

Idaho Transportation Board
Subcommittee on Policies
Riverside Hotel, 2900 W. Chinden Blvd.
October 19, 2021

Idaho Transportation Board (ITB) Subcommittee on Policies Chairman Bob Hoff called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, October 19, 2021. The Subcommittee met at the Riverside Hotel in Garden City. District 3 Member Julie DeLorenzo and District 1 Member James R. Thompson, who substituted for Vice Chair Janice Vassar, participated. Also in attendance were: ITB Chairman Bill Moad and District 4 Member Jim Kempton.

Key principal Subcommittee staff members and advisors Lead Deputy Attorney General Tim Thomas, Director Brian Ness, Chief Deputy Scott Stokes, Chief Operations Officer Dan McElhinney, Highway Construction & Operations Administrator (HCOA) Dave Kuisti, Highway Development Administrator - Chief Engineer (HDA/CE) Blake Rindlisbacher, Communications Chief Officer for the Board Vince Trimboli, and Executive Assistant to the Board Lorraine Dennis were present.

Subcommittee Chairman Hoff introduced the Subcommittee members, recognized the participation of the ITB Chairman Moad and Member Kempton, the Idaho Transportation Department Leadership, and provided opening remarks.

Communications Chief Officer Trimboli moderated the listening workshop. He prefaced the session is in follow up to the ITB's June 2021 workshop at Chairman Moad's request.

Listening Workshop. The following is a synopsis of the five stakeholder groups' presentations in discussion of Board Policy 4028, Allocation of Federal Formula Highway Apportionments to Local Public Agencies.

1. Urban Committee/Metropolitan Planning Organization

Bannock Transportation Planning Organization Director Mori Byington provided background, the issues and impacts, its request, and resulting benefits.

- Background: recapped how federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding is allocated in Idaho amongst transportation management, urban and rural areas.
 - o Transportation Management Area (TMA) – Boise urbanized area only: over 200,000 population; dedicated funding; and represented by COMPASS.
 - o Urban – 5,000 – 200,000 population (46 cities); share funding; represented by 5 MPOs: 50,000 – 200,000 population, and LHTAC: 5,000 – 50,000 population. It is anticipated Twin Falls will soon become Idaho's 6th MPO when the 2020 Census numbers are released.
 - o Rural – rest of state (less than 5,000 population); share funding; represented by LHTAC.
 - o Approximately 44% of state's population, almost 800,000 people live in urban areas – excludes the Boise urbanized area.
 - o Current Policy 4028 – locals receive direct allocation of 12.6%, STBG.

- Issue: Policy 4028 is based on 1990 population data (52% urban/48% rural). 2019 population represents 67% urban and 33% rural, but the funding split is 50/50. Urban funding is diluted.
- Policy 4028 was developed before Idaho had a TMA so the funding is taken out of the overall urban portion. The funding split between rural and urban is not equitable and results in rural per capita STBG funding being nearly three times higher than that of urban. Further resulting in critical safety, maintenance and expansion needs left unmet.
- FHWA issues guidance for distribution of STBG funds taking into account the total amount of funding and required distribution to TMAs.
- Request: 1) update Policy 4028 to follow federal guidance for TMA and urban allocations to better align with Idaho's growing population and transportation needs, and 2) match rural funding to urban amount in federal apportionment for equitable funding split. Results in urban funding not diluted, funding automatically aligns with growth and an equitable split. Also, annual updates to the federal apportionment tables take growth into account so the policy stays current as Idaho grows.
- Benefits – both urban and rural areas will be better equipped to address critical transportation needs on the federal aid system.

2. Association of Idaho Cities

Executive Director Kelley Packer presented remotely thanking the department for its support.

- Federal aid is critical for transportation success. They recognize the limited resources and needs have increased statewide; however, funding for local jurisdictions have not kept pace. Urban areas are seeing more demand due to growth and rural areas on vehicle miles traveled. Rural areas have a smaller tax base.
- Many projects left unfunded every year – citing an example, in 2020, Locals had \$9.2 million funded projects, but \$47.2 million unfunded needs.
- Request: increase the allocation in Policy 4028 from 12.6% to 15%, and keep urban funding whole by taking the TMA portion out prior to applying the percentage allocation and 50/50 split.

3. Idaho Association of Highway Districts

Executive Director Nick Veldhouse thanked the members for the opportunity to present and discussed some select funded projects. He also outlined needs and unfunded projects.

- Needs: included Rathdrum to I-84, 1-lane bridge in Gooding; and deteriorating pavement on: Shoestring Road (3.5 miles), Peckham Road (City of Greenleaf to Wilder), and Simco Road and Old Highway 30 (both maintained by Mountain Home Highway District).
- Growth rates: 5-year Idaho growth rates snap shot with substantial growth in population, driver's licenses, vehicle registrations, annual miles driven and tons of freight moved.
- Bridges: about 500 state and local bridges are aging beyond useful life – 50 years old. Presents problems with explosive growth.
- Each year an additional \$241.8 million is needed for restoration and maintenance projects on the state, local and transit systems. Excludes safety and capacity enhancements needs.
- For 2020, there were \$28.8 million unfunded federal aid projects.

4. Idaho Association of Counties

Executive Director Seth Grigg presented remotely. He provided an overview of the county federal aid projects, unfunded projects, congestion issues, and solutions.

- Federal aid projects: between 2010 and 2020, there were 13 county federal aid projects in 12 counties for improvements of existing roads totaling \$21 million in funding.
- Unfunded projects: for each funded county federal aid project, three go unfunded. There were \$55 million in unfunded project applications.
- Rural counties, including highway districts, have limited tax bases and rely on state and federal funding for transportation projects.
- Federal Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funds are dedicate to forest county schools and highway maintenance. Since 2008, funding has declined 10% a year, and for 2021 and beyond, there are no scheduled payments.
- Congestion: rural counties have seen significant increases in recreation creating traffic congestion and wear and tear on rural highways.
- Solution: remove TMAs from the local apportionment (locals should not have to compete with TMAs for funding), increase local apportionment from 12.6% to 15%, and split local apportionment 50/50 urban/rural.

Madison County Commissioner Todd Smith also addressed the subcommittee to express his appreciation for receiving federal aid help and outlined the challenges with growth and escalating costs.

5. Local Highway Technical Assistance Council

Administrator Laila Kral presented LHTAC's local federal aid programs, financial needs for the rural and urban programs, bridge needs, and projects.

- Data: LHTAC serves 287 local highway jurisdictions – 191 cities, 33 counties and 63 highway districts. Local system has 67,496 roadway lane miles and 2,421 structures over 20-feet, which in comparison to state data, reflects five times greater amount maintained than the state.
- Federal funding program: federal aid amounts total – rural \$18.2 million, small urban \$2.9 million, bridges \$9.2 million, and Local Highway Safety Improvement Program (LHSIP) \$8.6 million.
- Financial needs: target budget for rural projects is \$2 million. Amongst the cities, counties and highway districts there are 69 entities with annual budgets over \$2 million.
- Rural program: applications are taken every other year. A total of \$188 million in unfunded needs representing 99 unsuccessful applications from 2010 to 2019. For example in 2019, City of Challis, who has an annual budget of \$414,000, had an unfunded project of \$1.8 million for reconstruction of curb, gutter and sidewalk. Some entities do not apply because of limited availability and required match.
- Small Urban Program: a map was displayed with the 17 urban clusters, 5 MPOs and TMA locations. Of the \$18.2 million, \$8.2 million is available for the MPO's and urban clusters. A balancing group analyzes a 10-year rolling average program eligibility, and subsequently, entities then can submit application by invitation only. \$250,000 is reserved each year for a

goal of 2 – 3 project awards. From 2012 – 2021, there were 8 unsuccessful applications totaling 22.9 million.

- Bridges: there are 2,468 locally owned bridges (over 20-feet) of which, 155 are rated poor condition and 355 are posted/restricted. Also, 41% are 50 years old and 61% will be 50 years or older in 10 years with \$7.2 million available funding. It has been 2 years of not accepting applications. Needs total \$247.4 million with 104 unsuccessful applications from 2012 to 2020.
- LHTAC projects: For FY20, projects totaled 85: LHSIP – 16, TAP – 11, rural/urban/bridge in construction – 14, rural/urban/bridge in design – 5, and LRHIP – 39. All funds are awarded through a competitive application process.
- Position: supports the requests made by the other local agencies.

Open Discussion

- Chairman Moad thanked the presenters and acknowledged the vast needs amongst a limited budget.
- Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) Executive Director Matt Stoll was invited to comment. He supports all the jurisdictions and stated the policy distribution formula, based on 1990 data, is outdated. He also stated the Transportation Management Area (TMA) should be removed prior to the apportionment distribution. He supports the update of Policy 4028 and that both rural and urban entities should remain whole.
- Board Member Kempton emphasized the importance of the group meeting. Pointing out the challenges with population growth and corresponding tax base amongst the cities and counties; LHTAC's large unfunded project list; and the cities' capacity issues. However, he appealed to the group to not only advocate for themselves, but for the other entities. He is not adverse to revisiting the policy, but needs more information to make a decision.
- Board Member Thompson thanked the agencies and stated the board looks forward to looking at all the information.
- Subcommittee Member DeLorenzo also thanked the agencies for coming and presenting their needs and ideas. She stated the Board is dedicated to working together and acknowledged the policy review has been a topic of discussion for a while so she appreciates Chairman Moad for bring the conversation forward for consideration.

Subcommittee Chairman Hoff closed the session remarking the subcommittee will take time to review the information and continue discussions within the next few months. The subcommittee recessed at 2:30PM and reconvened at 3:00 PM for the business session items.

Minutes. Member DeLorenzo made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2021, meeting as submitted. Member Thompson seconded the motion and it passed unopposed.

Administrative Policy A-05-37 – Highway Construction & Operations Administrator Dave Kuisti proposed deleting Administrative Policy A-05-37, Allocation and Management of the Highway Maintenance Budget. The policy has been in effect since 2014; however, current business practices have changed incorporating transparency on how information is disseminated and shared on a statewide basis.

The Subcommittee concurred with staff's recommendations. Staff will present policy recommendations to the ITB next month for its approval.

Administrative Policy A-38-02 – Highway Safety Manager John Tomlinson proposed deleting Administrative Policy A-38-02, Accident Cost Information. In consultation with FHWA, the information has not been used in many years and is no longer required. Procedures and processes have changed making the administrative policy obsolete.

The Subcommittee concurred with staff's recommendations. Staff will present policy recommendations to the ITB next month for its approval.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 P.M.

Lorraine Dennis

Respectfully submitted by:
LORRAINE DENNIS
Executive Assistant
Idaho Transportation Board

Approved: January 12, 2022