

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Why Plan?

Based on the U.S. Census, Chubbuck had a population of 9,700 persons in the year 2000. This represents an increase in population of 23% over the ten-year period between 1990 and 2000. With this growth come change and the need for coordination and planning. The City of Chubbuck has been an active participant in the *Our Valley Our Vision* regional planning effort that was jointly conducted with the City of Pocatello, Bannock Planning Organization, Idaho Department of Transportation, and School District #25. Population estimates conducted as part of that project forecast an increase of 20,000 people in the region over the next 20 years. Based on land availability, Chubbuck will be home to as many as 5,000 of these new residents.

It is important that the community anticipates and plans for this growth. Through planning, we can meet the regional vision as well as Chubbuck's community vision as a full-function city complete with jobs, services, and recreation. Chubbuck citizens value their small town atmosphere, and by planning for land use, transportation systems, and infrastructure improvements, we can assure that new growth fits our vision of the community and the region.

Our Plan

Our 2001 Comprehensive Plan is based on the interests and concerns of our citizens. The plan builds on the City's 1995 Comprehensive Plan and incorporates concepts and elements of the *Our Valley Our Vision* project. In developing the 1995 plan and the 2001 plan, surveys, open houses, advisory committees, meetings with the Land Use and Development Commission, and the City Council have been used to raise interest and gather input. In addition, the plan has been developed to be consistent with the requirements of the Idaho Local Planning Act of 1975.

Our Valley Our Vision — The Regional Planning Context

Our 2001 Comprehensive Plan has been developed to be consistent with the vision and goals of our regional planning document, *A 2020 Vision for the Portneuf River Valley*. In 1999, a regional effort was launched to plan for future growth in the Portneuf River Valley. The *Our Valley Our Vision* planning process determined how to best accommodate and plan for new residents. The project was a cooperative effort of citizens, agencies, and regional stakeholders to create a common vision for the area and plan for the management of growth in the Portneuf River Valley. It was co-sponsored by the cities of Chubbuck and Pocatello. The 2001 Chubbuck Comprehensive Plan is the culmination of the two-year *Our Valley Our Vision* regional planning effort. Throughout the *Our Valley Our Vision* project, citizens, stakeholders, elected officials, and City, County, and Bannock Planning Organization (BPO) staff worked with a consulting team to create and refine a vision for growth in the region entitled "A 2020 Vision for the Portneuf River Valley." The build-out analysis and community visioning and refinement process have helped shape policies and priorities for the region that will encourage development patterns to accommodate growth while preserving the qualities residents most value. The Plan has been updated to reflect the results of this planning effort and guide the implementation of the policies, programs, and activities that will make the vision a reality.

A 2020 Vision for the Portneuf River Valley

IN THE YEAR 2020, the Portneuf River Valley region, including the communities of Pocatello and Chubbuck, is known for having successfully planned for its future, achieving a quality of life that is consistent with local values, goals, and aspirations. The region has strategically managed its

growth and development, improved its transportation system, preserved open spaces and scenic views, protected its environment, promoted neighborhood livability, developed new parks and recreational amenities, and enhanced regional cooperation to improve government services, local schools, and economic development.

Managed Growth and Smart Development

Since the year 2000, the population of the Portneuf River Valley has grown to approximately 83,000 people, representing a moderate increase in its population of 20,000 people over 20 years. Chubbuck and Pocatello have effectively accommodated this growth in a proactive manner by encouraging new “infill” development within existing urban areas and selectively adding new neighborhoods on vacant land at the edges of the urban area.

This dual emphasis on infill and new neighborhoods has helped the region curb costly, unplanned sprawl and produce a smarter approach to development. Smart development has resulted in revitalized neighborhoods, a better mix of residential and commercial land uses, and a more walkable community. Redevelopment of underutilized sites also has contributed to the revitalization of older areas within the region. Public-private partnerships and financial incentives have helped make such redevelopment feasible. Examples of smart development in the Valley include:

University District. The area between the university and downtown has become an active, lively district with new mixed-use projects that combine commercial and residential uses. This has helped strengthen the link between the activity centers of downtown Pocatello and the university.

Downtown Pocatello. Downtown Pocatello has experienced a significant amount of infill and redevelopment. New housing areas north of downtown have created a unique urban living environment for downtown, inviting pedestrians, enlivening the streets, and enhancing public safety.

Chubbuck. New infill and redevelopment also has enlivened Chubbuck. Along Yellowstone Avenue, a new central downtown area has emerged. The downtown improvements have resulted from a focused plan and a program that encourages public-private partnerships.

New Neighborhoods. New neighborhoods have developed at the edges of Pocatello and Chubbuck. These neighborhoods include new shopping areas, allowing people to walk or bike short distances for their daily shopping needs. In general, new neighborhood development is more compact, utilizing smaller lots, with more efficient and less costly public services related to infrastructure and public safety. New neighborhoods are located in strategic locations that help provide surrounding areas with essential neighborhood services. This is especially true in the Highland area and near Century High School.

Transportation Improvements and Choices

The Portneuf River Valley’s transportation system has been significantly improved by creating greater street connectivity and providing new pedestrian and bike ways, which contribute to a wider range of transportation choices for area residents. Many streets have been improved and resurfaced, and storm drainage problems have been resolved. The Yellowstone Avenue corridor

has been greatly enhanced with new landscaping, sidewalks, lighting, and transit facilities. The corridor functions as a vital link between downtown Pocatello and Chubbuck.

Open Space and Farmland Protection

Growth in the Portneuf River Valley has been managed to take advantage of existing infrastructure and to protect open space and farmland surrounding the urban area. Urban service boundaries and agricultural zoning have helped preserve and protect farms northeast of Chubbuck and along the Portneuf River. A few hillside areas have been carefully developed, but the steepest areas have been retained and protected as open space and for the spectacular views they provide the region's residents.

Clean Air and Water

Air quality in the Portneuf River Valley has been improved by citizens working with industries to reduce emissions. Air quality also has been achieved by reducing reliance on the automobile and reducing the number of daily vehicle miles traveled by residents. This has been accomplished through a better mix of land uses, a more connected street network, and more people using alternative modes of transportation, including buses and shuttles. The Portneuf River Valley also has improved its water quality by protecting water resources and wetlands and working to clean up sites that contribute to water pollution.

Livable Communities, Parks, and Recreational Amenities

The Portneuf River Valley is still a great place to raise a family. The region has a high quality of life with friendly, walkable neighborhoods; easy access to recreational opportunities; and many youth- and family-oriented activities. Affordable housing for a range of income levels is available throughout the region. The cities of Pocatello and Chubbuck offer a variety of housing choices, including single-family homes, manufactured housing, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments.

New neighborhood parks provide a place for children to play close to home. Recreational bike paths connect new developments with a planned system of trails and routes that traverse the entire region. The recently completed greenway path along the Portneuf River is a popular recreational feature actively used by young and old alike.

Cooperating for Better Government, Schools, and Economic Development

The Portneuf River Valley is a place where citizens and government leaders from Pocatello, Chubbuck, and Bannock County come together in a cooperative, supportive way to solve regional problems. Parents, teachers, and school officials, working together, have ensured that the local schools have sufficient funds to offer the highest-quality education in Idaho.

Pocatello, Chubbuck, Bannock County, and local economic development organizations have worked together to recruit a variety of new manufacturing, distribution, and high-tech industries to the area. Area leaders have worked with local businesses to develop strategies to reduce pollution and promote clean industry. In addition, existing businesses have benefited from local incentives and the programs, research, and facilities of Idaho State University. Through these cooperative efforts, family-wage jobs have been created, and the regional economy has prospered.

Planning for the Next 20 Years

In the year 2020, the people of the Portneuf River Valley can look back and be proud of their commitment to a vision for the region, and the hard work and perseverance they have demonstrated to achieve it. Our valley provides a wonderful setting for the neighborhoods, communities, and people that thrive here. Looking to the future, our children are now leading the efforts to create a vision for 2050.

City of Chubbuck Vision Statement

Our Plan is designed with the intent of helping Chubbuck grow into a city that our citizens want to live in, a city described as:

Chubbuck Pride

A place people call home.

A clean and secure city, proud of its home-town sensibility.

A city conscious of the need to manage growth, and confident of its ability to do so.

A city sensitive to balancing individual needs within larger community values.

In short, a national model of a well-governed community.

Current Trends and Their Implications

The discussion section at the beginning of each chapter presents trends and projections related to each plan element. These trends and projections help identify issues that should be considered when plan policies are made. The most significant trends for each plan element are summarized below:

Property Rights (Chapter 2)

In 1994, the State of Idaho adopted new regulatory requirements that require state agencies to follow a checklist prepared by the State Attorney General to ensure that regulations and policies do not result in a “taking” of private property.

Population and Demographics (Chapter 3)

From 1990 to 2000, the population of Chubbuck increased by 23%. The Bannock Planning Organization (BPO) forecasts an increase in population of 20,000 people for the Portneuf River Valley by 2020. This growth, coupled with demographic trends such as an aging population and a continued decline in number of people per household, indicates an increase in demand for housing and medical care.

Land Use (Chapter 4)

The *Our Valley Our Vision* project identified a two-part strategy to accommodate growth in the region. First, infill and redevelopment should be encouraged to fully utilize existing urban land and infrastructure. One area targeted for infill and redevelopment is in the vicinity of Yellowstone Avenue and Chubbuck Road. Second, new communities can be designed according to “Smart Growth” principles and developed on suitable land within the Urban Service Boundary (USB). Generally, the land use element strives to integrate residential, commercial, and other types of uses to create a more dynamic, livable, and compact community.

Transportation (Chapter 5)

While Chubbuck has a limited network of roadways, only one arterial (Chubbuck Road) is expected to exceed acceptable levels of congestion by the year 2020. Chubbuck has been developing at low

densities and with street patterns that do not support public transit. An aging population will be better served by an integrated transportation system, one that is less reliant on personal vehicles and is capable of supporting transportation alternatives, such as walking or riding a bus.

Community Design (Chapter 6)

The City of Chubbuck intends to implement “Smart Growth” management principles identified by the *Our Valley Our Vision* project to protect the community’s quality of life from the impact of anticipated growth and to create a more livable city. Key concepts for community design include the revitalization of downtown Chubbuck along Yellowstone Highway, infill and redevelopment of existing neighborhoods, and future development of new neighborhoods.

Government Services (Chapter 7)

In response to growth, the City of Chubbuck is planning to build a second fire station to serve both existing development and to accommodate anticipated growth. Chubbuck also requires a new police station to meet present and future needs. Yet perhaps the most significant service issue for the region is water supply. Per capita water use in the Portneuf River Valley is nearly double the national standard. As the region identifies a long-term solution to meet growing water needs, water conservation and efforts to protect the aquifer from contamination are of utmost importance. The City and the region will need to identify innovative financing to fund public facility improvements.

Recreation (Chapter 8)

Chubbuck has four major public parks. As the City grows and a denser pattern of land use emerges, the park system will become more valuable to residents. The City will expect new development to help expand the park system.

Natural Resources (Chapter 9)

The City must protect groundwater resources from contamination and help reduce the emission of airborne particles that harm air quality. By managing growth, the City will also help protect prime agricultural lands on its borders.

Housing (Chapter 10)

Recent growth has increased home values in the region and made housing prices unaffordable for some lower-income families. Multi-family rental projects have had difficulty obtaining financing. Affordable housing and a mixture of housing types must be secured to accommodate the growing needs of the community.

Economy (Chapter 11)

The BPO forecast projects a 49% increase in regional employment by 2020. Three out of four of the new jobs probably will be located within existing neighborhoods. Household income and consumer spending power will increase with higher wages.

Special Sites (Chapter 12)

Chubbuck has a relatively short history and few natural features. The City recognizes that it has the opportunity to protect historic structures and to engage in public works that will foster civic pride and mark the City’s history.

School Location and Transportation (Chapter 13)

Anticipated growth and new neighborhoods may require construction of new elementary schools. Schools built within walking distance of new communities will reduce transportation costs. If new schools are required to serve infill development, finding suitable property may be difficult.

Area of Impact and Growth Management (Chapter 14)

This element of the Chubbuck Comprehensive Plan defines the area of city impact and describes the City’s plan to work with Bannock County and Pocatello to limit urban sprawl and ensure orderly annexations.

Implementation (Chapter 15)

Methods to implement and maintain the Comprehensive Plan.

Plan Organization

Our plan is organized by plan element according to the Idaho Local Planning Act of 1975. We recognize that many of the comprehensive plan elements are interrelated and work together to define our city now and in the future.

Each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan contains the following subsections:

Discussion: Background information.

Vision Statements: Statements from *Our Valley Our Vision* and the City vision statement.

Goals: Statements of purpose or intent, stated in such a way that they are general in nature and immeasurable.

Objectives: More specific and measurable refinements of portions of the goal statement.

Policies: Specific statements guiding actions and implying clear commitment.

Strategies: Actions, procedures, or techniques that carry out the Comprehensive Plan by implementing a standard.

Our Plan is a flexible planning document, not a specific plan. The City’s failure to accomplish any goal or objective does not give rise to any legal rights against the City.