Northwest Foothills Transportation Study Update

Ada County, Idaho

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PREFACE

The Northwest Foothills Transportation Study Update was developed under the guidance of the Project Management Team (PMT) and Project Steering Committee (SC). PMT and SC members are identified below, along with members of the consultant team. The PMT was responsible for reviewing all work products, providing direction to the project, facilitating the open house, and making recommendations to the Eagle City Council and Ada County Highway District (ACHD) Commission for consideration of Study adoption. The PMT included representatives from ACHD, the City of Eagle, Ada County, and COMPASS. The SC was responsible for reviewing all work products, providing input and recommendations to the PMT, and participating at the public open house. The SC was made up of local citizens, business owners, and local officials including the Idaho Transportation Department. Thank you to the following PMT and SC members for their instrumental involvement with the development of the Northwest Foothills Transportation Study Update.

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A special thanks to the Eagle City Council and Ada County Highway District Commission for attending the work sessions and public meetings and providing input and guidance during the development of the plan.

A final thank you to any person, individual, group, agency, or participating member of the public that provided information, comments, suggestions, or their valuable time during this planning process.

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Executive Summary

Section 1   Executive Summary
SECTION 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Northwest Foothills Transportation Study Update (NWFTS Update) is to revise the roadway network and improvement recommendations of the Northwest Foothills Transportation Study which was adopted in 2008 (2008 NWFTS). Since its adoption, the following changes have occurred in and around the City of Eagle to bring about the need for this update:

- Update to the COMPASS Communities in Motion (CIM) Long Range Transportation Plan with a regional population forecast increase from 825,000 for 2030 to 1,022,000 for 2035 for Ada and Canyon Counties;
- Update of the Eagle Comprehensive Plan for the Eagle downtown area;
- ACHD Commission decision to not proceed with federal funding for the proposed Three Cities River Crossing roadway project, due to an estimated cost of over $80 million;
- The secondary crossing of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property to serve the M3 Spring Valley development from Palmer Road was not approved by the BLM making Linder Road the only access from northwest Eagle;
- A Community Infrastructure District formed for M3 Spring Valley by City of Eagle;
- Adoption of the State Street Transit & Traffic Operational Plan (TTOP) by the City of Eagle, City of Boise, and ACHD;

In addition to these regional actions, development plans in the foothills have changed for many of the tracts of privately-owned land. The City and ACHD also identified the need to tie the anticipated development to the regional horizon year of 2035. The 2008 NWFTS assumed all of the potential development in the foothills study area was fully completed (build-out), even though it could take well beyond the 2035 horizon year to accomplish. The change in development plans and the horizon year for estimating potential development in the northwest foothills result in the anticipated housing dropping from 24,261 units to 13,889 units and the anticipated employment dropping from 10,822 jobs to 4,579 jobs for this update.

Figure 1 shows the updated roadway sizes and the anticipated type of control at key intersections. In addition, the roadways which increased or decreased in size from the 2008 NWFTS are highlighted. Following are the key recommendations as part of this update:

- Eagle Road: Between Plaza Drive and Willow Creek Road, three lanes are recommended which will be refined pending the outcome of the Eagle Road/State Street Concept Study. Between Chinden Boulevard and SH 44, seven lanes are recommended in the long term, which is primarily due to regional growth and the removal of the Three Cities River Crossing.
- SH 44: Based on the TTOP recommendations and funding considerations, SH 44 is recommended to be five lanes plus high occupancy vehicle lanes (seven lanes total) between Glenwood Street and Eagle Road and five lanes between Eagle Road and SH 16.
### Recommended Roadway Sizes and Intersection Control

**H:\projfile\12343 - NW Foothills Transportation Study Update\GIS\ActiveFiles\Recommended_Roads.mxd**

**Figure 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roadway Size</th>
<th>Intersection Control</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Lanes</td>
<td>Overpass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Lanes</td>
<td>Grade-Separated Interchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Lanes with Median</td>
<td>High-Capacity Intersection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Lanes with Turn Lane</td>
<td>Unsignalized or Roundabout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Lanes + HOV</td>
<td>Signal or Roundabout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Lanes</td>
<td>Signal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed Since Last Plan</td>
<td>Unsignalized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example Routes and Plan Details**

- **Aerie Way**: 2008 plan = 3 lanes
- **Equest Ln**: May be grade-separated beyond 2035
- **Alignment to be Determined**
- **Right-in or Right-in/Right-out**

**Intersection Control**

- **New Hope Rd**: Right-in
- **State St Hwy 55 Hwy Emmett Hwy Chinden Blvd**: Right-in/Right-out
- **Eagle Rd Star Rd**: Right-in
- **Hill Rd**: Right-in
- **Equest Ln**: Right-in
- **Beacon Light Rd Linder Rd**: Right-in
- **Hill Rd**: Right-in
- **Eagle Rd Star Rd**: Right-in

**Overpass**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Overpass Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aerie Way</td>
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**Grade-Separated Interchange**

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<th>Route</th>
<th>Grade Separated</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aerie Way</td>
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**High-Capacity Intersection**

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<th>Route</th>
<th>High-Capacity</th>
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**Signal or Roundabout**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Signal or Roundabout</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aerie Way</td>
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**Signal**

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<th>Route</th>
<th>Signal</th>
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<td>Aerie Way</td>
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**Unsignalized or Roundabout**

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<th>Route</th>
<th>Unsignalized or Roundabout</th>
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**Unsignalized**

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**Roundabout**

<table>
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<th>Roundabout</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aerie Way</td>
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</table>
- SH 55: Between Beacon Light Road and Avimor, five lanes is recommended with at-grade traffic signals at Beacon Light Road, Brookside and the two Avimor intersections. Grade separation may be required beyond 2035 or in response to specific development requirements. Therefore right-of-way preservation for grade separations is recommended.

- Linder Road: Between Chinden Boulevard and SH 44, seven lanes are recommended in the very long term with the potential for incremental widening to five lanes in the medium term. This is primarily due to regional growth and the removal of the Three Cities River Crossing. Between Beacon Light Road and the M3 Spring Valley development, five lanes could be needed with the removal of the Palmer Road connection. Therefore, corridor preservation and/or construction of five lanes north of Beacon Light Road are recommended beyond 2035.

- Beacon Light Road: Between Linder Road and SH 55, five lanes were identified as needed near the end of the study timeframe (around year 2035). Corridor preservation for five lanes is therefore recommended.

- Willow Creek Road: A bypass of Willow Creek Road from Eagle Road to the proposed east-west foothills collector continues to be recommended as part of this plan due to the design and constraint of Willow Creek Road. The alignment of the bypass road will be dependent on future property development and topography.

With this update, an implementation plan was developed. Following are the key findings of the implementation plan:

- Most of the short-term improvements on the existing transportation system are funded and planned for construction in the next five years.

- The two most significant short-term and medium-term improvements to existing roadways that remain unfunded are the widening of Chinden Boulevard (US 20/26) to five lanes from Eagle Road to SH 16 and widening SH 44 to five lanes between Linder Road and SH 16. The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) has indicated that both improvements will likely be funded in the next five to ten years.

- All of the long-term widening needed on ITD roadways are currently unfunded including:
  - SH 55 widening to five lanes north of Beacon Light Road
  - SH 16 widening to five lanes (four lanes with median/left-turn lane), SH 44 to M3 Spring Valley
  - SH 44 widening for HOV lanes, Glenwood to SH 55
  - Eagle Road widening to seven lanes, Chinden Boulevard to SH 44

- Right-of-way preservation should be the focus for the following very long-term projects:
  - Beacon Light Road widening to five lanes (Linder Road to SH 55)
  - Linder Road widening to seven lanes (Chinden Boulevard to SH 44)
  - Linder Road widening to five lanes (Beacon Light Road to M3 Spring Valley)
  - SH 16 grade separations at, SH 44 Floating Feather, Beacon Light, and M3 Spring Valley
  - SH 55 widening to seven lanes from SH 44 to Beacon Light Road
Chinden Boulevard widening to seven lanes (six lanes with median/left-turn lane) from Cloverdale Road to SH 16.

The roadway network and recommended projects should remain dynamic and responsive to development and changes to the adopted land-use and transportation plans. To accomplish this goal, a monitoring process should be agreed upon by the City and ACHD in an Inter-Governmental Agreement that identifies triggers for reviewing the improvements and how development within the surrounding area will be reviewed and coordinated with all parties. It is recommended that the land-use assumptions and recommendations used for this study be reviewed at least every five years and the study updated if significant changes to the future roadway network, land use assumptions, or adopted plans occur that could affect the need or appropriateness of the recommendations in this NWFTS Update.