

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING A MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE STATE HIGHWAY 75 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**WHEREAS**, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released the State Highway 75 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for public review and comment in December, 2005; and

**WHEREAS**, Blaine County and the Cities of Carey, Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley, Idaho have reviewed and discussed the DEIS as presented and find the proposed Highway 75 expansion to be a major and significant public improvement to a vital and necessary transportation and transit corridor and will be integral to the overall planning of the region for accommodating future growth and development; and

**WHEREAS**, Blaine County and the Cities of Carey, Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley, Idaho have identified common concerns, goals and recommendations regarding the DEIS; and

**WHEREAS**, these jurisdictions presented a collaborative and unified public comment letter during the public hearing held in Hailey, Idaho hosted by ITD and FHWA on January 26, 2006 and now wish to restate the common concerns, goals and recommendations of the jurisdictions regarding the DEIS; and

**WHEREAS**, Blaine County and the Cities of Carey, Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley understand and are committed, whenever feasible, to presenting coordinated and shared comments to ITD and the FHWA.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY BLAINE COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF CAREY, BELLEVUE, HAILEY, KETCHUM AND SUN VALLEY, IDAHO:**

1. The attached letter dated February 24, 2006 be submitted to ITD and FHWA as a joint comment letter on the State Highway 75 Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
2. The joint comment letter state the general comments, concerns, recommendations, and requests of the signing jurisdictions which need to be considered and addressed prior to and subsequently in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, Record of Decision and Highway 75 design process.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 23 day of February, 2006.

*Sarah Michael*  
Sarah Michael, Commissioners Chairperson  
Blaine County, Idaho


ATTEST:  
*Marsha Riemann*  
Marsha Riemann, County Clerk

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.

*Rick Baird*  
Rick Baird, Mayor  
City of Carey, Idaho

ATTEST:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kristine Boender, City Clerk

PASSED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.

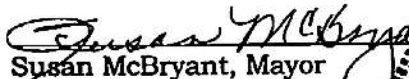
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Anderson, Mayor  
City of Bellevue, Idaho



ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dorothy Barton, City Clerk

PASSED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.

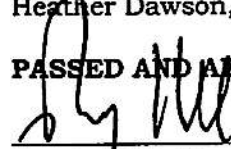
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan McBryant, Mayor  
City of Hailey, Idaho



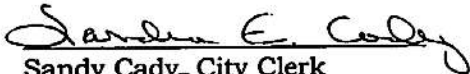
ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Heather Dawson, City Clerk

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 13<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2006.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy Hall, Mayor  
City of Ketchum, Idaho

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandy Cady, City Clerk  
APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CONTENT:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ben Worst, City Attorney

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 16<sup>th</sup> day of February 2006.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Thorson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Blampied, City Administrative Assistant

February 24, 2006

Idaho Transportation Department  
3311 W. State St.  
Box 7129  
Boise, Idaho 83707-1129

Attention: Ms. Gwen Smith

Dear Representatives of ITD and FHWA:

On behalf of our respective jurisdictions, Blaine County and the Cities of Ketchum, Hailey, Bellevue, Carey and Sun Valley, we thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the *Highway 75 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)*. As stated in our letter submitted at the public hearing on January 26, we have come together as elected bodies to evaluate the *DEIS*, identify our common concerns and offer our comments and recommendations on what we believe to be the best consensus-based alternative to achieving a transportation corridor improvement which meets local, state and federal objectives. Our joint comments have not changed from the first letter; however we would like to reiterate the key comments from our January 26<sup>th</sup> letter.

First of all, we recognize that many issues regarding State Highway 75 transportation corridor improvements will be addressed during the design process once a preferred alternative is selected by FHWA. In the Final EIS and Record of Decision we request a commitment to design excellence through enhancement of the natural setting using context sensitive design principles. We further ask to be actively involved in the design process to ensure consideration of vitally important details including, but not limited to, shoulder width, turn lanes, bicycle, pedestrian and transit facility improvements, wildlife/vehicular conflicts at wildlife crossings and visual character.

Without hesitation, as elected representatives of the six local entities, we find Alternative 3 to be the preferred solution to the present congestion we experience and the future travel demands of State Highway 75. We recognize that the environmental footprints of Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 are essentially the same. However, in terms of the transportation system's operational efficiency, Alternative 3 will allow us the greatest number of options to effectively address congestion and safety issues using a long range multi-modal approach that can be adjusted as conditions in the valley change with future growth.

Alternative 3, or operating peak hour HOV lanes, alone will not accomplish our common goals and we are committed to a multi-pronged approach. Attachment A provides a listing of key adopted Comprehensive Plan statements promoting multi-modal and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures. These consensus-based objectives and strategies, which have been adopted by the majority of our communities, are a reflection of our dedication to a comprehensive approach.

A comprehensive operating scenario that seeks to control the growth of peak hour traffic, reduce travel time and enhance the system efficiency, is the most viable option. This scenario should include peak hour HOV restrictions, extensive transit system enhancements, and a comprehensive regional and local Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. This operating scenario will require a strong

partnership between ITD, FHWA and local governments and the Final EIS and Record of Decision should reflect the intentions for this partnership.

As evidence that the ITD and FHWA share in our commitment to the successful implementation of a multi-modal system the Final EIS should address the necessary design and construction elements that can help Alternative 3 be successful. This will require, throughout the design and construction phases, the development and designation of funds for increased transit service, park and ride lots, bus barns, bus turnouts, and strategic education and enforcement plans. The Final EIS should also consider utilizing an approach that addresses person trips instead of vehicle trips. Measuring capacity in terms of person trips is the most effective way to capture and measure the benefits of a multi-modal system and TDM. Using both vehicle and person-trip data will allow a better understanding of travel demand as it relates to moving people, not just vehicles. We look forward to working with the ITD EIS team to develop this scenario as we proceed to the final EIS, Record of Decision, and preferred alternative.

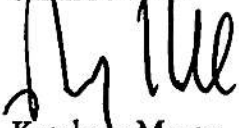
In conclusion, State Highway 75, as a component of the regional transportation system, which also serves as the Main Street of Bellevue, Hailey and Ketchum, should be designed to achieve local goals of increasing pedestrian and vehicular safety and enhancing main street commerce. We support bringing to fruition a transportation corridor designed in such a way to soften the impacts of road expansion and balance the future needs of these resort communities and effective traffic flow without being a detriment to local economies and quality of life. In our view, there is much to be gained in supporting multi-modal principles and context sensitive design techniques.

We are hopeful that the preceding concerns are accurately considered in the Final EIS and selection of the preferred alternative. We look forward to a continuing and successful working relationship with ITD and FHWA on this important project.

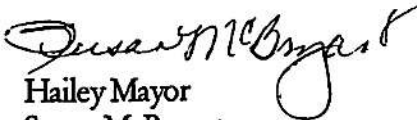
Cordially,



Blaine County Chair  
Sarah Michael



Ketchum Mayor  
Randy Hall



Hailey Mayor  
Susan McBryant



Bellevue Mayor  
Jon Anderson



Carey Mayor  
Rick Baird



Sun Valley Mayor  
Jon Thorson

cc: Governor Dirk Kempthorne  
Clint Stennett, State Senator  
Wendy Jaquet, State Representative  
Donna Pence, State Representative  
Chuck Winder, ITD Board Chair  
Gary Blick, ITD Board, District 4  
David Ekern, ITD Director

**Attachment A**  
**Summary Statements of Local Plans and Adopted Policies**

**BLAINE COUNTY**

**Blaine County Comprehensive Plan**

The County's Comprehensive Plan states that Highway 75 corridor has been designated in the Comprehensive Plan as a Scenic Corridor and as a primary tourist attraction into and through Blaine County. The importance to the recreational and tourism economy of the Scenic Corridor is covered in other sections of the Plan, however all planning criteria for Highway 75 are measured in the context of this designation.

**Blaine County Public Transit Feasibility Study, 2001**

"Developing a public transportation plan places a fundamental issue before the people of Blaine County: is transit a social service for people who have no other choice or a legitimate and thus larger part of the transportation system that everybody in the County uses?" (pg 3)

**SHORT TERM STRATEGIES within 2 years (pgs 3, 35, and 38-50)**

"The proposed short-term strategy is designed to build on the success of the existing KART bus service and the Wood River Rideshare program while the County and ITD resolve the future role of transit in the Highway 75 corridor."

**Operations and Management**

- A public education and promotional campaign to raise awareness of the public transportation options currently available as well as the strategies being considered for the future
- Enhanced KART service within Ketchum and Sun Valley
- An enhanced Wood River Rideshare program
- Special events bus service between Bellevue and Ketchum/Sun Valley
- Blaine County should coordinate with ITD and local communities on short-term capital improvements to support public transportation.
- Development of peak-hour HOV queue bypass lanes on Highway 75 near East Fork
- Development of peak-hour HOV queue bypass lanes on Highway 75 near Elkhorn
- Active participation in the Timmerman to Ketchum Environmental Studies.

**MID TERM STRATEGIES 2-5 years (pgs 3, 36, and 51-55)**

"Mid term strategy assumes that the discussion within Blaine County and between Blaine County and ITD results in public transportation playing a larger role in solving the County's traffic problems."

**Operations and Management**

- Initiating regularly scheduled peak-hour bus service in the Bellevue to Ketchum/Sun Valley corridor
- Initiating a transportation management program, including paid parking in the Ketchum central business district

**Capital Improvements**

- Construct transit stations and park-and-ride lots for commuter bus service in the Bellevue to Ketchum corridor
- Developing peak hour HOV lanes or some other means of providing preferential treatment for high occupancy vehicles on Hwy 75 between Bellevue and Ketchum
- Identifying and preserving an alignment for a future fixed guide way corridor



## LONG TERM STRATEGIES 5 years plus (pgs 4, 36, and 56-62)

“Long term strategies will respond to the County’s determination of the appropriate role for transit in the community.”

### Operations and Management

- Initiating all-day scheduled bus service in the Bellevue to Ketchum/Sun Valley corridor
- Initiating peak-hour bus service to more distant communities, including Carey and Twin
- Initiating local circulator bus service in Bellevue and Hailey

### Capital Improvements

- Construct park-and-rides in Carey, Twin and other communities served by peak hour transit
- Completing the implementation of the Timmerman to Ketchum project
- Develop a proposal for fixed guideway transit in the Highway 75 corridor

## KETCHUM

### Ketchum Transportation Study, 2004

The recommended long-range strategy emphasizes support for pedestrian and bicycle modes within Ketchum, then expand transit service to/from and within Ketchum, and finally road improvements where undeniably necessary. The effectiveness of transit strategies requires a supporting strategy of parking controls in the downtown area and other major employment centers, as proposed in a separate parking study.

Initial elements of this long-range include:

- Expansion of KART system for higher frequency and reduced waits
- Expansion of Peak Bus commuter service

Over time, the following pedestrian and transit elements of the plan would be gradually expanded on an annual basis to keep up with growth

- Annual expansion of Peak Bus commuter service
- Annual expansion of KART neighborhood circulation program

Ketchum should also work with Blaine County and ITD to achieve the following:

- Enhance transit and carpool operations between the hospital area and downtown Ketchum. This becomes more important in that the County is proposing a Community Housing Overlay to increase the density of the immediate area surrounding the hospital. This area will become denser and will provide many more opportunities for transit operations in the future.
- Investigate the possibility of creating a bus transit corridor from Hailey to Ketchum

### Ketchum Comprehensive Plan, 2001 - Part 6 Transportation

- Goal 2: Design safe roads and other transportation systems that support the Wood River Valley and maintain Ketchum’s small town mountain character.
- Goal 3: Develop a valley wide mass transit system with other jurisdictions for the employees, residents and tourists of Blaine County
- Goal 4: Reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles and vehicle trips and promote alternative transportation
- Policy 6.1: Ensure that transportation decisions are made comprehensively for all of Blaine County, including the consideration of all modes of travel and potential impacts to land uses.

- Policy 6.2 Work with the Idaho Transportation Department, other Blaine County jurisdictions and citizen groups to develop a countywide transportation plan, which includes mass transit.
- Policy 6.6 Improve current Ketchum Area Rapid Transit system, including a high frequency, City wide mass transit service focusing on times and stop locations to serve tourists, residents and workers. When ridership is down increase service instead of decreasing service.
- Policy 6.7: Restrict and reduce access points along Highway 75, Warm Springs Road, Saddle Road and Sun Valley Road. Provide for a landscape buffer on these roadways.
- Policy 6.8: Place a high priority on developing safe, convenient and attractive bicycling and walking systems that are integrated with other transportation systems.
- Policy 6.10: Wherever possible reduce the lane width for vehicular travel to promote traffic calming and to allow room in the rights-of-way for alternative modes of transportation to preserve the small mountain town character of Ketchum.

#### Short Term Action Plan

- Work with KART, other interested agencies and citizen groups to develop a program to encourage the reduction of vehicle trips in Ketchum through development of alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips.
- Develop a plan for implementing a valley wide transit system
- Clean, improve, and maintain the shoulder of the stretch of Highway 75 between River Street and Serenade Lane, and between Saddle Road and Sixth Street, and along Warm Springs Road, including adding pavement and trimming vegetation for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel.

#### Mid Term

- In conjunction with the other jurisdictions and citizen groups in the County, implement a mass transit system to serve the Wood River Valley along the Highway 75 corridor.
- Construct or require the construction of transit shelters
- Ensure the KART schedule efficiently transportation employees from their residents to downtown Ketchum and other large areas of employment, in addition to maintaining the service for tourists and skiers.

#### Long Term

- Work with the other jurisdictions and citizen groups in the County to expand the mass transit system to other modes of mass transit to service additional outlying areas.

## HAILEY

### Hailey Comprehensive Plan, 2000

#### 10.0 TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION

In 2000, the City adopted the Gem Community Plan. In assessing Hailey's strengths and weaknesses, the plan listed "no local transportation within Valley" as the first weakness. A recent preference survey indicated that 40% of commuters countywide would ride a bus if available. Along with designated pedestrian and bicycle routes, Hailey plans for shuttle routes that would connect to a commuter bus via a centrally located transit station. Development along those routes should include transit shelters for commuters and students who ride the school busses.

#### 10.1 Engineering

Goal: Create and maintain a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly community that provides safe, convenient and efficient multi-modal transportation for all Hailey residents, that moves people and not just cars, and that preserves and enhances our quality of life.

**Policy:** Promote long-term planning and development of an interconnected and integrated multi-modal transportation system. Contain or reduce the number of single occupant vehicle trips.

**Implementation:**

- a. Create and implement a Transportation Master Plan.
- b. Participate in, and support, regional transportation planning for traffic and transportation management.
- c. Support efforts to create a public transportation system that includes a local circulator shuttle within walking distance of most Hailey residents, as well as commuter service within the Wood River Valley corridor.

**Policy:** Promote land development that discourages urban sprawl, connects the community, and encourages multi-modal use.

**Implementation:**

- a. Create clear entrances at our north and south to define Main Street and our community (where to slow down).
- b. Balance parking needs with multi-modal transportation needs. Minimize the effect of large parking lots with landscape buffers and islands.
- c. Encourage neighborhood service centers that serve the adjacent neighborhoods
- d. Encourage or require transit shelters along designated transit routes.
- e. Encourage multi-use development closer to or along transportation corridors.

## 10.2 Education

**Goal:** Recognize that Engineering and Education are better tools for traffic management than enforcement - use creative street designs to manage transportation demands, and use education to encourage healthy transportation choices.

**Policy:** Maximize transportation opportunities and minimize tax dollars.

**Implementation:**

- a. Explore, create and foster cooperative opportunities with other county and regional resources.
- b. Ensure that Hailey participates in long-term countywide transportation efforts
- c. Work with other resources and jurisdictions to provide a cohesive transportation system for our countywide community.
- d. Explore and support efforts for a public transportation system that provides regional commuter service and connects to a local circulator shuttle service within Hailey.

## 10.3 Enforcement

**Goal:** Ensure that future growth does not place undue demands on our current quality of life, transportation infrastructure, rural character, or environmental quality, including clean air.

**Policy:** Standards for development should encourage multi-modal transportation.

**Implementation:**

- a. Residential development of 20 units or more, and commercial development of 20,000 square feet or more should provide a Transportation Management Study and should construct the infrastructure necessary to meet the transportation needs of that development, such as transit shelters, sidewalks and pathways, park and ride parking spaces, etc.



- b. Review the parking ordinance to establish appropriate minimum and maximum numbers of parking spaces for development. Encourage creative alternatives to larger parking lots, such as shared parking, public transit, special event shuttles, etc. Explore other means to balance parking needs, such as parking meters.

## SUN VALLEY

### City Of Sun Valley Comprehensive Plan, 2005

Vision Statement (pg. 1) - We recognize the need to resolve regional issues, such as transportation and housing, and to work closely with the greater community of the Wood River Valley to provide opportunities for the development and expansion of adequate transit and housing, as well as to participate as good stewards of the region's social and natural assets. It is with this vision that the citizens, planners, employees, and appointed and elected officials of Sun Valley commit to plan, guide, and manage change and development of the City in accordance with the principal goals of this Comprehensive Plan:

- Preserve and protect natural scenic resources, the environment and open spaces
- Provide for an integrated transportation system

Action Item 3.1.6: Evaluate funding mechanisms to assist w/the development of community housing and to mitigate the transportation impacts of off-site development.

Objective 3.2: Manage growth and development in a manner that preserves, protects, the existing physical and natural environment by steering growth into the appropriate locations, regulating its design and by emphasizing a pattern of pedestrian and mass transit oriented travel. The City can effectively serve development, including an efficient transportation system when growth is well planned... The Sun Valley Resort 2004 Development Plan includes new hotels, residential housing, community housing, open space and a transportation gondola" ... (pg. 13)

Objective 7.3: Initiate, encourage, support, and participate in regional partnerships to provide for rational land use decision-making and for a healthy economy.

Action Item 7.3.6: Work cooperatively with the City of Ketchum to  
1) create a Future Land Use Map for River Run, including accommodation for a gondola station, commercial uses that complement downtown Ketchum businesses, park facilities and mitigation of impacts of Sun Valley Resort Development within the City of Sun Valley, including community housing, public safety needs, parking and transit terminal; and  
2) evaluate the impact on each community and arrange for adequate mitigation, including revenue sharing." (Pg. 24)

## BELLEVUE

### Bellevue Comprehensive Plan - Chapter 9 Transportation

#### GUIDING POLICY 1

Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that will meet the needs of the community.

#### IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

1. Traffic control methods should be kept functional and in good repair to provide for the safe and efficient circulation of traffic, and safety of pedestrians. With the growth projections done, the city

should examine the option of placing traffic lights at appropriate areas to accommodate increased vehicular, bike, and foot traffic.

2. Establish bike routes that interconnect residents and business areas within the Wood River Trail System to provide a safer environment for bicycle usage.
3. Maintain areas within the central business district for the parking of bicycles.
4. Encourage commercial deliveries of incoming freight and off-street parking to be through the alleyways.
5. Research the possibility of temporarily leasing vacant lots and open space for snow storage.

#### GUIDING POLICY 2

Upgrade the transportation system when the opportunity is available. New street development shall be reviewed to determine the effect on existing streets.

#### CAREY

##### Carey Comprehensive Plan, 1997

*Note: Carey is served directly by U.S. Highway 93, State Highway 20/26, Comprehensive Plans relate to these highways and other local roads. The commute for residents along Highway 75 to jobs in Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley is not addressed in the Carey Comprehensive Plan.*

#### DESIRABLE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1) It is the intent of the City to work with the Idaho Transportation Department and Blaine County to provide a safe and efficient transportation system that will meet the needs of the community.



## THE BOARD OF BLAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

206 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH, SUITE 300

HAILEY, IDAHO 83333

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Sarah Michael, Chair \* Tom Bowman, Vice Chair \* Dennis Wright, Commissioner

January 26, 2006

Idaho Transportation Department  
Attention Ms. Gwen Smith  
3311 W State St  
PO Box 7129  
Boise, ID 83707-1129

Dear Representatives of ITD and FHWA

This letter is to be considered an addendum of support by the Board of Blaine County Commissioners to the joint comment letter submitted concurrently by our elected colleagues in Blaine County referred to hereinafter as the joint letter.

In spirit, we support all of the concepts of the joint letter, most importantly using techniques to reduce the ratio of single occupant vehicles (SOV), especially during peak demand hours. We assume that the County Commission serving in the future will be asked by ITD to consent to the concept, rather than having it imposed on them. We have some questions in regards to the design, mechanics and the safe operation of a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane for State Highway 75. We are interested in research and studies that have been conducted on existing HOV lanes that might address our questions. These questions include but are not limited to:

- On any point where two lanes need to merge to one, how will rapidly traveling HOV's safely merge with predictably slower the SOV lane?
- How will slow moving SOV's safely cross over the HOV lane to exit the highway at uncontrolled intersections?
- How will SOV's stopped at uncontrolled side streets safely cross the HOV lane to merge into a congested SOV lane?
- Will HOV restrictions be suspended when snow covers the painted striping? Who makes the decision and how will drivers know?

Idaho Transportation Department  
Attention Ms. Gwen Smith  
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- What are the techniques that can be used by the State Police and our Sheriff to safely enforce HOV lane restrictions?
- Are there other documented safety issues that are particular to the implementation of HOV lanes, for instance, right-of-way rules for SOV's versus HOV's?

As the governing agency which will have most if not all HOV segments of State Highway 75 within our jurisdiction, we will seek more information on these types of safety concerns. We must also assume that you have done some of this research as part of the EIS process and would not have developed an alternative that triggered unsafe driving conditions once implemented. Before giving our unconditional support to the HOV alternative, we would appreciate learning more. The Commissioners understand that these issues as well as a thorough implementation plan will be addressed in the design phase of the Highway 75 project and desires ITD's cooperation to resolve them.

Again, the Blaine County Commissioners confirms our support of the need to implement techniques listed on the joint letter to reduce single occupancy vehicles during peak travel hours and this addendum is not meant to diminish that endorsement.

  
Sarah Michael  
Chair

  
Tom Bowman  
Vice Chair

  
Dennis Wright  
Commissioner