

The Coalition for Regional Public Transportation



The goal of the Coalition for Regional Public Transportation is to develop local funding options for regional public transportation with the leadership of Valley Regional Transit, enlist support from companies, business leaders, chambers of commerce, legislators and other interested community organizations and achieve passage of state legislation.

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New study documents strong voter support of transportation ballot measures

Voters in 33 different states have approved 70 percent of all proposed transportation funding measures since the year 2000, according to a study by the Center for Transportation Excellence.

The measures passed by voters have or will generate funding in excess of \$70 billion.

In its study, which was released in August, CTFE analyzed more than 200 state and local ballot measures related to transportation.

The CTFE research also details trends in voter-approved financing for transportation. More than 80 percent of all transportation measures since the year 2000 have specifically authorized financing. The report found support across the board for a variety of funding tools, including sales tax, property taxes, bonds and dedicated fees.

Among the report's other findings are:

- Transportation measures have passed at twice the rate of all ballot measures (70 percent to 34 percent);
- Sales tax proposals were the most common type of financing initiative, nearly 40 percent of the total.



Volunteers took over Jefferson Street in front of the Idaho Statehouse on Sept. 12 to show the roadway space requirements for 33 single occupant vehicles (above), 11 three-person carpools (top, right), three 11-passenger vanpools (center, right) and a bus with 33 passengers. The demonstration was sponsored by Valley Regional Transit and ACHD Commuteride.



Questions and answers about RPTAs

What is a Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA)?

A regional public transportation authority is a governmental agency created by ballot initiative to address public transportation issues within each county or region that deems such an agency necessary.

How is an RPTA governed?

An RPTA is governed through a board of directors made of local elected and appointed officials representing each of the local governments (cities, counties, highway districts) within the authority boundaries. This use of existing public officials is intended to limit the expansion or duplication of governmental roles.

What are RPTA responsibilities?

An RPTA provides public transportation services, encourages private transportation programs and coordinates both public and private transportation programs, services and support functions.

How many RPTAs are in Idaho?

There currently are two RPTAs in Idaho. Bonneville County was the first to approve the formation of a countywide RPTA (the Targee Regional Public Transportation Authority, or TRPTA) in 1995. In 1998, voters in Ada and Canyon counties voted for the formation of a RPTA (now called Valley Regional Transit).

How is an RPTA formed?

An RPTA can be formed on a

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county or regional basis. If the city councils and county commissions of all cities and counties wholly or partially included in the proposed region approve a resolution proposing the establishment of an RPTA, the question shall be submitted for voter approval. A simple majority is needed for passage.

What are the advantages of an RPTA?

One advantage of an RPTA is that its focus is solely on public transportation issues in its area of jurisdiction. This narrowed focus can result in better coordination of services, closer monitoring of federal grant programs and a unified effort to secure federal and local funding.

Does the RPTA law provide for a funding mechanism for transit services?

No. Counties, cities, highway districts and other governmental entities within the region may, at their discretion, enter into a cooperative agreement with the authority in order to contribute funds from any source, provide services-in-kind and loan or convey real and personal property to the authority in recognition of costs of the authority, maintain continuity of existing public transportation services, or to implement new services.

How is public transportation funded now?

The limited transit service available in Idaho is supported by voluntary local contributions from the local jurisdictions that receive services. These local contributions are used to help match federal transit grants. These funds pay for transit operations, capitol purchases, planning efforts and administrative costs.

Resort cities in Idaho with populations less than 10,000 are able to provide local funding through monies raised by a local option tax. The Cities of McCall and Ketchum/Sun Valley provide funds from this local option tax for public transportation.

Upcoming Presentations

- » Wednesday, Sept. 18, noon, Caldwell Optimists, Caldwell Mayor Garret Nancolas
- » Wednesday, Sept. 18, 6:30 p.m., Caldwell City Council and Chamber, Mayor Garrett Nancolas
- » Monday, Sept. 18, time TBD, Notus City Council, Valley Regional Transit (VRT) staff
- » Tuesday, Sept. 19, noon, Nampa Optimists, Nampa Mayor Tom Dale
- » Tuesday, Sept. 26, noon, Caldwell Exchange Club, Mayor Nancolas
- » Thursday, Sept. 28, noon, Nampa Kiwanis, Mayor Dale
- » Monday, Oct. 2, noon, Rotary Club of Meridian, VRT staff
- » Tuesday, Oct. 3, noon, Eagle Chamber of Commerce, VRT staff
- Tuesday, Oct. 3, noon, Nampa Lions Club, Mayor Tom Dale

Supporters of Coalition recommendations

The following is a list of organizations and governing bodies that have gone on record in support of the proposed legislation:

- » Ada County Commission
- » Albertson College of Idaho
- » Amalgamated Sugar Co.
- » Association of Idaho Cities
- » Blue Cross of Idaho
- » Boise Cascade, LLC
- » Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce
- » Capital City Development Corporation (CCDC),
- » CH2M Hill
- » City of Boise
- » City of Eagle
- » City of Garden City
- » City of Greenleaf
- » City of Parma
- » Colliers International
- » Comprehensive Advocacy, Inc.
- » Community Planning Association of SW Idaho (COMPASS)
- » Farmers & Merchants State Bank
- » Givens Pursley, LLP
- » HDR, Inc.
- » Hawley Troxell Ennis & Hawley, LLP
- » Hewlett-Packard Company
- » Home Federal Bank
- » Idaho Smart Growth
- » Key Bank of Idaho
- » Living Independence Network Corporation
- » Meadow Gold Dairy,
- » Meridian Chamber of Commerce
- » Meridian Development Corporation
- » Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center
- » State Independent Living Council
- » United Heritage
- » Valley Regional Transit
- » Washington Trust Bank

This monthly newsletter is designed to provide information about the local activities of the Coalition for Regional Public Transportation and transit issues in the region.

The Coalition has completed work on a recommendation for a local funding source for public transportation. Its focus now is to educate Treasure Valley residents and build support. If you have suggestions for story ideas, or want to help spread the word about the importance a vibrant and comprehensive public transportation system will play in the development of a successful regional transportation network, send an e-mail to: mcarnopis@valleyregionaltrtransit.org.