



## SUMMARY

# Idaho 44 Corridor Preservation Study February 2009 Open Houses



Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho  
Idaho Transportation Department District 3



Prepared by RBCI

## **Table of Contents**

---

Introduction.....	3
Preparation .....	4
Open House Format .....	4
Notification .....	5
Summary of Comments .....	6
Eagle Open House.....	6
Middleton Open House.....	11
Appendix.....	16

---

## Introduction

---

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) hosted public open houses on Feb. 11 and 12, 2009 to receive input on the Idaho 44 Corridor Preservation Study.

The purpose of the open houses was to provide the public with an opportunity to:

- Receive a study update, learn the next steps, and how to participate.
- Review and give input on potential north, south and existing route options for Idaho 44.
- Review and comment on criteria that will be used to screen (evaluate) route options.
- Provide additional comments.

The open houses were the third in a series of public involvement opportunities for this study. Public input will help ITD and COMPASS make critical decisions about the future design of Idaho 44 and the role of the corridor in the regional transportation system. The highway runs from the city of Eagle, through the downtown areas of Star and Middleton, and ends at Interstate 84 in Canyon County. It is one of only three east/west highways carrying traffic between Boise and Caldwell.

The completed study will include:

- List of needed improvements within this corridor.
- How much right-of-way is necessary to improve the corridor.
- An approved environmental document.
- An access management plan that will identify the number of locations and driveways and intersections on Idaho 44.

---

## Preparation

---

The Idaho 44 corridor is approximately 15 miles long. Open houses were scheduled in two locations for the convenience of attendees.

- The Feb. 11 open house was held at Eagle City Hall, 660 E. Civic Dr. in Eagle, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- The February 12 open house was held at the Middleton Fine Arts Building, 115 W. Main St. in Middleton, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

In preparation for the events, a detailed open house plan was created that outlined the:

- Format of the open houses.
- Notification.
- Displays and materials needed.
- Questions that would be asked on the comment forms.
- Ways public input would be used in the decision-making process.
- Deadlines for each step.

Open house staff included representatives from ITD and COMPASS; the cities of Eagle, Middleton and Star; URS Washington Division; Parametrix; Bionomics and RBCI.

---

## Open House Format

---

Attendees were encouraged to drop in any time between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Upon arrival, participants were greeted and given a brief explanation of the open house format.

Informational display stations were placed throughout the room and staffed by technical experts. In addition, five large maps were placed on tables in the back of the room. Each map had a corresponding comment sheet.

Attendees were directed to review the maps, ask questions of study experts, and fill out a comment sheet for any and all segments relevant to them. Every participant received a general comment sheet and was encouraged to give input.

---

## Notification

---

Notification for these open houses occurred in several ways:

- **Postcard** – A postcard was produced that included the open house dates along with study information. The postcard was mailed to nearly 15,717 people. Of those, 14,500 were delivered by mail carrier route to people who live and work along the corridor. The other 1,200 were sent to a database that included property owners, Corridor Preservation Committee members, developers, agencies and others who have expressed an interest in this project. (*see Appendix*)
- **E-mail notification** – COMPASS sent an electronic version of the postcard to its *Communities in Motion* database of 1,500 people.
- **Media** – A media release about the open houses was sent the week before the open house. (*see Appendix*)
- **Newspaper display ads** – A display ad ran in The Idaho Statesman, the Idaho Press-Tribune, the Valley Times and the Eagle Independent the week of Feb. 8. (*see Appendix*)
- **Web site** – Open house notification was placed on the Idaho Transportation Department home page ([www.itd.idaho.gov](http://www.itd.idaho.gov)) and on the study Web page ([www.itd.idaho.gov](http://www.itd.idaho.gov), click on Projects, click on Southwest Idaho, click on Idaho 44 Corridor Preservation Study).
- **Study partners' Web sites** – Open house notification was sent to COMPASS, Canyon County, city of Eagle, city of Middleton, and city of Star to be placed on their homepages.
- **Sandwich boards** – Sandwich boards notifying motorists about the open houses were placed in eight locations along the corridor.

---



## Summary of Comments



---

In all, there were 201 attendees at the Idaho 44 Corridor Preservation Study open houses and 175 comment forms were received. Comment forms were available for general and targeted comments for the five segments of Idaho 44. Everyone received a general comment form, but attendees were directed to select targeted comment forms based on corridor segments.

The following summary is a general overview of the documented comments and represents the main themes and opinions expressed by the public. It is not intended to be statistically reliable. A verbatim transcription of comments is included in the Appendix.

---

### Eagle Open House Comments Feb. 11, 2009

In all, 68 returned comment sheets at the Eagle open house.

- 22 returned a general comment sheet.
- 6 returned a Segment 1 comment sheet.
- 9 returned a Segment 2 comment sheet.
- 5 returned a Segment 3 comment sheet.
- 9 returned a Segment 4 comment sheet.
- 17 returned a Segment 5 comment sheet.

#### GENERAL COMMENT SHEET

**1. The Idaho Transportation Department will be evaluating (screening) many route options to improve the Idaho 44 corridor. Please check the questions that are most important to you.**

Seventeen responded to this question. Many checked multiple categories.

In order of frequency, respondents checked the following categories:

Is the route consistent with regional, city and county planning documents? (9)

How much right-of-way may be needed to construct the route? (8)

What impacts would a route have on:

- Homes and businesses.

- Wetlands. (5)
- Parks and recreation areas. (4)
- Cultural sites. (3)
- Other (schools, north-south access). (2)
- Hazardous material sites. (1)

---

## **2. Are there other issues that you would like ITD to consider when evaluating options?**

---

Most of the 22 responses to this question raised issues to consider. Of these, 20 responses suggested specific improvements. The most often-repeated improvements were:

- Provide more public transportation options: cycling options, light rail, plan pedestrian and bike safety improvements.
- If possible, build a route around downtown areas (Star and Middleton).
- Safety and traffic signals for safety, plan well for access points.

---

## **3. Additional comments**

---

There were nine responses to this question. Comments included:

- Bike paths and walking paths are a must.
- Improved transportation alternatives (buses, light rail) need to be considered in a transit corridor; look ahead to the future.
- Traffic lights need to be adequate for safety. Plan signal spacing, look at u-turns.

---

## **SEGMENT-SPECIFIC COMMENT SHEETS**

The following questions were repeated for each of the five segments.

1. North route option: Do you have any issues or concerns with this option? Have we missed anything?
2. Existing route option: Do you have any issues or concerns with this option? Have we missed anything?
3. South route option: Do you have any issues or concerns with this option? Have we missed anything?
4. Is there another option you would like ITD to consider? Why?
5. Additional comments

---

**Segment 1: I-84 to Canyon Lane**

---

Six returned a comment sheet about Segment 1. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Three of the six commented on the north option.** One person had no issues or concerns. The other two comments gave concerns:
  - No need to divert the route.
  - Private homes and land on the proposed route would be an issue.
2. **Five of the six commented on the existing option.** Frequent comments included:
  - This is the best option.
  - All options must allow for easy access for cyclists.
3. **Five of the six commented on the south option.** Frequent comments included:
  - Stay off the river, preserve the greenbelt, no need to divert this route.
  - This route would cause problems for cyclists that use this area.
4. **No one identified another option.**
5. **No one gave additional comments.**

---

**Segment 2: Canyon Lane to Duff Lane**

---

Nine returned a comment sheet about Segment 2. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Six of the nine commented on the north option.** Frequent comments included:
  - Not a good option; goes through too many properties.
  - Access is a problem.
2. **Seven of the nine commented on the existing option.** Frequent comments included:
  - Reduce impacts to businesses (bypass downtowns).
  - Route could negatively affect Middleton.
  - Need an alternate route to expedite east-west traffic.
3. **All nine commented on the south option.** All nine seemed to favor the route. Comments included:
  - Best choice so far, viable.
  - Stay off the river.
  - Would prefer as little development as possible.
4. **No one identified another option.**

5. **One gave additional comments**, saying the south option was the best.

---

**Segment 3: Duff Lane to Kingsbury Road**

---

Five returned a comment sheet about Segment 3. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Four of the five commented on the north option.** One person thought it was the best option. Three of the four disliked the option for the following reasons:
  - No need to divert the route (2).
  - Access management would be a problem.
2. **Four of the five commented on the existing option** and disagreed whether it was the best. Two said it was the best. The other two disliked the option for the following reasons:
  - Too congested.
  - Access would be a problem.
3. **Four of the five commented on the south option.** All four disagreed with the route. Comments included:
  - Too many environmental impacts; need to discourage development.
  - No need to divert this route and it would be too expensive.
4. **Two of the five commented on another option**, saying there was no other option.
5. **One of the five gave additional comments**, including:
  - All routes seem equivalent.
  - Minimize stop lights; minimize curb cuts for every property owner.
  - Add more mass transit.

---

**Segment 4: Kingsbury Road to Idaho 16**

---

Nine people returned comment sheets about Segment 4. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Six of the nine commented on the north option.** Two supported the option. Four thought it was not a good option for the following reasons:
  - Major bike route.
  - No better than existing route and will be expensive.
  - Access management would be a problem.
  - Fewer problems with land that is already developed.
2. **Six of the nine commented on the existing option** and disagreed whether it was the best. Three said it was the best. The other three disliked the option for the following reasons:
  - Too congested.
  - Access would be a problem.

- Would kill any hopes of Star Economic Development Committee has been working on to bring businesses to town.
3. **All nine commented on the south option.** All were in agreement against the route. Comments included:
    - Too many environmental impacts with the river.
    - Need to discourage development.
    - Route would be too expensive.
  4. **No one identified another route option.**
  5. **One gave additional comments.** The Star Chamber, local newspaper and Star Economic Development Committee voiced support for the north route option, and asked for a quick decision and notification.

---

### **Segment 5: Idaho 16 to Ballantyne Lane**

---

Seventeen returned comments about Segment 5. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Nine of the 17 commented on the north option.** Respondents were almost all against this route. Seven respondents thought it was not a good option. One said it was the best; one was neutral. Comments included:
  - It would impact too many homes and people.
  - Waste of money.
  - Best option; more economically feasible.
2. **Sixteen of the 17 commented on the existing option.** Fifteen agreed it was the best option. One said it would involve too much traffic and the other was concerned with their property in light of this option. Other comments included:
  - Best route; most logical.
  - No reason to move route; just widen it.
  - Too many trucks and traffic.
3. **Twelve of the 17 commented on the south option.** Most were in agreement. Comments included:
  - Too many environmental impacts with the river.
  - Need to discourage development.
  - Route would be too expensive.
4. **Two of the 17 commented on another option.** One said there was no other option. The other wanted stoplights and wildlife crossings to be considered.
5. **Two of the 17 gave additional comments.** Add more mass transit options and manage access (minimize stop lights and access points).

---

## Middleton Open House Comments

### Feb. 12, 2009

In all, 107 returned comment sheets at the Middleton open house.

- 34 returned a general comment sheet.
- 17 returned a Segment 1 comment sheet.
- 20 returned a Segment 2 comment sheet.
- 14 returned a Segment 3 comment sheet.
- 11 returned a Segment 4 comment sheet.
- 11 returned a Segment 5 comment sheet.

### GENERAL COMMENT SHEET

**1. The Idaho Transportation Department will be evaluating (screening) many route options to improve the Idaho 44 corridor. Please check the questions that are most important to you:**

Twenty-three responded to this question. Many checked multiple categories.

In order of frequency, respondents checked the following categories:

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| What impacts would a route have on homes and businesses?                   | (18) |
| How much right-of-way may be needed to construct the route?                | (13) |
| What impacts would a route have on wetlands?                               | (8)  |
| Other: animals, river corridor, cycling, etc.                              | (8)  |
| Is the route consistent with regional, city and county planning documents? | (6)  |
| What impacts would a route have on:  |      |
| ▪ Parks and recreation areas.  | (4)  |
| ▪ Cultural sites.  | (3)  |
| ▪ Hazardous material sites.  | (2)  |

**2. Are there other issues that you would like ITD to consider when evaluating options?**

Most of 25 responses to this question raised issues to consider. All responses suggested specific improvements. The most often repeated improvements were:

- Consider cost.
- Don't cross the river so many times.
- Stay away from homes, subdivisions.

---

### 3. Additional comments

---

There were nine responses to this question. The most often-repeated comments were:

- Too many river crossings.
- South routes would work best around the first three segments.

---

### SEGMENT-SPECIFIC COMMENT SHEETS

The following questions were repeated for each of the five segments.

1. North route option: Do you have any issues or concerns with this option?  
Have we missed anything?
2. Existing route option: Do you have any issues or concerns with this option?  
Have we missed anything?
3. South route option: Do you have any issues or concerns with this option?  
Have we missed anything?
4. Is there another option you would like ITD to consider? Why?
5. Additional comments

---

#### Segment 1: I-84 to Canyon Lane

---

Seventeen people returned comments about Segment 1. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Eight of the 17 commented on the north option.** Most did not like the route. Comments included:
  - Houses are too close to the road.
  - Route does not connect or work with topography.
  - Purple Sage Rd. would go through with least complications.
2. **Fifteen of the 17 commented on the existing option.** Eight people were in favor of this route. Two people did not like it. Other comments could not be categorized. Comments included:
  - This is the best option.
  - Widen the road; avoid land-locking properties.
3. **Seven of the 17 commented on the south option.** Comments included:
  - Route would impact homes and other property.
  - Not cost-effective.

- Most convenient route.
4. **Five of the 17 commented on another option.** Comments included:
    - Extend two areas: Idaho 44 to U.S. 20/26, and Emmett Road. Would provide local access to Caldwell and the U.S. 20/26 area.
    - Maintain present routes.
  5. **One of the 17 gave an additional comment**, which supported making U.S. 20/26 a major east-west route and improving Idaho 44.

---

### **Segment 2: Canyon Lane to Duff Lane**

---

Twenty returned comments about Segment 2. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Fourteen of the 20 commented on the north option.** The majority were against the route. Comments included:
  - Route is the most costly, not a good option.
  - Too much impact on area homes.
  - Route would ruin good farm ground.
  - Access is a problem.
2. **Seven of the 20 commented on the existing option.** Most thought this was the best option. Comments included:
  - This is the best option.
  - Widen Idaho 44.
  - Option is too expensive.
  - Something needs to be done, as traffic already backs up.
3. **Eighteen of the 20 commented on the south option**, and 11 seemed to favor the route. However, others had concerns. Comments included:
  - Best choice so far; viable.
  - What I say won't make a difference.
  - Concerns with wetlands, wildlife.
  - Costly; uses valuable farmland.
4. **Five of the 20 commented on another option.** Comments included:
  - Need to use existing routes except through Middleton.
  - What about a combination of alternatives.
5. **Three of the 20 gave additional comments**, which included:
  - Be consistent no matter what option is chosen.
  - Noise abatement will be needed; need a bypass.
  - Existing route is best.

---

### **Segment 3: Duff Lane to Kingsbury Road**

---

Fourteen returned comments about Segment 3. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Eight of the 14 commented on the north option.** Two people had questions about the route. One person did not respond with data. Five people did not favor this option for the following reasons:
  - Too much development already on this route; subdivisions and possible parcel splits.
  - Cost is too high.
  - Noise impacts.
  - Wetlands.
  - Waste of good farmland.
2. **All 14 commented on the existing option.** Of these, 10 liked this option. Four people were concerned about the traffic, existing speed limits, structures and accommodating existing properties. One person was very concerned about losing property. Other comments included:
  - This is the best option.
  - Keep this route; just widen it.
  - Good option, but big impact on businesses.
  - Cost should be reasonable.
3. **Nine of the 14 commented on the south option.** Comments included:
  - Water table is too high (wetlands).
  - Farm ground and irrigation would be affected.
  - Looks best.
  - Not a problem if it doesn't affect corner of Idaho 44 and Duff Lane.
4. **One of the 14 commented on another option,** saying that if the existing route were widened, property should be taken from commercial side and not the residential side.
5. **Two of the 14 gave additional comments,** which included:
  - Feels like our comments don't make a difference.
  - Use ground that is currently there.

---

#### **Segment 4: Kingsbury Road to Idaho 16**

---

Eleven people returned comments about Segment 4. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Seven of the 11 commented on the north option.** Participants seemed split about this option. Comments included:
  - North option #1 is the best option. (2)
  - North option #2 is the best. (2)
  - Others thought this was the best option but did not distinguish between Route 1 or Route 2.

- Not good for Idaho 16 connection.
  - This option ties in best with access through Eagle.
  - Problems with existing school and subdivisions.
  - Coordination with ACHD's study of Floating Feather and Purple Sage.
2. **Eight of the 11 commented on the existing option.** Comments were divided about this option, and included:
    - Feasible, needs widening.
    - Not a good option: already too slow, bottlenecks, air quality.
    - Impact to business.
  3. **Nine of the 11 commented on the south option** and were in agreement against the route. Comments included:
    - Too many environmental impacts with the river, wetlands.
    - Too costly.
  4. **No one gave comments about another option.**
  5. **No one gave additional comments.**

---

#### **Segment 5: Kingsbury Road to Idaho 16**

---

Eleven returned comments about Segment 5. Many commented on multiple route options.

1. **Seven of the 11 commented on the north option.** Nearly all were against the route. Comments included:
  - Route would impact too many homes and people.
  - Too costly.
  - All right; best option.
2. **Nine of the 11 commented on the existing option.** All seemed to agree it was the best option. Comments included:
  - Best route; most logical.
  - No reason to move route; just widen (existing route).
  - Best route to keep; avoid interfering with historic places.
  - Going south would be a joke.
3. **Eight of the 11 commented on the south option** and were in agreement against the route. Comments included:
  - Too many river crossings.
  - Expensive.
  - Unnecessary.
4. **No one identified another option.**
5. **One of the 11 gave additional comments,** saying the existing route made more sense than involving more properties around cities.

---



## Appendix



---

- Transcription of comments
- Transcription of sign-ins
- Invitation
- News release
- Newspaper display ad
- Display boards
- Comment forms
- Open house photos