Executive Summary

Background

Voters in Ada and Canyon Counties approved the formation of a Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) in each of their respective Counties in 1998. The Treasure Valley Regional Public Transportation Authority (TVRPTA) was formed on January 21, 1999 when the Boards of the Ada and Canyon County RPTAs met and formally voted to merge the two organizations. The transit authority, now known as Valley Regional Transit (VRT) is (the agency) responsible for meeting the evolving public transportation needs of Treasure Valley residents through the planning and administration of a wide range of transportation services operating under the ValleyRide name.

The VRT Board of Directors is composed of twenty-six appointed representatives from the incorporated cities, counties and highway districts of Ada and Canyon Counties. The Board also includes one appointed representative from the Capital City Development Corporation (CCDC) and one representative from Boise State University.

Under Idaho State Code, VRT is responsible for the oversight of all public transportation services in the two-county area, "except those transportation services and programs under the jurisdiction of public school districts and law enforcement agencies." Currently, VRT is directly responsible for the operations of public transportation services in Boise and Garden City and is the administrative and planning body for public transportation services throughout the Treasure Valley, including: fixed route bus, rail, and van services; paratransit service for the elderly and disabled; shuttle and commuter service between cities, counties, health care facilities, employment centers, educational institutions or Park-and-Ride locations; and subscription van and car-pooling service.

VRT initiated the Regional Operations and Capital Improvement Plan (ROCIP) to develop a comprehensive public transportation service plan and capital improvement strategy for the Treasure Valley. The 18-month plan development process took place with close cooperation between VRT, other

regional service providers and stakeholder groups. An extensive public involvement program also complemented the project. This report details the ROCIP findings and recommendations. The VRT Board of Directors had adopted all active elements of this plan (Chapters 3 – 7) by November 2004, before the production of this final report.

Planning Context

The context for the Regional Operations and Capital Improvement Plan (ROCIP) is shaped by regional economic and population growth. Natural beauty, easy access to recreational opportunities, quality public services, and the presence of major educational institutions have led communities in the Treasure Valley to prosper economically, even during recent years of nationwide recession. Impacts of economic growth and immigration to the area have increased pressure on transportation systems and spurred housing, commercial and institutional development. Many area residents are concerned with the rate and structure of growth in the Treasure Valley and with increasing traffic congestion, despite efforts to increase roadway capacity and improve functionality. Smart Growth forums, such as *Treasure Valley Futures*, have initiated ongoing community dialog about how to deal with the opportunities and issues associated with growth.

Over the past five years, Valley Regional Transit (VRT) has completed a Transportation Development Plan concept service design, a Five-Year Strategic Plan, and a preliminary analysis of a commuter rail corridor.

The Regional Operations and Capital Improvement Plan (ROCIP) was developed within the context of these plans and the ongoing regional discussion of growth issues. Many of the ideas and inputs to the year-long outreach process that shaped the ROCIP have evolved from a well-informed and motivated group of stakeholders with a vested interest in the future of the Treasure Valley. John Bryson, an expert in strategic planning for public organizations, defines a stakeholder as “any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on an organization's attention, resources, or output or is affected by that output.” This broad definition was carried through the ROCIP process and ultimately

includes any and all citizens of VRT's service area who have an interest in the future of the two-county public transportation system.

Input from key community leaders and the public was supported by the work of several committees that contributed intensively to the Regional Operations and Capital Improvement Plan. These groups include:

- **Regional Operations and Planning Committee**: This committee is comprised of a range of public and private interests, including service area jurisdictions, transportation providers, employers and educational institutions, such as Boise State University. The Chair of the Committee is a member of the VRT Board of Directors. This committee met monthly throughout the plan process to discuss plan developments and provide critical feedback on ROCIP recommendations. All active elements of the ROCIP were approved by this committee and forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval.
- **Ways and Means Committee**: This committee, comprised of select VRT Board members, member agency staff, and citizens is responsible for reviewing financial and funding concerns for the agency. This committee reviewed and provided directive for financial plan elements and funding strategies related to the ROCIP.
- **Management and Coordinating Council**: The VMCC is a group of area transportation providers formed to jointly develop regional policy and operational policies and procedures. This group includes VRT, Canyon County operators, the Ada County Highway District, Idaho Transportation Department, COMPASS and others. VMCC members participated actively in the development of the ROCIP.

Public Involvement

Extensive public involvement contributed to the Regional Operations and Capital Improvement Plan. In all, the ROCIP process drew from the participation of over 6,000 individuals through its public involvement program and related campaigns. The consultant team and Valley Regional Transit (VRT) used a

number of outreach strategies and gathered information from previous public outreach done by VRT and other regional agencies. These efforts included:

- Results of 11 employer surveys from ACHD Commuteride from 1999-2002.
- Results of previous public involvement from seven separate projects conducted by VRT from 2001-2003.
- Summarized results of 571 comments from the public and local agencies regarding ValleyRide bus and Commuteride services from 2000-2004.
- Results of a public opinion poll that surveyed 500 residents of Ada and Canyon counties in November 2003. This survey was designed and implemented as part of this project.
- Twenty-nine stakeholder meetings conducted by VRT staff in Ada and Canyon counties between February and April 2004.
- Input received at two public open houses (one each in Ada and Canyon counties) on short-range service scenarios in April 2004.
- Input received at four public open houses (two each in Ada and Canyon counties) to present long-range service scenarios in July 2004.

A more detailed summary of ROCIP outreach efforts is provided in Appendix A of this report.

Existing Conditions

Chapter 2 summarizes findings from the *ROCIP Existing Conditions Report*. Generated in December 2003, the *Existing Conditions Report* includes an environmental scan of the Valley Regional Transit (VRT) service area communities, assesses the quality of public transportation services provided to them, and develops a context from previous planning efforts. The data and analysis elements presented in this document provided baseline data and context for developing short- and long-range service plans described in Chapters 3 and 4 (Short- and Long-Range Service Plans).

Existing Providers

A review of existing public transportation providers and their services provides crucial background for this study, aiding in the identification of opportunities for better regional connectivity and organizational coordination or consolidation. The following table lists key regional public transportation providers in Ada and Canyon Counties operating in 2004. After the implementation of the ROCIP Short-Range Service Plan in 2005, several of these services will be consolidated under the ValleyRide name.

Figure ES-1 Public Transportation Providers in Ada and Canyon Counties

Organization	Type of Services	Service Area
ValleyRide	Fixed-Route Service, Commuter, Paratransit	Boise and Garden City
ACHD Commuteride	Vanpool, Carpool and Employer Assistance	Ada County and Canyon County
Commuters Bus	Commuter/Express	Caldwell, Nampa, Middleton, Star, Eagle and Boise
Treasure Valley Metro	Commuter/Express, Mid-day Service	Nampa, Meridian and Boise
Treasure Valley Transit	Fixed-route and Demand Response	Local fixed-route service in Nampa and Caldwell

System Performance

Nelson\Nygaard measured performance, particularly ridership and productivity, of all local and regional bus services in the Treasure Valley. These data were crucial to the development of short- and long-range service plans detailed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Bus System Performance

Figure ES-2 provides a summary bus system ridership, revenue hours of service and resulting productivity measures for the various Treasure Valley bus service providers. Approximately 90 percent of trips made by bus in the Treasure Valley during 2003 were within the Boise/Garden City area. This is not

surprising as 75 percent of the total service hours deployed were in this area. Overall, services in the Boise urban area are more efficiently utilized, with an average of 16 passengers boarding a bus for every hour of service deployed. Since the ability of a bus system to attract passengers is tied closely to the density of households and employment near fixed lines, we expect productivities in Boise City to continue to be much higher than those in suburban and rural areas.

Figure ES-2 Bus System Performance in the Treasure Valley (2003)

Name	Daily Boardings	Revenue Hours	Passengers per hour
ValleyRide			
Boise and Garden City Routes	**4,401**	**275.4**	**16.0**
Treasure Valley Transit			
Nampa & Caldwell Routes	**235**	**37**	**6.4**
Treasure Valley Metro			
Commuters Express	118	35	3.4
Mid-day Service	16	8	2
Total	**131**	**45**	**3.0**
Commuters Bus			
Route 1 Nampa/Caldwell	59	3	19.5
Route 2 Middleton/Star/Eagle	24	3	8
Total	**83**	**6**	**13.8**

Ada County Highway District (ACHD) Commuteride

ACHD Commuteride offers carpools, vanpools, commuter benefits and employer support services. With over 50 active vanpools in service, the program successfully provides ridesharing options to communities throughout the valley. Vanpool commuters qualify for various incentive options, which help subsidize their out-of-pocket expenses. Commuteride has had success providing commute alternatives for trips not currently being served by the

area's fixed route transit systems. The following table summarizes vanpool ridership and the resulting reduction in auto Vehicle Miles Travel (VMT) for the year 2003.

Figure ES-3 Commuteride Vanpool

Year	Number of Riders	Passenger Trips	Vehicle Miles Traveled	VMT Avoided
2003	440	129,454	669,553	7,100,000

Financial Characteristics

The *Existing Conditions Report* details the operating budgets and funding sources for each of the five existing public transportation providers in the Valley Regional Transit (VRT) service area. An agency-by-agency summary of operating revenue sources is provided in the following table.

Figure ES-4 Boise Area Transit Agencies Financial Characteristics

Agency	FY02 Budget	FY03 Budget	Projected FY04 Budget	Revenue Sources
ACHD Commuteride	$1,250,523	$1,569,500	$1,793,615	Federal STP Funds, fares, Federal 5309 funds and ACHD funds
Commuters Bus	N/A	$236,423	N/A	Fares, FTA 5307 funds, City of Nampa, advertising
Treasure Valley Metro	$298,350	$298,350	$298,350	Federal STP Funds, local matching from the cities of Nampa and Meridian and fares
Treasure Valley Transit	N/A	N/A	$575,510	FTA 5307 operational, planning and demand/response funds, local contributions
ValleyRide	$4,595,981	$4,360,571	$5,504,497	FTA 5307, fares, advertising, City of Boise, employer contributions

Document Review

A number of recent planning processes have particular relevance to the Regional Operations and Capital Improvement Plan (ROCIP). The *Transit Development Plan Technical Memorandum, Five-Year Strategic Plan* and the *Rail*

Corridor Evaluation were all completed in the last three years and were designed, in part, to provide a strategic policy framework for the ROCIP. These efforts and others are summarized below:

Transit Development Plan (TDP) Technical Memorandum

The *TDP Technical Memorandum* is broad based policy study, which outlines a regional service allocation policy on which the ROCIP Long-Range Plan details are constructed. Service classifications and target performance measures developed in the TDP were integrated into ROCIP service planning and design efforts.

Five Year Strategic Plan

The 2002 *Five-Year Strategic Plan* outlines key organizational goals and specific strategies for achieving these goals. The plan includes mission and vision statements, organizational structure recommendations and implementation strategies. Five high-level priorities from the Strategic Plan were fundamental in the development of ROCIP service, capital, finance and organizational plan elements.

- Priority One: Secure Stable Funding
- Priority Two: Public Education/Public outreach
- Priority Three: Providing Efficient Services / Maximize Service
- Priority Four: Develop, Improve, and Increase Partnerships
- Priority Five: Develop a Rail Strategy

Rail Corridor Evaluation Study

A *Rail Corridor Evaluation Study* of the Boise Cut-Off rail corridor was completed in April 2003. The study examined the costs, benefits and barriers to acquiring and implementing commuter rail service on the Boise Cut-Off alignment between the Idaho Center and the Boise Depot Station.

The study determined that the corridor could be brought up to the condition necessary to operate heavy-commuter rail services at speeds up to 60 miles per hour with minor track improvements, significant tie replacement, crossing

improvements and the installation of a centralized train control and signal system. Recommendations and cost structures from this plan are integrated into the ROCIP long-range service and financial plan elements.

2002 Public Opinion Survey

In 2002 Valley Regional Transit (VRT) polled a sample of 500 Treasure Valley residents to determine attitudes toward public transportation, define future needs, and assess support for funding public transportation service described in the proposed service alternatives that came out of the Transportation Development Plan. The survey collected basic public opinion data on awareness, use of, and attitude toward public transportation; potential service demand and barriers; and perceived value of public transportation. This information was useful in ROCIP service plan development.

Short-Range Service Plan

Chapter 3 describes in detail the fixed-route Preferred Short-Range Service Plan. Figure ES-5 through Figure ES-7 show the proposed network, including separate maps for each county and a detail map of downtown Boise.

The fundamental goal of the short-range plan is to increase ridership. To this end, the emphasis is on creating a system that is more frequent, faster, simpler, and easier to market, since in our experience, these features are most likely to draw new riders to the system.

Path to a Short Range Service Plan

Two alternative service scenarios designed by the ROCIP consulting team were presented to the Board of Directors during its March 2004 meeting. Both were designed to fit within current funding resources, which means that they could only provide local service in the cities that fund it now (Boise, Garden City, Nampa and Caldwell) while also providing the same quantity of regional service that exists today.

In the Boise area, the two scenarios differed according to purpose. The Ridership Scenario was designed for maximum ridership overall, but this meant

no service in many low-ridership areas. The Coverage Scenario provided more service to all parts of the city, but with lower frequencies, and lower ridership potential, overall.

These scenarios provided stakeholders, customers and members of the general public in Ada and Canyon Counties a chance to debate short-range improvement to public transportation in the Treasure Valley. Detailed outreach was conducted around these conceptual scenarios through a series of stakeholder meetings and public open houses in Nampa and Boise.

On April 30th, 2004 the Regional Operations and Planning Committee met to process the results of the public outreach process and specific technical data provided by the consultant. At this meeting the committee reviewed ridership estimates for both scenarios, detailed estimates of the number of riders affected by service changes as well as the results of on-street route review and testing by ValleyRide Operations staff, which resulted in some minor changes and improvements to the proposed systems. The committee confirmed the broad consensus of the public outreach process, which was:

> *Provide more frequency on key corridors where possible, but not at the expense of large numbers of existing customers.*

The Short-Range Service Plan, presented in this chapter, is a hybrid of the two short-term alternatives designed to best achieve this goal.

Short Range Service Plan Structure and Implementation Timeline

The Short-Range Service Plan is an integrated regional system constrained by Valley Regional Transit's existing revenue sources. These services, all working together, consist of:

- Boise area local service. A network of directly-operated services covering the cities of Boise and Garden City.
- Regional service. (Routes 40-42) Services connecting Boise, Meridian, Nampa, and Caldwell, including a range of commuter express services as

well as all-day service. These will replace the existing Treasure Valley Metro (TVM) and ACHD Commuter's Bus services.

- Nampa-Caldwell local service. A new streamlined system of local service in Nampa and Caldwell, replacing the service now operated as Treasure Valley Transit (TVT).

The Boise, Nampa-Caldwell, and regional systems are proposed for implementation in early to mid 2005. The following maps illustrate the Preferred Short-Range Service Plan for Ada and Canyon Counties.

Figure ES-5 Short Range Scenario – Boise/Garden City Area

This page intentionally left blank.

Figure ES-6 Short Range Scenario – Downtown Boise

This page intentionally left blank.

Figure ES-7 Short Range Scenario – Nampa & Caldwell Area

This page intentionally left blank.

Long-Range Service Plan

Chapter 4 presents the long-range element of the Regional Operations and Capital Improvement Plan. The long-range element includes two conceptual service plans designed for implementation by 2012.

Why Two Scenarios?

The Long-Range Plan is based on two service scenarios representing different levels of future funding growth for the regional public transportation system. These scenarios are defined by financial projections:

1. Low Growth: Assumes an additional $15.5 million in annual revenues become available through a regional options revenue source.

2. High Growth: Assumes an additional $44.5 million in annual revenues become available through a regional options revenue source.

To provide some perspective, the Low-Growth Scenario still leaves Valley Regional Transit behind many peer transit agencies in level of service per capita. The High-Growth Scenario is much more ambitious, as it provides service levels that meet or exceed many peers in terms of service allocated per capita and includes the addition of a major rail transit corridor project. Both scenarios include substantial service expansions to previously unserved areas and both employ "flex routes," a delivery method that combines attributes of fixed schedule and demand response services to serve large areas where demand is dispersed.

The following maps illustrate the two long-range plan scenarios:

This page intentionally left blank.

Figure ES-8 Long Range Low Growth Scenario – Ada County

This page intentionally left blank.

Figure ES-9 Long Range Low Growth Scenario – Canyon County

This page intentionally left blank.

Figure ES-10 Long Range High Growth Scenario – Ada County

This page intentionally left blank.

Figure ES-11 Long Range High Growth Scenario – Canyon County

This page intentionally left blank.

Phasing/Priority for Long-Range Improvements

What if Valley Regional Transit (VRT) successfully passes a regional options funding source with annual revenues somewhere between the estimates for the Low- and High-Growth Scenario? What if a regional source fails, but funding increases incrementally through other sources? Even if VRT is able to increase its annual operating revenues substantially, service improvements will have to be phased in to allow time for capital fleet purchases and facilities development. The Long-Range Plan is designed to provide "bookend" scenarios that show what is possible given presumed *low* and *high* regional options funding scenarios. When the time comes for VRT to put together a ballot proposal, it will likely have to select some projects from the two scenarios and exclude others. Therefore, it is not so important that the long-range plan answer the question, "What timeline do we implement various service improvements under?" Instead, it needs to address the question, "How do we choose what services to include in a ballot measure, given projected revenues won't fund them all?"

Capital Issues Governing Improvement Sequence

If Valley Regional Transit does pass a regional options source, it will be important that some new service hit the street quickly, providing a partial answer to this question.

The capital necessities of phasing suggest the following implementation sequence:

1. <u>Changes that do not require new buses or facilities</u>: This would primarily impact routes that currently have more peak service than midday service, increasing midday service to the peak level. This benefit occurs mostly in Boise, where ridership gains will be most substantial.
2. <u>Changes that require new buses, but where interim facilities are workable.</u> Frequency upgrades on Nampa-Caldwell local service, and the remaining upgrades on existing Boise routes, fall in this category. If fleet replacement is occurring when the decision is made to expand service, the older buses can be retained for a year or two pending the arrival of

new fleet triggered by the expansion, and this can permit service to start sooner.

3. Changes that require major new facilities: Two services are in this category:

   Meridian and western Boise local network, including Kuna. This network requires expansion of Towne Square Mall transit center to a capacity of roughly eight buses, plus a new Meridian Transit Center with a capacity of roughly 8-10 buses. The locations of these facilities also depend on whether commuter rail is planned.

   Full development of intercounty express service. These will require Park-and-Ride facilities on a larger scale than existing now, especially in Nampa.

4. Large capital projects with extensive planning and environmental work. Commuter rail, and its dedicated feeder shuttles, would likely be the last to be implemented, because of the long lead-time required for the planning and environmental work, as well as significant construction that would probably be involved at stations, particularly the Boise terminus.

Increments for Use in Developing Final Plan

The Regional Operations and Planning Committee and the Board of Directors clearly indicated that frequency improvements on key corridors in Boise (Emerald, Overland, Vista, Fairview, and State) should be implemented as a top priority. A successful ballot measure will, ultimately, need to be sensitive to the interests of voters in rural and currently underserved areas, such as Kuna and Meridian. In developing a service proposal to take to the voters Valley Regional Transit (VRT) will need to weigh the inevitable tradeoff - invest in services that will attract the most riders or expand service area coverage to provide regional equity. To simplify and focus these choices, we have outlined a number of separable "service packages" based on geography and funding availability for the Low- and High-Growth service proposals. While some elements of these "packages" could be implemented separately, this format provides a means for outlining essential policy choices on service priority as part of a successful

regional strategy. These "service packages" are detailed at the end of Chapter 4.

Implementation Plan

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) has adopted the Short-Range Preferred Service Plan, described in Chapter 3 of this report, for implementation in 2005. The intent of the plan is to increase ridership by:

- Retaining virtually all existing riders.
- Being useful to existing riders for a wider range of trips.
- Being useful to people who do not currently ride.

The largest growth market is among people who do not currently ride. This market also has the potential to grow long term, especially as densities increase and costs associated with driving rise.

The goal of the implementation should be to make the transit system available, transparent, and readily comprehensible to potential customers. Current customers have already gone to the trouble of learning the system and are likely to absorb changes easily. The real test is a first-time customer. They should be able to easily and quickly figure out what the system can do for them and how to use it. Cultivating this perception among current and potential customers will maximize future ridership.

Chapter 5 (Implementation Plan) first recommends a framework for a ridership-oriented approach to implementing the Preferred Short-Range Plan for the ValleyRide fixed route system. It then suggests how each aspect of the plan can be made as customer-centric as possible.

Designing a Welcoming Transit System

The implementation of a successful transit network must be predicated on simple, understandable service design. Without a good product, implementation and marketing are meaningless. To expand ridership, the plan emphasizes <u>simple</u> and <u>direct</u> service. Routes are designed to be easy to

understand, and are as straight and direct as possible. The third key element of ridership growth, frequency, is a longer-term issue requiring additional funding, though the proposed system makes it easier to add frequency in the future.

Implementing the ROCIP is an opportunity for Valley Regional Transit (VRT) to improve its services and make them friendly to potential customers, as well as existing ones. Still, it is the details of the implementation – the numbering and timing of routes, overhead signs, bus stop signage and locations, maps, bus book, website, and so on – that will largely determine how customers perceive the changes and the new service plan.

When thinking through how to design and implement each of these details, each should be considered through the lens of the potential customer who is not familiar with the system. At each step, it may be useful to ask the following questions as a litmus test for simplicity:

- Does this decision serve the goal of being simple, direct, and easy to use?
- Will this decision make the system more comprehensible to someone who has never used ValleyRide before?
- Is this decision consistent with the other choices that have been made about the presentation of the service?

Elements of Implementation

Putting a new route structure on the street is a concentrated effort that is quite different from making minor service changes. It is important to think through each aspect of the implementation from the perspective of its customers to make the new system as simple, direct, and easy to use as possible.

Chapter 5 discusses crucial elements of a successful customer-centric implementation of the new Valley Regional Transit service plan. Each major implementation element in the plan includes: a brief discussion of why it's important, guiding principles, and key implementation considerations. Major elements to successful implementation that are discussed in Chapter 5 include:

- Customer information: route naming, overhead signage, maps;

- Fixed stops: stop spacing, placement, management, amenities;
- Transit centers: development, design and location;
- Driver training and information sharing; and
- Decision making processes to avoid reactive planning.

Paratransit and Special Services Plan

The *Paratransit and Special Services Plan* was conducted as a component of the ROCIP process, but is produced under separate cover. This plan reviews paratransit service trends in the Treasure Valley and makes short- and long-range recommendations for managing projected demand growth and improving the efficiency of service.

The recommended paratransit service strategy is divided according to overall policy and administration recommendations, and operational procedures. Short-range recommendations pertain to the next two years of service, while the long-range recommendations refer to those that should occur in the 2007 to 2012 timeframe. The recommendations are summarized in the matrix below; a full set of recommendations from the report is included in Appendix B of this report. Projected capital and operating costs for recommended paratransit program improvements are included in the ROCIP Capital and Financial Plan (Chapter 6).

Figure ES-12 Summary of Recommended Service Strategies

Short-Range Strategies
• Expand Paratransit Staff • Overhaul the Eligibility Screening Process • Actively Negotiate Pick-up and Drop-off Times • Establish an “open booking list” • Implement a “will-call” trip request policy for return medical trips • Begin the process of procuring a computer-assist scheduling software

package • Establish productivity improvement objectives • Create a travel training program
Long-Range Strategies
• Consolidate paratransit administration under the rubric of Valley Regional Transit • Establish a Transfer Point in Meridian • Implement Feeder Service • Assess Impacts of Fixed-Route Expansion • Explore Cost-sharing or operations sharing arrangements with other agencies • Establish a paratransit taxi contract to complement the ADA paratransit program

Financial and Capital Plans

Chapter 6 details capital and operating needs for the Short-Range Service Plan (Fiscal Years 04/05 - 05/06) and for the Long-Range Service Plan (Fiscal Years 06/7-11/12 inclusive). The chapter discusses separately: six-year capital needs, operating costs and revenues, and available or potential revenue sources. Assumptions from each of these sections are incorporated in a six-year financial model that projects revenues and costs for public transportation services and projects in the Valley Regional Transit service area.

Capital Plan

The ROCIP Capital Plan discusses facility and fleet replacement and expansion needs, along with their timelines and cost projections. Fleet procurement and capital facility development costs are based on service recommendations presented in Chapters 3 and 4 (Short-Range and Long-Range Service Plans) and in the *Paratransit and Special Services Plan* (separate document).

In the short-range, capital plans include the implementation of fixed-stop bus signage and facilities in the Boise area at a projected cost of $398,000.

Long-range capital improvements costs vary widely from $42 to $182 million, depending on the range of services to be implemented. Long-range plan capital improvements include:

- Bus stop signs, shelters and amenities for new fixed route services.
- Fleet vehicle additions to accommodate new services and replacement of aging vehicles.
- Operations facility improvements in Boise and a new facility in Canyon County.
- Administrative bases for both Ada and Canyon Counties.
- Regional Transit Centers:
    - Downtown Boise Multimodal Center
    - Boise State University Multimodal Center
- Other Transit Centers:
    - Towne Square Mall
    - Meridian
    - East Nampa
    - Nampa
    - Caldwell
- Park-and-Rides – the location of Park-and-Rides is dependent on the decision to implement Commuter Rail in the Cut-Off Corridor.

- Vanpools – to be added, as Ada County Highway District expects to add 34 vans to its fleet by 2005.
- Software – particularly a new paratransit scheduling software package needed to accommodate demand growth.

Financial Plan

The ROCIP financial presents operating costs and revenue projections for ValleyRide fixed-route, ACCESS paratransit and other program services through 2013. Current-year budget figures are also presented and are the working baseline for the financial model. The assumptions used in developing cost and revenue projections to support Valley Regional Transit are detailed in Chapter 6.

The following tables summarize the outputs of High- and Low-Scenario financial models, including revenue and expenditure summaries for operational categories, planning and capital programs. The financial models are built on a Pay-As-You-Go basis, which creates inequities between revenue intake and spending in early and later years of the plan. In reality, major capital projects would likely be debt financed and cost spread across the plan period, creating a more equitable revenue/expenditure balance.

Figure ES-13 Low-Growth Financial Model Summary

	Future Year Projections					
	Six-Year Plan Timeframe					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Boise Area Fixed Route						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 7,467,702	$ 8,451,844	$ 9,466,411	$ 9,712,360	$ 9,966,680	$ 10,229,672
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 7,454,252	$ 8,388,239	$ 9,378,474	$ 10,427,750	$ 11,538,986	$ 12,715,235
Boise Area Demand Response						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 1,036,060	$ 1,245,927	$ 1,362,123	$ 1,481,836	$ 1,605,176	$ 1,832,251
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 1,011,472	$ 1,193,537	$ 1,312,891	$ 1,444,180	$ 1,588,598	$ 1,747,457
Canyon County, Intercounty and Rural Fixed Route						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 2,315,542	$ 2,385,991	$ 2,458,985	$ 2,634,620	$ 2,715,995	$ 2,800,302
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 2,293,283	$ 2,396,416	$ 2,504,188	$ 2,616,808	$ 2,734,493	$ 2,857,471
Nampa Area Demand Response						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 183,365	$ 189,455	$ 295,774	$ 305,332	$ 315,229	$ 325,476
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 151,782	$ 182,139	$ 209,460	$ 240,879	$ 277,010	$ 318,562
VRT Planning						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 1,797,864	$ 1,835,696	$ 1,874,883	$ 1,915,474	$ 1,957,521	$ 2,001,077
Total Planning Expenditures	$ 1,718,689	$ 1,775,903	$ 1,835,120	$ 1,896,409	$ 1,959,844	$ 2,025,498
VRT Capital Programs						
Total Capital Revenues	$ 13,810,250	$ 10,098,078	$ 9,364,540	$ 9,408,996	$ 9,554,786	$ 9,604,949
Total Capital Expenditures	$ 25,201,300	$ 2,518,000	$ 7,986,000	$ 1,212,000	$ 3,240,000	$ 1,024,000
TOTAL FOR ALL PROGRAMS						
Total Revenues	$ 26,610,783	$ 24,206,991	$ 24,822,716	$ 25,458,620	$ 26,115,387	$ 26,793,727
Total Expenditures	$ 37,830,778	$ 16,454,234	$ 23,226,133	$ 17,838,025	$ 21,338,931	$ 20,688,224

Figure ES-14 High-Growth Financial Model Summary

	Future Year Projections					
	Six-Year Plan Timeframe					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Boise Area Fixed Route						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 13,769,602	$ 17,542,801	$ 20,130,097	$ 23,695,957	$ 27,369,784	$ 31,354,869
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 13,714,952	$ 17,466,271	$ 20,109,064	$ 23,616,316	$ 27,344,441	$ 31,304,606
Boise Area Demand Response						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 1,400,800	$ 1,421,610	$ 1,443,075	$ 1,465,218	$ 1,488,059	$ 1,511,620
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 1,011,472	$ 1,193,537	$ 1,312,891	$ 1,444,180	$ 1,588,598	$ 1,747,457
Canyon County, Intercounty and Rural Fixed Route						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 3,442,792	$ 3,547,058	$ 3,754,885	$ 3,969,397	$ 4,090,815	$ 9,216,366
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 3,406,284	$ 3,559,503	$ 3,719,614	$ 3,886,928	$ 4,061,768	$ 9,244,474
Nampa Area Demand Response						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 218,355	$ 225,494	$ 232,895	$ 240,567	$ 348,520	$ 359,766
Total Operating Expenditures	$ 151,782	$ 182,139	$ 209,460	$ 240,879	$ 277,010	$ 318,562
VRT Planning						
Total Operating Revenues	$ 1,775,614	$ 1,812,779	$ 1,851,278	$ 1,891,161	$ 2,032,479	$ 2,078,283
Total Planning Expenditures	$ 1,718,689	$ 1,775,903	$ 1,835,120	$ 1,896,409	$ 1,959,844	$ 2,025,498
VRT Capital Programs						
Total Capital Revenues	$ 46,932,620	$ 38,454,119	$ 34,601,262	$ 28,407,820	$ 30,045,575	$ 15,809,462
Total Capital Expenditures	$ 54,998,500	$ 30,593,000	$ 34,666,000	$ 28,492,000	$ 30,184,000	$2,368,000
TOTAL FOR ALL PROGRAMS						
Total Revenues	$ 67,539,783	$ 63,003,861	$ 62,013,492	$ 59,670,119	$ 65,375,231	$ 60,330,367
Total Expenditures	$ 75,001,681	$ 54,770,353	$ 61,852,149	$ 59,576,711	$ 65,415,661	$ 47,008,597

Finally, Chapter 6 identifies other funding programs that Valley Regional Transit is eligible to pursue. A conservative approach is taken and these sources are not assumed to be available in this plan. If VRT is successful in securing any of these discretionary sources, they could be used to increase service in the outer years of the plan, accelerate implementation of the plan, or decrease local contributions to VRT.

Organizational Plan

Chapter 7 examines the benefits and costs of service delivery model options available to Valley Regional Transit (VRT), with specific attention to the question, "Should Ada County service provision be retained as an in-house function or contracted to a private service management company."

VRT has established a solid organizational framework through the development of its Strategic Plan and has successfully implemented several of the resulting capacity development recommendations. The agency is wisely structured to build and sustain partnerships at every opportunity with customer service as the focal point. However, its capacity to build these partnerships and work collaboratively with the host of transportation providers and land use planning agencies throughout the region is compromised by a reactive focus on operating local fixed-route and paratransit services in Boise and Garden City. Additionally, key strategic priorities such as developing sustainable regional funding are hampered by the day-to-day management related to running a bus system.

Organizational recommendations focus on creating capacity for VRT to achieve its primary strategic objectives as the regional coordinating body for public transportation in the Treasure Valley. Recommendations are organized in two categories: (1) Organization and Service Delivery and (2) Governance.

Organization and Service Delivery

Chapter 7 presents several recommendations related to the organization and staffing of Valley Regional Transit's four key service components.

- Retain Planning, Market Development and Community Outreach, and

Administrative support functions in house. These three elements of VRT's organization should remain in house functions. Staff capacity should be developed to include:

- *Contract management and monitoring capacity*. This capacity could be added under current VRT Planning and Administrative staff.
- *Long-Range Service Planning and Coordination*. This staff position would require 0.5 to 1.0 FTE and would focus on funding strategy development, Long Range Service Plan implementation and local and regional service coordination.
- *Land Use - Transportation Coordination*. This staff position would require 0.5 FTE and would focus on: (1) land-use review for new development to ensure that transit facility and operations needs are accounted for and (2) coordinated land use planning required to ensure that long-term service investments are complemented by transit supportive land use regulations and zoning codes.

- **Maintain turnkey contract service arrangement for Nampa County and intercounty services**. VRT signed a new contract with a private service provider to deliver these services through 2008. This contract should be monitored and reviewed at the end of its term.
- **Develop Request for Proposal, solicit bids and select contractor to provide service management and operations of paratransit and fixed-route services in Ada County**. VRT should develop a Request for Proposal for turnkey management and operations of Boise and Garden City fixed-route and paratransit services.
- **Plan for organizational and staffing capacity required to support the Long-Range Service Plan**. VRT should evaluate staffing ratios per unit of service for all administrative support functions and plan for capacity increases relative to projected service increases defined in the Long Range Service Plan.

Governance

This report presents two key recommendations relate to the governance structure of Valley Regional Transit, both of which are intended to strengthen the agency's effectiveness as a regional coordinating body:

- **Strengthen role of the Management and Coordinating Council**: The governance structure, discussed in the Strategic Plan, identifies a key role for the Management and Coordinating Council (representatives of regional providers) in forwarding regional planning and coordination goals. The Strategic Plan states that the Council will provide a mechanism to, "…*co-develop operational policy and procedures, seek efficiencies and optimization of existing services, collaborate on development of new services, and create the real meaning of ValleyRide through extraordinary customer focus."*

  The Council has been formed and has met regularly over the last year; however, the group has been ineffective due in part to a perception that VRT planning efforts are inequitably focused on Boise area services. The contract manager for the new Canyon County service provider should be added to this group and regular meetings should continue with a renewed focus. The Council should report directly to the Board Management Committee on items included in its annual Action Plan (see below).

- **Develop annual action plan for the Management and Coordinating Council**: VRT should develop an annual meeting schedule and action plan for the Council. A focus on top priority goals from the Strategic Plan and the ROCIP Implementation Plan would be a primary focus for this group. The Council should also play a key role in the achievement of VRT's top strategic priority – securing new funding through a regional option authority. The annual Action Plan will lay out goals and strategies to be completed by the Council or "cross-business operational teams" composed of staff members from various provider organizations.

Table of Contents

PAGE

Executive Summary 1
Background 1
Planning Context 2
Public Involvement 3
Existing Conditions 4
Short-Range Service Plan 9
Long-Range Service Plan 18
Implementation Plan 30
Paratransit and Special Services Plan 32
Financial and Capital Plans 33
Organizational Plan 37

Table of Figures

PAGE

Figure ES-1 ..... Public Transportation Providers in Ada and Canyon Counties 5
Figure ES-2 ..... Bus System Performance in the Treasure Valley (2003) 6
Figure ES-3 ..... Commuteride Vanpool 7
Figure ES-4 ..... Boise Area Transit Agencies Financial Characteristics 7
Figure ES-5 ..... Short Range Scenario – Boise/Garden City Area 12
Figure ES-6 ..... Short Range Scenario – Downtown Boise 14
Figure ES-7 ..... Short Range Scenario – Nampa & Caldwell Area 16
Figure ES-8 ..... Long Range Low Growth Scenario – Ada County 20
Figure ES-9 ..... Long Range Low Growth Scenario – Canyon County 22
Figure ES-10 ..... Long Range High Growth Scenario – Ada County 24
Figure ES-11 ..... Long Range High Growth Scenario – Canyon County 26
Figure ES-12 ..... Summary of Recommended Service Strategies 32
Figure ES-13 ..... Low-Growth Financial Model Summary 36
Figure ES-14 ..... High-Growth Financial Model Summary 36

•