

# U.S. 20/26 Corridor Preservation Study Summary of Public Open Houses May 2007

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# Table of Contents

Summary at a glance .....	3
Open house preparation and format.....	4
Notification.....	5
Summary of comments .....	6
Transcribed comments .....	9
Transcription of sign-ins .....	30
Appendix.....	35

## Summary at a glance

ITD and COMPASS hosted public meetings May 30 and 31 to give stakeholders an update on the U.S. 20/26 Corridor Preservation Study. This summary gives a brief overview of the meetings and what ITD and COMPASS heard from the public.

Approximately 218 people attended the meetings, and 58 completed comment sheets. Meeting attendees were asked to comment on a proposed access management plan for the west, middle and east segments; environmental issues for the entire corridor; and three potential alignments for the middle segment.

**Comments varied widely, and ITD and COMPASS did not hear an overall mandate from the public.** Frequent comments included the following themes:

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### OVERALL

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**Save right-of-way for future use.**

**Prioritize speed on the future roadway.**

**Reduce impacts to homeowners.**

- Noise impact to the east segment and overall corridor was a frequent concern.
- While comments supported a wider roadway, some asked why 200 feet of right-of-way was necessary.

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### ACCESS

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**Consider signal frequency, traffic flow and speed.**

- The majority said signals were too frequent in the west and middle segments.
- Comments were divided about signal spacing in the east segment.

**Consider surrounding roads.**

- The most frequent response in the environmental issues category was to consider the future circulator system, roundabouts and access to I-84 or the river.
- Comments supported frontage and backage roads on the west segment.

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### ALIGNMENT

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**Prioritize homeowners, power lines, and a straight roadway when evaluating the three alignment options.**

- Comments varied widely on all three alignment options.

- Overall, the centerline option generated the most discussion.

## Open house preparation and format

The purpose of the open houses was to provide the public with an opportunity to learn about the U.S. 20/26 Corridor Preservation Study and give input on:

- Managing access on and off the roadway
- Environmental studies for the corridor
- Roadway alignment and design options

The open houses were located on each end of the 15-mile corridor. The study boundaries are Eagle Road on the east and Interstate 84 in Canyon County on the west.

- The May 30 open house was held at the Friendship Celebration Church, 765 E. Chinden Blvd. in Meridian, from 4-8 p.m.
- The May 31 open house was held at the Thomas Jefferson Charter School, 1209 Adam Smith Avenue in Caldwell, from 4-8 p.m.

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
- Deadlines for each preparation activity

Smaller meetings with property owners occurred on May 30 prior to the public open house. The purpose of the meetings was to allow property owners to have one-on-one interaction with ITD and show possible impacts to their property. The content of the open houses and property owner meetings included:

- Display stations staffed by study experts (*see appendix*)
- Tables for people to complete comment forms (*see appendix*)

The open house included informational display stations staffed by study experts. All attendees were asked to fill out a comment sheet.

## Notification

Notification for the U.S. 20/26 Corridor Preservation Study open houses occurred in several ways. Copies of all materials are included in the appendix.

- **Newsletter**– A newsletter was produced that included open house dates and study information. The newsletter was mailed approximately 15,300 people. Of those, nearly 14,600 were delivered by mail carrier route to people who lived and worked along the corridor. The other 700 were sent to a database of people who had expressed interest in this project.
- **Letters** – Personal letters were sent to Ada and Canyon county property owners inviting them to attend a May 30 meeting with ITD to discuss possible impacts to their property.
- **Media** – Media releases about the study and open houses were sent on May 25 to the Idaho Statesman, Idaho Press-Tribune, KBCI Channel 2, KIVI Channel 6, KTRV Fox 12 and KTVB Channel 7. Coverage about the open houses was included in the Idaho Statesman, KTVB Channel 7 and KTRV Fox 12.
- **Newspaper display ads** – A display ad ran in the following papers:
  - Middleton Gazette on May 11
  - Valley Times on May 21
  - Idaho Business Review on May 21 and 28
  - Star Independent on May 28
  - Idaho Statesman on May 29
  - Idaho Press-Tribune on May 29
- **Web site** – Open house notification was placed on the ITD 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 Get Involved, Southwest Idaho and U.S. 20/26 Corridor Study)
- **Study partners' Web sites** – Open house notification was sent to COMPASS, Ada and Canyon Counties, city of Boise, city of Caldwell, city of Eagle, city of Meridian and city of Nampa to be placed on their Web pages.
- **E-mail** – COMPASS and city of Meridian sent out an e-mail to their databases notifying them of the open houses.
- **Sandwich boards** – Sandwich boards notifying motorists about the open houses were placed at following locations along the corridor one week before the meetings.
  - Star Road
  - Middleton Road
  - Friendship Celebration Church
  - Thomas Jefferson Charter School

## Summary of Comments

ITD and COMPASS received 58 comment sheets at the U.S. 20/26 Corridor Preservation Study open houses on May 30-31, 2007. This summary is a general overview of the documented comments and represents the main themes and opinions expressed by the public. **Comments varied widely, and ITD and COMPASS did not hear a clear mandate from the public.**

This summary is not intended to be statistically reliable. A verbatim transcription is included.

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### 1. Please indicate the part of U.S. 20/26 where you primarily commute or live.

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ITD and COMPASS received 52 responses to this question.

- East (McDermott Road to Eagle Road) – (33)
- Middle (Midland Road to McDermott Road) – (6)
- West (I-84 to Midland Road) – (2)
- More than one, or not applicable – (11)

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### 2. What do you like or dislike about the proposed access management plan?

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#### *EAST Segment – McDermott Road to Eagle Road*

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Of the 36 comments on this segment, the most often-repeated “like” responses included:

- Signals every ½ mile or frequent spacing (7)
- Expanded roadway (5)
- Retaining walls/noise barrier (3)

The most often-repeated “dislike” responses included:

- Too many signals; don’t want it to become another Eagle Road (7)
- Noise impact, or loss of berms that block sound (5)

#### *MIDDLE Segment – Midland Road to McDermott Road*

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Of the 19 comments on this segment, the most often-repeated “like” responses included:

- Multiple lanes (4)
- Plan or save right-of-way for future use (3)

The most often-repeated “dislike” responses included:

- Too many signals (2)
- Eagle Rd. all over again (2)

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### ***WEST Segment – I-84 in Caldwell to Midland Road***

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Of the 15 comments on this segment, the most often-repeated “like” responses included:

- Limited access, or signals every mile (4)
- Protect right-of-way (3)
- Frontage and backage roads to help facilitate traffic (3)

The most often-repeated “dislike” responses included:

- Too many signals. The idea is to move traffic faster. (6)

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### **3. Have we missed any environmental issues or studies?**

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Of the 25 responses to this question, the most often-repeated comments included:

- Consider circulator system; roundabouts; access to I-84 and river (6)
- Noise (6)
- Other comments included concerns about property values, bike lanes or transit, historical views and wildlife.

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### **4. The project team is considering three alignment options for the “middle” segment of U.S. 20/26 from Midland Rd. to McDermott Rd. A no-build is also being considered. Please provide the following information (likes and dislikes) for the three new alignment options.**

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#### ***Option 1: Centerline***

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The 21 comments on this option were varied. “Like” responses included the minimal—or “more fair”—impact to landowners, and the need for six lanes. “Dislike” responses included shifting the power lines and not wanting 100 feet on each side of the centerline.

Seven comment sheets indicated that this was their preferred option through checkmarks, statements or declining to identify likes on any other option.

#### ***Option 2: Shift to the north***

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The 13 comments on this option were varied. “Like” responses included preserving historical views or structures and removing fewer homes. “Dislike” responses included shifting power lines, burdening landowners and making the road out of line with the east and west ends.

One comment sheet indicated that this was the preferred option by declining to identify likes on any other option.

#### ***Option 3: Shift to the south***

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The 11 comments on this option were varied. The most often-repeated “like” response was to keep power lines in place to reduce cost and outages. “Dislike” responses included burdening land owners, adding one mile of “more-spaced” traffic signals, and making the road out of line with the east and west.

Four comment sheets indicated that this was their preferred option through statements or declining to identify likes on any other option.

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## 5. Additional comments:

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ITD and COMPASS received 30 responses to this question. Repeated responses in other sections of comment sheets that did not correlate with specific questions have been included in this list of often-repeated comments:

- Reduce impact on residents in subdivisions (10)
- 20/26 should be expressway, high-speed arterial, or include light rail all the way through (7)
- 200 feet of right-of-way is too much (6)
- Build now or purchase right-of-way now (5)
- Consider widening or moving surrounding roadways now or in the future (5)
- Concerned about safety of specific intersections or driveways (4)
- Sidewalks are unnecessary (3)