

WELCOME!

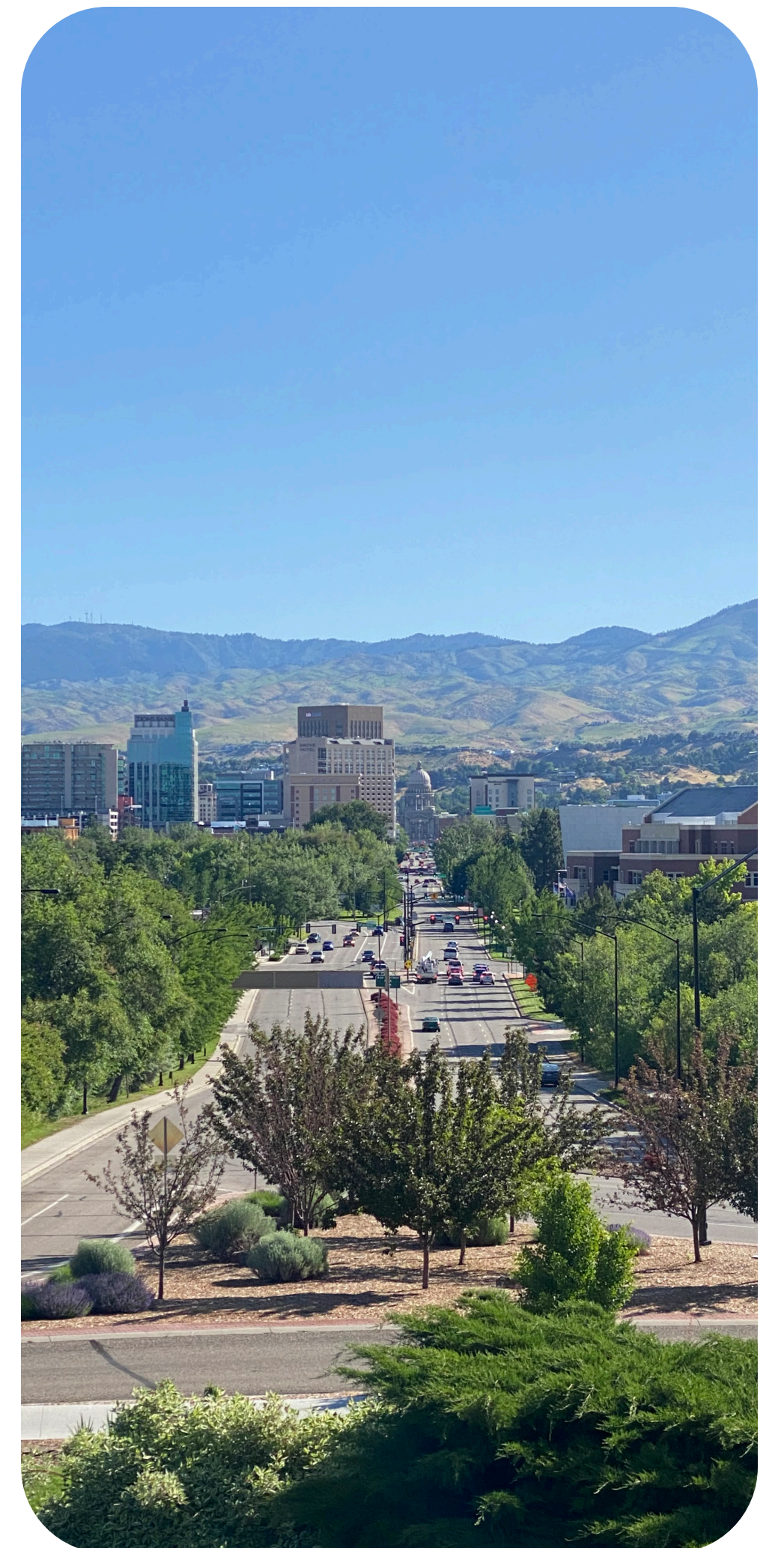
Let's Ride Treasure Valley Open House

Thank you for joining us!

Please sign in, review the information, and engage with the study team.

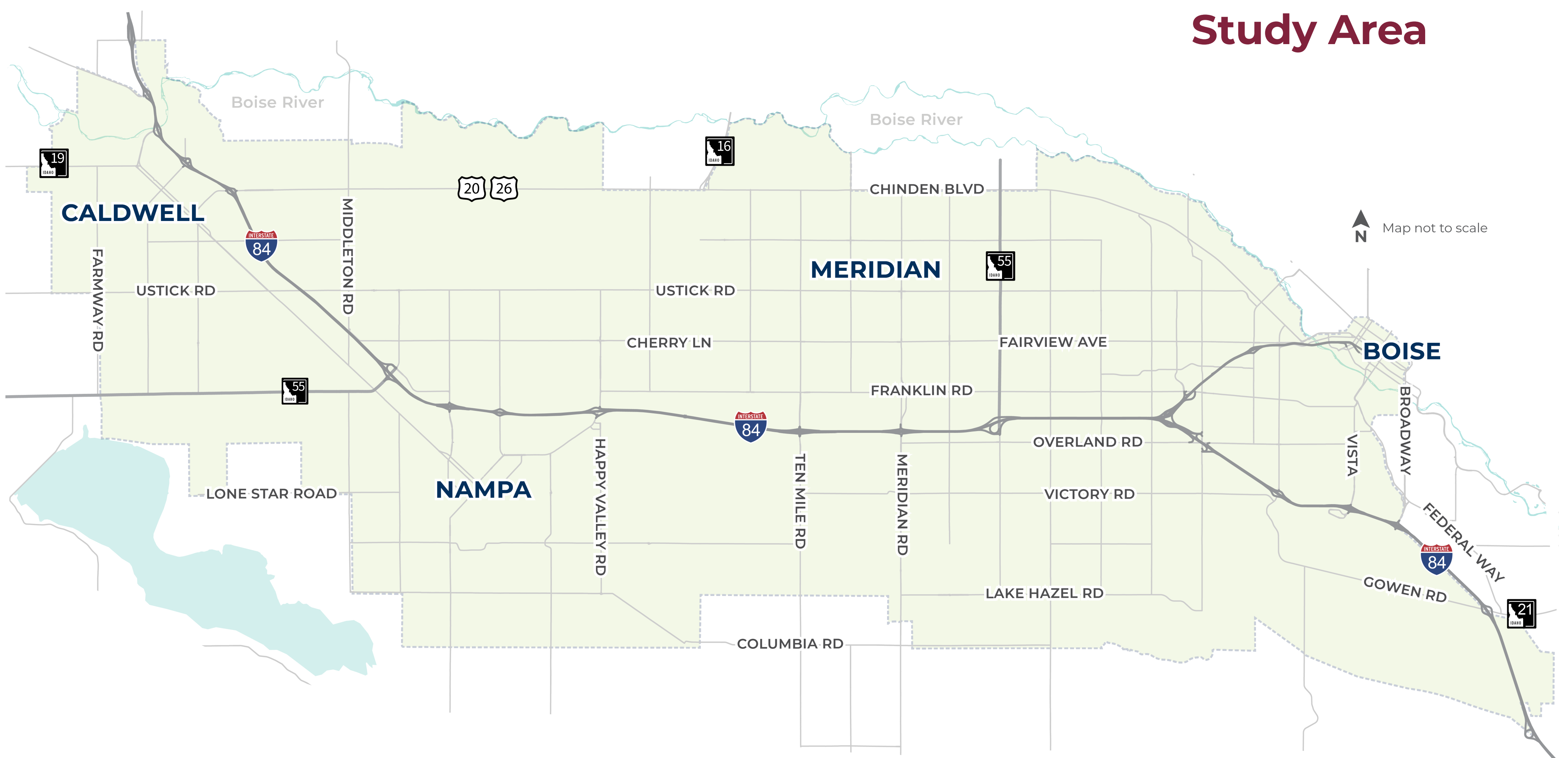
We want to hear from you!

Be sure to complete the questionnaire and provide your feedback.



Study Background

Let's Ride Treasure Valley is a partnership between the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) and its member agencies to further examine a future high-capacity transit connection east to west across the region south of the Boise River.



Past Planning



This study builds on several previous planning efforts.

2003 Rail Corridor Evaluation Study

Initial examination of rail transit options

2009 Treasure Valley High-Capacity Transit Study

Advanced examination of transit corridors (rail, bus, etc.)

2020 Treasure Valley High-Capacity Transit Study Update

Update to the 2009 study with new data

2021 COMPASS conducted the All Aboard! Survey

It asked Treasure Valley stakeholders about their travel patterns and thoughts on high-capacity transit. Over **11,700 people responded**. Some potential benefits of high-capacity transit they shared included:

- » Increased mobility and accessibility for people who don't drive
- » Positive environmental impacts
- » Reduced drinking and driving
- » Access to special events
- » Saves time, money, and stress



High-Capacity Transit Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

What is a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study?

COLLECT

Collect information to define the transportation problem the project seeks to address.

UTILIZE

Use information to develop a range of potential transportation solutions including routes and transit technologies.

REFINE

Screen routes against certain factors such as reliability, environmental impacts, and future development and planning.

ANALYZE

Analyze how routes perform in the future transportation system.

DEVELOP

Develop recommendations for the project to move forward including potential phasing.

The PEL process is a formal federal process to help streamline future environmental analysis.

The process is guided by the project partners and considers:



Transportation issues, opportunities, and priorities



Environmental resources concerns and opportunities



Stakeholder and public input



The Idaho Transportation Department has developed a great overview video on PEL studies.

Scan the code to view the video.

Post-PEL project steps

NEPA Analysis
Preliminary Design
(pending project funding)

Final Design

Construction

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the project is to **improve the mobility, accessibility, and efficiency of east-west travel** between Boise, Meridian, Nampa, and Caldwell, providing **reliable and convenient high-capacity transit service that links key origins and destinations** with strong potential for transit use.



Key Terms:

- » **Mobility:** Traveling from one place to another
- » **Accessibility:** Ease of entering and exiting a transit stop/station
- » **Efficiency:** Transit working well and organized, without wasting time or energy
- » **Convenience:** Making transit simple and intuitive for the user
- » **Reliability:** The transit service arrives and departs as scheduled



High-Capacity Transit Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

Why is High-Capacity Transit Needed in our Region?



Lessen future stress on the region's transportation infrastructure due to population and employment growth.



By 2050, the city areas of Boise, Meridian, Nampa, and Caldwell (within the study area) will account for 78% of the region's jobs.

78% OF THE REGION'S JOBS

Ada County Population

2000 —→ 2023

+81% growth

2023: 545,000

+35%

2050: 733,000

Canyon County Population

2000 —→ 2023

+95% growth

2023: 257,000

+40%

2050: 359,000



Provide greater mobility choice given the region's forecasted deteriorating travel times.



50% TRAVEL TIME INCREASE

By 2050, travel times between Caldwell and Downtown Boise are **projected to increase by 50%** (peak morning/evening directions).

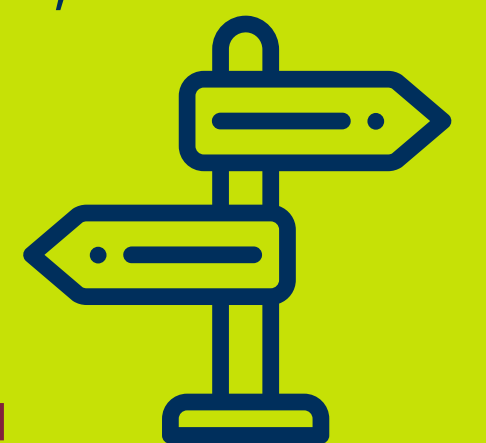


Transit **reliability will continue to degrade** with growing congestion.



Support the region's East-West travel patterns

The region's focused **East-West travel patterns will persist** between the region's business, governmental, cultural, and educational centers.



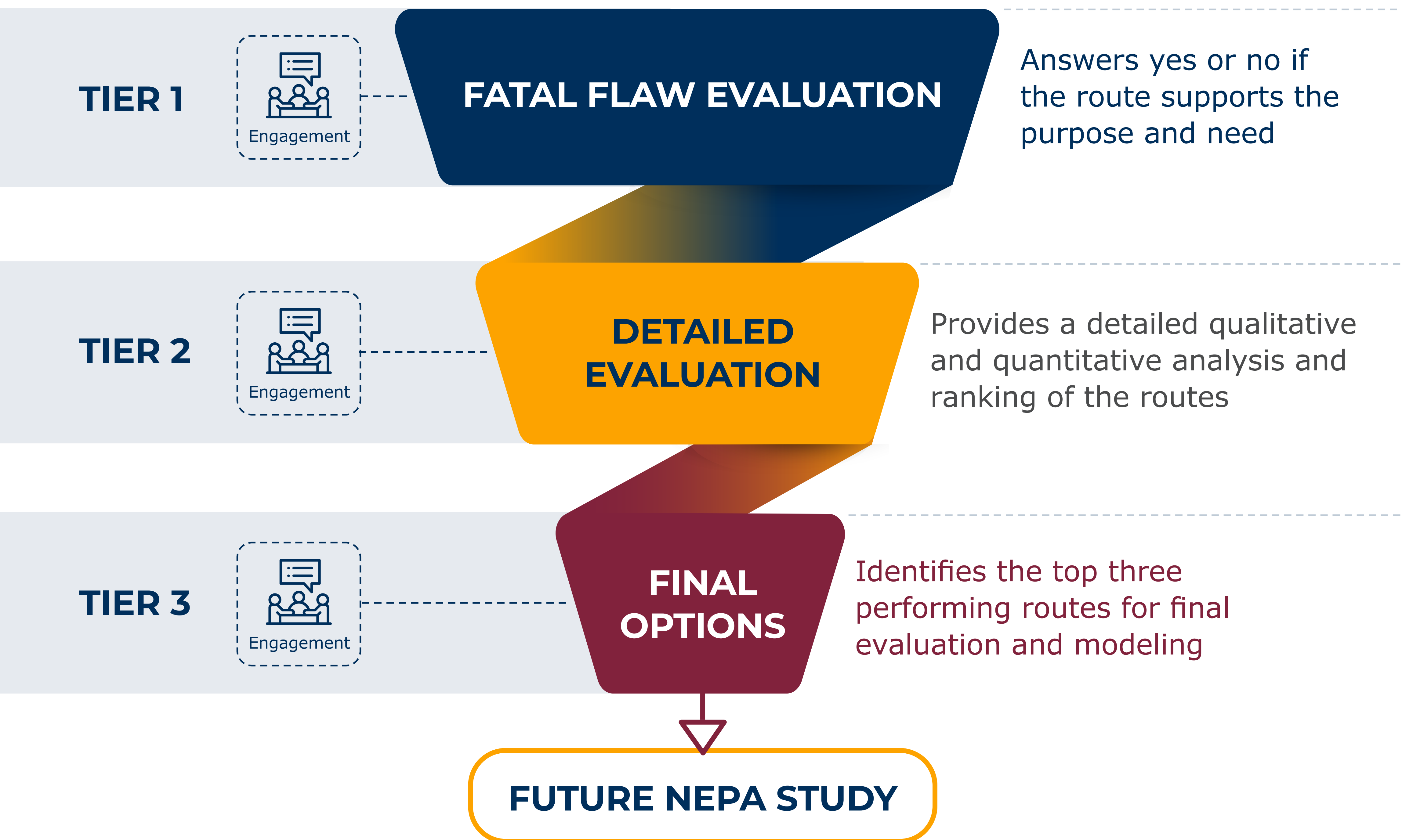
31%

By 2050, **31%** of all study area commute trips will focus on **Downtown Boise.**



High-Capacity Transit Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

Tiered Evaluation Process



The process becomes increasingly more detailed at each tier.

Tier 1:

Routes are examined to determine if they meet the purpose for the project. If the answer is “yes,” they continue to Tier 2.

Tier 2:

Each route is refined based on Tier 1 input and assigned a type of transit vehicles (called “modes” e.g., light rail, bus rapid transit, commuter rail). The routes and associated modes are compared to one other, with the top three performing options continuing to Tier 3.

Tier 3:

The top three performing options are further refined and evaluated in more detail.

Tier 1 Evaluation

The Tier 1 Evaluation compared each option against the purpose and need statement, asking three key questions.

Does this route...

?

Improve regional mobility and accessibility for east-west travel across the study area?

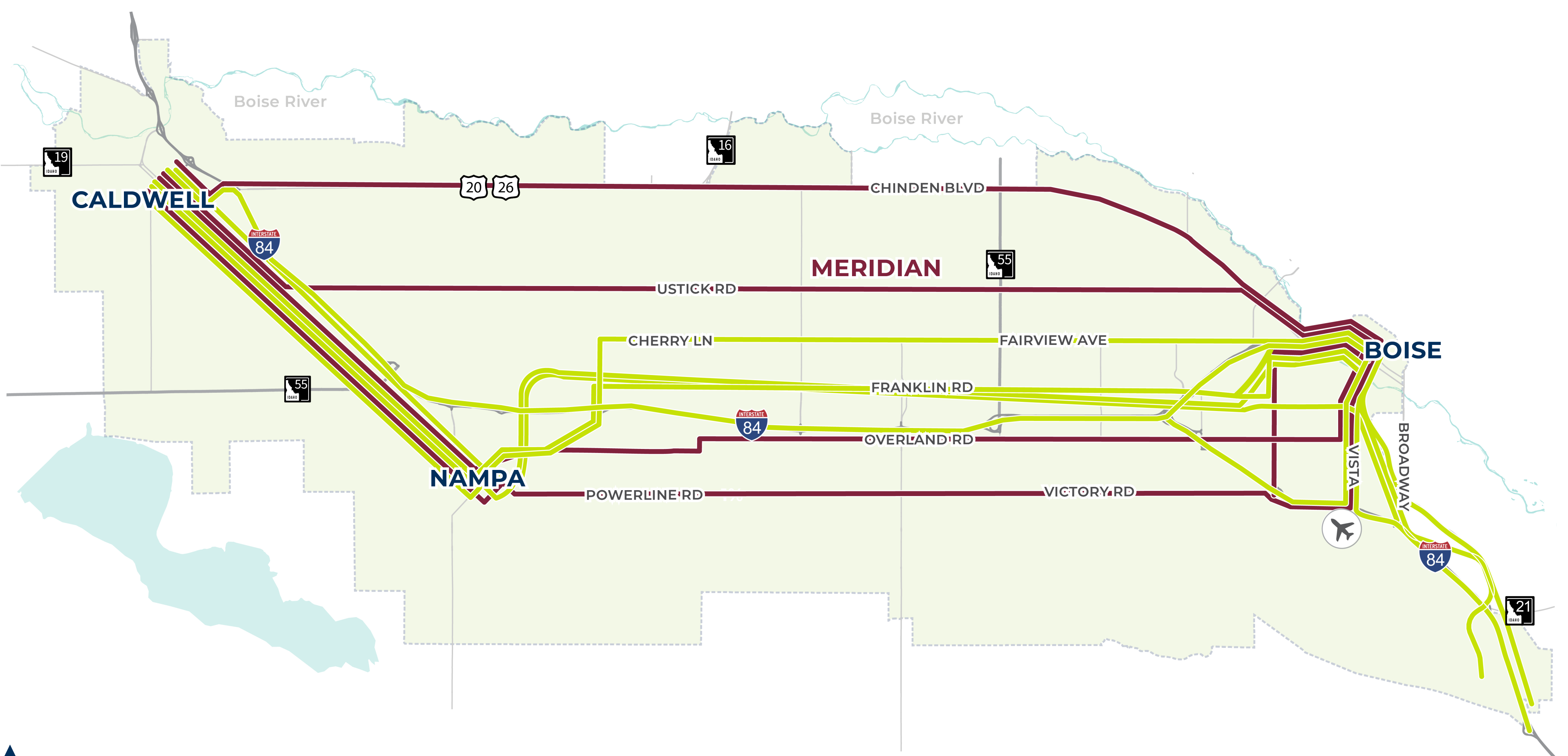
?

Provide convenient high-capacity transit service that links key origins and destinations with strong potential for transit use in Boise, Meridian, Nampa, and Caldwell?

?

Provide efficient and reliable high-capacity transit service across the study area?

Routes marked in green met the project purpose and needs and were carried forward into Tier 2 analysis. Routes in red were not carried forward.



N Map not to scale

High-Capacity Transit Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

Tier 1 Community Feedback



COMPASS held two open houses and gathered feedback through an online public survey in fall 2024 that received over 300 responses.

FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS



Strong consensus on the need for improved high-capacity transit solutions to address rapid population growth and traffic congestion in the region.



Most survey respondents agreed or mostly agreed (an average of 94%) with the purpose and need, goals and objectives, and route proposals.

Respondents ranked the five goals in order of importance. The results are as follows:

- 1 Provide more ways to travel.
- 2 Connect to places with more people and places people want to go.
- 3 Provide more transit, bike, and walking/rolling routes to more destinations.
- 4 Make sure transit arrives and departs as scheduled.
- 5 Ensure that projects are compatible with various funding programs or other relevant opportunities.



Ensure that transit options are **accessible and affordable for all residents**, particularly those who cannot drive and lower-income communities.

Highlight the **environmental benefits of transit solutions**, and the potential risks of inaction, to build motivation and support.



Transit solutions are urgently needed to **alleviate worsening traffic congestion**, particularly on major routes such as I-84 and Eagle Road.

Key takeaways from open-ended comments.

Use existing train tracks and depots to **minimize costs and maximize efficiency**.



Concerns about **securing adequate funding** from state and federal sources.



Maintain and improve existing transit routes that provide essential connections to people and destinations including Chinden, Ustick, Overland, and Victory.

Connect to key destination routes, such as the Boise Airport, Boise State University, Micron Campus, parks/recreation, healthcare, and government offices.



Provide **pedestrian and bike connectivity** to ensure an accessible transportation network.

Tier 2 Mode Options

Mode defines the type of transit vehicle or technology that will be used. The initial mode options for consideration build on the previous high-capacity transit planning that narrowed the mode options to those listed below.



Regional – commuter rail:

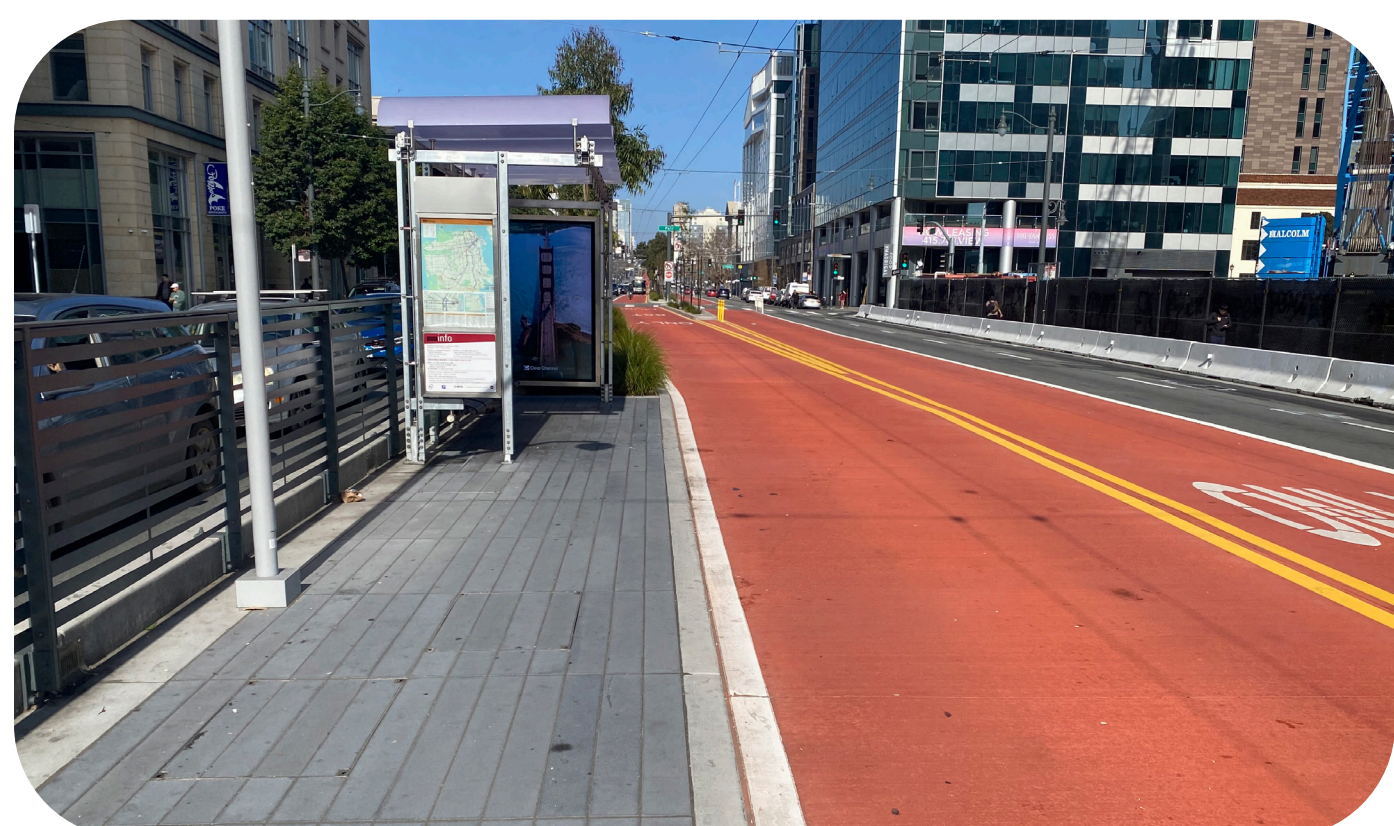
A heavy-rail vehicle operating within the existing freight rail corridor. Safety features are necessary due to potential interactions between freight and passenger services.



Light rail transit (LRT):

A light-rail vehicle operating in its own dedicated corridor. Light rail cannot safely operate on freight rail tracks and would require significant separation from freight.

Bus rapid transit (BRT): BRT can operate similarly to a train, using dedicated bus lanes with significant amenities at stops (raised platforms, benches, real-time displays, etc.). This study explores three potential configurations:



BRT – exclusive guideway:

Buses run in center lanes and are physically separated from other traffic.



BRT – business access and transit (BAT) lanes:

Buses run in outside lanes, primarily used for buses, but other vehicles may use the lanes to access adjacent businesses and residences or as right-turn lanes.



BRT – mixed traffic:

Buses run in general purpose lanes with other vehicles. Includes some improvements like BRT stop amenities and signal priority.

Tier 2 – Modes Evaluation

Step 1:

Assess the suitability of different modes for high-capacity transit within Treasure Valley using the following questions:

- Does the mode improve transit connectivity and reliability?
- How does the mode fit into the existing context of the corridor
- Is the mode financially feasible and constructable?

Step 2:

Pair Tier 2 routes with appropriate mode.

Proposed modes not carried forward:

LRT:

- » Most expensive mode
- » Requires the most space
- » Safety considerations if operating in the freight rail corridor.
- » Best suited for short, urban routes

BRT- Mixed Traffic:

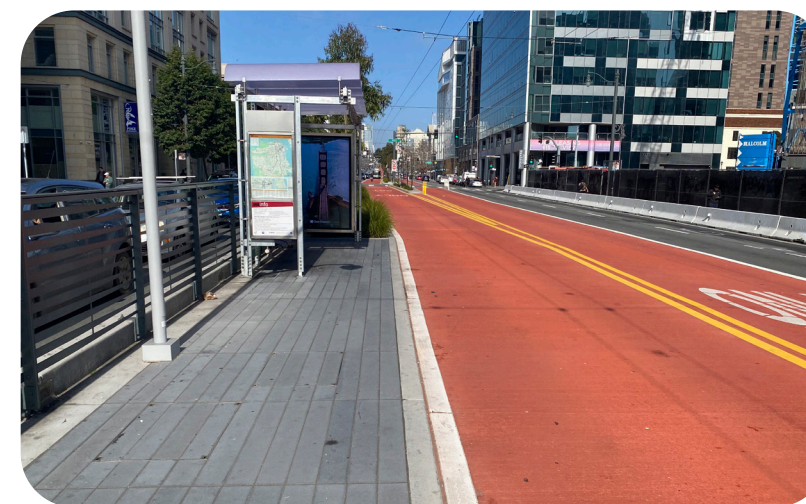
- » Less reliable service compared to other modes.
- » Requires more vehicles to maintain service frequencies

Mode Evaluation

Proposed Modes Carried Forward



Regional – Commuter Rail



BRT – Exclusive Guideway



BRT – Business Access and Transit (BAT) Lanes

Proposed Modes Not Carried Forward



Light Rail Transit



BRT – Mixed Traffic

Modes Paired with Routes



Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane

- ▶ BRT – Exclusive Guideway (center)
- ▶ BRT – Business Access and Transit (BAT) Lanes



Franklin Road

- ▶ BRT – Exclusive Guideway (center)
- ▶ BRT – BAT Lanes (side)



I-84/I-184

- ▶ BRT – BAT Lanes (side)

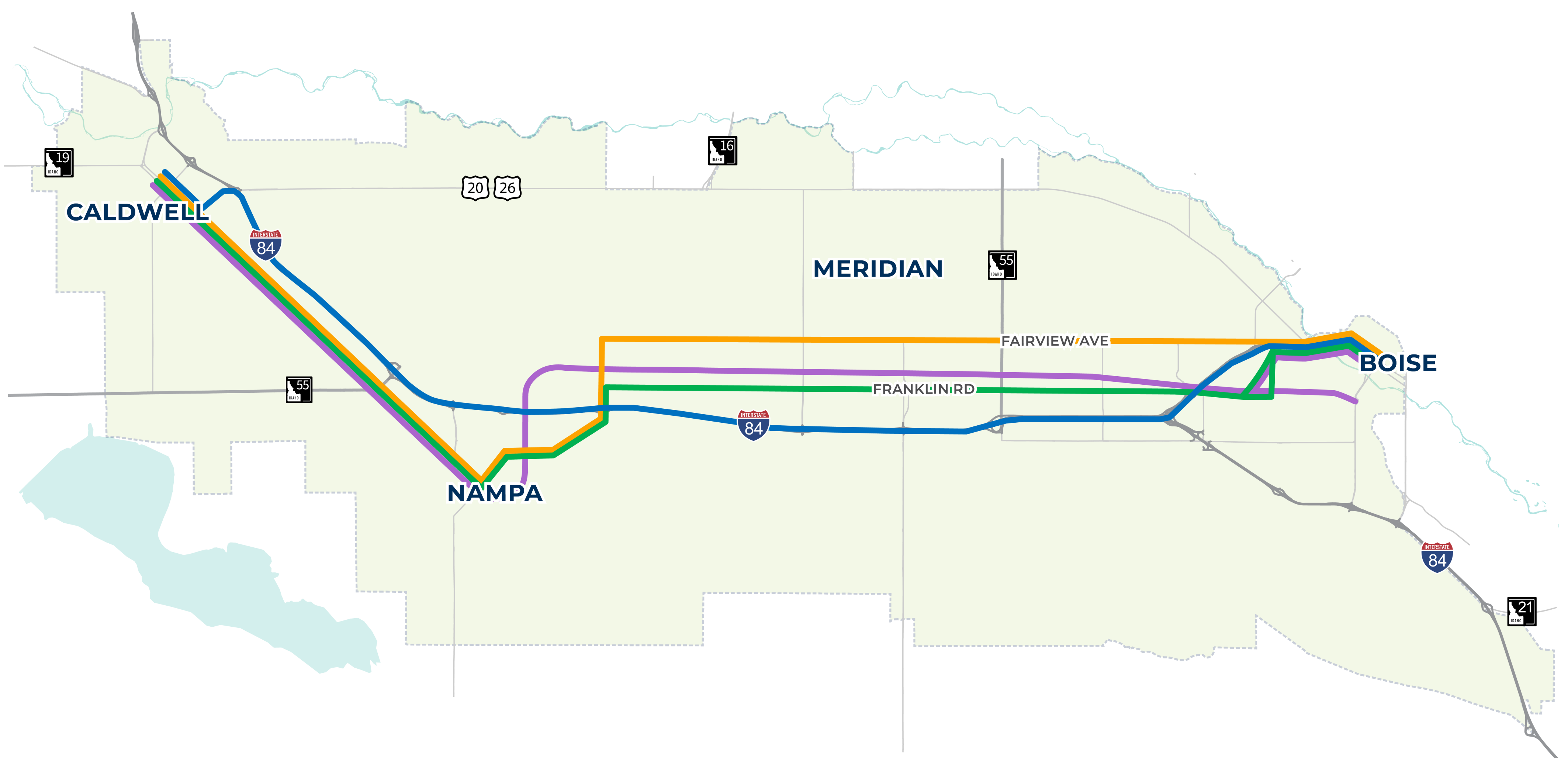


Boise Cutoff

- ▶ Regional – Commuter Rail

Tier 2

ROUTE OPTIONS



- Boise Cutoff
- Fairview Ave/Cherry Ln
- Franklin Rd
- I-84/I-184

N Map not to scale

Tier 2 Evaluation

Step 3: Assess each option along with its mode based on the criteria below that build on the goals and objectives from the purpose and needs.

Goals	Objectives/Measures
<p>Improve transit connectivity and mode share</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Does the option connect key origins and destinations? » Does the option provide access to important community resources (e.g., healthcare, grocery stores, government facilities.)? » Does the option connect areas with the potential for high transit usage? » Does the option connect to population and employment centers?
<p>Improve transit reliability, and expand travel choices and mobility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Does the option integrate with the existing and planned transit network? » Is the option reliable and predictable for users? » To what magnitude are traffic operations potentially impacted? » Does the option connect to existing and planned trails, sidewalks, and/or bike lanes?
<p>Develop compatible plans for high-capacity transit, land use, and transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Does the option go through areas with transit supportive land uses (employment centers and higher density housing)? » Does the option present environmental challenges? » Does the option manage impacts and/or enhance opportunities to support freight/goods movement?
<p>Advance financially feasible solutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » To what extent does this option align with available funding opportunities? » Can the corridor be protected or preserved for future high capacity transit service? » How difficult would it be to implement the option?

Tier 2 Evaluation Summary

Below is a summary of how each route/mode combination scored against one another when applying the criteria.

Goal	Evaluation Criteria	Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane		Franklin Road		I-84/I-184	Boise Cut-Off
		BRT Exclusive	BRT BAT	BRT Exclusive	BRT BAT	BRT BAT	Commuter Rail
Improve transit connectivity and mode share	Connects key origins and destinations (activity centers)?	○	○	+	+	-	+
	Connects community services (healthcare, grocery stores, etc.)?	+	+	○	○	-	+
	Connects area of potential high transit usage (seniors, students, etc.)?	+	+	○	○	+	○
	Serves high share of the region's population (current and future)?	○	○	○	○	-	○
	Serves high share of the region's jobs (current and future)?	+	+	+	+	+	+
Improve transit reliability	Provides exclusivity and priority for transit?	○	-	○	-	○	+
	Presents potential impacts to traffic?	-	○	-	○	+	○
Expand travel choices and mobility	Integrates with the transit network?	+	+	+	+	+	○
	Integrates with active transportation (bike, pedestrians)?	+	+	+	+	○	-
Develop compatible plans for high-capacity transit, land use, and transportation	Serves planned existing or future transit supportive development opportunities?	-	-	○	○	+	○
	Presents potential environmental issues?	+	○	+	○	+	○
	Supports freight/goods movement?	+	+	-	-	+	+
Advance financially feasible solutions	Aligns with federal, local, and private funding opportunities?	○	○	○	○	+	○
	Preserves the corridor for future high-capacity transit service?	-	-	-	-	+	+
	Increases complexity of implementation?	-	-	-	-	-	○
Draft Tier 2 Scoring		Carry Forward				Carry Forward	Carry Forward

Tier 2 Evaluation Results

Below describes the major findings from the Tier 2 evaluation. Each remaining option was evaluated against the criteria and each other.

Boise Cut-Off

COMMUTER RAIL

Benefits:

- » Passes through key regional activity centers.
- » Provides exclusive and reliable service, as trains get priority at crossings and travel in dedicated right of way.
- » Fewer environmental challenges or impacts.
- » Requires the least amount of property acquisitions.
- » Track and crossing upgrades may improve freight efficiency.

Considerations:

- » Serves lower share of the region's population and jobs (current and future).
- » Feasibility dependent on negotiations with railroad owners and operators.

I-84/I-184

BRT/BAT

Benefits:

- » Passes through communities with higher likelihood of using transit.
- » Serves a higher share of the region's jobs (current and future).
- » Provides exclusive and reliable service as buses would operate in dedicated lanes.
- » Fewer anticipated traffic impacts.
- » Intersects many existing and future transit routes.
- » Fewer environmental challenges or impacts
- » Requires fewer number of property acquisitions.
- » Potentially lower cost to implement.

Considerations:

- » Passes through fewer key regional activity centers.
- » Intersects fewer existing and future pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane & Franklin Road

BRT-BAT & BRT-EXCLUSIVE

Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane and Franklin Rd (arterial routes) score similarly for numerous criteria. Both routes:

Benefits:

- » Provides connections to key destinations, community resources, jobs, existing and future transit, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- » Passes through communities with higher likelihood of using transit.
- » Serves high share of the region's population and jobs (current and future).

Considerations:

- » Presents moderate to high traffic impacts.
- » Requires significant roadway widening to construct and high number of property acquisitions.
- » Impacts a large number of historic sites.
- » Potentially complex and costly to implement.

The analysis found that BRT-BAT (side) would have greater impacts compared to BRT-Exclusive (center).

BRT-BAT requires the most amount of right-of-way to construct the corridor resulting in:

- » Greater number of historic sites impacted.
- » More property acquisitions.
- » More expensive to construct.

BRT Exclusive may result in:

- » More difficulty accessing businesses.
- » Greater impacts to freight operations.

Tier 2 Evaluation Results

Proposed Options Not Carried Forward

Franklin Road

Franklin Road provides similar benefits and impacts to Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane, but there are additional factors for why the corridor is not proposed to advance to Tier 3.

- » Franklin is a critical urban freight corridor and high-capacity transit may disrupt freight operations.
- » Fewer people are forecasted to live along the route option.
- » Passes through fewer communities with higher likelihood of using transit.

Following initial outreach to study stakeholders, there was interest in combining the most promising segments of the Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane and Franklin Road routes to connect to more key regional and community destinations.

Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane

BRT BAT

The Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane BRT-BAT mode option is not proposed to advance to Tier 3. While the route provide similar benefits to the exclusive BRT option, BRT BAT would result in:

- » Greater number of property acquisitions
- » Significant changes to the right-of-way to accommodate the service
- » Significant impacts to a large number of historic properties

LIGHT RAIL (LRT)

LRT was not carried forward following the mode evaluation. Ultimately, when compared to other modes, LRT scored lower due to several factors:

- » More expensive to construct.
- » Requires more space to safely operate in the freight rail corridor.
- » More effective in urban environments with frequent stops.
- » Incompatible with typical freight corridor design and purpose.

BRT MIXED TRAFFIC

BRT Mixed Traffic was not carried forward following the mode evaluation. When compared to other modes, BRT Mixed Traffic scored lower due to several key issues:

- » Buses would face congestion and delays similar to other vehicles. Delays are compounded over the 30-mile corridor.
- » BRT improvements are expensive. Potential poor return on investment if buses are delayed in traffic.
- » BRT is expected to be faster and more predictable than local service. Mixed traffic BRT would not meet rider expectations.

Proposed Options Carried Forward to Tier 3

Boise Cut-Off

COMMUTER RAIL

- » Provides reliable and exclusive service to regional activity centers including Downtown Caldwell, Nampa, and Meridian, while requiring shuttle service to Boise's center.
- » Most of the infrastructure could be constructed within the existing right-of-way.
- » Fewer environmental impacts compared to other options.

I-84/I-184

BRT/BAT

- » Provides similar reliability and exclusivity as Commuter Rail at a reduced cost.
- » Most of the infrastructure could be constructed within the existing right-of-way.
- » Fewer environmental impacts compared to other options.
- » Minimal traffic impacts.

Fairview Avenue/Cherry Lane

BRT EXCLUSIVE

- » Provides more connections to key destinations, community resources, jobs, existing and future transit, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities compared to Franklin Rd.
- » Passes through more communities with higher likelihood of using the service.
- » Provides services to more people (current and future).
- » While the Franklin Rd route is not proposed to advance into Tier 3, initial outreach to stakeholders showed interest in combining Fairview Ave/Cherry Lane and Franklin Rd routes to capture activity centers along Franklin.

Tier 3 Evaluation

Three route options and the No Action are proposed to be carried forward into the Tier 3 evaluation. The Airport Connection and the Micron Connection options will be considered with the remaining routes (as appropriate) during the Tier 3 evaluation. Tier 3 will include more detailed analysis of the route's potential performance, including considerations for stop locations, transit demand, benefits, and costs.

		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	
No Action					Carried forward for further analysis as baseline condition
Chinden Blvd					
Ustick Rd					
Fairview Ave/ Cherry Lane					Carried forward for further analysis: BRT Exclusive
Boise Cutoff Railroad					Carried forward for further analysis: Commuter Rail
Franklin Rd					Poorer performance for feasibility, connectivity, and reliability
I-84/I-184					Carried forward for further analysis: BRT BAT
Overland Rd					
Victory Rd/ Powerline Rd					
Airport Connection					To be considered with other routes as options in Tier 3
Micron Connection					To be considered with other routes as options in Tier 3

FINAL EVALUATION



Comment Station



Please Share Your Input!

Please complete a comment form now, either written or online, on one of our laptops.



Online Comments

The open house boards are posted on the project website along with a link to the online comment form at: **compassidaho.org**



Submit your comments anytime from **February 10 – March 2, 2025.**

« Scan the code to visit the project website.

Need more information?

Contact the study team:

Email: info@compassidaho.org

Call: 208.855.2558

