

Regional Advisory Council Meeting Agenda

November 19, 2024

9:00 AM

5907 W. Cleveland Blvd. Caldwell, ID 83607

This is an in-person meeting.

The meeting will be held at the Happy Day Transit Center at
5907 W. Cleveland Blvd. Caldwell, ID 83607

If you are unable to attend in person, you may join us via MSTeams at http://ridevrt.org/VRTRAC_FY24
or by dialing in at 323-484-8960 **Conference ID: 403 243 232#**

I. Calling of the Roll

II. Agenda Additions/Changes

III. Consent Agenda

Items on the Consent Agenda are Action Items and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Regional Advisory Council Member requests the item be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed under Action Items.

A. ACTION: Minutes of the September 17, 2024, Meeting

Pages 3-5 | Paula Cromie

The Regional Advisory Council is asked to consider approve of the minutes from the September 17, 2024, meeting.

B. ACTION: 2025 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

Page 6 | Paula Cromie

The Regional Advisory Council is asked to acknowledge the 2025 meeting calendar.

IV. Action Items

A. ACTION: Access Handbook Update

Pages 7-59 | Jeannette Ezell

The Regional Advisory Council is asked to consider recommending for approval the Access Handbook Update to the Executive Board.

V. Information Items

A. INFORMATION: Service Change Effect on Ridership

Pages X60-73 | Alissa Taysom

Staff will provide an update to ridership since the implementation of the June 2024 Service Change.

B. INFORMATION: Reduced Fare Verification Process Update

Pages 74-75 | Duane Wakan

Staff will present the proposed reduced fare verification process with nontransferable fare media for seniors, youths and persons with disabilities beginning in 2025.

C. INFORMATION: VRT Access Holiday Service

Page 76 | Jeannette Ezell

This is an information item only. VRT Staff has provided a memo to the Regional Advisory Council members to inform them of Access service being offered on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

D. INFORMATION: Simme Seat Pilot Project

Pages 77-78 | Kate Dahl

Staff will present information on a pilot project to deploy 12 Simme Seats at bus stops recommended by the Regional Advisory Council.

E. INFORMATION: 2025 Outreach

Page 79 | Jason Rose

This is an information item. Staff will review ongoing marketing efforts and outline upcoming outreach and facilitate a discussion with RAC members to get feedback on priorities and tactics.

F. INFORMATION: Topics for Discussion

Walter Steed

Members of the Regional Advisory Council will have the opportunity to bring up topics on items they've heard about during an open discussion session, or topics they would like to be considered on an upcoming agenda.

VI. Department/Staff Reports

A. INFORMATION: Department/Staff Reports

Pages 80-91 | Staff

The most current department/staff reports were included in the packet for information. RAC members are encouraged to read them as they contain valuable information.

VII. Adjournment

Agenda order is subject to change.

Next Regional Advisory Council Meeting:

January 21, 2025

VRT Boardroom

700 NE 2nd Street

Meridian, ID 83642

Any accommodations needed for effective communication, such as language interpretation or auxiliary aids, should be made no later than three working days before the scheduled meeting. Please contact Jason Rose, Communications Director at jrose@rideVRT.org or by calling 208-258-2739.

Regional Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2024

9:00 AM

VRT Board Room – 700 NE 2nd Street – Meridian, Idaho

MEMBERS PRESENT	MEMBERS ABSENT	OTHERS
Susan Bradley	Laylo Hamund	Brad Alvaro, VRT
Samantha Kenney	Megan Zusne	Paula Cromie, VRT
Terri Lindenberg		Elaine Clegg, VRT
Andrew Mills		Kate Dahl, VRT
Mary Beth Nutting		Jeremy Gianchetta, VRT
Deeann Solis		Stephen Hunt, VRT
Walter Steed		Lila Klopfenstein, COMPASS
Theresa Vawter		Hailee Lenhart-Wees, VRT
David White		Rob Lowe, VRT
		Jason Rose, VRT
		Kyle Street, VRT
		Alissa Taysom, VRT
		Duanne Wakan, VRT
		Cameron Wells, VRT

I. **Calling of the Roll** – The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m., with a quorum present by phone and in-person.

II. **Agenda Additions/Changes** - None

III. **Consent Agenda**

Items on the Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. **ACTION: Minutes of the July 16, 2024, Regional Advisory Council Meeting**
- B. **ACTION: Regional Advisory Council 2025 Meeting Calendar**

Terri Lindenberg moved to approve the consent agenda as presented; Teresa Vawter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. **Action Items** - None

V. **Information Items**

A. **INFORMATION: Partner Funding Status**

Stephen Hunt presented the current status of FY2025 funding requests and commitments from all of the jurisdictions that are a part of Valley Regional Transit.

Stephen explained where the shortfalls took place and the reasoning behind the changes to the budget and service from VRT for FY2025.

Several jurisdictions felt severe budget constraints due to a law enacted by the Idaho legislature and had to find places to cut their budgets, which, in turn, affected the VRT budget.

VRT has no stable form of funding at this time.

B. INFORMATION: Funding Model Changes

Stephen Hunt presented a summary of current funding model including how it has changed and evolved over the last decade and where we are headed. The goal is to have a funding model that works for all jurisdictions and is easy to understand and compute.

VRT is working for ways to explain the importance of service to different populations and areas around the valley to the jurisdictions in an effort to enable them to understand how assessments are requested and allocated.

C. INFORMATION: Ada County Highway District Integrated Five-Year Work Plan Comments

Stephen Hunt presented VRT comments on 2025-2029 Ada County Highway District (ACHD) Integrated Five-Year Work Plan.

Over the last three years, VRT has been a part of developing that plan. ACHD has done a tremendous job in gathering data and information. It is a revolving plan where items can move up and down the list due to importance or changes in the plan and the final decision on the plan will be approved next week.

D. INFORMATION: FlixBus Lease Proposal

Kate Dahl presented a summary of the proposal for intercity carrier FlixBus to utilize Happy Day Transit Center as a bus stop.

Staff has presented the agreement to FlixBus and is waiting for their approval before VRT moves forward.

E. INFORMATION: FY2025 Supplemental Service Summary

Stephen Hunt presented a summary of the planned supplemental services for FY2025.

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) will continue to provide the Treeline service which provides free transportation between concert venues in downtown Boise. The Treeline does not conflict with regular service as it will provide service outside VRT's hours of peak demand.

VRT will extend the span of service and frequency on route 16 VA/15th Street to provide transportation options to the Hyde Park Street Fair.

Although approved by the Board, Stephen confirmed the transportation provided to the BSU games will not take place this year. VRT needs time to fully explore the best way to handle this service to make it the most efficient and effective.

VRT will also participate in community parades including Boise Veterans Day Parade, Boise Pride Parade, Boise Holiday Parade, Dairy Days Parade, Nampa Parade America, and more.

During holidays, VRT is looking into extended service to the downtown area.

The costs for the supplemental services were included in the FY2025 budget.

F. INFORMATION: Topics for Discussion

Members of the Regional Advisory Council had the opportunity to bring up topics on items they've heard about during an open discussion session, or topics they would like to be considered on an upcoming agenda.

VI. Department/Staff Reports

A. INFORMATION: Department/Staff Reports

The most current department/staff reports were included in the packet for information.

VII. Adjournment – Terri Lindenberg made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Andrew Mills seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:55.

Next Regional Advisory Council Meeting:

November 19, 2024

VRT Boardroom

700 NE 2nd Street

Meridian, ID 83642

Regional Advisory Council

FY2025 Meeting Calendar

VRT Administrative Offices - Board Room
700 NE 2nd Street – Meridian, Idaho

As a general rule, all Regional Advisory Council meeting take place on the third Tuesday of the month. Please note exception below. *

Tuesday, January 21	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (Orientation and election)
*Monday, March 3 Board)	11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Joint meeting with the Executive Board)
Tuesday, May 20	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
June, July, August	TBD - Schedule a tour
Tuesday, September 16	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday, November 18	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.



TOPIC	VRT Access Handbook Update
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Jeannette Ezell

Staff Recommendation/Request

This is an action item. Valley Regional Transit (VRT) staff requests the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) recommend approval of the revised VRT Access Handbook to the Executive Board.

Highlights

Schedule

- November 2024 – RAC action item – Recommend approval to the Executive Board
- December 2024 – Executive Board action item – Recommend approval to the VRT Board of Directors
- January 2025 – VRT Board of Directors action item – Approve VRT Access Handbook
- March 2025 – VRT Access Handbook effective on March 1, 2025

Summary

VRT reviewed the current Access handbook and made revisions as needed. The attachment included with this memo provides details on what changes were made through the handbook.

Implication

The VRT Access handbook revision will align with recommended industry best practices and meet FTA requirements.

More Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: VRT Access Handbook Updates
- Attachment B: VRT Access Handbook Redline
- Attachment C: VRT Access Handbook Draft Final

For detailed information, contact:

Jeannette Ezell
Operations Director
jezell@ridevrt.org
(208) 258-2711



Rider's Handbook

Effective 03/01/2025



vrt • access



valley regional transit

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Welcome Aboard!

Letter from the Valley Regional Transit (VRT) CEO

Thank you for using VRT Access!

VRT takes pride in the services we provide, the way we provide them, and our dedication to working together to make our customer's day better. We are committed to safety as a primary goal, and every VRT representative is a transit "ambassador" and is asked to put riders first. We expect every representative to be safe, professional, courteous, and friendly to our customers and to treat our customers and each other with respect.

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) is a subdivision of state government formed by a vote of the residents in 1998 as the regional public transportation authority for Ada and Canyon counties. We are governed by a Board of Directors composed of elected and appointed officials from the cities, counties, and highway districts within Ada and Canyon counties and special members such as colleges and universities, urban renewal districts, and the Idaho Transportation Department. The Board sets VRT's policies and budget.

VRT directly provides a variety of public and specialized transportation services in Ada and Canyon counties, including fixed-route bus service, on-demand service, paratransit service, services for older adults and persons with disabilities, and transportation to workplaces. We are the region's leader in developing, providing, and advocating for well-funded, expansive transit services that afford mobility for all users and allow this region to thrive as we grow. We connect more people to more places more often.

Our job is to ensure that VRT Access takes you where you need to go, from work to the store to appointments and more. If there's anything you need to make that connection, please let us know. We're glad to have you on board!

Elaine Clegg
Chief Executive Officer



Welcome to VRT ACCESS Service

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law that guarantees persons with disabilities full and equal access to the same services and accommodations available to people without disabilities. Under the ADA, public buses that run on regular schedules along specific routes, called fixed-route service, must be accessible to persons with disabilities. When fixed-route service is not accessible, or when a person with a disability is not able to use the fixed-route system, ADA mandates that transit systems operate ADA transportation. The common term for this service is ADA complementary paratransit.

VRT Access is the ADA complementary paratransit service specifically for persons with disabilities who, because of their disability, are unable to use the Valley Regional Transit (VRT) fixed-route service or travel to a VRT fixed-route bus stop. For ADA-eligible passengers traveling within the VRT service area, VRT Access provides service using an ADA-accessible vehicle. The passenger's origin and destination must be within $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of the VRT fixed-route service area, and the trip time must fall within the hours of the nearest fixed-route.

Each vehicle has a wheelchair lift to accommodate recognized mobility devices. This service is provided curb-to-curb. The goal of VRT Access and ADA is to provide transportation service that promotes the integration and independence of persons with disabilities. The ADA prohibits priority scheduling based on the purpose of the trip.



Using this Handbook and Definitions

This handbook is available in alternative formats. Call 208-345-7433 to learn more about format options. If someone other than the eligible passenger assumes the responsibility for reading and understanding this information, the eligible passenger is still expected to follow the VRT Access Rules of Conduct.

Americans With Disabilities Act (Ada)

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public.

Fixed-route transit

Fixed-route transit is public transportation that operates along designated routes according to a set schedule.

Paratransit

Paratransit is transportation services for people with disabilities, often provided as a supplement to fixed-route bus and rail systems by public transit agencies.

No-Show

A no-show is when the passenger has not cancelled their trip at least one hour prior to pick-up time, the passenger is not ready to board the vehicle within five minutes after vehicle arrives as long as the vehicle has arrived within the 30-minute pick-up window, the passenger is not at the correct address or the correct location, or the address requested cannot be located by the driver and/or the driver is not able to locate the passenger.

Read more about the no-show policy in the [No-Show Policy](#) in the [How to use VRT Access](#) chapter.



Eligibility

Eligibility Process

Persons with disabilities may be eligible for VRT Access on the basis of a permanent or temporary disability. Per federal regulations, complementary paratransit must be offered to persons whose disability:

1. Prevents them from getting on and off the fixed-route bus or riding the fixed-route bus; or
2. Prevents them from traveling to or from a fixed-route bus stop on the VRT fixed-route bus system. This could be due to distance, weather, ground conditions, or architectural barriers.

Complementary paratransit must be provided to all persons described as being ADA eligible under ADA Regulation (49 CFR §37.123). ADA eligibility includes the following categories:

Category I

Applicants who cannot independently use VRT fixed-route service, even with training.

Category II

Applicants who can use or learn to use an accessible public transit system, but the system is not fully accessible.

Category III

Applicants who have a specific impairment that prevents them from getting to or from a fixed-route bus stop or station.

Contact customer service for more information regarding ADA transportation eligibility. The applicant for ADA complementary paratransit must fill out a certification application and a medical verification form completed by a licensed medical professional. All new or re-certifying applicants must complete this process to be certified.

Determination Process

Applicants must complete all questions and information requested on the certification application and the medical verification form. Incomplete applications will be returned to applicants, causing delays in processing. All information will remain confidential.

Applicants receive a determination letter certifying eligibility sent in writing within 21 days of receiving the completed certification application and the medical verification form.



There are three types of eligibility considered for each applicant. These eligibility determination types are:

Unconditional Eligibility

Allows individuals to use VRT Access for all trips within the VRT fixed-route service area and hours.

Conditional or Trip-by-Trip Eligibility

An individual may be eligible for certain trips or on a trip-by-trip basis. This eligibility is for individuals that can use VRT fixed-route sometimes, but at times require the use of VRT Access. The individual may use VRT fixed-route or find alternative transportation for trips not deemed eligible for VRT Access.

Temporary Eligibility

An individual may be eligible for VRT Access on a temporary basis. The length of time varies on the individual's needs. This eligibility is for those who have a temporary need for service due to a major event such as a stroke or broken leg. Applicants receive an expiration date based on application information and date and information from the verifying medical professional. Applicants needing extensions for temporary eligibility are required to complete a new application. Temporary eligibility is granted if the eligibility determination process takes longer than 21 days. The individual may use VRT fixed-route or find alternative transportation for trips not deemed eligible for VRT Access.

Appealing Eligibility Determination

Individuals have the right to appeal any decision that declares the individual ineligible for VRT Access. Specific information regarding eligibility appeal process is included in the individual's eligibility determination letter. Individuals maintain the original eligibility determination until the appeal process is complete.



How to use VRT Access

Scheduling a Trip

Once certified, eligible passengers may call 208-345-7433 or email reservations@ridevrt.org to schedule a trip. Reservations can be made Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Reservations can be made one day in advance and up to two weeks in advance. The reservationist at the end of each call will confirm the trip information.

Reservations by Phone

If calling in your reservation, please provide the specific information listed below. Only calls before 5:00 p.m. will be scheduled for the next day.

- Please have the following information available when calling to schedule a trip:
- First and last name
- Trip date
- Pick-up address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable)
- Drop off address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable; if destination is a business, supply business name)
- Requested pick-up time
- If needing a return trip, pick-up address
- Drop off address
- Requested pick-up time

Providing answers to the following questions can help the reservationist better schedule your trip:

- Are you using a mobility device such as a wheelchair, non-standard size wheelchair, scooter, or walker?
- Has your mobility device changed since last trip?
- Eligible passengers are allowed to travel with one personal care attendant (PCA). Guests can be accommodated if space is available. Guests will pay the same fare as eligible rider. Will you be traveling with a PCA or a guest?
- Does your pick-up location have multiple entrances or exits? If so, which location should driver use?



Leaving a Voice Message

If requested to leave a message for a trip, please provide the specific information listed below. Only messages left before 5:00 p.m. will be scheduled for the next day.

If calling on Sunday or a holiday, only trip requests left on the reservation voice mail before 5:00 p.m. will be scheduled for Monday or the day after the holiday.

- All voice messages must include the following information:
- First and last name
- Trip date
- Pick-up address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable)
- Drop off address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable; If destination is a business, supply business name)
- Requested pick-up time
- If needing a return trip, pick-up address
- Drop off address
- Requested pick-up time
- Valid phone number in case reservationist needs to follow up with additional questions

Providing answers to the following questions in your message can help the reservationist better schedule your trip:

- Will you be using a mobility device such as a wheelchair, non-standard size wheelchair, scooter, or walker?
- Has your mobility device changed since last trip?
- Eligible passengers are allowed to travel with one personal care attendant (PCA). Guests will be accommodated on a space available basis. Guests will pay the same fare as eligible rider. Will you be traveling with a PCA or a guest?
- Does your pick-up location have multiple entrances or exits? If so, which location should driver use?

Reservationist cannot schedule trips from voice mail messages if the caller fails to provide the details needed for the trip, and/or the reservationist cannot reach the caller by phone.

Service Hours

Because VRT Access is complementary to our fixed-route service, trips are scheduled during the same hours that the fixed-route operates.



For Ada County,

Boise trips can be scheduled Monday through Friday between 6:15 a.m. and 7:00p.m. Some routes start earlier or run later, so be sure to ask a reservationist for more detailed information. Saturday trips can be scheduled between 7:30 a.m. and 6:30p.m.

Meridian trips can be scheduled Monday through Friday between 08:00 a.m.to 10:30 am and 2:30 p.m. to 6:30pm Trips cannot be scheduled between 10:30 am and 2:30 pm

For Canyon County, trips can be scheduled Monday through Friday between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Requested Time

The requested time is the time the passenger is asking to be picked up. **This time needs to be appropriate for the passenger to be on time to their destination.** Persons can be on the bus for up to an hour because VRT Access is a shared-ride service.

Negotiating a Pick-Up Time

Because VRT Access is a shared-ride service, reservationists may negotiate a time for the vehicle to arrive. Reservationists may negotiate a time as early as one hour before and up to one hour after the passenger's requested time. Once the reservationist and the passenger agree on a time, the 30-minute window will be referred to as the negotiated pick-up time.

The vehicle may arrive at any time within the 30-minute window. As a result, the passenger must be ready and waiting in a visible location at the start of the 30-minute pick-up window. Upon vehicle arrival, the driver will wait five minutes. If the passenger is not at the scheduled pick-up location within the five-minute wait time, the driver will mark this a no-show.

As a curb-to-curb service, the passenger should wait at the curb or a safe location as close as possible to the entrance of the pick-up address. Drivers will help a passenger who requests assistance from this point to enter and exit the vehicle. Drivers are not allowed to enter homes or businesses to assist eligible riders.

Scheduling Multiple Trips

Sometimes the passenger may need to go to several places on the same day. If this happens, a separate reservation is required for each trip. Since this is a shared- ride service, remember to allow enough time between each trip to complete your business at each destination.



Scheduling Subscription Trips

A subscription trip is a service provided to a passenger who travels to the same place at the same time at least once a week for a period of at least six months. Once a subscription trip is set up, the passenger will no longer have to call to make a reservation. Passengers are responsible to notify the reservationist when a trip needs to be cancelled to avoid a no-show for that trip.

The ADA permits the use of subscription service, as long as it does not absorb more than 50% of the available trips at a given time of day. VRT may provide subscription service above the 50% ceiling if it has excess capacity available. If VRT determines that next-day requests are being denied trips, VRT will either increase its passenger carrying capacity or reduce the number of subscription trips back to 50%.

Change or Cancel a Future Trip

To change or cancel a future trip, call 208-345-7433 no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the trip.

Provide the following information:

- First and last name
- Date(s) of scheduled trip
- Time(s) of scheduled trip

If more than one trip exists on the same day, be sure to explain which trip(s) to change or cancel.

Checking Trip Status

If vehicle has not arrived within the 30-minute pick-up window, please call to check on the trip's status.

Ada County (Boise and Meridian)	(208) 345-1234
Canyon County	(208) 258-2780

Automated Telephone Reminders

The reservationist can set up automated telephone call or an automated text message reminder as an option for passengers. If selected, passengers will receive an automated call or text the evening prior to a trip, and once the vehicle has arrived. The automated call or text the night before will remind the passenger of all scheduled trips for the next day. Passengers will need to contact customer service at 208-345-7433 to cancel any trips not needed or to stop automated reminders.



Not Ready for Pick-Up

If passenger will not be ready at scheduled pick-up time, please call to avoid a no-show:

Ada County (Boise and Meridian)	(208) 345-1234
Canyon County	(208) 258-2780

Call as soon as possible to request a change. Changes may not be an option due to availability or possible time constraints. If changes are made an extensive wait may result.

Same Day Cancel

To cancel a trip on the same day, call at least one hour prior to pick-up time. Depending on circumstances and timing, a trip cancelled with less than one hour's notice may be considered a no-show.

Ada County (Boise and Meridian)	(208) 345-1234
Canyon County	(208) 258-2780

No-Show

A no-show occurs when:

- The passenger has not cancelled their trip at least one hour prior to pick-up time.
- The passenger is not ready to board the vehicle within five minutes after vehicle arrives as long as the vehicle has arrived within the 30-minute pick-up window.
- The passenger is not at the correct address or the correct location.
- The address requested cannot be located by the driver and/or the driver is not able to locate the passenger.

When the passenger is a no-show on the first trip of the day, remaining trip(s) for that day **are not** automatically cancelled. The passenger must call to cancel any remaining trip(s). If remaining trips are not cancelled, each trip will be considered a no-show.

No-Show Policy

In a 30-day calendar period, any passenger who has scheduled 10 or more trips and has no-showed at least three times or 10 percent of those trips will receive a warning or suspension notice.



Driver Error

VRT Access will not count a no-show or a late cancellation if the missed trip(s) are due to an error, such as:

- Trips placed on the schedule in error.
- Pick-ups scheduled at the wrong pick-up location.
- Drivers arriving and departing before the pick-up window begins.
- Drivers arriving after the end of the pick-up window.
- Drivers arriving within the pick-up window but departing without waiting the required five minutes.

Passengers Role to Reduce No-Shows

Reducing no-shows requires effort by both passengers and staff. Below are some guidelines to keep in mind:

- Confirm the pick-up window (noting the beginning and end time).
- Remember the vehicle will only wait five minutes once it has arrived within pick-up window.
- Call to cancel as soon as possible if unable to take the trip.
- Be alert and ready for the vehicle at the start of the pick-up window.
- Provide detailed pick-up instructions (side or rear entrance, business name, suite number, etc.) for large facilities, locations that may be difficult for drivers to find, or locations where pick-up is not located at the main entrance.
- Provide pick-up address and telephone numbers and confirm the trip has been scheduled correctly with the reservationist.
- If a subscription trip, call to make any schedule changes (such as a vacation or other known absences). Informing the driver to cancel subscription trip is not sufficient.

Circumstances Beyond Passenger's Control

In addition, VRT Access will not count a no-show or a late cancellation in situations beyond a passenger's control (such as medical and family emergencies) that prevents them from notifying us that the trip cannot be taken. The passenger will need to notify Reservations, by calling 208-345-7433, when the no-show or late cancellation is due to circumstances beyond their control.

No-Show Violations

- 1st Violation: a warning letter will be sent
- 2nd Violation: will result in a one-week suspension



- 3rd Violation: will result in a two-week suspension
- 4th Violation and Violations thereafter: will result in a thirty-day suspension

Late Cancellations

Cancellations made less than one hour before the scheduled trip or cancellations made at the door after the vehicle has arrived are considered late cancellations. Late cancellations are treated the same as a no-show.

Extreme Weather or Local Disasters

Public transportation service may be delayed or cancelled during periods of severe snow, ice, flooding, or other local disasters. Service may be reduced and possibly cancelled when the weather creates hazardous conditions, or a residence or destination cannot be reached. During periods of severe weather, updates will be posted at ridevrt.org/news. For updates on VRT fixed-route and VRT Access service during times of inclement weather, call 208-345-7433.

If the weather worsens after a passenger is dropped off, priority will be given to getting passengers home. Providing life-sustaining trips such as dialysis or chemotherapy will take priority during times of limited service. If the trip starts or ends on a hill or side street, the vehicle may be unable to get there until the street is safe to travel. The passenger should have a back-up location in mind for a safe drop off.

Travel Training

All VRT fixed-route vehicles are equipped with wheelchair ramps or lifts to assist mobility devices. Fixed-route drivers are required to announce all major stops and intersections. VRT staff can provide travel training to assist passengers in using the VRT fixed-route system. Staff can also help familiarize passengers with the fixed-route bus system – including the routes, schedules, fares, and fare box – and can provide personalized training up to and including riding the vehicle with the passenger to their destination. If interested in this no-cost service call 208-345-7433.



VRT Access Vehicles

Driver Responsibilities

The drivers are trained in defensive driving, passenger assistance, and the safe operation of the vehicle. All drivers wear a VRT uniform and have company identification. If in doubt, ask to see their photo identification badge. The driver's highest priority is the safety and security of all passengers and the vehicle. Drivers make their best efforts to keep the vehicle in sight at all times. It is possible for a passenger to be left alone on the vehicle while the driver assists other passengers.

Drivers will:

- Assist the passenger on and off the vehicle
- Assist the passenger with the seat belt
- Assist the passenger to and from the door
- Be courteous
- Drive safely
- Wear a seat belt
- Securely tie down mobility devices
- Be in uniform with photo identification attached
- Make a good faith effort to locate a scheduled passenger

Drivers will not:

- Maneuver wheelchairs on stairs or unsafe ramps
- Carry any packages
- Enter a residence or destination/pick-up location
- Help a passenger find their fare
- Provide the trip if a fare is not paid
- Wait while a passenger completes a small errand
- Accept tips
- Secure car seats
- Transport unscheduled passengers

Travel Time

Reservationists schedule shared trips to allow for adequate travel time between stops. Reservationists consider comparable trips on the VRT fixed-routes when determining scheduled times. This travel time is typically one hour, but sometimes may be longer. Be sure to allow enough travel time to reach the destination. Because VRT Access is a shared-ride service, while on



the vehicle, passengers should expect other passengers to be picked-up and dropped off. Unexpected delays may happen due to road construction, heavy traffic, or bad weather.

Rider Courtesy and Rules of Conduct

- Have either the exact fare or a VRT Access ticket ready upon boarding.
- Be ready to go, and remember, it is the passenger's responsibility to meet the vehicle at the curb.
- Cooperate with the driver and follow instructions.
- Limit conversation with the driver. Non-essential conversation can distract a driver from focusing on driving and the surrounding area.
- Do not tip your driver. To reward good service, call 208-345-7433 to submit a compliment.
- Only transport packages that can be carried by passenger and fit within the seating area. Passengers are not permitted to make multiple trips in order to carry additional packages on the vehicle.
- Passenger will be dropped off at a destination even if there is no one waiting. If the passenger cannot be left alone, it is the passenger's responsibility to arrange for a PCA or guest.
- The return trip may be on a different vehicle and drivers do not have access to other vehicle schedules. The passenger must know the return-trip pick-up time.
- Keep mobility devices in good, working condition and clean.
- Passengers must be eligible or be a PCA or a guest of the eligible passenger.
- May not eat, drink, or use alcohol or tobacco (including e-cigarettes)
- Must not litter
- Must not use profanity or engage in disruptive behavior
- Must not threaten or harass other passengers or the driver
- Must not have any offensive body or other odors, including heavy perfume
- Must not bring open food or drink containers; flammables (such as gasoline, alcohol, and lighter fluid); bicycles other than those that fold and fit between the seat rows; strollers, grocery carts, or other non-mobility devices that cannot fit between the seats; and animals, except for service animals, which are not in an approved carrier.



- Must control bodily functions to ensure other passengers are not exposed to biohazards. These episodes may be accidental but are disruptive to service and must be controlled.

Violation(s) of these rules will be addressed as follows:

- 1st Violation: Warning by a Supervisor or Manager. This warning may be by phone or in person, followed up in writing, and recorded in passenger file.
- 2nd Violation: Riding privileges will be suspended immediately for 10 days. Passenger will be notified in writing when they may resume using service.
- 3rd Violation and Violations thereafter: Riding privileges will be suspended immediately for 30 days. Passenger will be notified in writing when they may resume using service.

Rider's Assistance

Visitors

To use VRT Access for out-of-town visitors with paratransit eligibility in other cities or states, proof of eligibility documentation from their home jurisdiction must be provided in advance.

Prior to visiting, the visitor should contact their local certifying agency and request the agency notify VRT at 208-345-7433, fax at 208-846-8564, or email to info@ridevrt.org of their ADA paratransit eligibility. A visitor may use the service for up to 21 days during any 365-day period. If service is required beyond 21 days, the visitor will need to apply for VRT Access certification.

Appeal Process

Trips missed for reasons beyond passenger's control, such as a verified illness or verified last minute cancellation by a medical provider will not count as a no-show. In order to excuse the no-show, written verification must be received by the administrative office at the address listed below, no later than 30 days from the date of the no-show warning letter. Verifications can also be faxed to 208-846-8564.

Comments

VRT welcomes feedback, suggestions, questions, complements, complaints and comments about service. You can call 208-345-7433, send an email to info@ridevrt.org, or write to:



VRT Access
Valley Regional Transit
700 NE 2nd Street, Suite 100
Meridian, Idaho 83642

Provide as much information available including:

- First and last name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date, time, and location of the incident if applicable
- Vehicle number and/or driver's name.
- Provide information or details regarding feedback, suggestion, questions, compliment, complaint or comment.

Management reviews every submittal and follows up on the comments. The follow-up may include contacting the passenger.



Helpful Information

Addresses		
Administrative Office 700 NE 2nd Street Suite 100 Meridian, Idaho 83642	Main Street Station 777 W. Main Street Boise, Idaho 83707	Happy Day Transit Center 5907 Cleveland Blvd. Caldwell, Idaho 83607

Important Numbers	
Reservationist	208-345-7433
Ada County	208-345-1234
Canyon County	208-258-2780
Hearing Impaired	1-800-377-1363 or 711 for TTY (Idaho Relay Service)
If unable to speak, send an email to reservations@ridevrt.org .	

Holidays

There is no regular VRT Access service on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day (January 1 or Observed Holiday)
- Memorial Day (Last Monday of May)
- Independence Day (July 4 or Observed Holiday)
- Labor Day (First Monday of September)
- Thanksgiving Day (Fourth Thursday of November)
- Christmas Day (December 25 or Observed Holiday)

VRT may opt to provide VRT Access occasional holiday service as capacity allows. VRT will notify passengers about holiday trip opportunities.

Personal Information Changes

Passengers must notify VRT Customer Service if moving to a new address, changing a telephone number, updating an emergency contact number, if a mobility device will now be used, or if a PCA is now required. It is very important that this information is kept up to date.

Fares

Fares may be paid by using cash, a personal check, or a VRT Access pass. Make sure exact fare is ready upon boarding the vehicle. Drivers do not carry change and cannot search pockets, backpacks, or purses to find fare. The fare



must be placed in the fare box or handed to the driver. All guests must pay the same fare as the eligible rider. The PCA is not required to pay a fare.

Passes may be purchased by mail, in person at any VRT office or with a debit or credit card by calling 208-345-7433. There is a \$10.00 minimum charge for debit or credit card purchases. There will be an additional \$5.00 fee charged if passes are sent via US Mail. Passes may be purchased by eligible passengers or by someone on behalf of the passenger. More information on fares and pass purchases is also available on the website at ridevrt.org/fares

VRT Access Fares	
Certified Passenger	\$3.00 per trip
Personal Care Attendant	No cost
Guest/Companion	\$3.00 per person, per trip

Service Area

The passenger’s origin and destination must be within ¾-mile of the VRT fixed-route service area, and the trip time must fall within the hours of the nearest fixed-route. See website for more details at www.ridevrt.org or call 208-345-7433. Passengers are responsible to get within the ¾-mile area of the VRT fixed-route in order to use the service.

Changes in the VRT fixed-route service area and service schedules may affect the available area and time of VRT Access service. For assistance in determining the VRT Access service area, and when service is available, contact customer service at 208-345-7433. Also, if moving to a new location, check with customer service to verify if the new address is within the VRT Access service area.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is a personnel care attendant?

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone traveling with the passenger who assists with personal care and activities. A PCA is different from a guest or companion. Passengers that periodically ride with a PCA must let reservationist know when booking a ride that a PCA will be riding. If a passenger always rides with a PCA, reservationists can register the riders' profile in the scheduling system. To register a PCA, call 208-345-7433.

Drivers cannot transport anyone not scheduled. Passengers must schedule a trip for the PCA if the PCA is going to be traveling with the passenger. PCAs do not pay fare when escorting a passenger on VRT Access or on a VRT fixed-route. PCAs must board and exit the vehicle at the same place and time as the eligible passenger.

What is a guest/companion?

A guest/companion is a person, not a PCA, the passenger wants to bring on a trip. As an eligible passenger, family and friends are permitted to travel as a guest/companion. When a reservation is made, passenger must inform reservationist the number of guests/companions for each trip.

Guests/companions will be accommodated on a space available basis. Drivers cannot transport guests/companions not scheduled. Guests pay the same fare as the eligible passenger and must board and exit the vehicle at the same place and time as the passenger.

May children ride?

All children infant to 17, may ride with an eligible passenger. When a reservation is made, passenger must inform reservationist the number of children for each trip. All children pay the same fare as the eligible passenger and must board and exit the vehicle at the same place and time as the passenger. Children will be accommodated on a space available basis. Drivers cannot transport children not scheduled.

Additionally, children aged six or younger or weighing less than 40 pounds must travel in an approved car seat. Vehicles are not equipped with car seats. The passenger is responsible for providing the car seat, securing the car seat to the vehicle, and securing the child in the car seat. If assistance is needed, bring someone to help. Children will not be transported if not safely seated and wearing a seat belt.



Are service animals permitted?

Service animals are animals that have been trained to perform specific tasks to assist their owner in doing daily activities. They are not pets, nor are they companion animals. Service animals are welcome on vehicles. The service animal may travel on the floor beside its owner, or if small, on the owner's lap. Animals are not permitted to run free inside the vehicle and not permitted to sit on seats.

The service animal must be under control. Bring a PCA or guest if assistance with a service animal is necessary. When making reservations, a passenger may be asked if service animal will be traveling with them. Pets that are not service animals (including companion animals) must be enclosed in a carrier that will remain secured during the trip. The carrier floor should have an absorbent material to prevent the vehicle from being soiled. The pet and carrier may not weigh more than 25 pounds and must fit on the lap or under the seat.

May I bring packages and personal items on vehicle?

Drivers are not allowed to carry any packages. A passenger may only transport packages that they can personally carry and fit within their seating area. Passengers are not allowed to make multiple trips to and from the vehicle to carry additional packages.

Carts must be able to be kept in control of the passenger and small enough that they do not impede walkways or other passenger's space. Carts cannot be over filled, bags cannot hang on the outside of cart, and passengers must be able to control, load and unload cart from the bus.

May I take a wheelchair or other mobility device?

All VRT Access vehicles are designed to transport a minimum of two manual or powered three- or four-wheeled mobility devices, such as wheelchairs. The wheeled-mobility-device must be designed for indoor use and used by a passenger with a disability. Every vehicle will allow the loading of a mobility device that does not exceed the manufacturers limit of the lift. The minimum size allowed is 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length and weighs no more than 600 pounds when occupied. A passenger and the mobility device must be able to fit on a lift, permit the driver to operate the lift safely, and fit within the securement area inside the vehicle.

Some vehicles have wheelchair lifts that support up to 800 pounds when occupied. If the larger capacity wheelchair lift is necessary, be sure to inform the reservationist at the time of making a reservation.



To ensure passenger safety and that of the driver, the driver will assist a passenger in a manual wheelchair on or off the lift platform if needed, and to the doorway of destination. Drivers are not allowed to help over rough terrain, steep slopes, or operate mobility devices over a step to a level surface. Drivers cannot assist if the mobility device is not operational. Please keep wheelchair or mobility device in good working condition and clean. A dirty or poorly maintained mobility device may be a hazard to the passenger, the driver, or other passengers if it has loose parts, brakes that do not hold, or damaged wheels.

May anyone use the wheelchair lift?

Any passenger may use the wheelchair lift to board the vehicle if they are not comfortable using the vehicle steps. If a passenger is going to use the wheelchair lift, the passenger should inform the reservationist when making a reservation.

Does my mobility device have to be secured?

All mobility devices must be properly secured. Lap and shoulder belt use is not mandatory but is highly encouraged for passenger safety. The mobility device is required to be secured into the onboard securement system at all times during the trip. If a mobility device is unable to be secured with the passenger in it, they may be asked to transfer to a seat. Passengers are not required to transfer from their mobility device if they choose not to. Drivers will call in to their dispatch to record the refusal. If a passenger refuses the securement of the mobility device, the driver will be instructed not to transport. If a driver fails to secure a mobility device, please notify VRT immediately at 208-345-7433.

May I travel with my respirator or portable oxygen equipment?

Devices such as canes, walkers, or oxygen carts should be kept in front of the seat passenger is sitting in. If this is not possible, the driver will help determine a method of securing the item. In the event the driver must make a quick unplanned maneuver or brake quickly, an unsecured device may become a projectile and cause injury to the person in the device or others on the vehicle.

Do I have to wear a seatbelt?

For the safety and security of all passengers, PCAs, guests, companions, and children are required to wear a seat belt and remain seated with their seat belt secured during their trip. Passengers who use mobility devices are also requested to use lap and shoulder belts. A driver cannot secure the lap belt on a mobility device for the passenger. If the vehicle does not have seat belts for every seat, wearing the seat belt is recommended, but not mandatory.



What if I think I forgot something on the vehicle?

Passengers are responsible for keeping track of personal belongings. If a personal item is left on the vehicle, call **208-345-7433** with:

- Description of the item
- Trip day
- Trip time
- Vehicle number



ATTACHMENT A

Access Handbook Updates

Overall Changes

- Formatting for consistency and brand
- Sections reworded for better clarity
- Update to position titles as applicable
- Updated Table of Contents and effective date
- Added CEO letter

Page 7

Service hours

- Changed to match current service

Page 10

No Show Policy

- Removed indefinite and replaced with 30-day recurring

Page 12

Comments

- Changed who to send comments to

Information at a Glance

Page 14

Fares

- Eliminated Children under 6 ride free
- All pay the same fare
- \$5 mailing fee added

Page 15

Automated Telephone Reminders

- Added text option
- Updated process to cancel ride

Driver Responsibilities

- Clarified driver expectations

Page 16

Passenger Rules of Conduct

- Removed indefinite and replaced with 30-day recurring

Weapons

- Removed

Frequently Asked Questions

Page 19

What is a Personal Care Attendant

- Clarified booking process

What is a Guest / Companion

- Clarified booking process

May Children Ride

- All pay fare

Page 20

Are Service Animals Permitted

- Clarified language for service animals

ATTACHMENT A

Access Handbook Updates

May I bring Packages and personal items on the vehicle

- Clarified language on carts

May I take a Wheelchair or Other Mobility Device

- Clarified language on mobility devices

Page 22

Do I have to wear a seatbelt

- Added Children to seat belt requirement

Rider's Handbook

Effective 03/01/2025



vrt • access



valley regional transit

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Welcome Aboard!

Letter from the Valley Regional Transit (VRT) CEO

Thank you for using VRT Access!

VRT takes pride in the services we provide, the way we provide them, and our dedication to working together to make our customer's day better. We are committed to safety as a primary goal, and every VRT representative is a transit "ambassador" and is asked to put riders first. We expect every representative to be safe, professional, courteous, and friendly to our customers and to treat our customers and each other with respect.

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) is a subdivision of state government formed by a vote of the residents in 1998 as the regional public transportation authority for Ada and Canyon counties. We are governed by a Board of Directors composed of elected and appointed officials from the cities, counties, and highway districts within Ada and Canyon counties and special members such as colleges and universities, urban renewal districts, and the Idaho Transportation Department. The Board sets VRT's policies and budget.

VRT directly provides a variety of public and specialized transportation services in Ada and Canyon counties, including fixed-route bus service, on-demand service, paratransit service, services for older adults and persons with disabilities, and transportation to workplaces. We are the region's leader in developing, providing, and advocating for well-funded, expansive transit services that afford mobility for all users and allow this region to thrive as we grow. We connect more people to more places more often.

Our job is to ensure that VRT Access takes you where you need to go, from work to the store to appointments and more. If there's anything you need to make that connection, please let us know. We're glad to have you on board!

Elaine Clegg

Chief Executive Officer





Welcome to VRT ACCESS Service

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law that guarantees persons with disabilities full and equal access to the same services and accommodations available to people without disabilities. Under the ADA, public buses that run on regular schedules along specific routes, called fixed-route service, must be accessible to persons with disabilities. When fixed-route service is not accessible, or when a person with a disability is not able to use the fixed-route system, ADA mandates that transit systems operate ADA transportation. The common term for this service is ADA complementary paratransit.

VRT Access is the ADA complementary paratransit service specifically for persons with disabilities who, because of their disability, are unable to use the Valley Regional Transit (VRT) fixed-route service or travel to a VRT fixed-route bus stop. For ADA-eligible passengers traveling within the VRT service area, VRT Access provides service using an ADA-accessible vehicle. The passenger's origin and destination must be within $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of the VRT fixed-route service area, and the trip time must fall within the hours of the nearest fixed-route.

Each vehicle has a wheelchair lift to accommodate recognized mobility devices. This service is provided curb-to-curb. The goal of VRT Access and ADA is to provide transportation service that promotes the integration and independence of persons with disabilities. The ADA prohibits priority scheduling based on the purpose of the trip.



Using this Handbook and Definitions

Using this Handbook and Definitions

This handbook is available in alternative formats. Call 208-345-7433 to learn more about format options. If someone other than the eligible passenger assumes the responsibility for reading and understanding this information, the eligible passenger is still expected to follow the VRT Access Rules of Conduct.

Americans With Disabilities Act (Ada)

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public.

Fixed-route transit

Fixed-route transit is public transportation that operates along designated routes according to a set schedule.

Paratransit

Paratransit is transportation services for people with disabilities, often provided as a supplement to fixed-route bus and rail systems by public transit agencies.

No-Show

A no-show is when the passenger has not cancelled their trip at least one hour prior to pick-up time, the passenger is not ready to board the vehicle within five minutes after vehicle arrives as long as the vehicle has arrived within the 30-minute pick-up window, the passenger is not at the correct address or the correct location, or the address requested cannot be located by the driver and/or the driver is not able to locate the passenger.

Read more about the no-show policy in the [No-Show Policy](#) in the [How to use VRT Access](#) chapter.



Eligibility

Eligibility Process

Persons with disabilities may be eligible for VRT Access on the basis of a permanent or temporary disability. Per federal regulations, complementary paratransit must be offered to persons whose disability:

1. Prevents them from getting on and off the fixed-route bus or riding the fixed-route bus; or
2. Prevents them from traveling to or from a fixed-route bus stop on the VRT fixed-route bus system. This could be due to distance, weather, ground conditions, or architectural barriers.

Complementary paratransit must be provided to all persons described as being ADA eligible under ADA Regulation (49 CFR §37.123). ADA eligibility includes the following categories:

Category I

Applicants who cannot independently use VRT fixed-route service, even with training.

Category II

Applicants who can use or learn to use an accessible public transit system, but the system is not fully accessible.

Category III

Applicants who have a specific impairment that prevents them from getting to or from a fixed-route bus stop or station.

Contact **customer service** for more information regarding ADA transportation eligibility. The applicant for ADA complementary paratransit must fill out a certification application and a medical verification form completed by a licensed medical professional. All new or re-certifying **applicants** must complete this process to be certified.

Determination Process

Applicants must complete all questions and information requested on the certification application and the medical verification form. Incomplete applications will be returned to applicants, causing delays in processing. All information will remain confidential.



Applicants receive a determination letter certifying eligibility sent in writing within 21 days of receiving the completed certification application and the medical verification form.

There are three types of eligibility considered for each applicant. These eligibility determination types are:

Unconditional Eligibility

Allows individuals to use VRT Access for all trips within the VRT fixed-route service area and hours.

Conditional or Trip-by-Trip Eligibility

An individual may be eligible for certain trips or on a trip-by-trip basis. This eligibility is for individuals that can use VRT fixed-route sometimes, but at times require the use of VRT Access. The individual may use VRT fixed-route or find alternative transportation for trips not deemed eligible for VRT Access.

Temporary Eligibility

An individual may be eligible for VRT Access on a temporary basis. The length of time varies on the individual's needs. This eligibility is for those who have a temporary need for service due to a major event such as a stroke or broken leg. Applicants receive an expiration date based on application information and date and information from the verifying medical professional. Applicants needing extensions for temporary eligibility are required to complete a new application. Temporary eligibility is granted if the eligibility determination process takes longer than 21 days. The individual may use VRT fixed-route or find alternative transportation for trips not deemed eligible for VRT Access.

Appealing Eligibility Determination

Individuals have the right to appeal any decision that declares the individual ineligible for VRT Access. Specific information regarding eligibility appeal process is included in the individual's eligibility determination letter. Individuals maintain the original eligibility determination until the appeal process is complete.



How to use VRT Access

Scheduling a Trip

Once certified, eligible passengers may call 208-345-7433 or email reservations@ridevrt.org to schedule a trip. Reservations can be made Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Reservations can be made one day in advance and up to two weeks in advance. The reservationist at the end of each call will confirm the trip information.

Reservations by Phone

If calling in your reservation, please provide the specific information listed below. Only calls before 5:00 p.m. will be scheduled for the next day.

- Please have the following information available when calling to schedule a trip:
- First and last name
- Trip date
- Pick-up address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable)
- Drop off address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable; if destination is a business, supply business name)
- Requested pick-up time
- If needing a return trip, pick-up address
- Drop off address
- Requested pick-up time

Providing answers to the following questions can help the reservationist better schedule your trip:

- Are you using a mobility device such as a wheelchair, non-standard size wheelchair, scooter, or walker?
- Has your mobility device changed since last trip?
- Eligible passengers are allowed to travel with one personal care attendant (PCA). Guests can be accommodated if space is available. Guests will pay the same fare as eligible rider. Will you be traveling with a PCA or a guest?
- Does your pick-up location have multiple entrances or exits? If so, which location should driver use?



Leaving a Voice Message

If requested to leave a message for a trip, please provide the specific information listed below. Only messages left before 5:00 p.m. will be scheduled for the next day.

If calling on Sunday or a holiday, only trip requests left on the reservation voice mail before 5:00 p.m. will be scheduled for Monday or the day after the holiday.

- All voice messages must include the following information:
- First and last name
- Trip date
- Pick-up address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable)
- Drop off address (be sure to include apartment or suite number if applicable; If destination is a business, supply business name)
- Requested pick-up time
- If needing a return trip, pick-up address
- Drop off address
- Requested pick-up time
- Valid phone number in case reservationist needs to follow up with additional questions

Providing answers to the following questions in your message can help the reservationist better schedule your trip:

- Will you be using a mobility device such as a wheelchair, non-standard size wheelchair, scooter, or walker?
- Has your mobility device changed since last trip?
- Eligible passengers are allowed to travel with one personal care attendant (PCA). Guests will be accommodated on a space available basis. Guests will pay the same fare as eligible rider. Will you be traveling with a PCA or a guest?
- Does your pick-up location have multiple entrances or exits? If so, which location should driver use?

Reservationist cannot schedule trips from voice mail messages if the caller fails to provide the details needed for the trip, and/or the reservationist cannot reach the caller by phone.

Service Hours

Because VRT Access is complementary to our fixed-route service, trips are scheduled during the same hours that the fixed-route operates.



For Ada County,

Boise trips can be scheduled Monday through Friday between 6:15 a.m. and 7:00p.m. Some routes start earlier or run later, so be sure to ask a reservationist for more detailed information. Saturday trips can be scheduled between 7:30 a.m. and 6:30p.m.

Meridian trips can be scheduled Monday through Friday between 08:00 a.m.to 10:30 am and 2:30 p.m. to 6:30pm Trips cannot be scheduled between 10:30 am and 2:30 pm

For Canyon County, trips can be scheduled Monday through Friday between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Requested Time

The requested time is the time the passenger is asking to be picked up. **This time needs to be appropriate for the passenger to be on time to their destination.** Persons can be on the bus for up to an hour because VRT Access is a shared-ride service.

Negotiating a Pick-Up Time

Because VRT Access is a shared-ride service, reservationists may negotiate a time for the vehicle to arrive. Reservationists may negotiate a time as early as one hour before and up to one hour after the passenger's requested time. Once the reservationist and the passenger agree on a time, the 30-minute window will be referred to as the negotiated pick-up time.

The vehicle may arrive at any time within the 30-minute window. As a result, the passenger must be ready and waiting in a visible location at the start of the 30-minute pick-up window. Upon vehicle arrival, the driver will wait five minutes. If the passenger is not at the scheduled pick-up location within the five-minute wait time, the driver will mark this a no-show.

As a curb-to-curb service, the passenger should wait at the curb or a safe location as close as possible to the entrance of the pick-up address. Drivers will help a passenger who requests assistance from this point to enter and exit the vehicle. Drivers are not allowed to enter homes or businesses to assist eligible riders.

Scheduling Multiple Trips

Sometimes the passenger may need to go to several places on the same day. If this happens, a separate reservation is required for each trip. Since this is a

shared- ride service, remember to allow enough time between each trip to complete your business at each destination.

Scheduling Subscription Trips

A subscription trip is a service provided to a passenger who travels to the same place at the same time at least once a week for a period of at least six months. Once a subscription trip is set up, the passenger will no longer have to call to make a reservation. Passengers are responsible to notify the reservationist when a trip needs to be cancelled to avoid a no-show for that trip.

The ADA permits the use of subscription service, as long as it does not absorb more than 50% of the available trips at a given time of day. VRT may provide subscription service above the 50% ceiling if it has excess capacity available. If VRT determines that next-day requests are being denied trips, VRT will either increase its passenger carrying capacity or reduce the number of subscription trips back to 50%.

Change or Cancel a Future Trip

To change or cancel a future trip, call 208-345-7433 no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the trip.

Provide the following information:

- First and last name
- Date(s) of scheduled trip
- Time(s) of scheduled trip

If more than one trip exists on the same day, be sure to explain which trip(s) to change or cancel.

Checking Trip Status

If vehicle has not arrived within the 30-minute pick-up window, please call to check on the trip’s status.

Ada County (Boise and Meridian)	(208) 345-1234
Canyon County	(208) 258-2780

Automated Telephone Reminders

The reservationist can set up automated telephone call or an automated text message reminder as an option for passengers. If selected, passengers will receive an automated call or text the evening prior to a trip, and once the vehicle has



arrived. The automated call or text the night before will remind the passenger of all scheduled trips for the next day. Passengers will need to contact customer service at 208-345-7433 to cancel any trips not needed or to stop automated reminders.

Not Ready for Pick-Up

If passenger will not be ready at scheduled pick-up time, please call to avoid a no-show:

Ada County (Boise and Meridian)	(208) 345-1234
Canyon County	(208) 258-2780

Call as soon as possible to request a change. Changes may not be an option due to availability or possible time constraints. If changes are made an extensive wait may result.

Same Day Cancel

To cancel a trip on the same day, call at least one hour prior to pick-up time. Depending on circumstances and timing, a trip cancelled with less than one hour’s notice may be considered a no-show.

Ada County (Boise and Meridian)	(208) 345-1234
Canyon County	(208) 258-2780

No-Show

A no-show occurs when:

- The passenger has not cancelled their trip at least one hour prior to pick-up time.
- The passenger is not ready to board the vehicle within five minutes after vehicle arrives as long as the vehicle has arrived within the 30-minute pick-up window.
- The passenger is not at the correct address or the correct location.
- The address requested cannot be located by the driver and/or the driver is not able to locate the passenger.

When the passenger is a no-show on the first trip of the day, remaining trip(s) for that day **are not** automatically cancelled. The passenger must call to cancel any remaining trip(s). If remaining trips are not cancelled, each trip will be considered a no-show.



No-Show Policy

In a 30-day calendar period, any passenger who has scheduled 10 or more trips and has no-showed at least three times or 10 percent of those trips will receive a warning or suspension notice.

Driver Error

VRT Access will not count a no-show or a late cancellation if the missed trip(s) are due to an error, such as:

- Trips placed on the schedule in error.
- Pick-ups scheduled at the wrong pick-up location.
- Drivers arriving and departing before the pick-up window begins.
- Drivers arriving after the end of the pick-up window.
- Drivers arriving within the pick-up window but departing without waiting the required five minutes.

Passengers Role to Reduce No-Shows

Reducing no-shows requires effort by both passengers and staff. Below are some guidelines to keep in mind:

- Confirm the pick-up window (noting the beginning and end time).
- Remember the vehicle will only wait five minutes once it has arrived within pick-up window.
- Call to cancel as soon as possible if unable to take the trip.
- Be alert and ready for the vehicle at the start of the pick-up window.
- Provide detailed pick-up instructions (side or rear entrance, business name, suite number, etc.) for large facilities, locations that may be difficult for drivers to find, or locations where pick-up is not located at the main entrance.
- Provide pick-up address and telephone numbers and confirm the trip has been scheduled correctly with the reservationist.
- If a subscription trip, call to make any schedule changes (such as a vacation or other known absences). Informing the driver to cancel subscription trip is not sufficient.

Circumstances Beyond Passenger's Control

In addition, VRT Access will not count a no-show or a late cancellation in situations beyond a passenger's control (such as medical and family emergencies) that prevents them from notifying us that the trip cannot be taken. The passenger



will need to notify Reservations, by calling 208-345-7433, when the no-show or late cancellation is due to circumstances beyond their control.

No-Show Violations

- 1st Violation: a warning letter will be sent
- 2nd Violation: will result in a one-week suspension
- 3rd Violation: will result in a two-week suspension
- 4th Violation and Violations thereafter: will result in a thirty-day suspension

Late Cancellations

Cancellations made less than one hour before the scheduled trip or cancellations made at the door after the vehicle has arrived are considered late cancellations. Late cancellations are treated the same as a no-show.

Extreme Weather or Local Disasters

Public transportation service may be delayed or cancelled during periods of severe snow, ice, flooding, or other local disasters. Service may be reduced and possibly cancelled when the weather creates hazardous conditions, or a residence or destination cannot be reached. During periods of severe weather, updates will be posted at ridevrt.org/news. For updates on VRT fixed-route and VRT Access service during times of inclement weather, call 208-345-7433.

If the weather worsens after a passenger is dropped off, priority will be given to getting passengers home. Providing life-sustaining trips such as dialysis or chemotherapy will take priority during times of limited service. If the trip starts or ends on a hill or side street, the vehicle may be unable to get there until the street is safe to travel. The passenger should have a back-up location in mind for a safe drop off.

Travel Training

All VRT fixed-route vehicles are equipped with wheelchair ramps or lifts to assist mobility devices. Fixed-route drivers are required to announce all major stops and intersections. VRT staff can provide travel training to assist passengers in using the VRT fixed-route system. Staff can also help familiarize passengers with the fixed-route bus system – including the routes, schedules, fares, and fare box – and cab provide personalized training up to and including riding the vehicle with the passenger to their destination. If interested in this no-cost service call 208-345-7433.

VRT Access Vehicles

Driver Responsibilities

The drivers are trained in defensive driving, passenger assistance, and the safe operation of the vehicle. All drivers wear a VRT uniform and have company identification. If in doubt, ask to see their photo identification badge. The driver's highest priority is the safety and security of all passengers and the vehicle. Drivers make their best efforts to keep the vehicle in sight at all times. It is possible for a passenger to be left alone on the vehicle while the driver assists other passengers.

Drivers will:

- Assist the passenger on and off the vehicle
- Assist the passenger with the seat belt
- Assist the passenger to and from the door
- Be courteous
- Drive safely
- Wear a seat belt
- Securely tie down mobility devices
- Be in uniform with photo identification attached
- Make a good faith effort to locate a scheduled passenger

Drivers will not:

- Maneuver wheelchairs on stairs or unsafe ramps
- Carry any packages
- Enter a residence or destination/pick-up location
- Help a passenger find their fare
- Provide the trip if a fare is not paid
- Wait while a passenger completes a small errand
- Accept tips
- Secure car seats
- Transport unscheduled passengers

Travel Time

Reservationists schedule shared trips to allow for adequate travel time between stops. Reservationists consider comparable trips on the VRT fixed-routes when determining scheduled times. This travel time is typically one hour, but sometimes may be longer. Be sure to allow enough travel time to reach the



destination. Because VRT Access is a shared-ride service, while on the vehicle, passengers should expect other passengers to be picked-up and dropped off. Unexpected delays may happen due to road construction, heavy traffic, or bad weather.

Rider Courtesy and Rules of Conduct

- Have either the exact fare or a VRT Access ticket ready upon boarding.
- Be ready to go, and remember, it is the passenger's responsibility to meet the vehicle at the curb.
- Cooperate with the driver and follow instructions.
- Limit conversation with the driver. Non-essential conversation can distract a driver from focusing on driving and the surrounding area.
- Do not tip your driver. To reward good service, call 208-345-7433 to submit a compliment.
- Only transport packages that can be carried by passenger and fit within the seating area. Passengers are not permitted to make multiple trips in order to carry additional packages on the vehicle.
- Passenger will be dropped off at a destination even if there is no one waiting. If the passenger cannot be left alone, it is the passenger's responsibility to arrange for a PCA or guest.
- The return trip may be on a different vehicle and drivers do not have access to other vehicle schedules. The passenger must know the return- trip pick-up time.
- Keep mobility devices in good, working condition and clean.
- Passengers must be eligible or be a PCA or a guest of the eligible passenger.
- May not eat, drink, or use alcohol or tobacco (including e-cigarettes)
- Must not litter
- Must not use profanity or engage in disruptive behavior
- Must not threaten or harass other passengers or the driver
- Must not have any offensive body or other odors, including heavy perfume
- Must not bring open food or drink containers; flammables (such as gasoline, alcohol, and lighter fluid); bicycles other than those that fold and fit between the seat rows; strollers, grocery carts, or other non-mobility devices that cannot fit between the seats; and animals, except for service animals, which are not in an approved carrier.



- Must control bodily functions to ensure other passengers are not exposed to biohazards. These episodes may be accidental but are disruptive to service and must be controlled.

Violation(s) of these rules will be addressed as follows:

- 1st Violation: Warning by a Supervisor or Manager. This warning may be by phone or in person, followed up in writing, and recorded in passenger file.
- 2nd Violation: Riding privileges will be suspended immediately for 10 days. Passenger will be notified in writing when they may resume using service.
- 3rd Violation and Violations thereafter: Riding privileges will be suspended immediately for 30 days. Passenger will be notified in writing when they may resume using service.

Rider's Assistance

Visitors

To use VRT Access for out-of-town visitors with paratransit eligibility in other cities or states, proof of eligibility documentation from their home jurisdiction must be provided in advance.

Prior to visiting, the visitor should contact their local certifying agency and request the agency notify VRT at 208-345-7433, fax at 208-846-8564, or email to info@ridevrt.org of their ADA paratransit eligibility. A visitor may use the service for up to 21 days during any 365-day period. If service is required beyond 21 days, the visitor will need to apply for VRT Access certification.

Appeal Process

Trips missed for reasons beyond passenger's control, such as a verified illness or verified last minute cancellation by a medical provider will not count as a no-show. In order to excuse the no-show, written verification must be received by the administrative office at the address listed below, no later than 30 days from the date of the no-show warning letter. Verifications can also be faxed to 208-846-8564.

Comments

VRT welcomes feedback, suggestions, questions, complements, complaints and comments about service. You can call 208-345-7433, send an email to info@ridevrt.org, or write to:



VRT Access
Valley Regional Transit
700 NE 2nd Street, Suite 100
Meridian, Idaho 83642

Provide as much information available including:

- First and last name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date, time, and location of the incident if applicable
- Vehicle number and/or driver's name.
- Provide information or details regarding feedback, suggestion, questions, compliment, complaint or comment.

Management reviews every submittal and follows up on the comments. The follow-up may include contacting the passenger.



Helpful Information

Addresses		
Administrative Office 700 NE 2nd Street Suite 100 Meridian, Idaho 83642	Main Street Station 777 W. Main Street Boise, Idaho 83707	Happy Day Transit Center 5907 Cleveland Blvd. Caldwell, Idaho 83607

Important Numbers	
Reservationist	208-345-7433
Ada County	208-345-1234
Canyon County	208-258-2780
Hearing Impaired	1-800-377-1363 or 711 for TTY (Idaho Relay Service)
If unable to speak, send an email to reservations@ridevrt.org .	

Holidays

There is no regular VRT Access service on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day (January 1 or Observed Holiday)
- Memorial Day (Last Monday of May)
- Independence Day (July 4 or Observed Holiday)
- Labor Day (First Monday of September)
- Thanksgiving Day (Fourth Thursday of November)
- Christmas Day (December 25 or Observed Holiday)

VRT may opt to provide VRT Access occasional holiday service as capacity allows. VRT will notify passengers about holiday trip opportunities.

Personal Information Changes

Passengers must notify VRT Customer Service if moving to a new address, changing a telephone number, updating an emergency contact number, if a mobility device will now be used, or if a PCA is now required. It is very important that this information is kept up to date.

Fares

Fares may be paid by using cash, a personal check, or a VRT Access pass. Make sure exact fare is ready upon boarding the vehicle. Drivers do not carry change



and cannot search pockets, backpacks, or purses to find fare. The fare must be placed in the fare box or handed to the driver. All guests must pay the same fare as the eligible rider. The PCA is not required to pay a fare.

Passes may be purchased by mail, in person at any VRT office or with a debit or credit card by calling 208-345-7433. There is a \$10.00 minimum charge for debit or credit card purchases. There will be an additional \$5.00 fee charged if passes are sent via US Mail. Passes may be purchased by eligible passengers or by someone on behalf of the passenger. More information on fares and pass purchases is also available on the website at ridevrt.org/fares

VRT Access Fares	
Certified Passenger	\$3.00 per trip
Personal Care Attendant	No cost
Guest/Companion	\$3.00 per person, per trip

Service Area

The passenger’s origin and destination must be within ¼-mile of the VRT fixed-route service area, and the trip time must fall within the hours of the nearest fixed-route. See website for more details at www.ridevrt.org or call 208-345-7433. Passengers are responsible to get within the ¼-mile area of the VRT fixed-route in order to use the service.

Changes in the VRT fixed-route service area and service schedules may affect the available area and time of VRT Access service. For assistance in determining the VRT Access service area, and when service is available, contact customer service at 208-345-7433. Also, if moving to a new location, check with customer service to verify if the new address is within the VRT Access service area.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is a personnel care attendant?

A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) is someone traveling with the passenger who assists with personal care and activities. A PCA is different from a guest or companion. Passengers that periodically ride with a PCA must let reservationist know when booking a ride that a PCA will be riding. If a passenger always rides with a PCA, reservationists can register the riders' profile in the scheduling system. To register a PCA, call 208-345-7433.

Drivers cannot transport anyone not scheduled. Passengers must schedule a trip for the PCA if the PCA is going to be traveling with the passenger. PCAs do not pay fare when escorting a passenger on VRT Access or on a VRT fixed-route. PCAs must board and exit the vehicle at the same place and time as the eligible passenger.

What is a guest/companion?

A guest/companion is a person, not a PCA, the passenger wants to bring on a trip. As an eligible passenger, family and friends are permitted to travel as a guest/companion. When a reservation is made, passenger must inform reservationist the number of guests/companions for each trip.

Guests/companions will be accommodated on a space available basis. Drivers cannot transport guests/companions not scheduled. Guests pay the same fare as the eligible passenger and must board and exit the vehicle at the same place and time as the passenger.

May children ride?

All children infant to 17, may ride with an eligible passenger. When a reservation is made, passenger must inform reservationist the number of children for each trip. All children pay the same fare as the eligible passenger and must board and exit the vehicle at the same place and time as the passenger. Children will be accommodated on a space available basis. Drivers cannot transport children not scheduled.

Additionally, children aged six or younger or weighing less than 40 pounds must travel in an approved car seat. Vehicles are not equipped with car seats. The passenger is responsible for providing the car seat, securing the car seat to the vehicle, and securing the child in the car seat. If assistance is needed, bring

Frequently Asked Questions

someone to help. Children will not be transported if not safely seated and wearing a seat belt.

Are service animals permitted?

Service animals are animals that have been trained to perform specific tasks to assist their owner in doing daily activities. They are not pets, nor are they companion animals. Service animals are welcome on vehicles. The service animal may travel on the floor beside its owner, or if small, on the owner's lap. Animals are not permitted to run free inside the vehicle and not permitted to sit on seats.

The service animal must be under control. Bring a PCA or guest if assistance with a service animal is necessary. When making reservations, a passenger may be asked if service animal will be traveling with them. Pets that are not service animals (including companion animals) must be enclosed in a carrier that will remain secured during the trip. The carrier floor should have an absorbent material to prevent the vehicle from being soiled. The pet and carrier may not weigh more than 25 pounds and must fit on the lap or under the seat.

May I bring packages and personal items on vehicle?

Drivers are not allowed to carry any packages. A passenger may only transport packages that they can personally carry and fit within their seating area. Passengers are not allowed to make multiple trips to and from the vehicle to carry additional packages.

Carts must be able to be kept in control of the passenger and small enough that they do not impede walkways or other passenger's space. Carts cannot be over filled, bags cannot hang on the outside of cart, and passengers must be able to control, load and unload cart from the bus.

May I take a wheelchair or other mobility device?

All VRT Access vehicles are designed to transport a minimum of two manual or powered three- or four-wheeled mobility devices, such as wheelchairs. The wheeled-mobility-device must be designed for indoor use and used by a passenger with a disability. Every vehicle will allow the loading of a mobility device that does not exceed the manufacturers limit of the lift. The minimum size allowed is 30 inches in width and 48 inches in length and weighs no more than 600 pounds when occupied. A passenger and the mobility device must be able to fit on a lift, permit the driver to operate the lift safely, and fit within the securement area inside the vehicle.



Frequently Asked Questions

Some vehicles have wheelchair lifts that support up to 800 pounds when occupied. If the larger capacity wheelchair lift is necessary, be sure to inform the reservationist at the time of making a reservation.

To ensure passenger safety and that of the driver, the driver will assist a passenger in a manual wheelchair on or off the lift platform if needed, and to the doorway of destination. Drivers are not allowed to help over rough terrain, steep slopes, or operate mobility devices over a step to a level surface. Drivers cannot assist if the mobility device is not operational. Please keep wheelchair or mobility device in good working condition and clean. A dirty or poorly maintained mobility device may be a hazard to the passenger, the driver, or other passengers if it has loose parts, brakes that do not hold, or damaged wheels.

May anyone use the wheelchair lift?

Any passenger may use the wheelchair lift to board the vehicle if they are not comfortable using the vehicle steps. If a passenger is going to use the wheelchair lift, the passenger should inform the reservationist when making a reservation.

Does my mobility device have to be secured?

All mobility devices must be properly secured. Lap and shoulder belt use is not mandatory but is highly encouraged for passenger safety. The mobility device is required to be secured into the onboard securement system at all times during the trip. If a mobility device is unable to be secured with the passenger in it, they may be asked to transfer to a seat. Passengers are not required to transfer from their mobility device if they choose not to. Drivers will call in to their dispatch to record the refusal. If a passenger refuses the securement of the mobility device, the driver will be instructed not to transport. If a driver fails to secure a mobility device, please notify VRT immediately at 208-345-7433.

May I travel with my respirator or portable oxygen equipment?

Devices such as canes, walkers, or oxygen carts should be kept in front of the seat passenger is sitting in. If this is not possible, the driver will help determine a method of securing the item. In the event the driver must make a quick unplanned maneuver or brake quickly, an unsecured device may become a projectile and cause injury to the person in the device or others on the vehicle.

Do I have to wear a seatbelt?

For the safety and security of all passengers, PCAs, guests, companions, and children are required to wear a seat belt and remain seated with their seat belt



Frequently Asked Questions

secured during their trip. Passengers who use mobility devices are also requested to use lap and shoulder belts. A driver cannot secure the lap belt on a mobility device for the passenger. If the vehicle does not have seat belts for every seat, wearing the seat belt is recommended, but not mandatory.

What if I think I forgot something on the vehicle?

Passengers are responsible for keeping track of personal belongings. If a personal item is left on the vehicle, call **208-345-7433** with:

- Description of the item
- Trip day
- Trip time
- Vehicle number



TOPIC	Service Change Effect on Ridership
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Alissa Taysom

Staff Recommendation/Request

This is an information item only. Staff will provide an update to ridership trends since the implementation of the June 2024 service change.

Summary

The June 2024 service change was a significant task for not only the Valley Regional Transit (VRT) staff, but also for our riders and drivers to adjust to the changes. Between June and September 2024 ridership was generally less than the same period last year but was trending up. In June, where the service launched, overall ridership was down by 8.4% over June of 2023. In July ridership grew to approximately 77,000 monthly boardings which was 0.7% more than July of 2023. Although August ridership grew to 84,000 by August, that was 8.6% less than the roughly 90,000 boardings in August of 2023. September 2024 ridership was approximately 82,000, down slightly from August 2024 but that is up approximately 4,000 boardings from September of 2023 (see figure 1). Overall, between June – September 2024, ridership is down 2.4%, or approximately 8,000 riders (see table 1). We will continue to monitor ridership and strive to achieve our ridership target of an 18% increase by the end of FY2025.

Figure 1: Total Fixed Route and On-Demand Ridership

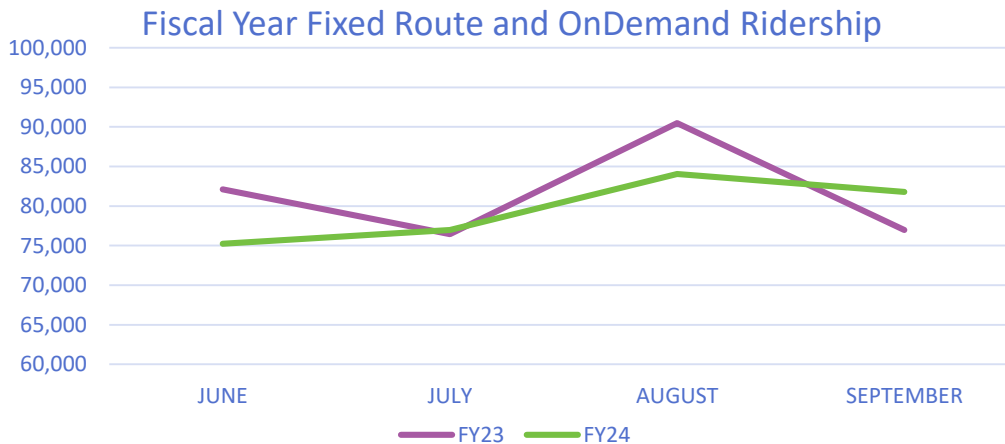


Table 1: Total Ridership

Total Ridership Comparison June - September			
2023	2024	Difference	Percent Difference
82,000	77,000	-5,000	-6.1%
77,000	77,000	0	0%
90,000	84,000	-6,000	-6.7%
77,000	82,000	5,000	6.5%

326,049 318,084 -7,965 -2.4%

Ridership response typically takes a few years to fully adjust to major service changes. In addition to learning new routes, VRT faced a few other headwinds this summer. First, construction impacts have had a significant impact on the 9 – State Street which is our highest ridership route. Also, on-time performance has been a challenge over the last several months. We will continue to review schedules and are looking to adjust timetables as necessary.

Although ridership system-wide is down when we compare the months of June to September in 2024, the trend is up and there are several routes that have had significant increases (see table 2).

Table 2: Route Details

Average Monthly Activity June - September			
Route	2023	2024	Percent Difference
1	2,648	0	-100.0%
2	6,100	6190	1.5%
3	8,651	8778	1.5%
4	2,650	3,140	18.5%
5	6,572	5708	-13.1%
6	4,989	0	-100.0%
7a	4,745	0	-100.0%
7b	6,392	0	-100.0%
7	0	12691	100.0%
8	1,303	0	-100.0%
8X*	2,082	957	-54.0%
9	14,947	14460	-3.3%
10	2,025	582	-71.2%
12	2,952	0	-100.0%
16	893	1101	23.4%
17	857	1844	115.3%
20	0	1881	100.0%
21	0	3991	100.0%
24	0	1775	100.0%
28	2,854	2611	-8.5%
29	4,142	5624	35.8%
30	441	464	5.4%
40	1,185	1351	14.0%
42	2,006	2949	47.1%
43	330	0	-100.0%
45	447	1030	130.4%
150	2,216	2252	1.6%
160	89	143	60.7%

Total	81,512	76,381	-2.4%
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*2024 Ridership is for the Revised 8 Chinden

In addition to reviewing routes at the route level, Table 3 looks at ridership at the service area level. Several of the routing changes were intended to work together to better serve the overall community. Looking at ridership changes this way highlight several things.

- **Warm Springs/Parkcenter:** We were expecting a ridership decline in the Warm Springs/Parkcenter area because we reduced the amount of service in the area. This corridor has also been plagued with ongoing construction detours that have limited its ability to operate as designed.
- **Orchard/Overland/Franklin:** With the elimination of the 6 - Orchard and significant restructure of the 4 - Franklin, this area saw some of the most significant changes of any in the system. The 29 - Overland and 4 - Franklin both saw healthy growth as they picked up some of the former 6 - Orchard ridership headed downtown. As a cross-town route we did not expect the 20 - Orchard to carry as many people as the former 6 - Orchard, however, it is not yet performing at the desired levels.
- **North End:** The 16 has seen good ridership growth and is likely picking up some of the midday ridership on the former 10 - Hill Road. Although we were expecting a decline in ridership on the 10 - Hill Road when reducing its service to peak only, we may need to consider restoring a PM trip after 5:00PM. Summer performance of the 10 - Hill Road was especially poor because the remaining trips on the 10 were designed to target student ridership. September 2024 ridership on the 10 is up 77% from June 2024. We anticipate seeing ridership on the 10 - Hill Road to continue to recover some during the remainder of the school year, though it will not be at the same levels it was in 2023.
- **Emerald:** The size of ridership decline on the 5 - Emerald, suggests people may have switched to using the more frequent 7 - Fairview rather than splitting ridership between the former 7B - Fairview and 5 - Emerald. The 5 - Emerald has also seen some on-time performance issues since the change and that may also be impacting current ridership.
- **Fairview/Cole:** This service area saw significant increases in service and the ridership has increased accordingly. The 7 - Fairview now has more ridership than the former 7A and 7B. The 21 - Cole/Glenwood saw a 35% increase in ridership over the former 12 Maple Grove. This is an encouraging sign. We will continue to promote these services as there is more ridership potential in these routes.
- **Chinden/Five Mile/Ustick:** This is another service area with a new route with a changed orientation. We expect it will take a little longer to see ridership growth in this area. The new 24 - Ustick/Maple Grove connects Towne Square Mall to the Village, and it has seen a 24% ridership growth since beginning in June. We expect this route to continue to grow. We also will continue to promote the improved connection between downtown Boise and the Idaho State Chinden Campus. This service has struggled with on-time performance, and we believe has more room to grow.
- **State Street:** Virtually nothing changed for the State Street corridor except significant summer construction. We anticipate this ridership growing again when service around the Boise YMCA and Boise High School returns.



- **Cole/Victory:** This ridership change may be due to the 4 – Franklin taking over service on Barrister.
- **Central Valley:** The ridership response to changes on this section have been very encouraging and there is still room for improvement with the convenient connections across the valley the 42 and 45 now make.
- **Intercounty Express:** Although there is some growth on the 40, we lost more Caldwell riders than we had hoped with the route consolidation. There is a lot of room for growth on this important express connection. We will continue promoting these services.
- **On-Demand:** The streamlined service area in Canyon County may have made it easier for some 150 riders to find rides. Although we saw substantial growth in the 160, The City of Eagle ultimately decided not to continue funding it, and it was discontinued in October.

Table 3: Service Area Comparisons

Average Monthly Activity June - September				
Service Areas		2023	2024	Percent Difference
Warm Springs/Parkcenter (1, 17)		3,504	1,844	-47.4%
	1	2,648	0	-100.0%
	17	857	1,844	115.3%
Broadway (2)		6,100	6,190	1.5%
	2	6,100	6,190	1.5%
Vista (3)		8,651	8,778	1.5%
	3	8,651	8,778	1.5%
Orchard/Overland/Franklin (4, 6, 20, 29)		11,780	7,505	-9.6%
	4	2,650	0	18.5%
	6	4,989	0	-100.0%
	20	0	1,881	100.0%
	29	4,142	5,624	35.8%
North End (10, 16)		2,917	1,684	-42.3%
	10	2,025	582	-71.2%
	16	893	1,101	23.4%
Emerald (5)		6,572	5,708	-13.1%
	5	6,572	5,708	-13.1%
Fairview/Cole (7, 7a, 7b, 12, 21)		14,089	16,682	18.4%
	7	0	12,691	100.0%
	7a	4,745	0	-100.0%
	7b	6,392	0	-100.0%
	12	2,952	0	-100.0%
	21	0	3,991	100.0%



Table 4: Service Area Comparisons (continued)

Average Monthly Activity June - September				
Chinden/Five Mile/Ustick (8, 8x, 24)		3,385	2,732	-19.3%
	8	1,303	0	-100.0%
	8x*	2,082	957	-54.0%
	24	0	1,775	100.0%
State Street (9)		14,947	14,460	-3.3%
	9	14,947	14,460	-3.3%
Cole/Victory (28)		2,854	2,611	-8.5%
	28	2,854	2,611	-8.5%
Central Valley (30, 42, 45)		2,893	4,443	53.6%
	30	441	464	5.4%
	42	2,006	2,949	47.1%
	45	447	1,030	130.4%
Intercounty Express (40, 43)		1,515	1,351	-10.8%
	40	1,185	1,351	14.0%
	43	330	0	-100.0%
On Demand (150, 160)		2,305	2,395	3.9%
	150	2,216	2,252	1.6%
	160	89	143	60.6%

*2024 Ridership is for the Revised 8 Chinden

Based on the initial ridership information VRT will focus communication resources on “route reach” over the next several months to promote those routes that have seen ridership declines, have had significant routing changes or have room for ridership growth.

In addition to route and service area summaries, VRT has begun looking at stop level data and how ridership activity has shifted with the service change. Attachments 1, 2, and 3 illustrate the concentration of rider activity before and after the change and where those changes have been most pronounced.



Specialized services

While the fixed-route service is growing out of the initial ridership drop, Specialized Transit Services, including Access and Beyond Access have seen growth of 15% since the service change took effect in June (see table 4).

Table 5: Specialized Transportation Programs

Average Monthly Activity June – September Specialized Transportation Programs			
	2023	2024	Percent Difference
Ada County Access	2,490	2,769	11%
Canyon County Access	276	55	-80%
Specialized Transportation Programs	2,669	874	-67%
Beyond Access	0	2,531	100%
Total	5,434	6,230	15%

Implication

Overall, the June 2024 service change is promising, with growth on many routes, including the new or rebranded routes. VRT will continue to focus on improving ridership to meet the service change growth target over the next year. The addition on the Beyond Access service has proven to be highly successful, averaging 2,531 riders a month between June and September of 2024, increasing ridership on Specialized Transportation services by an average of 497 riders every month.

More Information

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: June – September 2023 Average Daily Ridership Map
- Attachment 2: June – September 2024 Average Daily Ridership Map
- Attachment 3: Average Daily Ridership Difference Map
- Attachment 4: FY2024 Service Change Summary

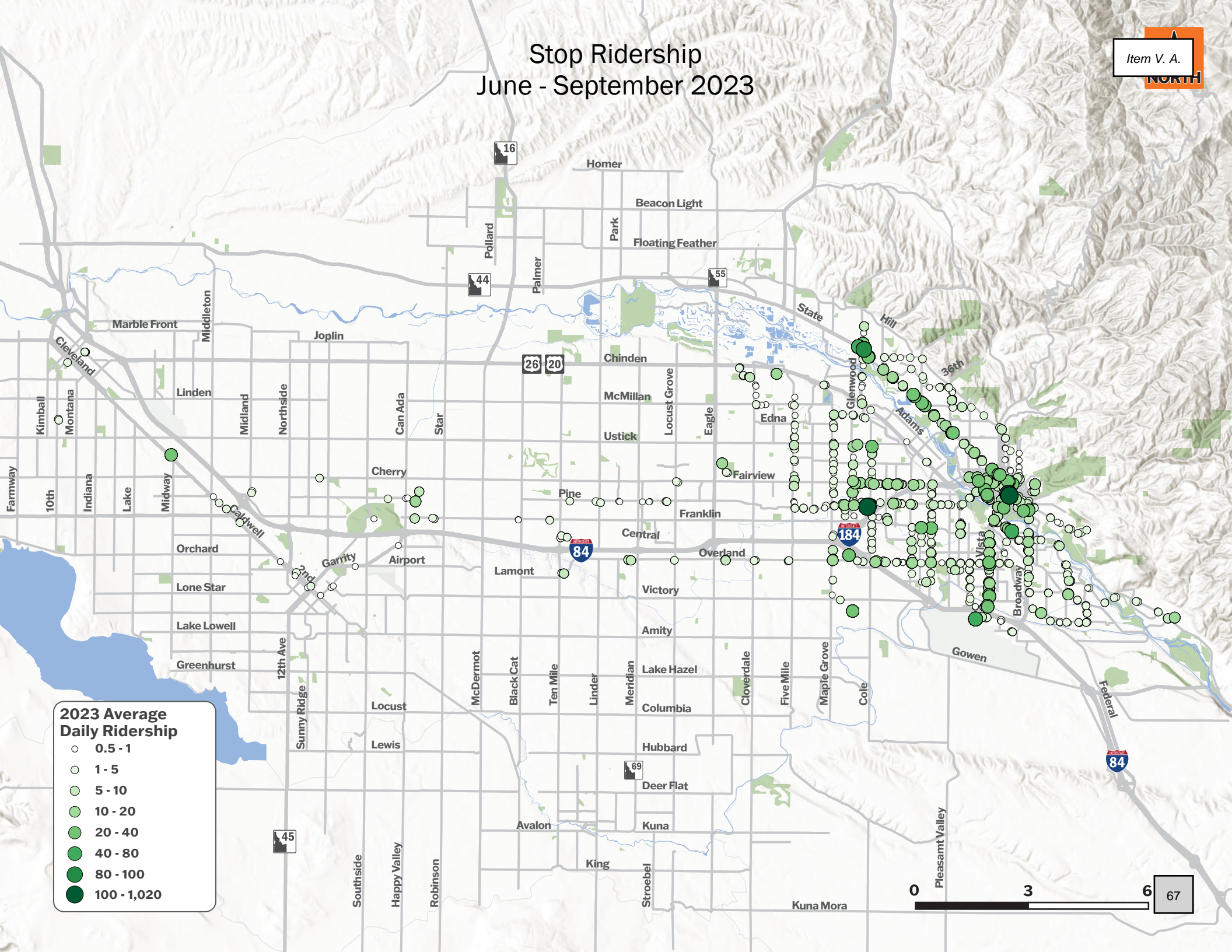
For detailed information, contact:

Alissa Taysom
 Associate Planner II
 ataysom@rideVRT.org
 (208) 258-2717



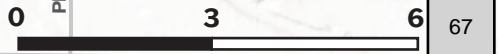
Stop Ridership June - September 2023

Item V. A.



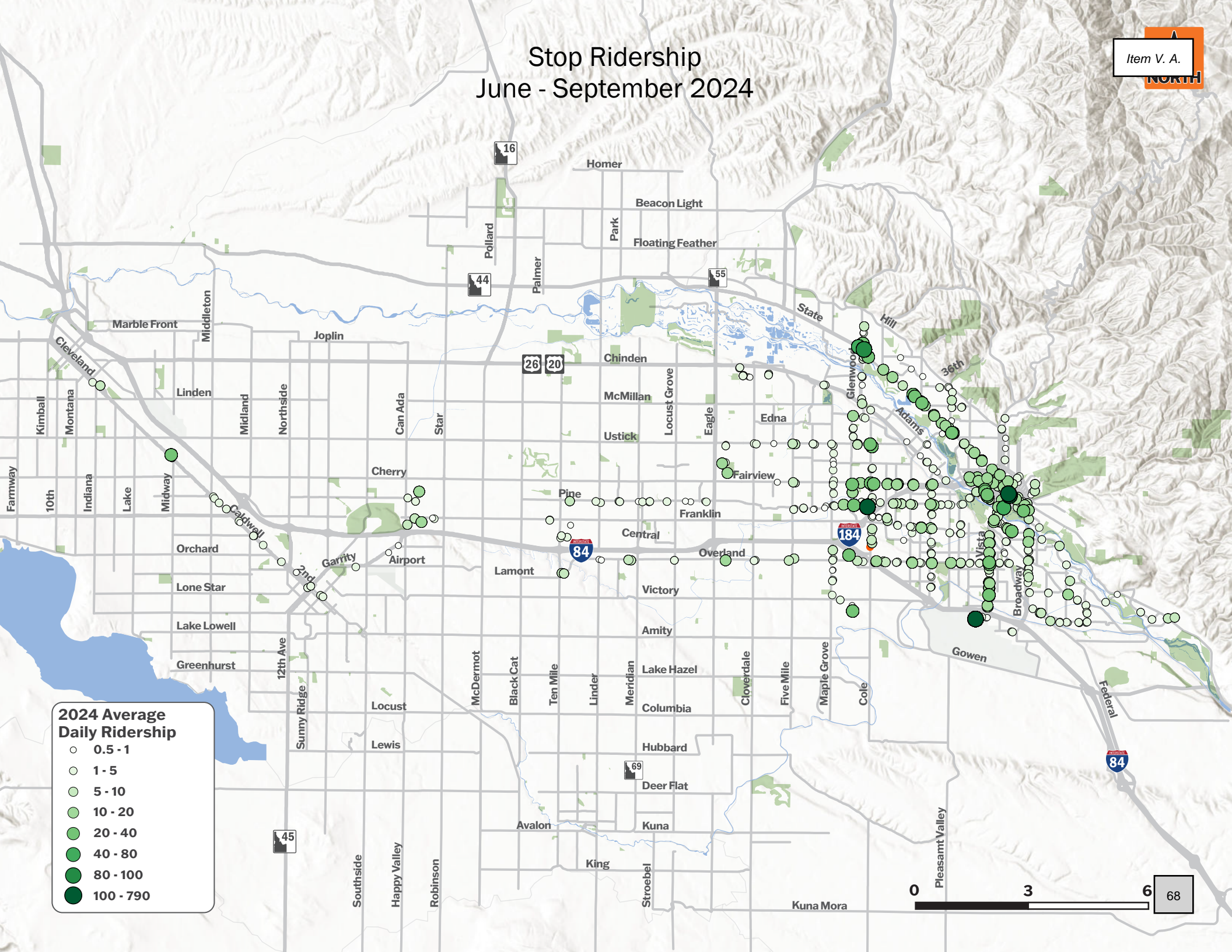
2023 Average Daily Ridership

- 0.5 - 1
- 1 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 40
- 40 - 80
- 80 - 100
- 100 - 1,020



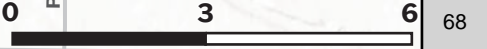
Stop Ridership June - September 2024

Item V. A.

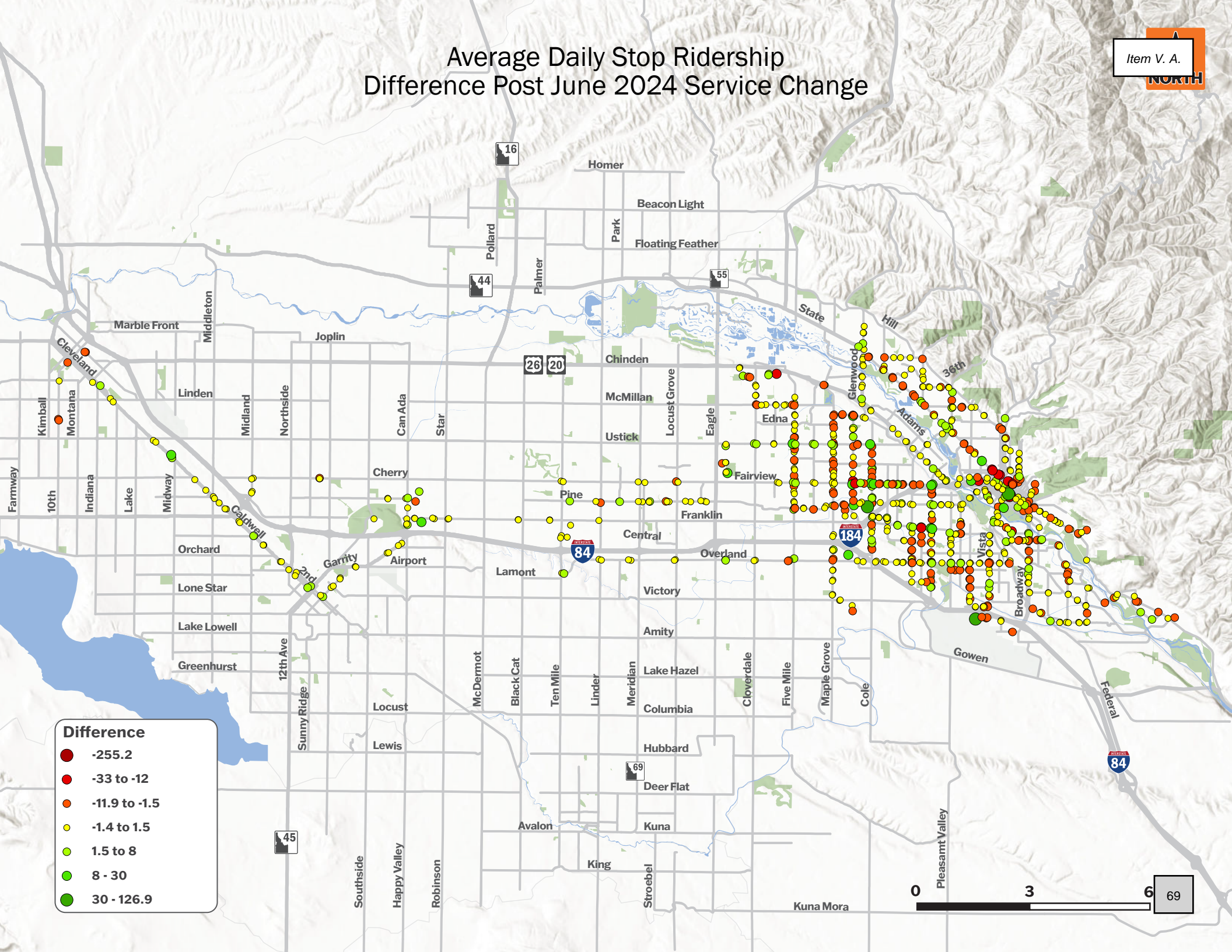


2024 Average Daily Ridership

- 0.5 - 1
- 1 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 40
- 40 - 80
- 80 - 100
- 100 - 790

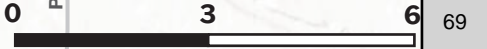


Average Daily Stop Ridership Difference Post June 2024 Service Change



Difference

- -255.2
- -33 to -12
- -11.9 to -1.5
- -1.4 to 1.5
- 1.5 to 8
- 8 - 30
- 30 - 126.9



Attachment 4: FY2024 Service Change Summary

On June 3, 2024, Valley Regional Transit (VRT) implemented the largest service change in 20 years. As a result of the change, there have been significant changes in what routes riders can take. The summer 2024 service was implemented in response to the results of the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) that was completed in 2022 by Tranpsco Group for Valley Regional Transit. The COA reviewed all VRT's existing fixed-route services and on-demand service in Canyon County. The results of the COA were used to develop recommendations for service restructure to strengthen the transit network, improving service on premium corridors and repurposing service on lower performing routes. The on-demand service in Eagle was not in effect until after the COA was completed, therefore was not included in the recommendations in the COA.

All VRT fixed-route services and the on-demand service in Caldwell saw changes to service on June 3, 2024. Overall ridership is expected to rise by 18% by the end of FY2025.

Routes

- 1 – Harris Ranch via Parkcenter: Service was combined with the 17 – Warm Springs to create a one-way loop up Warm Springs to Harris Ranch before returning down Parkcenter to downtown Boise. The service was rebranded as the 17 – Warm Springs/Parkcenter.
- 2 – Broadway: Timing adjustments were performed to accommodate the interlining of the 3 – Vista and the 2 – Broadway with the 20 – Orchard (formerly the 6 – Orchard).
- 3 – Vista: Timing adjustments were performed to accommodate the interlining of the 3 – Vista and the 2 – Broadway with the 20 – Orchard (formerly the 6 – Orchard).
- 4 – Roosevelt: Hours on the 4 – Roosevelt was repurposed to the new 4 – Franklin. The 4 – Franklin follows the path of the 4 – Roosevelt from Main Street Station to Rose Hill and Roosevelt, where it continues onto Franklin Road to Towne Square Mall. The 4 – Franklin serves Borah High School in both directions, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, to accommodate high school students, and serves Barrister all day, covering stops formerly served by the 28 – Cole/Victory.
- 5 – Emerald: Timing adjustments were performed to accommodate the interlining of the 29 – Overland.
- 6 – Orchard: Hours on the 6 – Orchard was repurposed to the new 20 – Orchard. The 6 – Orchard no longer serves downtown Boise but rather connects Hill Road to the Boise Airport along Orchard and VMP/36th St. This change increases the level of service at the Airport on Saturdays and add a new cross-town connection for riders who live north of the Boise River.
- 7/7B – Fairview: Hours on the 7A – Fairview/Ustick were repurposed to the 7 – Fairview (formerly the 7B – Fairview – Towne Square Mall) to bring the service to 15/30. The 7 was rerouted to return from the Towne Square Mall to Fairview via Cole and returned to using the Orchard on-ramp to access I-184. The reroute was done to alleviate on-time performance issues. Several stops along Fairview were also consolidated to improve travel time.

- 7A – Fairview/Ustick: Hours on the 7A – Fairview/Ustick were repurposed to the 7 – Fairview (formerly the 7B – Fairview – Towne Square Mall) to bring the service to 15/30. Segments north of Fairview are covered by the new 21 – Cole/Glenwood route.
- 8 – Five Mile: The hours on the 8 – Five Mile were repurposed for the new route 24 – Ustick/Maple Grove, providing hourly, all weekday service between Towne Square Mall and the Village at Meridian along Maple Grove and Ustick.
- 8x – Five Mile/Chinden: The 8x – Five Mile/Chinden was rebranded the 8 – Chinden, the route was shortened to provide direct access from downtown Boise to The State of Idaho Chinden Campus along Chinden. The new route no longer serves Five Mile or Towne Square Mall but has reduced the one-way trip time from one hour and ten minutes to a two-way trip that can be completed in 40–55 minutes.
- 9 – State Street: Minor timing adjustments were performed to continue to refine the on-time performance of the 9 – State Street
- 10 – Hill Road: Hours on the 10 – Hill Road were reduced to focus service to the peak period where the majority of the ridership was occurring. Previously an hourly route, the 10 now runs two trips to Main Street Station and one to Ellens Ferry in the morning, and three trips to Ellens Ferry with two to Main Street Station in the afternoon. The last afternoon trip leaves Main Street Station at 4:45 pm.
- 12 – Maple Grove: Hours on the 12 – Maple Grove was repurposed to the new 21 – Cole/Glenwood. The new route 21 provides a connection between Towne Square Mall and Gary Lane, with service on Cole Road and Ustick, covering areas previously covered by the 7A – Fairview/Ustick, while still covering areas of Goddard and Glenwood previously covered by the 12. The new 21 has higher frequency than the 12, providing 30 minute all-day weekday service and 60-minute Saturday service where service did not exist before.
- 16 – VA/Hyde Park Loop: The 16 was rerouted to connect to Hill Road along 15th St. following the path of the 10 – Hill Road and was rebranded 16 – VA/15th St. The new path for the 16 helps to cover the loss of midday service in the North End, providing hourly service from 9 am – 5 pm.
- 17 – Warm Springs: Service was combined with the 1 – Harris Ranch via Parkcenter to create a one-way loop up Warm Springs to Harris Ranch before returning down Parkcenter to downtown Boise. The service was rebranded as the 17 – Warm Springs/Parkcenter.
- 20 – Orchard: Hours on the 6 – Orchard was repurposed to the new 20 – Orchard. No longer providing service to downtown Boise, the new service connects Hill Road to the Boise Airport along Orchard and VMP/36th St. This change increases the level of service at the Airport on Saturdays and add a new cross-town connection for riders who live north of the Boise River.
- 21 – Cole/Glenwood: Hours on the 12 – Maple Grove was repurposed to the new 21 – Cole/Glenwood. The new route 21 provides a connection between Towne Square Mall and Gary Lane, with service on Cole Road and Ustick, covering areas previously covered by the 7A – Fairview/Ustick, while still covering areas of Goddard and Glenwood previously covered by the 12. The new 21 has higher frequency than the 12, providing 30-minute weekday service and 60-minute

Saturday service where service did not exist before.

- 24 – Ustick Maple Grove: The hours on the 8 – Five Mile were repurposed for the new route 24 – Ustick/Maple Grove, providing hourly, all weekday service between Towne Square Mall and the Village at Meridian along Maple Grove and Ustick.
- 28 – Cole/Victory: The hours on the 28 remain largely unchanged, continuing to operate hourly throughout the day. However, the time of departure in the morning has been shifted back to leave Towne Square Mall 15 minutes after the hour instead of 45 minutes, to allow students at Frank Church High School to arrive before the final bell rings. The service shifts back to leaving Towne Square Mall at 45 minutes after the hour to continue to accommodate Frank Church High School students as well as CWI students at the Maple Grove and Overland Campus. The route no longer serves Barrister, remaining on Cole from Towne Square Mall to Overland, improving on time performance for the route. Service on Barrister is now covered by the 4 – Franklin, giving riders on Barrister direct service to downtown Boise.
- 29 – Overland: Service on the 29 has been extended from its previous terminus at Boise State University to its new terminus at Main Street Station. This change provides riders along Overland direct access to downtown Boise.
- 30 – Pine: Service on the 30 – Pine have been reduced to 60-minute frequency in downtown Meridian. In conjunction with the rerouting of the 45 – Boise State-CWI, downtown Meridian has 30-minute service during the commute period.
- 40 – Caldwell-Boise Express: The routes 40 – Nampa/Meridian Express and the 43 – Caldwell Express were consolidated to a single route providing peak service between Caldwell and downtown Boise/Boise State University. The new service extends from the College of Idaho in Caldwell, along the Boulevard to Happy Day Transit Center before using I-84 Caldwell from Midland to access CWI, and Overland at Ten Mile before following the path of the 40 – Nampa/Meridian Express to Boise. The new service is focused on service the peak direction, with one trip serving the reverse peak direction in the morning and the afternoon.
- 42 – Happy Day-Towne Square: The 42 – Happy Day to Towne Square Mall was rebranded to 42 – Happy Day-Towne Square. Frequency on the 42 was increased to hourly all day and it now serves downtown Nampa to 16th Ave S/Garrity Blvd. In addition, the service now turns north on Five Mile instead of continuing down Overland to Maple Grove. This alteration covers the changes to the 8 - Five Mile (now the 24 – Ustick Maple Grove) and the 8x – Five Mile/Chinden (now the 8 – Chinden) providing service on Emerald between Five Mile and the Towne Square Mall.
- 45 – Boise State-CWI: The 45 – BSU/CWI via Fairview was rerouted and timed to provide 30-minute service in conjunction with the 30 – Pine through downtown Meridian during the peak period. The 45 was rerouted to use I-84 from Idaho Center Blvd to Ten Mile where it follows the 30 through downtown Meridian before continuing along Fairview to the Towne Square Mall. From the Towne Square Mall, the 45 takes I-184 to Boise State. This change provides new, direct access from Towne Square Mall to Boise State University via the interstate.
- 150 – Nampa/Caldwell On-Demand: The boundaries of the on-demand service in Canyon County were clarified to improve rider understanding of the service area. The overall service area was expanded.

- 160 – Eagle On-Demand: This service was discontinued due to lack of funding support from the City of Eagle.
- Access and Beyond Access: the changes to fixed-route service led to adjustments to the Access paratransit service, with a decrease in the service area in Canyon County. The new Beyond Access service provides coverage outside of the Access service area and allows riders to travel between service areas that they were unable to travel between prior to the launch of the Beyond Access program in January 2024.



TOPIC	Reduced Fare Verification Process
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Duane Wakan

Summary

This is an information item. Staff will present a proposed reduced fare verification process with nontransferable fare media for seniors, youth and persons with disabilities beginning in 2025.

Highlights

Bus operators and staff have recognized that without a consistent reduced fare validation process, any patron can board a bus and pay a reduced fare upon request. Currently, there is no verification process for cash payments with reduced fares, but there is for mobile and smart cards. This inconsistency creates an environment where bus operators are unable to verify whether a passenger qualifies for a reduced fare, and where passengers experience an inconsistent process for accessing reduced fares.

The lack of a validation process for cash paying riders creates an opportunity of fare evasion and creates a barrier for greater adoption of digital or smart card media which can speed up bus operations. An updated reduced fare verification process will close the cash loophole, remove the perverse incentive that may be limiting the adoption of digital media and increase the faster boarding benefits inherent in digital media.

VRT proposes an updated verification process that

1. Requires anyone wishing to use a reduced fare to first complete an application
2. Establishes internal/external roles to validate a passengers eligibility based on the reduced fare category (Seniors, Youth, Disabled and Medicare)
3. Establishes expiration periods for reduced fare eligibility
4. Issues smart cards and digital media with photo ID's that validate on the bus

More Information

VRT is able to illustrate fare transaction data from fare boxes on the bus and via on-board Umo validators. Fare boxes track reduced fare transactions when bus operators enter the appropriate code when a reduced fare rider pays with cash. Reduced fare transactions are automatically uploaded in a cloud-based platform anytime a reduced fare is scanned on a Umo validator.

Tables 1 and 2 below compare cash and Umo data for 2022 – 2024 YTD (August 2024). Table 1 shows reduced fare riders are more likely to pay in cash where there is no verification process, and that the vast majority of reduced fare transactions occur with cash. This data suggests some cash riders may be abusing the reduced fares by avoiding the verification

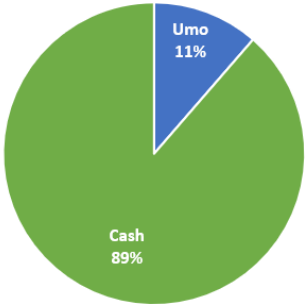
process of digital media. In any case the overwhelming use of cash where this is no validation process for reduced fares opens VRT to significant exposure to fare evasion.

Table 1: Reduced Fare Transactions 2022 – 2024 (YTD) Umo vs Cash

Year	Reduced Fare	Non-Reduced	Percent of Total
2022	21,483	85,664	20.1%
2023	25,557	135,988	15.8%
2024 (YTD)	15,499	82,339	15.8%

Year	Reduced Fare	Non-Reduced	Percent of Total
2022	184,449	663,180	22.6%
2023	190,883	655,426	22.6%
2024 (YTD)	111,313	378,437	22.7%

Reduced Fare Transactions by Media Type:

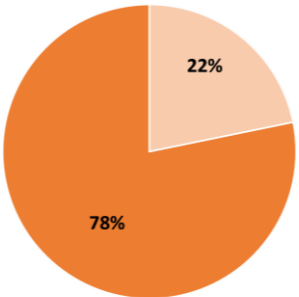


2022 – 2024 YTD (August)

Table 2: Reduced Fare Transactions 2022-2024 (YTD) Umo and Cash

Year	Reduced Fare	Non-Reduced	Percent of Total
2022	205,932	718,884	22.3%
2023	216,440	791,414	21.5%
2024 (YTD)	126,812	460,776	21.6%

VRT Transactions by Fare Type: 2022-2024 YTD



Reduced Fare Non-Reduced Fare

Table 2 shows that 22% of all fare transactions are reduced fare. A reduced fare verification process would ensure the validity of 22% of all fare transactions.

For detailed information, contact:

Duane Wakan Mobility Integration Planner
 dwakan@ridevrt.org
 (208) 258-2750



TOPIC	VRT Access Holiday Service
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Jeannette Ezell

Staff Recommendation/Request

This is an information item only.

Highlights

VRT offered Access service on Thanksgiving and Christmas to eligible riders for the first time in 2023. There was very limited use of the service, due to the short notification provided by VRT. VRT began promoting service on the holidays for 2024 in October.

Summary

VRT will offer a holiday service for Access passengers on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Rides will be booked on first come-, first served basis. Service hours are from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 3:00 PM to 6:00PM.

Reservations for Thanksgiving Day will be accepted from October 21, 2024, to November 14, 2024. For Christmas Day, reservations will be available from November 11, 2024, to December 11, 2024.

Implication

By offering service to eligible Access Riders allows for increased independence and social inclusion during the holidays.

For detailed information, contact:

Jeannette Ezell
 Operations Director
Jezell@ridevrt.org
 208-258-2711

TOPIC	Simme Seat Pilot Project
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Kate Dahl and Stephanie Hailey

Staff Recommendation/Request

Staff is recommending that up to twelve existing bus stops be installed with off-set Simme Seats as a pilot project. Staff requests the RAC make recommendations on bus stops to include in the pilot.

Highlights

- 12 Simme Seats
- Top 100 bus stops
- Locations with sidewalk only



Summary

Valley Regional Transit (VRT) staff discovered Simme Seats several years ago and was immediately impressed with the benefits they could provide for Valley Regional Transit Bus Stops. Simme Seats accommodate 1-2 people, are free-standing with a minimal footprint. The seats can be installed onto 2" diameter poles inserted into sidewalks, without the need of an extra mounting pad. The standard VRT or COA benches are commonly installed on a 3'x10' concrete pad on the back of a 3'-5' sidewalk. The process to add a concrete pad requires significant design, permitting and construction, so only the highest ridership routes and stops have been prioritized. Simme Seats do not require additional design, permitting, or construction which substantially shortens the time frame in which VRT can provide seating to its riders. Because of the minimal installation requirements this type of seat would allow VRT to prioritize low and medium ridership where seating is still needed by riders. Providing seating at small and medium stops would improve the ease and comfort of riders over a larger portion of the network, than just the highest ridership stops alone.

Bus Stop Selection

VRT has purchased 12 Simme Seats as a pilot project to try out at bus stops. Simme Seats are not designed to replace amenities at large premium stops. Simme Seats are ideal for small and medium-sized stops with consistent ridership that are not likely to warrant the larger investments of benches or shelters. Staff will present a list of low and medium ridership stops and requests the RAC provide input on selecting the best candidates.

Implication

Provide essential seating at stops with medium ridership in a shorter time frame and more affordably. Supports Bus Stop Typology and FY2024 Budget.

More Information

For detailed information, contact:

Kate Dahl
Principal Planner
kdahl@rideVRT.org

Stephanie Hailey
Capital Projects Manager 1
shailey@rideVRT.org



TOPIC	2025 Outreach
DATE	November 19
STAFF MEMBER	Jason Rose

Summary

This is an information item. Staff will review ongoing marketing efforts and outline upcoming outreach and facilitate a discussion with RAC members to get feedback on priorities and tactics.

Highlights

In general, VRT’s Communications & Engagement team categorizes public-facing work into the buckets of “Communications/Media” and “Engagement.” Within the former, we include earned media (primarily media relations), owned media (things we own, ranging from posters to website to signage), paid media (advertising we pay for), and shared media (communications pushed out through platforms we do not own, such as social media); within the latter, we include high-touch engagement, such as in-person engagement, tabling, partnerships, canvassing, and more.

VRT is approaching **marketing** and **outreach** over the next couple of years as parallel tracks. Our ongoing paid marketing awareness campaign – Let’s Ride, BOI – aims to increase ridership, increase revenue across revenue streams, position VRT as a thought leader, and create interest/support/demand for transportation at the policy level. Last year’s campaign set the foundation for this work, and this year we aim to continue the momentum and add a layer of conversion/education.

With this information item, we will review the metrics and future of the Let’s Ride, BOI marketing campaign. We will then facilitate a discussion and feedback session on outreach in order to refine priorities and tactics.

For detailed information, contact: Jason Rose, Communications Director, jrose@ridevrt.org, (208)803-5183

CEO Activity Report	CEO Activity Report
DATE	11/04/24
STAFF MEMBER	Elaine Clegg

CEO Update

Information only, no action needed.

Highlights

October has been a month of travel and catch up for me. After focusing on the budget process for the previous four months I was busy spending time on several important policies, procurements and plans.

We are developing a policy update calendar for internal use to ensure that as policies are due for updates the department responsible has it on their own calendar and they get done timely. A handful of internal policies have been updated since we started. Paula is also developing a records destruction, retention and archive policy. As we move files to our new cloud system, we will have a clearer understanding of which files need to be moved and which can be archived or done away with. We will bring this policy to the board and then periodically a list items for destruction.

Thanks to the Board for expanding our new financial management system to include all of modules we requested such as the parts and supplies inventories at our two bus facilities and other auxiliary modules. Finance, IT and Operations are busy implementing those new modules. We expect in the end to be more efficient and most importantly to have all of our financial data in a more easily accessible format. This should help with everything from reporting to the board to having the ability to build budget and other financial scenarios.

We had one final outstanding policy, website and signage amendment from the FTA Triennial Review. We have submitted the changes and expect to get final closeout on the issue very soon.

The work to identify opportunities for facilities improvements is beginning to pay off. I met with our new battery lease holder at the APTA conference, and they are interested in possibly partnering on energy projects. They plan to visit our facilities in Boise and Caldwell in December. In preparation we are meeting with Idaho Power to explore possible rooftop solar and battery storage opportunities. Construction on the north side for the bus stop improvements at 18th and State are complete, we and are now working on the south side. Work is expected to be complete late in November.

Travel

This month was perhaps the busiest travel period I have had since starting at VRT. After

finishing September with two trips in Idaho I returned to north Idaho and Spokane twice in early October and also traveled to Philadelphia. I met with legislators, local elected officials and other Idaho transit providers while in north Idaho. While in Spokane VRT staff toured the Spokane Transit Authority's new Bus Rapid Transit route and the infrastructure serving it. Spokane is the region most like ours in size and demographics in the west. While in Philadelphia I connected with some interests who do joint development projects and met with USDOT staff to explore ideas for the Thriving Communities grant in Garden City we are participating in. I also had a firsthand tour of their regional rail system. Theirs is perhaps the most extensive system in the US with vestiges of the Reading and the Pennsylvania Railroads that have been connected in a through-running tunnel in downtown Philadelphia. It was fun to see the work they are contemplating to bring it up to modern standards and improve service.

It remains unclear exactly when a vote might occur with regards to my **Amtrak Board nomination**, I continue to receive updates that it is likely to come to the Senate for a vote before the end of the year. The board holds a public board meeting every year and this year is scheduled for Seattle in December. I have been invited to participate in the public activities as a board nominee and will also visit FTA while in Seattle.

Individual Meetings

The meetings with Idaho legislative members, transit agencies and local officials interested in public transportation is ramping up in preparation for an education push during this upcoming legislative session. The agencies around the state are geared up to visit the legislature as a group this year. VRT is helping with a booklet that will outline every agency in Idaho and also share stories about each service. We have an intern who is helping with this project. Look for discussion about this at the December Executive Board and January Board meetings.

- **Meetings with state leaders** – I continue to meet with Treasure Valley legislators and took advantage of my travel to meet with legislators in north Idaho as well.
- **Local Leaders** – I have continued meetings with mayors, county commissioners, transit board members and others in the Treasure Valley and around the state.

VRT Meetings

We have engaged local leaders in discussions around service to Micron and infrastructure planning for State Street.

- **Micron Service** – The Micron project is due to open in 2026. I held a meeting with mayors and key staff from the jurisdictions to develop a strategy for serving Micron. I met with the legal counsel from Micron since and will follow-up with a meeting with Micron officials this month.
- **State Street Infrastructure Planning** – it has been two decades since planning for a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) type service on State Street began. Many pieces of that plan have been worked on since. VRT has lived up to our commitment to increase service to BRT levels and we are working on a RAISE grant to complete some bus infrastructure. The City of Boise completed a transit-oriented development (TOD) study and designated the corridor for TOD in their new zoning code. ACHD has improved two of the intersections and will work on a third starting this year. VRT,



ACHD, ITD, City of Boise and CCDC are partnering to pipe the canal on the north side of State Street from Saxton to Bogart and possibly beyond. To complete the corridor with full BRT service will require completing the segments between the intersections, improving all bus infrastructure and implementing bus priority on signal timing and other improvements. We recently had a meeting of the Executive Team to discuss a path forward, that will be followed by a meeting with the leadership team members soon and then reconvening the technical team to keep the momentum moving. Watch for further updates soon.

Internal Activities

The executive management team is working with me to complete an Internal Business Plan by the end of the year to identify priorities and to celebrate project completion that meet those priorities.

We are updating and reorganizing the transit development plan which will come to the Board when complete.

More Information

For detailed information, contact:

Elaine Clegg, CEO, eclegg@ridevrt.org, (208) 258-2712



TOPIC	Operations Department Staff Report
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Leslie Pedrosa

Summary

This report provides a status update of activities related to contracted transportation services, Specialized Transportation services, compliance, customer service support and regional operations.

Regional Highlights

Ada County Charging and Battery Electric Bus Update

VRT’s attorney worked with the Proterra Estate and Pheonix Motors, Inc to determine a path forward. All agreements have been signed. The replacement chargers from Rhombus Energy Solutions have been delivered. Contractors will begin installation in October to install new software, replace faulty parts on chargers, and replace dispensers.

VRT continues to work with Phoenix Motors, Inc. to try and get backordered parts for buses that have been down for an extended amount of time due to replacement parts not being available. VRT is attempting to get third part vendor contacts to order from them directly.

Beyond Access Service

Beyond Access service launched on January 2. VRT has provided over 32,000 rides, which is about a 3% increase from the combined total of previous service providers. VRT continues to see an increase in ridership in Canyon County following the June 3 reduction of ACCESS service. VRT continues to have challenges hiring drivers with school back in session.

Miscellaneous

- Staff continues to work with Avero and FourthSquare to prepare for the maintenance software replacement. VRT expects the new software to be ready for use by the end of 2024.
- Eagle On-demand service ended September 30. Staff had software updated to remove the Eagle On-demand service area. VRT staff also removed all infrastructure and signage.
- Metro Community Services (Metro) began operating as a contractor for VRT under the Beyond Access service on October 1. Previously Metro was operating independently of VRT in a separate database. All services have been combined into one database. With Metro being based in Canyon County, VRT expects this new service model will help with the increase in ridership in Canyon County.

- VRT worked with Saint Alphonsus and St. Luke's to pilot changes to the Rides2Wellness program beginning November 1. Currently, rides are only allowed to designated clinics. Beginning November 1, a ride can be booked to any clinic under Saint Alphonsus and St. Luke's. This pilot will be tested for three months to see if changes need to be made to the program.
- VRT finalized an MOU with the Ada County Emergency Management and Community Resilience for emergency evacuation and transportation supports for several municipal organizations throughout Ada County.

Service Highlights

Canyon County

- One preventable accident in September
- Intercounty on-time performance 56% for September
- On-demand on-time performance 49% for September
- ACCESS on-time performance 100% for September

Ada County Highlights

- Zero preventable accidents in September
- Fixed-route on-time performance 77% for September
- ACCESS on-time performance 93% for September

Beyond Access Service

- No preventable accidents in September
- On-time performance 88% for September
- Piloting AI preventative maintenance monitoring software on vehicles to determine if it helps to reduce maintenance road calls by predicting issues in advance

Compliance

- Implemented new software to report road calls in fiscal year 2025
- Staff continues to work on updates to VRT policies and procedures as needed
- Staff preparing to report NTD data for fiscal year 2024

Customer Service Support

- Customer service handled 6,663 of 7,058 phone calls for information, with 356 calls abandoned. The average call time was 3 minutes, 10 seconds and the average hold time was 20 seconds in September.
- Reservationist handled 655 of 723 phone calls to change or schedule a ride on ACCESS, with 53 calls abandoned. The average call time was 4 minutes, 13 seconds and the average hold time was 18 seconds in September.
- September City Go Pay mobile ticket sales totaled \$11,828.32.



More Information

For detailed information, contact:

Leslie Pedrosa
Chief Operating Officer
lpedrosa@ridevrt.org
(208) 258-2713



TOPIC	Development Department Monthly Report
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Stephen Hunt

Summary

Development Department activities for November 2024 report

Highlights

VRT Strategic Plan: Goal 1 – Demonstrate responsible stewardship of public resources

Performance Based Decision-making

- **FY2025-FY2029 Transportation Development Plan** – After completing the FY2025 budget build, staff transitioned to completing the FY2025-2029 Transportation Development Plan. This plan will look out to FY2029 and make revenue and expense projections. These projections and the associate projects will guide future budget development discussions.

VRT Strategic Plan: Goal 2 – Increase Ridership and Revenue

Planning

- **FY2024 Service Changes** – Staff has begun reviewing ridership performance of the FY2024 service changes and identified areas that would benefit from community awareness and promotions. Staff also will identify any issues with stop spacing and utilization that could lead to amenity improvements or changes to stop locations.
- **Bus Stop Improvements** – Phase 2 of the Bus Stop Inventory will begin this fall. Creative Outdoor Advertising (COA) benches have been inventoried and storage space being organized for their arrival at Happy Day Transit Center. The license agreement with City of Boise for bus stops is being updated to allow scooter corrals for Lime scooter parking and advertising on bike racks.
- **FlixBus Lease** –VRT and Flix legal teams have reviewed the lease contracts. The lease agreement is currently on hold until Flixbus is able to secure a layover location in Salt Lake City and restore direct connections between Salt Lake and Boise.
- **Nampa – Caldwell Corridor TOD Study** – HDR, the consultant, has continued laying the groundwork for the project. They have identified stakeholders and held initial meetings. Staff and consultants are holding regular project meetings.
- **Valley Connect 3.0** – Jacobs and staff held the first steering committee meeting, drafted goals and objectives, collected draft peer agency information, drafted transit network scenarios and began planning November steering committee meeting.

Mobility Integration

- **Parking Day and Open Streets** – Staff completed successful Parking Day and Open Streets events, together engaging with thousands of individuals
- **VRT Lyft Service** – Staff reinstated the temporary VRT Lyft service on Warm Springs/Parkcenter to mitigate on-going construction impacts on Warm Springs Avenue
- **Micromobility/Lime** – Staff continues work with Lime to develop micromobility discounts for City Go members.
- **Reduced Fare Verification** – Staff is researching reduced fare verification processes and developed a draft proposal
- **Safe Routes to School (SR2S)** – staff are continuing bike rodeos and student outreach/engagement

VRT Strategic Plan: Goal 3 - Build Institutional and Regional Capacity

Regional Capital Enhancements

- **Orchard Facility Master Plan Implementation** – Consultants and staff began installation of new depot chargers to replace faulty Proterra chargers and expand charging capacity for additional buses.
- **Happy Day Transit Center Upgrades (HDTC)** – Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) replacement needs have been identified but all construction/improvement activities are on hold until local funding can be identified. HVAC conditions are critical to ongoing operations. Because HDTC office space could become unusable VRT has begun preparing contingency plans for what could happen if local funding is not available.
- **Main Street Station (MSS)** – Consultants and staff completed early construction activities at Main Street Station, including moving HVAC equipment and coordinating with Idaho Power in preparation for installation of on-route charging equipment.

VRT staff completed permitting with the City of Boise for MSS exit ramp gate and completed its installation.

Regional Corridor Planning/Corridor Capital Investments

- **State Street Corridor Projects**
 - VRT and FTA continue to work on finalizing Rebuilding America's Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) paper grant agreement. Further planning design activities are on hold until RAISE funds are available and/or rebalanced. State Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds complete their transfer from Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) to FTA.
 - 23rd and 27th and State Street activities are currently on hold for release of RAISE funding.
 - VRT staff continued coordination activity efforts to cover the Boise Valley Canal from Saxton to Bogart on State Street. This is a combined effort with ITD, ACHD, City of Boise, and CCDC to prepare the right of way for entitled developments and future projects. The canal closure is a key milestone for the RAISE projects at



- Saxton and State as well as to advance the design at Bogart and State.
- VRT staff and contractors continue to coordinate construction activities at State and 18th with Ada County Highway District (ACHD). Construction began July 17 and experienced several delays. It is currently planned for re-opening by mid-November.
 - VRT staff and the technical team continue to push updates to the State Street Traffic and Operation Plan (TTOP) through partner agencies approval process.
 - **Bus Stop Improvements**
 - VRT staff continues to work with the FTA to complete NEPA review of new stops associated with the FY2024 service change. Temporary stops will be used until the NEPA is complete.

More Information

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TOPIC	Finance and Administration Activity Report
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Cameron Wells, Chief Financial Officer

Summary

This memo provided an update on the accomplishments of the Finance Department.

Highlights

Budget/Finance

- The FY2025 budget has been approved and is uploaded to the new ERP system.
- Finance staff prepare for the fiscal year-end audit.
- The CFO has been working with the local funding partners for their FY2025 cooperative agreements.
- The CFO is working with the Communications Director to explore implementing Oracle’s customer experience module as well to streamline processes between the Communications Department and the Finance Department.

Grant Management

- Grants and Compliance Administrator is working on the following:
 - FTA grant applications
 - PNWER subrecipient agreement
 - Active grant revisions/amendments
 - FY2025 Project funding based on approved budget
 - Federal grant reconciling
 - Grants administrator attended a finance and grant training held by FTA Region 10 staff

Procurement

- Procurement and Contracts Specialist is working on:
 - Consulting Service for Transit Operating Contract
 - Preparations for FY2025 procurements
 - Procurement Specialist attended a procurement training held by FTA Region 10 staff

For detailed information, contact:

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TOPIC	Information Technology Monthly Report
DATE	November 19, 2024
STAFF MEMBER	Brad Alvaro

Summary

This memo provides an update on the accomplishments of the Information Technology Department and the status of the IT related projects and services.

Projects

- Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system: Continue working with FourthSquare for minor production support issues and troubleshooting.
- Oracle Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system: Worked with Avail (Fleetnet – legacy finance system) and FourthSquare on finalizing asset management data for Oracle. Continue to work with RF-Smart for new barcoding system that integrates with Oracle Cloud.
- FY2024 Service Changes. Modified bus stops and routes in General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) and bus head signs.

Support Services

- Completed computer replacement for FY24
- Continued data conversion for the new Oracle Enterprise Asset Management System (EAM)
- Help Desk resolved 104 of 140 tickets received for September
- Migrated Orchard and Happy Day server to new equipment
- Continue support and integration with FY2024 Service Change Programming
- Assisted with EAM implementation for FuelMaster and RF-Smart (barcoding)
- Implemented Hyde Park supplemental service

More Information

For detailed information, contact:

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TOPIC	Communications & Engagement Update
DATE	November 19
STAFF MEMBER	Jason Rose

Summary

This memo provides updates on current and future communications, engagement, and marketing efforts.

Highlights

The Communications & Engagement Staff is preparing for the fall outreach season, which includes engagement with school partners, fall events, parades, travel training, and more. This also has included minor service updates in August, September, and October.

We have been working closely with our marketing consultant on branding updates, which include onboard signage (standard car card posters, ongoing infotainment, farebox decals, etc.), environmental signage (large displays at major transfer points, transit center banners, etc.), and updates to the website following the previously reported UI/UX review (especially the homepage and route pages).

The awareness campaign, Let’s Ride, continues and features elements such as digital video, social media advertising, free ride promotions, physical advertising, a bus wrap, shelter wraps, new displays at Main Street Station, and an updated Boise Airport display.

We are also hiring for a Mobility Engagement Manager. Reporting to the Communications Director, the Mobility Education Manager is responsible for training the public and partners on accessing transportation services in the region. The Mobility Education Manager will provide travel education and trip planning across modes for groups and partners, create and host travel education events and experiences, manage material distribution, and build an ambassador program.

For detailed information, contact: Jason Rose, Communications Director, jrose@ridevrt.org, (208)803-5183