

## Chapter 13: SCHOOL LOCATION AND TRANSPORTATION

### Discussion

School District #25 serves Pocatello and Chubbuck. In 2001, there are 15 elementary, 4 junior high, and 3 high schools distributed throughout the cities. One of the high schools is located on the east bench, another on the west side, and the third in the southeast. Century High School was recently constructed to alleviate overcrowding at the high schools and to accommodate future student population growth. In the past, comprehensive planning for school facilities and transportation has been deferred to School District #25. However, in an effort to coordinate and direct new growth within the region, school capacity, location, and access must be considered.

### Regional Planning

As part of the *Our Valley Our Vision* project, a build-out technical analysis was conducted to determine the impacts of various growth scenarios on public facilities (included in the Technical Appendix, *Portneuf River Valley Build-Out Technical Analysis*, Shapiro and Associates, Inc. 2000). With the District's proposed modified grade configurations (K-5 and 6-8); schools within School District #25 will be operating below capacity for future projected enrollment to 2010. Capacity is calculated based on a class size of 22 for grades K-5, 24 for grades 6-8, and 25 for grades 9-12. In the short term, development in areas identified for new neighborhoods may require the construction of new elementary schools in specific areas, while other schools remain under capacity. Five of the proposed new neighborhoods are within 1 mile of an existing elementary school. In the long term, schools built within walking distance of new communities would reduce school costs by minimizing the need for bus service. If new schools are required to serve infill development, it may be difficult to acquire suitable undeveloped property.

### Regional Vision Statement

*In the year 2020: 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.*

### School Facilities and Transportation Mission Statement

Enhance the educational opportunities of Pocatello's citizens.

### Our Goals

*Goal 1: Deliver our children safely to school.*

#### Chubbuck Vision Elements

1. Home is a place for children
2. Security

#### Issues Addressed

1. Parks and Paths
2. Children's needs
3. Community values concerning the needs of children

**Objective 1.1**

Improve the safety of Chubbuck's streets.

**Objective 1.2**

Create opportunities for children to walk safely to school.

**Policy:**

- a. Establish a system of paths, sidewalks, bike lanes and routes that permit safe access to city schools.
- b. Consider pedestrian access to nearest school during site plan review.
- c. Require sidewalks along both sides of public streets.

**Objective 1.3**

Coordinate residential development and school location with School District 25.

**Policy:**

- a. Continue to send copies of residential developments to school district 25 offices for review for input on bus routes and pedestrian routes to local schools.
- b. Encourage a school to be sited as part of the neighborhood center in the area identified as a new neighborhood in the Growth Management Plan.
- c. Discuss with School District 25, as possibilities, the following sites for school development:

**Elementary School**

1. Philbin Road between Siphon and Tyhee Road
2. Hiline Road between Siphon and Tyhee Roads

**Junior High School:**

1. SE Corner of Philbin and Siphon Roads

**High School:**

1. SE corner Yellowstone Ave/ Siphon Road
- d. Establish a process for communication and cooperation between city and school district officials.

NOTE: The locations of the schools make cooperation between the city and the school district on co-locating schools and parks more important.

***Goal 2: Support the maintenance and enhancement of the public educational system and place a strong emphasis on providing quality school facilities in conjunction with new development. Promote the concept of the neighborhood school as an ideal, with schools located and designed to function as focal points for family and community activity.***

**Objective 2.1**

Support efforts of the school district to ensure that adequate school sites are provided and that the intended capacity of schools is not exceeded.

**Policy:**

- a. Consider the impact on school enrollments and capacities when reviewing zone changes and land-use plan amendments.
- b. Require public and private cooperation to provide school sites as part of neighborhood refinement plans.
- c. Ensure that school sites include room for future expansion if needed.

**Objective 2.2**

Create schools that are safe and accessible to students with a minimal need for school-operated busing, and that are compatible with and complementary to their neighborhoods.

**Policy:**

- a. Prohibit development of schools on sites that present hazards, nuisances, or other limitations on the normal functions of schools.
- b. Locate elementary schools within residential neighborhoods. Elementary schools may be located on collectors, but not on arterial streets. Secondary schools may be located on collectors and arterials. High schools may be located on arterials.
- c. Work with schools and neighborhoods to explore options for access to elementary and secondary schools via local streets and/or pathways.
- d. Require the installation of sidewalks, crosswalks, special signage and other traffic control measures along routes to all schools. Require new developments near schools to provide these features as a condition of approval. Retrofit existing neighborhoods as funding becomes available or as land uses are redeveloped.
- e. Encourage the sharing of school and park sites whenever possible.
- f. Encourage high schools to reduce traffic impacts by developing alternative transportation for students, limiting student parking, and/or establishing closed campuses to reduce traffic impacts.
- g. Establish parking overlay districts around schools where parking capacity problems exist.
- h. Encourage the school district to continue to make schools available for civic functions when classes are not in session.

***Goal 3: Accommodate the maintenance and enhancement of private school opportunities for area students and residents.***

**Objective 3.1**

Approve requests for expansion of existing private schools and development of new private schools, contingent on compliance with zoning and land-use regulations.

**Policy**

- a. Ensure that the zoning ordinance and the comprehensive plan provide sufficient accommodation for the operation and expansion of private school opportunities.

