success of COMPASS communication programs as a whole, including this *Integrated Communication Plan*, will be evaluated based on individual target audiences, as well as the entire population of Ada and Canyon Counties, as all residents are potential “audiences” of COMPASS communication projects and programs.

COMPASS will specifically review data regarding traditionally underrepresented populations, such as minority and low income, to measure success in providing all residents with an equal opportunity to learn about and participate in COMPASS projects and programs, and to find ways to improve outreach efforts to those populations, when necessary.

Employing Programs to Evaluate Success

COMPASS will employ four means of evaluating success of its communication programs: outputs, outcomes, public survey data, and qualitative feedback.

Outputs. Outputs include all COMPASS outreach efforts – in essence, those actions over which COMPASS has control.

COMPASS will track and analyze the outputs of individual public involvement processes and other communication efforts, including annual and project-specific sums of:

- News releases distributed
- Guest opinion articles submitted
- Presentations given by COMPASS staff
- Social media posts
- Advertisements placed
- Displays exhibited (number of displays, locations, and days exhibited)
- COMPASS events hosted
- Other agency’s events sponsored
- Brochures developed/printed
- Email blasts sent

Outcomes. Outcomes are the result of outputs. For example, issuing a news release is an output, while a news story generated by that news release is an outcome.

Outcomes can be used to evaluate the success of outputs, but this measure should be not be considered in a vacuum, as many circumstances can affect whether an output results in an outcome. For example, even the most finely crafted, relevant, and timely news release may be trumped by another “bigger” story – particularly breaking news. Conversely, a reporter may approach COMPASS concerning a story that COMPASS did not initiate. While this is a sign of “success,” in that the reporter chose to approach COMPASS for the needed information and therefore is an indication of COMPASS’ success in cultivating relationships with the news media, it cannot be tied directly to a specific “output.”

COMPASS will track and analyze the “outcomes” of individual public involvement processes and other communication efforts, including annual and/or project-specific sums of:

- News stories involving COMPASS staff, projects, or programs
- Guest opinion articles published
- Attendance at presentations given by COMPASS staff
- Attendance at COMPASS events
- Social media followers and measures of engagement
- Website hits
- Public comments received during public comment periods

COMPASS shall prepare an annual social media audit to determine the current conversation regarding COMPASS, as well as provide framework for future social media strategies. The audit will evaluate each social media account, demonstrate the effectiveness of current and past strategies, provide insights into the demographics of COMPASS fans/followers, and help COMPASS determine what content is resonating most and on what platforms. The majority of the evaluation will be the result of analyzing measurable metrics from platform-specific analytics, as the number of fans/followers alone does not determine the success of a specific social media account. More information on social media can be found in Chapter 9.

COMPASS will also track demographic data, as appropriate, to assist in determining if the agency is successful in reaching out to all segments of the population. Comment forms and event sign-in sheets will request voluntary information on zip code, gender, race/ethnicity, and disability. This information will be compared to data across the planning area to find gaps between population demographics and demographics of those participating in COMPASS activities.

Public Survey Data. COMPASS shall conduct a random household telephone survey of residents of Ada and Canyon Counties every three years to evaluate the success of its communication programs. A baseline survey shall be conducted in summer/fall 2015, upon completion of this plan; subsequent surveys shall be conducted the fall prior to the update of this plan.²⁸ The execution of the survey shall include all current best practices to ensure maximum, and representative, participation, including providing bi-lingual surveyors and ensuring cell phones are included at a ratio to match their use in the Treasure Valley. The survey shall also include demographic questions to assist COMPASS in evaluating if it is reaching out to all residents equally.

The survey will address residents' awareness of COMPASS; its role in the Treasure Valley; its plans, projects, and programs; opportunities to be involved; and services available to the public, as well as opinions of COMPASS and its communication programs, including perceptions of COMPASS' openness to public involvement and input and the extent to which COMPASS uses that input. It is intended that the majority of the questions remain consistent across survey years so that trends may be tracked. However, additional questions may be included to address timely communication-related topics, as appropriate. The survey shall be used solely to address communication-related issues and topics; it is not intended to address broad planning issues.

Feedback. In addition to the data described above, COMPASS shall also solicit and examine qualitative feedback. COMPASS shall provide evaluation forms at COMPASS-hosted events, and other forums whenever possible, and examine the feedback received on those forms to gauge success of the event and related communication information. For example, in addition to requesting feedback on education series speakers, COMPASS shall request feedback from participants of the education series relating to how an individual learned of the event, which provides feedback on the success of COMPASS communication strategies.

COMPASS shall also examine comments received through other means, including email, comments left on social media sites or submitted through the COMPASS website, comments left with online news stories, and comments submitted during public comment periods that address the communication or public involvement process.

Policies and Practices for Use

COMPASS will assess the effectiveness of its communication and outreach programs on both a project-specific and agency-wide basis using the means described above. Project-specific measures shall be examined upon project completion, or mid-project if warranted, and agency-wide measures shall be compiled and examined yearly.

COMPASS shall develop a spreadsheet to record outputs and outcomes, to track trends and allow comparisons across years. COMPASS shall examine other feedback and circumstances to provide additional information and context.

²⁸ The baseline and following survey will be conducted two years apart (2015 and 2017) to allow time for results to be incorporated into the update of this plan. Subsequent surveys will be conducted on a three-year cycle.

Public survey data shall also be examined. Over time, trends will be revealed through the survey data, and will assist COMPASS in determining success in reaching out to the residents of Ada and Canyon Counties, and where additional improvements are needed.

Using all of this information, COMPASS shall evaluate successes and determine where, and how, improvement is needed. Changes to processes shall be made in a timely manner and incorporated in the update of this plan, as appropriate, every three years.

COMPASS aims to excel in all its programs. However, there will always be room for improvement. Through this *Integrated Communication Plan*, and the methods for evaluating success outlined in this chapter, COMPASS will continually improve upon its past efforts and strive for excellence in its communication, outreach, and public involvement programs.

Appendix A. Public Involvement Plan Public Participation Process and Summary of Comments Received

COMPASS requested public comment on the DRAFT *Integrated Communication Plan*, with an emphasis on the Public Involvement Plan, from April 17 – May 31, 2015.

COMPASS followed the public involvement process outlined in Chapter 3 of this DRAFT *Integrated Communication Plan*/Public Involvement Plan, including all required elements and recommended best practices.

This appendix outlines the public involvement process used and provides a summary, analysis, and disposition of comments received. All comments received (verbatim), with individual staff responses, can be found in Appendix B.

Public Involvement Process

In preparation for developing this Public Involvement Plan and initiating public comment on it, COMPASS reviewed all federal requirements to ensure both the plan itself and the public comment process met or exceeded all federal requirements. COMPASS staff conducted “behind the scenes” work to prepare for public comment, including gathering and analyzing demographic data, developing an internal project-specific public participation outline, determining how best to coordinate with other agencies, and developing a stakeholder outreach matrix.

Results of demographic analysis for this Public Involvement Plan show that Latinos encompass 24% of the population in Canyon County and 7% in Ada County. In addition, the Boise area is a refugee resettlement community, home to a population of refugees of multiple ethnicities. In Canyon County, 16% of families have incomes below poverty level; 9% of Ada County families fall into this category.

COMPASS used this information in developing its stakeholder outreach matrix for the Public Involvement Plan. This matrix was used to guide COMPASS in reaching out to the many different types of populations that broadly make up the “public,” including the general population of Ada and Canyon Counties, as well as targeted stakeholders, including Tribes, freight interests, public transportation providers, and traditionally underrepresented populations, including minority and low income “Environmental Justice” populations.

Outputs. COMPASS solicited public input during a 45-day public comment period from April 17 through May 31, 2015. COMPASS publicized and facilitated public comment via:

- Advertising and promotion
 - Print advertisements (14 total)
 - Idaho Statesman (3)
 - Idaho Press Tribune (3)
 - Valley Times (4)
 - Kuna Melba News (3)
 - El Regional (1)
 - Email blasts (4)
 - Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Executive Director’s blog)
 - News release (1)

- Flyers placed in public locations and distributed via COMPASS member agency staff and Public Participation Committee members
- Legal notices (2 newspapers; 3 days each)
 - Idaho Statesman (3)
 - Idaho Press Tribune (3)
- Website outreach
 - Draft plan and summary materials (English and Spanish)
 - Comment forms; online and printable PDF (English and Spanish)
 - List of locations where hard copy materials were available for review
- Comment materials at public locations
 - 17 libraries
 - 1 city hall
 - COMPASS office
 - Creating Healthy Communities Summit (April 20 and 21, 2015)
 - Ada County National County Government Month open house (April 25, 2015)

To reach targeted stakeholder groups as outlined in the DRAFT Public Involvement Plan and stakeholder outreach matrix, COMPASS specifically reached out to specific stakeholder types with personal email messages requesting their feedback on the Public Involvement Plan and requesting that recipients forward the information to their constituents to encourage their review and feedback as well. Organizations listed in parentheses are examples of the groups COMPASS reached out to, but do not constitute the entire list. Note that there is overlap among populations and in the groups that serve them. For example, a refugee may or may not also be a minority, low income, elderly, and/or have limited English skills. Stakeholder types receiving personal messages included:

- Minorities/limited English speakers and advocates (e.g., Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, Idaho Office for Refugees)
- Low income individuals and advocates (e.g., Assistance League of Boise)
- Individuals with disabilities and advocates (e.g., Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Idaho Council on Development Disabilities, Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- Tribes (e.g., Native American Coalition of Boise, Intertribal Native Council [Boise State University])
- Elderly individuals and advocates (e.g., AARP, Canyon County Office on Aging)
- Public transportation users and providers (e.g., Valley Regional Transit/ValleyRide, ACHD Commuteride)
- Freight interests, including farm freight
- Active transportation (bicycle/pedestrian) users and advocates
- Colleges and universities (Boise State University, College of Western Idaho)
- Health interests (e.g., Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, local health districts)
- Transportation agencies (e.g., Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Idaho Transportation Department)
- COMPASS member agencies

In addition, COMPASS advertised in the El Regional Spanish-language newspaper and provided web content and comment materials in Spanish, as well as offered other translation and/or other types of assistance upon request. No requests for assistance were received.

Outcomes. Two news stories on the public comment period were generated from COMPASS promotional efforts. In addition, COMPASS social media posts were “liked” and “retweeted” by COMPASS social media followers. COMPASS received a total of 12 comments – 4 via online comment form, 6 via email, 1 via phone, and 1 via Facebook message. Quantitative results from comment forms can be found below; all open ended comments can be found in Appendix B.

COMPASS requested demographic information on comment forms to help determine success in reaching out to all populations across the COMPASS planning area. Respondents were required to include their zip code, but other demographic questions were listed as “optional” on the comment form. Table A-1 shows demographics of individuals who responded via comment form. The response with the highest percentage in each category is shown in bold.

Table A-1. Demographics of respondents from comment forms

Demographic	Number of respondents	Responses
Gender	3	Male: 1 (33%) Female: 2 (67%)
Race/Ethnicity	3	American Indian/Alaska Native: 0 (0%) Asian/Pacific Islander: 0 (0%) Black: 0 (0%) Hispanic: 0 (0%) White: 3 (100%) Other: 0 (0%)
Age	3	Under 20: 0 (0%) 20 – 34: 2 (67%) 35 – 49: 1 (33%) 50 – 64: 0 (0%) 65 and older: 0 (0%)
Disability	3	Yes: 0 (0%) No: 3 (100%)
Zip code	4	83616 83605 83651 83716
County (as determined by zip code)	NA	Ada: 2 (50%) Canyon: 2 (50%)

Summary, Analysis, and Disposition of Comments Received

Overall, the comments received were complimentary. Quantitative results, from the comment form, are shown in Table A-2. Each of these questions uses a Likert-type scale, with 1 = “No, not at all” to 5 = “Yes, very well”; therefore, a higher average score is better than a lower average score.

Table A-2. Quantitative results from public comment form (1 = "No, not at all"; 5 = "Yes, very well")

Question	Number of responses	Average Score
Does the Public Involvement Plan describe COMPASS' overall public involvement process?	4	4.5
Does the Public Involvement Plan describe how COMPASS will solicit public input during the following individual planning processes?		
Public Involvement Plan	4	4.5
Long-range transportation plan and amendments	4	4.5
Regional Transportation Improvement Program and amendments	4	4.5
Other COMPASS plans, programs, and projects	4	4.25
Does the Public Involvement Plan explain how public feedback will be used?	4	4
Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' support of reaching out to traditionally underrepresented communities (e.g., low income and minority)?	4	4.25
Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' commitment to an active public involvement process?	4	4.75

Commenters were asked "why or why not?" in response to their quantitative answers on the comment form, and offered the opportunity for open-ended comments. These comments, along with all other open ended comments, can be found in Appendix B and were provided to the COMPASS Board of Directors and to the COMPASS Public Participation Committee.

Table A-3 lists specific recommendations for changes to the Public Involvement Plan made by commenters, and corresponding changes made.

Table A-3. Recommended changes to Public Involvement Plan from Commenters

Recommended Change (paraphrased)	Commenter	Changes Made
Consider moving Table 1 into an appendix.	Scott Frey, Federal Highway Administration	Table 1 was left in the body of the document (Chapter 2), based on a public comment that stated that the table was very helpful.
Ensure it is clear in the Public Involvement Plan that COMPASS will summarize, analyze, and discuss the of disposition of comments <u>within</u> each plan document, and in addition to the summary, full (verbatim) comments will be readily accessible to the reader with the plan document. For the long-range transportation plan, when verbatim public comments are not included in the physical plan document, create a "virtual appendix" that highlights the link to the verbatim comments.	Scott Frey, Federal Highway Administration	Language was strengthened to clarify that a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments will be included <u>in</u> each plan document, that verbatim comments will be provided <u>in addition to</u> the summary and discussion in the document, and, when verbatim comments are linked from the document, rather than included in the plan document (long-range plan only), the links will be readily apparent and included in a "virtual appendix." For all other types of plans, the full comments will be included in the document itself (not linked).

Table A-3. Recommended changes to Public Involvement Plan from Commenters

Recommended Change (paraphrased)	Commenter	Changes Made
Explain what Administrative Modifications to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program are and how they are treated from a public comment standpoint.	Scott Frey, Federal Highway Administration	Explanation added.
Explain the source of “best practice” recommendations.	Ellen Campfield Nelson, AICP Managing Associate, Agnew:: Beck	While many of the requirements and best practices listed are based on federal requirements and industry best practices, their inclusion as requirements/best practices in this document is to establish COMPASS policy of what COMPASS requires and recommends for its public involvement processes.
Regarding “visualization techniques” - use a mix of written, static and dynamic visual and auditory messages – not just “big” visualization techniques such as CommunityViz-type tools.	Ellen Campfield Nelson, AICP Managing Associate, Agnew:: Beck	Language was added to clarify that “visualization techniques” include all types of visual tools – from simple graphics and maps to complex technical tools.
Add metrics for measuring the success of public outreach.	Ellen Campfield Nelson, AICP Managing Associate, Agnew:: Beck	COMPASS is continually seeking ways to better measure success of public outreach. Within this plan, COMPASS commits to tracking “outcomes” (e.g., number of comments received, geographic distribution of participants, etc.) for our public participation processes. COMPASS will be conducting a random household survey later in 2015 to collect baseline data on the public’s awareness of and involvement with COMPASS to inform future updates to the Public Involvement Plan. The intent is to use that information to help develop more robust measurements in the update to this plan in 2018.
Clarify in footnote 15 that funding source (federal vs non-federal) does not impact whether a project is determined to be “regionally significant.”	Lori Porreca, PhD, AICP, Federal Highway Administration	Language added to footnote 15 for clarification.
Giving public presentations should be noted as a “best practice” and not “optional” for the long-range plan and long-range plan amendments.	Jeremy Borrego, Transportation Program Specialist, Federal Transit Administration, Region 10	Changed to “best practice” in Table 1 and Chapter 4.
Define who traditionally underrepresented and Environmental Justice populations are specific to the COMPASS planning area.	Jeremy Borrego, Transportation Program Specialist, Federal Transit Administration, Region 10	Additional information added in text box on Page 6.
Include information about privacy of people submitting comments.	Jeremy Borrego, Transportation Program Specialist, Federal Transit Administration, Region 10	Information added to “Outcomes” sections of Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 to note that comments may be submitted anonymously and that names of commenters are not included unless comment is signed or commenter indicates he wants his name included.

Appendix B. Public Involvement Plan Public Participation Process Open Ended Comments Received (verbatim)

Verbatim public and agency comments, with staff responses, on Integrated Communication Plan/Public Involvement Plan

Comment	Staff Response	Zip Code and Name/affiliation (if included)	Format
Question 1. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan (Chapters 2 – 6, as summarized in Chapter 2, Table 1) describe COMPASS’ overall public involvement process?			
This table is extremely helpful. It gives us an indication of what public comment/outreach activities will occur with each type of plan. The required activities make sense and seem appropriate for each type of plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
I think this entry describes why: [referring to “yes, very well”]: General public, Residents of Ada and Canyon Counties, Professionals in planning, transportation, and related fields, Local and national, Individuals, organizations, and companies, Media, Local print and broadcast media, Individuals and organizations, Industry-specific media and blogs, Elected officials, Cities, counties, regions, Local businesses and organizations, Local colleges and universities, Interest groups, Bike/pedestrian, Safety, Youth, Aging population, Public transportation users/ commuters	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
It’s obviously an attempt to be comprehensive, but few ordinary citizens have or will take the time to thoroughly read it all--it’s simply too much in one monolithic document.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Robert Minch 83616	Online comment form
Question 2. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan describe how COMPASS will solicit public input during the following individual planning processes?			
It’s obviously an attempt to be comprehensive, but few ordinary citizens have or will take the time to thoroughly read it all--it’s simply too much in one monolithic document.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Robert Minch 83616	Online comment form
Question 3. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan explain how public feedback will be used?			
The process is clearly described and explains that comments will be considered and shared with decision makers.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
...I may not have read how feedback will be used in the draft plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form

Comment	Staff response to questions	Zip Code and Name/affiliation (if included)	Format
Question 4. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' support of reaching out to traditionally underrepresented communities (e.g., low income and minority)?			
I appreciate the effort made to reach LEP and low income populations. I think it is especially important to reach out to people in locations that are familiar and by providing comment opportunities at well attended community events both of which seem to be part of this plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
I don't think I read in the plan, how COMPASS is actively finding events or gatherings of "underrepresented communities" to dispense COMPASS's plan.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
Question 5. Why or why not? In response to: Does the Public Involvement Plan convey COMPASS' commitment to an active public involvement process?			
Outreach efforts are varied and tailored to meet specific needs.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
The effort to reach me, is a sign COMPASS is committed to gain public involvement.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
Question 6. Do you have any additional comments on the COMPASS Public Involvement Plan?			
Thank you!	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83651	Online comment form
Keep up the good work!	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Mark Caldwell Young Professionals 83605	Online comment form
As mentioned above, you've obviously made an attempt to be comprehensive, but few ordinary citizens have or will take the time to thoroughly read all your materials--it's simply too much in one relatively monolithic document or set of documents. Here's the most important suggestion I can make: Take your own advice and seriously explore much more innovative outreach methods. For example, let people opt in to FOCUSED communications about particular issues, particular geographic areas, and other factors that they are most interested in and most willing and able to provide feedback on.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	Robert Minch 83616	Online comment form

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At first glance, it seemed a little long, but after I looked at it, I everything seemed like it was needed or it wouldn't make sense, so I guess it's the right length. I like the "checklists" at the end of each chapter -- let me know what to expect from COMPASS at a glance. Some of that (like analyze demographic information) seems kind of "behind the scenes" for the public to care about.	Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee	83716	Online comment form

Other Comments Received

<p>Amy: I'm commenting on the subject document and, in particular, the component Public Involvement Plan (Chapters 2-6) by this email. If you would prefer, I can also complete the comment form.</p> <p>Integrated Communications Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is a wonderful document for tying together all facets of your communication process including both the federally prescribed Public Involvement Plan described in Chapters 2-6; the guidance and strategies for correspondence, media relations, and social media tools described in Chapters 7-9 and the education, marketing, and outreach activities described in Chapters 10-13. This plan not only fulfills a need identified during the 2014 Certification Review; it sets a new standard for what might be done by MPOs to address all of these related subjects in a single, comprehensive, document. 2. Chapter 8, Media Relations and Advertising, and Chapter 9, Web and Social Media are particularly noteworthy for the additional guidance they provide for making effective use of both traditional media and for tapping the tremendous potential available through the modern day electronic media. <p>Public Involvement Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chapter 2, Public Involvement Plan, Introduction and Federal Requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inclusion of the federally required 45 day comment period is good. Also, references to the various related Federal Orders and Acts on pages 7 and 8 is good. b. Table 1 is tedious and not likely to be of broad use or interest. Given that, I would tuck into the appendix unless you really want it in the main body of the document (your call). 2. Chapter 4, Long Range Plan PPP Process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. I support the strategy explained in paragraph 4 of Page 21 which, in essence, says that the comments and responses will be posted on the long range plan web page and linked from the plan document. The federal expectation with respect to reporting of comments is detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a)(2) which reads as follows: 	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific responses below.</p> <p>Table 1 was left in the body of the document (Chapter 2), based on a public comment that stated that the table was very helpful.</p> <p>Language was strengthened to clarify that a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments will be included <u>in</u> each plan document, that verbatim comments will be</p>	<p>Scott Frey, Transportation Engineer Federal Highway Administration, Idaho Division</p>	<p>Email</p>
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<p>(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.</p> <p>The challenge before us in this regard is ensuring that what you have described and what you intend can reasonably fulfill what the regulations describe. With that, we need to be careful that these “links” to the comments are readily apparent; not simply footnotes that largely go unnoticed or used. I would actually encourage that these comments be in an appendix to the plan with this and all other appendices being available as part of the “full document” by means of a single link. As for the highlighted phrase, above, I don’t have any criteria or general guidance to offer concerning how (of if) one might classify comments in terms of being “significant” or not. Suffice to say that not all comments need to be reported or responded to.</p> <p>Chapter 5, Public Participation Plan for the TIP, TIP Amendments, and Conformity:</p> <p>b. A thought to consider: Should we also include a paragraph or two on page 31 explaining what Administrative Modifications are (minor changes in cost, scope, and funding) and the corresponding minor public involvement (notification to the changes by the Director to the COMPASS Board at the next Board Meeting)? I think it would be helpful to make some brief mention of this in the document versus having to explain that, “these changes are so small that the document doesn’t apply to them”.</p> <p>c. Comments in the TIP (Page 30, second sentence): The wording here indicates that the final TIP will include a description of the public involvement process in the main document and that all verbatim comments, with responses, will be in an appendix. My expectations with respect to this are the same as previously described above for the Long Range Plan PPP Process (See Comment 2.a.)</p> <p>That’s all I have. Again, nice work on this Amy. Give a call if you would like to discuss this further and, also, let me know if you would like me to submit my comments through the official commenting form.</p> <p><i>(COMPASS staff followed up for clarification. The email below is in response to that follow-up discussion.)</i></p>	<p>provided <u>in addition to</u> the summary and discussion in the document, and, when verbatim comments are linked from the document (long-range plan only), the links are readily apparent and included in a “virtual appendix.”</p> <p>Language added.</p> <p>Language was strengthened to clarify that a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments will be included <u>in</u> each plan document, and that verbatim comments will be provided in an appendix in the TIP document in addition to the summary and discussion in the body of the document.</p>		

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<p>Thanks for your follow up explanation, Amy. I viewed the link you provided (CIM 2040) and am satisfied that we are meeting the range of interpretations of the regulations including not only yours and mine but also that of others in the Federal chain of command.</p> <p>One tweak that would help reinforce our position that the public comments are a part of the LRTP [long-range transportation plan] and TIP would be to have the links to these comments serve as actual appendices. For example, have a page in both the Plan and TIP with a heading such as, "Appendix B, Complete Public Comments" followed by a link which takes you to these comments. A "virtual appendix" I'll call this....</p> <p>If you need further explanation on what I am describing or why the need for it, feel free to give me a call. Scott</p>	<p>Reference to a "virtual appendix" added; see above.</p>		
<p>Hi Amy –</p> <p>I thought I would take a moment to send some feedback on the COMPASS PIP. These are fairly high-level comments, but hopefully worthwhile.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In general, you have a very thorough public outreach approach, and I applaud you for tracking all of these various requirements and implementing them well. 2. When "Best Practices" are referenced, explain the source of the best practice recommendations (perhaps you did this, but I did not find the reference). One organization I like very much is IAP2 – the International Association for Public Participation. They have great information about new and old techniques and how to make them effective. Also, they have very extensive information and techniques for public involvement planning and best practices. 3. I was happy to see "use visualization techniques" in the list, but I believe these are referring to specific Community-Viz-type scenario planning tools. I am not sure if this is the case, but I would suggest including more visual communications in your public documentation, generally. For example, the graphic on page 5 is simple, but does a good job of explaining how the sections of the plan fit together. The rest of the document is fairly dense. Perhaps this is fine for this particular document, but, in general, it is good communication practice to use a mix of written, static and dynamic visual and auditory messages. Since I am not very familiar with all of COMPASS's outreach efforts, you might be doing this already. Either way, I think the COMPASS Board should consider adding a line or two about communication techniques into the 	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific responses below.</p> <p>While many of the requirements and best practices listed are based on federal requirements and industry best practices, their inclusion as requirements/best practices in this document is to establish COMPASS policy of what COMPASS requires and recommends for its public involvement processes.</p> <p>Language was added to clarify that "visualization techniques" includes all means of visually displaying information, from simple graphics and maps to complex technical tools.</p>	<p>Ellen Campfield Nelson, AICP Managing Associate Agnew::Beck</p>	<p>Email</p>

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<p>“public involvement elements” chart that starts on page 9, and make this an explicit activity/goal for public involvement. To be clear, what I am talking about here is incorporating infographics and other information visualizations (maps, charts, diagrams, etc.) as part of all public documentation.</p> <p>4. I would suggest thinking about how to best incorporate metrics for measuring the success of public outreach. As I’m sure you well know, fulfilling the requirements of public involvement activities is not always enough to actually achieve the level of public involvement desired. It is always challenging to figure out how to motivate people to be involved. One example of how to achieve this is to really distill down clearly for the public how the plan/project will directly impact them or be relevant to their lives. Another technique would be to always allow comment on entire documents, as I believe you do now, but then also to focus response on the specific areas where the public has expert content knowledge, and really try to elicit information on those narrow topics where their opinions matter the most. These are just some examples that can help you meet measured outreach goals (like “10% survey response rate,” or “50% of affected organizations comment,” etc.). The purpose, of course, in creating metrics is to help calibrate and adjust techniques during the process, as needed, and over time, and even perhaps to provide feedback to regulators who are requiring that you spend time on activities that do not seem to be effective. An additional benefit is that those involved may start to better understand how COMPASS’s work is relevant to their lives, and find providing input easy and meaningful.</p> <p>I know you spend a lot of time and energy thinking about how to best involve the public, so I hope these comments are not taken as undue criticism of COMPASS, but are offered from a member of the public who cares about COMPASS’s mission, efforts and effectiveness.</p> <p>Thanks, and good luck.</p> <p>~Ellen</p>	<p>Additional photos were added to provide visual examples of public input techniques.</p> <p>COMPASS is continually seeking ways to better measure success of public outreach. We do agree that measuring “outputs” does not measure success. Within this plan, COMPASS commits to tracking “outcomes” (e.g., number of comments received, geographic distribution of participants, etc.) for our public participation processes and hope to develop more robust measurements in the update to this plan in 2018. COMPASS will be conducting a random household survey later in 2015 to collect baseline data on the public’s awareness of and involvement with COMPASS to inform future updates to the Public Involvement Plan.</p>		

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<p>Amy,</p> <p>I've read through the plan again and I really don't have any major comment. I think the plan looks great. You've done a great job.</p> <p>I have one small comment about the footnote on page 27 about regionally significant and the corresponding text above that. In the footnote you say, "a regionally significant project is a transportation project that serves regional transportation needs, such as an improvement to an arterial..."</p> <p>I think it might be helpful to say in this footnote that regionally significant projects that are either federally funded or funded by a non-federal source. Or some other language. It's a little unclear as you read through the remainder of the footnote that non-federal projects of regional significance are included because of the air quality regs. I know you say that above in the text, but repeating that in the footnote would be helpful.</p> <p>I hope this isn't too confusing. Let me know if I need to clarify.</p> <p>Thanks, Lori</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific response below.</p> <p>Language added to footnote 15.</p>	<p>Lori Porreca, PhD, AICP Federal Highway Administration, Idaho Division</p>	<p>Email</p>
<p>Public comments and public comment periods don't matter. The decisions have already been made anyway.</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>"Nampa Girl"</p>	<p>Phone (Transcribed message)</p>
<p>ITD has reviewed the subject line document [Public Involvement Plan] and does not have any changes/comments to offer. Good job.</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>Mark Wasdahl, Senior Planner Idaho Transportation Department</p>	<p>Email</p>
<p>Honestly, when I get a request for input from COMPASS it usually looks like info that is over my head and more (research) than my senior citizen-afflicted brain can absorb so I just blow it off. Just seems like some things need to be made simpler for the average citizen to respond to. Maybe I'm alone in this but I doubt it.--- Thanks</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>Anonymous</p>	<p>Facebook</p>
<p>Please find FTA Region 10's comments attached in the PDF. Overall, the plan was very comprehensive and well put together. If you have any questions, please let Ned or I know. Thank you, Jeremy Borrego</p> <p>[Comments from referenced PDF are below]</p> <p><i>Page 6. RE: "During this public review period, comments were explicitly requested from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Idaho Transportation Department, Valley Regional Transit (regional transit authority), local Tribal representatives, and members of traditionally underrepresented communities."</i></p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee; specific responses below.</p>	<p>Jeremy Borrego Transportation Program Specialist Federal Transit Administration Region 10 Seattle, WA</p>	<p>Email</p>

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<p>Comment: Who are your local Tribal representatives and traditionally underrepresented communities? How did you engage them in this process?</p> <p><i>Page 7. RE: Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments</i></p> <p>Comment: There should be documented MPO processes on consulting with Indian Tribal governments and Federal land management agencies (to the extent practicable).</p>	<p>Local Tribal representatives include the Native American Coalition of Boise, Intertribal Native Council (Boise State University), and the Red River PowWow.</p> <p>Within the COMPASS planning area, Latinos encompass 24% of the population in Canyon County and 7% in Ada County. In addition, the Boise area is a refugee resettlement community, home to a population of refugees of multiple ethnicities. Sixteen percent of Canyon County families and nine percent of Ada County families have incomes below the poverty level.</p> <p>Representatives, advocates, and individuals were individually contacted via email and asked to review and comment on the plan and forward the plan to their constituents for review and comment. In addition, COMPASS promoted the opportunity for comment in <i>El Regional</i>, a local Spanish language newspaper.</p> <p>A more complete description of the public involvement process is described in the plan appendix.</p> <p>Table 1 of the Public Involvement Plan identifies when COMPASS will consult and coordinate with Tribes and "other" agencies (including land management agencies) and consult on environmental issues. The process for this shall be determined and documented within project-specific public participation outlines and stakeholder outreach matrices, based on the specific needs and issues of the individual programs, projects, and plans.</p>		

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<p><i>Table 1, Page 10. RE: Hold public meetings.</i> Comment: Are public presentations given at your public meetings? Are you thinking an open house or charrette vs. a traditional public meeting?</p> <p><i>Table 1, Page 10. RE: Give public presentations, "optional" for long-range transportation plan and amendments.</i> Comment: This is generally a BP (Best Practice)</p> <p><i>Table 1. Page 11. RE: Optional vs. Determine on a case by case basis.</i> Comment: What is the difference between "optional" and "determine on a case by case basis"?</p> <p><i>Page 15. RE: Invite and use feedback...traditionally underrepresented populations.</i> Comment: Please define this earlier in the document so that a reader knows who the traditionally underrepresented populations are in the COMPASS MPA. What about EJ populations?</p>	<p>"Public meetings" includes all types of meetings and may include open houses, presentations, workshops, or charrettes. The format of each meetings is designed based upon the topic, audience, and type of input being sought.</p> <p>Changed to "best practice."</p> <p>"Determine on a case by case basis" is noted for "other programs and projects" where the appropriate type of outreach is dictated by the nature of the issue. For example, placing legal notices is noted as "determine on a case by case basis" for "other programs and projects." Depending on the type of project, a legal notice may be required and for others it may not be. "Optional" indicates use of the outreach method is at the discretion of staff, based on circumstances.</p> <p>Additional information added in text box on Page 6.</p>		

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<p><i>Page 16. RE: How COMPASS will compare demographic data from public comments to full demographic data to help determine if we are reaching the entire population.</i></p> <p>Comment: Because this is a public review of your public involvement process, it might be helpful to include a sentence about any privacy policy you have covering people who comment.</p> <p><i>Page 20. RE: Traditionally underrepresented populations.</i></p> <p>Comment: Please define here or earlier in document. What about EJ populations?</p>	<p>Information added to "Outcomes" sections of Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 to note that comments may be submitted anonymously and that names of commenters are not included unless comment is signed or commenter indicates he wants his name included.</p> <p>Additional information added in text box on Page 6.</p>		
<p>Hi Amy, I've looked through your PIP, and everything looks good to me! I'll follow up with FHWA to see if they have any comments for you.</p> <p>Russ Rivera</p>	<p>Provided to COMPASS Board and Public Participation Committee</p>	<p>Russ Rivera, MPA Compliance Officer Idaho Transportation Department – Office of Civil Rights</p>	<p>Email</p>