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2020 Interagency Working Group (IWG) Annual Program, Usage, and Funding Report for Transportation

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IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

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Interagency Working Group (IWG) Fiscal 2020 Annual Report

Background

Idaho receives approximately \$25.8 million annually from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Idaho received an additional \$27 million in funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Transit providers in the Coeur d'Alene, Lewiston, Boise/Nampa, Pocatello, and Idaho Falls urban areas receive approximately \$13.1 million per year directly from the FTA to operate public transportation within their jurisdictions. These same providers receive approximately \$1.6 million in federal funding indirectly through ITD.

ITD distributes approximately \$11 million of the FTA funds to qualified public transportation service providers throughout the state in rural areas. In addition, the department receives approximately \$1.5 million annually for program administration, statewide planning and training and scholarship opportunities for transit providers.

Idaho Code allows resort communities to assess local option taxes. These taxes are currently being collected in Sun Valley, Coeur d'Alene, Sandpoint, and Ponderay.

While information above describes how FTA funds are distributed to public transportation providers throughout Idaho, the Interagency Working Group (IWG) members receive transportation funding separately through their respective agencies. The IWG is comprised of 13 state agencies specifically tasked to "advise and assist the department (ITD) in analyzing public transportation needs, identifying areas for coordination, and developing strategies for eliminating procedural and regulatory barriers to coordination at the state level."

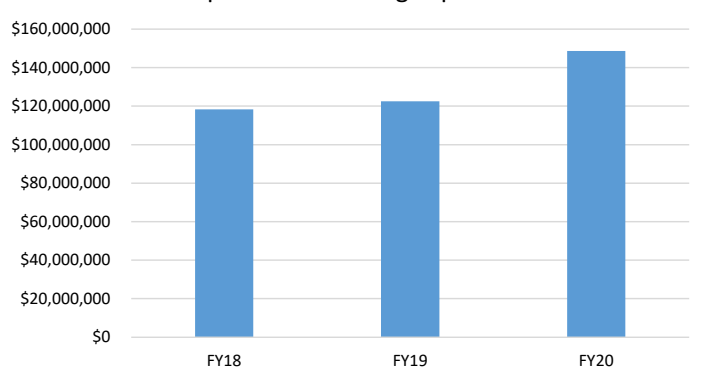
The agencies collect transportation information based on their specific needs. Each agency included in the annual report has a unique transportation role for their clients. Agencies receive some form of funding for transportation with some providing services as a part of their operations while others contract for such services or provide vouchers to their clientele.

FY20 Data

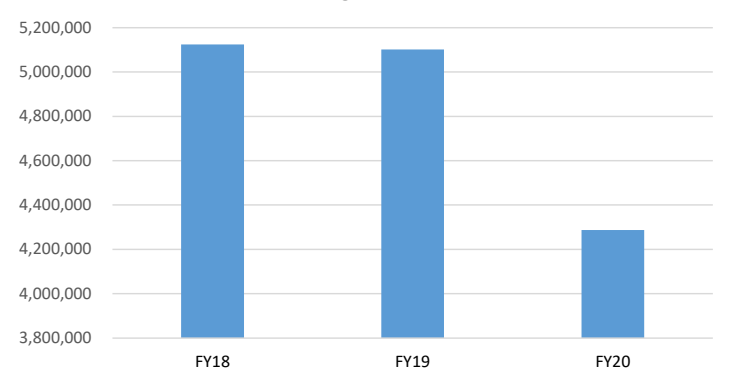
The tables show an increase in funding with a significant decrease in ridership. Providers indicate this is due to service reductions and pandemic-related responses.

This reduced ridership leads to significant challenges for providers by decreasing revenues. Ultimately, these reductions in ridership decrease matching funds which would help improve operations by expanding routes or adding additional hours to services. Additionally, the reduction in local funding limits the opportunities for potential capital investments that transit providers can make to attract more or even keep current riders. To help mitigate this loss of revenue, many providers indicate a desire for state public transportation funds which are eligible for use as "match" for federal funds received from the Federal Transit Administration through ITD.

Transportation Funding Expenditures



Passengers Carried



2020 Goals & Highlights

In an effort to fulfil our commitment to advise and assist the Idaho Transportation Department in analyzing public transportation needs, identifying areas for coordination, and developing strategies for eliminating procedural and regulatory barriers to coordination at the state level, IWG established goals in 2020.

Goal 1:

Identify purpose, structure, and direction of the group so it is more conducive to collaboration and information gathering and do an orientation.

The Idaho Transportation Department, Public Transportation Office (ITD-PT) conducted an orientation with IWG at the June 2020 meeting. ITD-PT also presented the following purpose statement to complete this goal:

“ITD-PT will keep the IWG informed on public transportation programs, initiatives, and projects. ITD will identify specific barriers and challenges facing public transportation, and the IWG will work to recognize areas that members have influence, expertise, or familiarity, and seek to develop strategies to overcome these barriers and challenges.”

Goal 2:

Broaden representation for all districts by the end of 2020.

Over the year, various members on IWG did outreach to identify additional ex-officio members that would be beneficial in aiding the purpose of the group. In December we welcomed our newest member, MaryBeth Frank-Clark with the Nez Perce Tribe who will be representing tribal interests in the group.

Interagency Working Group (IWG)

The Interagency Working Group (IWG) for Public Transportation Services was created in Idaho Statute 40-514 during the 1992 legislative session. The group is specifically tasked to “advise and assist the department [ITD] in analyzing public transportation needs, identifying areas for coordination, and developing strategies for eliminating procedural and regulatory barriers to coordination at the state level”.

In an effort to assist the group in identifying specific detailed work assignments, the Idaho Transportation Department is tasked with three key responsibilities:

- (a) Develop a uniform data collection and reporting system; information from said system shall be submitted annually to the joint finance-appropriations committee of the Idaho legislature; and as public information, it shall also be available upon request;*
- (b) In cooperation with other state agencies and public entities, develop a comprehensive plan for public transportation;*
- (c) Provide assistance to operators of local and regional transportation systems that are consistent with public program objectives of the state plan-*

IWG Member Agencies

- Office of the Governor
- Idaho Transportation Department
- Idaho Department of Health & Welfare
- Idaho Department of Health & Welfare, Division of Medicaid
- Department of Labor
- Idaho Workforce Development Council
- Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Idaho Department of Education
- Head Start Association of Idaho
- Idaho Commission on Aging
- Community Transportation Association of Idaho (CTAI)
- Idaho Division of Veterans Services (Ex-Officio)
- Idaho Department of Commerce (Ex-Officio)

Idaho Transportation Department, Public Transportation Office

The Idaho Transportation Department, Public Transportation (ITD-PT) Office supports public transportation in line with the Department's mission of Your Safety, Your Mobility, Your Economic Opportunity.

ITD-PT utilizes public outreach and involvement with communities to determine the needs throughout the state. Through the use of local coordinated plans and the ITD-PT Statewide Public Transportation Plan strategies have been developed, documented and coordinated on a local and statewide level. Through administration of federal funds allocated to the state alongside the coordination of other funding opportunities, ITD-PT helps identify the financial means to provide public transportation choices for Idaho travelers.

Public transportation provides services to the traveling public with an emphasis on safety to gain and gains them access to travel for employment, shopping, medical care, and social/recreational opportunities. Subsequently, public transportation options placed across Idaho are also a major contributor to the economic development and well-being of the state.

Federal Funding Sources: ITD-PT assists in the administration of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula funding for public transportation programs targeting rural transportation, mobility for the elderly and persons with disabilities, intercity transportation, and commuter options. ITD-PT operates largely out of the following three grants:

5310 Program: Enhances mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations.

5311 Program: Provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas

5311 CARES Program: Provides additional capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

5339 Program: Provides capital assistance to states to support the purchase of vehicles and other capital needs to provide public transportation

State Funding Source:

The Vehicle Investment Program (VIP) provides capital funding prioritized for demand response providers to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses to support the continuation and expansion of public transportation.

Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

Transportation is provided through four main programs: Behavioral Health, Family and Community services, Self-Reliance/Welfare and the Division of Medicaid (next page).

Division of Behavioral Health

This division is comprised of the Children and Adult Mental Health programs, as well as the Substance Use Disorders program. The division provides gas vouchers through the Mental Health programs and provider transportation through the Substance Use Disorder program. The division also administers the state's two psychiatric hospitals, State Hospital North and State Hospital South, for people who have been into the state's custody.

The Division of Behavioral Health target populations include children and youth with serious emotional disturbance, adults with serious and persistent mental illness and adolescents and adults with substance use disorders.

Division of Family and Community services (FACS)

The Child Welfare program provides transportation that supports the following two programs: staff specific positions (client services technicians) to assist children and families for visitation and providing gas vouchers to parents involved in the child protection system. The Navigation program supports families with emergency car repairs needed for job and family sustainability, and gas vouchers through the Emergency Service Grant (ESG).

Division of Welfare (Self-Reliance Program)

Through the Self Reliance programs, vouchers are issued to eligible SNAP participants for buses, cabs, and other transportation services. Eligibility for vouchers is based on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participation which includes criteria such as citizenship/immigration status, income, and resources. In addition, vouchers can be issued through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) programs operated and managed by the Community Action Agencies and the Community Council of Idaho.

Idaho Department of Health & Welfare – Division of Medicaid

Idaho Medicaid covers non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) for eligible program participants. NEMT is a required Medicaid benefit designed to help individuals get to and from medical appointments and services when they have no other available transportation. The program uses a variety of transportation modalities including public transit, private vehicle, shared ride and personal/family member reimbursement.

Transportation and ancillary services for medically necessary long distance/out of state travel are also covered.

Like most states, Idaho Medicaid's NEMT program is administered through a transportation brokerage model. Under this model, the Department of Health and Welfare contracts with a transportation broker who arranges transportation services for Medicaid enrollees in return for a capitated payment.

Ambulance services are also covered by the Medicaid program to provide emergency transportation for program participants. The emergency transportation benefit is managed by the Division of Medicaid.

The Division of Medicaid administers two Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers that allow individuals with assessed institutional level of care needs to receive services in their homes and communities rather than institutions or other isolated settings. Non-medical transportation services are available under both HCBS waivers. Non-Medical Transportation is designed to improve an individual's ability to meaningfully participate within their community.

Idaho Department of Labor

The Department administers the employment security laws of the State of Idaho so it targets the entire workforce. It promotes workforce development and economic security for the citizens of Idaho through labor exchange, unemployment insurance, job training opportunities and labor market information.

Transportation is one of the supportive services provided to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participants. The types of transportation services provided to WIOA participants are: mileage reimbursement, actual fuel cost, public transportation and in some cases automobile repairs.

Transportation expenses may be provided for participants to attend training, conduct out-of-area work search, or relocate for employment. When transportation costs are authorized, the case manager may select from one of the following payment methods: mileage reimbursement, actual fuel cost or public transportation. When making this decision, the case manager should choose the most economical means available that reasonably meets the needs of the client. These funds come out of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a federally funded program that includes transportation reimbursements as one of the supportive services provided.

Allowable transportation costs may also include the costs of a rental vehicle for moving household goods, costs for the rental of an automobile dolly, trailer, or other similar conveyance, actual gasoline costs for rental vehicles or personal vehicles, or reimbursement for gasoline expenses incurred during the relocation.

Local Job Search Fuel Costs: Fuel purchases that are necessary for local job seeking activities are an allowable expense. The WIOA-04 general description section must identify the time frame covered for the fuel purchase.

Public Transportation: If available and appropriate, public transportation may be authorized using the WIOA-04. Again, a brief explanation stating why transportation is necessary for participation must be included in Section I. The WIOA-04 would then be processed as a normal vendor payment or reimbursement to the client.

Participants who attend training outside of their local area may be reimbursed for transportation costs to and from training as well as round-trip travel during school vacation periods and summer /session breaks.¹

¹ WIOA Technical Assistance Guide – Supportive Services and Insurance, pg.-7

Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

There are three transportation options available for participants with developmental disabilities: public transit, natural support, and Medicaid.

Medicaid services include: physical and occupational therapy, housing and living supports, chore services, employment support, environmental modifications, home delivered meals, nursing services, respite care, rehabilitative supports, family education, crisis intervention, and in-school supports, to name a few.

Developmental disabilities are defined as a chronic disability of a person which appears younger than 22 years of age and:

- Is attributable to an impairment, such as an intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or other condition found to be closely related to or similar to one of these impairments that requires similar treatment or services, or is attributable to dyslexia resulting from such impairments.
- Results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, or economic self-sufficiency.
- Reflects the needs for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary or generic care, treatment or other services which are of life-long or extended duration and individually planned and coordinated.

Non-Medical Transportation is offered in order to enable waiver participants to gain access to community services and resources. This service is offered in addition to medical transportation required under 42 CFR 440.431.53 and transportation services offered under the State Plan, defined at 42 CFR 440.170(a). Whenever possible, family, neighbors, friends, or community agencies which can provide this service without charge or public transit providers will be utilized.

In accordance with Section 39-5103(4), Idaho Code, in-home financial assistance monies allocated through Medicaid programs may be used for transportation, such as to and from doctor's offices, clinics or training centers.²

² <http://www.icdd.idaho.gov/pdf/Legislative%20Advocacy/Final%20Legislative%20Report%20April%2013%202011.pdf>

Idaho Division of Vocation Rehabilitation

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) provides vouchers and reimbursements for transportation related expenses based on the participant's Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Reimbursements include:

Public conveyance: Actual cost of service for bus or van

Private vehicle: Not to exceed \$60 maximum per month within a 20 mile radius or up to a maximum of \$200 per month outside the 20 mile radius

Taxi Services: In areas without public conveyance, IDVR will not exceed \$60 maximum per month

Car Repairs: Maximum \$300 per case (except for cost of reasonable accommodation for disability). IDVR will not pay for customary general car maintenance (i.e. oil changes, tire rotations, etc.)

Auto Insurance: Maximum six (6) months of auto insurance. IDVR will only pay necessary auto insurance required to cover the VR customer as a vehicle operator.

Vehicle Purchase: Maximum expense cannot exceed \$5,000 and cannot purchase new vehicles

- Vehicle purchase may be provided if it is not the sole vocational rehabilitation service needed for the customer to return to work or to achieve an employment outcome. The vehicle purchased will be only at a level to meet the vocational rehabilitation need of the customer. If the customer desires a vehicle above and beyond the level of vehicle needed to meet the vocational rehabilitation need they will be required to pay the cost difference between the two. This amount would not count towards the customer's financial participation requirements and IDVR will not be party to associated financial obligations.
- Purchase of vehicles for a customer is allowable only when the occupation of the customer will require a vehicle as occupational equipment. The agency may not purchase a vehicle for a routine need for transportation to and from a place of employment.

When IDVR has a joint case with another VR agency (Veterans Administration, Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation, Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, or another state VR agency) the sharing of case cost shall be done in a way that multiple agencies are not paying for the same service.³

IDVR also reimburses participants for bicycle purchases as a method of transportation to and from work.

³ Field Services policy manual pg. 50-62

Idaho Department of Education

The goal of Student Transportation is to provide eligible Idaho students with safe, effective, and efficient transportation to and from school in accordance with federal and state mandates. The Idaho State Department of Education Student Transportation department gives expertise and technical assistance to districts and charter schools regarding school bus maintenance, operations, and financial reimbursement.

It is the responsibility of Student Transportation to provide these services economically and in accordance with sound management policies and procedures. Student Transportation is an integral part of the total educational system, contributing significantly to the learning process by providing safe and dependable transportation.

Every school year, about 109,000 of Idaho's children rely on bus services to attend school. Every school day, more than 3,400 buses travel more than a total of 25 million miles to transport students to and from home to ensure their participation in academic programs. Transportation programs are operated by 112 Idaho school districts, 23 charter schools, and 3 in-lieu schools.

The State Department of Education provides reimbursement for transporting eligible students to and from public schools.

Opportunities: Currently the shortage of trained school bus drivers is a barrier to all student transportation programs throughout the state.

**While the Department of Education does not provide "Public Transportation", they are a member agency per Idaho Code 40-514 and provide beneficial information regarding transportation in Idaho.*

Head Start Association of Idaho

Head Start has 13 programs throughout the state of Idaho serving children from low- income households. They offer prenatal services, child development and education, health and nutrition services, family development, self-sufficiency, and opportunities for parental involvement.

As a rule, families must have an income at or below the federal poverty level to qualify for Head Start/Early Head Start services (HS/EHS). At least 10% of the program's enrollment must be made up of children with disabilities. In addition, up to 10% of the slots may be over-income and are often used for children with disabilities. Those with the highest needs are enrolled first and other eligible children are placed on a wait list for future openings.

Funding: Federal funding for Idaho's HS/EHS programs comes directly from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Head Start to local grantees. They may be community agencies, non-profits, colleges, school districts, migrant and seasonal, or tribal programs. This federal-to-local model allows more funding to go directly to program services. Each program must match federal funds received with 20% from local in-kind goods, services, volunteer time or non-federal funds.

Services: Programs use information from many sources when deciding which service model options to offer, the location of centers, and other activities that will support and interest families. The policy council and the board work with staff to design services that meet the local community needs and allocate funds in the most effective manner. The three services offered are center-based, combination model, and home-based. ⁴

Depending on the location, each of the 13 programs has a different budget that allows for more or less transportation services depending on the needs in that area. Services are specifically tailored to meet the needs of Head Start communities and families seeking transportation assistance.

⁴ <http://www.idahoheadstartassoc.net/Documents/H.S.%20Presentation%20GENERAL.pdf>

Idaho Commission on Aging

The Idaho Commission on Aging's (ICOA) vision is "To provide an informative, visible, reliable and easily accessible support system for aging Idahoans."⁵ The Older Americans Act (OAA) authorizes the state to designate a State Unit on Aging (SUA) to administer federal programs in Idaho.

ICOA manages several supportive services in addition to transportation, including:

- Home-Delivered Meals
- Congregate Meals
- Homemaker
- Chore
- Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
- Adult protective Services
- Senior Employment
- Legal Assistance
- National Family Caregiver Support
- Information and Assistance

Transportation services are designed to transport persons 60 years of age and over to and from social service agencies, medical and health care services, meal programs, places of employment, senior centers, shopping, community functions, and adult day care facilities for the purpose of applying for or receiving services.⁶ The goal is to promote independent living, prevent institutionalization, and reduce social isolation that otherwise negatively impacts a person's ability to age independently in their community of choice.

Service is available to those who do not have a feasible means of transportation or who are unable to use existing public transportation options. The program focusses on the needs of populations at-risk for institutionalization including those living alone, living in rural counties, of ethnic/racial minority, and those living in poverty.⁷ Personal assistance for those with limited physical mobility is provided.

These services include door-to-door, fixed route, scheduled, and rideshare services. According to Idaho Statute 67-5008, transportation grants or contracts can be used for operating expenses only.⁸

The ICOA contracts with six geographically located Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), who provide services defined in the Older Americans Act. In addition to transportation, the AAAs also provide the local implementation of ICOA's other programs.

⁵ ICOA 2020 Annual Report (p. 49), http://aging.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ICOA_Annual-Report_SFY2020_Final.pdf

⁶ ICOA 2020 Annual Report p. 12

⁷ ICOA 2020 Annual Report (At a Glance)

⁸ Idaho State Code <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title67/t67ch50/sect67-5007/>

Community Transportation Association of Idaho

Community Transportation Association of Idaho (CTAI) is an independent 501(c)6 nonprofit organization founded in 1979 that works to empower individuals and communities to develop the transportation systems they need for economic vitality and improved quality of life.

Vision: A safe, convenient multimodal transportation network that promotes vibrant, healthy and economically sustainable communities in Idaho.

CTAI Board of Directors encompasses eleven positions for statewide representation that includes public and private transportation agencies and advocates.

CTAI has been advocating on behalf of Idahoans for the past 40 years to improve both public transportation and active transportation options throughout the state.

CTAI represents the voice of local citizens, promotes the interests of member organizations, and supports giving local communities the tools they need to fund the transportation options that get individuals from point A to point B.

Goal 1: Develop a public education and awareness program that encourages individuals and communities to develop transportation options

Goal 2: Develop a public policy and advocacy program that promotes transportation options

Goal 3: Build the institutional and resource capacity of the statewide public transportation system through collaboration, coordination and technical assistance

2020 Accomplishments:

CTAI has released a Request or Proposal (RFP) for transit technology by firms qualified to implement and support fixed-route and demand response Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) solutions to be deployed throughout the state of Idaho. CTAI has worked closely with public transportation systems to develop the RFP with specific agency needs and funding opportunities through the Idaho Transportation Department.

Idaho Division of Veteran Services

Veteran Services assists and advocates for Idaho veterans and their families. Transportation services are limited, but are available through Disabled American Veterans, US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals, Idaho State Veterans Homes, and miscellaneous community transportation providers.

Disabled American Veterans: The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) van provides a transportation service to disabled veterans utilizing volunteer drivers. The DAV operates a fleet of vehicles around the state to provide free transportation to VA medical facilities for injured and ill veterans. While DAV units are located at the VA Medical Centers they are their own separate service. Their contact numbers are:

- Treasure Valley: (208) 422-1000 x 7555
- Northern Idaho: (800) 325-7940 x-7019
- Eastern Idaho: (801) 582-1565 x- 2003

VA Hospitals and Homes: In addition to state owned buses at the veteran homes providing transportation to veteran residents, the VA also has a number of transportation programs.

The VA is authorized to provide eligible veterans and other beneficiaries mileage reimbursement, common carrier (plane, train, bus, taxi, light rail etc.), or when medically indicated "special mode" (ambulance, wheelchair van) transport for travel to and from VA, or VA authorized non-VA health examination, treatment, or care. The VA's veterans Transportation Program (VTP) offers veterans many travel solutions to and from their VA health care facilities.

In Idaho, this program is accessible through the following contacts:

- In the Treasure Valley, veterans can contact the Veteran Transportation Coordinator (VTS) at (208)4 22-1000 x 7356 to schedule a ride – or the Travel Office at (208) 422-1076.
- In Eastern Idaho, veterans can contact the VTS at (800) 613-4012 ext. 2003 or ext. 1027.
- In Northern Idaho, veterans can contact their VTS at (509) 434-7537.

Visit <https://www.va.gov/HEALTHBENEFITS/vtp/> for more information regarding VTP.

Miscellaneous Community Transportation Providers: In the Treasure Valley, there are additional transportation resources provided through local community assets.

The Supportive Housing and Innovative Partnerships joined with Valley Regional Transit to provide free curb-to-curb transportation to wheelchair bound veterans in the Treasure Valley, accessible at (208) 573-2584.

The GoRide Mobility program provides low-cost transportation services (\$3 per 8 miles of travel) to wheelchair-bound veterans in Ada and Canyon counties not served by ValleyRide buses. This program will expand to other counties in the future. More information is available at (208) 345-7433.

ACCESS transportation service, operated by ValleyRide, is available to people who are unable to utilize the bus system because of a disability. ACCESS services the cities of Boise, Garden City, Nampa and Caldwell. Once approved, ACCESS fares are \$2 per one-way trip for each passenger and for each guest. More information can be found at: <http://valleyride.org/special-services/paratransit/>

Opportunities: Participation in transportation programs and funding available through other organizations, mainly, the Disabled American Veterans and the US Department of Veterans Affairs

Idaho Department of Commerce

The Idaho Department of Commerce is the lead economic development agency for the State of Idaho. The agency's mission is focused on fostering a business-friendly environment, promoting the state, helping advance the Idaho economy and assisting with community infrastructure development.

In recent years, Idaho has been recognized as the nation's fastest growing state population per capita as well as a leading state for jobs, wage, and visitation growth. Access to workforce talent and mobility are top of mind for businesses throughout Idaho. Additionally, access to the outdoors means more tourists are traveling to Idaho than ever before. As Idaho's population, jobs, and visitor numbers continue to grow at a rapid pace, public transportation and transportation infrastructure will be important factors to business success, workforce development, and community vitality.

Through partnership with the Idaho Department of Transportation and other agencies in the working group, we will continue to work to make Idaho more business-friendly environment by ensuring the transportation and movement of workforce and goods remains efficient and cost-effective.

Contributor Acknowledgements

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