

PURPOSE . .

The purpose of valley**connect** is to establish a vision of the comprehensive alternative transportation system needed, given the growth projections and regional and local land use and road plans. The plan will serve as a guide to the region as individual components are implemented to ensure that each piece builds logically toward the complete system.

Valley**connect** identifies transportation options, other than driving alone, that are currently available in Ada and Canyon counties, and future transportation options. It also documents the information network to help customers use these services. The services identified in this document are those provided by public providers in Ada and Canyon counties. Because of the extent and changing nature of privately provided services, they are not specifically identified in this plan.

Valley**connect** started with existing transportation plans as the base. These specific plans, completed over the past several years, were consolidated and duplications were eliminated. Next, area growth projections and local jurisdiction land use plans were used to bring information up-to-date.

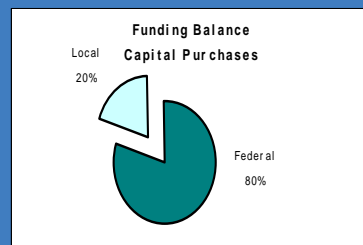
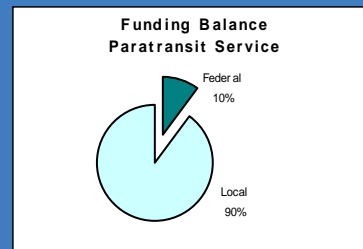
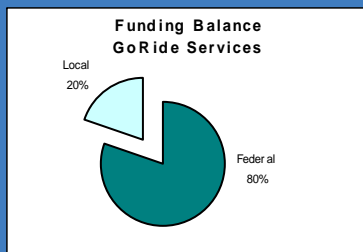
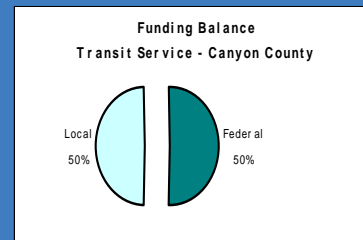
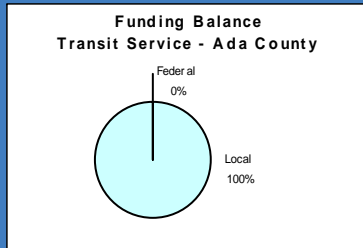
VALLEYCONNECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS . . .

- ✓ INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH INTERVIEWS, FORUMS AND COMMITTEES
- ✓ DEVELOP A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE AREA TO BETTER UNDERSTAND NEEDS
- ✓ DOCUMENT EXISTING PLANS AND SERVICES
- ✓ COMPLETE A NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE GAPS BETWEEN EXISTING NEEDS AND EXISTING SERVICES
- ✓ IDENTIFY STRATEGIES TO MEET GAPS

IMPLEMENTATION

Valleyconnect does not establish a specific planning horizon in which these alternative transportation services will be implemented. Current alternative transportation services are funded partially with federal funds and partially with local funds provided during each budget cycle. Local funds are needed as match for federal funds before federal funds can be allocated.

Individual components of this plan will be implemented as local and federal funds can be identified. The order of implementation will be impacted by the specific source of the funding. Services within a community will be prioritized, to ensure a logical progression of implementation. Because the cost for each component depends on when it is implemented, there is no specific budget included in valleyconnect. Budgets will be developed as a service component is considered for implementation. Should a dedicated funding source for public transportation become available, a more specific implementation timeline and budget will be established.



VRT'S ROLE . . .

In 1994, state legislators passed a law giving citizens the opportunity to vote on the formation of public transportation authorities. Ada County and Canyon County voters approved the formation of a regional public transportation authority in November 1998. The legislation states *"that the authority . . . shall provide public transportation services, encourage private transportation programs and coordinate both public and private transportation programs, services and support functions."*

As such, Valley Regional Transit (VRT) hires and manages contractors to provide transit and paratransit services in Ada and Canyon counties and vanpool services in Canyon County. The agency coordinates with state agencies, private providers, social service agencies, and road agencies to ensure that a variety of transportation options are available with limited duplications and efficient use of public funds and resources. VRT is implementing regional volunteer driver and ride reimbursement programs. VRT's RideLine service is designed to help the region's residents access all these services.

ALTERNATIVES TO DRIVING ALONE . . .

TRANSIT SERVICE

EXPRESS SERVICE

LOCAL SERVICE

INTERCITY SERVICE

FLEX SERVICE

VANPOOL

CARPOOL

ORIGIN TO DESTINATION

PARATRANSIT

DEMAND RESPONSE

VOLUNTEER DRIVER

RIDE REIMBURSEMENT

VEHICLE SHARING

AGENCY VEHICLE SHARING

CAR SHARING

BIKE / WALK

COORDINATION

Coordination is a primary focus for transportation project prioritization and funding at both a federal and regional level. The objective of coordination is to make the most efficient use of funds and resources to move as many people as possible. This coordination plays out at many levels.

In the broadest sense, it means coordinating the transportation system with land use, housing and infrastructure. VRT is working with other jurisdictions and agencies to develop these “sustainable communities.”

Coordination also means coordinating alternative transportation options with roads development. Through Communities In Motion, the regional long-range transportation plan, the region is developing coordinated solutions to transportation problems along travel corridors.

Within alternative transportation, the region is focusing on prioritizing and funding projects that reach the most people. To achieve this, organizations are working together to develop projects that meet the needs of multiple groups that share similar transportation challenges.

STATE

I-WAY

Through local coordination and partnerships, I-way connects rural and urban communities, allowing for more efficient and convenient transportation options throughout the state.

DISTRICT

3C LOCAL MOBILITY NETWORK

These local stakeholders tailor strategies and priorities respective to their communities.

REGION

COMMUNITIES IN MOTION

The regional long-range transportation plan for Ada and Canyon counties provides transportation solutions for the next twenty-plus years.

TREASURE VALLEY

Valleyconnect

This local alternative transportation plan identifies and plans for transportation options and coordination in the Treasure Valley.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT . .

Mobility management means helping people go where they need to go when they need to go. It means looking beyond the “one size fits all” solutions. It acknowledges that getting to work daily is a different need than getting to a doctor’s appointment weekly or meeting a friend for dinner. It also acknowledges that some people live in an urban setting and some live in a rural area.

Driving alone or riding the fixed route bus works for a lot of people a lot of the time. But these options are not always viable and sometimes people would prefer an alternative. For some trips, walking, biking, sharing a ride, borrowing a car, riding in a social service agency van or taking a taxi may be the only way, or a better way, to get there. Mobility management also means matching a specific need with the most convenient, cost efficient and environmentally friendly way of getting a person where they need to be.

Valley**connect** calls for the development of these alternatives and for the information systems necessary to match a specific need to get someplace with the best option for making the trip.



- **RIDELINE**—IS THE SYSTEM OF INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE THAT HELP PEOPLE FIND THE BEST WAY TO GET AROUND
- **VALLEYRIDE**—IS THE BUS SYSTEM INCLUDING FIXED ROUTES, FLEX ROUTES AND PARATRAN-SIT SERVICE
- **COMMUTERIDE**—ARE THE VANPOOLS AND CAR-POOLS THAT HELP PEOPLE COMMUTE TO WORK
- **GORIDE**—ARE THE SPECIALIZED SERVICES THAT HELP PEOPLE GET AROUND THEIR COMMUNITY WHEN MORE TRADITIONAL OPTIONS DON'T MEET THEIR NEEDS

RIDELINE . . .

. . . CUSTOMER SERVICES

RIDELINE SERVICES . . .

- RIDELINE CALL CENTER
- RIDELINE WEBSITE
- 511 WEBSITE
- GOOGLE TRANSIT
- RIDEMATCH
- COMMUTERIDE WEBSITE
- TRIP RESERVATIONS / SCHEDULING

Currently, RideLine uses personalized customer assistance, printed materials, and websites to provide information to customers about VRT provided services. RideLine also provides links to information about area vanpool and car-pool services.

Through RideLine, VRT will provide information to area residents, workers and visitors about all the alternative transportation options available in Ada and Canyon counties. Information will be available about transportation services that VRT provides, and about services available through other public and private providers.

The following pages outline RideLine services currently in place or planned. As technology advances and transportation programs expand, the information and customer assistance programs will be adjusted to match.

RIDELINE . .

.....customer call center

The Customer Call Center currently provides trip planning assistance to transit riders. **Valleyconnect** calls for RideLine to expand into a “one stop shop” for area residents to call and get personalized assistance in finding the right transportation option for them.

.....reservations and scheduling

Individuals can use RideLine to reserve trips with a volunteer driver or on ACCESS paratransit service. Organizations will be able to reserve a vehicle from the GoRide Fleet. A further investment in scheduling software and automatic vehicle location equipment for the buses will allow RideLine to schedule trips on flex transit and demand response service.

.....eligibility assessment

RideLine staff conduct interviews to determine if applicants are eligible for services such as ACCESS, which have specific requirements.

- DATABASE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROVIDERS
- FLEX ROUTE SCHEDULING SOFTWARE
- AUTOMATIC VEHICLE LOCATOR EQUIPMENT ON BUSES
- FLEET RESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE



- DATABASE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROVIDERS
- ON-LINE PASS SALES AND FARE COLLECTION
- AUTOMATIC VEHICLE LOCATOR EQUIPMENT ON BUSES
- SOFTWARE FOR REAL TIME BUS INFORMATION FOR CUSTOMERS

.. RIDELINE

.....rideline.org

RideLine.com currently provides links to transit, vanpool and carpool information in Ada and Canyon Counties. **Valleyconnect** calls for this website to include links to private service providers.

.....valleyride.org

The valleyride.org website provides information about transit service and fares in Ada and Canyon counties. Information about GoRide community transportation programs can also be found. On-line pass sales and fare collection will be available once the technology is in place.

.....511.idaho.gov

511 provides interactive maps and schedules of transit service throughout the state. With the addition of automatic vehicle locator equipment on the buses, the website will be expanded to provide real-time bus information via the web, telephone and hand-held devices.

RIDELINE . .

.....googletransit.org

Google Transit provides a trip planner for transit service in Ada and Canyon counties. The site also provides transit route, schedule and fare information.

.....rideshareonline.com

The rideshareonline website provides an interactive service for area residents to find carpool partners and vanpools. Similar services will be developed for one-time event carpool matching.

.....commuteride.com

The Commuteride website provides information about vanpooling, carpooling and park & ride lots.



.. RIDELINE

.....*travel training*

Travel trainers work with individuals to plan their transit trip, show them how to get on and off the bus, how to pay and how to use lift equipment if needed. Travel trainers ride along with individuals on their first bus trip. Expansion of this program includes adding non-English language capabilities and providing training for transportation options in addition to transit.

.....*ambassador program*

Through the Ambassador Program, individuals from specific communities or populations are trained regarding various transportation alternatives so they can then help others in their group use the services. Ada County Highway District (ACHD) Commuteride's Employee Transportation Coordinator program currently includes "ambassadors" at many of companies and government agencies in Ada County. Groups targeted for future growth of this program include students, seniors, non-English speaking communities, neighborhood associations, and persons with disabilities.

- TRAVEL TRAINING TRANSLATORS
- SENIOR AMBASSADORS
- STUDENT AMBASSADORS
- PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AMBASSADORS
- NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING AMBASSADORS
- NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION AMBASSADORS

RIDELINE . .

.....information materials

Printed materials provide transit route and schedule information, Commuter-Ride commuter program information, and GoRide community program information. While the objective is to provide as much information as possible electronically, thereby saving on printing costs and paper usage, some printed materials will always be needed.

Regular printed materials and special announcements are provided at set locations throughout Ada and Canyon Counties including libraries, schools, government services and employers. Valleyconnect calls for expanding the distribution locations to reach more residents, especially those with limited access to electronic information.

ACHD Commuteride and VRT provide information at community events throughout the region and at specially scheduled transportation fairs at workplaces. The next step is to coordinate these activities and provide information about all alternative transportation options at each event to make most efficient use of staff time.

- ENHANCE ELECTRONIC INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION
- EXPAND MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION LOCATIONS
- AUTOMATIC VEHICLE LOCATOR EQUIPMENT ON BUSES
- COORDINATED INFORMATION EVENT ACTIVITIES



.. RIDELINE

- ONLINE PASS SALES AND FARE COLLECTION
- RELOADABLE FARE CARDS
- ENHANCED RIDERSHIP TRACKING SYSTEM
- REVISED CONTRACTING MECHANISM

.....*pass sales*

VRT currently sells 31-day transit passes and stored value cards at several stores throughout Ada and Canyon Counties. Longer term passes must be purchased in person at the VRT office. Single trip and day passes can be purchased on the bus. Commuteride conducts a monthly fare collection process for vanpool riders. On-line pass sales and fare payment, the next advancement in this area, will significantly improve customer service and reduce staff time. Fare cards that can be reloaded is another future advancement.

.....*contracts*

VRT enters into annual contracts with employers to provide transit passes to their employees at no charge. The contract amounts are based on annual ridership. There is significant market to grow this program, however, current farebox technology limits the number of individual employer ridership that can be tracked. Development of a better tracking system or restructuring how the contract amount is established needs to be done before expansion of the program.

TRANSIT SERVICES . .

VRT contracts to provide ValleyRide transit service in Ada and Canyon counties. The service is designed to meet the needs of commuters as well as those who have limited access to other transportation options. ValleyRide also provides paratransit service, origin to destination service for qualified individuals who are not able to use the regular transit service. This service is available for pick-up and drop off within 3/4 mile of all fixed transit routes.

To better fit into the overall regional transportation planning and funding process, VRT has developed a transit service classification system. The system designates service by its primary use and frequency. This system will allow regional transportation planners to classify a transportation corridor by both a street and transit classification.

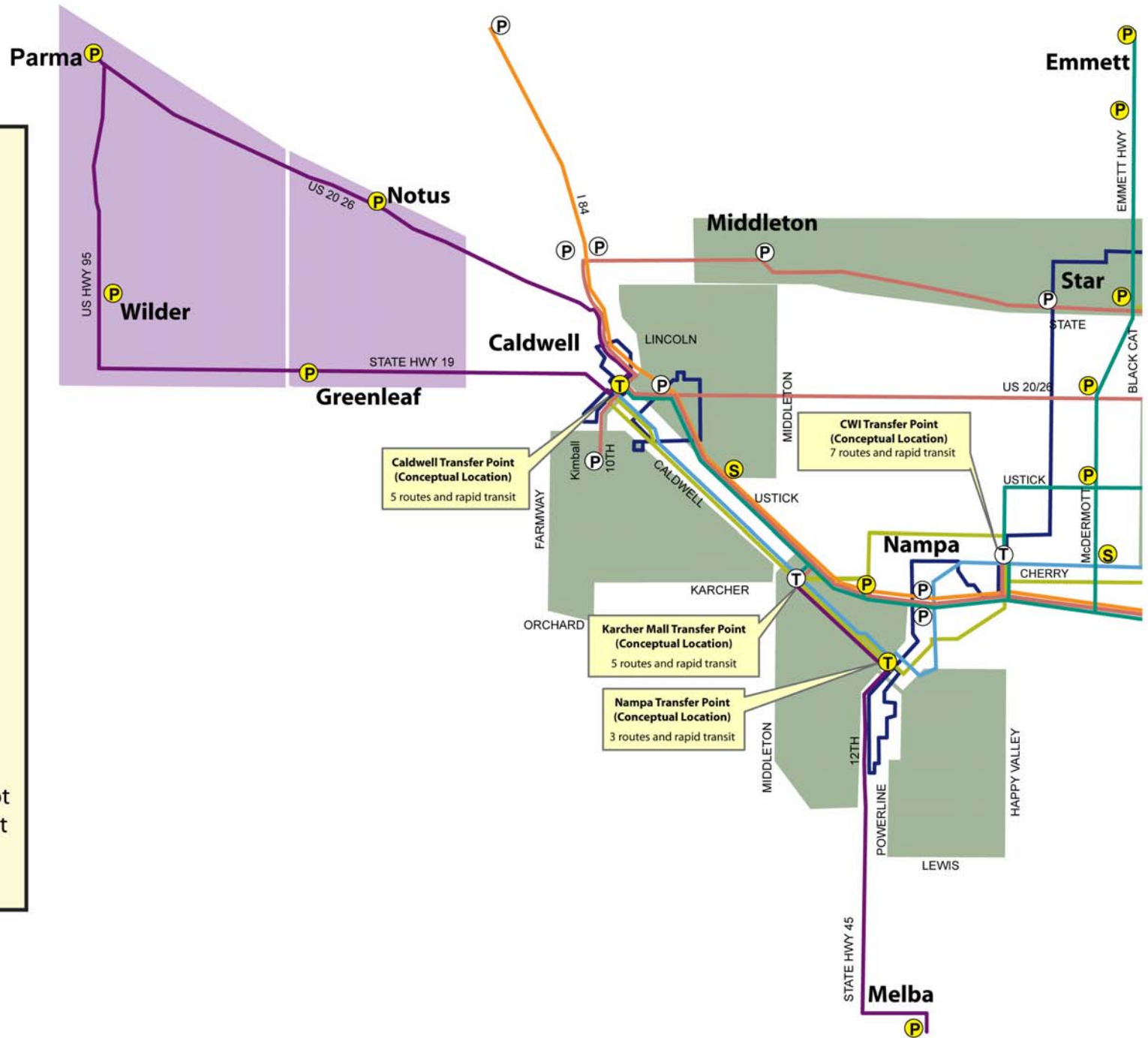
Technology and equipment advances will improve on-time performance, emissions, vehicle locating and customer service

The following pages outline current and planned transit services for the region and for each community.

. . VALLEYRIDE

- SIGNAL PRIORITIZATION
- CLEAN FUEL VEHICLES
- AUTOMATIC VEHICLE LOCATOR EQUIPMENT ON BUSES
- STOP ANNUNCIATORS
- ON-OFF PASSENGER COUNTERS
- BYPASS LANES ON FREEWAY RAMPS
- HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE LANES

Legend	
Premium Service	15 to 30 minutes all day Dedicated right of way Limited stops
Express Service	15 to 30 minutes peak 30 to 60 minutes midday Limited stops
Employer Express Service	30 minutes peak
Primary Service	15 to 30 minutes peak 30 to 60 minutes midday Frequent stops
Secondary Service	30 to 60 minutes all day Frequent stops
Rural Service	60 minutes all day Frequent stops
Boise Streetcar	15 minutes all day
Intercity Service	Varies
Flex-Route Service	Up to 60 minutes all day Deviates from its set route
Demand Response Service	By reservation
Planned Transit Center	Planned Park & Ride Lot
Existing Transit Center	Existing Park & Ride Lot
Planned Station	





TRANSIT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

PREMIUM SERVICE
HIGH SPEED COMMUTER SERVICE

EXPRESS SERVICE
COMMUTER SERVICE TO MAJOR EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

EMPLOYER EXPRESS SERVICE
COMMUTER SERVICE TO MAJOR EMPLOYERS

PRIMARY SERVICE
CONNECT NEIGHBORHOODS AND NEIGHBORHOODS TO COMMUTER SERVICES

SECONDARY SERVICE
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE

RURAL SERVICE
CONNECT RURAL COMMUNITIES TO CITIES

FLEX ROUTE SERVICE
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE IN LESS DENSE AREAS

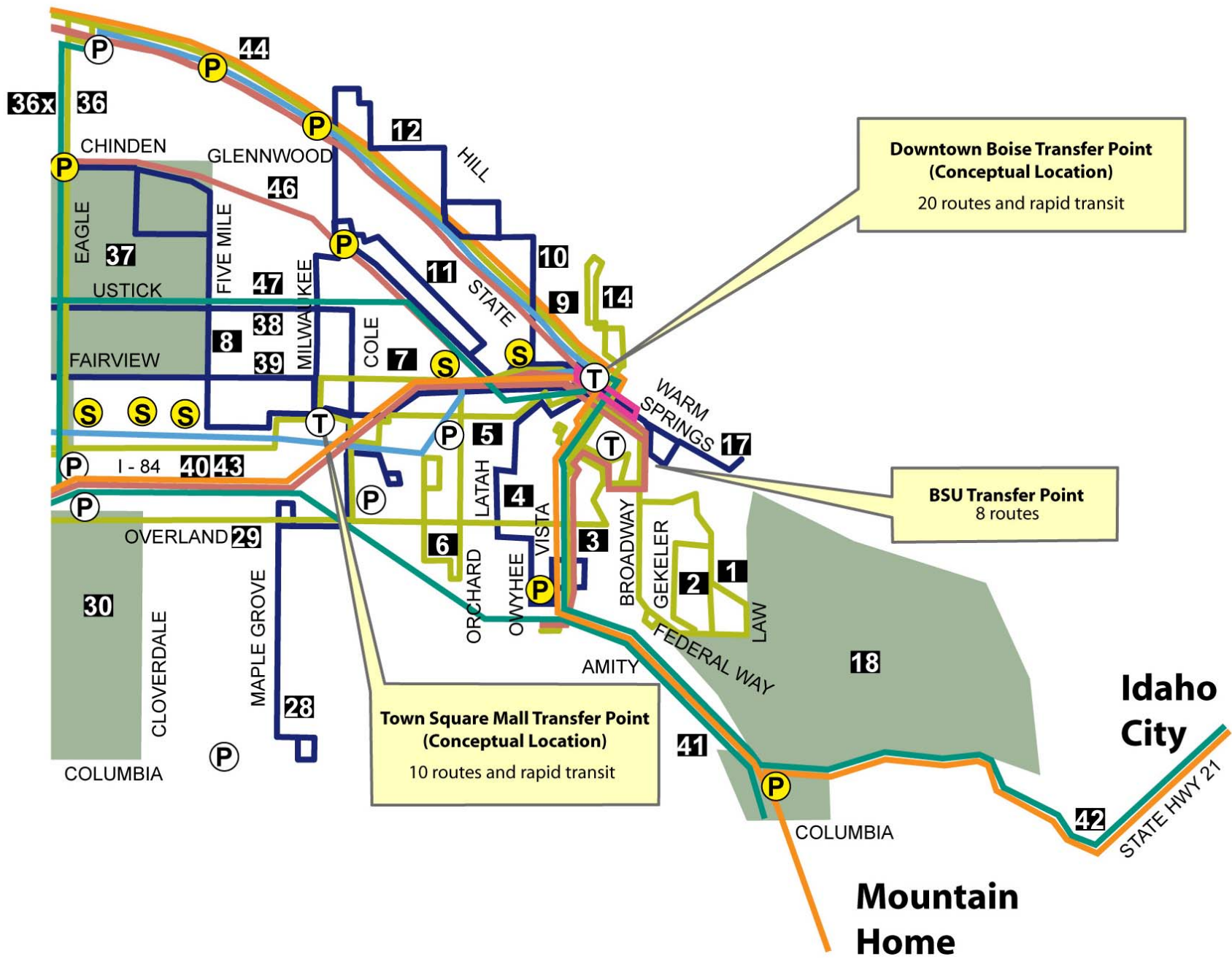
DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE IN RURAL AREAS

VALLEYRIDE . . . BOISE / GARDEN CITY

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
1 Parkcenter	Secondary	Primary
2 Broadway	Secondary	Primary
3 Vista	Primary	Primary
4 Roosevelt	Secondary	Secondary
5 Emerald	Secondary	Primary
6 Orchard	Secondary	Primary
7 Fairview	Primary	Primary
8 Five Mile	Secondary	Secondary
8x Five Mile/Chinden	Employer Express	
9 State Street	Secondary	Primary
9x State Street	Employer Express	
10 Hill/Maple Grove	Secondary	Secondary
11 Garden City	Secondary	Secondary
12 Glenwood		Secondary
14 Hyde Park	Secondary	Primary
16 VA Shuttle	Secondary	Secondary
17 Warm Springs	Secondary	Secondary
18 Southeast Boise		Flex
28 Maple Grove	Secondary	Secondary

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
29 Overland	Secondary	Primary
30 South Meridian		Flex
36 Eagle		Primary
36x Eagle		Employer Express
37 North Meridian/Boise		Flex
38 Ustick		Secondary
39 Meridian/Fairview		Secondary
40 Nampa/Merdian	Express	Express
41 Micron		Employer Express
42 Idaho City		Employer Express
43 Caldwell	Employer Express	Express
44 Hwy 44	Employer Express	Express
45 BSU/CWI	Employer Express	
46 20/26		Express
47 Ustick		Employer Express
Mt. Home/Ontario/Horseshoe Bend/Idaho City		Intercity
State Street Rapid Transit		Premium
I-84 Corridor Rapid Transit		Premium
Boise Street Car		Premium

Bold indicates new service

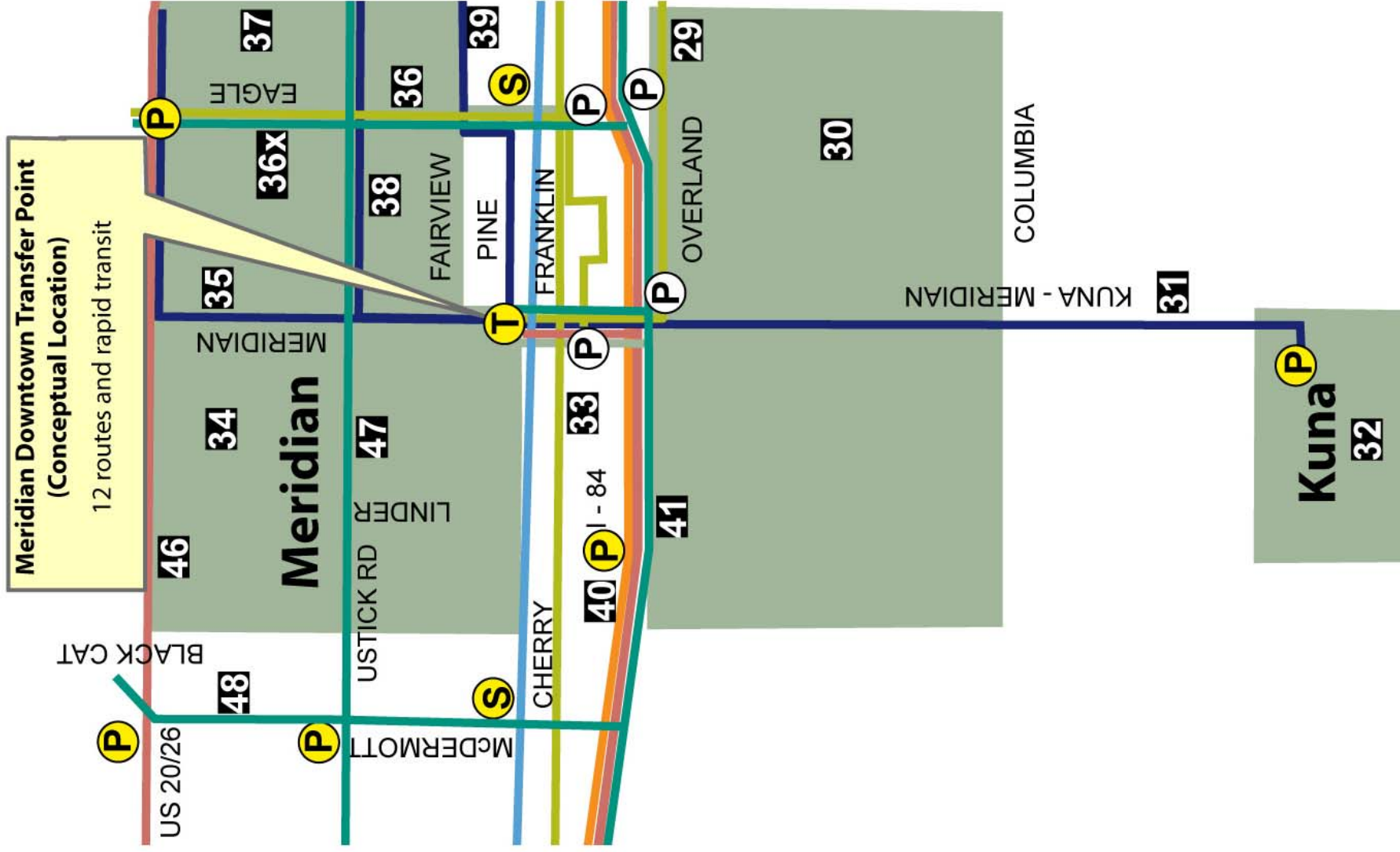


VALLEYRIDE . . . MERIDIAN / KUNA

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
29 Overland		Primary
30 South Meridian		Flex
31 Meridian/Kuna		Secondary
32 Kuna		Flex
33 Cherry		Primary
34 North Meridian		Flex
35 Meridian		Secondary
36 Eagle		Primary
36x Eagle		Employer Express
37 North Meridian/Boise		Flex
38 Ustick		Secondary
39 Meridian/Fairview		Secondary
40 Nampa/Merdian	Express	Express
41 Micron		Employer Express
46 20/26		Express
47 Ustick		Employer Express
Ontario/Horseshoe Bend		Intercity

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
I-84 Corridor Rapid Transit		Premium

Bold indicates new service

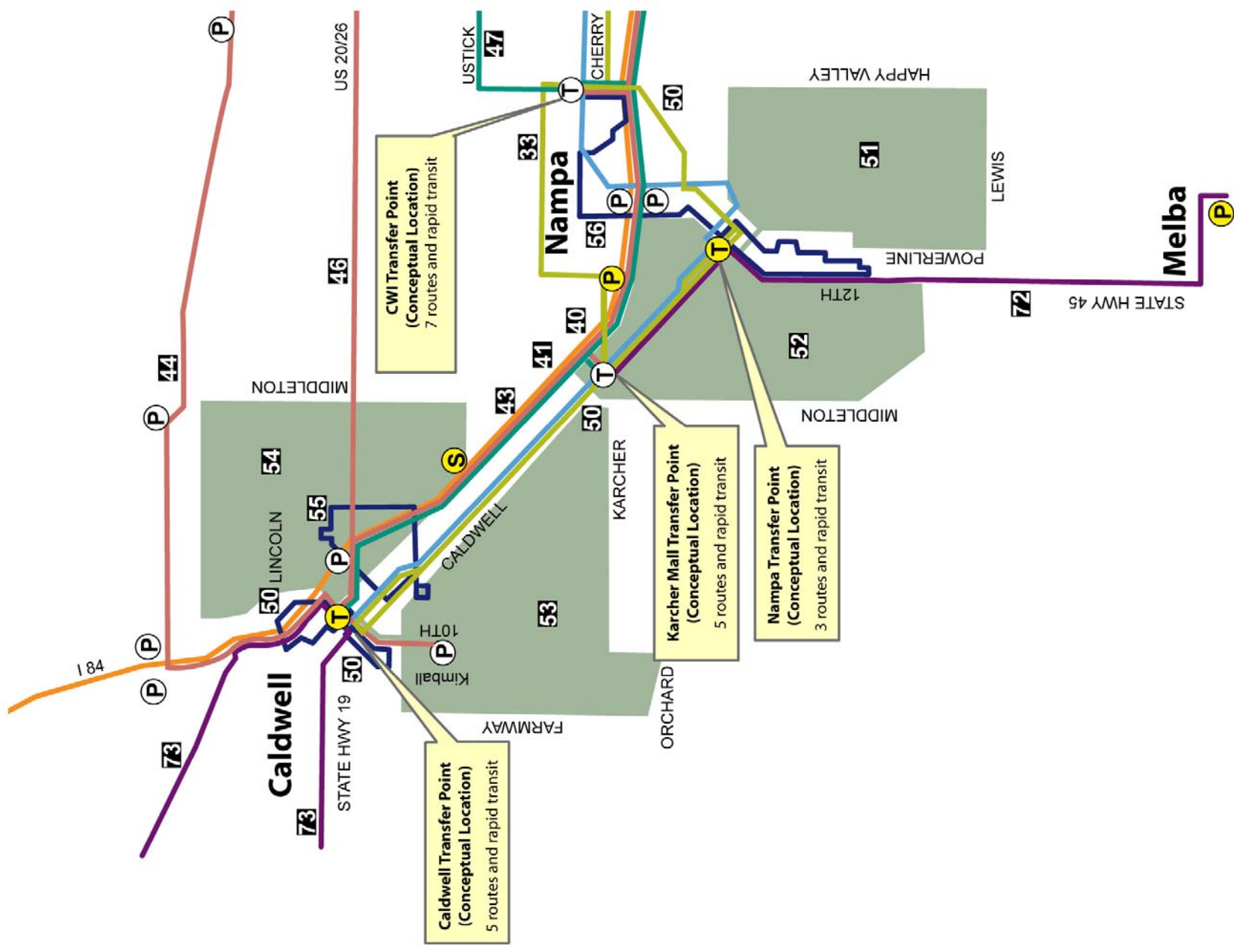


VALLEYRIDE . . . NAMPA / CALDWELL / MELBA

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
33 Cherry		Primary
40 Nampa/Merdian	Express	Express
41 Micron		Employer Express
42 Idaho City		Employer Express
43 Caldwell	Employer Express	Express
44 Hwy 44	Employer Express	Express
45 BSU/CWI	Employer Express	
46 20/26		Express
47 Ustick		Employer Express
50 Caldwell Blvd	Secondary	Primary
51 Southeast Nampa	Secondary	Flex
52 Southwest Nampa	Secondary	Flex
53 South Caldwell	Secondary	Flex
54 North Caldwell	Secondary	Flex
55 Franklin/Smeed	Secondary	Secondary
56 11th St.		Secondary
72 Melba		Rural

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
73 Parma/Notus/Wilder/Greenleaf		Rural
Ontario		Intercity
I-84 Corridor Rapid Transit		Premium

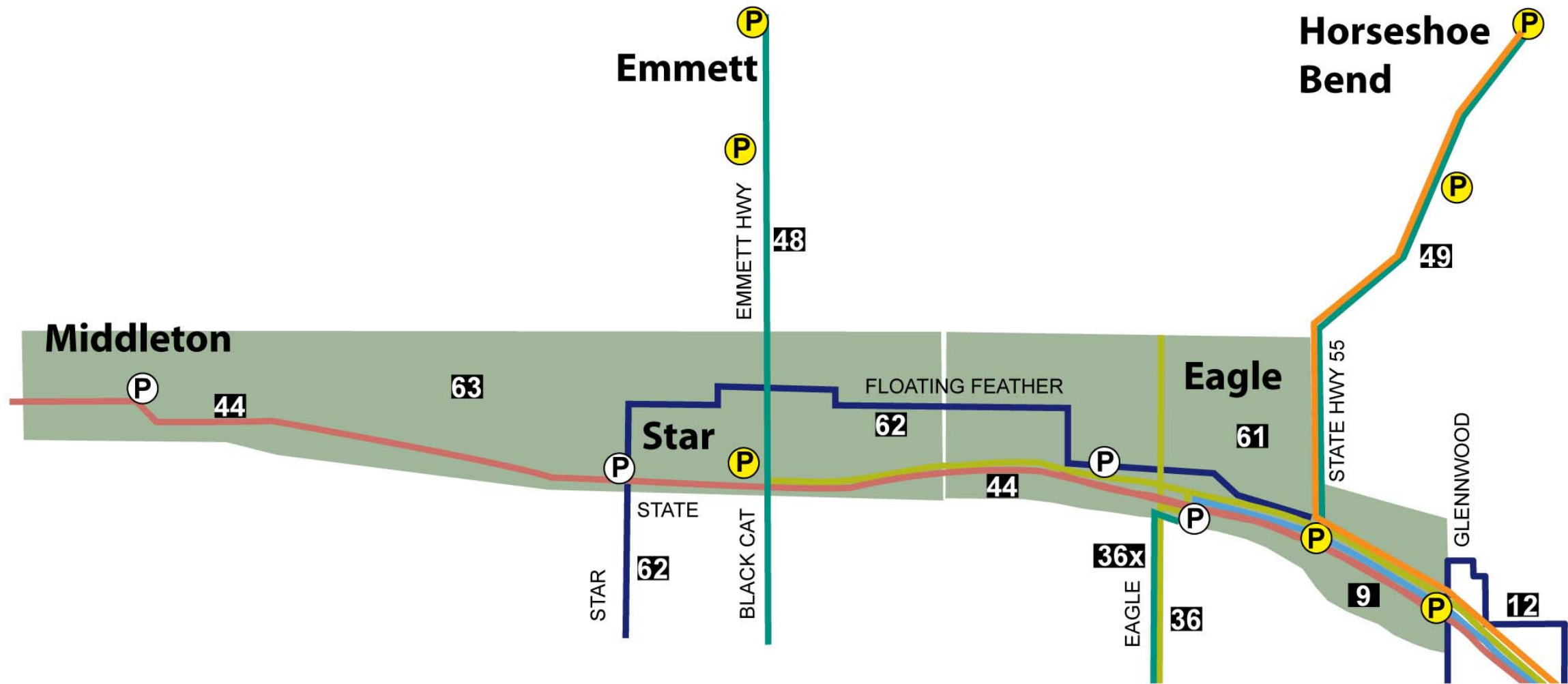
Bold indicates new service



VALLEYRIDE . . . MIDDLETON / STAR / EAGLE

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
9 State Street	Secondary	Primary
9x State Street	Employer Express	
10 Hill/Maple Grove	Secondary	
12 Glenwood		Secondary
36 Eagle		Primary
36x Eagle		Employer Express
44 Hwy 44	Employer Express	Express
48 Hwy 16		Employer Express
49 Horseshoe Bend		Employer Express
61 Eagle		Flex
62 Eagle/Star		Secondary
63 Star/Middleton		Flex
Horseshoe Bend/Ontario		Intercity
State Street Rapid Transit		Premium

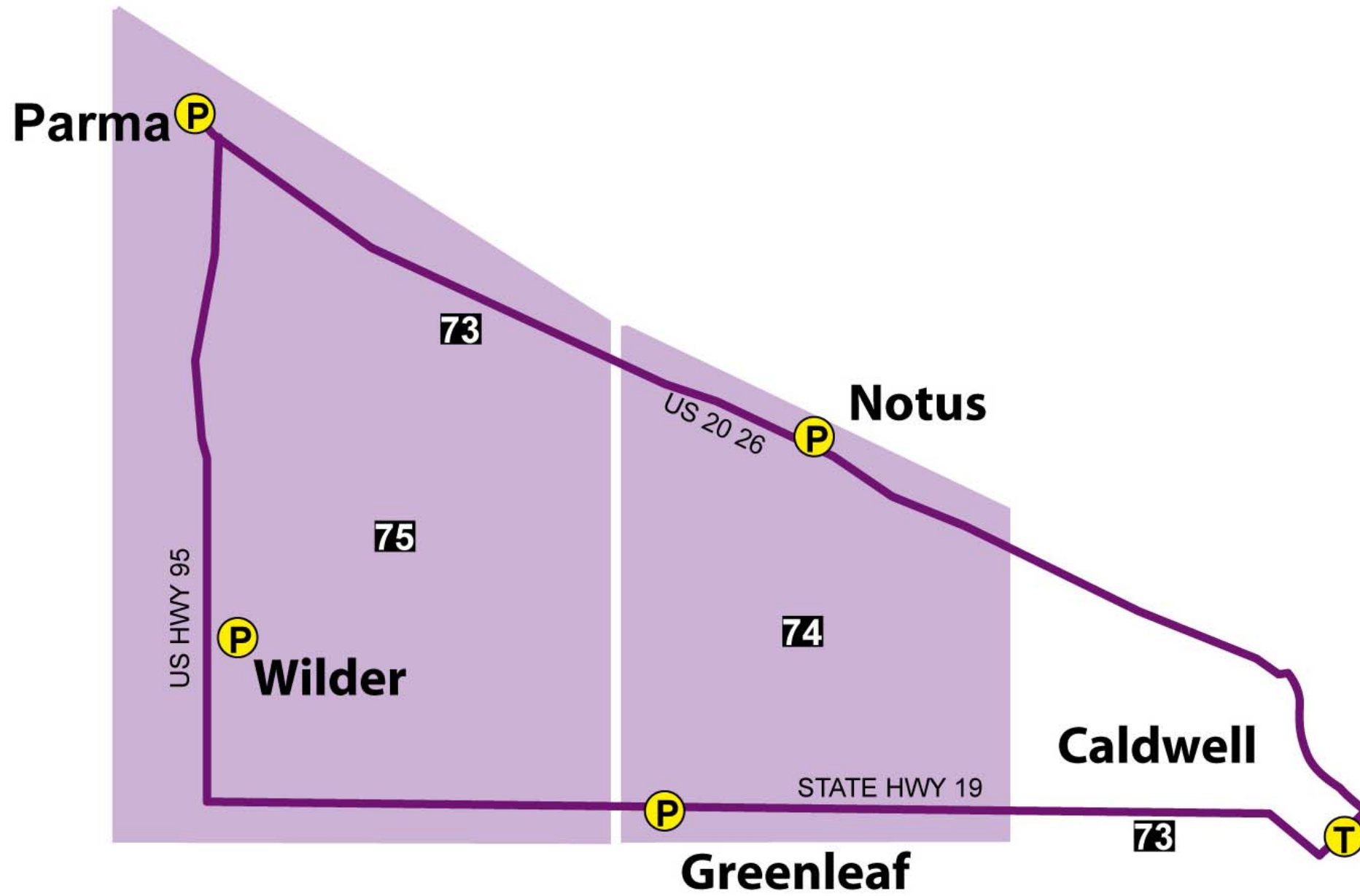
Bold indicates new service



VALLEYRIDE . . . WILDER / PARMA / NOTUS / GREENLEAF

Route	Current Service	Planned Service
73 Parma/Notus/Wilder/Greenleaf		Rural
74 Notus/Greenleaf		Demand Response
75 Wilder/Parma		Demand Response

Bold indicates new service



COMMUTERIDE . .

- VANPOOLING
- CARPOOLING
- TELECOMMUTING
- COMPRESSED WORK WEEKS

. . COMMUTER SERVICES

Commuter services provide options for employees to get to work other than driving alone or using traditional transit. Transit, even routes specifically targeted to commuters, cannot efficiently serve all work locations or shifts. Vanpools and carpools allow small groups of people who live in the same community and work in the same community to share the ride. These options are especially important for people living in rural communities and in towns a significant distance from main employment centers.

Routes and schedules for vanpools and carpools are determined by the participants. Because they continue to operate as long as there are sufficient riders, the number of vanpools and carpools in operation and the areas they serve often changes.

In addition to these services, commuter programs can include working with employers to eliminate commute trips altogether by implementing programs such as compressed work weeks and telecommuting.

The following pages detail existing services, services currently being implemented, and those planned.

COMMUTERIDE . .

.....vanpool

Ada County Highway District operates Commuteride for commuters who begin or end their trip in Ada County. There are more than 85 vans on the road each weekday. The vans carry 11 to 14 passengers and are operated by volunteer drivers. ACHD Commuteride works with area employers to provide free or preferential parking for vanpools. Vanpools are allowed to park on the street in downtown Boise without paying the parking meter. VRT is setting up a vanpool program for commuters who live or work in Canyon County but not beginning or ending their trip in Ada County.

Technology enhancements will allow for vehicle location for safety purposes, traffic alerts for vanpool drivers and better customer service. Roadways that give preference to vanpools would significantly increase usage.



- VARIATION IN VEHICLE SIZE
- VEHICLE LOCATORS
- TRAFFIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEM
- ROUTES ON 511 WEBSITE
- ONLINE FARE PAYMENT
- BY-PASS LANES ON FREEWAY RAMPS
- HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE LANES



- CARPOOL REGISTRATION SYSTEM
- BYPASS LANES ON FREEWAY ON RAMPS
- HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE LANES
- COMPRESSED WORK WEEK POLICY SAMPLES
- TELECOMMUTING POLICY SAMPLES

.. COMMUTERIDE

.....carpool

The Community Transportation Association of Idaho (CTAI) maintains Ride Share Online, a web-based system through which individuals can find carpool partners. This service is available statewide. Through ACHD's Commuteride program, some employers offer free or preferential parking for carpoolers. In order to more accurately measure the impact of carpooling, a better means of tracking the number of carpoolers is needed.

.....compressed work weeks / telecommuting

Currently, there is no comprehensive effort to encourage compressed work weeks, modified work schedules or telecommuting in the region. These programs eliminate commute trips or shift them to less congested times. Sample workplace policies and procedures and an education program would encourage employers to establish these programs for employees.

COMMUNITY SERVICES . .

GoRide is a group of community-based transportation services designed to move people when and where more traditional transit and commuter services are not available. Many social service agencies and private organizations typically provide these services for their clients and customers. However, these organizations often prefer to focus their efforts and resources on their primary purpose rather than transportation. Also, because transportation is not their primary function, the vehicles and resources they have are often underutilized.

GoRide services are designed to make more efficient use of the transportation resources in which the community has already invested, and to enhance the benefits of future investments. This can often be achieved by sharing equipment and resources.

VRT is currently coordinating and implementing several GoRide services.

These services are available throughout Ada and Canyon counties.

Several other services have been identified for future implementation and there are transportation gaps or inefficiencies for which GoRide solutions have

GORIDE

- AGENCY VEHICLE SHARING
- CAR SHARING
- VOLUNTER DRIVER PROGRAM
- JOB ACCESS VANPOOLING



- COMPUTERIZED AGENCY VEHICLE RESERVATION SYSTEM
- AGENCY VEHICLE LOCATORS
- TRAFFIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEM
- EXPANDED FLEET OF AGENCY VEHICLES
- AGENCY AND STATE POLICY CHANGES TO FACILITATE AGENCY RESOURCE SHARING
- LOCATIONS FOR PARKING CAR SHARING VEHICLES

.. GORIDE

.....agency vehicle sharing

Many social service and private organizations need vehicles to transport their clients. However, one agency seldom makes full-time use of their vehicles. Vehicle sharing by agencies is a computerized database that shows what vehicles are available and when, so that participating agencies can reserve and use them when needed. The RideLine customer call center will coordinate the reservations. VRT will own, insure and maintain some vehicles, and some may be owned and maintained by individual organizations. This program is currently being developed.

.....car sharing

Car sharing gives individuals access to a car when they need it, thereby eliminating the need to own and maintain a car. Individuals join the program for a monthly fee and pay a usage fee each time they use a car. Currently, ZipCar has vehicles available on the Boise State University (BSU) campus. The program is open to anyone. The car sharing program can be expanded so that cars are located throughout the region.



- PARK & RIDES
- TRANSIT CENTERS/STATIONS
- BIKE/WALK FACILITIES
- BUS TECHNOLOGY
- CUSTOMER SERVICE TECHNOLOGY
- OPERATIONS/PLANNING TECHNOLOGY
- VEHICLES
- FACILITIES/SUPPORT EQUIPMENT

■ ■ CAPITAL

Capital investments are essential to operate all of the services more efficiently. These investments also help customers access services. The capital investments are in the community, on the vehicles and at the operations facilities. VRT needs to replace existing capital equipment as well as purchase additional capital. The 10-Year Capital Replacement Plan, required by the Federal Transit Administration, documents when buses, vans and other major capital equipment is scheduled for replacement. VRT also has a technology plan which prioritizes the technology investments outlined in **valleyconnect**.

Many of the capital projects require coordination with other public agencies, non-profits and private entities. Often the projects are not on VRT property or can benefit from economies of scale.

While the following pages outline the capital priorities for the future, it is important that this part of the **valleyconnect** remain somewhat flexible in order to take advantage to the most advanced technology and equipment at the time of implementation.

INFRASTRUCTURE . .

.....*park & rides*

Park & Rides are parking locations where carpoolers, vanpoolers and bus riders can park and meet their ride. There are currently 16 park & rides in Ada and Canyon counties. **Valleyconnect** identifies general locations for 19 more. The amount of parking available depends on the site and the demand. Currently, ACHD and VRT both manage park & rides. A regional coordinator needs to be established. New park & ride lots near highways should be designed so that buses can exit, pick up passengers quickly, and then re-enter the highway directly. In addition to building new park & rides, the program can be expanded by using existing lots that are underutilized or that are not used during weekday commute periods.

.....*bike/walk facilities*

VRT has bike racks on all transit vehicles. The bike program can be expanded to include bike lock facilities at major bus stops. **Valleyconnect** calls for coordination between road and transit agencies to improve sidewalks near bus to increase accessibility.



- ESTABLISH REGIONAL PARK & RIDE LEAD
- INCLUDE PARK & RIDES IN ROAD PROJECTS
- DETERMINE SPECIFIC LOCATIONS FOR NEW PARK & RIDE LOTS AND BUILD THEM
- SET UP PARK & RIDES AT CHURCH AND STORE PARKING LOTS
- DEVELOP A PARK & RIDE MAINTENANCE PLAN
- BIKE FACILITIES AT MAJOR BUS STOPS
- WORK WITH LOCAL JURISDICTIONS FOR SIDEWALK ENHANCEMENTS



- BUILD DOWNTOWN BOISE TRANSIT CENTER
- LOCATE AND BUILD TRANSIT CENTERS
- ESTABLISH SPECIFIC STATION LOCATIONS AND BEGIN LAND PRESERVATION
- EXPAND SHELTER PROGRAM TO ALL MAJOR STOPS
- ESTABLISH SHELTER MAINTENANCE PROGRAM
- EXPAND BUS BENCH PROGRAM TO ALL STOPS
- BRING ALL BUS STOPS TO ADA STANDARDS

.. INFRASTRUCTURE

.....transit centers

Transit centers are locations where a significant number of transit routes come together so that passengers can transfer. They must be large enough for several buses to pull in simultaneously and have parking for customers. Currently, there are four transit centers. Valleyconnect calls for three more. Also, the downtown Boise transit center is being relocated to improve traffic flow and provide parking at the facility.

.....ADA bus stop enhancements

Bus stop enhancements including landing pads, sidewalk improvements, shelters, and benches make the bus stops more usable for all customers, but especially the elderly and persons with disabilities. VRT is currently improving access to bus stops to meet Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) standards using one time federal funding. In addition, VRT receives some federal funding each year targeted specifically for bus stop enhancements.

INFRASTRUCTURE . .

.....high occupancy vehicle lanes

High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes usually function along major highways and corridors and can be used by buses, vanpools and some carpools. The service plan for the State Street corridor calls for high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV) before demand warrants dedicated right-of-way. A more detailed look at HOV lanes along I-84 is identified in the High Capacity Corridor Study. HOV lanes should also be considered for the Highway 16 project.

.....dedicated right-of-way

The premium service along State Street and the I-84 corridor in **valleyconnect**, calls for dedicated right-of-way. Work to secure the needed land along these corridors should begin well in advance of the initiation of this service.

.....rapid transit stations

Stations will be located along the premium service. **Valleyconnect** calls for eight stations. The premium service will also use some of the transit centers.



- CONDUCT HOV STUDY
- DETERMINE HOV LANE USAGE POLICY
- IMPLEMENT HOV LANES WHEN AND WHERE WARRANTED
- DETERMINE WHICH PREMIUM CORRIDOR TO DEVELOP FIRST
- CONDUCT DETAILED RIGHT-OF-WAY ANALYSIS
- IDENTIFY SPECIFIC STATION LOCATIONS
- BEGIN TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING NEAR STATIONS



- COMPREHENSIVE AVL EQUIPMENT ON TRANSIT VEHICLES
- BASIC AVL EQUIPMENT ON VANS AND VEHICLE SHARING VEHICLES
- SOFTWARE ON 511 WEBSITE AND PHONE SYSTEM TO PROVIDE REAL TIME BUS INFORMATION TO CUSTOMERS
- ANNUNCIATORS ON TRANSIT VEHICLES
- SOFTWARE TO PROGRAM ROUTE AND SCHEDULE INFORMATION FOR ANNUNCIATORS

.. TECHNOLOGY

.....*vehicle technology*

Several technologies are key to maximizing potential on transit and vanpool vehicles. While ValleyRide buses currently have automatic vehicle locator (AVL) technology, the resulting data is not accurate enough for public use. Accurate AVL equipment will allow customers to receive real time bus information on the web, their cell phones and hand held devices. AVL will also allow ValleyRide to accurately measure on-time performance and allow VRT schedule routes better. The equipment is also needed for buses to use traffic signal prioritization. Simplified AVL equipment on vanpools and vehicle sharing vehicles will allow staff to locate these vehicles as needed for safety purposes.

Annunciators use AVL data to inform passengers of the next bus stop. The information is provided orally and on an electronic reader board. Announcing stops is required by the ADA. Using annunciators automates this process, allowing bus operators to concentrate on driving.

TECHNOLOGY . .

Automatic passenger counters track how many passengers get on and off at each stop. This data is required by the Federal Transit Administration as part of an annual National Transit Database report. Currently, transit trips are randomly selected for tracking and the passenger counts are done manually by the drivers. The data from automatic passenger counters would also be used for route planning and for performance reporting to local jurisdictions.

Video display terminals on buses allow drivers of paratransit, flex route and demand response services to see their scheduled passenger pick-ups and drop-offs and the recommended route. ValleyRide paratransit vehicles currently have this technology. Adding this technology and the corresponding software to regular transit vehicles would allow ValleyRide to operate flex route and demand response services. Valley**connect** calls for 11 flex routes and two demand response services. These monitors will also provide drivers with route and schedule information to assist riders. This information is currently printed.

VRT will also monitor upgrades to fare box equipment and implement improvements that make fare payment and fare tracking easier.



- AUTOMATIC PASSENGER COUNTERS ON TRANSIT VEHICLES
- SOFTWARE FOR COMPILING PASSENGER COUNT INFORMATION
- VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS FOR TRANSIT VEHICLES
- SOFTWARE FOR VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS
- FARE BOX UPGRADES

.. TECHNOLOGY

.....*roadway technology*

Several roadway technologies are available that allow buses to flow through traffic more quickly. Having bus travel time equal to, if not faster than, car driving time is key to increasing ridership.

With signal pre-emption, transit vehicles are equipped to trigger a light to stay or turn green if the bus is running late. This system requires AVL, which includes a GPS, on the buses, and special equipment at each stop light. VRT and ACHD are beginning to test signal pre-emption on State Street, as called for in the State Street Transit and Traffic Operational Plan. Such technology may also be key to speeding up bus flow in and out of the new downtown Boise transit center.

Slip lanes are a short additional lane on the far side of intersections on that have right-turn lanes and right-turn signals. They allow buses to use the right turn lane on the near side of the traffic light to move ahead of traffic, proceed across the intersection before the regular traffic, and use the slip lane to merge back into the regular lanes. Additional locations should be coordinated.

- AVL EQUIPMENT ON BUSES
- SIGNAL PRE-EMPTION EQUIPMENT FOR TRAFFIC LIGHTS ON STATE STREET
- EVALUATE SIGNAL PRE-EMPTION TEST
- POSSIBLE SIGNAL PRE-EMPTION NEAR NEW TRANSIT CENTER
- IDENTIFY LOCATIONS FOR SLIP LANES
- BUILD SLIP LANES

TECHNOLOGY . .

Slip ramps are transit, carpool and vanpool only lane on highway entrance ramps that allow buses to move past the queue of cars waiting to enter the highway. These should be incorporated when signals are put at entrance ramps to regulate flow of traffic onto the highway.

.....operations/planning technology

VRT and ValleyRide have a database system to track transit ridership, fare collection, bus maintenance and other operations details. This database requires continued refinements. Ideally, this database should be expanded to track the ridership, fare collection and maintenance of vanpools, vehicle sharing vehicles, flex routes and demand response service. It should also track usage of the travel training and volunteer driver programs. VRT should monitor the compatibility of this database, with other software accompanying new technology. Newer database software may be required.

The automatic passenger counters and fare box enhancements will provide planning staff with more detailed information for route productivity analysis and service planning.



- EXPAND OPERATIONS DATABASE TO TRACK VANPOOL PROGRAM
- EXPAND OPERATIONS DATABASE TO TRACK VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM
- EXPAND OPERATIONS DATABASE TO TRACK FLEX ROUTES AND DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE
- EXPAND OPERATIONS DATABASE TO TRACK TRAVEL TRAINING PROGRAM
- AUTOMATIC PASSENGER COUNTERS
- FARE BOX ENHANCEMENTS

.. TECHNOLOGY

.....*customer assistance technology*

A significant investment in technology for RideLine is needed. Ideally, the software packages implemented can handle multiple tasks, making the system simpler to use and less expensive to purchase and maintain.

Many of the transit related technologies and projects use bus route, schedule and stop information as a basis. Because this route information is extensive and detailed, all technologies and projects that need this information should draw it from one location. This will significantly improve accuracy and consistency and reduce staff data maintenance time.

In order to develop the RideLine customer call center into a “one-stop shop” for transportation options, a searchable database of available services needs to be developed, along with a process for keeping the information up to date.



TECHNOLOGIES AND PROGRAMS USING BUS ROUTE, SCHEDULE AND STOP DATA INCLUDE

- AVL
- FLEX ROUTE SCHEDULING
- OPERATIONS DATA TRACKING
- 511 WEBSITE
- GOOGLE TRANSIT
- BUS STOP ENHANCEMENTS
- STOP ANNUNCIATORS

TECHNOLOGY . .

Trip scheduling software for flex route transit service, demand response transit service, and the volunteer driver program is another key component.

For the flex route and demand response transit service, the scheduled trip information is automatically displayed on the vehicle's display terminal. A system to communicate and track trip information to volunteer drivers needs to be developed. A system to schedule and track travel training requests is also needed.

Websites are key to providing information directly to customers, which reduces the cost of providing customer service. The Google Transit trip planner, already in place, and the real time bus information on the 511 website, to be developed, will allow transit users to plan their trips and get bus information on the web, via their phone and on their hand held device. These same tools will provide RideLine staff with quick, detailed information for customers who call in.

- 
- AUTOMATIC PASSENGER COUNTERS
 - FARE BOXES
 - TRAVEL TRAINING
 - AMBASSADOR PROGRAM
 - PRINTED MATERIALS



- CNG BUSES IN CANYON COUNTY
- CNG VANPOOLS
- CNG VEHICLE SHARING VEHICLES
- CNG FUELING FACILITY IN CANYON COUNTY
- ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES
- EXPAND CAPITAL REPLACEMENT PLAN
- COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF MAINTAINING VS REPLACING VEHICLES

.. EQUIPMENT

.....*vehicles*

Increasing emphasis is being placed at a federal level on clean fuel vehicles. VRT currently operates compressed natural gas (CNG) and clean diesel buses in Ada County and is transitioning the Canyon County fleet to these fuels. VRT needs a CNG fueling facility in Canyon County. The region should look at making the vanpool fleet run on CNG and as technologies such as hybrid and electric vehicles become more refined, they should also be considered.

The VRT 10-Year Capital Replacement Plan details when each bus is due to come out of service and when each bus must be replaced because of CNG fuel tank expiration. Vanpool and vehicle sharing vehicles need to be incorporated in this plan. Since many vehicles are still in operation after their eligible replacement date, a system to conduct a cost benefit analysis of maintaining versus replacing each vehicle is needed.

EQUIPMENT . .

.....support equipment

Maintaining the capital and technologies outlined in valleyconnect is key to operating an efficient system. Also, as the vehicles and technologies change new maintenance and support equipment will be needed. It is key to provide the corresponding training.

.....facilities

ValleyRide currently has a facility in Canyon County and one in Ada County that house the transit service operations and maintenance. Because of a lack of space and unsafe conditions, the Canyon County facility is being relocated. The new location is planned to include a park & ride. Maintenance and parking for vanpools and vehicle sharing vehicles will need to be incorporated into both locations. A secure system to allow drivers, who are not ValleyRide employees, to pick up vans and vehicle sharing vehicles needs to be developed. VRT is moving to new administration offices large enough to accommodate current staff and future growth.



- UP-TO-DATE MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT
- UP-TO-DATE COMPUTER EQUIPMENT
- NEW CANYON COUNTY OPERATIONS FACILITY
- NEW VRT ADMINISTRATION FACILITY
- MAINTENANCE FOR VANS AND VEHICLE SHARING VEHICLES
- PARKING FOR VANS AND VEHICLE SHARING VEHICLES
- DRIVER ACCESS SYSTEM FOR VANS AND VEHICLE SHARING VEHICLES

VALLEYCONNECT . . . SUMMARY

	<i>Boise</i>	<i>Caldwell</i>	<i>Eagle</i>	<i>Garden City</i>	<i>Greenleaf</i>	<i>Kuna</i>	<i>Melba</i>
Premium Transit							
Express Transit	Have						
Employer Express Transit	Have	Have	Have				
Primary Transit	Have	Have					
Secondary Transit	Have	Have		Have			
Rural Transit							
Flex Route Transit							
Demand Response Transit							
ParaTransit	Have	Have		Have	Have		
Intercity Transit							
Vanpool	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have
Carpool	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have
Volunteer Driver							
Travel Training	Have	Have	Have	Have			
Agency Vehicle Sharing							
Car Sharing	Have						
Park & Ride Lot	Have	Have	Have				
Transit Center	Have						
Premium Transit Station							

Have

Planned or expanded

VALLEYCONNECT . . . SUMMARY

	<i>Meridian</i>	<i>Middleton</i>	<i>Nampa</i>	<i>Notus</i>	<i>Parma</i>	<i>Star</i>	<i>Wilder</i>
Premium Transit							
Express Transit	Have		Have				
Employer Express Transit		Have				Have	
Primary Transit			Have				
Secondary Transit			Have				
Rural Transit				Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded		Planned or expanded
Flex Route Transit		Planned or expanded		Planned or expanded		Planned or expanded	
Demand Response Transit				Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded		Planned or expanded
ParaTransit			Have	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded
Intercity Transit							
Vanpool	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have
Carpool	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have	Have
Volunteer Driver				Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded
Travel Training	Have		Have	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded
Agency Vehicle Sharing				Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded
Car Sharing				Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded
Park & Ride Lot	Have	Have	Have	Planned or expanded	Planned or expanded	Have	Planned or expanded
Transit Center				Planned or expanded			
Premium Transit Station				Planned or expanded			

Have

Planned or expanded

CONCLUSION

Valley**connect** is the basis for implementing projects and services going forward. It will guide VRT staff in service implementation, capital expenditures, budget allocations and grant applications.

Valley**connect** is a living document. Detailed valley**ride** and gor**ide** service plans for each area will be developed with regional partners based on valley-**connect**. VRT's is updating its Ten Year Capital Improvement Plan and its Technology Plan using valley**connect** as the foundation. All of these detailed area and topic specific plans will become attachments to valley**connect**.

While the ultimate goal is to obtain an ongoing, dedicated funding source to implement the entire plan, valley**connect** is designed to show that there are many steps that can be taken in the interim to build the foundation for a comprehensive transportation system that provides all citizens with choices in how they travel.

VALLEYCONNECT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS . . .

- ✓ COMPILE EXISTING PLANS
- ✓ JURISDICTION AND COMMUNITY INPUT
- ✓ DEVELOP VALLEYCONNECT PLAN
- AGENCY AND JURISDICTION ADOPTION
- PRIORITIZATION OF COMPONENTS FOR EACH COMMUNITY
- BUDGET AND FUNDING FOR COMPONENT
- IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPONENT