

# Foundation for Ada/Canyon Trail Systems (F.A.C.T.S.)

(Recorded) Minutes of June 26, 2024

Meeting called for 3:00 PM

In attendance:

Officers: Bill Gigray, President, Bill Mullane, Vice President and Sharon Hubler, Secretary

Directors: Paul Mann, Bob Hay, Gary Payne and Gary Segers

Agency "ex officio": Austin Miller, COMPASS; Colin Schmidt, city of Garden City Public Works Director; and, Kim Warren, city of Meridian Parks & Recreation Pathways Director

Call to Order

President Bill Gigray

The Meeting was called to order at 3:03 PM.

Approve Agenda – Move to Approve, Additions/Reorder

Knowing that a communication from Marc Vance re: the 1999 Boise River Study could have been included had there been time enough to process the information:

*It was moved to approve the Agenda by Paul Mann, seconded by Gary Payne.*

MOTION CARRIED

1. Secretary's Report – Minutes of May 22, 2024 Secretary Sharon Hubler

*It was moved to approve the Minutes of May Officers' Reports 22, 2024 by Paul Mann, seconded by Gary Payne.*

2. Treasurer's Report updated as of June 26, 2024 Treasurer Phil Peterson

*It was moved by Sharon Hubler, seconded by Paul Mann to accept the Bank Balance of \$9,511.41 as reported by the Treasurer.*

MOTION CARRIED

3. President's Report President Bill Gigray

- a) Paul gave FACTS the alert re: the Conditional Use Permit submitted to Canyon County Development Services Department on a site north of the Boise River near Curtis Park involving at least 2.5 years of mineral extraction. Bill Gigray is very familiar with the site since it was part of the Greenbelt Civic League Master Plan performed by Jensen-Belts in the early 1980s. Curtis Park is located on Channel Road off River Road. The park is 15 acres and includes a Wilderness Park along the Boise River. A comment letter fashioned by Bill Gigray was directed to Development Services espousing not losing a future connection going east to Middleton for a bike/ped pathway. Bill obtained the support of the city of Caldwell through its Public Works Director Robb MacDonald and Parks and Recreation Department for an easement. There were 700 pages of comments gathered. Even though the proposal was for a high-end development after mineral extraction the public-at-large felt it was not a seemly proposal having only a 15-foot road in and out of Curtis Park for an estimated 50 truckloads onto Highway 44 hauling out the gravel. Staff recommended a no and only four testified in favor with more than 20 against citing the noise off the canyon walls, back-up alarms and so forth. Paul attended the hearing and felt that given the power of suggestion the bike/ped easement would be considered in any future development plans. Bill G. said there'll be a legacy of information, at least for a while.

- b) Bridge alternatives – Bill G. will contact J-U-B on alternative bridge structures so no pilings in the floodplain. Bill M. is willing to go door-to-door on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street talking to the neighbors.

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- c) Email to Idaho Department of Lands – still no response
- 4. Vice-President's Report Vice President Bill Mullane
  - a) 52<sup>nd</sup> Street – All different proposals have their challenges and the four bridge options separate hurdles. Bill M. has spoken with Jenah and talked to her about making contacts with property owners/neighbors on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street so they can vent or voice their opinions. Right now, 52<sup>nd</sup> Street has no bikeway identified and there are numerous driveways with this aspect of the project perhaps costing as much as the bridge crossing. All said and done forging ahead with the bridge will require the push to get more money and to ascertain the lay of the land with the neighborhood. The new EXPO will draw more people to the area.
- 5. **Presentation** by Gary Payne, Paul Mann and Kim Warren on Rails to Trails  
Kim asked Gary to go first. These three have been participants since 2016 on this COMPASS project entitled Rails with Trail. In 2019 COMPASS commissioned Alta Planning & Design as a consultant for a feasibility study along the Union Pacific Railway Corridor with a major focus on rails between Nampa and Boise. The study researched the r-o-w for corridor conditions and estimated construction costs. With COVID the meetings were less consistent for the wide array of committee members including city of Meridian, Ada County, St. Lukes, ACHD, SW District Health, two FACTS representatives, St. Alphonsus, Nampa Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board and Idaho Dept. of Transportation. 2021 estimated costs for the project total \$49m. Smaller “opportunity” segments were identified that did not require UP approval. At no time did Union Pacific agree to meet with the committee by sending representatives.  
Kim next asked Paul to continue the presentation. The study was thorough in estimating land costs, going through all the intersection streets perpendicular to the railroad. However, the Rails with Trail Committee was absorbed under the COMPASS ACTIVE Transportation Committee. Perhaps, not having a light rail connection was not persuasive enough and the dollar amount is large for a trail. Kim jumped in. COMPASS Alexa Roitman suggested opportunity segments that did not involve buying r-o-w with one listed along the one mile easement stretch in Meridian. Kim thought the second bit is to require an easement when development ensues; the third are relatively easy acquirable easements such as a long stretch of sewer line. There is another undeveloped mile toward Nampa. By taking small steps there might be four miles achievable along the rail. The higher order of the Rails to Trails project will have to happen politically. Union Pacific owns the track and easements. Bill G. said it would be worthwhile to see to what extent UP's ownership exists.  
Gary said that it was a good work group, came up with lots of ideas without having an active interface with Union Pacific. With the committee structure subsumed under the ACTIVE Transportation Committee and new staff it will take time to figure out what a new committee could do and how to go ahead from here. Gary thinks it takes a special committee to pursue this. There is a spur

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west of Caldwell to Wilder and a spur from Nampa to Meridian, which might be abandoned. Comment back was the spur from Caldwell to Wilder would unlikely be abandoned because of its utility to Simplot's and other industrial businesses. Another consideration is the rail north of Hwy. 20-26 in terms of its direct connection to the city of Middleton. City of Meridian seems to be at the helm more than anyone else at this point. Count colleges and Chambers of Commerce wanting to make this happen. Austin Miller was asked about the area's population estimate. Right now, it is more than 820,000. He appreciated the enlightening background information on the project. Alexa Roitman will be available at the next meeting. Bill G. thought this could be on the Agenda of the ACTIVE Transportation Committee and FACTS can chime in with our recommendations.

A further follow-up would be to ask Elaine Clegg to come to a FACTS meeting. She is the Valley Regional Transit CEO who has been nominated by President Joe Biden to sit on the Amtrak Board of Directors.

*It was moved by Gary Segers, seconded by Gary Payne that Gary Payne and Kim Warren confer with Alexa Roitman and/or Austin Miller (COMPASS staff) to incorporate the "Rails to Trails" effort into COMPASS Active Transportation Work Group (ATWG) meetings.*

MOTION CARRIED

### Agency Reports

City of Caldwell Paul Mann reporting, Highway 55 underpass passed \$2.6 million on consent agenda for Caldwell City Council 6/18/24 along with an agreement with Gem State Academy for access on both sides of Highway 55.

COMPASS, Austin Miller reporting, Doing a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study PELL, which is the formal process for high capacity alternatives for transit with Caldwell, Nampa, Meridian and Boise involved. Look for "Let's Ride Treasure Valley" as the name. Bill Gigray thought it would be ideal to identify the percentage of population with .25 or .5 mile from the corridor access. COMPASS has a walkability analysis on sidewalks and so forth and, with time, will determine businesses whose employees could benefit. For instance, Amazon is right on the corridor; Power Engineers is expanding as well.

Bob Hay said there's a railroad spur close to the airport and Micron. These are two big employers whose employees could benefit. That is a good segue to Bill G's concern with greenbelt access to Hwy. 21 given the the Micron Expansion. What is Boise's plan, particularly for down the hill on Hwy. 21. Dane Hoskins should know.

State Street Down Debrief – need information

Budget Presentation for parks, recreation and pathways. Bill asked Kim what is a good time frame? Kim said that the agency knows better what P&R is getting in August. Kim expanded on the city of Meridian's report stating that she is involved with the final sidewalk widening, north to Chinden. As part of the Pathways Master Plan updated efforts there will be stakeholder meetings July 30-31 for a

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couple of hours with a virtually held meeting later. Let Kim know if you are interested. Bill thought FACTS members should not let this invite go by. We need more people to serve on the FACTS board and Kim will seek out a person from Meridian.

Attendance is slow in the summertime but you are encouraged to make your best effort to attend the Zoom meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 3:00 pm.

The meeting stood adjourned at 4:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Hubler, Secretary