



May 3, 2013

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Valley Regional Transit Ready For Next Steps On Downtown Boise Multi-Modal Center

MERIDIAN – Valley Regional Transit (VRT) is moving forward on the Downtown Boise Multi-Modal Center at 8th and Jefferson streets, a project that will improve public transportation services in the Treasure Valley while generating significant new revenue for the State of Idaho’s Normal School Endowment Fund. The center would replace the existing transit mall on Main and Idaho streets, which currently requires passengers to walk up to four blocks to transfer between buses.

This month, VRT will issue a Request for Qualifications as the first step in soliciting a private development partner on the project.

“A project partner will add additional value to the project,” said Rhonda Jalbert, VRT capital infrastructure project manager. “While a partner is not essential, a mixed-use facility will increase the vitality of the project and the downtown community.”

Jalbert says several developers have expressed an interest in the project.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awarded VRT \$9.5 million in federal funds to build the \$11.9 million Multi-Modal Center, which will provide transit, bike, vanpool, and parking facilities. Capital City Development Corporation is providing \$2.4 million in local funding. The 8th and Jefferson site is owned by the Normal School Endowment Fund and managed by the Idaho Department of Lands.

The 8th and Jefferson site currently consists of a surface-level parking lot with 82 parking spaces; the Multi-Modal Center, with a planned minimum of 145 parking spaces, will increase parking revenue from the location for the Normal School Endowment Fund. A project partner could generate additional revenues to the Fund.

A citizen advisory committee will be established in June 2013 to provide input regarding the design of the project. Citizens who want to participate may contact Mark Carnopis at Valley Regional Transit at 208-258-2702 or mcarnopis@valleyregionaltransit.org.

VRT also released a rendering of the Multi-Modal Center and potential development, showing how the building will fit into the downtown community. The Multi-Modal Center will include an outdoor covered waiting area, a lobby, a customer service center, restrooms, and bike lockers. The building is designed to facilitate the timely flow of buses in and out of the facility; a comprehensive traffic study done by VRT determined that the center would have minimal impact on area traffic. Construction of the facility will create approximately 100 construction jobs over an 18-month period.

“The Downtown Boise Multi-Modal Center will complete the network of two multi-modal centers and three transit centers in the region,” said Kelli Fairless, VRT executive director. “The multi-modal and transit centers will make commuting between Caldwell, Nampa, Meridian and Boise much easier. It will also make public transportation easier to use in Boise because passengers will be able to transfer from one route to another all at one location.”

VRT recently purchased property in Caldwell and will begin a remodel on a multi-modal center at the intersection of Happy Day Boulevard and Cleveland Boulevard; the facility is scheduled to be in operation by December 2013. Transit centers at Boise State University and Boise Towne Square Mall have been operating for several years. A new transit center at the College of Western Idaho in Nampa will be open by December 2013.

The Boise local transit service provided 1,236,000 trips in 2012, a 28 percent increase since 2005. The Inter county Express service, which brings commuters into Boise from Caldwell, Nampa, Meridian, Middleton, Star, and Eagle, provided 130,000 trips in 2012, a 156 percent increase since 2005. The number of trips on the Caldwell and Nampa local transit service totaled 77,000 in 2012, a 29 percent increase since 2005.

Downtown Boise Multi-Modal Center milestones:

April 2012	VRT and Idaho Department of Lands met to discuss properties in Downtown Boise
May 2012	Project was presented to the Idaho Department of Lands Board
June 2012	VRT held outreach meetings for tenants of nearby buildings
October 2012	VRT held an open house for the 8 th Street site
October 2012	VRT received land use permits to start preliminary engineering
December 2012	VRT submitted Application For Use regarding the property to IDL
December 2012	Application For Use was publicized. No other statements of interest in the property were received.
May 2013	Final Draft of Environmental Assessment was completed
May 2013	VRT will issue a Request for Qualifications to solicit a private development partner
June 2013	VRT will establish a Citizens Advisory Committee