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ITD director's plan wins praise from lawmakers

BOISE — The chairs of the Idaho Senate and House transportation committees praised the vision to improve the Idaho Transportation Department outlined Wednesday by ITD Director Brian Ness.

“Under the new leadership I’ve seen dramatic improvement already at ITD. I applaud the director’s vision and look forward to working with him to successfully implement it,” Sen. John McGee, R-Caldwell, said. “Making sure the department is accountable for the people’s money and improving service are important steps.”

Rep. JoAn Wood, who chairs the House Transportation and Defense Committee, said she also has been impressed by Ness’ leadership and vision.

“Brian has a sharp sense for the concerns the Legislature has about the department and the direction it needs to go to address them,” Wood said. “He is engaging legislators, listening to them, and extending a cooperative hand to achieve transparency for the agency. I believe his vision for the department reflects those conversations.”

Ness outlined his vision for the department “to become the best in the nation” through implementing seven initiatives. They include:

- ITD will strive to continually get better with the goal of being the best transportation department in the country.
- ITD is transparent, accountable and delivers on its promises. n ITD seeks to be more effective and to save costs through increased efficiencies. n ITD provides extraordinary customer service. n ITD uses partnerships effectively. n ITD values teamwork and uses it as a tool to improve. n ITD places a high value on its employees and their development. Gov. Butch Otter agrees with the direction set by Ness, who brings 30 years of transportation experience to his position, officials said Wednesday.

Steps to accomplish certain initiatives have already been taken, including implementation of the legislative audit, development of performance measures and creation of employee teams. Ness pledged the department would build on these efforts.