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Treasure Valley

Regional Vanpool System Plan

April 2022

REGIONAL VANPOOL SYSTEM PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The needs of commuters in the Treasure Valley have transformed in recent years for many reasons—because of the COVID-19 pandemic, in response to evolutions in where, how, and when we work, and as a function of the region’s changing employment landscape. One of the many ways commuters in the Treasure Valley get to work is with vanpool, a group transportation option similar to a large carpool, with groups of people with similar commutes sharing a van to access their destination(s).

Valley Regional Transit (VRT), the regional public transportation authority, and Ada County Highway District (ACHD) Commuteride, the regional vanpool provider, have partnered on a Regional Vanpool System Study to evaluate the impacts of commuters’ changing needs on vanpool programs and offerings, and develop concrete solutions and action steps to expand the breadth and reach of vanpool and shared mobility services regionwide. This document, the Regional Vanpool System Plan, is the result of that Study.

COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED VISION FOR THE REGIONAL VANPOOL SYSTEM

This Plan was developed in close coordination with key stakeholders and partners from across the region, including Canyon County, the Community Planning Association for Southwest Idaho (COMPASS), and the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), local municipalities, and major employers. Beyond these core collaborators, the entire Treasure Valley community was invited to share their experiences about commuting in the region through a variety of digital platforms.

Broadly, the stakeholders, partners, and community members engaged supported an expansion of geographic coverage and service options for the Treasure Valley vanpool system. With more commuters traveling to and within Canyon County for work and many working non-traditional and flexible schedules, the face of employment in the Treasure Valley is changing. Collaborators encouraged the vanpool system to remain nimble and keep pace with this ongoing transformation, and ensure that vanpool can serve as a feasible commute option for many different people while remaining financially stable and leveraging available infrastructure.

OPPORTUNITIES

The study identified several key opportunities to advance vanpool and shared mobility options in the Treasure Valley to accommodate changes in commuter behaviors and patterns in the Treasure Valley. These include:

- **Align vanpool services with regional public transportation strategy.** The study identified significant opportunity to expand vanpool’s reach to better align with the overall public transportation strategy articulated in ValleyConnect 2.0 and enhance coordinated decision-making about how best to serve the Treasure Valley community through all available transportation options.
- **Expand geographic coverage.** Existing vanpool service in the Treasure Valley is limited by current policy. At present, ACHD Commuteride only supports services that travel to, through, or originate within Ada County. Geographic expansion of the vanpool system will help serve more Treasure Valley communities and reflect new realities in where people live and work.

- **Accommodate flexibility.** As people change their work styles and schedules, vanpool can keep pace with innovative options and tools to address new and diverse commute needs.
- **Connect with hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations.** The current typical vanpool user is wealthier and more educated than the average Treasure Valley resident, with better access to personal vehicles. There is an opportunity to increase the utility of vanpool and shared mobility options for populations who need it most, such as low-income commuters, immigrant and refugee communities, and communities with little to no access to personal vehicles.

SUCSESSES TO-DATE

The Treasure Valley’s regional vanpool system has remained nimble and resilient in the face of COVID-19 and its monumental disruptions to work and travel norms, maintaining relatively consistent levels of ridership compared to other vanpool and public transportation programs nationwide. Commuteride and its partners have also already taken some steps to reflect and accommodate changes in the region and shifting commuter needs, including partnering with employers to serve nontraditional commuters and “essential” employees, implementing a part-time rider fare and piloting an integrated fare payment system, and launching programs to help small businesses reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.

REGIONAL VANPOOL SYSTEM PLAN

The Regional Vanpool System Plan focuses on three main courses of action to support the regional vanpool system by leveraging key opportunities, including:

- Strengthening vanpool service.
- Creating collaborative processes across different public transportation providers.
- Building on existing regional marketing efforts and partnerships.

While the Plan was initially intended to help make decisions about critical pieces of infrastructure, such as replacements for the aging van fleet, the Study ultimately determined that significant strides should be made in facilitating collaborative decision-making processes and aligning vanpool services with the broader public transportation network prior to pursuing new capital investments. Given the dramatic changes in commute patterns and workstyles experienced in the Treasure Valley over the last decade, this initial step will be essential in assessing true capital needs for the vanpool system and appropriately allocating resources within the public transportation framework.

GOAL 1: BUILD A SUPPORTIVE FOUNDATION FOR VANPOOL AND SHARED MOBILITY

This goal focuses on building processes to better support a collaborative and holistic strategy for deploying vanpool and shared mobility services in the Treasure Valley region. Specific action steps include creating a Regional Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee or Work Group responsible to the VRT Executive Board. This committee or group should have designated staff support, adopt a decision-making framework for deploying vanpool and shared mobility options regionally, and create a uniform policy for vanpool and shared mobility service providers. Strategies also contemplate ways to facilitate geographic expansion of vanpool services, and strategically invite new service providers to participate in the network if it is determined that these new providers could overcome existing geographic limitations or better serve specific community needs.

Collaborative processes are a vital part of a sustainable, equitable, and comprehensive vanpool system. These action steps will lay the groundwork for planned and deliberate policymaking and investment in

vanpool and shared mobility in close coordination with other transportation options, such as fixed-route service, bus rapid transit, and on-demand.

GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN VANPOOL SERVICE

This goal focuses on further developing a sustainable and equitable vanpool system capable of serving more people in many different communities and circumstances. Specific action steps include targeting employers in high-demand commute areas, reducing the minimum full-time vanpool ridership requirements and implementing a flexible per-ride fare, strategically broadening services to high-yield Ada-to-Canyon and Canyon-to-Canyon commute paths, investing in fixed-route connections, and expanding driver-provided services.

If pursued, these action steps will substantially improve the alignment of the vanpool network with the regional transportation system, expand service to Canyon County residents and commuters, offer greater flexibility for people with non-traditional and flexible work patterns, and help hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations use vanpool and shared mobility services. Most recommended actions can be funded entirely by end-user fares.

GOAL 3: ADVANCE REGIONAL VANPOOL AND SHARED MOBILITY MARKETING AND PARTNERSHIPS

This goal focuses on augmenting and updating the already excellent marketing strategies of Commuteride and its partners. Recommended action steps include more direct targeting of employers based on key benefits that support their goals, such as public relations, employee attrition, and employee productivity, building packages for employers that can fit seamlessly into employee benefit elections processes, and creating a vanpool/shared mobility policy package for local jurisdictions, in addition to building upon existing programs, such as the **Commuteride Workspace** Mobility Grant Program. These strategies should be deployed across Ada and Canyon counties so that all residents have the opportunity to access a consistent level of service and freedom of mobility no matter where they live in the Treasure Valley.

When completed, these action steps will help broaden vanpool's reach to a larger range of employers and employees and encourage policies and regulations that will complement the vanpool and shared mobility system in all jurisdictions across the region.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For decades, Valley Regional Transit (VRT), Ada County Highway District Commuteride (Commuteride), and their partners have supported mobility freedom in Idaho’s Treasure Valley and worked to alleviate the social, economic, and environmental costs of single-occupancy vehicle commuting. VRT’s coordination with Commuteride is well documented and memorialized in a current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This plan will build on that partnership to address the rapid shifts in the employment landscape in the region, throughout the state, and nationally. VRT and Commuteride, the region’s publicly supported service provider for commuter vanpools, are exploring innovative ways to accommodate change and align services with a greater range of needs.

WHAT IS VANPOOL?

Vanpool is a group transportation option akin to a large carpool, where groups of people with similar commuting patterns and routes share a van to access their destination(s). Each vanpool requires a member or members of the group to volunteer to drive the van.

Vanpool is a type of shared mobility. Shared mobility refers to a system where multiple people share transportation resources—either at the same time (like a vanpool) or together over time (like a carshare program).

Shared mobility generally, and vanpool specifically, are creative options to expand the reach of public transportation to areas where more traditional services, like fixed-route rail or bus lines, are impractical or even infeasible. In addition to looking specifically at traditional vanpool options, this plan also considers other employer based shared mobility options. This is necessary to fully understand how traditional vanpool fits into the shared mobility landscape.

This plan’s discussion of shared mobility is limited to employer based/commuter programs. Further discussion about VRT’s shared mobility plans can be found in the Integrated Mobility study which is under development.

REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Regional Vanpool Plan is to develop a path forward for advancing vanpool and shared mobility services regionwide. The Plan is intended to articulate and advance a cohesive and collective vision for deploying and investing in these integral transportation options. Specifically, initiatives discussed in this Plan are intended to:

- **Build on Existing Efforts:** The Treasure Valley’s existing vanpool and smart commuting system—led by Commuteride—has facilitated the elimination of over 7 million vehicle miles from Idaho’s roadways. This Plan will advance and build on this legacy by supporting and guiding Commuteride and other vanpool and shared mobility providers working in the region as they adapt to a changing and growing workforce.
- **Address Changes in Commute Behaviors, Patterns and Needs:** Commuter behaviors, patterns and needs are evolving, both as a lasting result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in response to longstanding changes in work location, technology advancements, and the types of businesses making their home in the Treasure Valley. This Plan will help VRT, Commuteride, and other

mobility providers identify and quantify these changes, and address them using service updates and enhancements, collaborative processes, and targeted marketing and partnerships.

- **Accommodate a More Diverse Range of Users:** Historically a strong option for traditional 9-to-5 commuters and military personnel, Commuteride's Club Red vanpool program has expanded its user base in recent years. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Commuteride implemented health, safety and logistical measures to make vanpool a feasible and convenient commute option for essential workers. In addition, Commuteride forged a partnership with Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area to provide transportation to employees working at the resort. This Plan advances these efforts to broaden the reach and utility of vanpool and shared mobility to an even more diverse array of Treasure Valley workers, including partially remote workers, nontraditional workers, immigrant workers, and more.
- **Remain Cost Effective:** Presently, costs to operate vanpools in the Treasure Valley are primarily covered by rider fares, with additional support for administrative and capital costs from federal and state grant funding, the ACHD Commuteride budget, and local sponsorships. While some investment will be needed for the region's vanpool and shared mobility programs to grow and meet evolving community needs, this Plan supports the continued ability of rider fares to cover the vast majority of operational costs well into the future.
- **Guide Future Investments:** Ultimately, recommendations included in this plan are intended to inform investments through the Idaho Transportation Investment Program (ITIP), as well as local, state, and federal grant funding applications.

In addition to rigorous quantitative data collection and analysis of commute trip patterns and commuter needs, the study included extensive community and partner collaboration, as well as input from the public through a questionnaire focused on evolving workstyles and schedules in the Treasure Valley and gaps in the existing transportation network.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

This plan includes five chapters:

- **Chapter 1 – Introduction:** Outlines key background information and provides an overview of the Regional Vanpool Study.
- **Chapter 2—Community-Supported Vision for the Regional Vanpool System:** Describes collaboration and engagement with key stakeholders, partners, and the Treasure Valley Community, and articulates the vision and guiding principles for the vanpool system.
- **Chapter 3—Progress and Opportunities:** Discusses attributes of the existing vanpool system and the progress already made in achieving the objectives this study advances, and outlines key opportunities to improve upon the existing system.
- **Chapter 4—Regional Vanpool System Plan:** Details the recommended goals, strategies, and actions for the regional vanpool system.
- **Chapter 5—Summary and Next Steps:** Reiterates key themes and next steps.

CHAPTER II

COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED VISION FOR THE REGIONAL VANPOOL SYSTEM

Key partners, stakeholders, and the Treasure Valley community more broadly each played an essential role in crafting an overarching vision for the regional vanpool system. This section discusses the key themes from these collaborative efforts, outlines the vision and guiding principles for the system, and details the vital components of a successful and sustainable vanpool network.

COMMUNITY AND PARTNER ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

This work was supported by the time and commitment of two partner groups: an Internal Project Team, comprising public agency partners regionwide which met three times over the course of the study, and a Project Advisory Committee, comprising large employers, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholder organizations which met twice over the course of the study. Key themes from their collaboration include:

- **Emphasis on the need to expand geographic coverage.** Eliminating restrictions and limitations for strategic, unified coverage, while appropriately allocating investment in high-demand commute paths.
- **Support for creating meaningful regional partnerships.** Leveraging employers and municipalities in the region by using vanpool and shared mobility to help them meet their goals.
- **Listening to commuters and understanding broad needs.** Creating service options that demonstrate a deep understanding of the variety and versatility of Treasure Valley commuters.
- **Offering options for those with the highest need for public transportation.** Offering greater flexibility in options and fares to support high-needs commuters, like those who do not own or have access to personal vehicles or are low-income.

In addition to these stakeholder groups, the entire Treasure Valley was invited to share their commuting experiences and needs through the Regional Vanpool Study Community Questionnaire, and more broadly on access, mobility, and employment in the Canyon County region through the Connected Canyon County planning initiative.

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR VANPOOL IN TREASURE VALLEY

VRT, Commuteride, and their partners envision that the regional vanpool system will build on existing partnerships to expand cost-effective and practical transportation choices in communities throughout the Treasure Valley to reduce service gaps, single-occupancy vehicle usage, and greenhouse gas emissions. The system seeks to:

1. Provide more transportation choices to support freedom of movement and quality of life.
2. Adapt to the mobility needs of the growing region, integrating dynamic and innovative solutions as appropriate.
3. Serve as an equitable, seamless, and practical transportation solution for communities in Ada and Canyon counties.
4. Serve as a feasible transportation option for many different communities, focusing on communities with service gaps and the greatest need for expanded transportation choice.
5. Fill gaps in transit service to meet commute-to-work needs, resulting in an appreciable reduction in single-occupancy vehicle commuting regionwide.

6. Leverage existing infrastructure to provide service.
7. Achieve a sustainable level of cost recovery for services provided.
8. Seek meaningful partnerships to achieve outcomes that work for the entire region.

REQUIREMENTS AND GUARDRAILS

Serve a broad and comprehensive range of users. Meet the needs of the broad and diverse Treasure Valley community using innovative, flexible, and responsive tools and programmatic strategies. This report details the unique characteristics of Treasure Valley commuters using a series of Vanpool User Profiles on page 19, and shares how service improvement goals, strategies, and action steps improve their commute experiences on pages 20—21.

[Club Red Vanpool] has always been an excellent, reliable, and valuable program.

- **Treasure Valley Commuter, 2017**

Maintain excellence in customer service. Ensure that all service providers continue to emulate the excellent customer service reputation that the Commuteride Club Red vanpool program has forged over the years.

Consider costs to end users. Keep costs to end users low as compared to typical personal vehicle commute costs. Low cost maximizes conversion from single-occupancy vehicle commuting and ensures that vanpool and shared mobility are broadly affordable and accessible choices.

Create harmony among service providers. Maximize coordination and efficiency among all transportation service providers and reduce duplicative efforts and energies.

Support local control of the vanpool system and strategy. Make sure that the regional vanpool and is managed and monitored by public transportation agencies in service to the Treasure Valley community.

CHAPTER III

PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A successful future for the regional vanpool system first requires a deep understanding of the attributes, opportunities, and challenges of the vanpool and shared mobility services currently offered in the Treasure Valley. This section provides a high-level overview of existing vanpool and shared mobility conditions in the Valley, details key opportunities that inform the goals, strategies, and actions included in the Regional Vanpool System Plan (Chapter IV), and describes the progress already made on advancing these goals.

EXISTING CONDITIONS OVERVIEW

Vanpool in the Treasure Valley is currently offered by the Ada County Highway District (ACHD) through its Commuteride Club Red (Club Red) program. The current vanpool system provides affordable transportation to commuters with fares averaging \$100—\$120 per person per month, compared to a typical Treasure Valley single-occupancy vehicle commute expense of \$493 per month¹. While most of the Club Red program’s operating costs are paid for with user fares, the program is also supported by federal and state grant funding to support administrative and capital expenses.

How does the current vanpool system support different Treasure Valley communities? The current vanpool system plays an essential role in making smarter, lower cost commuting more accessible for many. Traditionally, vanpool participants have skewed wealthier and more educated than the Treasure Valley population as a whole, and generally have more convenient access to personal vehicles². In recent years, however, Commuteride has made strides in marketing vanpool options and services to nontraditional commuters and shift workers. VRT, Commuteride, and their partners are interested in continuing to increase ridership among low-income communities, people without vehicle access, service and hourly workers, and more.

How does the current vanpool system provide service to both Treasure Valley? Commuteride Club Red offers vanpool options for workers in Ada County, Canyon County, Gem County, and Elmore County. Under current policies, trips must originate, end, or pass through Ada County. Historically, this focus on Ada County made sense given its greater concentration of employment centers. However, as more and more Treasure Valley workers commute to jobs in Canyon County, VRT, Commuteride, and its partners are interested in opportunities to expand vanpool service to commute trips that serve Canyon County even when they don’t include Ada County.

How does the current vanpool system fill gaps in transit service? Current vanpool service offers connections to large employers south and southeast of Downtown Boise and to the Mountain Home Air Force Base in Elmore County³. Most of these employers are outside the VRT fixed route service area. Expanded efforts could offer connections to commuters throughout Canyon County and in the farther reaches of both counties.

¹ Average round trip commute length in Treasure Valley from American Communities Survey Data, multiplied by 20 working days, multiplied by 2021 Federal Mileage Reimbursement Rate.

² Per Club Red annual participant questionnaires

³ See Figure 1.7 on page 13

How does the current vanpool system achieve sustainable cost recovery? Vanpool fare revenues generally fully cover or approach full recovery of vanpool-related operating expenses, excluding marketing and transportation demand management⁴ (TDM) programming.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE REGIONAL VANPOOL SYSTEM

Promoting and managing a regional vanpool system is not without its challenges. Specifically, vanpool systems:

- **Are limited in terms of flexibility.** Vanpools require consistent routes with consistent riders, both for financial sustainability and to retain volunteer drivers. A lack of eligible volunteer drivers, combined with a need for dedicated riders, can limit where vanpools are formed and the types of work trips they can support.
- **Require more effort than other public transportation modes to make substantial decreases in single-occupancy vehicle commuting.** Vanpools can only serve a small number of people (typically a maximum of 12) on each route, especially when compared to other public transportation options like fixed-route bus service. Furthermore, while bus routes are designed to serve the needs of many, vanpool routes are generally set up for a specific group of people and cannot easily serve a new group if the first group is dissolved or reduced. Because of these factors, vanpool requires a more consistent and targeted marketing practice to retain existing riders and attract new riders and support meaningful reductions in single-occupancy vehicle commuting.
- **Are easily undermined by counterproductive policies and conditions.** As is the case with other public transportation options, vanpool ridership is easily undermined by employer policies and practices like free or heavily subsidized on-site parking, and by governmental policies and practices like investing in roadway widening over other transportation infrastructure. Other factors outside the control of employers and governmental bodies—such as gas prices—also impact vanpool ridership.

Given these obstacles, the Treasure Valley vanpool system, led by Commuteride, has made an impressive impact on single occupancy vehicle commuting regionwide. As the commuting patterns, behaviors and needs of the Treasure Valley community evolve and change, VRT, Commuteride, and its partners are seeking opportunities to build on existing efforts, address evolutions in how and when we get to work, accommodate a broader user base, retain cost effectiveness, and inform future investments in the public transportation network. Based on quantitative and qualitative analyses conducted as part of this Plan development, the following key opportunities have been identified to advance these goals:

⁴ Transportation Demand Management or “TDM” is the intentional use of policies and strategies to redistribute and/or reduce travel demand, especially personal vehicle demand

Align vanpool services with regional public transportation strategy. There is significant opportunity to better align public transportation, vanpool, and shared mobility offerings for a comprehensive suite of commute options, as articulated in ValleyConnect 2.0, VRT’s blueprint for the future of public transportation options throughout the Valley. This strategic alignment will allow leaders to make clear decisions about how to provide better transportation options and improve mobility choice for Treasure Valley communities holistically, whether with fixed-route or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) expansion, vanpool, driver-provided services, on-demand services, and more. This alignment will also support comprehensive marketing, logistical, and administrative efforts, which will save time, improve efficiency,

and reduce costs and duplicative efforts.

Personally, I would never be able to accept a job in Canyon County while living in Boise (and have turned down several), and vice versa. I have lived in the valley for 8 years and can count on one hand the number of times I have ever even been to Canyon County. Our community is no longer divided by county lines - we need better inter county service!

- Treasure Valley Commuter, Engage VRT

Expand geographical coverage.

Existing vanpool service in the Treasure Valley is inherently limited under its current policies, which require a focus on Ada County. As the geographic realities of where people live and work change, there is an opportunity to increase the physical reach of the Treasure

Valley vanpool system to better reflect new trip patterns.

Promote flexibility. Work styles and schedules are rapidly transforming, with the COVID-19 pandemic quickening the pace of some newly burgeoning realities, like the pervasiveness of remote work. In a recent survey of Treasure Valley commuters, over 45% of respondents shared that they have flexibility in what days they come into the office and choose to work from home at least once per week. There is opportunity to widen the vanpool model to increase ridership among potential users who do not commute five days a week.

Connect with hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations. Both VRT and Commuteride have made efforts in recent years to reach low-income communities regionwide through targeted programs and services. There is continued interest in increasing the ability of shared mobility and vanpool options to serve traditionally hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations, such as low-income communities which make up 16.7% of the total population, immigrant communities (6.6% foreign born), and communities with a high percentage of households with no access to a personal vehicle (4%).

TO-DATE PROGRESS AND INNOVATION IN VANPOOL AND SHARED MOBILITY

The Treasure Valley vanpool system has already taken steps to embrace and accommodate the region’s changing landscape and advance supportive policies. Major milestones include:

Regional Park and Ride Study

In 2020, the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS), alongside Commuteride and Valley Regional Transit, developed a regional park and ride plan for the Treasure Valley. The plan recommended strategies for prioritizing and locating future park and ride investments and improvements throughout the region to support the use of transportation choices beyond single-occupancy vehicles.

There was a point where I was living in Ada County and working in Canyon County, and I had to commute every day. Additionally, I went to school in Canyon County. I was lucky enough to have reliable transportation to get to both school and work, but that isn't an option for everyone. Having public transit between the counties would open them for job growth, economic growth, and a closer relationship between the communities.

- **Treasure Valley Commuter, Engage VRT**

Fare Flexibility and Payment Options

Commuteride has accommodated increases in telecommuting and flexible work schedules by implementing a part-time fare option (ride 8 times a month and pay a 50% monthly fare). In addition, Commuteride is currently working with CityGo to support an integrated payment system, called the CityGo Wallet, for certain vanpool routes. The pilot program will allow for vanpool fare payments to be included in a CityGo Wallet purchase, which centralizes transit and mobility service payments.

Transportation Demand Management Support and Policy

In 2021, Commuteride launched a new pilot grant, called the Commuteride Workspace Mobility Grant. The grant program provided up to \$3,000 in financial support to 16 small Ada County businesses working to implement mobility programs and enhancements at their worksites, including transit or vanpool passes, shared bike and scooter programs, telework support, and more.

CHAPTER 4

REGIONAL VANPOOL SYSTEM PLAN

This section includes the goals, strategies, and action steps that comprise the Regional Vanpool System Plan.

PLAN STRUCTURE

A **goal** is a broad statement of intent that embodies the vision and guiding principles for the regional vanpool system.

A **strategy** is an objective integral to achieving the stated goal.

An **action** is a specific step that is recommended to advance the stated strategy.

Note that most actions proposed are entirely funded by end user fares. Actions that would necessitate investment include a projected cost and funding discussion.

GOAL 1: Support a Strong Foundation for Vanpool and Shared Mobility

This goal centers building on existing governance frameworks for vanpool and shared mobility in the Treasure Valley by developing and affirming supportive processes and opportunities for collaboration among VRT, Commuteride, and their partners.

Opportunities:



Aligns vanpool services with regional public transportation strategy

by creating a systemic approach to deployment of vanpool and shared mobility resources in complement to the overall network.



Expands geographic coverage

by supporting increased services for the Canyon County community.

HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS

This goal develops concrete processes and actions intended to increase collaboration, information-sharing, and strategic alignment across the agencies that provide and support vanpool and shared mobility services. The strategies outlined below were developed to promote existing providers and programs, expanding and strengthening the system across the Treasure Valley. Achievement of this goal can be measured by the extent to which certain milestones outlined in this plan have been met.

COMMITTEE FORMATION

Formation of the Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Committee/Work Group, as described on page 29, will be an essential milestone in the achievement of this goal. This should also include the creation of bylaws and a standard meeting schedule.

USE OF DECISION-MAKING MATRIX

The decision-making matrix or a version thereof to make decisions about deploying public transportation resources, as described on pages 30-31, will also be an essential milestone in the achievement of this goal. The matrix should be considered a part of any decision-making process used by the Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Committee/Work Group and Executive Board in evaluating public transportation investment decisions and should be used as a framework by agency staff in compiling and sharing information with these bodies.

GOAL 1 STRATEGIES

Strategy 1A: Create processes that support tactical, regionwide deployment of vanpool and shared mobility services.

Vanpool and shared mobility services in the Treasure Valley are part of the broader public transportation network governed by the VRT Executive Board. As an important provider of these

services, as well as a critical leader in smart commuting and transportation demand management efforts regionwide, Commuteride plays a key role in determining the strategic direction of the Treasure Valley regional vanpool and shared mobility system. This strategy focuses on creating more and better opportunities for VRT, Commuteride, and its partners to collaborate and develop coordinated paths forward for offering vanpool and shared mobility options to the Treasure Valley community, while continuing the partnership between Commuteride and VRT, and honoring the agreements outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between VRT and Commuteride .

Action 1A-1: Create a group or committee of VRT, Commuteride and other shared mobility service providers dedicated to regional vanpool and shared mobility services.

This action step includes the formation of a Regional Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee or Work Group comprising staff from VRT, Commuteride and other shared mobility service providers, with ultimate responsibility to the Executive Board. The primary functions of this Committee/Work Group would include, but would not be limited to, advising the Executive Board and other governing bodies as appropriate on:

- Reporting to the VRT Executive Board
- Overall vanpool and shared mobility service strategy pursuant to Valley Connect 2.0 and other planning efforts as they emerge
- Vanpool and shared mobility capital and service needs, including needs for funding
- Expansion of existing services and deployment of new services
- How to obtain and strategically invest Federal, State, and local funding via VRT
- Fare policies and subsidies available to end users
- Strategies to bring in and manage other shared mobility service providers if needed to achieve the determined strategy(ies)

Action 1A-2: As necessitated by the vision and needs of the Regional Vanpool Study, the Integrated Mobility Plan and the Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee/Work Group, consider designating a Vanpool/Shared Mobility Coordinator/Manager to lead the Regional Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Committee who will report the progress of the Regional Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee/Work Group to the VRT Executive Board.

The duties of this role would focus on execution, implementation, and support of the vision and goals of the Regional Vanpool Study, Integrated Mobility Plan and Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee/Work Group, and would include, but would not be limited to:

- Serving as staff liaison to the Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee/Work Group, and to the Executive Board on vanpool and shared mobility issues and initiatives
- Ensuring the Vanpool and Shared Mobility programs are coordinated and aligns with other VRT services and programs
- Coordinating with service providers to implement service deployments as recommended by the Advisory Board and Executive Board
- Writing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) and reviewing responses from potential service providers
- Coordinating with VRT and service provider marketing teams to create coordinated regional print, online, and on-the-ground marketing efforts for vanpool and shared mobility

- Managing the employer-paid driver service programs
- Reporting on the success of vanpool and shared mobility programs pursuant to assigned metrics

Action 1A-3: Adopt and implement a clear decision-making framework for deploying vanpool and shared mobility options.

While vanpool can be an excellent option for many commuters, it is not necessarily the ideal option in every case. A clear decision-making framework can assist the VRT Executive Board (as advised by the Regional Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee/Work Group) and other governing bodies identify appropriate service lines, resource allocation and deploying or expanding services. It is not the intent of the decision-making framework to direct day-to-day operations of service providers, but to guide the deployment of vanpool and shared mobility options. **Figure 1.2** depicts a sample decision-making matrix for selecting appropriate transit, vanpool, and shared mobility services depending on case parameters.

Figure 1.2: Example Vanpool, Transit, and Shared Mobility Decision-Making Matrix

Service Type	Commuter Characteristics					Employer Resources	Use Metrics	Cost Per Passenger Trip
	Distance Between Home and Stop	Commute Length	Typical Schedule	Commute Type	Other			
Vanpool	≤ 10 miles	≥ 18 miles or 25 minutes at peak	Consistent work schedule (hours and days of week)	Work	Requires coordination among at least 5 individuals	May provide fare subsidy	5+ riders	\$16 ⁵
Bus Rapid Transit/Fixed-Route Transit	Low Income and urban areas ≤ .03 miles High Income areas ≤ 0.2 miles	≥ 2 miles	Within service operating hours	Work and personal	Greatest benefit when serving a high volume of riders.	May provide pass or subsidy; typically a pre-tax expense option for employees	25+ riders per trip	\$9 ⁶
On-Demand/Micro Transit	Not Applicable	≥ 0.5 mile	Within service operating hours	Work and Personal		May provide pass or subsidy; can be a pre-tax expense option for employees	Not applicable	\$40 ⁷
Village Van/Drive Provided Commuting- VRT Paid or Subsidized	≤ 10 miles	≥ 5 miles	Flexible	Work	Can benefit populations that lack access to vehicles or drivers licenses, or are otherwise harder to insure	Provide driver or subsidize funding for agency to hire a driver	4+ riders per trip	\$15 ⁸

⁵ Approximated based on annual passenger cost of roughly \$3,000 per year, and roughly 190 trips per passenger per year. Note that this figure will fluctuate depending on the route, and number of flexible/part-time passengers per route, in 2019 dollars.

⁶ Based on 2019 FTA data for Valley Regional Transit operations, in 2019 dollars.

⁷ Based on 2019 FTA data for Valley Regional Transit operations, in 2019 dollars.

⁸ Based on 2019 Village Van financial and ridership data

Village Van/Driver Provided Commuting- Employer Paid	≤ 10 miles	≥ 5 miles	Flexible	Work	Can benefit employers who want or need a commuter option for employees but do not want to start an employer pool of their own	Employer generally covers 100% of the cost to operate, although subsidies could be provided	4+ riders per trip generally, but could be left to employer discretio n	\$15 ⁹
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⁹ Based on 2019 Village Van financial and ridership data

Strategy 1B: Pursue structural opportunities to support expansion of vanpool and shared mobility services geographically and for hard-to-serve populations.

VRT, Commuteride, and their partners are interested in supporting a geographical expansion of vanpool and shared mobility services to increase service among Canyon County communities, and a general increase in ridership among hard-to-reach populations regionwide, such as low-income communities and nontraditional commuters.

Expanding vanpool and shared mobility services in Canyon County—particularly for trips that originate **and** terminate within the county’s boundary—would require a change to Commuteride’s current policy limiting its services to trips that originate, end, or pass-through Ada County. It is a priority to explore and identify options to address this barrier. Alternatively, services could be offered by another provider capable of filling geographic and demographic gaps while remaining cost-effective.

VRT currently has a Memorandum of Understanding with the private operator Commuter with Enterprise, Enterprise Rent-A-Car’s vanpool and shared mobility program, which enables Enterprise to provide turn-key vanpool services to Canyon County commuters. However, the partnership has had a slow and difficult start for several reasons. Chiefly, the VRT Executive Board and the community at large have expressed concerns about a private operation like Enterprise increasing vanpool fares or competing unnecessarily with Commuteride’s services. In tandem, Enterprise has struggled with capturing interest in creating vanpools as they do not receive the grant subsidies that enable Commuteride to offer lower end-user rates. Pursuant to information provided by Enterprise in October 2021, the company regularly receives inquiries from Canyon County commuters about vanpool options.

The goal of developing a supportive framework for expansion of services in Canyon County and broader demographics regionwide could be achieved in a number of ways, discussed below.

Action 1B-1: Create uniform foundational policies for vanpool and shared mobility services.

A uniform policy will allow oversight over the provision of vanpool and shared mobility service regionwide, even if additional service providers are participating. This policy, developed in coordination with the Advisory Committee/Work Group and service providers and adopted by the Executive Board, should include the following:

- Overall program goals
- Parameters and requirements for different service types
- Customer service policies and standards
- Plans for strategic provision and expansion of services, including priority commute paths
- Grant funding and subsidy allocation for any service provider based on the level of service provided, including vehicle condition and maintenance policies, customer service, service area, number of vanpools and vanpool riders and ridership growth and retention
- Standardized fares for all vanpools and shared mobility service providers, with set annual escalations based on inflation and/or expenses to operate.

Action 1B-2: Explore ways to extend geographic coverage so employers and residents in both Ada and Canyon counties have equal opportunity to use vanpool services.

Current policies and practices limit vanpool use and expansion in Canyon County. The Advisory Committee/Work Group should develop a proposal for the VRT Executive board to consider. These proposals should seek to remove current ACHD policies that create geographic constraints on Commuteride levels of service and allow for this commuting option to expand as warranted by changing demographics.

Action 1B-3: If warranted by needs and gaps in service, develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to solicit and manage other providers' participation in vanpool and shared mobility service regionwide.

If warranted by community needs and gaps in available services, a Request for Qualifications process could open competition to other potential providers for turnkey service in Canyon County, while granting VRT and its partners oversight of key components of the agreement and ultimately the services that the private company provides to the Treasure Valley community.

The intent of this RFQ is to ensure a transparent cost-effective approach to providing vanpool or shared mobility services across the Treasure Valley, not to replace any existing service providers.

The agreement and stipulations in the RFQ, developed by the Advisory Committee/Workgroup should include:

- The location and breadth of service, point of contact
- Requirements for alignment with program goals and VRT programs and services
- Performance goals and conversion targets—how many commuters should become vanpool users in the first year and first five years and evaluation metrics.
- Reporting requirements to VRT and partner agencies
- Data sharing, ownership, and data privacy standards
- Profit cap/operation fee, e.g., a flat fee per passenger mile on top of base operating costs that can be charged by the provider
- Standards of service for vehicle fleets and maintenance, customer service, emergencies, and new driver approval/training
- Risk management policies

Other policies and standards as dictated by the uniform vanpool/shared mobility service policy (Action 1B-1)

GOAL 2: Strengthen Vanpool Service

This goal focuses on creating a sustainable and resilient vanpool system capable of serving more people in many different circumstances and expanding the reach of the system to greater portions of the Treasure Valley region.

Opportunities:



Aligns vanpool services with regional public transportation strategy

by building connections between vanpool and shared mobility services and the existing and planned fixed route and bus rapid transit options.



Expands geographic coverage

by identifying new potential routes in underserved areas.



Accommodates flexibility

by offering new programs and services to different kinds of riders, like people with varying or nontraditional schedules.



Connects with hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations

by expanding Village Van services to communities in need.

HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS

This goal supports greater alignment of vanpool and shared mobility services with the changing demographics, behaviors, and needs of Treasure Valley commuters. Achievement of this goal can be measured by evaluating the share of vanpool as a primary commute method in the region, quantifying participation of major employers in vanpool and shared mobility programs and analyzing the demographics of communities served by vanpool and shared mobility programs.

INCREASED SHARE OF VANPOOL AS A PRIMARY COMMUTE METHOD IN TREASURE VALLEY

While the U.S. Census does not distinguish between vanpool and carpool commutes, based on 2019 American Communities Survey data, roughly 1.1% of commuters in the Treasure Valley use a carpool with more than 4 participants as their primary commute method. In fact, the percentage of Treasure Valley commuters using this primary commute option exceeds the percentage of those using public transit for their commute (0.3%). The average number of people per commute vehicle in Treasure Valley is 1.06 (rounded).

As shown in **Figure 2.1** below, even among communities with excellent public transportation service and support and strong vanpool programs, the share of vanpool (or large carpools) as a primary commute method rarely exceeds the 1% to 1.5% range. Generally, communities with similar population sizes to the Treasure Valley, as well as similar public transportation contexts, were selected—however, King

County Metro, Denver County Metro, and Dallas Metro are also shown as areas with peer vanpool programs.

	% - 4+ Person Carpool	% - Public Transportation	% - Drive Alone	Average Commute Time	Average – People Per Vehicle
Ada County	1.1%	0.4%	80.6%	21 Min	1.05
Canyon County	1.0%	0.3%	79.0%	25 Min	1.07
Charleston, SC Metro	0.5%	1.2%	79.0%	25 Min	1.05
Dayton, OH Metro	0.6%	2.5%	82.0%	23 Min	1.06
Cape Coral, FL Metro	1.6%	0.7%	79.0%	28 Min	1.07
El Paso, TX Metro	1.1%	2.0%	80.0%	22 Min	1.07
Knoxville, TN Metro	0.6%	2.5%	80.0%	21 Min	1.06
Dallas, TX Metro	1.5%	2.6%	79.0%	28 Min	1.07
King County Metro	1.1%	14.9%	60.2%	30 Min	1.08
Denver County Metro	0.8%	6.5%	69.1%	27 Min	1.06

While a dramatic increase in these metrics is unlikely given the showing of other metropolitan areas with similar population sizes, vanpool presence, and public transportation networks, VRT, Commuteride, and their partners could pursue a 10-year increase in large carpools (4 people or more) as a primary commute method by a margin of 0.4% (to a total share of 1.5% of the Treasure Valley population). Additionally, VRT, Commuteride, and their partners could pursue a 10-year increase in the average number of people per commute vehicle by a margin of 0.03 (to an average of 1.10 people per commute vehicle).

Increasing carpool and vanpool numbers is a benefit to the public and private sectors. On the public side, utilizing taxpayer dollars for transportation as efficiently as possible by utilizing transit services, removes passenger vehicles from the road. This in turn reduces congestion, prolongs the life of the roadway, reduces the need for additional infrastructure to accommodate more vehicles, and reduces air pollution and other environmental costs. Land use planning that allows denser uses that support other modes of transportation increases demand. On the private side sharing the costs of commuting between several riders reduces the cost of transportation. Not driving allows free time to catch up on work, socialize, read, or relax. In addition, transit options are an attractive benefit for employers to reach a larger talent pool. In turn, transit opens up job opportunities that are farther than what can be reached by foot or bike.

PARTICIPATION SURVEY FROM LARGE EMPLOYERS

An annual survey for all large employers (300 or more employees) in Treasure Valley will help assess institutional participation in and awareness of vanpool programs and help track any disparities between participation and awareness among Ada County employees versus Canyon County employees. Additionally, it could open new opportunities and avenues to reach out to employers who respond. The survey could include questions such as:

- What transportation, mobility, and parking benefits do you offer to your employees?
- Are you aware of vanpool options available to your employees?
- Do you currently offer a vanpool option to employees, or offer financial support for employees who use vanpool as a commute method?
- Have you ever considered vanpool as a possible transportation benefit for your employees? Why or why not?
- What priorities inform your decisions when you choose to offer parking, transportation, and mobility benefits to employees (e.g., environmental commitments, employee timeliness and productivity, employee attraction and retention, etc.)

In addition, the survey could be used to gauge employer office policies and trends, and employee commute patterns and behaviors, asking questions such as:

- On average, how many days per week do your employees commute to the office for work?
- How many days per week do you require employees to commute to the office for work?
- What percentage of your employees do you estimate drive alone to work?
- What percentage of your employees do you estimate carpool to work?

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

A rigorous demographic analysis of vanpool participants will help demonstrate the extent to which vanpool offerings serve different Treasure Valley communities. The analysis should include:

- Where vanpool users reside and work
- Vanpool users' primary type of employment
- Vanpool users' income level
- Vanpool users' age, gender, and racial background
- The percentage of vanpool users who have recently emigrated to the U.S.
- The number of vehicles vanpool users have access to at their household
- Other demographic indicators as necessary and applicable

GOAL 2 STRATEGIES

Strategy 2A: Build on existing services to improve conversion potential and accommodate new users.

Currently, the Treasure Valley vanpool system primarily supports smart commuting to work sites in Ada County. According to current projections¹⁰, Ada County is expected to add 100,000 jobs over the next 20 years. In consideration of this growth, this strategy focuses on building on existing efforts to attract commuters who follow the more typical Ada to Ada or Canyon to Ada commute pattern to use vanpool as a primary commute option.

Expanding vanpool's user pool within its current geographical framework will also pay dividends in terms of financial sustainability and overall program viability. Today, 36%¹¹ of Commuteride Club Red participants are employed by the armed forces (generally stationed at Mountain Home Air Force Base in Elmore County), compared to less than 2% of the population in the Treasure Valley, per Census data. This reliance on service members results in substantial depletion of vanpool ridership during military deployments. In addition, Commuteride has also cited challenges with maintaining ridership as a result of vanpool user retirements¹², indicating a significant reliance on long-term vanpool users who are not replaced quickly by new users. Commuteride has already taken some steps to diversify its rider base, and sees some benefits when it comes to its focus on essential employees like military members. While vanpool and public transit programs generally have greatly suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic—in some cases experiencing ridership reductions greater than 70%--Commuteride's ridership has remained relatively strong.

Action 2A-1: Continue to target employers with high numbers of employees at centralized locations.

Figure 2.2 below shows the largest employers in the Treasure Valley region with centralized locations for employee work sites. Note that Amazon is not included, as the fulfillment center was not built at the time the data was compiled by the Idaho Department of Labor. Currently, Micron Technology is the only one of these employers partnering with Commuteride directly to offer dedicated vanpool service.

This action step could include:

- **Targeted Employer Survey:** Issuance of a targeted employer survey as discussed on page 11 to evaluate employer needs and priorities.
- **Individualized Marketing Plan:** Development of an individualized marketing plan—solicited or unsolicited—for employers based on responses to the targeted survey.

¹⁰ Projections from the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) Communities in Motion 2040 Plan

¹¹ Per annual Commuteride Club Red Questionnaire

¹² Per July 10, 2017 VRT Executive Board Minutes

Figure 2.2: Treasure Valley Employers with the Highest Number of Employees at a Single Location

Employer	County	# Employees at a Single Location
Micron Technology	Ada	31,400
J.R. Simplot	Ada	10,000
Lamb Weston	Ada	7,200
Boise Cascade	Ada	6,370
Trus Joist	Ada	3,000
Saint Alphonsus	Ada	2,500
Idaho Power	Ada	2,028
POWER Engineers	Ada	1,916
US Ecology	Ada	1,450
Norco	Ada	1,250

Action 2A-2: Track commute patterns and densities in traditionally high-demand areas.

Figure 2.3, Figure 2.4, and Figure 2.5 depict the density of commute paths to Meridian and Boise from around Treasure Valley, showing opportunities to target potential new vanpool routes. While heavily trafficked commute paths do align generally with existing intercounty transit routes, the large commuter presence compared to the relatively low volume of vanpool routes demonstrates the potential for increased conversion, particularly among large employers as discussed in Action 1A-1.

Figure 2.3: Commute Trips to Meridian (Census Tract 10)

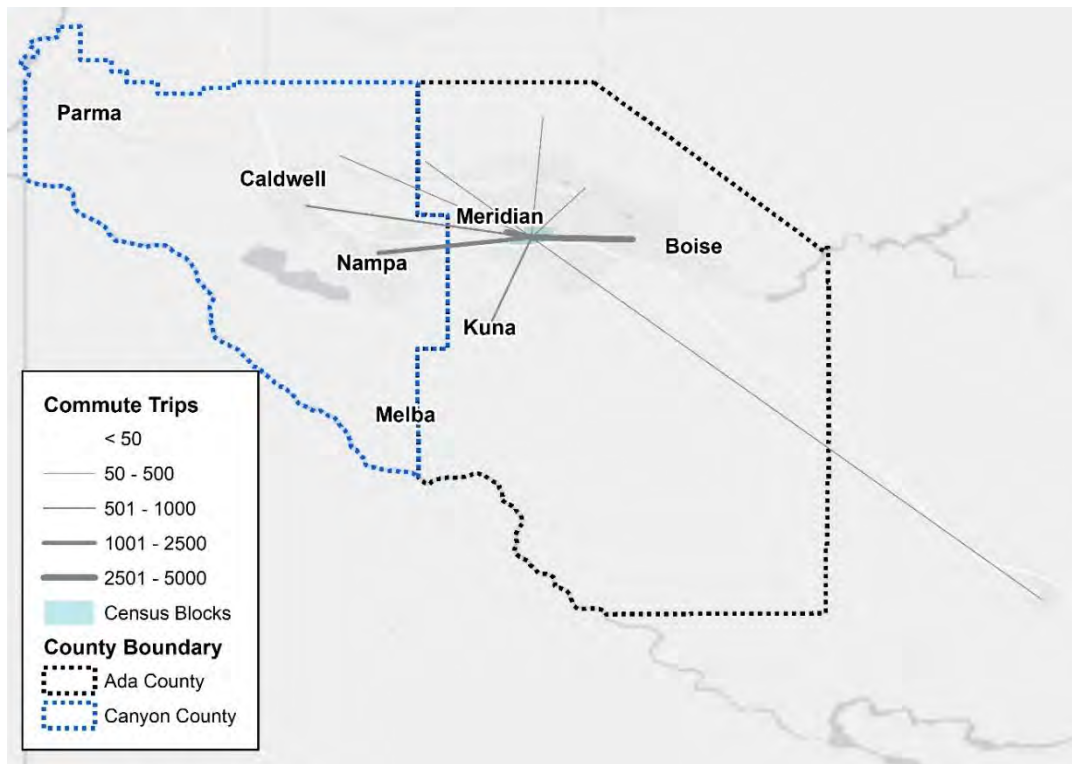


Figure 2.4: Commute Trips to Boise Metro (Census Tract 6)

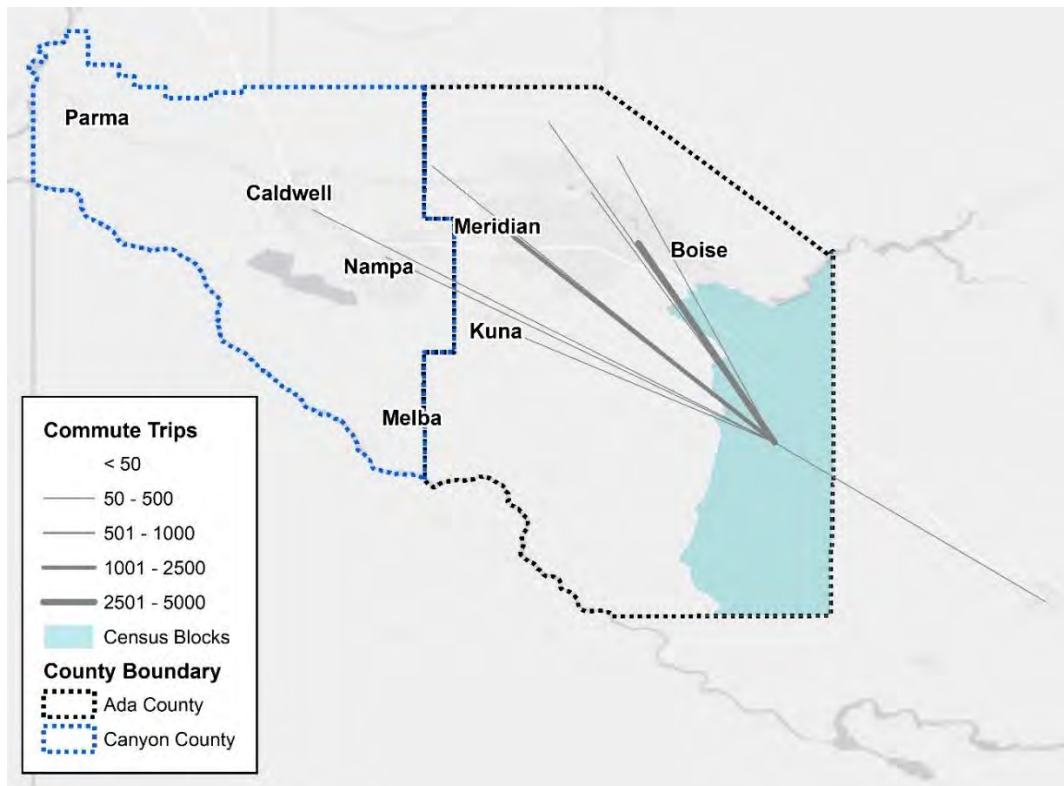
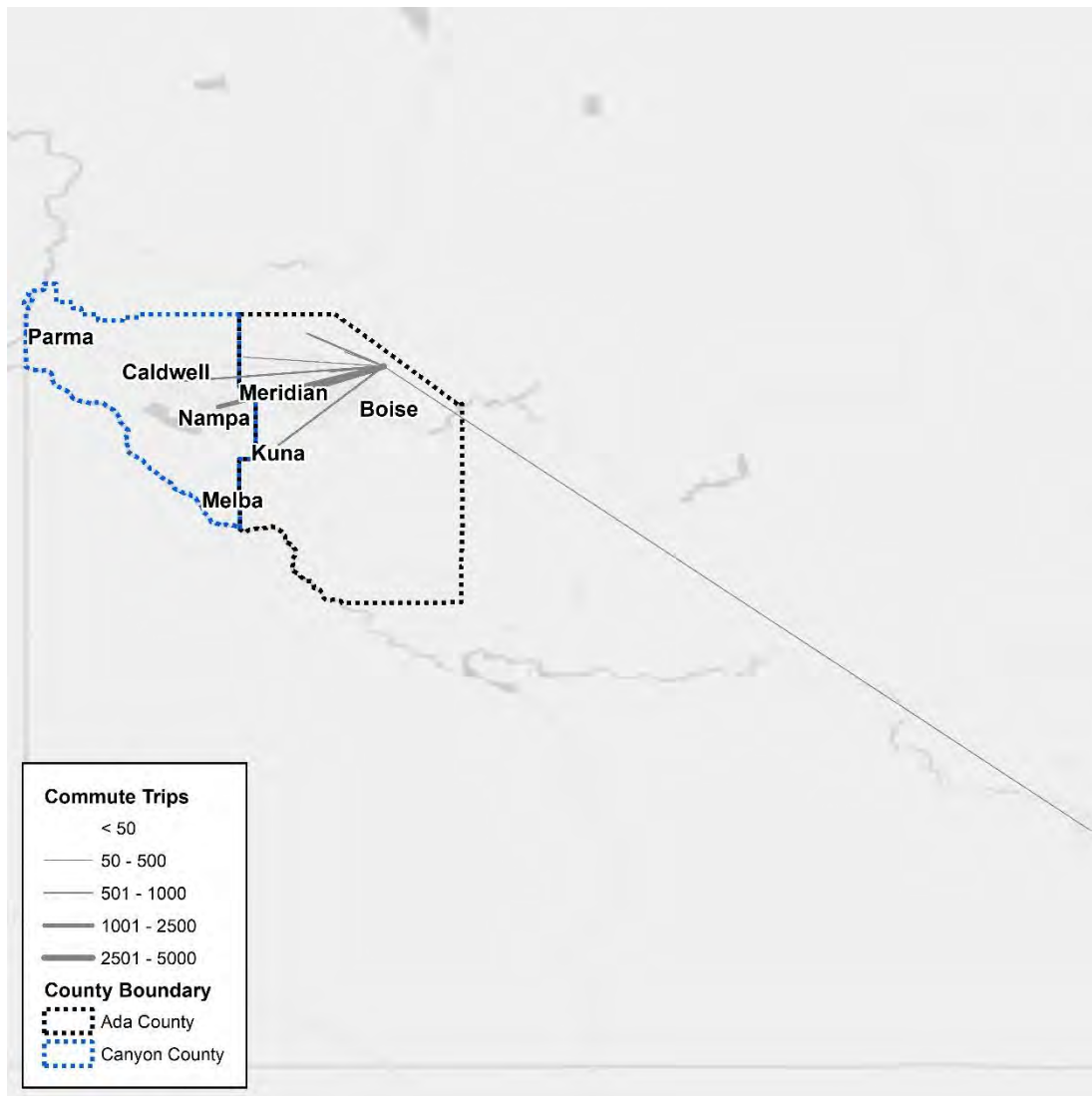


Figure 2.5: Commute Trips to Downtown Boise



This action step could include:

- **Data Sharing and Analysis:** VRT, Commuteride and their partners should share data on commute trips and patterns gathered as part of their efforts to deploy public transportation resources. Additionally, VRT, Commuteride, and their partners should establish regular (e.g., quarterly, biannually or annually) opportunities to analyze and report on commuter trip data, and how current established routes align with commuter trip patterns and densities.
- **Leveraging Flexible Actions (Actions 2A-3 and 2A-4):** Consider pursuing Actions 2A-3 and 2A-4 to build more flexibility into the vanpool system prior to pursuing extensive targeting of new routes.
- **Consider a Year 1 Fare Subsidy:** Consider a fare subsidy in Year 1 for high-density commute paths to attract riders and support reductions in single-occupancy commuting.

Action 2A-3: Consider reducing the minimum requirements for vanpool ridership, from 7 to 5.

The 2020 Commuteride Club Red Program Handbook requires a minimum ridership of 7 participants paying full-time fares for each route, although vanpools can start with 5 riders and scale up to 7 within a one-month period. It has proven challenging over the years for Treasure Valley vanpool commuters to attract and retain this level of ridership along a vanpool route to meet this requirement, and this trend is expected to continue and even intensify as more people embrace remote work for part of the week. With this requirement in place, many vanpool routes will cease to operate because of a lack of ridership, and many more will never be formed at all.

90% of Regional Vanpool Study
Community Questionnaire respondents
have never used vanpool.

Action 2A-4: Consider implementing a flexible per ride fare option.

Flexibility in vanpool fares is few and far between, even among well-established vanpool programs; the norm continues to be a monthly fare which caters to riders using the service every workday, or at least most workdays in a calendar month. However, some vanpool organizations, including Commuteride, have begun to implement flexibility in their fare programs. Currently, Commuteride offers a part-time fare program for riders using vanpool for 8 round trips per month. The part-time fare is 50% of the full-time fare.

At present, only one vanpool organization is openly pursuing and marketing a daily fare. In Summer 2021, Intercity Transit, based in Olympia, Washington, implemented a standardized and simplified monthly fare schedule¹³ based on a commuter's daily round trip mileage, as well as a daily trip fare of \$10 for commuters using vanpool 10 trips or fewer each month.

¹³ <https://www.intercitytransit.com/services/vanpool/vanpool-flat-rate-vanpool-fare>

Figure 2.6: Intercity Transit (Olympia, WA) 2021 Vanpool Fare Schedule

Flat Rate Vanpool Fare	
The Flat Rate Vanpool Fare structure simplifies our old fare structure from 2,000 price points to eight . In addition, the flat rate fare structure adds a single fare for our daily trip option. The Flat Rate Vanpool fare is summarized below.	
Daily Round Trip Miles	Monthly per Person Fare
0-25	\$25
26-50	\$50
51-75	\$75
76-100	\$100
101-125	\$125
126-150	\$150
151-175	\$175
176-200	\$200
Daily Trip Fare	\$10

Per Intercity Transit staff's presentation to its Board of Directors, the objectives of the daily fare program were to:

- Accommodate remote workers.
- Enable commuters to try vanpool with a limited up-front financial investment, therefore increasing potential conversion among people who typically wouldn't try vanpool.

Assuming the current volume of passenger trips, reducing the full-time ridership requirement to 5 (Action 1A-4) will increase monthly costs per rider by about 40%. However, this difference could be made up by incorporating a flexible per ride fare option for riders willing to "fill" a vanpool seat on a single-day basis. **Figure 1.7** summarizes the numbers behind this calculation. Note that the figures shown are raw, actual costs; no grant-based or other subsidies are included

42% of Regional Vanpool Study Community Questionnaire respondents either set their remote work/office work schedule entirely or have at least some flexibility in which days they travel to the office.

Figure 2.6: Flexible Per Ride Cost/Breakeven Calculation

Annual Cost per Vanpool	\$25,500.00
7-Member Vanpool	
Annual Cost per Vanpooler	\$3,642.86
Daily Breakeven Flex Fare, Aggressive Scenario	\$14.50 (rounded to the nearest quarter-dollar)
Daily Breakeven Flex Fare, Moderate Scenario	\$19.50 (rounded to the nearest quarter-dollar)
5-Member Vanpool	
Annual Cost per Vanpooler	\$5,100.00
Daily Breakeven Flex Fare, Aggressive Scenario	\$20.50 (rounded to the nearest quarter-dollar)
Daily Breakeven Flex Fare, Moderate Scenario	\$27.25 (rounded to the nearest quarter-dollar)

The **Aggressive Scenario** assumes that at least one rider can be found on a given vanpool route for every commute trip, assuming 250 round-trip commute trips each year.

The **Moderate Scenario** assumes that at least one rider can be found on a given vanpool route for 75% of commute trips, assuming 250 round-trip commute trips each year.

High-demand commute paths, such as those depicted in **Figures 1.2, Figure 1.3, and Figure 1.4**, may offer excellent opportunities to pilot the reduced ridership maximum and flexible per ride fare program, given the conversion potential and scalability. Given success in these areas, these programs could be extended to include other areas regionwide. To get this strategy off the ground, it is recommended that VRT and Commuteride consider subsidizing daily fares by a margin of 10-30%; it is unlikely that this strategy will otherwise result in conversions to vanpool as a primary commute method otherwise given the price and comparable convenience.

This action step would require several key considerations to be fully implemented, including:

- **Method of payment:** This option would function most effectively with a bulk purchase of rides up front, which would then be expended by the rider over a designated period (e.g., 1 year). For example, a rider could create an account with the service provider and purchase a 20-ride pass, similarly to how Commuteride customers currently create accounts and pay monthly fares. This up-front, bulk purchase would also help part-time vanpoolers apply for pre-tax commuter benefits offered by their employers.
- **Usage monitoring:** A digitized vanpool user tracking system, such as MagicBus or RideAmigos software, would be the best option to monitor part-time riders, and even identify routes where seats need to be filled. Any usage monitoring system should be solicited or developed in close coordination with development of the Integrated Mobility Plan.

Strategy 2B: Strategically expand services to broaden vanpool’s reach.

57% of Regional Vanpool Study Community Questionnaire respondents would be willing to try vanpool for a commute cost savings of \$50 or less per month.

Due to current policies under the Ada County Highway District, the existing vanpool system operated by Commuteride focuses primarily on trips that originate, end, or pass through Ada County, although these trips include residents of several other counties throughout

the region, including Canyon, Elmore, and Gem. VRT, Commuteride, and their partners are interested in exploring ways to expand vanpool services in Canyon County, which is currently home to 77,832 workers¹⁴, with an expectation to grow substantially over the next decade. This effort would require some policy changes discussed on pages 34-35.

Action 2B-1: Strategically expand routes to accommodate increasingly common commute paths.

28% of Regional Vanpool Study Community Questionnaire respondents spend 31 minutes or more on their one-way commute to work.

The density of certain Ada-to-Canyon and Canyon-to-Canyon commute trips supports expansion of the vanpool system. **Figure 1.8** below depicts common commute paths per Census data, and highlights (in orange) paths that should be prioritized for vanpool expansion. Note that the commute paths selected are

either Ada-to-Canyon or Canyon-to-Canyon commutes, yield >300 commuters per day, and could meet the distance and time requirements for vanpool (18 miles or 25 minutes at peak) as shown in **Figure 2.2**.

¹⁴ Per Bureau of Labor Statistics Data as of March 2021

Figure 2.8: Commuter Distribution by Census Tract

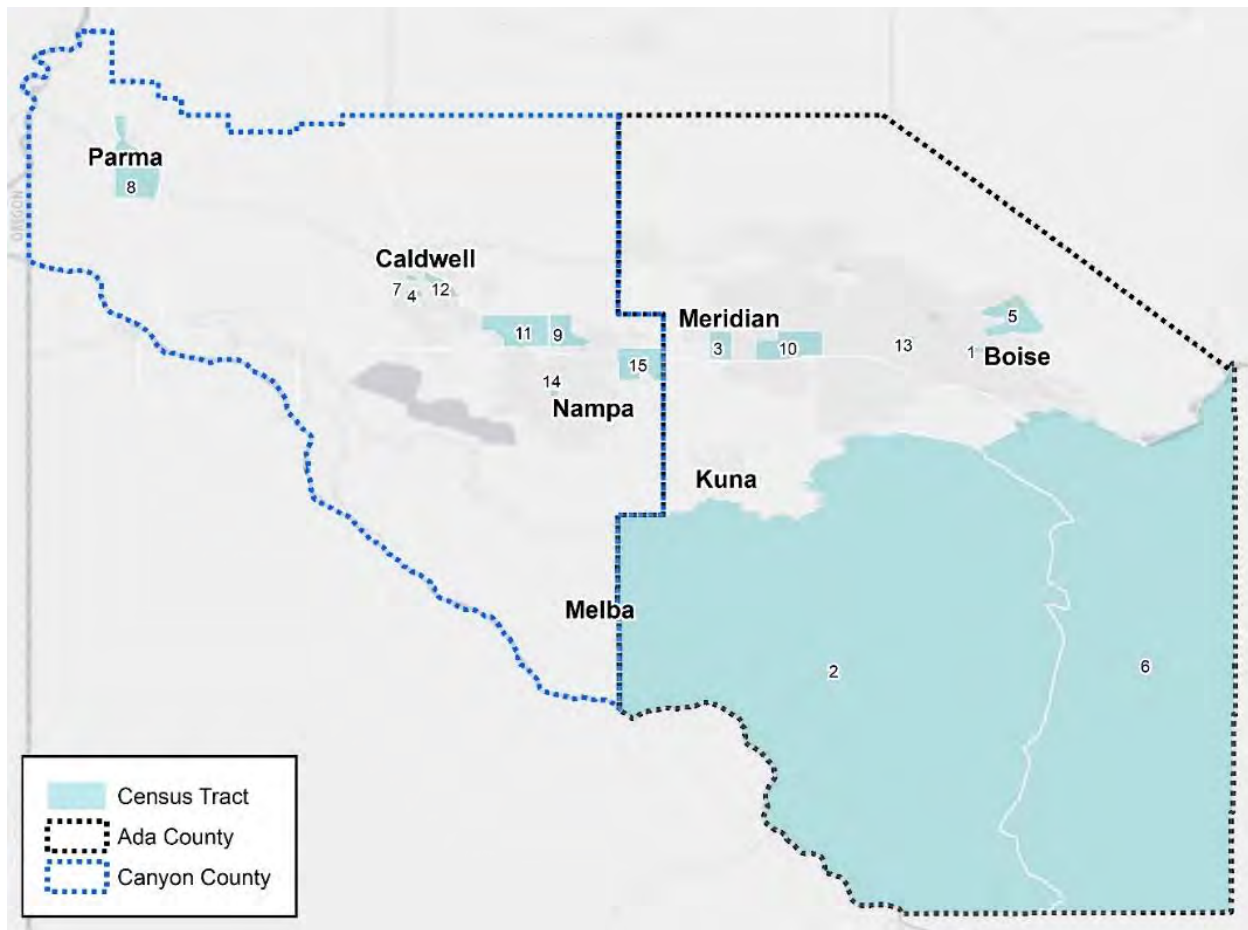
Employment Destination Tract Label	Employment Destination City	Commuter City of Origination									Total
		Boise	Meridian	Nampa	Eagle	Caldwell	Garden City	Kuna	Middleton	Other	
1	Boise	231	38	25	12	8	7	6	4	138	469
2	Kuna	372	114	291	15	108	15	109	45	532	1,601
3	Meridian	228	258	111	21	37	7	31	10	318	1,021
4	Caldwell	59	47	145	16	232	<5	13	19	358	889
5	Boise	293	72	33	22	8	18	8	<5	172	626
6	Boise	4,634	1,252	497	137	150	89	272	<5	2,565	9,596
7	Parma	158	77	146	18	239	10	16	13	325	1,002
8	Parma	14	11	21	<5	40	<5	<5	<5	347	433
9	Nampa	347	223	648	38	324	19	33	39	801	2,472
10	Meridian	4,835	3,920	1,875	436	866	253	588	127	5,190	18,090
11	Nampa	466	356	1,071	46	651	<5	63	60	1,741	4,454
12	Caldwell	160	109	303	23	480	16	<5	33	760	1,884
13	Boise	2,879	1,000	673	211	325	119	183	56	2,041	7,487
14	Nampa	58	47	217	6	44	5	10	7	208	602
15	Nampa*	312	358	771	23	393	18	106	18	937	2,936

Source: U.S. Census

*Includes assumed impacts of total employment as reported by Amazon, assuming even distribution of employees over 3 shifts proportionately distributed across the reported zip codes.

Figure 2.9 marks the locations of census tracts referenced in **Figure 2.8**.

Figure 2.9: Census Tract Locations



This action step could include:

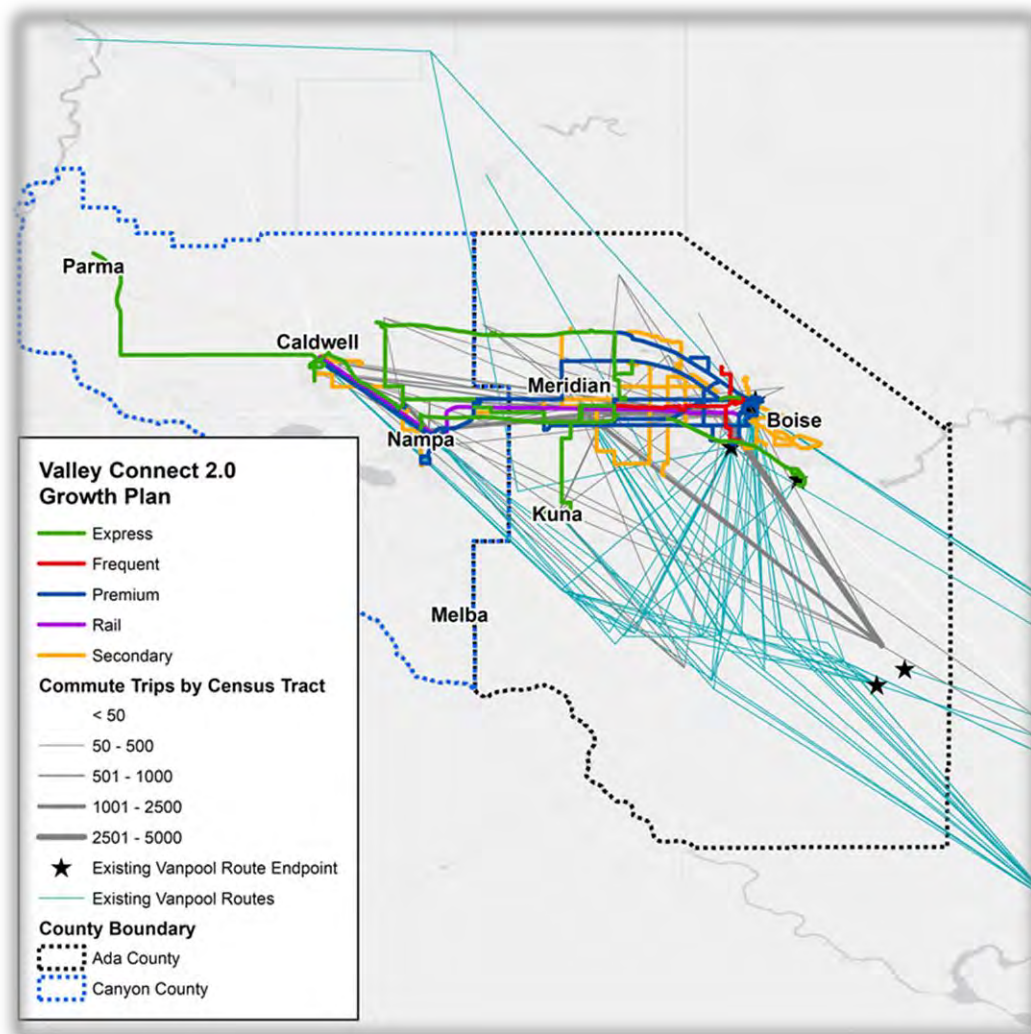
- **Data Sharing and Analysis:** Data sharing, analysis, and reporting as discussed on page 16.
- **Leveraging Flexible Actions (Actions 2A-3 and 2A-4):** Leverage flexible action steps as discussed on pages 25-27.
- **Coordination with Major Municipalities:** Work with large municipalities, such as Caldwell and Nampa, to coordinate outreach to employers and commuters and work to establish complementary policies and action steps levied by the municipal agency.
- **Consider a Year 1 Fare Subsidy:** Consider a fare subsidy in Year 1 for high-density commute paths to attract riders and support reductions in single-occupancy commuting.

Action 2B-2: Invest in fixed-route connections in core areas.

VRT has ambitious plans to grow transit service over the next twenty years, including increased service in Canyon County. Offering vanpool as a fixed-route service connection can efficiently extend geographic coverage and potentially create opportunities for those working non-traditional shifts to use vanpool as part of their commute. This action step could be piloted at existing bus stations in Canyon County with high ridership and expanded as demand increases and new stops are added to the transit system.

Figure 2.10 depicts the growth plan for transit service per VRT's Valley Connect 2.0, overlaid with commute trips and existing vanpool routes. Note that some endpoints for vanpool routes are off the map.

Figure 2.10 Valley Connect 2.0 Growth Plan Service with Commute Trips and Vanpool Routes



Strategy 2C: Expand beyond typical vanpool to provide coverage and choice to key populations.

Per current Commuteride vanpool program regulations, vanpool routes must have at least 2 participants as volunteer drivers. For many commuting populations, this is not a feasible option, particularly among immigrant and low-income communities without established driving records or proper insurance, and among large employers with high turnover rates. For this reason, establishing a robust driver services program could yield higher levels of conversion among current single-occupancy vehicle commuters, and could improve employee retention and productivity for Treasure Valley businesses.

Action 2C-1: Consider expansion of Village Van services along core Ada-to-Canyon and Canyon-to-Canyon commute paths.

VRT currently offers its Village Van service between Kuna and Boise. The program works with large employers who contract with VRT to provide transit service along established routes for low-income people and refugees who work hours outside of the typical workday. The service operates 15 hours per day, 7 days per week. The cost to provide this service is \$35 per hour, based on a cost analysis provided by VRT in October 2021. A piloted extension of this service—for example, offering three days of service between in high-demand Canyon County commute paths such as Caldwell to Nampa or Meridian to Nampa—could dramatically improve mobility and connectivity for commuters in cases where vanpool is not an option. Driver-provided services like Village Van are especially important in low-income areas and areas with a high percentage of households without access to personal vehicles, as shown in **Figure 2.11** and **Figure 2.12** below.

Figure 2.11: Average Household Income by Zip Code with Transit and Vanpool Service

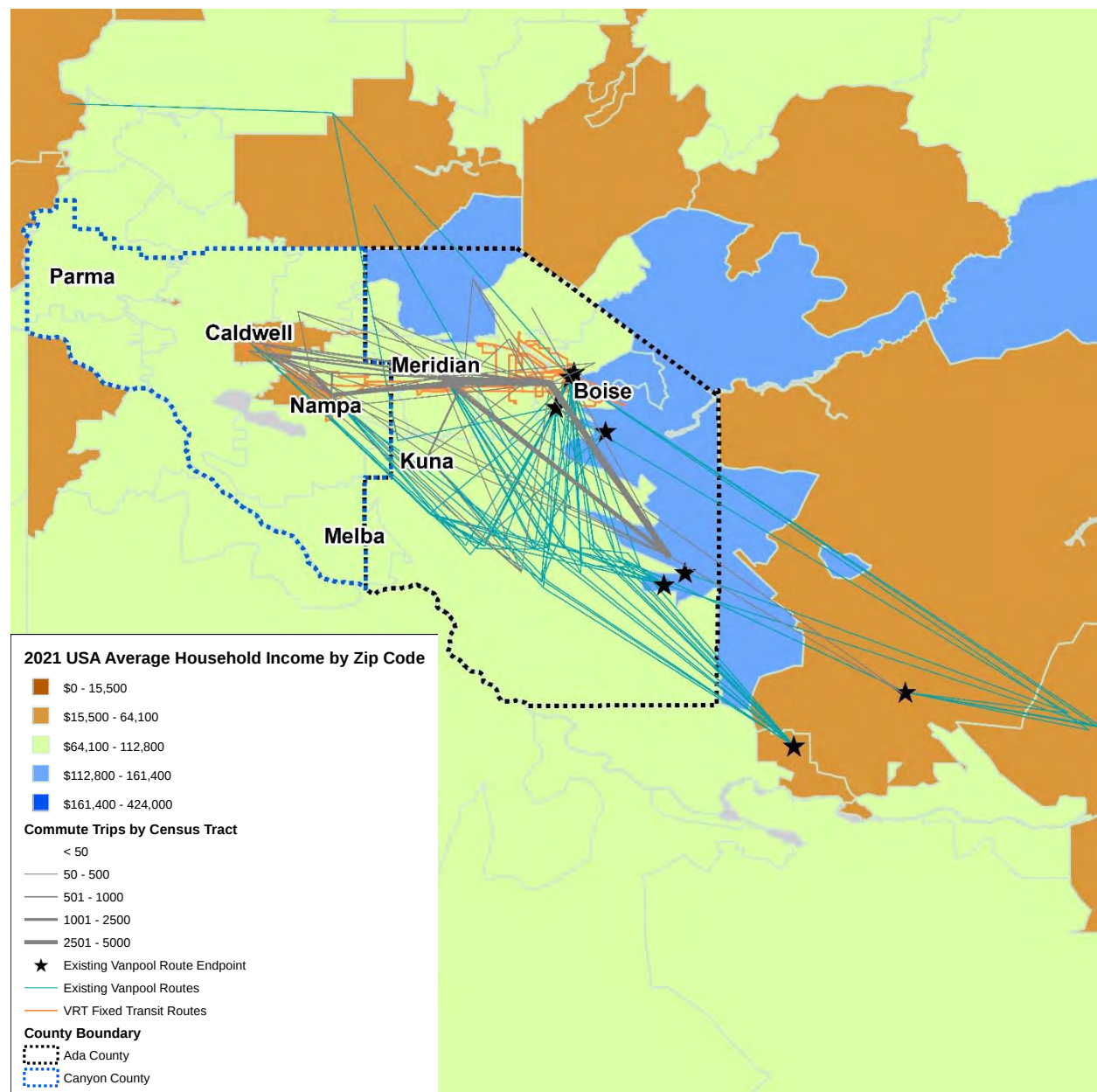
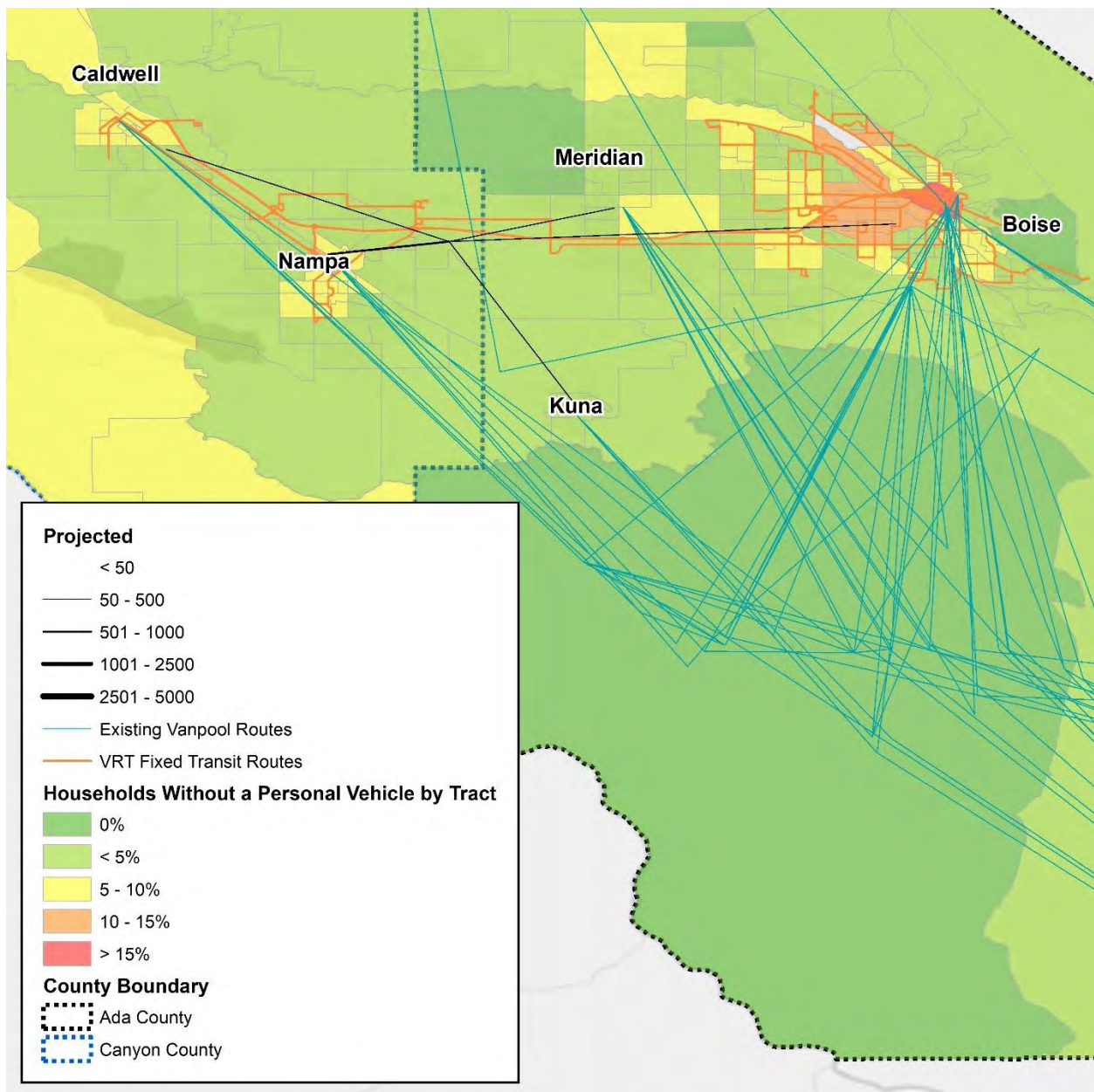


Figure 2.12: Households without a Personal Vehicle by Census Tract, with Vanpool Routes



Cost and Funding: A piloted extension of the Village Van service program comprising a five-hour route offered three days per week is projected to cost about \$60,000 per year, with expected increases to this cost as driver wages and other expenses increase annually. This investment could be partially covered by VRT Federal funds, with the potential to leverage other funding from municipalities where services are offered.

Action 2C-2: Consider packaging driver service offerings as 100% paid commuter pools.

Some large employers have shown interest in a commuter pool option for their employees both as a benefit option and as a method to improve employee productivity and timeliness but have difficulties with vanpool mostly because of high employee turnover. For employers who do not want to create their own employer vanpool programs, there is an opportunity to build a packaged commuter pool option with a driver hired by VRT or the service provider, set at a fixed rate paid by the employer on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis.

The existing Village Van costs (\$35/hour) can be used as a planning tool for projecting costs for employer pools, but actual costs should be estimated depending on the route and any special requirements included in the employer agreement. Agreements should include set annual increases to cost at CPI and/or commensurate with increases in expenses to operate, such as driver wage raises.

VANPOOL USER PROFILES

While every commuter in the Treasure Valley is unique, this Regional Vanpool System strategy focuses on five key commuter profiles to evaluate recommendations and develop action steps that will result in tangible benefits for those living and working in the Treasure Valley.

Ralph: The Traditional Commuter (Time and Direction). Ralph is a “traditional” commuter in the Treasure Valley who works in an office in Boise in person every day, Monday through Friday. He typically travels to work from his home in Meridian around 7 a.m., and travels home from work between 5:15 and 6:00 p.m.

Fatima: The Traditional Commuter (Time Only). Fatima is a “traditional” commuter in the Treasure Valley who works in an office in Nampa in person every day, Monday through Friday. She usually leaves her apartment in Boise around 7:45 a.m. and travels home from work at 6:00 p.m. on the dot.

Juan: The Flexible Commuter. Juan is a “flexible” commuter in the Treasure Valley. He lives in Caldwell, and works from home 2 to 3 days each week. On Mondays, Thursdays, and some Fridays depending on his schedule, Juan heads into the office in Boise, typically leaving between 6:30 and 7 a.m., and then heads home around 4:30 p.m.

Alex: The Non-Traditional Commuter. Alex is a “non-traditional” commuter in the Treasure Valley. Alex lives in Boise and works in Nampa. Their typical shift is from 3 p.m. to 12 a.m. Wednesday through Sunday, although they sometimes pick up shifts for coworkers or are asked to work overtime. Alex works for a company where turnover is nearly twice the industry standard.

Elsbeth: The High-Needs Commuter. Elspeth is a “high-needs” commuter in the Treasure Valley. She lives in Caldwell and works in Parma as a farm hand. She doesn’t have her own car, although she is sometimes able to get a ride to work with coworkers or on occasion borrow her cousin’s car. She works at the farm six days a week, Tuesday through Sunday, and needs to be at work by 7 a.m.

HOW WILL SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS HELP TREASURE VALLEY COMMUTERS?

	Ralph Traditional (Time + Pattern)	Fatima Traditional (Time Only)	Juan Flexible	Alex Non-Traditional	Elspeth High-Needs
2A-1: Target Employers in High-Demand Areas	+++ More potential vanpool route options for traditional time and pattern commuters.	++ More potential vanpool options for Ada to Canyon and Canyon to Canyon commuters in the mid to long-term, depending on demand.	+++ More potential vanpool options for flexible commuters to leverage as an ad-hoc or part-time rider.	++ No direct benefit, although expanded vanpool options will increase employer and agency awareness and support non-traditional commuters.	++ No direct benefit, although expanded vanpool options will increase employer and agency awareness and support high-needs commuters.
2A-2: Reduce Minimum Vanpool Ridership Requirements	+++ More potential vanpool route options for traditional time and pattern commuters, as they will be easier to form and maintain.	++ More potential vanpool route options for traditional time commuters in the mid to long term as the option is expanded, as they will be easier to form and maintain.	+++ More potential vanpool options for flexible commuters to leverage as an ad-hoc or part-time rider.	++ More potential options for non-traditional commuters to leverage as an ad-hoc or part-time rider if routes meet shift times.	++ More potential options for high-needs commuters to leverage as a rider, although routes may not always meet their needs.
2A-3: Implement Per-Ride Fare Option	++ No direct benefit, although the option will be available for traditional commuters if and when their schedules become more flexible.	++ No direct benefit, although the option will be available for traditional commuters if and when their schedules become more flexible.	+++ Easier and cheaper for flexible commuters to choose vanpool as an ad-hoc option.	++ Easier and cheaper for non-traditional commuters to choose vanpool as an ad-hoc option when routes fit their needs.	++ Easier and cheaper for high-needs commuters to choose vanpool as an ad-hoc option, although commute pattern needs might not be met, and price sensitivity will still be a factor.
2B-1: Strategically Expand Routes	++ No direct benefit, although expanded vanpool options will increase employer and agency awareness and support traditional commuters.	+++ More potential vanpool route options along commute paths that meet this commuter profile's needs.	++ No direct benefit, although expanded vanpool options will increase employer and agency awareness and support flexible commuters.	++ No direct benefit, although expanded vanpool options will increase employer and agency awareness and support non-traditional commuters.	++ More potential vanpool options for high-needs commuters, although routes may not always meet their needs.
2B-2: Invest in Fixed-Route Connections	++ No direct benefit, although expanded fixed-route connections could provide more commute options for traditional commuters.	++ No direct benefit, although expanded fixed-route connections could provide more commute options for traditional commuters.	+++ Combined with the flex fare program, provides additional options for flexible commuters to use vanpool in combination with high-frequency transit.	+++ Provides additional options for non-traditional commuters to use vanpool in combination with high-frequency transit during times that correspond with their work start and end times.	+++ Provides additional options for high-needs commuters to use vanpool in combination with high-frequency transit.
2C-1: Expand Driver Services	++ No direct benefit.	++ No direct benefit.	++ No direct benefit.	+++ Provides additional options for non-traditional commuters to get to work without needing to establish a vanpool route or having to worry about driver turnover.	+++ Provides additional options for high-needs commuters to get to work without needing to establish a vanpool route or meet driver requirements.

	Ralph Traditional (Time + Pattern)	Fatima Traditional (Time Only)	Juan Flexible	Alex Non-Traditional	Elspeth High-Needs
2C-2: Package Driver Service Offerings	+ No direct benefit, although increased employer awareness of commuter pool options could benefit traditional commuters.	+ No direct benefit, although increased employer awareness of commuter pool options could benefit traditional commuters.	++ In cases where employees work in the office certain days of the week, this could be a valuable benefit for flexible commuters.	+++ Provides a reliable, employer-subsidized option for non-traditional commuters to get to work without worrying about driver turnover.	+++ Provides a reliable, employer-subsidized option for high-needs commuters to get to work without worrying about driver turnover.

- +** : Does not offer direct benefits.
- ++** : Offers direct benefits in the mid-term and long-term, and/or offers benefits in the short-term with some caveats.
- +++** : Offers direct benefits in the short-term, mid-term, and long-term.

GOAL 3: ADVANCE REGIONAL VANPOOL AND SHARED MOBILITY MARKETING AND PARTNERSHIPS.

This goal focuses on advancing marketing vanpool and shared mobility options regionwide. This goal advances the following opportunities referenced in Chapter III:

Opportunities:



Expands geographic coverage

by growing marketing practices that target employers and municipalities regionwide.

HOW TO MEASURE SUCCESS

This goal advances regional vanpool and shared mobility parking and partnerships by supporting already strong marketing campaigns and practices and identifying ways to engage with new and growing audiences. Achievement of this goal can be measured primarily by assessing awareness of and interest in vanpool programs among employers and municipalities and measuring the extent to which employers and municipalities have considered or even adopted programs, initiatives, and policies advanced by VRT, Commuteride, and their partners.

EMPLOYER SURVEY

An annual survey for all large employers, as discussed on page 11, will provide necessary data in the evaluation of employer awareness of, interest in, and participation in vanpool programs, and could also provide insight as to the methods and avenues through which employers learn about vanpool. Additionally, this survey could offer an opportunity to ask about employer policies and programs related to parking and mobility. For example:

- Do you provide parking for your employees? On-site or off-site?
- If off-site, how much per space does your company pay for this parking?
- How much do your employees pay for parking?
- Does your worksite(s) currently provide any multimodal amenities for employees, such as bike or scooter share, bike parking, lockers or showers, etc.?
- What parking, transportation, and mobility benefits do you offer to employees? What benefits have you considered, but do not yet offer?

MUNICIPALITY SURVEY

An annual survey for Ada and Canyon County municipalities (particularly community development/planning and/or transportation/public works staff) can measure the extent to which municipal agencies are supporting complementary efforts, such as a requirement that all new development create a TDM plan, in their regulatory practices and policies. This survey could also support the development of individualized policy plans for municipalities that have demonstrated interest in these complementary policies but have not yet adopted or implemented them. Sample questions include:

- Does your municipal code/development code currently support parking reductions for transportation demand management initiatives, such as vanpool programs, carshare programs, or bikeshare programs?
- Does your municipal code/development code currently require a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for new development? Does your code require mitigating strategies for analyses that indicate traffic generation above a certain threshold?
- Does your municipal code/development code currently require any new development to create and submit a transportation demand management (TDM) plan?
- Has your municipal staff or other decision-making bodies (e.g., Planning Commission or City Council) ever considered these initiatives or similar initiatives to advance community goals?

GOAL 3 STRATEGIES

Strategy 3A: Build on existing employer marketing initiatives.

Treasure Valley employers drive the needs and requirements of Treasure Valley commuters. Engaging employers is an essential component of any successful vanpool and shared mobility strategy and is an important function of the current vanpool program operated by Commuteride.

Several action steps are recommended to develop a more regional employer marketing strategy, and enhance initiatives already advanced by Commuteride's efforts.

Action 3A-1: Continue to build on customized marketing plans that target employers based on key benefits that support their goals.

Commuteride already does an excellent job positioning vanpool as a way to achieve multiple goals espoused by employers, such as reducing demand for parking, recruiting and retaining talent, boosting morale and productivity, and demonstrating environmental leadership.

EMPLOYER SPONSORED VANPOOLS

Help your employees get to and from work with an employer-sponsored vanpool. Simply pay a monthly vanpool fare for a group of up to 13 employees per van. Commuteride is an experienced program with demonstrated employer partnerships, including Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area, Stevens Henager College, Hearthside Food Solutions, and more.

- REDUCE PARKING DEMAND**
- RECRUIT & RETAIN TALENT**
- BOOST MORALE & PRODUCTIVITY**
- DEMONSTRATE ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP**

GET STARTED

- 1** Consider which employees may take advantage of vanpooling. Commuteride can assist with address maps, surveys, and on-site events to help.
- 2** Complete an employer sponsored vanpool agreement. All expenses, including fuel, insurance, maintenance, and more are included in the vanpool fare.
- 3** Create vanpool groups based on common routes, work schedules, and driver availability. All riders must complete participant agreements. Commuteride will provide driver training and vanpool orientation.

An employer sponsored vanpool is an attractive benefit for your employees. Why not go further and create a commute benefit program for your workplace? Take advantage of the free Commuteride Works program to get started.

Part of an overview of services and benefits Commuteride provides to area employers.

This action step entails advancing this overview-level marketing to reach specific employers regionwide. Tailoring this message to speak to their bottom line will help to maximize employer partnerships and overall commuter conversion to vanpool and other smart commuting options. This would include creating a targeted list of employers throughout the Treasure Valley region from three key benefits and approaching them directly. Potential benefits include, but are not limited to:

- **Public Relations—Sustainability and Regeneration:** Larger employers (e.g., Amazon) with direct-to-consumer product marketing who have indicated an interest in or commitment to sustainability and regenerative practices, and/or have developed a specific climate action plan in their broader corporate messaging.
- **Employee Attraction, Recruitment, and Retention:** Employers of any size and type hiring and retaining skilled laborers from a

competitive workforce.

- **Employee Timeliness and Productivity:** Employers of any size and type relying on shift work or especially reliant on employee timeliness and productivity during shifts.

Commuteride staff can leverage this targeted marketing effort to attract employers to its existing Commuteride Works program, which offers one-on-one assistance to create a customized commute benefit plan.

Action 3A-2: Consider creation of packages for employers that can fit seamlessly into an employee benefit elections process.

In areas of the Treasure Valley where it is common for employers to provide employees with commuter benefits, like in Downtown Boise, packaging a vanpool/shared mobility option as part of the employee benefits election process can make it easy and seamless for employers to integrate this commute option. Efforts to do so should be expanded by:

- Marketing vanpool and driver-provided services as a simple, pre-tax commuter benefit election with pricing in line with Federal requirements (as of 2021, the monthly exclusion for commuter highway vehicle transportation and transit passes is \$270 per employee, so fares should not exceed this amount).

- Developing and marketing pricing, packages, and collateral materials when employers are doing their annual benefits elections process (generally in early to late Fall).
- Developing and marketing pricing, packages, and collateral materials as new employee onboarding for Treasure Valley employers.

Many public transportation agencies provide information about commuter tax benefits (federal, state, and local) on their websites and on employer resource pages. VRT and Commuteride should consider ways to make this information more accessible.

Metro
For Employers
Commuter Tax Benefit

Sign up for transit alerts

Commuter Tax Benefit


Quick links

[IRS benefits](#)

[Washington State Tax Credit](#)

[Tax resources](#)

[IRS regulations on Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefits \(PDF\)](#)

[Association for Commuter Transportation \(ACT\)](#)

Years ago, a simple yet ingenious idea took root: By allowing workers to defray public transportation costs through their employers' benefits packages, we could reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. In 1998, Congress amended the tax code to allow employees to take advantage of commuter benefits using their own pre-tax dollars.

King County Metro's Commuter Tax Benefit page—part of its online suite of employer resources.

Action 3A-3: Continue to champion supportive parking management and transportation demand management strategies at workplaces in the region.

In many communities throughout the Treasure Valley, driving to and parking at work is an easy choice—not only can you rely on your own vehicle, but parking is often plentiful and free (or subsidized heavily by employers). Supportive parking management strategies, championed by VRT, Commuteride, and their partners, can help create an environment where vanpool is seen as a viable and even attractive option.

Commuteride has already worked to advance transportation demand management and mobility initiatives at Treasure Valley workplaces through its **Commuteride Workspace** Mobility Grant program, which offers grant funds to small businesses (100 or fewer employees) in Ada County working to implement such initiatives at their worksite. In 2021—the first funding cycle for the pilot program—Commuteride issued these grants to 16 businesses.

Other strategies aimed to support both Ada County and Canyon County businesses may include developing marketing packages, including collateral, webinars, and more that:

- **Showing the true cost of parking:** Helping employers (particularly those who own their own work sites) understand the cost of a parking space, including capital costs, operations, and maintenance costs, and opportunity cost, as compared to the cost of a vanpool or shared mobility option to get employees to work.
- **Supporting parity:** Many employers provide free or subsidized close-in or on-site parking, but do not provide an equivalent benefit for other commute options, like public transit, vanpool, or shared mobility. Compare the costs of these offerings for employers and encourage them to

offer both options. The fact that parking is a benefit only for those who have a personal vehicle could also be an important consideration for employers who locate in or hire staff from areas with low household vehicle ownership.

- **Supporting disincentives:** Employers in dense urban environments with limited space may already be motivated to reduce employee parking on-site. Encourage employers to consider paid parking for employees who do choose to drive and park, while subsidizing or offering a free alternative commute option like vanpool.

In addition, VRT, Commuteride, and their partners might consider partnering for an expansion of the Workspace Mobility Grant program to incentivize parking management programs. For example, a future version of the grant program could offer up to \$3,000 for small businesses in both Ada and Canyon counties to:

- Administer a parking cash-out program
- Offer an “opt out” transportation/mobility benefit as an alternative to on-site parking
- Conduct an analysis of parking needs and transportation demand management options

Strategy 3B: Strengthen partnerships regionwide.

Action 3B-1: Consider development of a vanpool/shared mobility policy package for local jurisdictions.

Municipalities can strengthen vanpool and shared mobility through regulations and ordinances, particularly in site development plan and building permit processes for new development. Creating readily available regulatory guidance for municipalities can help to strengthen vanpool and shared mobility options both locally and regionally. Example policies may include:

- **Traffic Impact Analysis requirements:** Require new developments to provide vehicle traffic impact analyses and implement mitigation strategies if traffic generation is above a certain threshold.
- **Transportation Demand Management Plan requirements:** Require all new developments, or at least all commercial developments, of a certain size to provide a transportation demand management plan with specific parameters around single-occupancy vehicle reduction.
- **Administrative parking reductions for office buildings:** Offer an incentive in the form of an administratively granted parking reduction to new commercial buildings that provide transportation demand management programmatic elements and infrastructure, such as vanpool and shared mobility fare subsidies, preferential vanpool and carpool parking, and more

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

The Regional Vanpool System Plan focuses on goals, strategies, and action steps intended to build on existing efforts, address changes in commute behaviors, patterns and needs, accommodate a more diverse range of users regionwide, and guide future investments, all while building on existing and available infrastructure and remaining cost effective. Following is a summary of the goals, strategies, and action steps included in the Plan.

GOAL 1: SUPPORT A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR VANPOOL AND SHARED MOBILITY

Strategy 1A: Create processes that support tactical, regionwide deployment of vanpool and shared mobility services.	
Action Step	Action Description
Action 1A-1	Create a group or committee of VRT, Commuteride and other shared mobility service providers dedicated to regional vanpool and shared mobility services.
Action 1A-2	As necessitated by the vision and needs of the Regional Vanpool Study, the Integrated Mobility Plan and the Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee/Work Group, consider designating a Vanpool/Shared Mobility Coordinator/Manager to lead the Regional Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Committee who will report the progress of the Regional Vanpool and Shared Mobility Services Advisory Committee/Work Group to the VRT Executive Board.
Action 1A-3	Adopt and implement a clear decision-making framework for deploying vanpool and shared mobility options.
Strategy 1B: Pursue structural opportunities to support expansion of vanpool and shared mobility services geographically and for hard-to-serve populations.	
Action Step	Action Description
Action 1B-1	Create uniform foundational policies for vanpool and shared mobility services.
Action 1B-2	Explore ways to extend geographic coverage so employers and residents in both Ada and Canyon counties have equal opportunity to use vanpool services.
Action 1B-3	If warranted by needs and gaps in service, develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to elicit and manage other providers' participation in vanpool and shared mobility service regionwide.

GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN VANPOOL SERVICE

Strategy 2A: Build on existing services to improve conversion potential and accommodate new users.	
Action Step	Action Description
Action 2A-1	Continue to target employers with high numbers of employees at centralized locations.
Action 2A-2	Track commute patterns and densities in traditionally high-demand areas.
Action 2A-3	Consider reducing the minimum requirements for vanpool ridership, from 7 to 5.
Action 2A-4	Consider implementing a flexible per ride fare option.
Strategy 2B: Strategically expand services to broaden vanpool's reach.	
Action Step	Action Description
Action 2B-1	Strategically expand services to broaden vanpool's reach.
Action 2B-2	Invest in fixed-route connections in core areas.
Strategy 2C: Expand beyond typical vanpool to provide coverage and choice to key populations.	
Action Step	Action Description
Action 2C-1	Consider expansion of Village Van services along core Ada-to-Canyon and Canyon-to-Canyon commute paths.
Action 2C-2	Consider packaging driver service offerings as 100% paid commuter pools.

GOAL 3: ADVANCE REGIONAL VANPOOL AND SHARED MOBILITY MARKETING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Strategy 3A: Build on existing employer marketing initiatives.	
Action Step	Action Description
Action 3A-1	Continue to build on customized marketing plans that target employers based on key benefits that support their goals.
Action 3A-2	Consider creation of packages for employers that can fit seamlessly into an employee benefit elections process.
Action 3A-3	Continue to champion supportive parking management and transportation demand management strategies at workplaces in the region.
Strategy 3B: Strengthen partnerships regionwide.	
Action Step	Action Description
Action 3B-1	Consider development of a vanpool/shared mobility policy package for local jurisdictions.

A: Existing Conditions Analysis

B: Gaps, Opportunities, and Best Practices Analysis

C: Internal Project Team Meeting Minutes

D: Project Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

E: Community Questionnaire Results

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High-Level Existing Conditions Analysis

Key Findings

The following highlights how the existing vanpool network and its complements support core guiding principles for a region-wide vanpool/shared mobility system.

How does the current vanpool system support different Treasure Valley communities? The current vanpool system plays an essential role in making smarter, lower cost commuting more accessible for many. Traditionally, vanpool participants have skewed wealthier and more educated than the Treasure Valley population as a whole, and generally have more convenient access to personal vehicles¹. In recent years, however, Commuteride has made strides in marketing vanpool options and services to nontraditional commuters and shift workers. VRT, Commuteride, and their partners are interested in continuing to increase ridership among low-income communities, people without vehicle access, service and hourly workers, and more.

How does the current vanpool system provide service to both Treasure Valley? Commuteride Club Red offers vanpool options for workers in Ada County, Canyon County, Gem County, and Elmore County. Under current policies, trips must originate, end, or pass through Ada County. Historically, this focus on Ada County made sense given its greater concentration of employment centers. However, as more and more Treasure Valley workers commute to jobs in Canyon County, VRT, Commuteride, and its partners are interested in opportunities to expand vanpool service to commute trips that serve Canyon County even when they don't include Ada County.

How does the current vanpool system fill gaps in transit service? Current vanpool service offers connections to large employers south and southeast of Downtown Boise and to the Mountain Home Air Force Base in Elmore County². Most of these employers are outside the VRT fixed route service area. Expanded efforts could offer connections to commuters throughout Canyon County and in the farther reaches of both counties.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile

To inform vanpool service planning, Walker analyzed the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Ada and Canyon Counties. While the full analysis is included as Appendix A, key findings from the analysis include:

- Ada and Canyon Counties have a combined population of approximately 711,436 inhabitants. The population of the communities are well educated, with 44% having an Associate's degree or

¹ Per Club Red annual participant questionnaires

² See Figure 1.7 on page 13

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higher level of education, and almost 70% having some post-secondary education. Of existing vanpool participants, 74% have an Associate's degree or higher level of education, with approximately 97% having some post-secondary education.

- More than three-fourths of the population between the ages of 20 and 62 are in the labor force. Of these, less than 2% are employed by the armed forces, compared to 36% of existing Commuteride vanpool participants. For those that are not in labor force (20%), such as students, retirees or stay-at-home parents, or those unemployed (3%), expanded vanpool service can provide increased access to retail and service establishment, medical and government offices, libraries, campus and more.
- Approximately 16.7% of the communities' population lives at or below the poverty line, with roughly 40% of Canyon County households having an income of less than \$50,000 per year. While only 4% of households in each county do not have access to at least one vehicle, this number grows to more than 1 in 10 in households that are rented, as opposed to 1 in 100 of owner-occupied households. Of existing Commuteride vanpool participants, approximately 30% have an annual salary less than \$52,000 per year with 8% reporting they otherwise do not have access to a vehicle for commuting to work.
- Households in Ada and Canyon have a generally high level of access to technology. Approximately 81% of the community has access to a smartphone; 94% have a computer, laptop, or tablet; and 84% has Internet. This high level of access to internet and technology presents an opportunity to provide transit information, such as vanpool availability and on-demand mobility service, online or through a mobile application.

As summarized above, current vanpool participants typically have a higher level of education, higher average household income, and more convenient access to a vehicle than those that do not participate. There is also a strong representation of military employees in the active riders.³ This could demonstrate an opportunity and need to better connect services with underserved populations such as lower-income households and those employed in sectors outside of government services and the military.

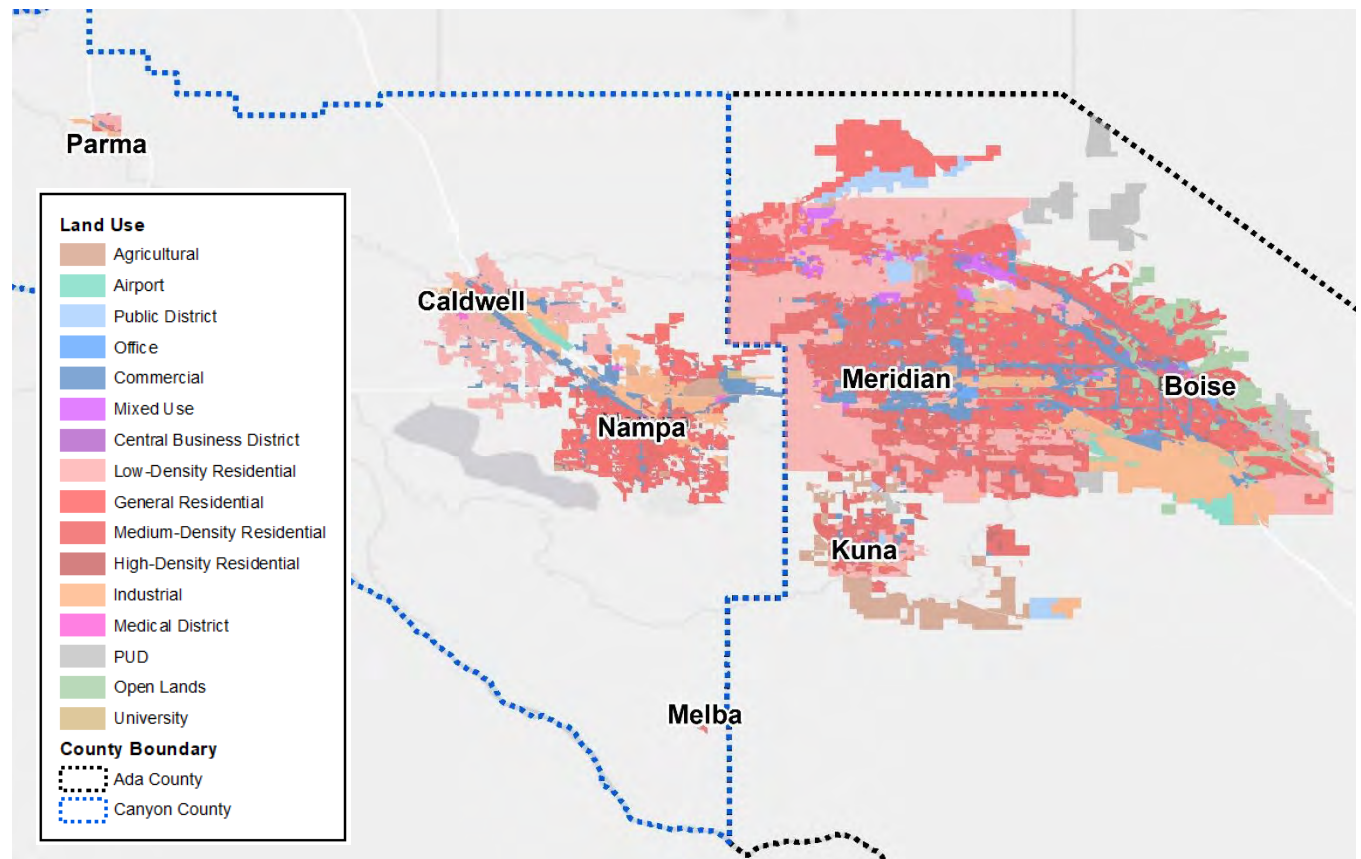
Land Use Profile

Figure 1 summarizes the existing land uses in the incorporated areas of Ada and Canyon Counties. As shown in the figure, commercial land uses are largely concentrated along major travel ways, with the densest commercial areas primarily located along I-84. While over 80% of the land use area of Canyon County is zoned for lower density land uses, 14% of Caldwell, 22% of Nampa, and 16% of Melba are zoned for commercial, mixed use, or medium and high-density residential.

³ 2012 – 2019 Commuteride Club Red Annual Questionnaire Results

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Figure 1. Ada and Canyon Counties Land Use Map



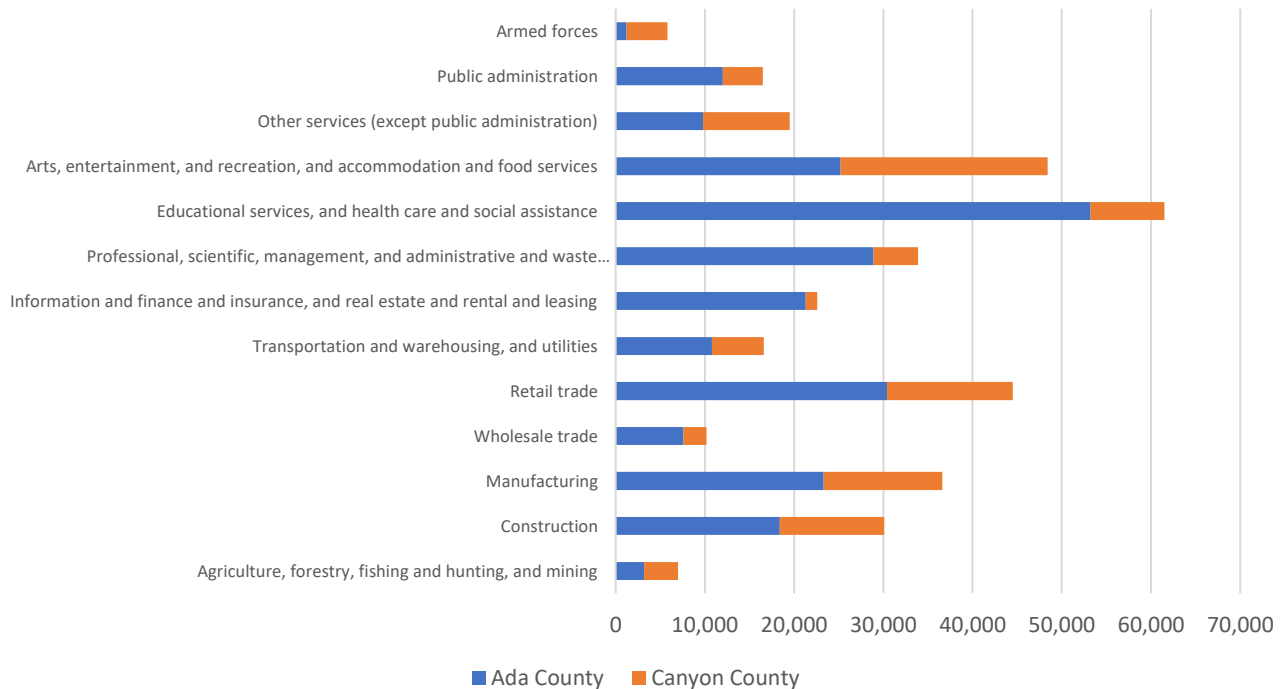
Source: Ada County, City of Caldwell, City of Parma*, City of Nampa, City of Melba*

*Zoning is approximate based on scans of hard copy maps provided that have been recreated with GIS using approximate boundaries.

There is a combined total of approximately 352,700 jobs in Ada and Canyon Counties. **Figure 2** summarizes the number of jobs by sector per county. As shown here, the largest job sector is educational services. While this remains the largest sector for Ada County individually, the largest job sector in Canyon County is arts, entertainment, recreation, lodging and food services. Comparatively, while the military represents less than 2% of Ada and Canyon Counties' total labor force, 36% of Commuteride vanpool riders in 2019 were employed with the military.

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Figure 2. Ada and Canyon Counties Jobs by NAICS Employment Sector



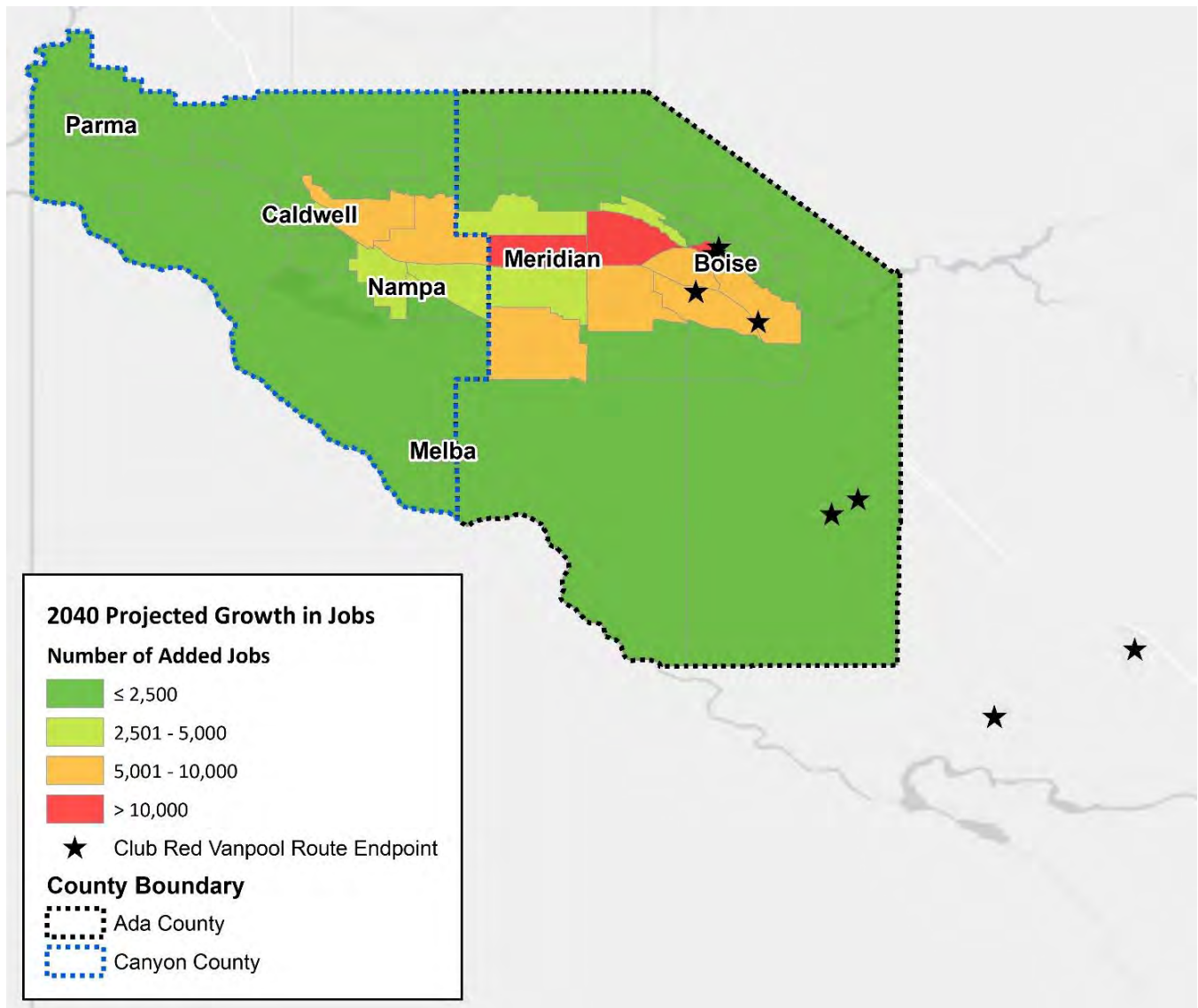
Source: U.S. Census ACS 2019 data

Collectively, Ada and Canyon Counties are home to 87% of the jobs represented by largest 100 employers in Idaho, or just under 448,000 jobs. While Canyon County represents about 11.5% of these jobs, no existing Commuteride vanpool routes terminate within Canyon County. Of the 16 routes that currently originate in Canyon County, 15 terminate in Ada County with 1 terminating at Mountain Home Airforce Base.

Looking out to the future and the demographic forecasting presented in the Communities in Motion planning process, existing vanpool service in the area does not adequately meet the growing employment sectors in Canyon County, assuming continuation of their current focus on route destinations within Ada County and Mountain Home. With North Nampa and Northeast Caldwell anticipated to add over 38,000 jobs by 2040, this area presents a strong opportunity for potential expansion of vanpool and commuter services. Ada County, by contrast, has a projected increase of over 100,000 jobs by 2040. **Figure 2** presents the Communities in Motion employment growth projections for the region overlaid with the existing Cub Red vanpool route endpoints.

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Figure 2. 2040 Projected Employment Growth and Existing Vanpool Route Endpoints



Source: Communities in Motion 2.0

Transportation Network Profile

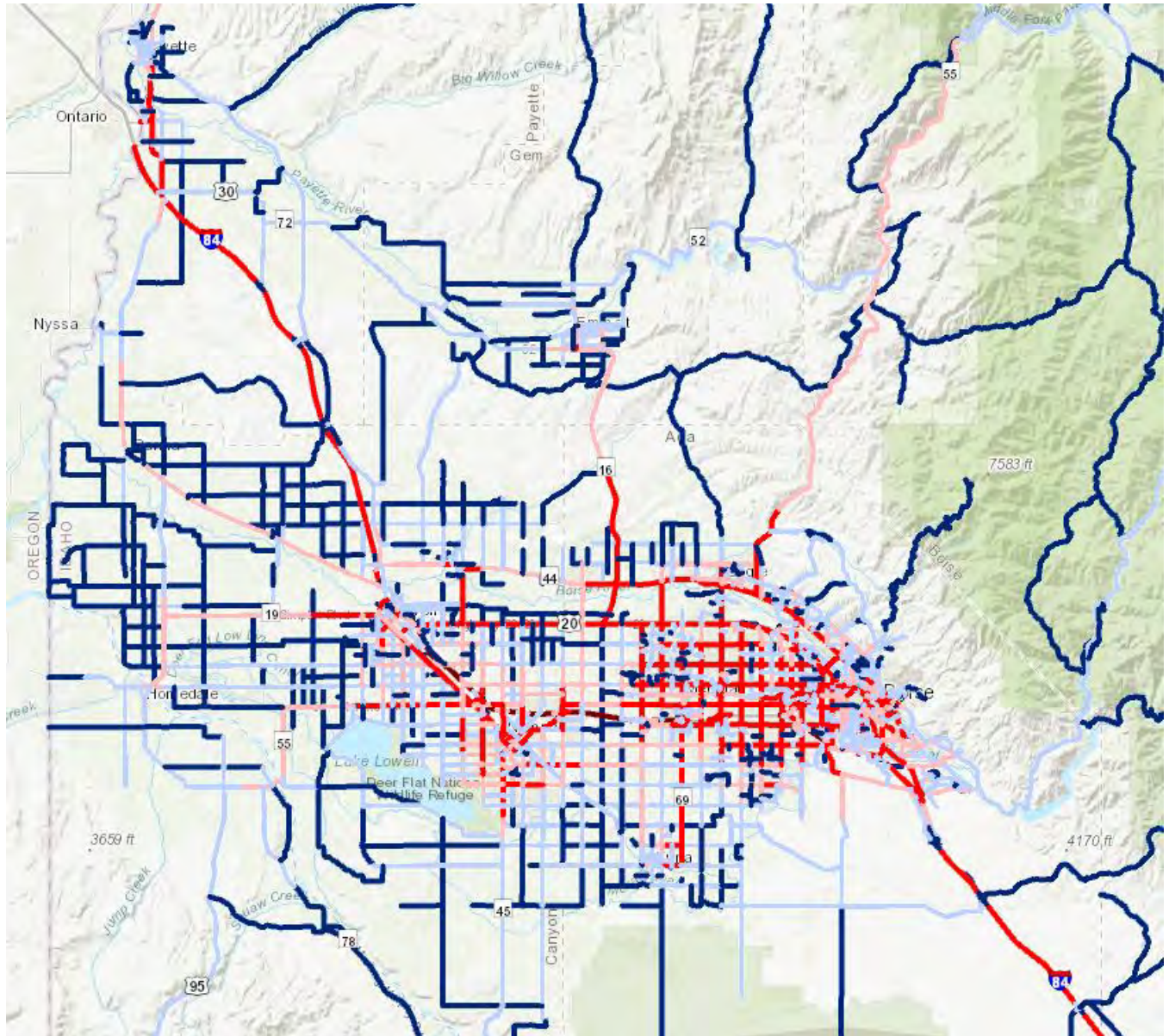
Road Network

Interstate 84, along with Nampa Caldwell Boulevard and Highways 26 and 55 accommodate a large percentage of commuter traffic during the morning and evening peaks. Under typical conditions, I-84 sees more than 50,000 vehicles per day in the sections stretching from as far north as Caldwell down to its intersection at Broadway Avenue in Boise. Where I-84 splits to I-184 to the north, typical traffic

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volumes exceeding 50,000 vehicles per day continues to its intersection with Chinden Boulevard. **Figure 3** shows typical traffic volumes per road segment based on Idaho Transportation Department 2019 count data⁴.

Figure 3. Annual Average Daily Traffic Counts, 2019



Source: Idaho Transportation Department

⁴ <https://iplan.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e8b58a3466e74f249cca6aad30e83ba2>

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Transit Network

Valley Regional Transit provides 18 fixed-line routes in Ada County with on demand service recently added in Canyon County, with an additional four intercounty routes between Ada County and Canyon County. Passenger fares are summarized in **Table 1**. Note that the current fare schedule offers discounts for seniors, youth, and the mobility-impaired for per-ride and day passes, but not for annual passes.

Table 1. Valley Regional Transit Fare Schedule

	Local Routes	Universal Routes (Local and Intercounty Routes)
Standard Adult Fare	\$1.50 per per ride \$2.50 per day pass \$42.00 31-day pass \$282.00 annual pass	\$4.50 per ride \$7.50 per day pass \$90.00 31-day pass \$594 annual pass
Senior/Youth/Mobility Impaired	\$0.75 per per ride \$1.25 per day pass \$21.00 31-day pass \$282.00 annual pass	\$2.25 per ride \$3.75 per day pass \$45.00 31-day pass \$594 annual pass

Source: Valley Regional Transit, 2021

Riders can also use a partnership with Lyft that extends transit through \$2 flat fee rides from a trip origination point to a Valley Regional Transit bus stop. For those working shifts that do not coincide with transit services, the VRT Late Night program provides \$3 Lyft rides to and from work for income-qualified riders when the bus is not running. This year, Valley Regional Transit added two new no-cost transportation services connecting veterans in Meridian, as well as Nampa and Caldwell residents with medical services. Both the Meridian Veterans Shuttle and the Canyon County Rides2Wellness provide prescheduled curb-to-curb transport for qualified individuals that are not well-served by existing fixed route service. **Figure 4** shows the existing routes, with the on-demand service area for Canyon County shown in the green thermal.

Figure 4. Valley Regional Transit System Map



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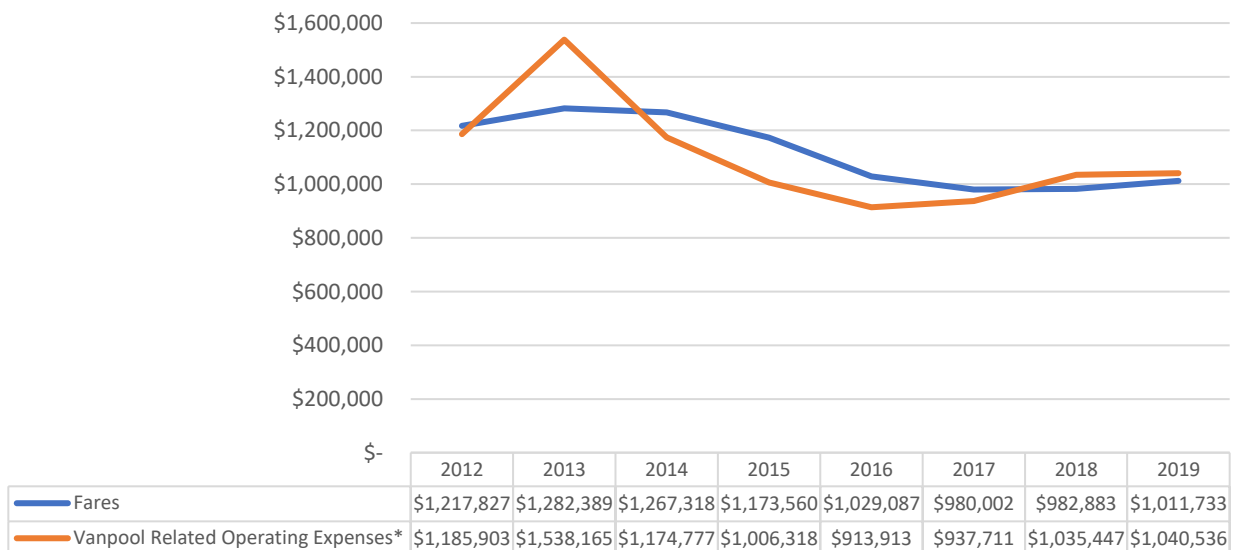
Source: Valley Regional Transit, 2021

Vanpool and Carpool Network

The Club Red vanpool program provided by Commuteride, part of the Ada County Highway District (ACHD), offers 73 active vanpool routes servicing approximately 610 riders. Commuteride reports vans have a seating capacity up to 10-13 riders, with some routes having as few as 4 riders per van to accommodate equipment traveling with occupants. While the average resident of Ada County has a commute of 20.7 minutes, residents of Canyon County average 24.6 minutes, which exceeds the overall average of approximately 21.1 minutes for residents of the state⁵. Existing Commuteride vanpool participants have a mean commute distance of just over 44 miles. The shortest route is approximately 21 miles, with the longest existing vanpool route stretching just over 90 miles. On average, vanpools have an average load factor of 70%, or an average of 7 out of every 10 available vanpool seats are occupied.

Vanpool fare revenues remained relatively consistent from 2012 through 2016 at \$1.2 million annually, dipping to \$980,000 in 2017 before climbing to just over \$1 million in 2019. Annual fare revenues, along with the audited operational expenses not including the average expenses related to Commuteride's budget for marketing and TDM activities, are summarized in **Figure 5**. Fare revenues generally fully cover or approach full recovery of vanpool-related operating expenses, excluding marketing and TDM programming.

Figure 5. Club Red Vanpool Fare Revenues and Vanpool Related Operating Expenses



Source: Valley Regional Transit

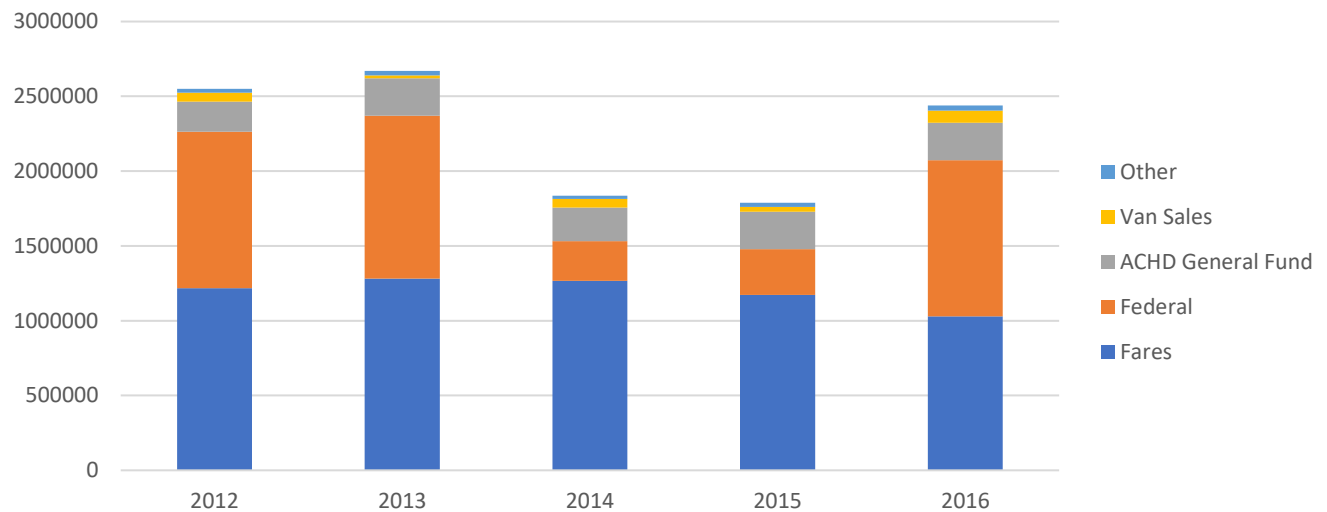
*Does not include Commuteride's average budget for marketing and TDM activities

⁵ U.S. Census, 2019

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Based on operations from 2012 through 2019, the average operating cost per mile is approximately \$0.70. In 2016, the average fare revenue collected per active rider was approximately \$111 per month accounting for approximately 44% of the program's overall funding. Compared to a total budget of \$2,876,652 for the same year, Club Red represents approximately 69% of the total Commuteride budget cost. Additional funding to support Commuteride and Club Red is provided by Federal grants, ACHD, the sale of decommissioned vans, and TDM planning services provided by Commuteride. **Figure 6** summarizes Club Red's vanpool funding for 2012 through 2016.

Figure 6. Club Red Vanpool Funding, 2012-2016

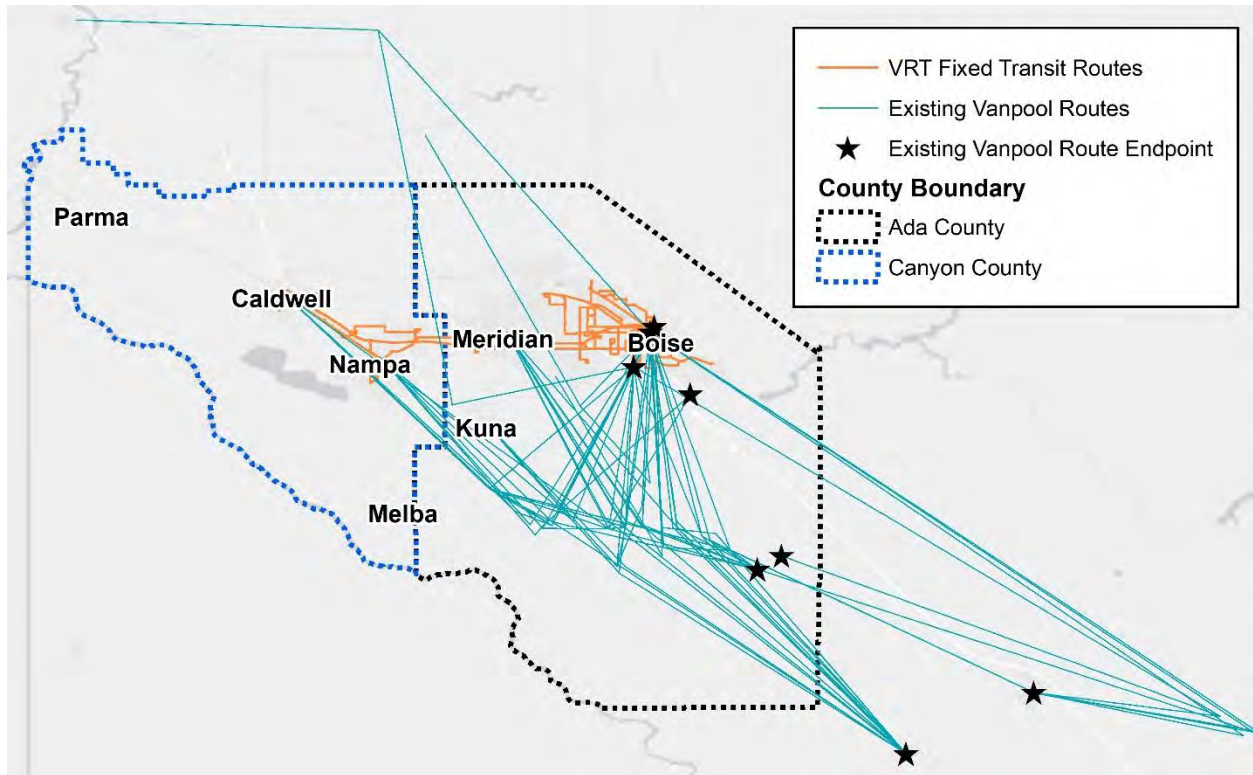


Source: Valley Regional Transit

As shown **Figure 7**, existing transit service is primarily focused on the eastern and western connections between the higher density areas of Ada and Canyon counties, with local service focused in and immediately around the City of Boise. Vanpool commuters are generally traveling where transit coverage is not provided. Also noted here, is that there are no routes terminating in Canyon County, with endpoints concentrated in and east/southeast of Ada County.

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Figure 7. Club Red Vanpool and Valley Regional Transit Routes



Source: Commuteride, Valley Regional Transit

First-Last Mile Network

The first and last mile network can support the reduction of reliance on a single occupant or personal vehicle for commuting. These connections can connect potential vanpool riders who may not have access to a vehicle to connect to an existing or new route. For example, bikeshare can provide an individual access to a park and ride facility to connect with a vanpool, whom does not otherwise have access to a personal vehicle. Additionally, e-scooters can provide a connection from a vanpool's termination point to a rider's place of employment, closing a gap that may otherwise provide a perceived barrier. These options can also supplement short trips at the destination. For example, employees that want to complete personal errands on a break, such as running to the bank or to pick up lunch.

Boise GreenBike is Boise's docked bikeshare service for those 16 years of age or above, also managed by VRT. Costs range from \$5 per hour to up to \$100 per year plus ride time over daily limits, with four individual membership options available. Station hubs and flex hubs (designated, ordinary bike racks) are located throughout Downtown Boise and surrounding areas, including Boise State University and Garden City. As part of a planned upgrade poised for a 2022 launch, Boise GreenBike donated 40 and sold 70 bikes, dissolving their inventory after suspending operating the bikeshare in September 2020.

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In 2019, a Nampa resident began operating the Nampa Bicycle Project, offering free bikes and space to work on their bikes in exchange for volunteering their time at the shop. Similar to an existing project in Boise, the Nampa Bicycle Project recently applied for nonprofit status to expand their available resources to better serve the community and distribute more bikes. With over 100 bikes distributed in their first year, the program's founder reports difficulty in meeting demands as community members have come to rely on the program to fill their transportation needs gaps.⁶

Personal electronic mobility devices such as e-scooters and electric assisted bikes (e-bikes) have been a growing option for short distance commute and first and last mile connections. Three vendors currently provide e-scooters in the region, predominantly in Boise market.

While typically provided on the Boise State University campus, Enterprise CarShare has suspended service due to COVID-19 with no posted date for anticipated return to service. Typically, the service was provided based on a membership with a \$3.75-\$5.25 cost per hour plus \$0.25 per mile for local service or \$8.00-\$10.00 per hour that provided up to 200 miles per day. For those not associated with the University, carshare options are limited to traditional vehicle rental companies.

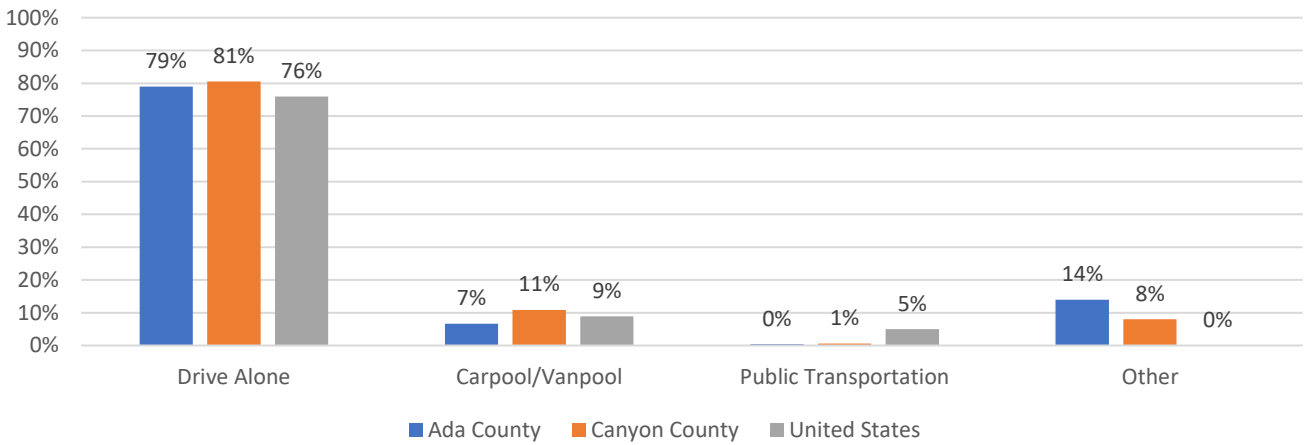
Commuter Profile

The majority (96%) of households in Ada and Canyon County have access to at least one vehicle. Compared to the rest of the country, both Ada and Canyon Counties rely more on a personal vehicle as their primary mode of transportation to work. As summarized in **Figure 8**, roughly 76% of U.S. residents driving alone to work compared to 79% of Ada County residents and 81% of Canyon County residents. Compared to the rest of the country, vanpool and carpool is more frequently used on a percentage of the population in Canyon County, while Ada County continues to lag the national average. This demonstrates a slightly higher existing propensity to use alternative modes of transportation to the personal vehicle in Canyon County.

⁶ <https://www.ktvb.com/article/news/local/nampa-bicycle-project-files-for-nonprofit-status-to-better-connect-communities-in-canyon-county/277-6e15dc98-b333-4f60-9d0a-407f13b5180e>

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Figure 8. Means of Transportation to Work by County



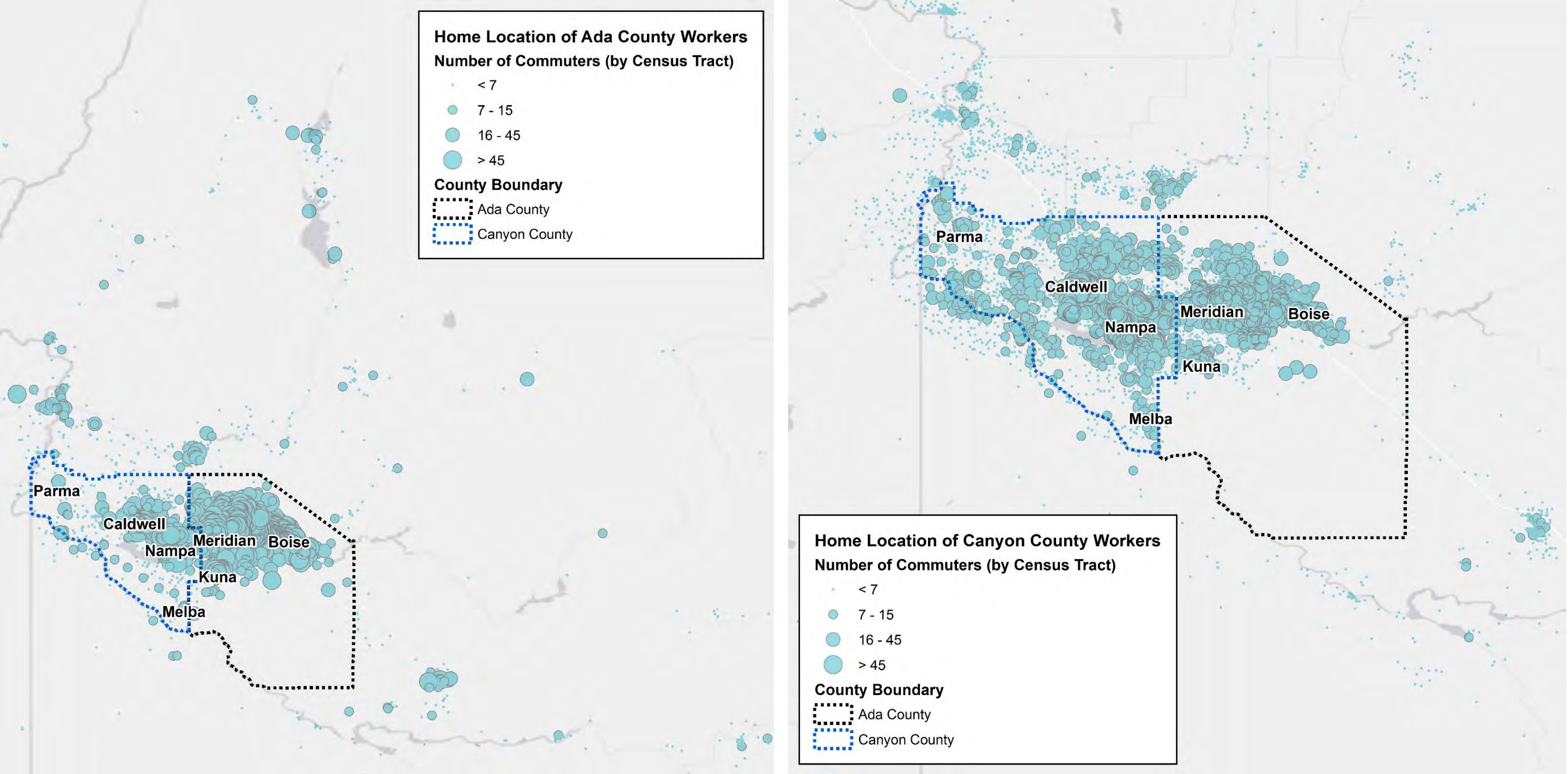
Source: U.S. Census, 2019

The following statistics summarize the number of people who live and work in Ada and Canyon Counties:

- 311,686 workers live in Ada and Canyon Counties
 - o 36,133 of them live in Ada County but work outside Ada County
 - o 54,855 of them live in Canyon County but work outside Canyon County
 - o 180,550 of them live and work in Ada County
 - o 40,148 of them live and work in Canyon County
- 106,687 workers employed in Ada and Canyon Counties commute to those communities.
 - o 77,901 workers employed in Ada County do not live in Ada County
 - o 28,786 workers employed in Canyon County do not live in Canyon County

Although there are currently no routes terminating in Canyon County, vanpool could provide a strong alternative commuting option to single occupant vehicles for the 28,786 workers in the County that commute from other areas. It may also support the capture of a higher portion of the 54,855 Canyon County residents that commute to work outside the county than is served by the 16 existing routes originating in Canyon County. **Figure 9** shows the home origin of those that work in Ada and Canyon Counties, respectively. According to Census data, most workers that commute into Canyon County live in Ada County, but there are sizable pockets of commuters that reside in Emmett and further north near Payette and Ontario.

Figure 9. Home Location of Workers per County



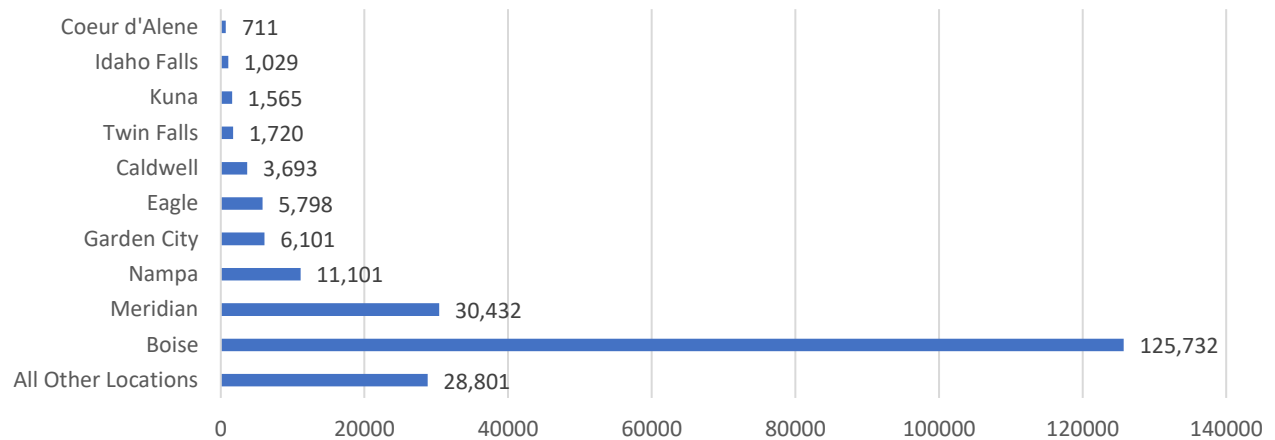
Source: U.S. Census LEHD 2018 Data; Walker Consultants, 2021.

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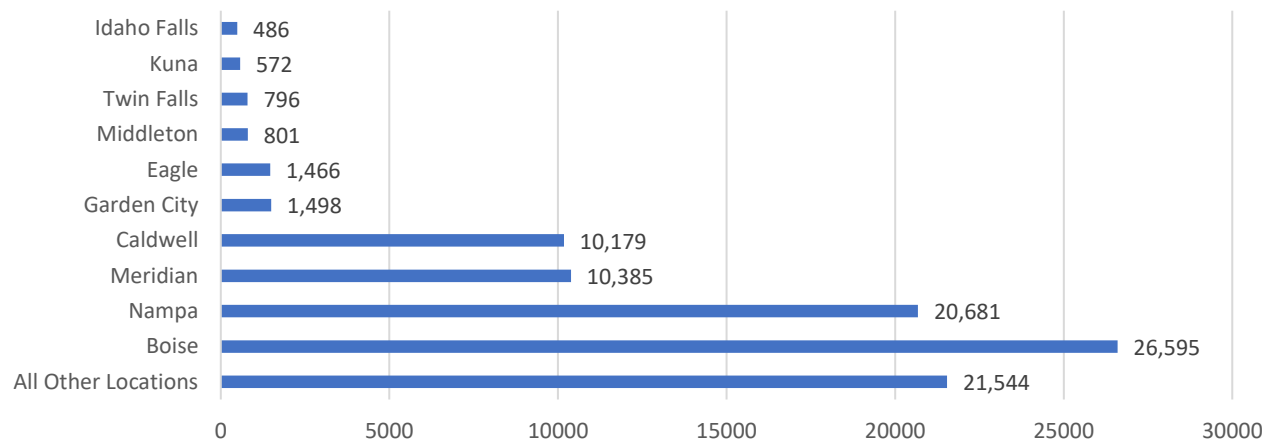
Figure 10 summarizes where workers are employed who live in Ada and Canyon Counties, respectively. As shown in the graph, Boise has the largest share of workers at approximately 28% of Canyon County residents and 58% of Ada County residents. This information is also mapped for the region in **Figure 11** for each county.

Figure 10. Where Residents are Employed per County(Top Ten Cities)

Ada County

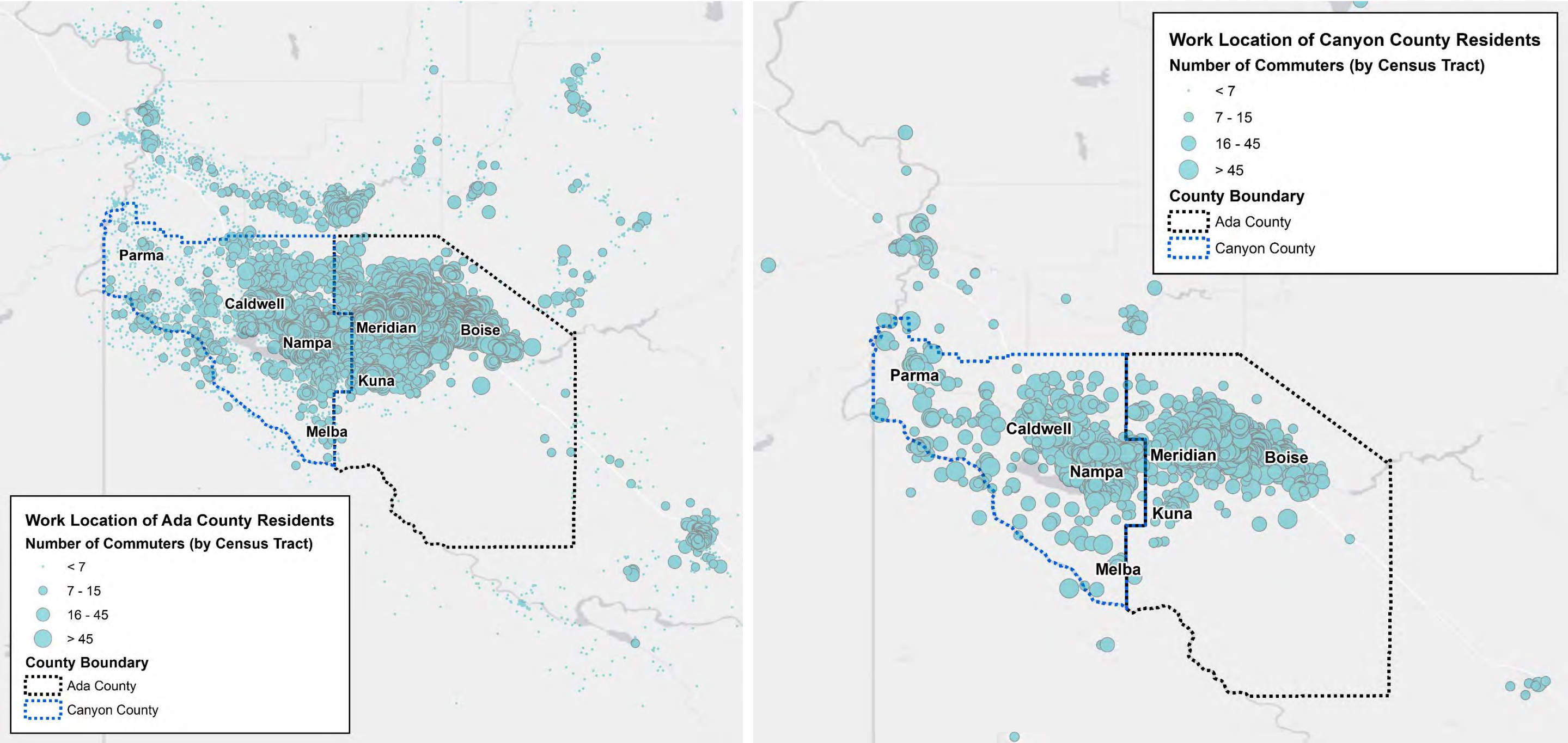


Canyon County



Source: U.S. Census LEHD 2018 Data; Walker Consultants, 2021.

Figure 11. Where Residents are Employed per County



Source: U.S. Census LEHD 2018 Data; Walker Consultants, 2021.

Gaps, Opportunities and Best Practices

This report identifies potential gaps between existing transportation services available in the Treasure Valley region and opportunities to better align services with the Guiding Principles. Best practices and, where available, examples of how these practices have been used are provided.

Guiding Principle: Provides more transportation choices to support freedom of movement and quality of life.

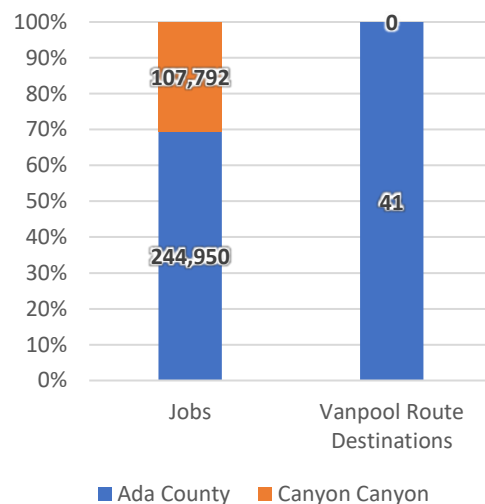
How is this currently achieved in the system?

Transit service is currently focused on the denser areas of Ada County, with on-demand service recently added for Canyon County. There are an additional 4 intercounty routes that connect Ada and Canyon Counties, specifically Caldwell and Nampa to the Towne Square Mall and Downtown Boise areas. From these locations there is access to the broader Boise and Garden City area bus transit network. Additionally, the existing vanpool system serves just over 600 riders on 73 routes. Currently, Club Red vanpool routes must originate from, terminate in, or pass through with a connection in Ada County as part of the ACHD funding requirements. This requirement on the funding restricts Club Red's ability to expand vanpool service outside of Ada County. First and last mile personal mobility options are generally limited to the core areas of Boise; however, Boise GreenBike recently sold its inventory in preparation for the 2022 upgrade launch to e-bikes. CarShare, previously available at the Boise State University campus, was suspended indefinitely because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is hindering achievement of this guiding principle?

Roughly 90% of bus transit service headways are 30 minutes or longer during peak times, with 41% 45 minutes or longer during peak times. Excessive headways limit the ability for individuals relying on this form of transportation to move freely with what can amount to a significant portion of their available commute time devoted to waiting for service.

As noted, Club Red vanpool currently focuses service on Ada County. While routes are determined by rider requests, they must originate, terminate, or pass through with a connection in Ada County. With approximately 352,700 jobs between Ada and Canyon Counties, Canyon County represents about 31% of the two-county workforce. Meanwhile, of the 41 vanpool routes between the counties, all of them terminate in Ada County.



Best practices for this guiding principle

Expansion of Vanpool Services Through Private Operation

Expanded vanpool services can help close the gap of transit service, extending the reach of transportation choice to underserved areas. The LA Metro vanpool program is a coordinated effort in which five counties work together to pool resources and leverage their increased buying power. They use private operators that can operate at a lower cost with nonunionized labor, purchasing at economies of scale, and not requiring LA Metro to insure drivers or the vehicles in the program. Three different operators participate in the program.

The inclusion of multiple operators helps keep pricing competitive, a lesson learned when Enterprise acquired WeRide, dropping LA Metro's pool of operators to two vendors. Shortly after the acquisition, Enterprise increased prices. Later, when the rider subsidy was increased to offset this additional cost, Enterprise increased their rate equal to the subsidy increase.

With a private operator, the vendor (In the case of LA Metro, Enterprise, AVR, and Green Commuter) charges the coordinator (the vanpool driver) directly and has a contract with LA Metro. The service includes roadside service, insurance, and vehicle maintenance, costing up to \$1,200 month. Of the \$1,000 to \$1,200 per month, LA Metro pays up to \$600 or 50%, whichever higher. The remaining cost and any fuel costs are then split between the vanpool riders according to their preferences. By outsourcing much of the vanpool program, LA Metro can operate 1,300 active vanpools with just two full-time staff.

Integration of Other Modes

The King County Vanpool Program provides bike racks for their vanpool vehicles free upon request. Only approved, provided bike racks may used on vanpool vehicles. This provides increased freedom of movement for riders at both their trip origination and destination locations.¹ To further support integration of bicycle use, King County and Sound Transit in the Seattle metro area has replaced the annual commitment to lease a bike locker with BikeLink lockers at Transit Centers and train stations. These lockers provide a more flexible, on-demand option for bicycle storage, and are intended to increase utilization among those that may commute by bicycle less frequently.²

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) has integrated carpooling into their larger transportation demand management planning by providing preferential parking in select permitted park and ride locations, along with electric vehicle charging stations.

¹ <https://kingcounty.gov/~media/depts/metro/travel-options/rideshare/pdf/commuter-van-program-manual.pdf>

² <https://www.bikelink.org/>

Seeks to adapt to the mobility needs of the growing region, integrating dynamic and innovative solutions as appropriate.

How is this currently achieved in the system?

The on-demand transit service offered in Canyon County is a dynamic approach to meeting the transit needs of the community. As the region grows, on-demand microtransit service can bridge the gap in providing reliable public transit sustainably. In delivering and expanding vanpool services, Club Red and Commuteride have previously identified a desire to explore an on-demand service that could fill vacant seats on existing routes. For those looking to use vanpool on a part-time or as-needed basis, this type of offering could be extremely beneficial, as the existing system as it is currently offered best serves those who work a traditional shift of Monday through Friday.

What is hindering achievement of this guiding principle?

The current funding provided by ACHD of the Club Red vanpool program is designed to support Ada County. This limits the ability of those desiring to participate in a vanpool program that live outside of Ada County and work in Canyon County. Cost for riders varies from approximately \$72 to \$230 per month, based on the van's daily round-trip miles and the average number of days it commutes per month. This can lead to a higher cost per mile for those on a route picked up closer to the point of termination than others in the van, or for those that do not commute on the route as frequently as others. Routes are determined by rider demand, with vanpool riders determining where the van will stop to pick up riders and if they will add stops to gain additional riders. For individuals looking to join a vanpool without a pre-established group, options are posted on the Share the Ride Idaho website. Here, the platform matches commuters of similar destinations based on scheduling needs. The website also highlights available carpools, distance and estimated time of travel for walking, biking, and driving alone, and provide the estimated cost for driving alone.

Best practices for this guiding principle

Responsive, Adaptive Expansion of the Shared Mobility System

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) received a \$12 million grant from the Sacramento Transportation Authority to implement a shuttle program, connecting residential and commercial destinations currently underserved by public transit. Rides cost between \$1.35 and \$2.75, similar to fare structures for bus transit. The program uses app-based scheduling to customize trips, altering routes to incorporate new calls along active trips. Launched in February 2018, the program expanded within 6 weeks to include additional neighborhoods, with ridership increasing by “more than 6 times since its original inception.”³

With LA Metro's vanpool program, and others that leverage private partnerships, operators are incentivized to market the vanpool program to expand usage which in turn increases their own

³ <http://www.sacrt.com/apps/sacrt-awarded-12-million-to-expand-smart-ride-service-on-demand/>

profitability. Their experience with operators has demonstrated extremely responsive scalability to demands, with vendors actively marketing vanpool services to businesses and their employees. **Table 1** summarizes rider fees for several programs.

Table 1. *Average Rider Fees by Vanpool Program*

	<i>Average Monthly Fare per Mile</i>	<i>Operator(s)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Club Red	\$1.60	<i>Self-operated by Commuteride</i>	<i>Based on a 5-day per week 86-mile roundtrip at \$137 per month.</i>
LA Metro	\$2.00	<i>Enterprise, Green Commuter, AVR</i>	<i>Based on a 5-day per week 70-mile roundtrip at \$140 per month.</i>
DRCOG		<i>Enterprise</i>	<i>Flat Fares, based on the vanpool mileage, are divided equally among its riders.</i>
Community Transit	\$6.41	<i>Self-operated</i>	<i>Based on a 5-day per week 80-mile roundtrip at \$513 per month.</i>
Connect Douglas	\$2.00	<i>Self-operated</i>	<i>Based on a 5-day per week 45-mile roundtrip at \$90 per month</i> <i>*Also provides a \$8 per day, daily rider option</i>

Trip Planning Tools

In addition to carpool and vanpool ride matching, ShareTheRideIdaho.com provides a comparison of the estimated time, mileage, and CO2 emissions between modes of travel including driving alone, ridesharing, transit, walking and biking. Its mapping feature also allows users to observe typical traffic conditions at the input time, and identify available transportation infrastructure locations, such as park and ride facilities, bike lanes, bike share locations, and VRT on-demand service stops, among others. Valley Metro in Phoenix uses a similar trip planning platform by a similar name, ShareTheRide.com, that also incorporates their light rail service. The Denver Regional Council of Government's (DRCOG) WayToGo.org platform provides trip planning services for commuters of all types, including matching for vanpool, carpool, and schoolpool to help families connect for student transportation needs.

Serves as a feasible transportation option for many different communities, with a particular focus on those communities with service gaps and the greatest need for expanded transportation choice, and as an equitable, seamless, and practical transportation solution for communities in Ada and Canyon counties.

How is this currently achieved in the system?

There are multiple programs serving Ada and Canyon Counties that provide free and reduced cost transportation for seniors and individuals with mobility impairments, such as ACCESS, Harvest Transit, Metro Community Services, Rides2Wellness, SHIP and others. Additionally, City Go is a commuting membership that incentivizes participants to choose “smarter” mobility options into and out of Downtown Boise. Through VRT’s partnership with Lyft, Lyft Transit Connections offers transportation to a qualifying Valley Regional Transit bus stops for a flat \$2 fee during peak weekday and Saturday hours. VRT also partners with Lyft to provide VRT Late Night, which offers \$3 rides for qualified riders when VRT buses are not running. For low-income transit users, Village Van coordinates shuttles in Ada County directly through employer or agency contracts.

What is hindering achievement of this guiding principle?

Low-income, senior, mobility-impaired, and student transit users may only acquire discounted passes through a third-party non-profit organization. There is no discounted fare pass option available to individuals. Organizations contract annually at two levels with a 30% discount for contracts over \$5,000 and a 50% discount for contracts over \$10,000. The VRT website does not currently provide a list of participating organizations for individuals looking into discounted transit pass options.

The vanpool offered by Club Red does not advertise any discounted fares. They do advise potential riders that subsidies may be provided by employers, but the rider is solely responsible for the full cost of their fares, per the Passenger Agreement.

Best practices for this guiding principle

Discount Programs for Qualifying Commuters

San Francisco and Oakland recipients of CalWorks, a public assistance program provided by the California Department of Social Services, pay no application fee, no deposit, or no monthly membership along with usage fees discounted by 50%. Services include MUNI (transit) passes, bike share, Lime scooter rentals, and a discounted auto insurance program. A similar program in Treasure Valley could include vanpool membership and would extend the accessible area for potential employment for the households in Canyon and Ada Counties that do not have or have limited access to a vehicle.

In addition to employer provided benefits, subsidies are often provided by local jurisdictions for income qualifying individuals to use alternative forms of transit. For example, RTD in Denver provides discounted

bus and light rail transit passes through their LIVE program. These discounts, however, do not apply to ridesharing services or the regional vanpool and carpool services. Other programs, for example the MTC's Bay Area Vanpool program provides subsidies to help cover the cost of recently lost seats in vanpools for limited periods of time to provide those remaining on the route opportunity to replace the rider without increasing their own travel costs during the interim. In Contra Costa County, new vanpools that originate or terminate in the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District are encouraged through a \$200 per month subsidy for the first year. They also receive a \$1,000 bonus after one year of operation. For riders joining an existing vanpool in the district, Contra Costa County pays half their fare for the first three months. Triangle Transit, which adjusts its fares monthly to reflect changes in the program cost, is subsidized in part by a one cent local option sales tax specifically designated for vanpool and transit services. Because vanpool and carpool typically provide a relatively significant cost savings over driving alone already, subsidies specifically related to income qualifications are not common. They are not, however, unheard of, and for those traveling into or out of Ventura County, qualifying vanpool participants may receive vouchers for up to 50% of their monthly cost up to \$75 a month.

Designing Services to Meet Specific Community and Cultural Needs

In California, a Farm Worker Transportation Services Pilot Program was established in 2009 to provide, amongst other services, vanpool service to farm worker families for employment-related, childcare health, and/or social purposes. The program was developed in response to a growing number of injuries and fatalities of farm workers in the San Joaquin Valley relating to farm worker transportation, such as defective vehicles. They found that nearly twice as many immigrants (22%) as US-born individuals (12%) rely on ridesharing as their primary mode of commuting. Among the Mexican immigrant community their increased to 29% of commuters that rely on rideshare, with many reporting a preference to carpooling over public transit for commuting for work.⁴ A 2014 study found an estimated 8 million Latinos in the US rely on camionetas, or informal rideshare minibuses, for workplace commuting. As a result, several states have found success marketing vanpool services as camionetas to broaden appeal among Spanish-speaking communities.⁵

Achieves a sustainable level of cost recovery for services provided.

How is this currently achieved in the system?

Balancing the need to provide equitable transportation solutions with financially feasible transportation solutions is essential. Currently, user fare revenues for the vanpool system generally cover or approach full recovery of vanpool-related operating expenses. Cost recovery must continue to be a priority, even when other guiding principles, such as service expansion to support underserved communities, are achieved to ensure a sustainable service model. Further, the recently launched on-demand transit service continues to provide transit services to Canyon County without the cost of fixed route transit. This service

⁴ <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.378.7547&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

⁵ https://livingcities.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Can-Shared-Mobility-Help-Low-Income-People-Access-Opportunity_.pdf

also expands the potential service area beyond what could be provided by fixed routes at a comparable operating cost.

What is hindering achievement of this guiding principle?

When demand is too low to support the creation of new or expansion of existing transportation services, investment in efforts to increase demand or a subsidy is necessary to bridge the financial gap. To avoid this, transportation systems typically focus on areas likely to have the highest usage, such as areas with dense residential and commercial activity. This does not support the goal to provide transportation options for many different communities, particularly those where service gaps exist due to a perceived lack of demand or potential demand. When transportation options are extended into these areas, demand may continue to be low because of other barriers such as supporting infrastructure (bus shelters, bike lanes, first and last mile connections, etc.), and economic and educational circumstances where the local population is not aware of the added service, they cannot afford it, and/or are not aware of financial assistance programs to support their use of the service.

Best practices for this guiding principle

The LA Metro vanpool program has proven to be a very profitable program. Although they pay out approximately \$7 million in subsidies each year, they are able to generate roughly \$20 million per year in reimbursements. This is largely based on passenger miles traveled as reported to NTD and the Prop C sales tax. LA Metro is then able to use the remaining estimated \$13 million for other programming they provide.

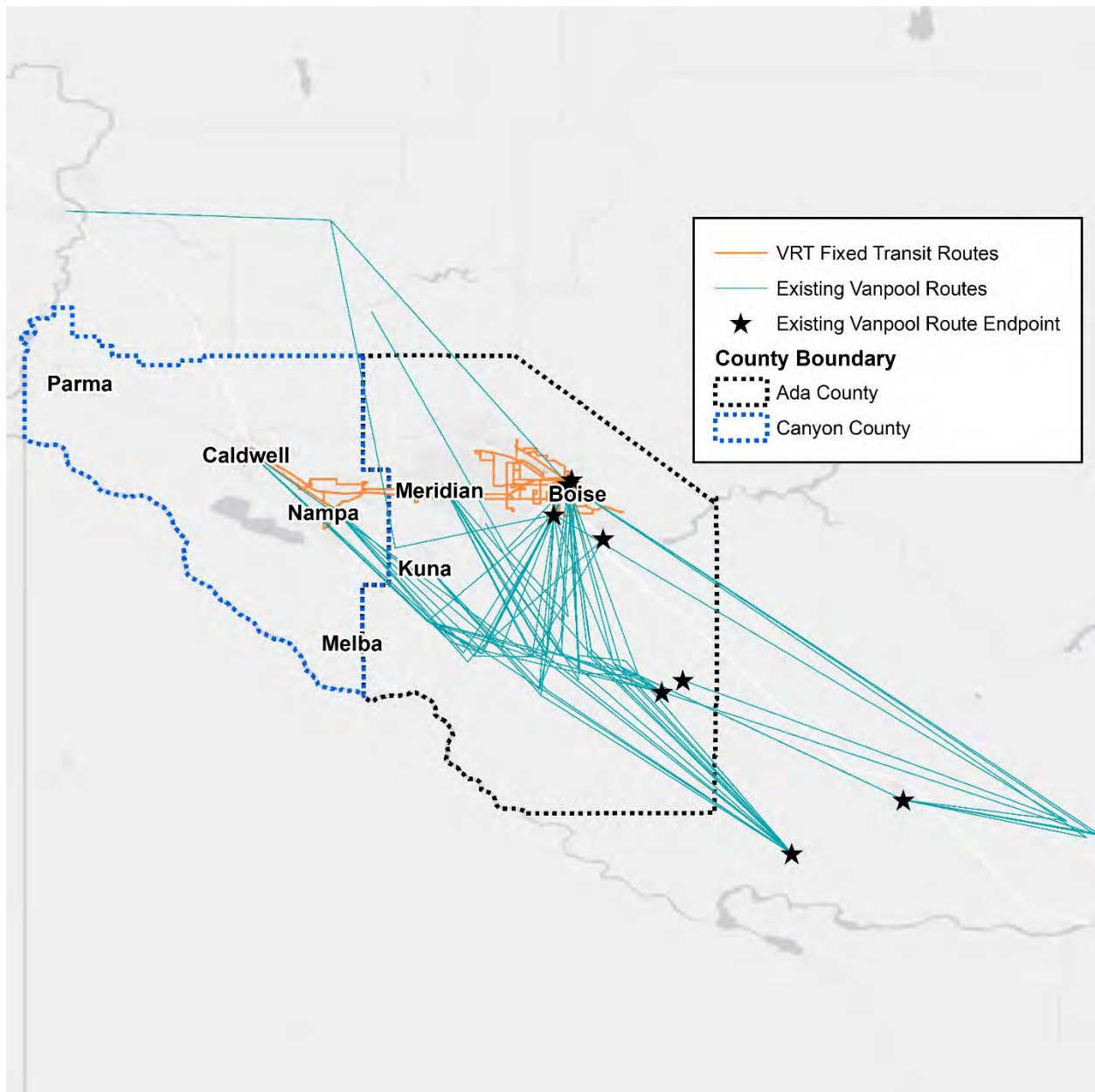
Fills gaps in transit service to meet commute-to-work needs, resulting in an appreciable reduction in single-occupancy vehicle commuting regionwide, and seeks meaningful partnerships to achieve outcomes that work for the entire region.

How is this currently achieved in the system?

The existing approximately 610 vanpool riders on 73 routes demonstrates an 88% reduction in vehicles on the road for those 610 commuters alone, reducing congestion on the road regionally by 537 vehicles. As shown in **Figure 1**, vanpool is an effective means of filling in gaps for areas not served by fixed route transit. As shown on the map, vanpools and fixed route transit do not directly overlay, with transit concentrate in the Boise and Garden City areas with several east/west intercounty branches. Vanpool routes, however, have a more predominant north/south orientation.

VRT currently partners with private sponsors on the bikeshare program, Boise Green Bike, which is anticipated to launch 300 e-bikes in 2022. They also work with ACHD Commuteride, Boise State University, Capital City Development Corporation, and the City of Boise in providing mobility options through City Go.

Figure 1. Valley Regional Transit Bus Routes and Existing Club Red Vanpool Routes



What is hindering achievement of this guiding principle?

Because the existing vanpool program is seated within a specific agency's authority, and the funding provided by that agency limits the reach of the service, the vanpool program cannot equitably address the needs of the larger Treasure Valley region.

Best practices for this guiding principle

Public Private Partnerships

In addition to LA Metro's partnership with private operators, Valley Metro in Phoenix also uses an operator. With approximately 372 vanpools operating as of 2020, riders are matched through an online portal.⁶ Similarly, CTRides, which serves the state of Connecticut, is provided through a partnership with Enterprise. Riders that track their alternative-mode trips, such as by train, bus, carpool, vanpool, biking or walking, can earn points towards rewards. These rewards include restaurant coupons, retailer discounts, and even tickets to shows.⁷

Intergovernmental Coordination

Lowcountry Go is funded by the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG), which represents 30 local government agencies, as well as by the South Carolina Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration. It was launched in 2018, the administration was not seated with in the hands of any one agency, so that all are represented equitably in the program's design and administration. **Figure 2** show the BCDCOG Planning areas overlaid with fixed route transit lines.

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) provides funding for the Transportation Services Group, and also funds the State's vanpool assistance programs, VanStart and VanSave. Any van in the Commonwealth of Virginia can apply for these programs, which assist vanpool operators who are having trouble filling a new vanpool or who have recently lost several riders and are in the process of getting new people to join. This is benefited the community by encouraging flexible, innovative. and unique approaches to ridesharing:

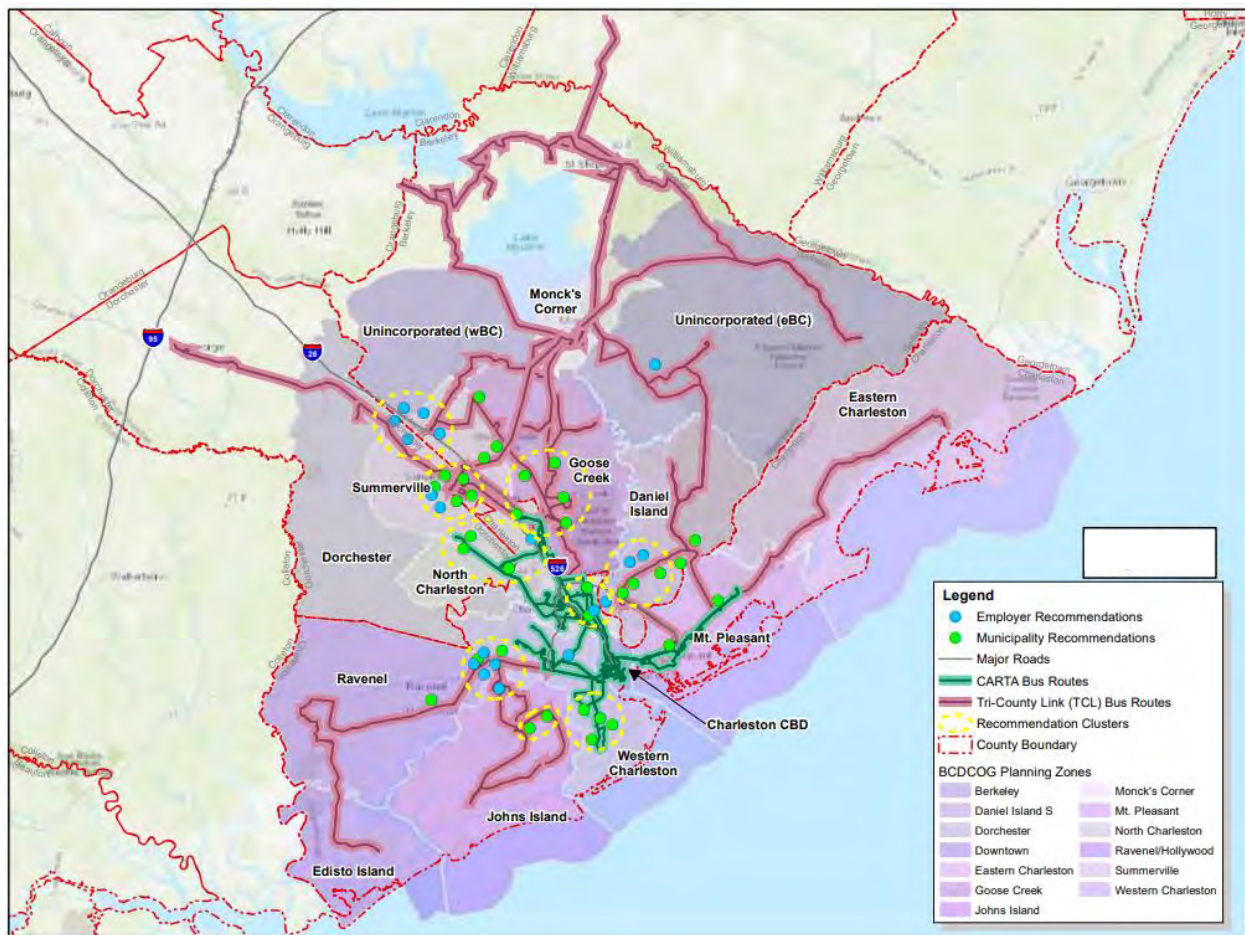
- Local service delivery supported by a larger regional program identity
- Vendor flexibility to offer tailored van wrapping according to employer needs
- Major construction projects have included state-funded vanpooling programs and incentives to encourage additional mode switching
- Employers contribute preferred parking spots for vanpools even if they are unable to provide additional subsidies
- Fairfax County offers tax breaks for owner-operators of vanpools that reside in Fairfax County
- Creative outreach techniques, including presenting on how vanpool works and the use of employer meetings as ad-hoc/impromptu vanpool formation sessions
- As of 2013, DRPT was pursuing geo-locating all vans to show coverage to potential riders⁸

⁶ <https://www.valleymetro.org/news/agency/2020/03/start-vanpool-and-get-your-first-month-free>

⁷ <https://ctrides.com>

⁸ <https://cdn.atlantaregional.org/wp-content/uploads/vanpool-040213.pdf>

Figure 2. Berkley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments Planning Zones and Regional Fixed Transit



Source: BCDCOG 2018 Park and Ride Study

Leverages existing infrastructure to provide service.

How is this currently achieved in the system?

Club Red incorporates the existing park and ride system into its programming, providing overnight storage of vans and a convenient point for riders to join vanpool routes. Many park and ride facilities are also served by existing bus transit service providing a first and last mile connection option as an alternative to personal vehicles. During the recent park and ride study conducted with COMPASS, use of VRT's Valley Connect 2.0 planning scenarios for growing the transit system was incorporated into the evaluation of future park and ride facility expansion and location. These types of partnerships promote the use of and expansion of existing, successful programming.

What is hindering achievement of this guiding principle?

As previously discussed, the geographical limitations placed on the program through funding source with ACHD hinder the program's ability to effectively serve Canyon County as effectively as it does Ada County.

Best practices for this guiding principle

LA Metro's third-party operators can quickly respond to increases and decreases in vanpool vehicle demand through the operators' access to their existing fleets. Alternatively, Lowcountry Go was able to develop a public vanpool program serving three counties by building on existing employee and employer-based programs within the region, as well as the area's existing park-and-ride locations.

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In Attendance:

Margaret Havey, ITD
Nicole Stern, COMPASS
Liisa Itkonen, COMPASS
Kate Dahl, Canyon County
Tessa Greegor, ACHD
Jerome Mapp, City of Caldwell
Grant Pelly, ACHD

Alissa Taysom, VRT
Eric Selekof, VRT
Stephen Hunt, VRT
Mallory Baker, Walker Consultants
Christina Jones, Walker Consultants
Chrissy Mancini-Nichols, Walker Consultants
Manuel Soto, Walker Consultants

Absent:

None

Meeting minutes are organized by topic of discussion. Next steps and action items are included at the end of this document. Presentation materials provided at this meeting are included as attachments.

WELCOME AND REVIEW

Mallory Baker opened the meeting and facilitated introductions. As part of introductions, each attendee provided background on their role and how their work influences and is impacted by commute services within the study's area of influence.

Rachel Haukkala, project manager for the recent COMPASS park-and-ride study, was noted to have move on to a new position outside of the state of Idaho and would not be joining this or future project related meetings.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Mallory Baker shared an overview of the project scope, schedule, key objectives, and community outreach plan. A copy of this presentation is attached.

SHARED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The group used an online whiteboard platform to guide a discussion of the broad goals and desired outcomes of the Valley Regional Transit Vanpool Study. A copy of the final whiteboard is attached. Mallory Baker noted that the activity was intended to be used only as a discussion tool and were not intended for quantitative analysis or to reflect finalized project goals. Key themes discussed by the group included:

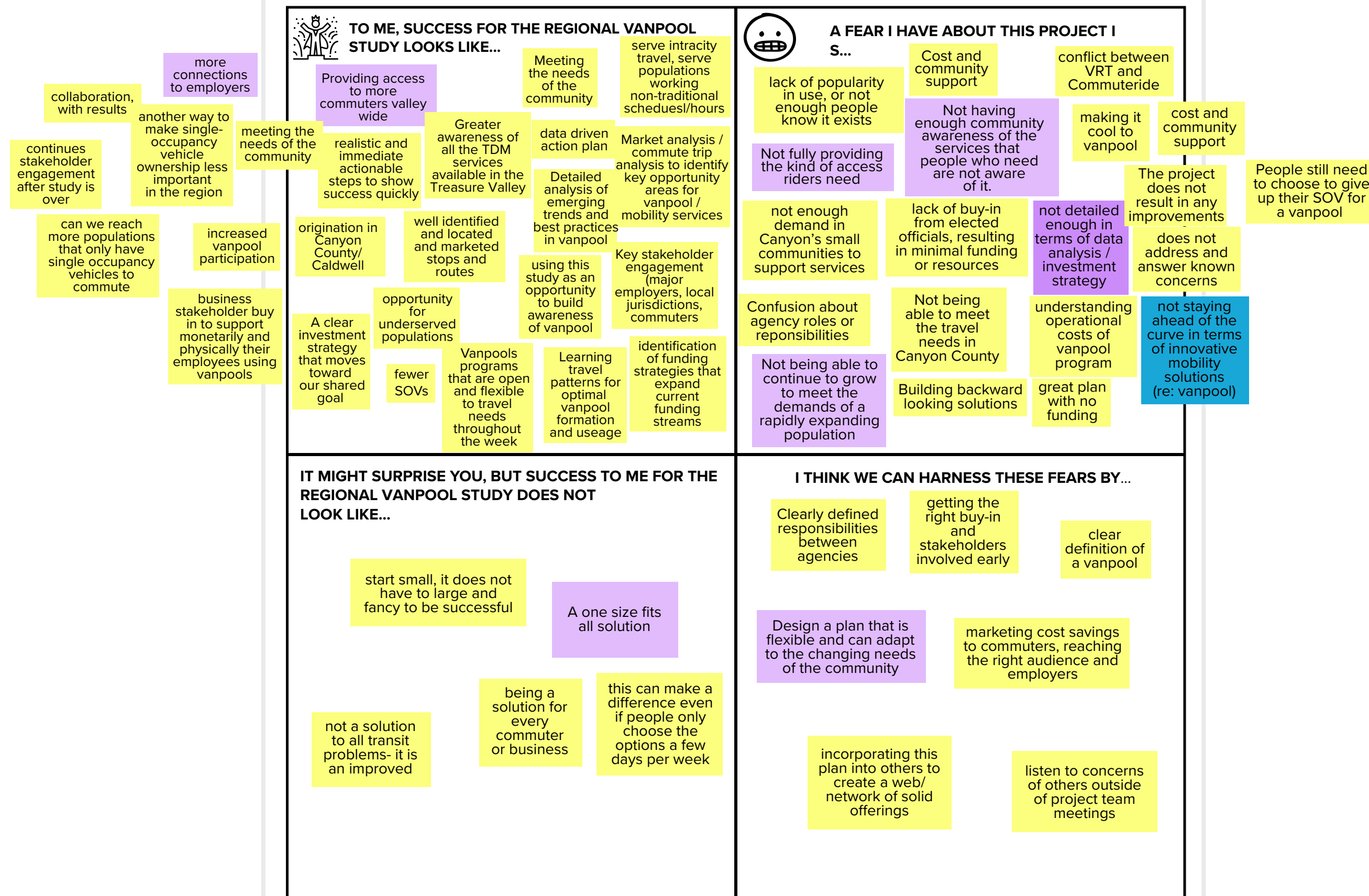
- A successful project...
 - meets the needs of the community by providing convenient options that reduce the overall number of single occupancy vehicles on the road.
 - includes stakeholder engagement and collaboration.
 - is realistic and implementable.
 - is data driven.
 - expands accessibility of the region.

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- looks beyond Ada County and includes currently underserved areas of Treasure Valley.
- is supported by improved connections and partnerships with employers and agencies.
- improves service with underserved populations that includes less obvious pockets of development in smaller communities and unincorporated areas, lower income households, those without or with limited access to a personal vehicle, and those with less consistent schedules.
- is supported by local officials both financially and by championing solutions.
- is cost effective.
- provides clear direction on agency roles and responsibilities.
- makes “cool to vanpool” and enjoy the social aspects of ridesharing in addition to the potential financial incentives.
- A successful project is NOT...
 - a solution to ALL transit problems.
 - necessarily an everyday solution.
 - backward looking.

NEXT STEPS

Upon confirmation of members to be included on the Project Advisory Committee, an initial meeting will be scheduled to facilitate project background and the committee’s role and responsibility for this study. In the meantime, Walker is preparing a deliverable summarizing existing conditions based on prior planning and evaluation efforts by Valley Regional Transit and its partner agencies. This deliverable is anticipated to be provided to Valley Regional Transit by the end of June 2021.





VRT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY

Project Kickoff and Visioning Meeting
June 2, 2021



Presentation Agenda

Introductions

Project Overview

Success/Fear Statement (Mural)

Existing Conditions Strategy Overview

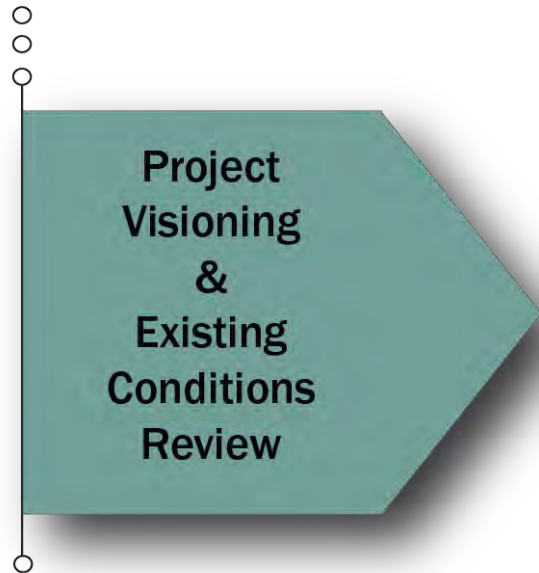
Engagement Strategy Overview

Next Steps



Project Scope and Schedule

MAY - JUNE



JUNE - JULY



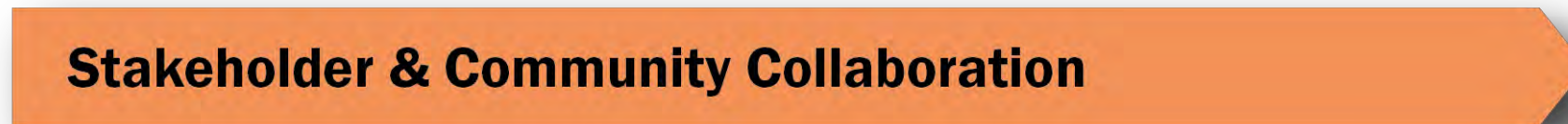
AUGUST - SEPTEMBER



SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER



MAY - SEPTEMBER



Project Objectives

Create a **cohesive and collective vision** for vanpool/shared mobility solutions—what we want it to achieve, who we want it to serve, and what outcomes it must achieve.

Identify a **strategy to meet our vision**—what pieces of the existing system we want to maintain, what we'd like to change, and how we can make those changes.

Develop an investment strategy and action plan to **achieve that vision**.



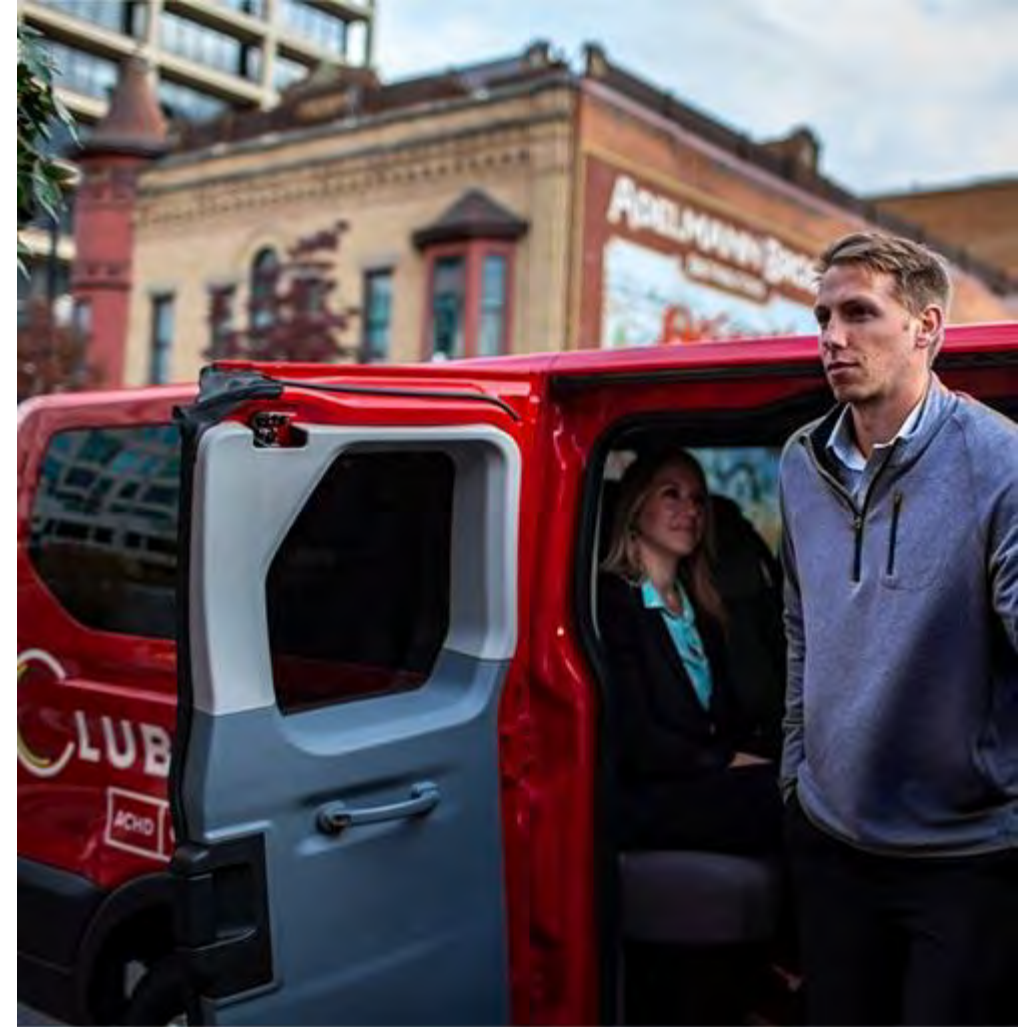
Success/Fear Statement



We'll now head over to Mural to create a **collective vision of success.**

Existing Conditions Strategy Overview

- High-level
- Building on work that's already been done
- Focusing on alignment with vision
- Priming for gaps/opportunities analysis



Engagement Strategy Overview

- **Internal Project Team:** Offering shared, cross-agency vision, institutional knowledge, vision → implementation
- **Project Advisory Committee:** Representing vision and needs of key groups, project champions, out-of-the box ideas and partnerships
- **Community:** Ground-truthing strategies and recommendations



Next Steps

June

Existing Conditions High-Level Overview
Project Advisory Committee Meeting

July

Gaps and Opportunities Analysis
Best Practices Review

VRT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY: MEETING MINUTES

Internal Project Team Meeting #2

July 23, 2021



IN ATTENDANCE

Nicole Stern, ACHD
Tessa Greegor, ACHD
Stephen Hunt, VRT
Liisa Itkonen, COMPASS
Eric Selekof, VRT

Grant Pelly, ACHD
Jerome Mapp, City of Caldwell
Drew Willsey, Walker Consultants
Mallory Baker, Walker Consultants

MINUTES

Meeting minutes are organized by topic of discussion. Next steps and/or action items are included at the end of this document.

Welcome and Existing Vanpool Conditions Presentation

- Ms. Baker presented a summary and high-level analysis of existing vanpool conditions and presented next steps: forming a vision and determining gaps and next steps.

Staff Questions/Comments on Presentation

- Question from Ms. Greegor: Within scope of study, are we looking at employment growth and residential growth? Is the study going to include more detailed analysis on commute paths? This information may be useful down the road as a way to explore where service is lacking today/service gaps.
- Answer from Ms. Baker: Yes. The data we have currently is not granular, but we are working on ways to bolster the data. A key part of the analysis process is to take principles/ideas and measure how strategies will meet principles. We need to determine if needs are being met with current options. Some additional data will come from community survey for trip patterns and routes so we can map how people are travelling, as well as provide further information on how needs are currently being met with current options.
- Question from Ms. Greegor: COMPASS has done such an analysis. If work has already been done or modelled by COMPASS, can pull from that?
- Answer from Ms. Baker: Interesting suggestion. Can reach out to Lisa to see what's been done in terms of existing planning work.
- Mr. Hunt: We can provide a large table with TAZs and can get useful data from that on what trip pairs are really big.
- Question from Mr. Hunt: When looking for market opportunities, what do we use to guide that discussion?
- Answer from Ms. Greegor: We look at opportunities by company and how vanpool can serve company's commuter patterns. That's the main way we approach looking for market opportunities.
- Ms. Stern: Demand has to be there for a given route. To gain more visibility for potential demand, we need to engage on social media and ask questions. We can do geotargeted advertising to certain locations saying that vanpoolers are wanted to gain more visibility for demand.
- Mr. Hunt: Can maybe cross-reference TAZ data with community survey data to arrive at some other opportunities
- Ms. Baker: Anywhere we can bolster data points would be helpful. Haven't yet reached out [to COMPASS], just using existing published work.

- Mr. Mapp: We have two industrial parks, and for us we need to have estimates of vanpool demand. Also, we should make sure we're not just looking at areas/developments that are currently completed/existing for vanpool opportunities.
- Ms. Baker: Density projections are just projections and are inherently future looking. It might be helpful to get more community-based projections for major new employers within municipal boundaries.
- Mr. Mapp: [Community-based projections for major new employers] would be good, but we've never seen industrial programs like this. There are current difficulties around parking in industrial areas, and we need to try to address those difficulties.
- Mr. Hunt: We can review forecasts. There could be a growing need for vanpool demand in Canyon County.

Mural Brainstorming Session

After the question/comment session, Ms. Baker then began the Mural portion of the meeting. As part of the pre-activity instructions, she commented that staff should try to focus on principals or achievements, even though we understand there are a myriad of factors involved. Staff were given a set amount of time to post their thoughts and notes to the Mural board for the respective topic given. Afterwards, there was a verbal discussion.

There were three Mural boards with three questions. Comments from the board and from the following discussion are provided below.

Board #1: Highest Need

The following are selected comments that were written on this board:

- "Employer sponsor"
- "Build on the village van program"
- "Identify employers that target entry level positions or work with refugees/migrant labor forces or recidivism"
- "Include an analysis that identifies key locations where we could best serve underserved populations through vanpool"
- "Engage the right people in this city's outreach"
- "Employer-sponsored vans for employees"
- "Employer-sponsored vans to remove payment from the employee"
- "Access to employment and educational opportunities, determine creative ways to inform the public"
- "Support TDM outreach efforts to employers to encourage transit subsidies, also through city incentives/regulations"
- "Determine possible schedule barriers for respective user groups, i.e. when, and what days, do more low-income or vehicle-restricted people show demand for trips"
- "Identify the audience/user"
- "Build on the village van program"
- "Explore other fare options. Could riders pay by the trip rather than monthly fares?"
- "Ensure drivers are available for refugee/migrant labor – driver's licenses, etc."
- "Facilitate more dynamic vanpool creation and modification. Vanpools to work training etc."
- "Target low-income employers/hotels/service industry, expand vanpool options to serve multiple employers"
- "Easy access to get to the vanpool. Start within close proximity of the homes"

Discussion:

- About driver requirements:

- o Mr. Pelly said that drivers must be at least 25, have 5 years of driving history, and less than 6 points on their license. They also need to go through different driver training courses and learn how to fill out reports correctly.
- o Mr. Pelly said he doesn't think current process [for becoming a driver] is prohibitive. He said it is mobile, brief, doesn't require having to go into a classroom, and has no time limit.
- o Ms. Baker asked if out-of-country driver experience is counted. Mr. Pelly responded that it does.
- o Ms. Stern: we've had the obstacle of drivers not having enough years of experience, which can become an issue
- Ms. Gregor: As we go through this process and are writing recommendations to serve certain populations or demographics, we need to make sure that we're engaging those people in the conversation. This may involve engaging organizations. Are there targeted community members or organizations we can reach out to in order to serve those with the highest need?

Board #2: Meaningful Partnerships

The following are selected comments that were written on this board:

- "Strengthen the role of the commute trip reduction staff"
- "Partner with groups of businesses - ex, Boise Towne Square Mall van, not just Macy's van"

Discussion:

- Mr. Mapp: We should broaden our education portfolio and determine who we are not reaching and what type of tools we are using
- About integrating vanpool into development review process:
 - o Mr. Mapp also suggested integrating vanpool/transit options with the development review process for cities. He said as we go through current process, we strictly focus on how many parking spaces are going to be provided. Also, he commented that he'd rather not spend time trying to do enforcement to verify if an employer is doing vanpooling if they're required to be doing it. "[We] can't go out and check to see if they're doing what they say after opening." He then asked, what tools do we have to enforce vanpool?
 - o Mr. Hunt responded that reporting or not reporting can be integrated into the regulatory environment, but that it is a "stick approach." He then said he wasn't sure what kind of appetite there is at local level for pursuing changing regulations to enable future vanpool enforcement activity
 - o Ms. Baker: Not a lot of precedent. The City of Denver recently adopted a TDM ordinance that requires all major new development to provide a plan that demonstrates reduction in SOV trips.
 - o Ms. Baker said that enforcement mechanisms for the new Denver policy include levying fines for developers who don't meet the reduction after a certain number of years, as well as tracking through tenant surveys that property managers are required to administer and then furnish to the city. There is also a fine for not furnishing that report.
 - o Ms. Baker: Vanpool is a type of TDM strategy. If VRT municipalities were to implement a similar process, we could maybe look to Denver as an example.
 - o Mr. Hunt: Not familiar with Denver program. Just state requirements for some employers, like Washington state. A local example would be better. Don't want approaches to "just be sticks."
- Mr. Hunt said he liked the Mural comment provided about partnering with groups of businesses vs. individual businesses.
- Ms. Baker: We learned from the PAC that many companies have sustainability goals. For instance, Amazon has substantial sustainability goals and was represented. Some companies will respond if we can effectively demonstrate that vanpool can be part of achieving those goals.

- About partnering with staffing agencies:
 - o Question from Mr. Hunt: Have we tried in past getting involved with staffing agencies in the past as another partnership strategy?
 - o Answer from Ms. Stern: At St. Luke's, there is an onboarding process. Within that process, one of the things they did was to have VRT staff present in order to introduce to the employer what commute options were available. We felt that was effective, depending on the time and effort made by the employer to educate on those options.
 - o Mr. Pelly: We recently provided an employer-sponsored van. Simplifies billing, makes sure route keeps going. The employer was contracted through the staffing agency to cover vanpool costs for employees. Working with other such agencies to establish similar program.
- Mr. Mapp: some employees may choose employer based on their ability to provide alternative transportation options other than a SOV.
- Ms. Gregor: Good point. If employers can provide transit options, incentives, needs to be clearly communicated to employers. Partnering with employer agencies might be one way to get message out.

Board #3: Geographic Coverage

The following are selected comments that were written on this board:

- "Research large employers outside existing service area"
- "Reach out to Commerce Department in areas where we have no active vanpools"
- "Determine number of people with unmet needs due to geography"
- "Identify biggest-opportunity employers"
- "Conduct targeted meetings in communities"
- "Research impacts of fare policy on vanpool formation. IE – do fare policies discourage different types of vanpool?"
- "Identify P&R locations or meet up points outside the service area"
- "Conduct targeted marketing in communities or higher population neighborhoods to determine interest/demand in vanpool"
- "Tough to say this, but remove ADA County to/from/through restriction"

Discussion:

- About geographical limitations:
 - o Mr. Selekof: If we want to expand vanpool, it will be necessary to expand beyond Ada County. Commuteride does a great job currently, but a great place to start would be to remove geographical requirements.
 - o Ms. Gregor: Relevant question to this study. Could go through state legislature. May be other ways to approach it, but not sure. Hasn't been a lot of research on what a creative solution might be. Would take legal work what other opportunities might be if we wanted to remain under jurisdiction of ACHD.
 - o Ms. Stern: Limitation is an obstacle. Majority of people in Caldwell probably also living around Caldwell. Will become a relevant issue.
- About VRT discussions with Vanpool by Enterprise:
 - o Ms. Gregor: Vanpool through Enterprise... was it in operation? What happened with that?
 - o Mr. Hunt: Understanding was that Enterprise program was just acknowledging that it can operate in Canyon County. Wasn't a meaningful connection between VRT and their services, don't know if any vanpools formed out of it. No specific program was set up. Was an MOU between VRT and Enterprise but didn't mean anything with no financial arrangement or commitment on either party's part to do anything. Was thinking about expanding geographical coverage beyond Canyon County.

- About potential for shorter-distance vanpool:
 - Mr. Hunt: What tools are in the toolbox to make shorter vanpools available/viable? There is typically a limitation to how short vanpools are or can be, but maybe we can decrease that limit to open up more opportunities.
 - Mr. Selekof: [Tools] might determine efficacy for vanpool operations in Canyon County.
 - Ms. Stern: We've been working on that on the operations side.
 - Ms. Gregor: May want to look at vanshare programs, which use the vanpool model to address the first/last mile.
 - Ms. Gregor: In Canyon County, where could vanpool cover needs not being served by on-demand service?
 - Ms. Stern: Within Ada County, we're looking at doing smaller routes and the potential demand for such routes. We need to look at how vanpool would fit into existing Canyon County service.

Next Steps

- July: Gaps and opportunities analysis, best practices analysis
- August: Community survey, next PAC meeting

Attachments

Mural Boards
Presentation

Highest Need

If serving those with the highest need, such as low-income people and people without personal vehicles, were our primary mission with this project, what specific actions could we take?

Just double-click to add a post-it! You can use the arrows to make your post-it larger. Double-click again inside the post-it to add your text.



Geographic Coverage

If *expanding the geographic coverage of the vanpool/shared mobility system* were our primary mission with this project, what specific actions could we take?

Just double-click to add a post-it! You can use the arrows to make your post-it larger. Double-click again inside the post-it to add your text.

Identify the biggest opportunity employers

Identify and focus on the key commute paths (greatest number of commuters going to a similar destination)

Conduct targeted marketing in communities / higher population neighborhoods to determine the interest/ demand for vanpool

Determine number of people with unmet needs due to geography

Tough to say this - but remove the Ada County travel (to, from or through) restriction

Do people travel to area for weekly business? Ex. travel to Boise on Monday, stay in hotel for the week, then travel home on Friday? If so, provide weekly shuttle.

Research large employers outside existing service area

Identify P&R locations or meet up points outside the service area

Research impact of fare policy on vanpool formation. i.e. do fare policies discourage different types of vanpools?

Reach out to commerce dept. in areas where we have no active vanpools

Meaningful Partnerships
If *establishing meaningful and productive partnerships for the vanpool/shared mobility system* were our primary mission with this project, what specific actions could we take?

Just double-click to add a post-it! You can use the arrows to make your post-it larger. Double-click again inside the post-it to add your text.





VRT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY

Internal Project Team Meeting #2
July 23, 2021

Presentation Agenda

Introductions

Project Overview and Goals

Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Project Advisory Committee Role

World Café (Mural)

Q&A

Next Steps



Project Objectives

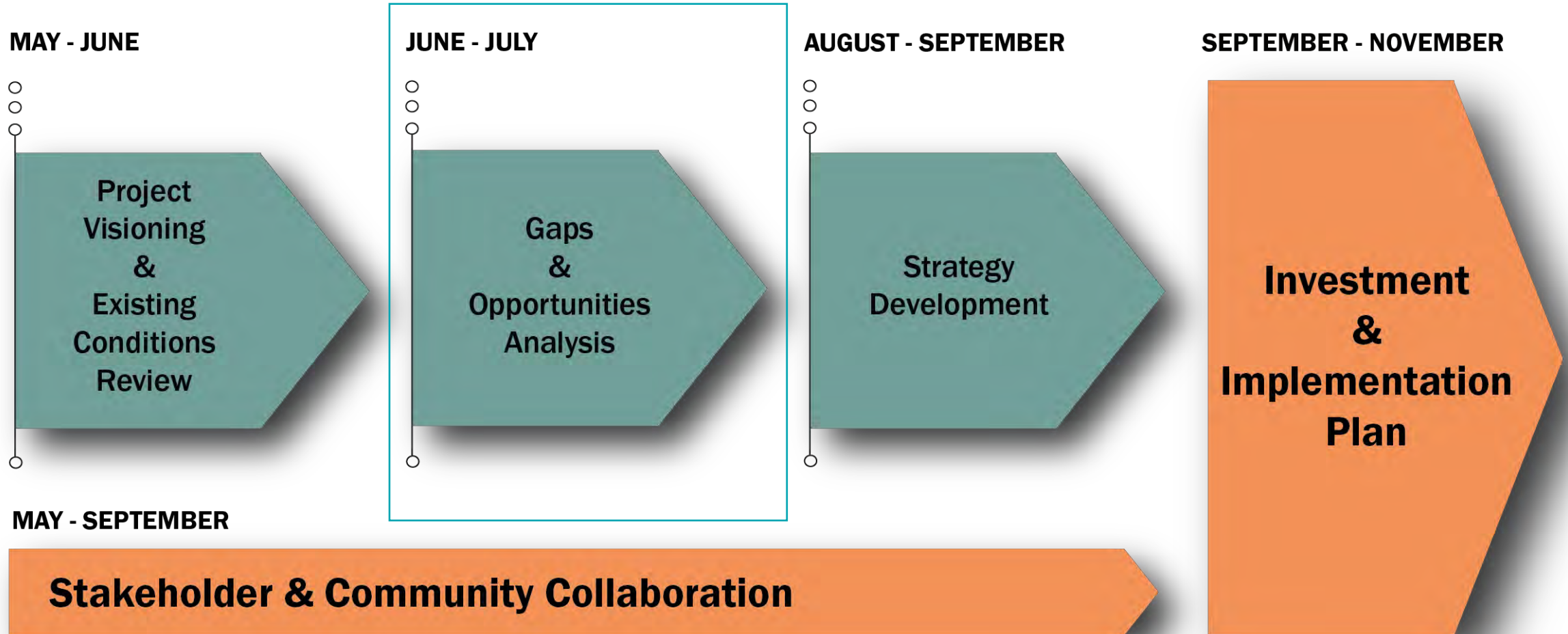
Create a **cohesive and collective vision** for vanpool/shared mobility solutions in Treasure Valley—what we want it to achieve, who we want it to serve, and what outcomes it must achieve.

Identify a **strategy to meet our vision**—what pieces of the existing system we want to maintain, what we'd like to change, and how we can make those changes.

Develop an investment strategy and action plan to **achieve that vision**.



Project Scope and Schedule



Project Vision and Guiding Principles

Offers transportation choices to support **freedom of movement** and quality of life.

Adapts to **changing** mobility needs.

Serves as an equitable and practical transportation solution **across Treasure Valley**.

Serves as a feasible transportation option for **many different communities**.

Fills gaps in transit service and result in an **appreciable reduction** in personal vehicle commuting.

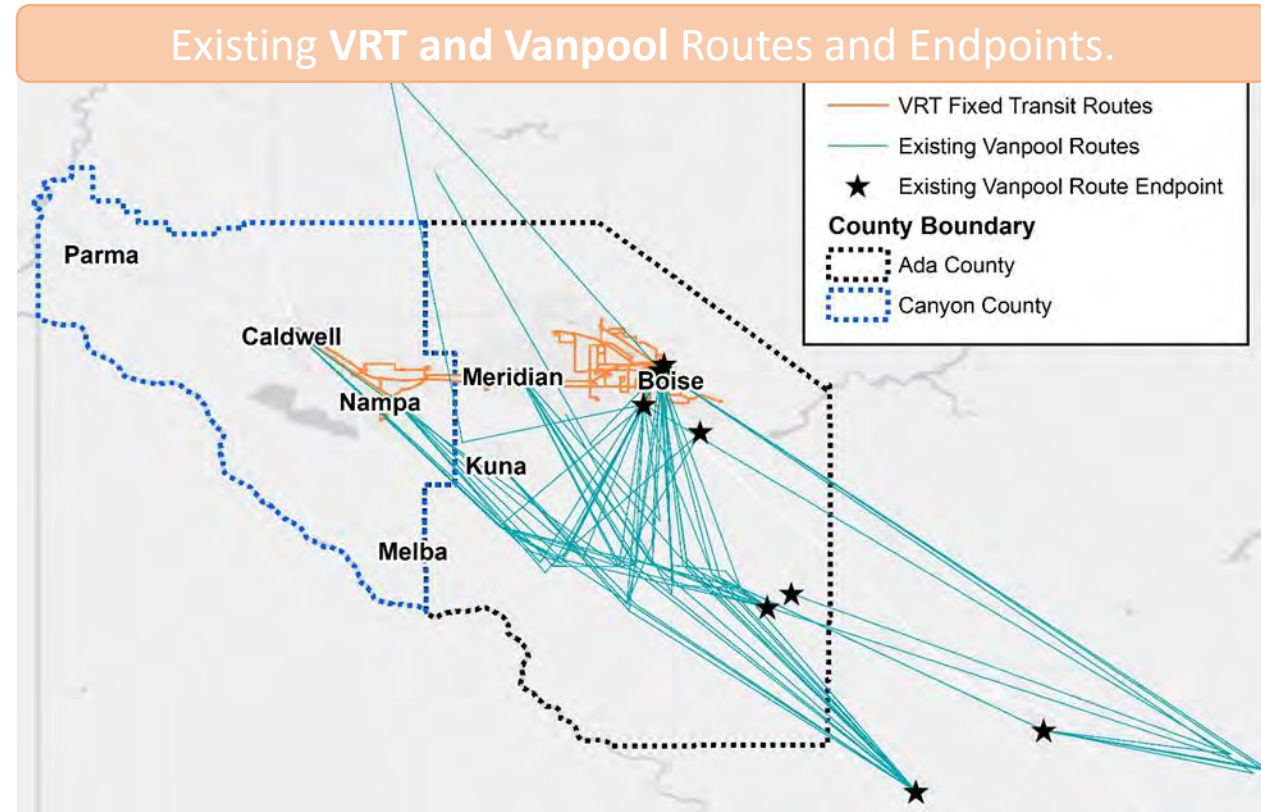
Leverages **existing infrastructure**.

Achieves **sustainable cost recovery**.

Takes advantage of **smart and meaningful partnerships** to achieve goals.

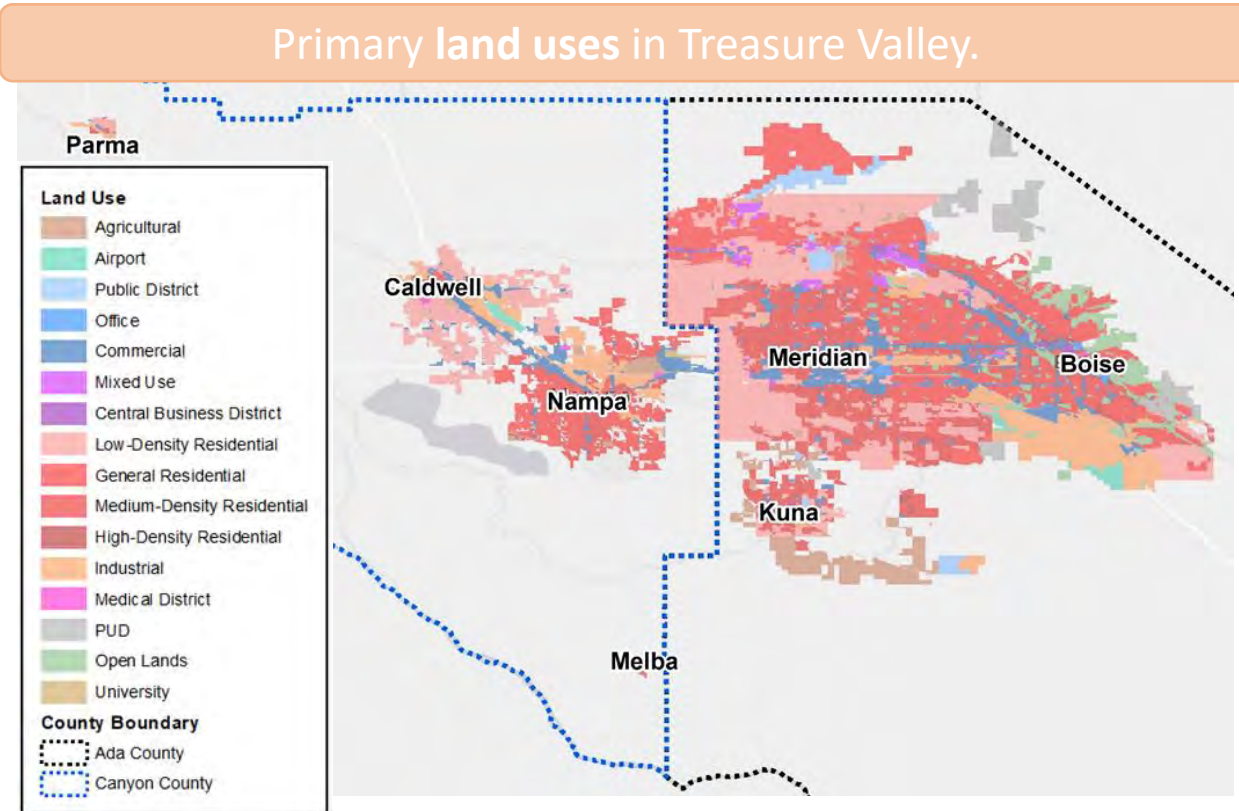
Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The current vanpool program is a partnership with the Ada County Highway District. Therefore, it is required to focus service on trips that originate, end or pass through **Ada County**. As such, available vanpool service in **Canyon County** does not represent its contribution to Treasure Valley's employment base—no existing vanpool routes terminate within Canyon County. Without change, **this disparity will continue to grow** as employment opportunities in Canyon County—particularly in Caldwell and surrounding areas—increase.



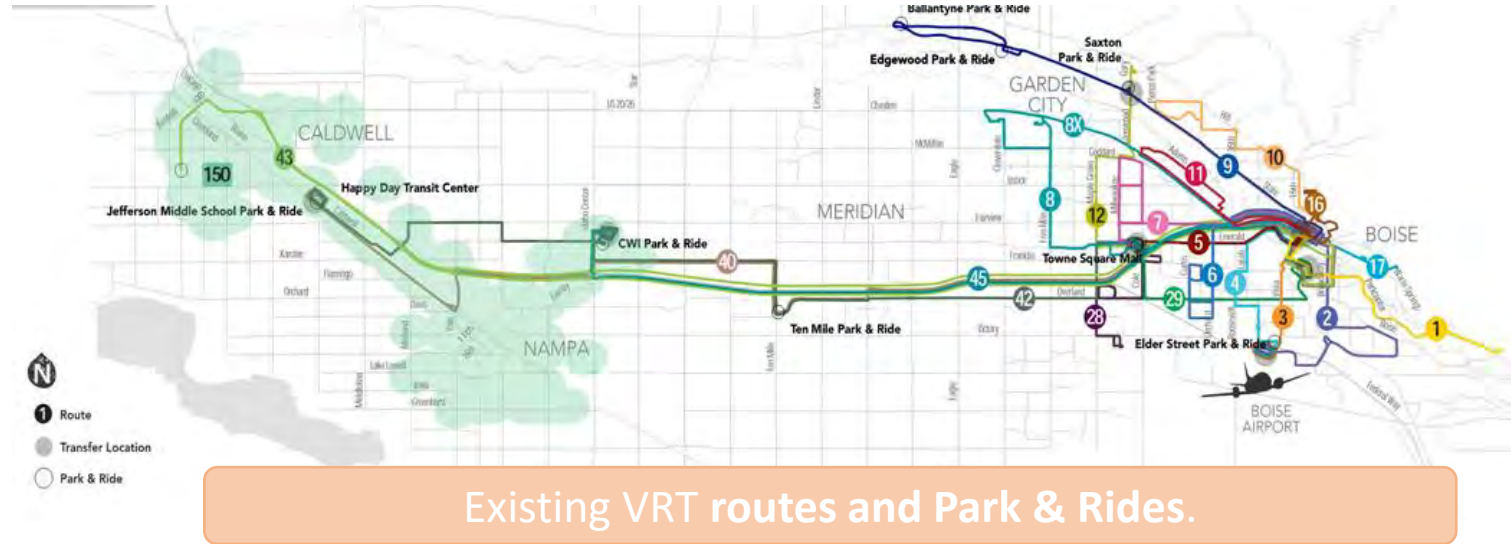
Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The current vanpool system plays an essential role in making smarter commuting more accessible for many. Compared to the entire Treasure Valley population, vanpool participants generally skew **wealthier and more educated**, and generally have **more convenient access** to personal vehicles. This indicates an opportunity to reach low-income communities, people without vehicle access, service and hourly workers, and more.



Existing Conditions and Opportunities

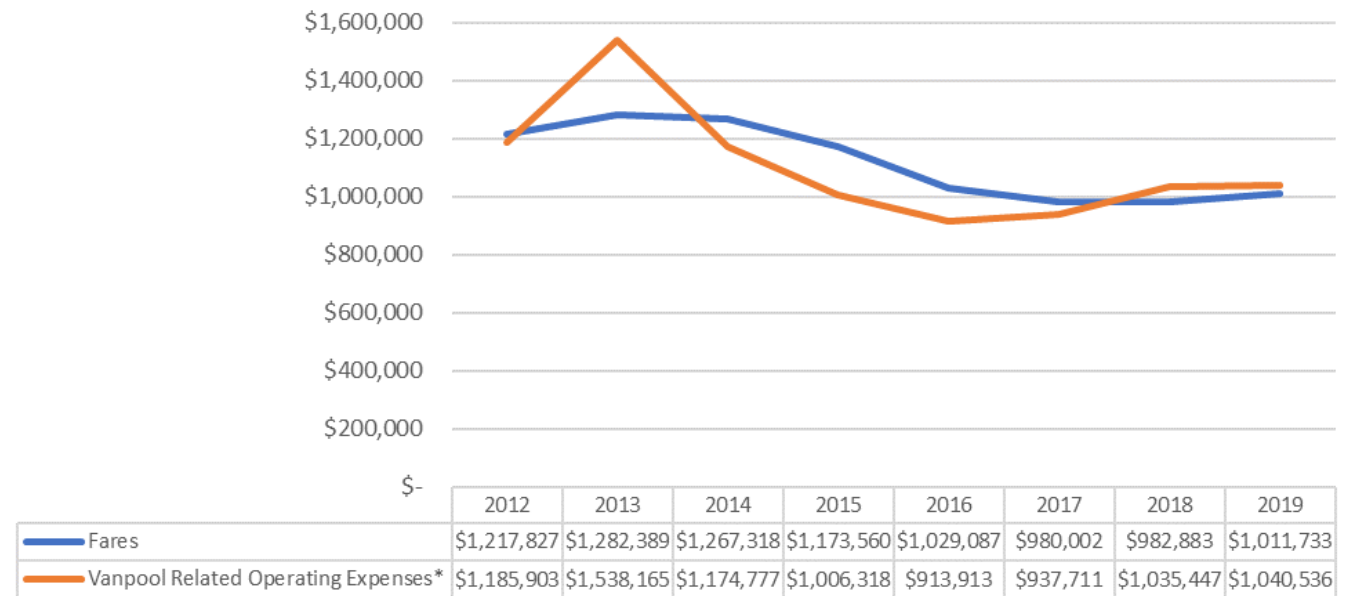
Current vanpool service generally offers coverage for **north—south travel** in complement to existing VRT routes, particularly in Ada County. Expanded efforts could **offer connections to commuters throughout Canyon County** and in the farther reaches of both counties.



Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Currently, vanpool fare revenues generally **fully cover or approach full recovery** of vanpool-related expenses, excluding marketing and TDM programming.

Vanpool operating expenses and revenues, 2012—2019.



World Café



We'll now head over to **Mural** for the rest of the meeting.

Next Steps

July

Gaps and Opportunities Analysis

Best Practices Analysis

August

Community Survey

Next Project Advisory Committee Meeting



VRT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY

Internal Project Team Meeting
September 10, 2021



Presentation Agenda

IPT Updates

What We've Heard

Vanpool Opportunities

Limitations and Challenges

Preliminary Strategies and Guided Discussion



What We've Heard: Key Themes

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Eliminate restrictions and limitations for strategic, unified coverage
Identify and focus on key commute paths

MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Leverage employers- especially large employers with sustainability goals
Seek municipal partnerships—e.g., through development review processes

HIGHEST NEED

Offer greater flexibility in options and fares
Expand employer subsidies and pools
Integrate and expand driver services

Our Biggest Opportunities

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

More strategic, comprehensive, regional approach to vanpool in complement to other services and options

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Accommodate changing commute trip patterns and increased employment in Canyon County

FLEXIBILITY

Accommodate evolving work styles and schedules as telecommuting continues to expand, and accommodate non-traditional/shift commutes

REACHING HARD-TO-REACH/VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Target service for those who need it most, such as low-income communities and people with no or low car ownership

Our Biggest Challenges

GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

Single vanpool operator with coverage restrictions and lack of direct connection to broader public transportation network

FUNDING ALLOCATION

Funding allocation for vanpool to single vanpool operator with coverage limitations (→Enterprise difficulties)

COVERAGE AND CONVERSION POTENTIAL

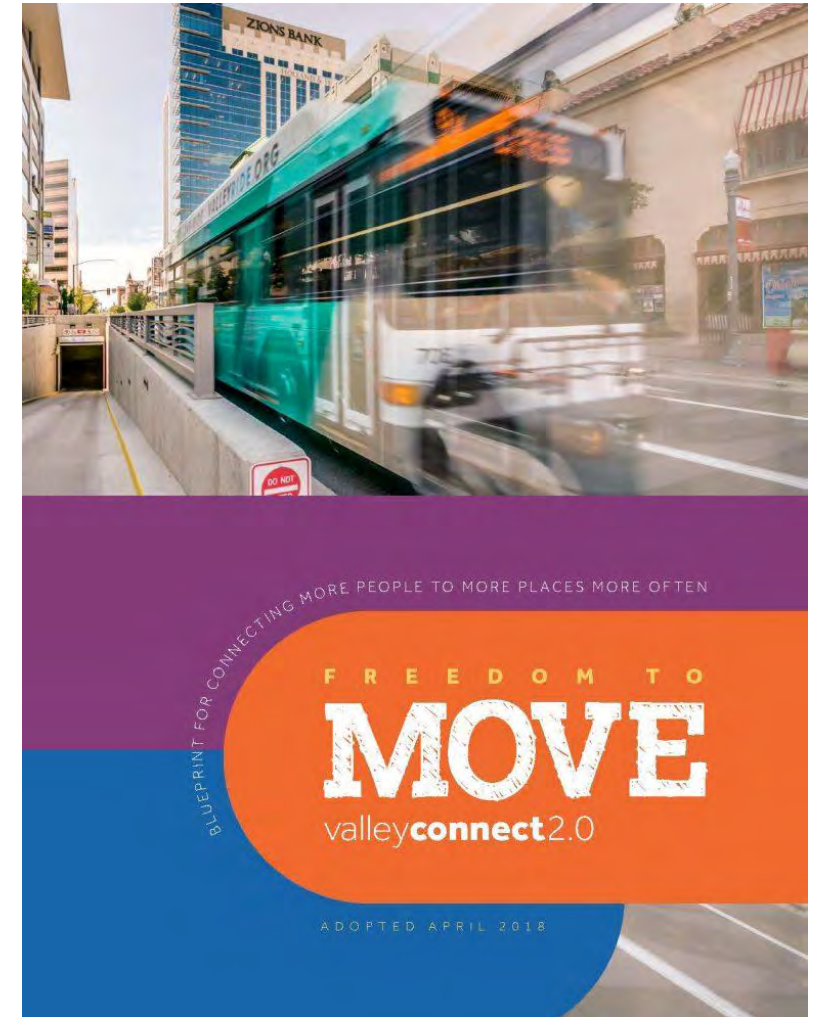
Supported single-occupancy vehicle commuting; limited opportunities to make large dents in reducing SOV commuting

LIMITATIONS ON FLEXIBILITY

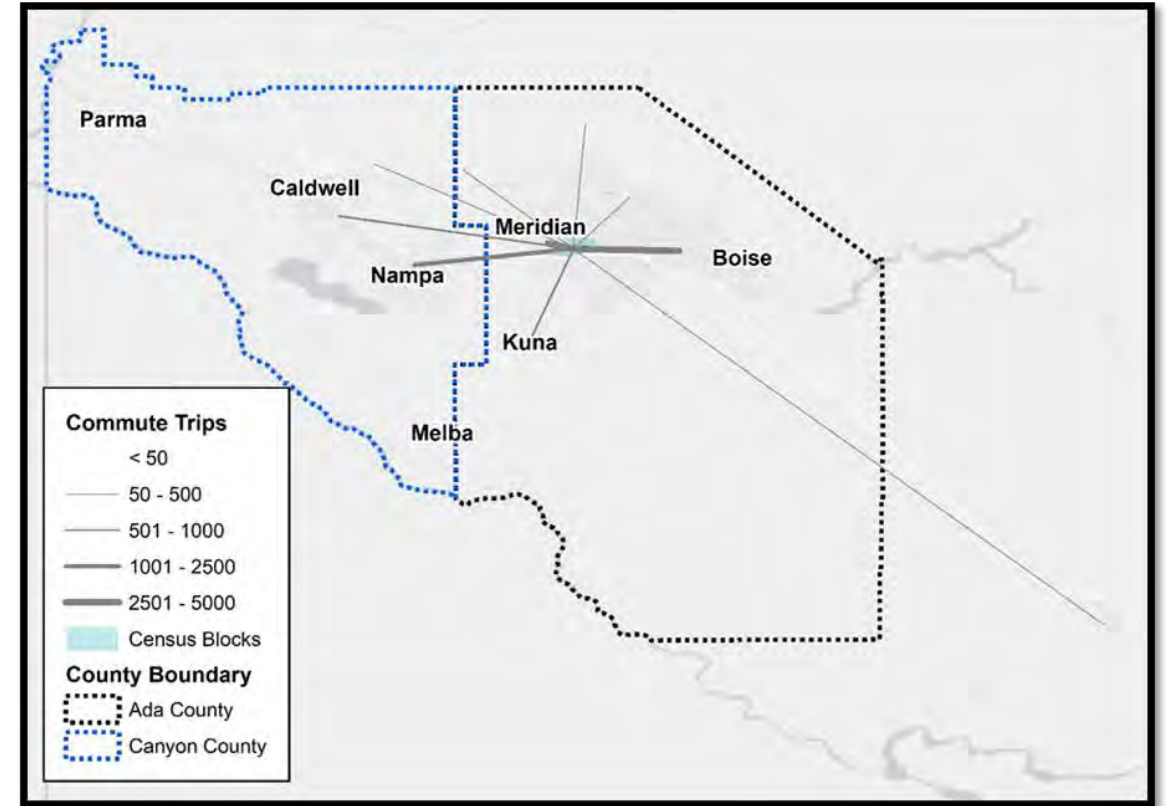
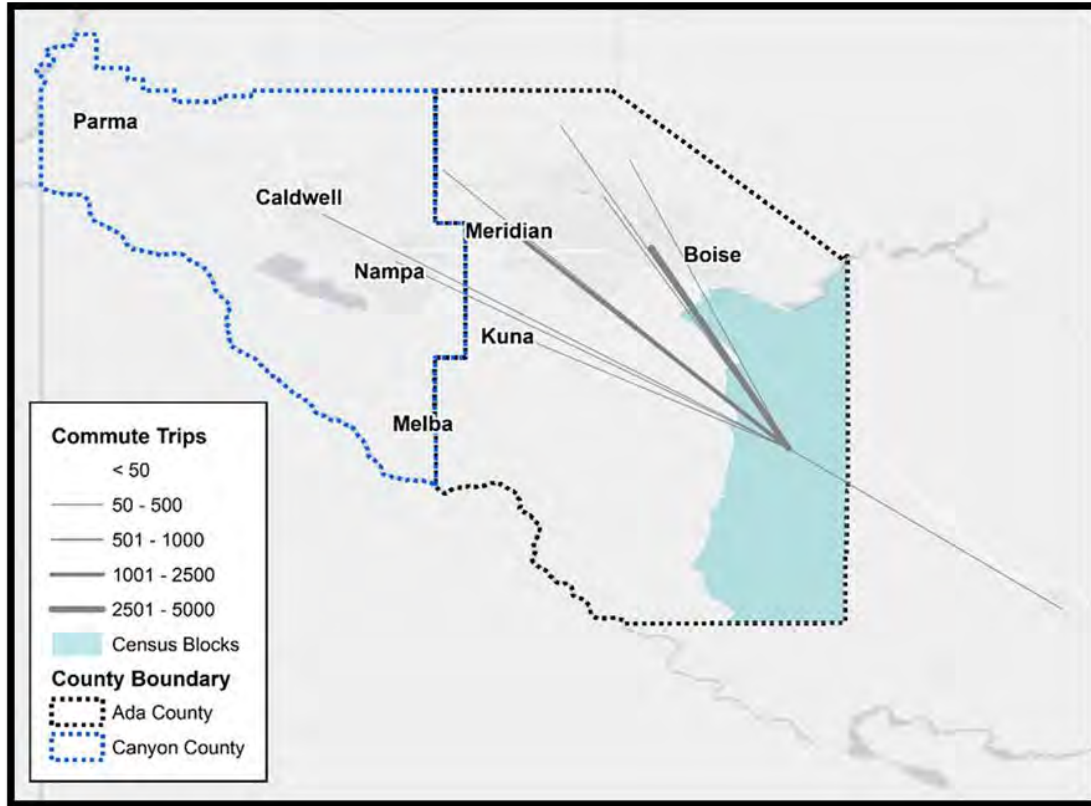
Number of riders per route, travel distance, driver requirements

Governance, Structure and Funding

- Strategic, multi-agency governance
- Alignment with **ValleyConnect 2.0**
- Clear, regional decision-making about service options
- Integrated with other modes
- Use of multiple service providers, public and private
- Equitable funding allocation based on service provision



“Traditional” Commute Time + Pattern



Target employers in **high-demand commute areas** through existing vanpool framework

Traditional Commute Time (Only)

- Strategic expansion of geographic coverage based on commute patterns and ability to absorb trips
- More information about Canyon County → Canyon County commutes coming in [Community Questionnaire](#)

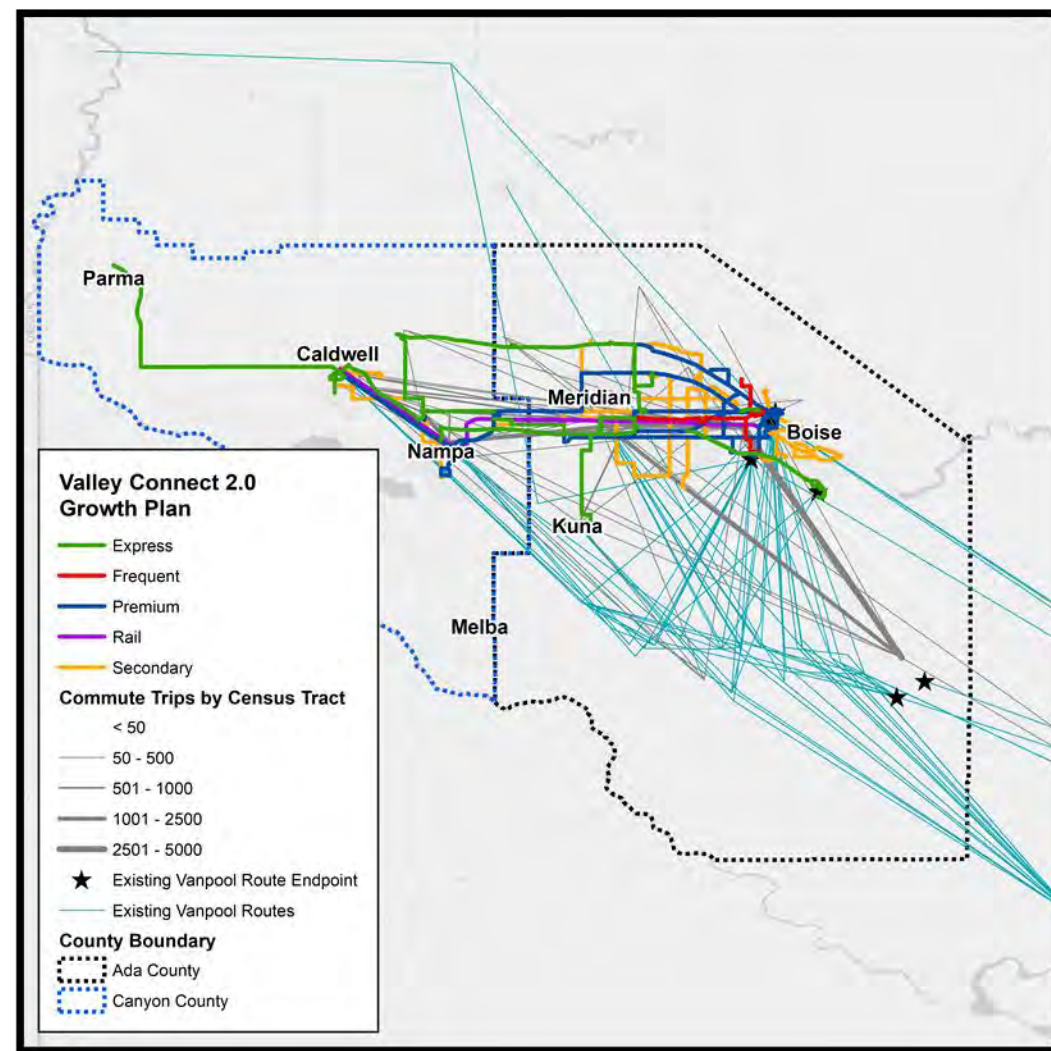
Tract Label	City	Commuter City of Origination									Total
		Boise	Meridian	Nampa	Eagle	Caldwell	Garden City	Kuna	Middleton	Other	
1	Boise	231	38	25	12	8	7	6	4	138	469
2	Kuna	372	114	291	15	108	15	109	45	532	1,601
3	Meridian	228	258	111	21	37	7	31	10	318	1,021
4	Caldwell	59	47	145	16	232	<5	13	19	358	889
5	Boise	293	72	33	22	8	18	8	<5	172	626
6	Boise	4,634	1,252	497	137	150	89	272	<5	2,565	9,596
7	Parma	158	77	146	18	239	10	16	13	325	1,002
8	Parma	14	11	21	<5	40	<5	<5	<5	347	433
9	Nampa	347	223	648	38	324	19	33	39	801	2,472
10	Meridian	4,835	3,920	1,875	436	866	253	588	127	5,190	18,090
11	Nampa	466	356	1,071	46	651	<5	63	60	1,741	4,454
12	Caldwell	160	109	303	23	480	16	<5	33	760	1,884
13	Boise	2,879	1,000	673	211	325	119	183	56	2,041	7,487
14	Nampa	58	47	217	6	44	5	10	7	208	602
15	Nampa*	312	358	771	23	393	18	106	18	937	2,936

Source: U.S. Census

*Includes assumed impacts of total employment as reported by Amazon, assuming even distribution of employees over 3 shifts proportionately distributed across the reported zip codes.

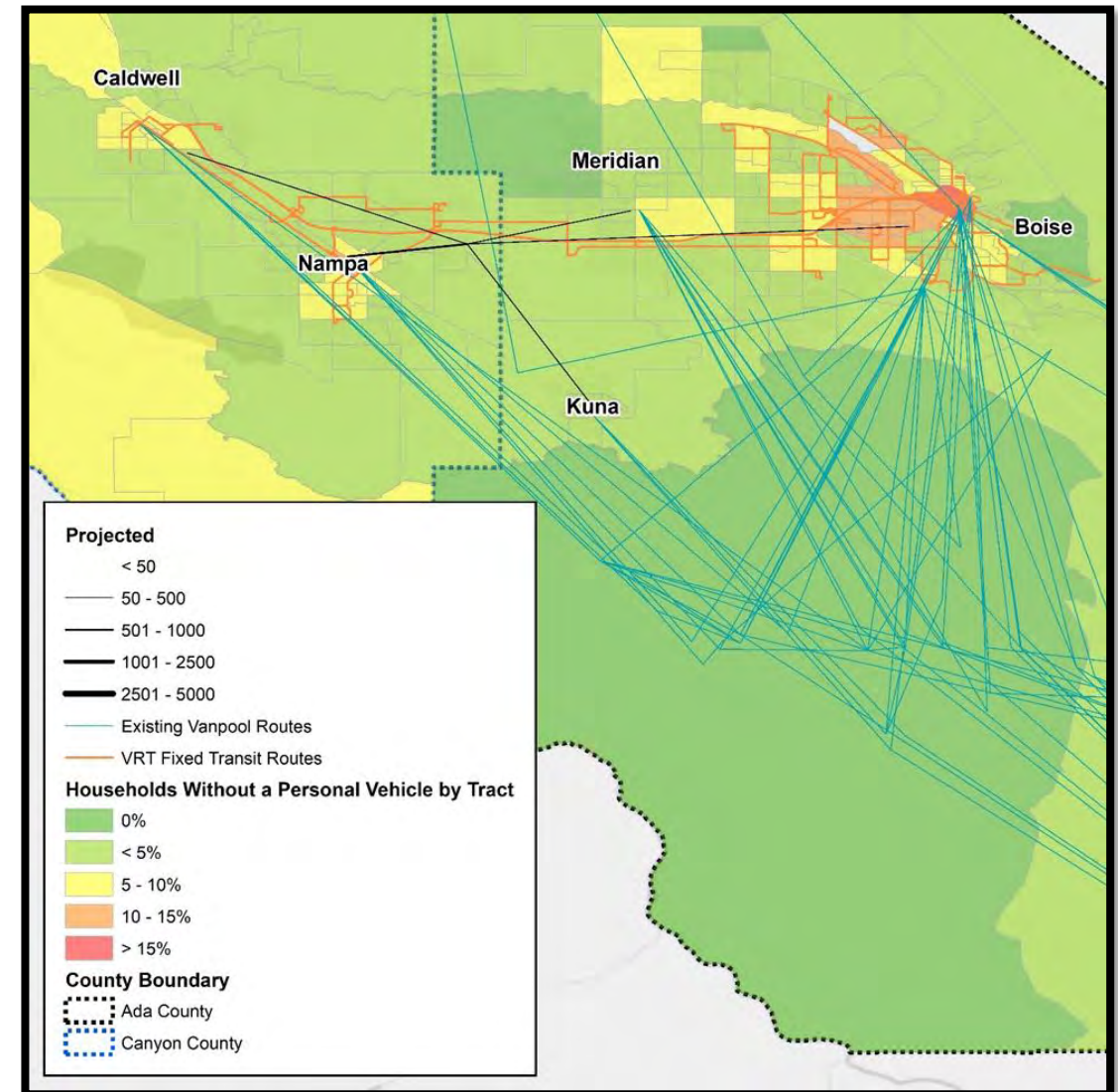
Flexibility and Non-Traditional Commuting

- Expanded fixed-route connections
- Employer pools
- Strengthened “find a seat” and “find a rider” connections
- Tiered and per-ride fare options
- More information about Treasure Valley commute patterns coming in [Community Questionnaire](#)



Hard-to-Reach Groups

- Expanded service to low-income communities, communities with low to no car ownership
- Targeted subsidies; low-income fare options
- Increased funding for Village Van program, Late Night program, and other initiatives that offer direct assistance to hard-to-reach groups



Marketing, Outreach, and Partnerships



- Large employers with sustainability targets (e.g., Amazon)
- Coordination with Economic Development/ Economic Partnership organizations and chambers
- New employer onboarding
- Coordination with broader transportation/commuting strategies and transportation demand management initiatives (especially parking considerations)
- Coordination with municipal development review processes

Guided Discussion

- Do you foresee other **opportunities** with the Treasure Valley regional vanpool program that we haven't articulated?
- Do you foresee other **challenges and limitations** that we haven't articulated?
- What aspects of the **preliminary strategies** do you support or resonate most with?
What aspects don't seem quite right to you?

Next Steps

September

Strategy Development

Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3

October

Final Plan and Investment Strategy Development

Lessons Learned: Geographic Coverage

LA Metro Vanpool Program

- Coordinated effort with funding and resources from five counties
- Private operators (3) can operate at lower cost and purchasing at economies of scale, so a wider geographic range can be served
- LA Metro/partners not responsible for vehicle purchase/maintenance, etc.
- LA Metro generally covers 50% of cost to operate the vanpool—the remaining cost + fuel costs are split between the vanpool riders according to their preferences
- 1,300 active vanpools with 2 full-time staff members
- Extremely scalable

Lessons Learned: Flexibility

Sacramento Regional Transit District Shuttle Program

- Grant-funded shuttle program to connect common residential and commercial destinations underserved by fixed-route service
- Per ride cost
- App-based scheduling to customize trips and alter routes to incorporate new calls along active trips
- Launched in February 2018, the program expanded within 6 weeks to include additional neighborhoods and increased ridership 6x

Lessons Learned: Underserved Communities

Farm Worker Transportation Services Program/CalVans

- Vanpool services for agricultural employees to and from rural worksites
- Services offered in 15 rural counties
- Partnerships with employers to cover costs
- Highly essential for immigrant communities—twice as many rely on ridesharing as their primary commute option
- Culturally-attuned marketing as “camionetas”

VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSIT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY
PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE—KICKOFF MEETING

AUGUST 16, 2021—12:30 PM—2:00PM

IN ATTENDANCE

Stephen Hunt, VRT
Alissa Taysom, VRT
Grant Pelly, ACHD
Tessa Greegor, Commuteride
Jeff Lynn, College of Western Idaho
Belen Garcia, Amalgamated Sugar
Clyde Dornier, Amazon
Jeffrey Jargstorf, Micron
Mallory Baker, Walker Consultants
Christina Jones, Walker Consultants

ABSENT

Nicole Stern, Commuteride
Shannon Jones, Scentsy
Susan Cassell, Meridian Chamber of Commerce
Steve Cherry, CS Beef Packers
Kassy Birby, Boise Cascade
Ryden Meyer, Idaho Department of Labor
Cheryl Tunno, Caldwell Chamber of Commerce
JK Pearson, Northwest Nazarene University

MINUTES

Mallory Baker opened the meeting and facilitated introductions. She then provided review of the project and discussion of potential opportunities for growth and expansion identified to date and lessons learned by other vanpool system's that have explored similar opportunities for their feedback.

Meeting participants then participated in activity via the mural platform. In discussing a specific focus on expanding geographic coverage, key points included:

- Partnerships with local jurisdictions and increasing partnerships with chambers of commerce and other agencies to reach commuters
 - Different geographies generally have different types of employers and workers
- Identifying the largest employers in surrounding counties
- Flexibility
- Sponsoring routes
- Adding rider amenities

If serving those with the highest need were the primary mission of this project, the following key themes were discussed:

- Expanded communication partnerships (faith-based organizations, immigrant community leaders, etc.)
 - One example would be cultivating pools of back up riders or drivers
 - Incorporate a member of the target entity to the pool as a backup, for example a member of HR
- Provide communications and outreach in a variety of languages
- Align communications with targeted populations

VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSIT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE—KICKOFF MEETING

AUGUST 16, 2021—12:30 PM—2:00PM

- Align employer specific communications with that firms' employees' greatest commute challenges
- Sponsorships and subsidies for underserved communities

If establishing meaningful partnerships for the vanpool/shared mobility system were the primary mission for this project, the following key themes were discussed:

- Expanding partnerships with employers, governmental agencies
 - Provider partnering opportunities when can't provide program itself
 - Coordination or creation and distribution of communication channels
- Tessa shared information about Commuteride's new small business grant program to support mobility improvements. These improvements may include vanpool passes as well as other mobility choices.
- Need more and ongoing relatively frequent communications to educate and remind as well as reach new employees as turnover occurs

Stephen posed the question of what was the most promising or interesting as an idea from today's discussion? Key themes included:

- How can VRT services not only connect employees to the employee site, but in the instance of Amazon, how to connect associates across multiple locations throughout the region, versus partnering with a private provider.
- Flexibility and availability are essential to accommodate flexible work plans
- Ride share is not a "traditional" mode of transportation for some populations, such as for immigrant populations. While they are provided temporary assistance, they are then on their own and may not be reached by traditional communication methods.
- The pandemic has been the largest short-term issue impacting Micron's vanpool interest. They have done table days and promotion during the facilities fair where the program was promoted by the sustainability committee.

NEXT STEPS

The Community Survey is launching through the VRT general engagement website. Stephen discussed how the platform support multiple projects through the umbrella of "Engage Valley Regional Transit." A link to that survey will be coming out, and Project Advisory Committee members are highly encouraged to share and promote responding to the survey among their employees and other connections.



VRT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY

Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2
August 16, 2021



Presentation Agenda

PAC Updates

Project Refresher

Opportunities for Growth and Expansion

Lessons Learned

World Café Exercise

Q&A

Next Steps



Project Background



What is vanpool?

Vanpool is a group transportation option akin to a large carpool, where groups of people with similar commuting patterns and routes share a van to access their destinations. ACHD Commuteride's Club Red program currently offers vanpool to Treasure Valley commuters.

What is shared mobility?

Shared mobility refers to a system where transportation resources are shared by multiple people—either at the same time (like a vanpool) or together over time (like a carshare program).

Project Objectives

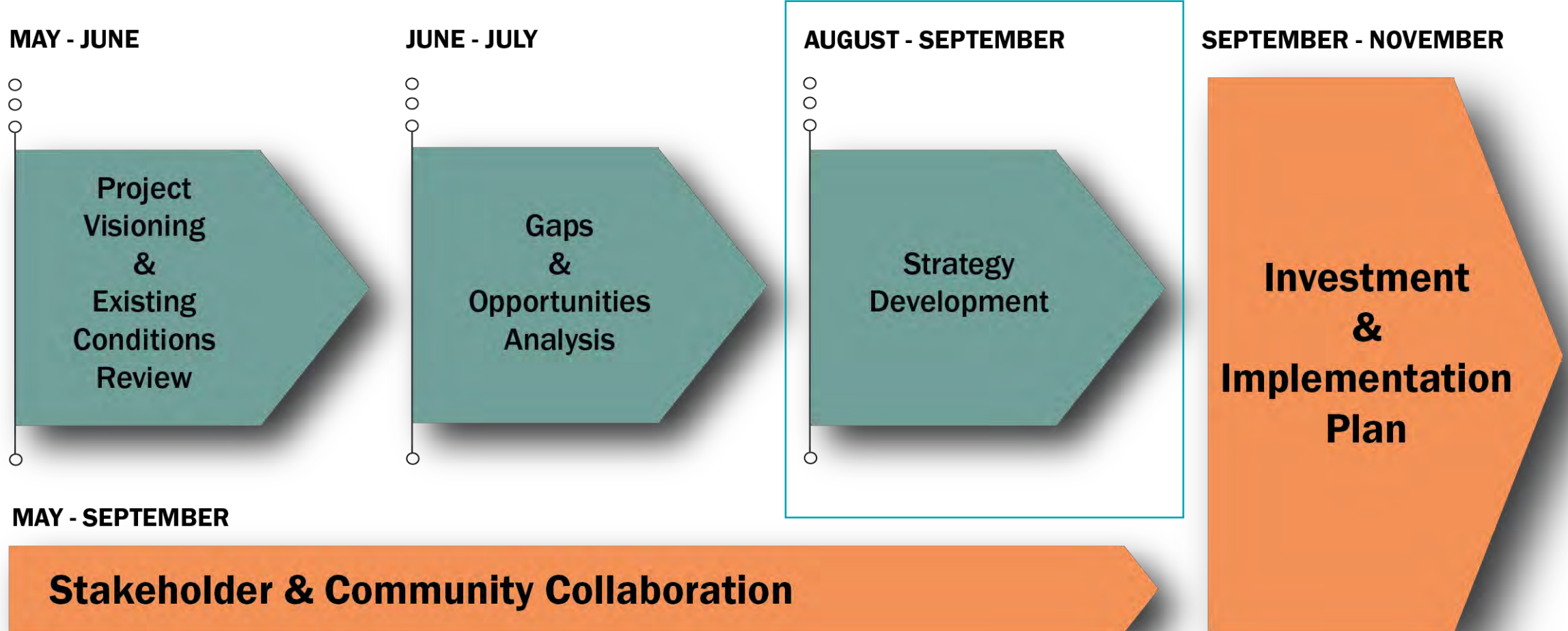
Create a **cohesive and collective vision** for vanpool solutions in Treasure Valley—what we want it to achieve, who we want it to serve, and what outcomes it must achieve.

Identify a **strategy to meet our vision**—what pieces of the existing system we want to maintain, what we'd like to change, and how we can make those changes.

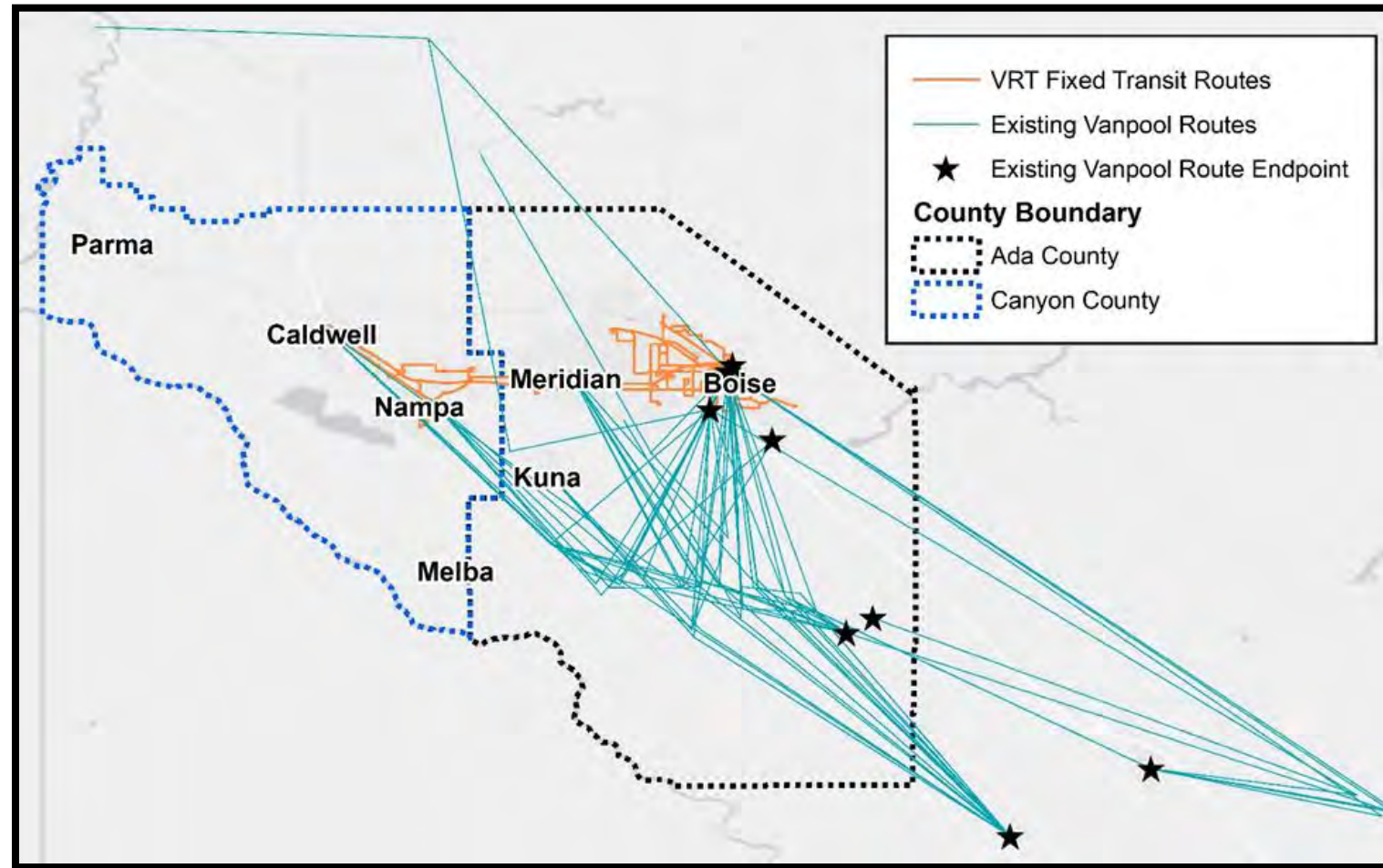
Develop an investment strategy and action plan to **achieve that vision**.



Project Scope and Schedule

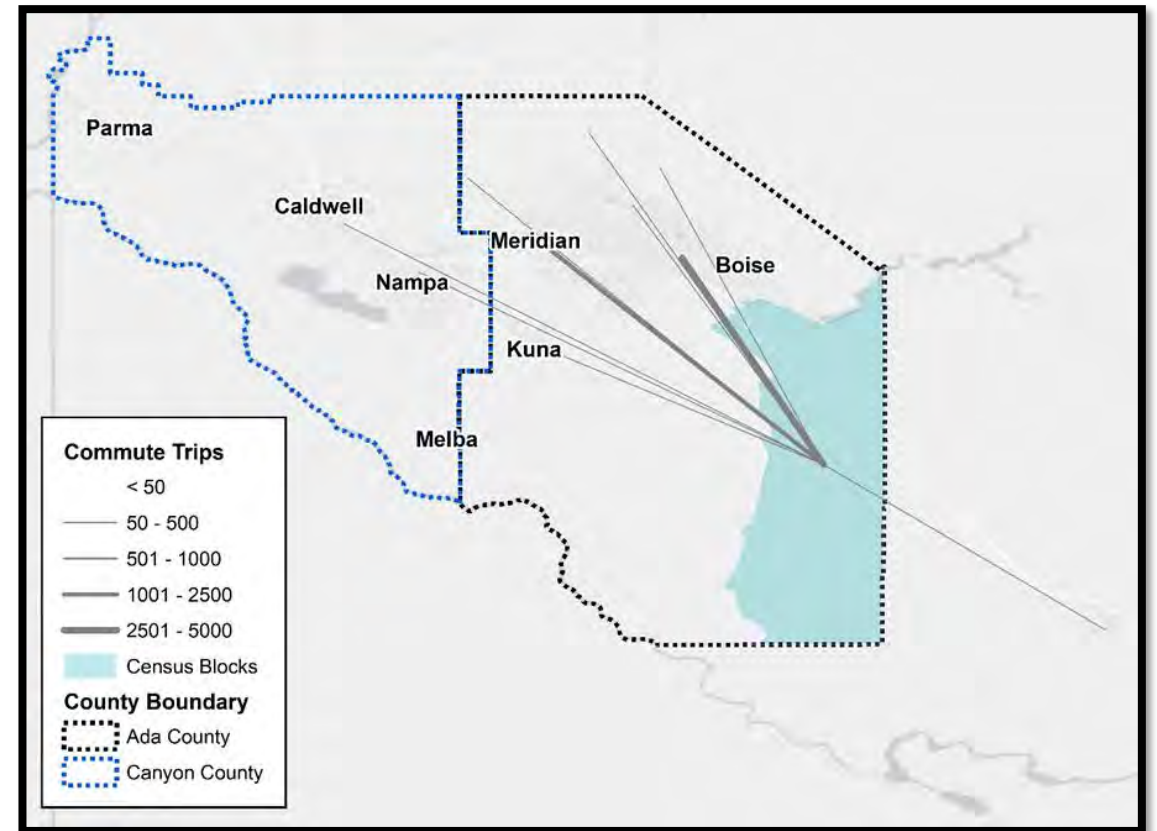
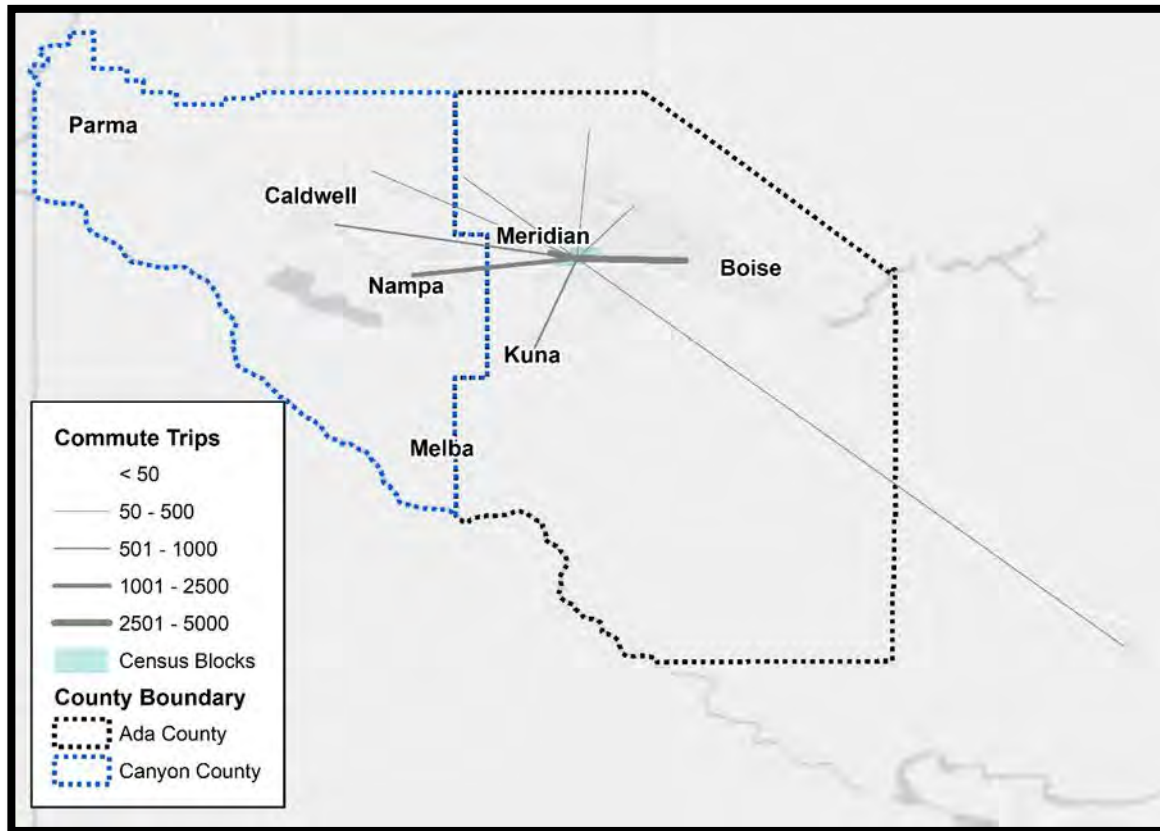


Vanpool Service Coverage



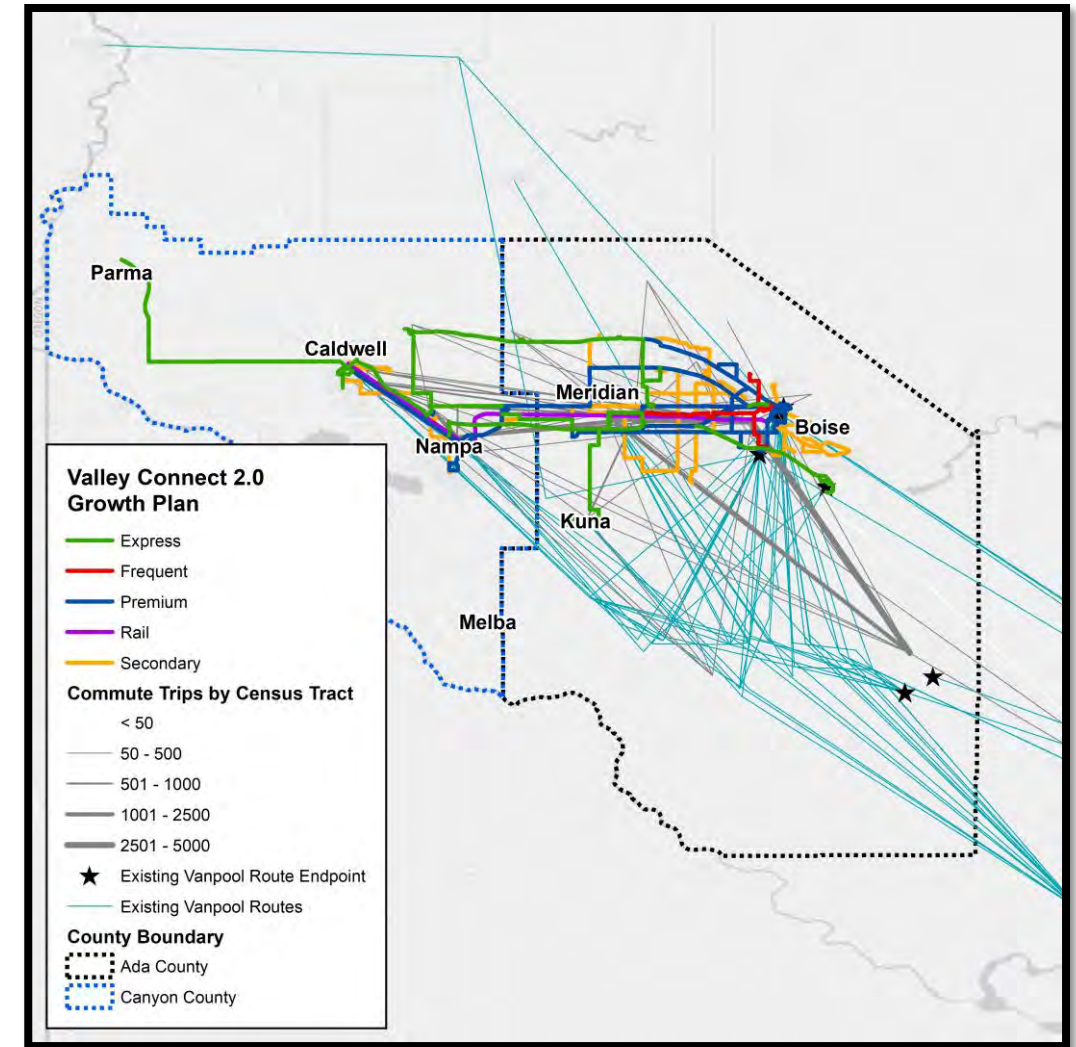
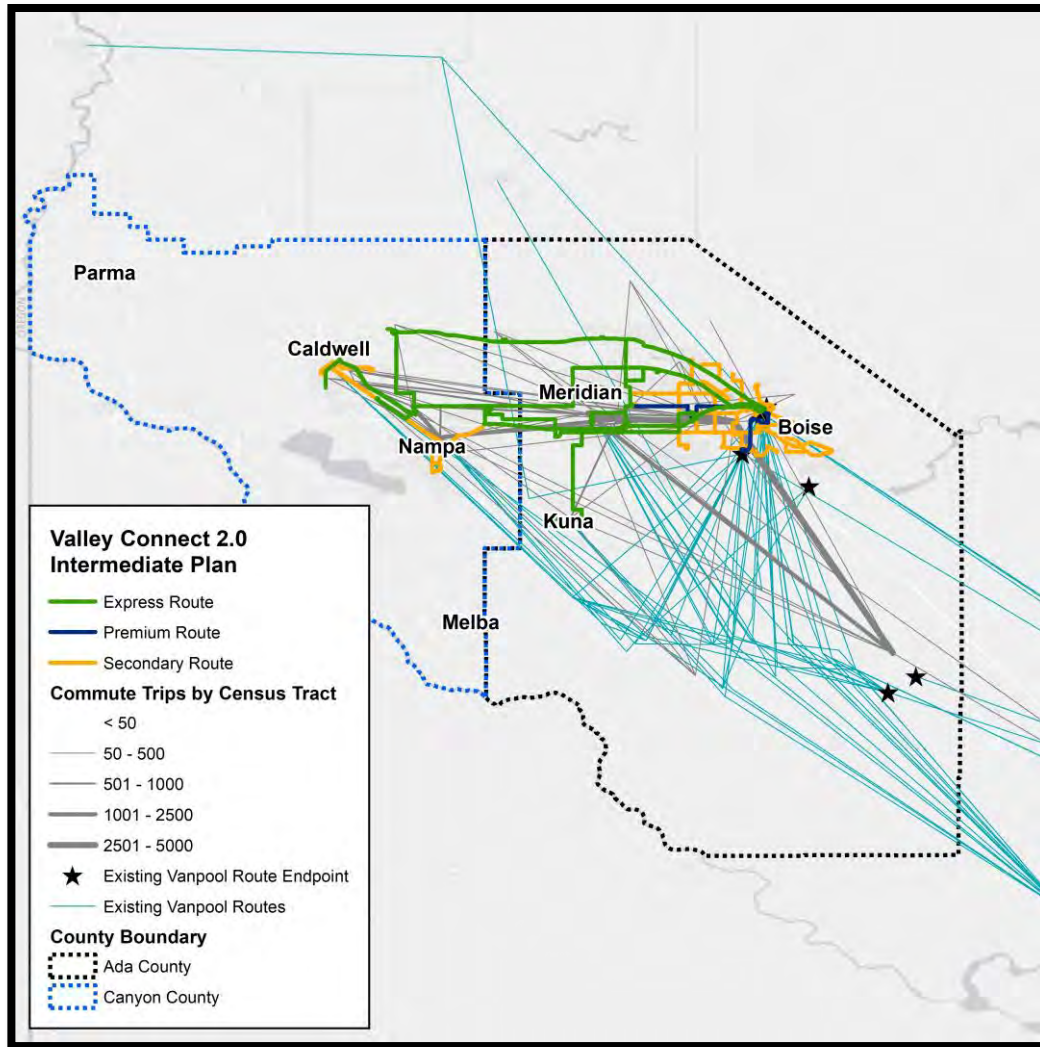
Expand Geographic Coverage: Opportunities to simply expand geographic coverage in places where it makes sense to do so

Vanpool Service Coverage



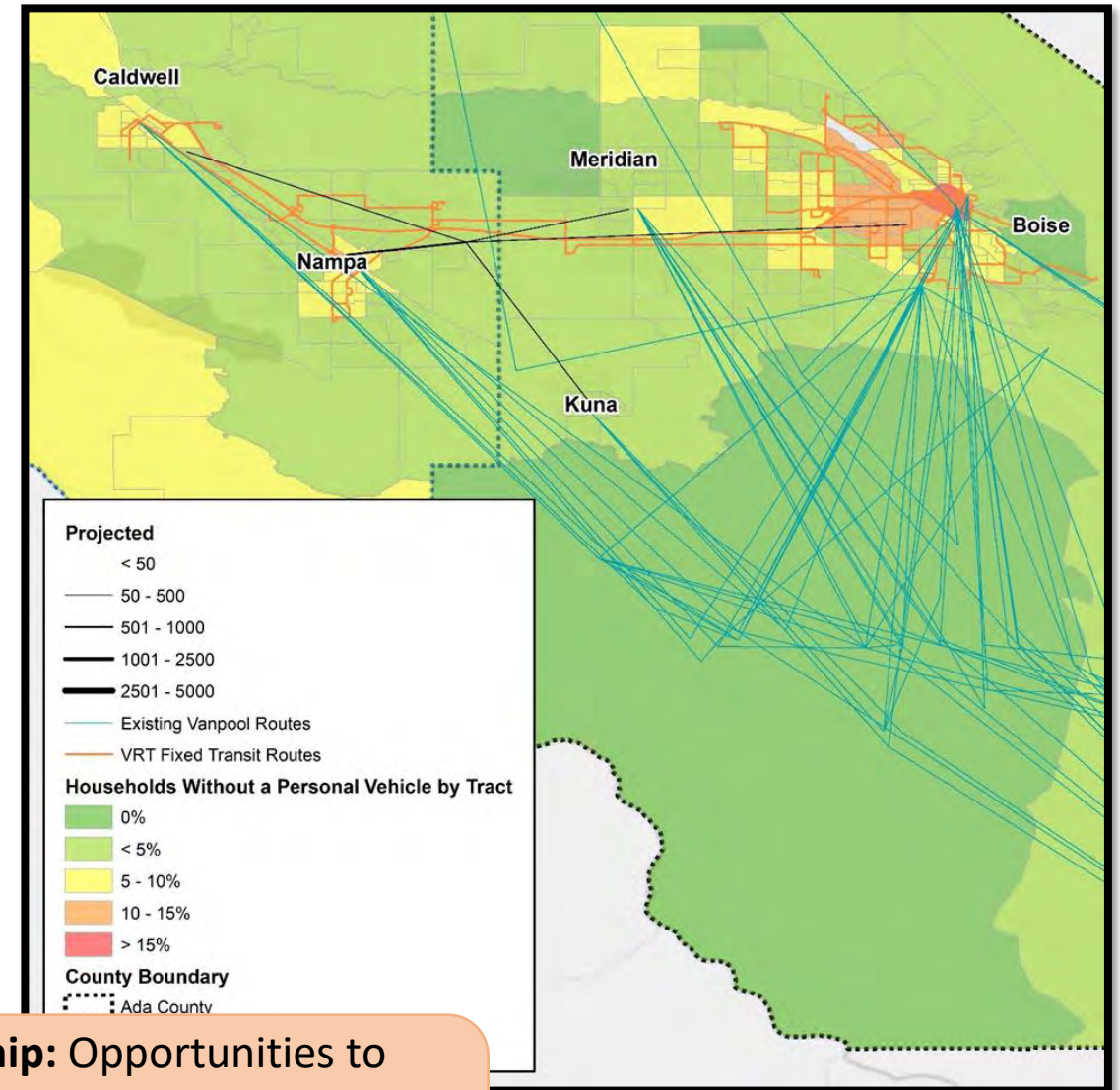
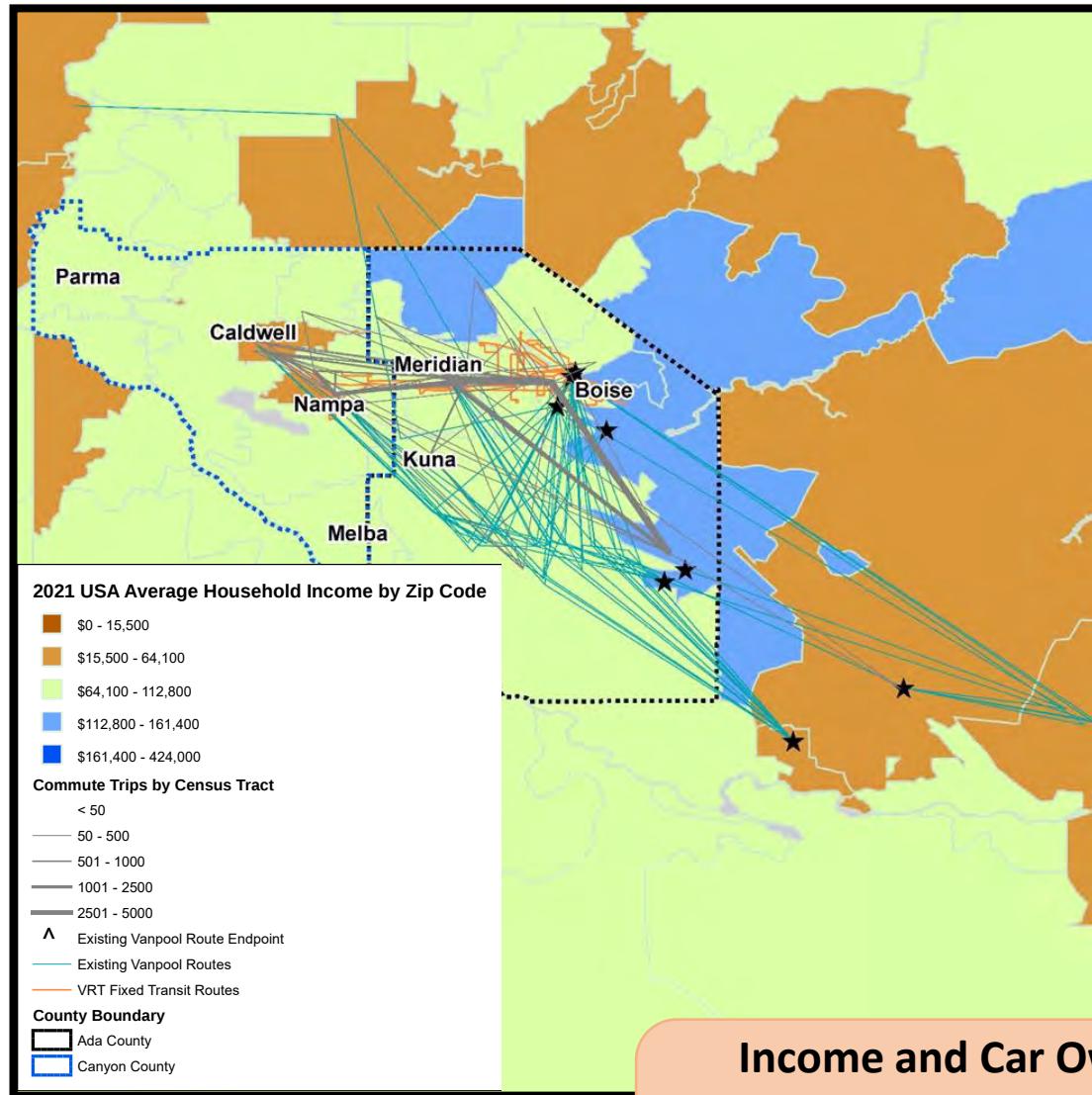
Concentrate on High-Demand Areas: Opportunities to expand and increase service to and from high-demand commute areas

Vanpool Service Coverage



Supporting existing fixed-route: Opportunities to expand service in areas with insufficient connections to fixed-route service lines

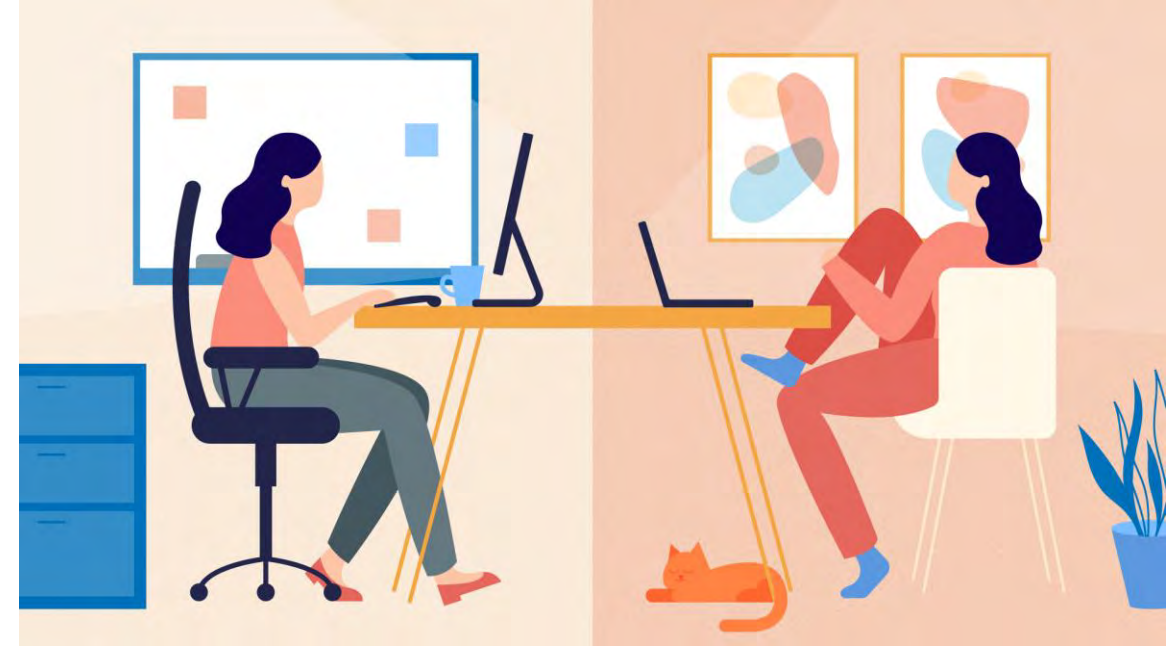
Vanpool Service Coverage



Income and Car Ownership: Opportunities to expand coverage in areas with the highest need for vanpool access, e.g., lower income and low car ownership

Flexibility and Non-Traditional Commutes

- Opportunities to increase flexibility in options and fares for commuters who don't **work in person every day**
- More options for different commute types and **non-traditional schedules**
- More information about specific Treasure Valley commuter profiles, wants and needs coming in **Community Survey**



Limitations of Vanpool



Concentration of Riders: Vanpools generally require a certain number of riders in each route to be efficient



Distance “Sweet Spot”: Vanpools generally work best for users with a long commute, but not so long that the concentration of riders who follow a similar route is low



Trip Absorption: Vanpools can absorb fewer commute trips than other transportation options, like fixed-route service

Lessons Learned: Geographic Coverage

LA Metro Vanpool Program

- Coordinated effort with funding and resources from five counties
- Private operators (3) can operate at lower cost and purchasing at economies of scale, so a wider geographic range can be served
- LA Metro/partners not responsible for vehicle purchase/maintenance, etc.
- LA Metro generally covers 50% of cost to operate the vanpool—the remaining cost + fuel costs are split between the vanpool riders according to their preferences
- 1,300 active vanpools with 2 full-time staff members
- Extremely scalable

Lessons Learned: Flexibility

Sacramento Regional Transit District Shuttle Program

- Grant-funded shuttle program to connect common residential and commercial destinations underserved by fixed-route service
- Per ride cost
- App-based scheduling to customize trips and alter routes to incorporate new calls along active trips
- Launched in February 2018, the program expanded within 6 weeks to include additional neighborhoods and increased ridership 6x

Lessons Learned: Underserved Communities

Farm Worker Transportation Services Program/CalVans

- Vanpool services for agricultural employees to and from rural worksites
- Services offered in 15 rural counties
- Partnerships with employers to cover costs
- Highly essential for immigrant communities—twice as many rely on ridesharing as their primary commute option
- Culturally-attuned marketing as “camionetas”

World Café



We'll now head over to Mural for a “World Café”-inspired exercise.

Next Steps

August

Community Survey—**We need your help!**
Strategy Framework

September

Strategy Development
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Geographic Coverage

If *expanding the geographic coverage of the vanpool/shared mobility system* were our primary mission with this project, what specific actions could we take?

Just double-click to add a post-it! You can use the arrows to make your post-it larger. Double-click again inside the post-it to add your text.

Eliminate limitations on where service can start or stop

Increase coverage to touch Ada or Canyon County, but can start or end outside of the two county area

Encourage business to offer incentives to employees who use vanpool

Identify the largest employers in surrounding counties. Diversity the way vanpool works to be more accommodating of different kind of work, ie. farm work, high turnover employers, immigrant populations etc.

Assuming that we were returning to normal increase the service coverage areas for remote assistance offerings. Increase mass transit locally. Expand to also include van pooling for off-shift commuters.

local jurisdictions could provide information on vanpool options to new and existing employers to build awareness / encourage transportation benefits

Harrison Ave apt developers pay a fee in lieu of to buy some side street parking.

Increase our presence in chambers of commerce in other parts of the region (Canyon, Elmore, Gem, etc.)



Increase flexibility of the timing of routes

Expand the number of start and end points

Add ride features to improve productivity during trips especially for work commute routes

Sponsorships for certain routes

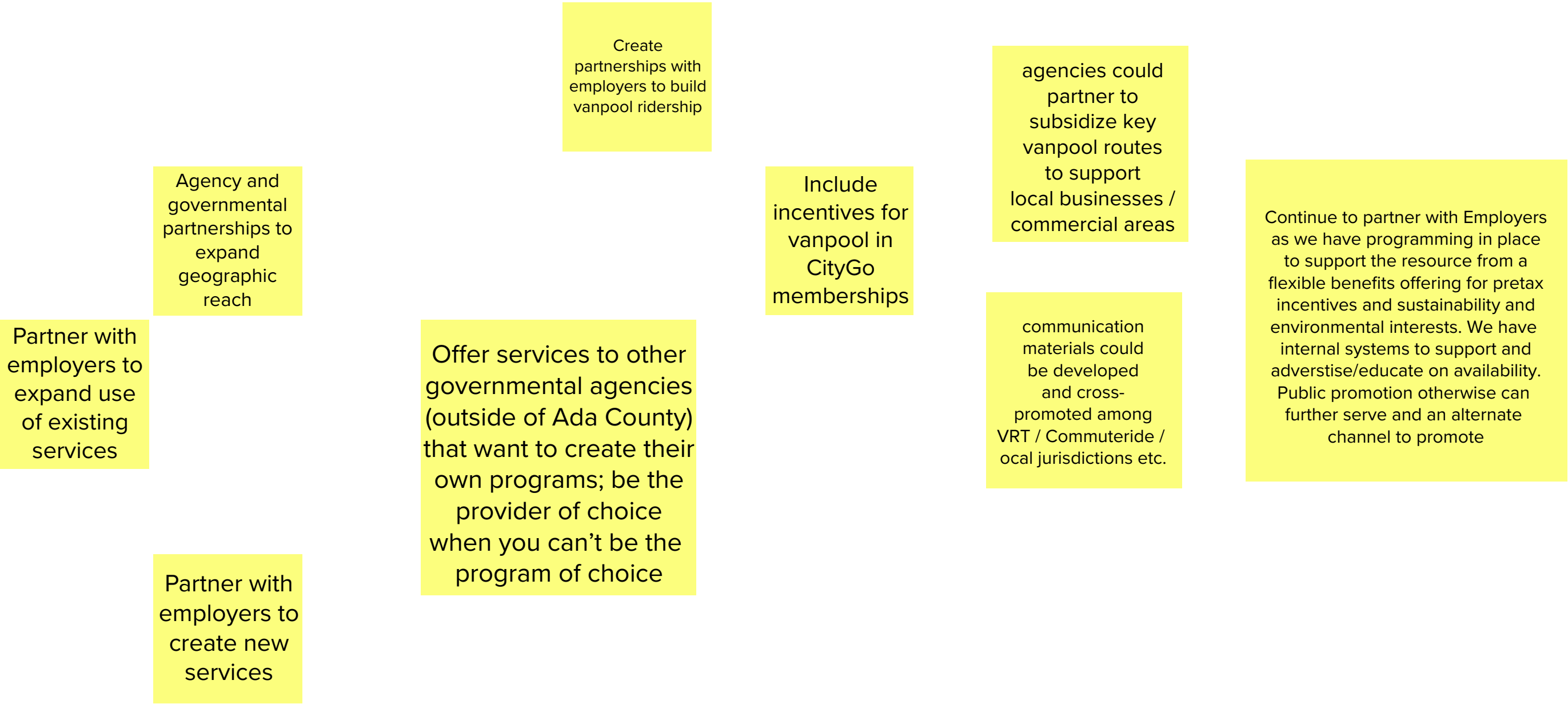
Add on demand options - "anytime services"

Employer specific programs

Meaningful Partnerships

If *establishing meaningful and productive partnerships for the vanpool/shared mobility system* were our primary mission with this project, what specific actions could we take?

Just double-click to add a post-it! You can use the arrows to make your post-it larger. Double-click again inside the post-it to add your text.



VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSIT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE—KICKOFF MEETING

JULY 14, 2021—11:00 AM—12:30PM

IN ATTENDANCE

Stephen Hunt, Valley Regional Transit
Alissa Taysom, Valley Regional Transit
Clyde Dornier, Amazon
Jeff Lynn, College of Western Idaho
Katie Baker, FARE Idaho
Belen Garcia, Amalgamated Sugar
Martha Oluna, Amalgamated Sugar
Mallory Baker, Walker Consultants
Christina Jones Walker Consultants

ABSENT

Shannon Jones, Scentsy
Susan Cassell, Meridian Chamber of Commerce
Steve Cherry, CS Beef Packers
Kassy Birby, Boise Cascade
Ryden Meyer, Idaho Department of Labor
Cheryl Tunno, Caldwell Chamber of Commerce
JK Pearson, Northwest Nazarene University

MINUTES

Meeting minutes are organized by topic of discussion. Next steps, including any assignments for the team and tentative or confirmed meeting dates, are included at the end of this document. The presentation provided at this meeting is included as an attachment.

Welcome and Introductions

Mallory Baker opened the meeting and facilitated introductions of VRT staff, Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members, and Consultant Team.

Project Goals, Scope, and Schedule

Mallory shared proposed project goals and guiding questions, defining what vanpool and shared mobility is as it relates to this effort. The project intends to create a cohesive and collective vision, with implementable strategies that leverage elements of the existing system and updates others.

Christina Jones then provided a summary of the high-level existing conditions review. Noting opportunities related to the two-counties' demographics and leveraging existing mobility infrastructure.

PAC Role

Mallory shared the proposed role of the PAC over the duration of the project, including:

- Project champions.
- Represent their organizations and the vision and needs of key groups.
- Share their ideas and partnerships.
- Provide feedback at key milestones on deliverables and the final Plan.

Mallory shared a tentative meeting list with 4 meetings total (including this meeting) in July (this meeting), August, September, and November. Each of the meetings is anticipated to last approximately 90 minutes. For those unable to attend or would like to provide feedback outside of the meeting, they are encouraged to email Mallory directly.

JULY 14, 2021—11:00 AM—12:30PM

Success/Fear Statement and Discussion

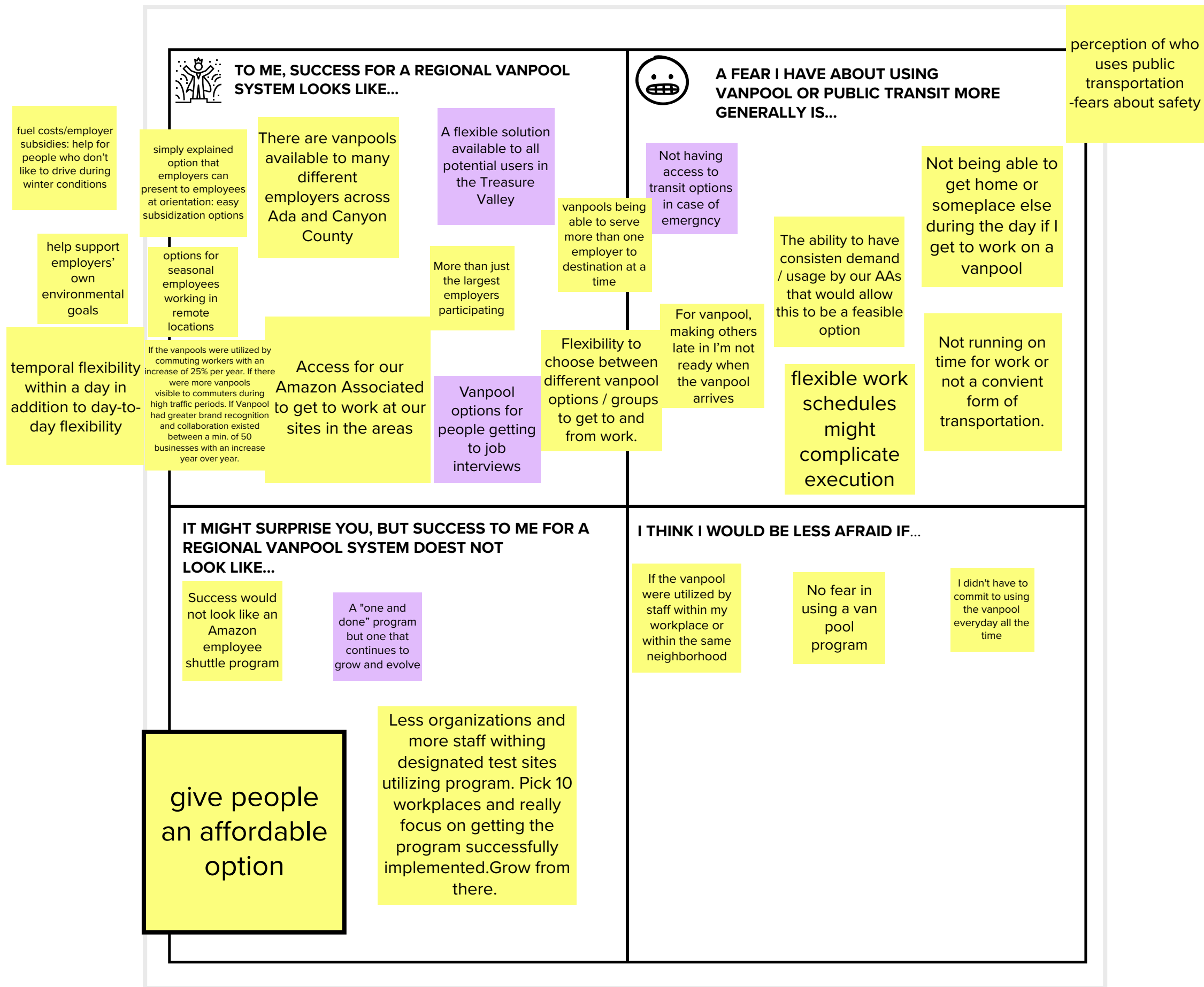
Mallory then led an activity via the online platform, Mural, to identify what the PAC considers successful elements for a regional vanpool system, what about using vanpool or public transit may be cause for fear or concern, as well as what success does not look like and how the system can be designed to reduce fears. Discussion topics included:

- Expanding vanpool access to many different employers throughout Treasure Valley (location, size, industry)
- Providing flexible solutions (scheduling, frequency of use, mode, fare)
- Increasing the use and visibility of vanpools
- Increasing communications and education on the benefits of vanpool (potential employer subsidy, safety, reduced traffic congestion, sustainability, alternative use of commute time)
- Overcomes preconceived notions about shared mobility options
- Importance of maintaining reliability and convenience in shared mobility options
- Solutions that are dynamic and adapt to communities' needs
- Solutions that support employer goals without being employer branded could improve employer participation

NEXT STEPS

Next steps for the Study include:

- Completion of a Gaps and Opportunities Analysis
- Best Practices Analysis
- Community Questionnaire in August
- Schedule the next PAC meeting in August





VRT REGIONAL VANPOOL STUDY

Project Advisory Committee Kickoff
July 14, 2021



Presentation Agenda

Introductions

Project Overview and Goals

Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Project Advisory Committee Role

Success/Fear Statement (Mural)

Q&A

Next Steps



Project Background



What is vanpool?

Vanpool is a group transportation option akin to a large carpool, where groups of people with similar commuting patterns and routes share a van to access their destinations. ACHD Commuteride's Club Red program currently offers vanpool to Treasure Valley commuters.

What is shared mobility?

Shared mobility refers to a system where transportation resources are shared by multiple people—either at the same time (like a vanpool) or together over time (like a carshare program).

Project Objectives

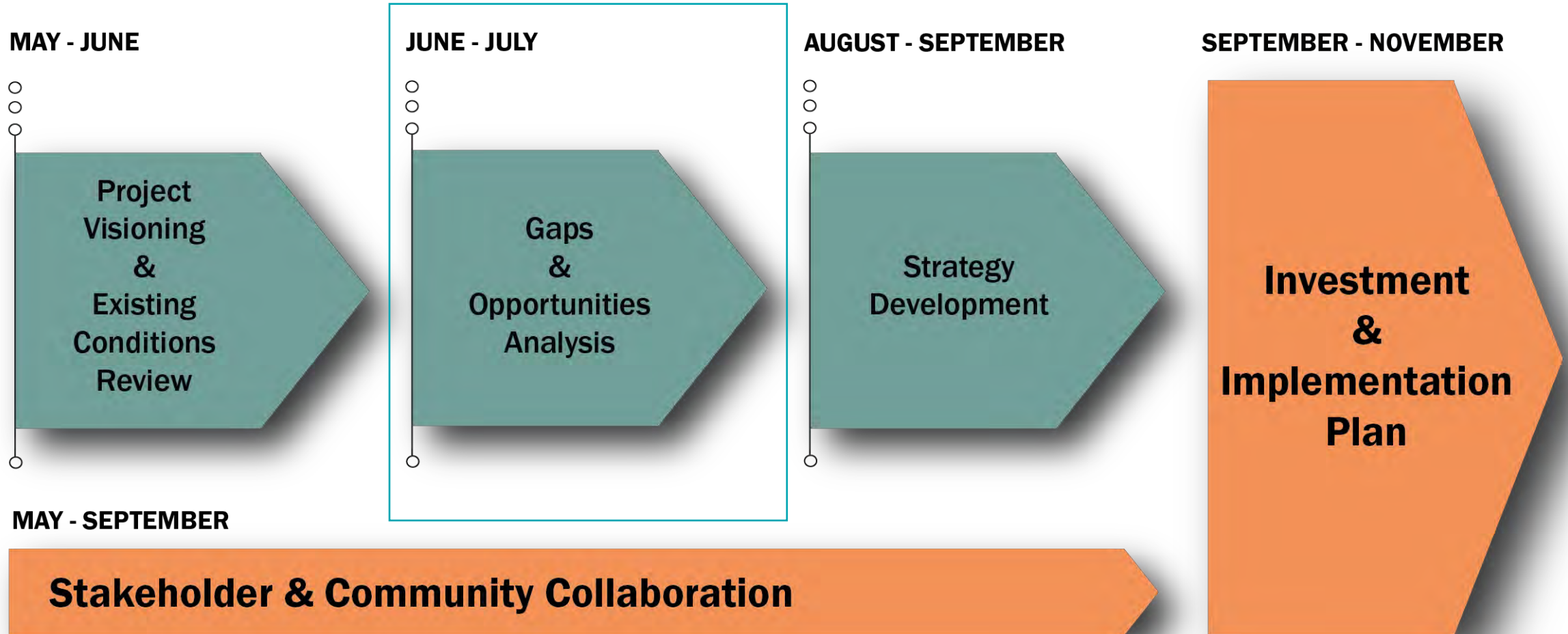
Create a **cohesive and collective vision** for vanpool/shared mobility solutions in Treasure Valley—what we want it to achieve, who we want it to serve, and what outcomes it must achieve.

Identify a **strategy to meet our vision**—what pieces of the existing system we want to maintain, what we'd like to change, and how we can make those changes.

Develop an investment strategy and action plan to **achieve that vision**.



Project Scope and Schedule



Project Vision and Guiding Principles

Offers transportation choices to support **freedom of movement** and quality of life.

Adapts to **changing** mobility needs.

Serves as an equitable and practical transportation solution **across Treasure Valley**.

Serves as a feasible transportation option for **many different communities**.

Fills gaps in transit service and result in an **appreciable reduction** in personal vehicle commuting.

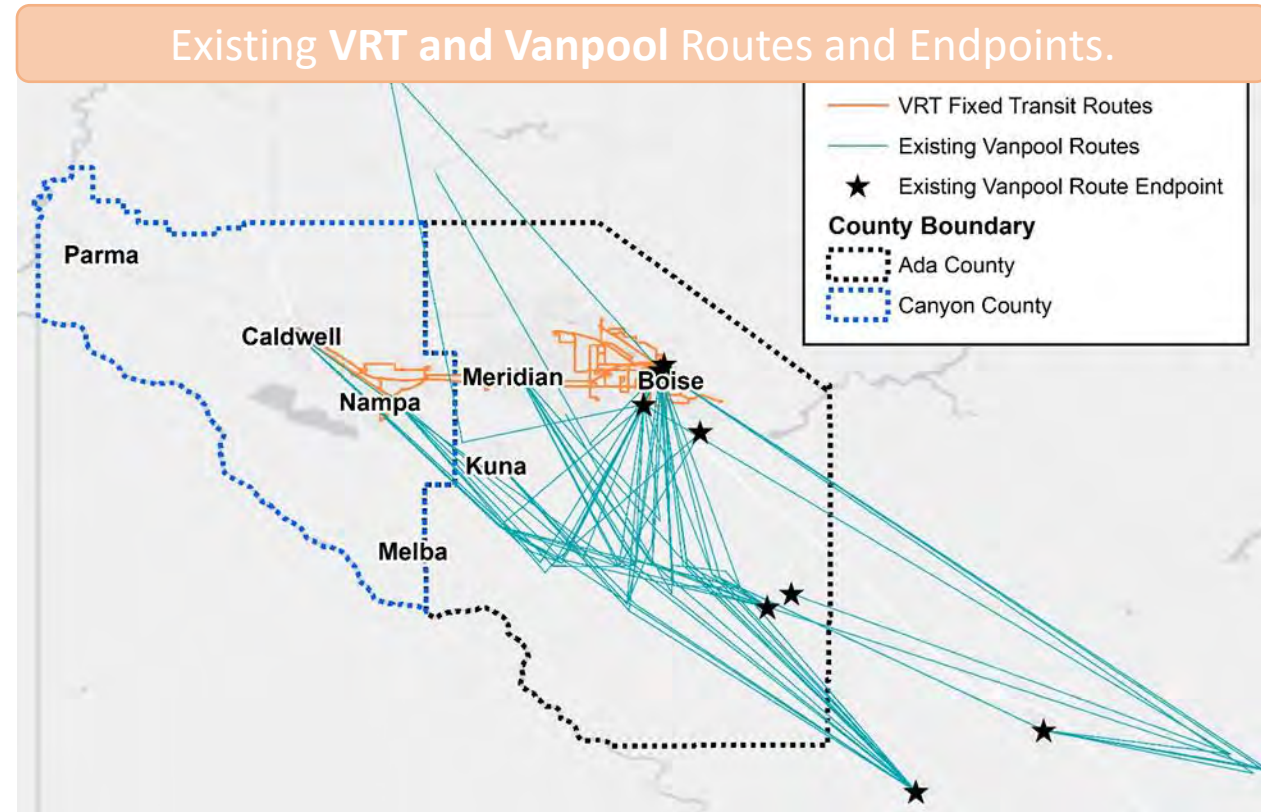
Leverages **existing infrastructure**.

Achieves **sustainable cost recovery**.

Takes advantage of **smart and meaningful partnerships** to achieve goals.

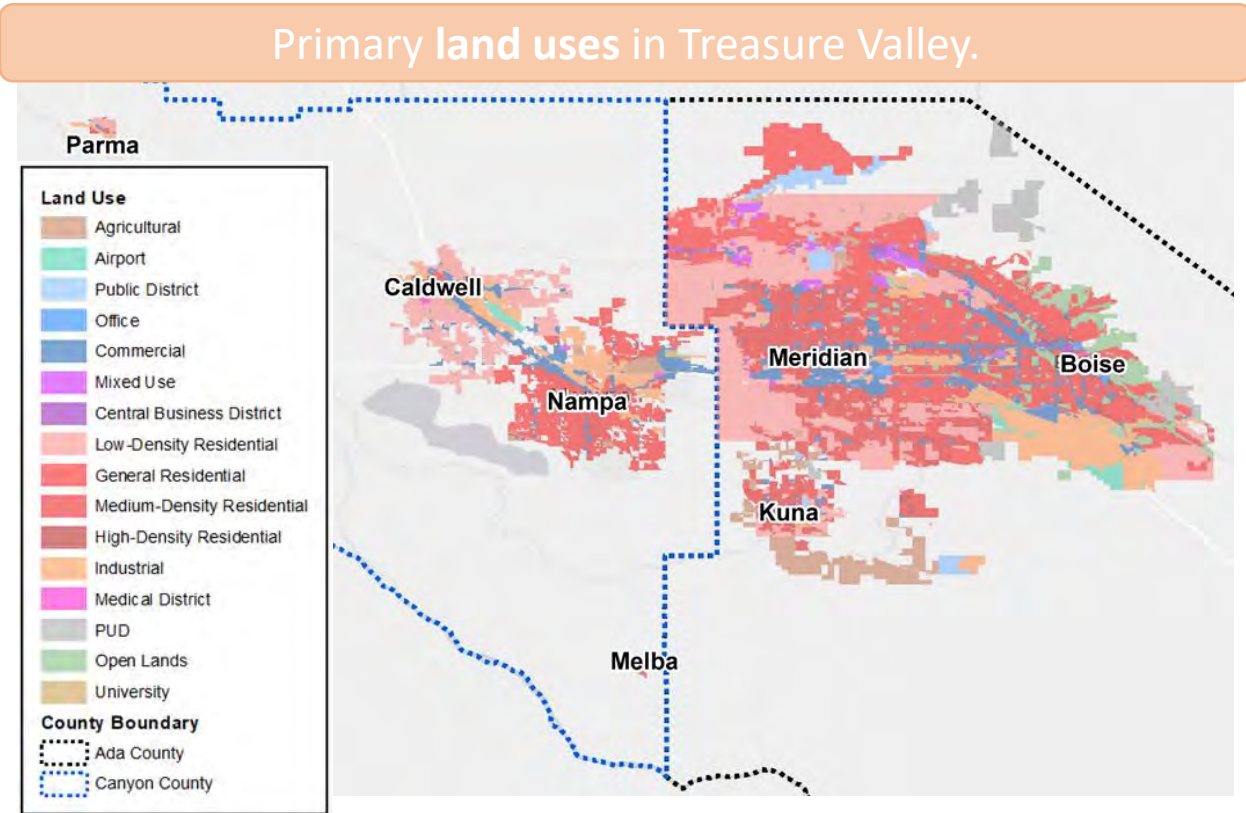
Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The current vanpool program is a partnership with the Ada County Highway District. Therefore, it is required to focus service on trips that originate, end or pass through **Ada County**. As such, available vanpool service in **Canyon County** does not represent its contribution to Treasure Valley's employment base—no existing vanpool routes terminate within Canyon County. Without change, **this disparity will continue to grow** as employment opportunities in Canyon County—particularly in Caldwell and surrounding areas—increase.



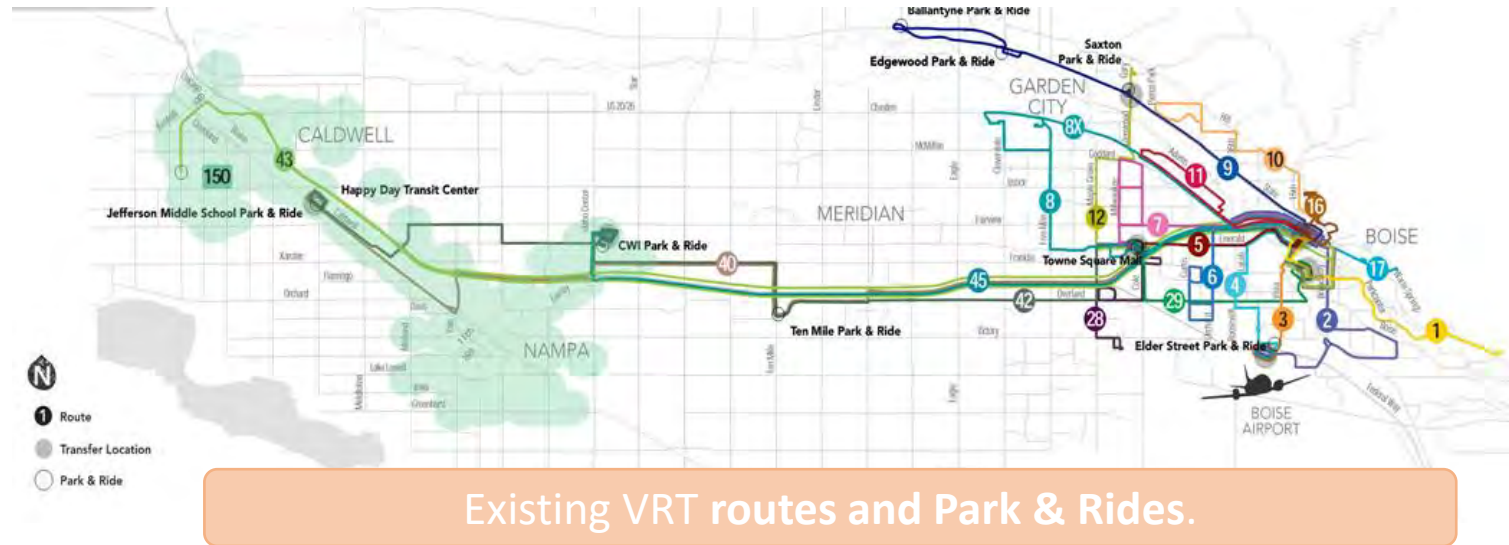
Existing Conditions and Opportunities

The current vanpool system plays an essential role in making smarter commuting more accessible for many. Compared to the entire Treasure Valley population, vanpool participants generally skew **wealthier and more educated**, and generally have **more convenient access** to personal vehicles. This indicates an opportunity to reach low-income communities, people without vehicle access, service and hourly workers, and more.



Existing Conditions and Opportunities

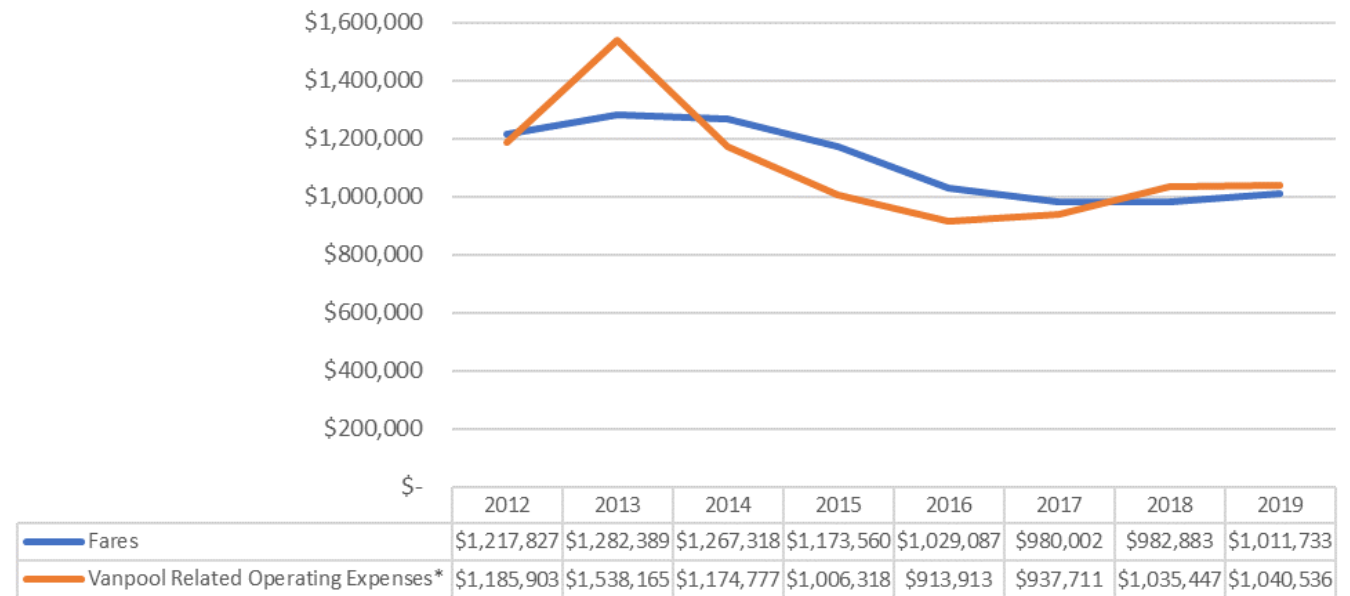
Current vanpool service generally offers coverage for **north—south travel** in complement to existing VRT routes, particularly in Ada County. Expanded efforts could **offer connections to commuters throughout Canyon County** and in the farther reaches of both counties.



Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Currently, vanpool fare revenues generally **fully cover or approach full recovery** of vanpool-related expenses, excluding marketing and TDM programming.

Vanpool operating expenses and revenues, 2012—2019.



Project Advisory Committee Role

- **Project Advisory Committee:**
 - Project champions
 - Representing vision and needs of key groups
 - Out-of-the box ideas and partnerships
 - 4 meeting commitment over 5 months



Success/Fear Statement



We'll now head over to Mural to create a **collective vision of success.**

Next Steps

July

Gaps and Opportunities Analysis

Best Practices Analysis

Project Advisory Committee Kickoff Meeting

August

Community Survey

Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2

VRT Regional Vanpool Study Community Questionnaire

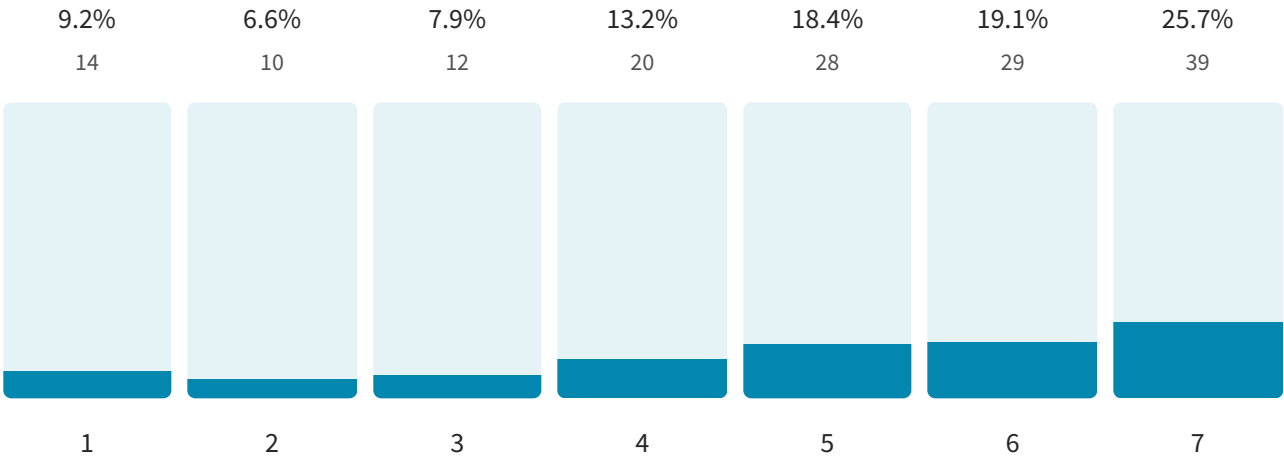
157 responses



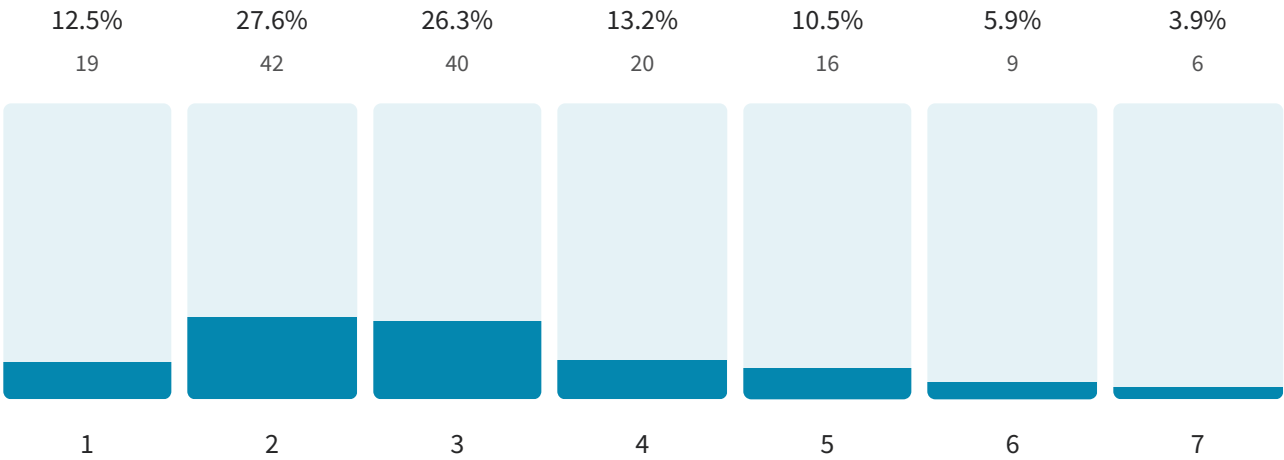
Please rank the following factors 1-7 based on how much they influence your travel choices, with 1 indicating the highest influence and 7 indicating the lowest influence.

152 out of 157 answered

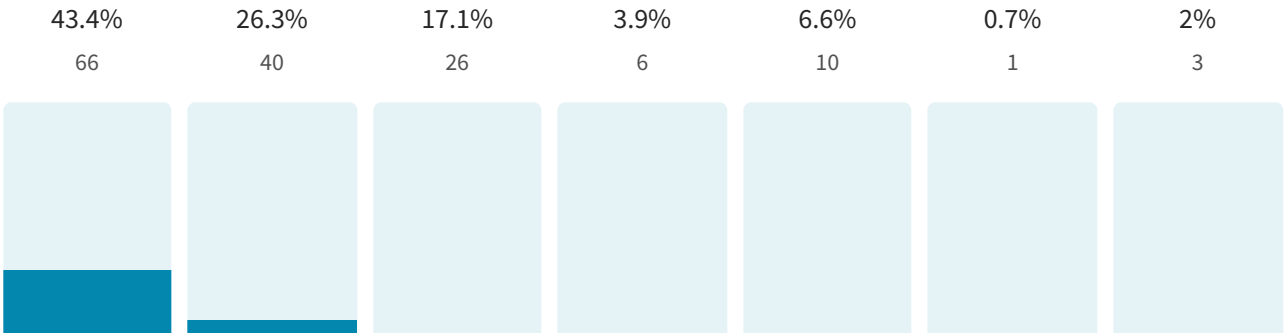
Environmental Impact

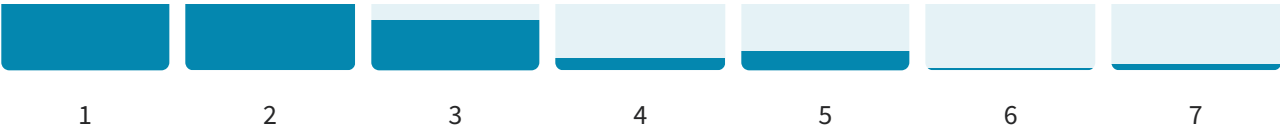


Travel time

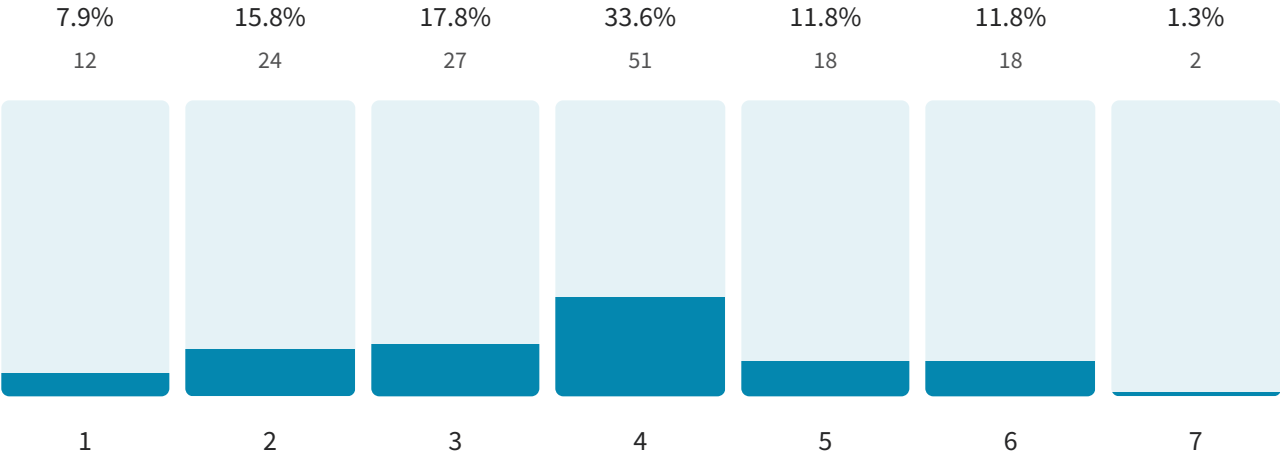


My schedule

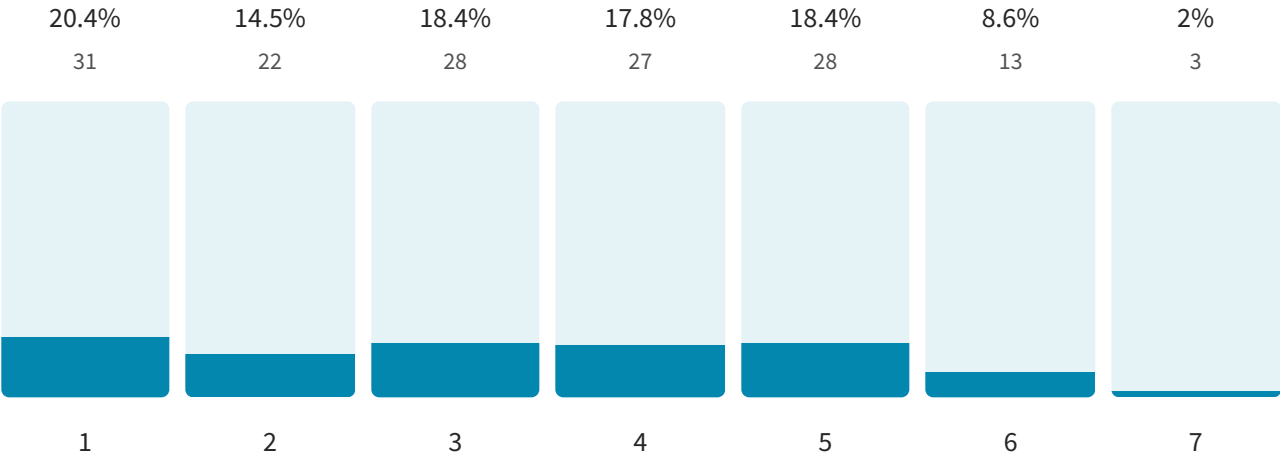




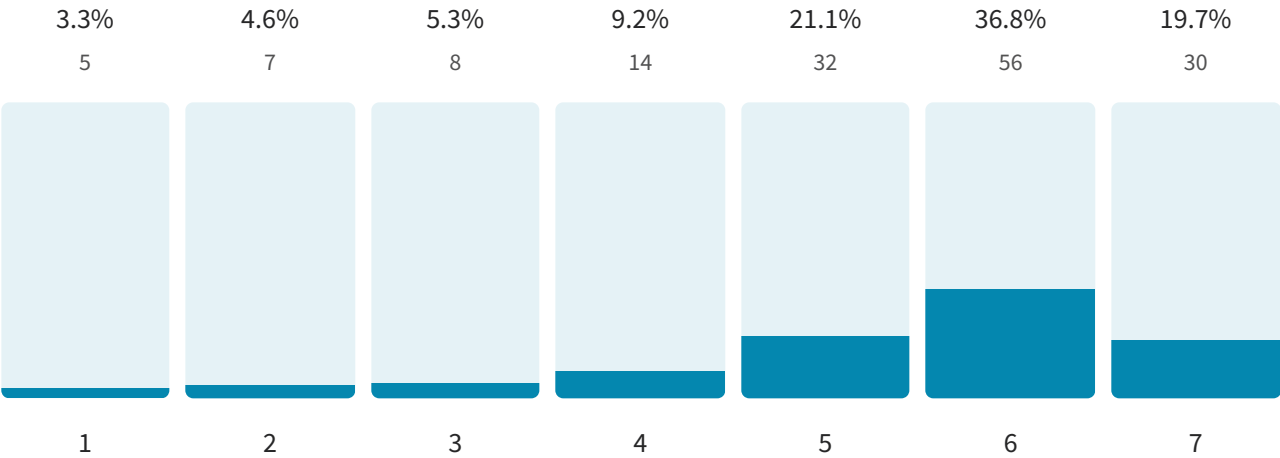
Reliability of the travel choice



Convenience of the travel choice

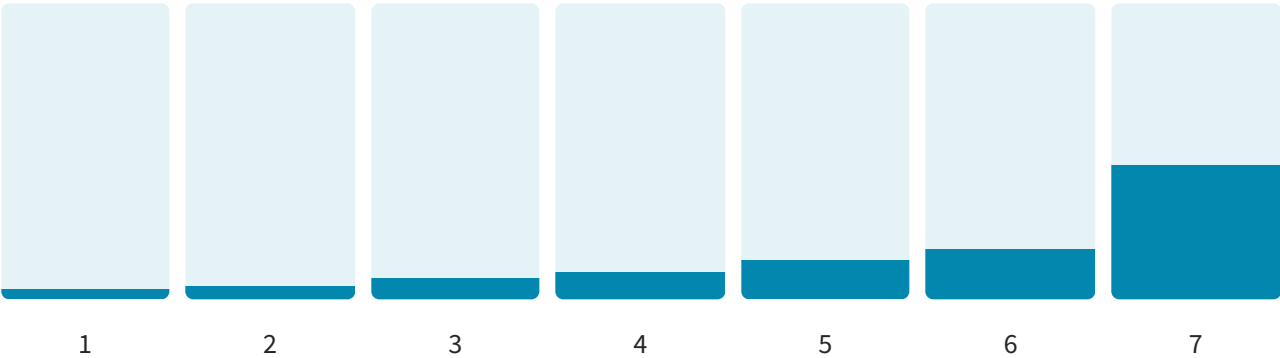


Safety of the travel choice

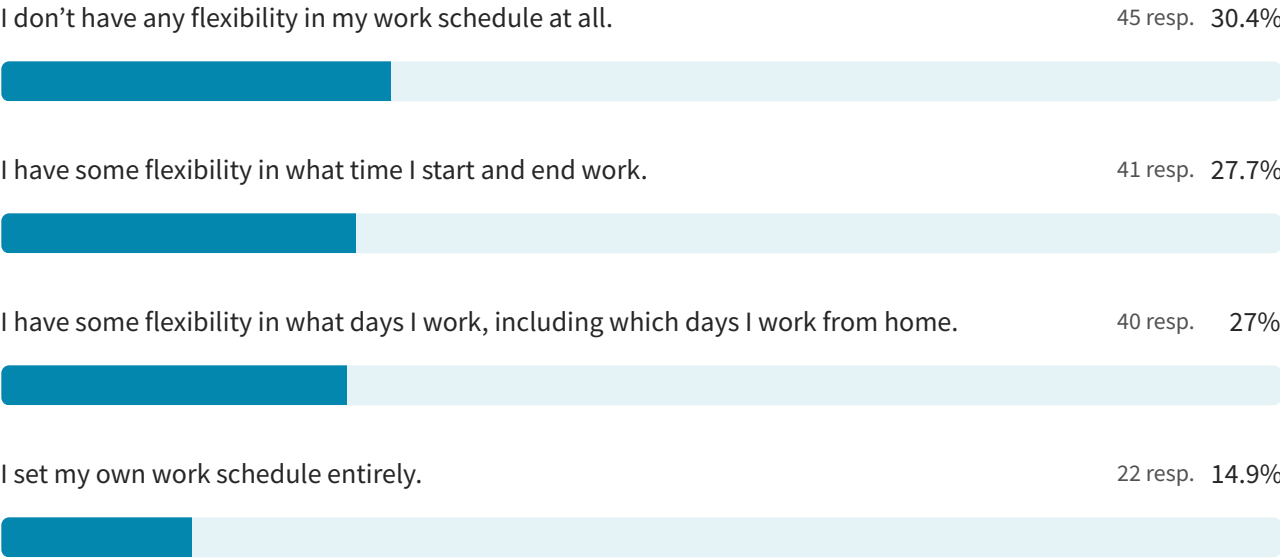


Cost of the travel choice





At your current job, how much choice do you typically have in your work schedule?
148 out of 157 answered



At your current job, how much does your work schedule vary from week to week?

147 out of 157 answered

I mostly work the same work schedule each week, although it can vary at times. 77 resp. 52.4%



I work the same schedule each week. 49 resp. 33.3%



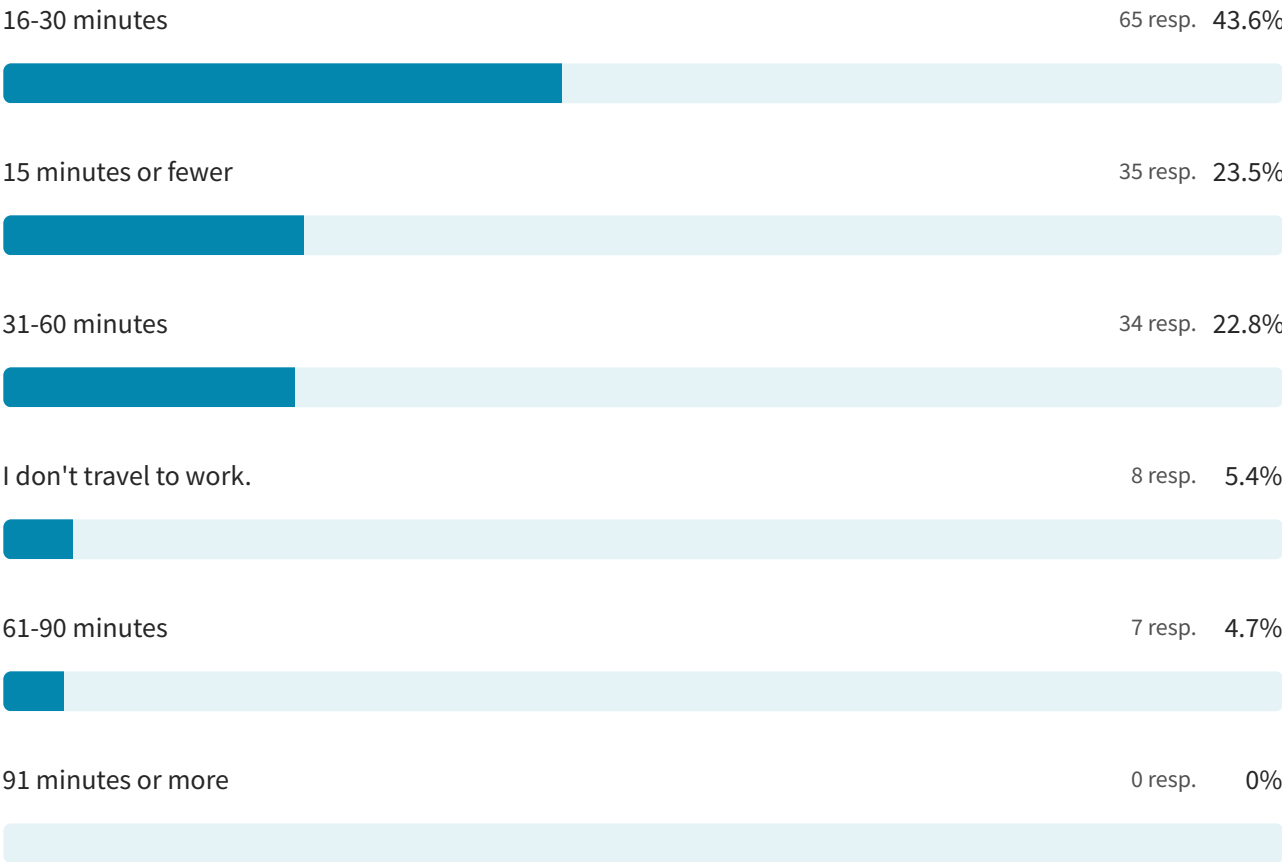
My work schedule is completely or almost completely different each week. 21 resp. 14.3%





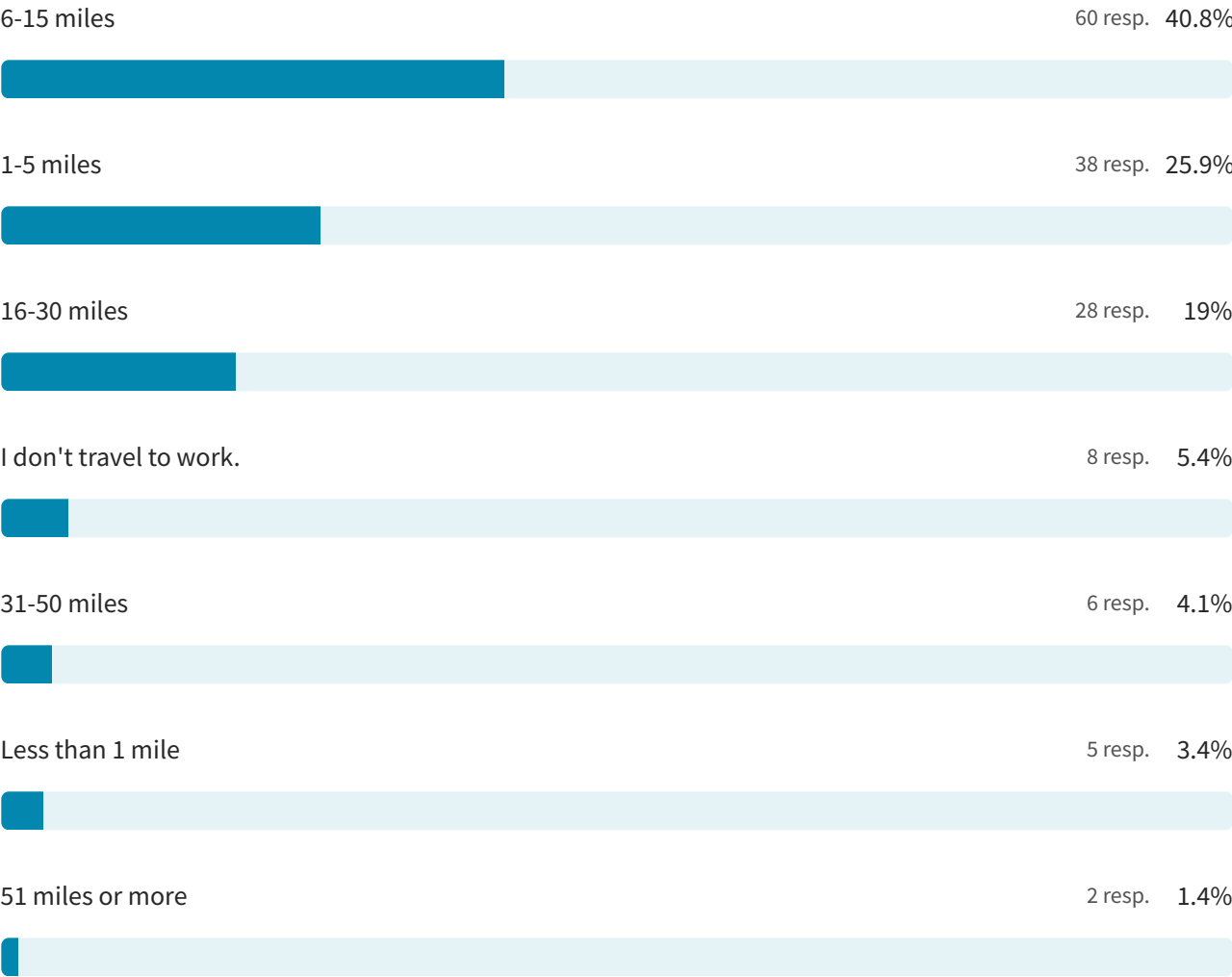
On a typical day, how many minutes do you spend on your commute to work (one way)?

149 out of 157 answered



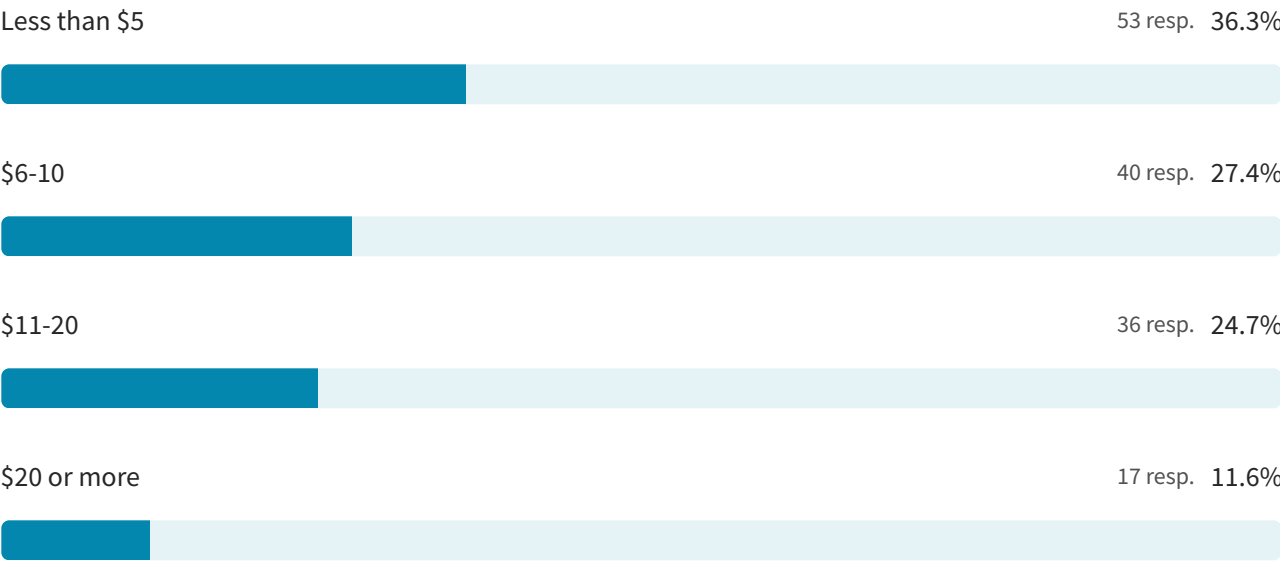
How many miles is your commute to work (one way)?

147 out of 157 answered



Including gas mileage and car wear-and-tear (about \$0.60 per mile), how much do you estimate you spend on your commute to work (single, one-way trip)? For example, if your work site is 20 miles away from your home and you drive alone to work, you spend roughly \$12 per one-way commute trip. _____

146 out of 157 answered

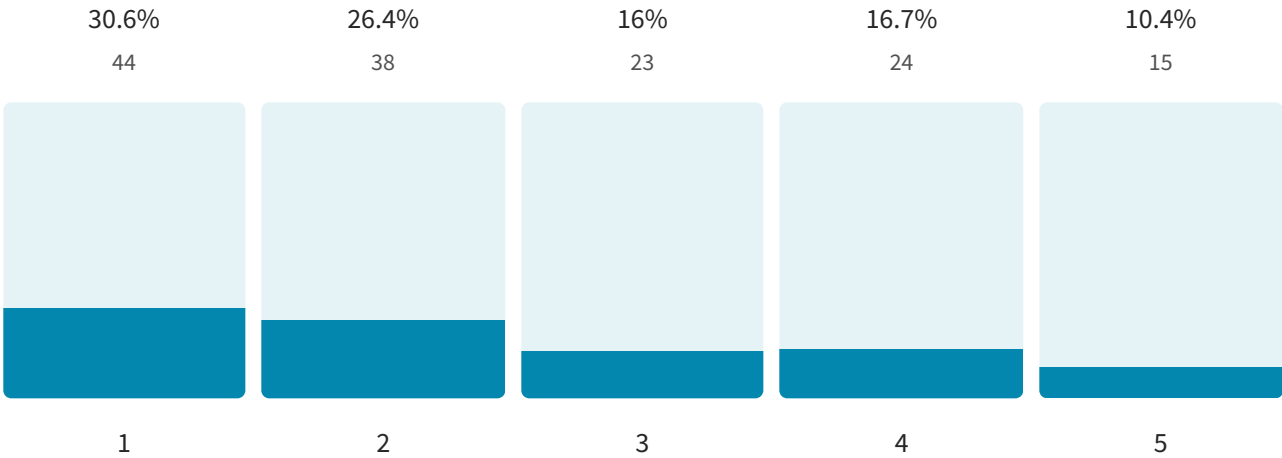




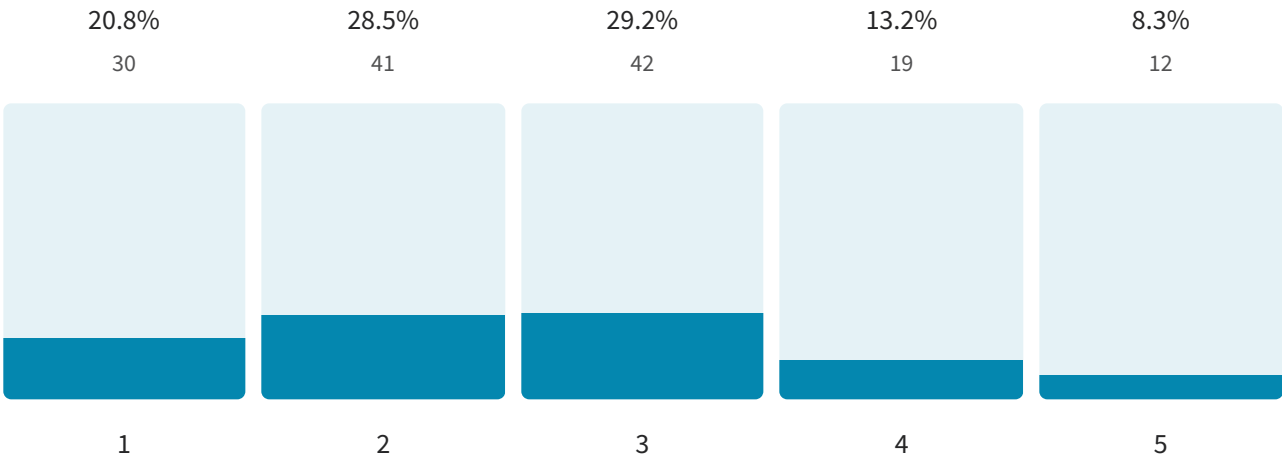
Please rank (1-5) the following ways you could learn about vanpool options by what would be most effective, with 1 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective.

144 out of 157 answered

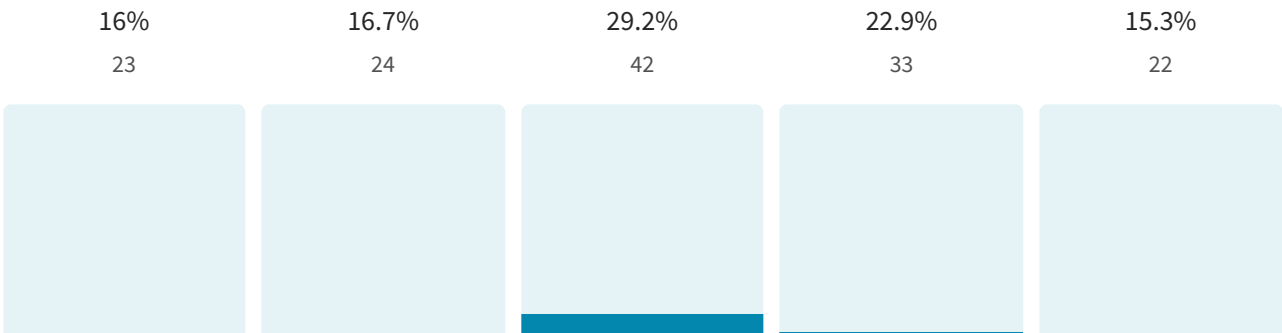
Employer e-mail or bulletin



Friend or colleague/word of mouth



Employer-sponsored lunch and learn, staff meeting or other event





1

2

3

4

5

Radio/television advertising

Category	1	2	3	4	5
Percentage	12.5%	11.1%	13.9%	25.7%	36.8%
Count	18	16	20	37	53



1

2

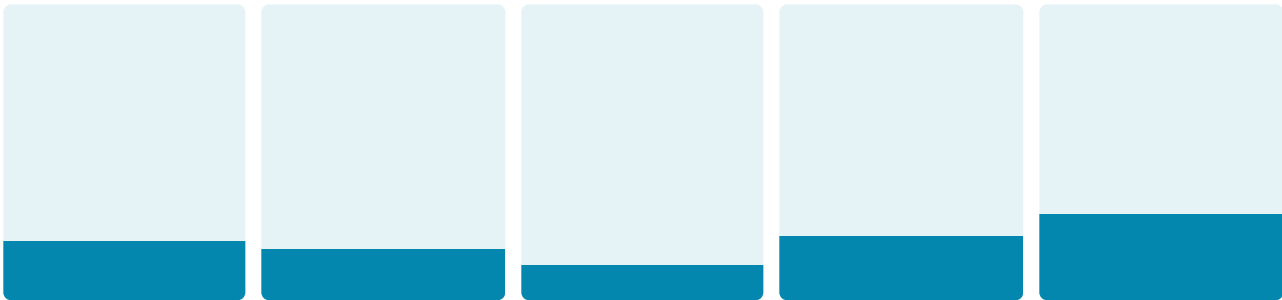
3

4

5

Social media

Category	1	2	3	4	5
Percentage	20.1%	17.4%	11.8%	21.5%	29.2%
Count	29	25	17	31	42



1

2

3

4

5



Are you a current vanpool participant?

156 out of 157 answered



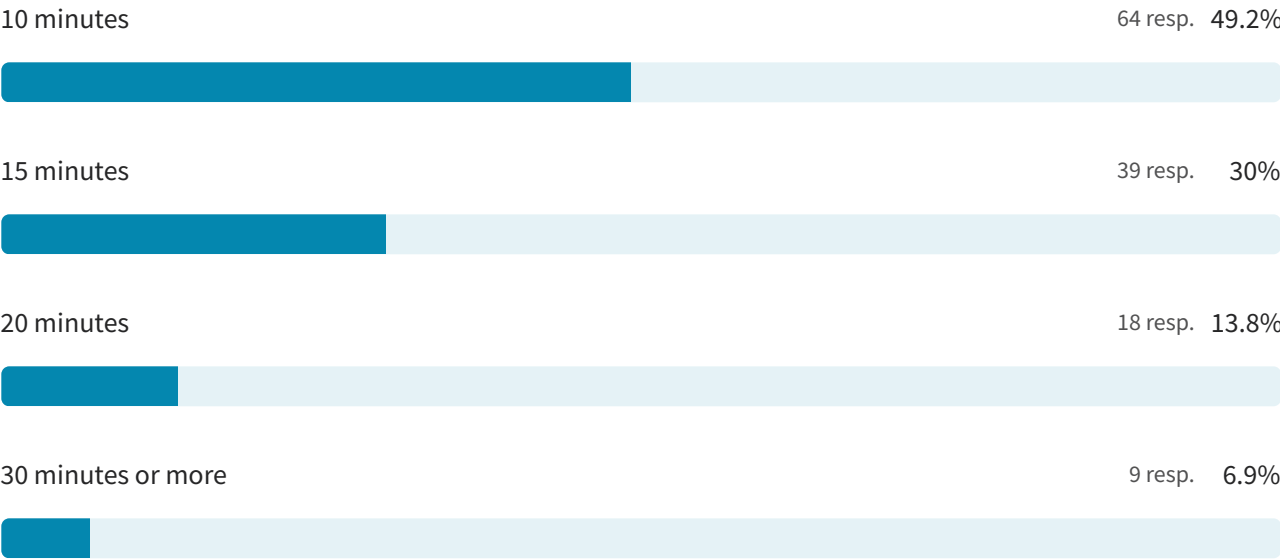


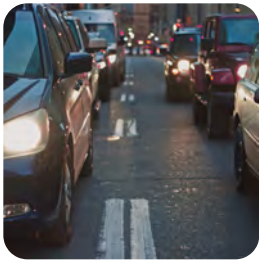
What level of commute cost savings would make vanpool an attractive option for you?
132 out of 157 answered



How many minutes would you be willing to add to your commute for those cost savings? _____

130 out of 157 answered





What is the biggest factor preventing you from considering vanpool as a commute option?

134 out of 157 answered

My work schedule is not predictable, or is not the same from week to week28 resp. 20.9%



I don't work during "traditional 9-5" hours26 resp. 19.4%



Errands I need to run on the way to work/during the workday24 resp. 17.9%



Time spent on commute20 resp. 14.9%



Sharing rides with other people11 resp. 8.2%



Other25 resp. 18.7%



I ride my bike to work. I do not like driving or being in cars.

I primarily bike to work

I didn't know it was an option.

