IDAHO 2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Between August 21 and September 20, 2026, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) received 48 public comments on the Draft 2050 Idaho Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) via email and through the project website's web comment form. The following six thematic categories were developed to respond to the public comments received during the public comment period.

We are concerned about the population growth and its impact on the transportation system. Has ITD identified key corridors for future capacity improvements?

Recent and future population growth influenced strategies in the LRTP, but it is a policy plan and does not identify specific projects. Specific projects are planned through the Idaho Transportation Investment Program (ITIP). Regional staff regularly identify needed projects through roadway data and community input to match available funding. In 2026, the department modified projects in its seven-year investment program following changes in transportation funding levels. Projects that remain funded first focus on protecting and maintaining the usability of the current transportation network before expanding it. To see which projects are planned, visit itd.idaho.gov.

Several new routes and bypasses were suggested. Is ITD planning on constructing new roadways or bypasses?

The 2050 LRTP is a policy document with a 20-year horizon and one of the purposes is to identify where future capacity, safety, and connectivity needs are emerging, not to select specific new highway alignments or commit funding to individual projects. Strategies from this plan will be used by regional planning staff when developing specific projects for inclusion in the seven-year plan known as the ITIP. Part of developing new routes or expansion projects includes evaluating the benefits, impacts and costs of multiple alignments. Survey results from the development of the LRTP indicated a preference for ITD to widen existing highways before building new ones, which matches the department's general strategy to maximize the use of limited available funding. However, with recent reductions in transportation funding in Idaho, the department has prioritized preservation of existing pavement and bridges on the state highway system and unfunded many expansion projects.

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We are concerned about crash risk, deteriorating road conditions, wildlife crossings, and increasing truck speeds. What is ITD doing about traveler safety?

Safety is Idaho's top transportation priority, both in what the public told us during LRTP outreach (it was consistently ranked the most valued attribute of the system, ahead of maintenance and mobility) and in ITD's own guiding policy. Safety comes first in the mission, and the department is committed to a long-term vision of zero roadway fatalities. That vision is pursued on two tracks: behavioral safety programs (public education, awareness campaigns, and local grants addressing risky driving, administered by ITD's Office of Highway Safety) and engineering improvements delivered through the ITIP projects, which uses crash data to target high-risk intersections and corridors, work zones, and lane-departure risks statewide.

ITD regularly collects and reviews data on the transportation system's performance including the roadway condition and crashes. Regional staff consider this data, public input, the benefits, an estimated cost, and available funding to propose projects into the ITIP every year. Speed limits are reviewed both upon request and when roadways are improved. The review process includes examining crash and speed data, with changes approved by the board. We have recorded the specific locations and safety concerns raised and provided them to the appropriate regional staff for review.

We want to see more investment in public transit, passenger rail, and biking/walking infrastructure. Does the LRTP address these modes, or is it just a highway plan?

The LRTP covers the state highway system, public transportation, bicycle, pedestrian, port, freight and passenger rail, and aviation in Idaho, regardless of who owns or operates them. The LRTP discusses existing conditions, future needs, and strategies for these modes and assets.

ITD does not have dedicated state funding to build transit, passenger rail, or bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure the way it does for the state highway system. Ownership and operation of these modes rests primarily with other public agencies and private entities, such as local transit providers, cities and counties, tribal governments, private non-profits, Amtrak, and private freight railroads. ITD's role is to coordinate with and support those responsible parties rather than fund improvements. That coordination happens through administering federal funding on their behalf, providing planning and technical assistance, and aligning state, regional, and local plans, rather than through a dedicated ITD capital program for these modes. ITD encourages advocates for these other modes to reach out to their legislative representatives.

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Is the Idaho Legislature funding transportation adequately? Why doesn't the plan include bolder, more ambitious projects, and how are spending priorities and project decisions actually made?

The LRTP is built around a vision and goals that are grounded in realistic fiscal priorities. Combined state and federal revenue is projected to stay nearly flat through 2050 (~$1.17B in 2025 to ~$1.20B in 2050) while population is forecast to grow ~36%. That gap is why the LRTP prioritizes continuing to provide acceptable condition of the existing system and why ITD is working with legislative partners to secure more funding.

Project decisions move through three levels. The Legislature sets the overall funding available for transportation. ITD staff then develop individual project proposals through the department's project development process, weighing options such as intersection and interchange improvements, operations and technology, demand management, and added capacity and evaluating them against community input, environmental review, safety data, and available funding. The Idaho Transportation Board then approves the ITIP and the funding decisions that move those proposals into action.

How has the public actually been able to weigh in on the LRTP, and why were meetings not held in every community?

The LRTP was built through two rounds of public engagement, not just the single comment period on the draft document. Round 1, held in November and December 2025, was focused on listening before anything was drafted. ITD held six regional in-person open houses (in Pocatello, Idaho Falls, Twin Falls, Coeur d'Alene, Lewiston, and Boise, drawing about 150 attendees), five regional pop-up events in community gathering places (including Teton Valley, Blackfoot, Coeur d'Alene, Lewiston, and Twin Falls), an online survey (343 responses) and online open house (1,290 visits) available statewide, five advisory committee meetings, and two tribal partner interviews. This occurred before the draft LRTP was written, so that early input shaped plan priorities and content.

Round 2 occurred in August and September 2026 and brought the completed draft LRTP back to the public for review. The purpose of this round was to provide Idahoans an opportunity to comment on the LRTP and offer one more chance to comment before the LRTP was finalized.

Opportunities for public comment are regularly held throughout the year, typically for feedback on projects in design. Every July public comment is sought statewide on all planned projects in the ITIP. Planning staff also routinely meet with other public and transportation officials and groups.