

Chapter 6: THE COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

Discussion:

The needs for governing landscaping and building design are the subject of the mandated analysis for community design. Chubbuck's size and growth rate are no longer those of a quiet, crossroads, bedroom community. Chubbuck's considerable vacant lands and older and smaller commercial buildings, ripe for redevelopment, hold potential for quality community design. Previously, Chubbuck has adopted Comprehensive Plan language that encouraged neo-traditional community planning and design concepts. More recently, new ideas and traditional community design and planning practices have been combined under the term "Smart Growth." "Smart Growth" management principles were used to develop growth scenarios during the *Our Valley, Our Vision* project. Some of these community design and planning principles are defined in the following section.

Downtown Chubbuck

The *Our Valley Our Vision* project establishes a regional framework to accommodate growth within the Portneuf River Valley until 2020. A part of this regional vision is to encourage infill and redevelopment in the City of Chubbuck along Yellowstone Avenue, creating a well-defined downtown commercial area and civic center. New storefront commercial development and downtown street improvements such as wide sidewalks, streetlights, benches, street trees, and building awnings will create an inviting environment for pedestrians. The downtown is intended to be a center for specialty retail, employment, and community life.

Neighborhood Design

In addition to downtown Chubbuck, the City should consist of numerous well-defined neighborhoods. Each neighborhood, whether it is an existing neighborhood that has undergone infill and redevelopment, or a new neighborhood planned on undeveloped land, should implement the following principles:

Each neighborhood should establish a well-connected hierarchy of streets. Street connectivity shortens pedestrian routes, and disperses traffic throughout the network of streets. Increased pedestrian traffic encourages casual meetings and builds community, and requires a viable pedestrian system of sidewalks and trails. Some streets should be designed for travel within the neighborhood, and others for through travel.

Each neighborhood should have a mini-park or neighborhood park. Mini-parks are usually only a few acres in size and may contain a playground, tot lot, or open grass play area. Neighborhood parks are larger (about 5 acres) and combine playgrounds, picnic areas, and playing courts or fields. Mini-parks are suitable for infill and redevelopment areas where space is limited. Neighborhood parks are suitable for newly developed areas and should be located near schools whenever possible.

Each neighborhood should include neighborhood commercial areas that serve the daily needs of local residents. Neighborhood commercial areas should be centrally located along major streets or intersections, within easy walking distance of all neighborhood residents. Optimal neighborhood size is based on a one-quarter mile radius; or the equivalent of a five-minute walk. Chubbuck must achieve higher residential densities to make neighborhood commercial areas economically viable.

Increased residential densities should result in a greater variety of housing types and an increase in the amount of affordable housing. Allowing mixed use and neighborhood commercial development reduces

a household's need for a second car and encourages the use of public transit. Pedestrian access to shopping, parks, jobs, and schools is particularly important for the young and elderly who cannot drive. Higher densities should be concentrated at neighborhood and community centers near strong, positive access to transit stops.

Public parks and buildings should be sited in prominent locations both within new communities and when existing neighborhoods are being redeveloped. They establish community identity and foster civic pride. Within each neighborhood a park of 7-15 acres, an elementary school, or a junior high school should serve as the community focus.

The model neighborhood planning and design concepts discussed above must be adapted to specific conditions of a site. The City should use neighborhood refinement plans to adapt and implement the model neighborhood planning and design concepts.

Neighborhood Refinement Plan

Refinement plans and overlay districts can be used to guide growth and implement specific design standards. In areas identified for new neighborhoods or infill and redevelopment on the Comprehensive Plan Map, neighborhood plans must be prepared prior to new development. The City also may use neighborhood refinement plans to coordinate development in other appropriate locations in the City. Neighborhood refinement plans are intended to serve as master plans for land development or redevelopment and may be applied to one parcel but usually are applied to multiple parcels.

Neighborhood refinement plans place an emphasis on the coordinated planning of streets and utilities that will serve multiple properties under different ownership. Once adopted, the neighborhood refinement plan defines permitted uses and specific development standards. Procedures for adoption and amendment of refinement plans are set forth in the neighborhood refinement plan section of the Development Code.

Neighborhood refinement plans must follow design guidelines that promote neighborhood livability and a pedestrian environment that is safe, convenient, and interesting. In addition, the design guidelines promote a mix of uses and an interconnected transportation system within new neighborhoods. In other areas, standards guiding infill and redevelopment, housing compatibility, and pedestrian improvements ensure that new development is compatible with existing development. These standards also encourage a mix of uses, allowing people to walk for their daily shopping needs, to work, to school, and to other civic and public places.

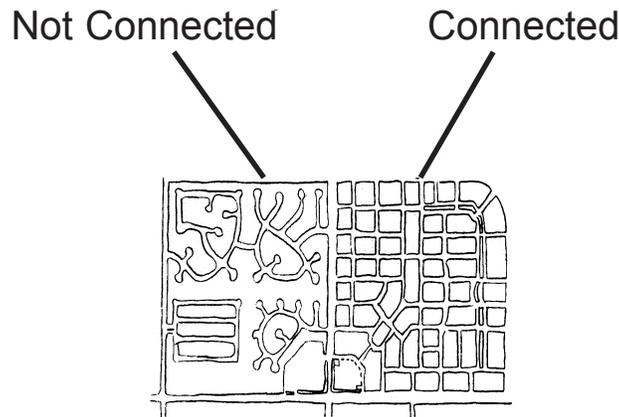
Relevant Vision Statement Component

In the year 2020: 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 has also contributed to the revitalization of older areas within the region.

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.

Our Goals:

Goal 1: Invest in the improved appearance of our city and stimulate improvements by the private sector.



Chubbuck Vision Elements

1. Pride in appearance
2. A place people call home with the emphasis on “place”
3. A clean city
4. Growth management

Issues addressed

1. Aesthetic

Objective 1.1

Improve compliance with codes on property appearance.

Policies:

- a. Adopt a revised Development Code implementing “smart” development concepts outlined in the *Our Valley Our Vision* Project.
- b. Define and adopt neighborhood refinement plans.

Objective 1.2

Contribute to the appearance of neighborhoods and communities through placement and design of public parks.

Policy:

- a. Establish park design standards and guidelines to enable the development of attractive, functional, low maintenance parks that generally serve as the focal points for neighborhoods and communities.
- b. Increase code enforcement efforts through training and re-emphasis of code enforcement efforts, expanding the current 1/2 time position as necessary.
- c. Plan for significant arrival features, signs, monuments, landscaping, or a combination of the three, to be placed at the intersections of Siphon Road and Yellowstone Avenue and Chubbuck Road and Yellowstone Avenue.

Objective 1.3

City Hall will model good design and proper maintenance.

Policy:

- a. Include generous landscaping and well-designed buildings in government building plans.

Objective 1.4

Coordinate private improvements with public investments.

Policy:

- a. City-sponsored clean-up days, with private sector co-sponsors.
- b. Increase code enforcement efforts through training. Increase code enforcement as necessary.
- c. Work with the Southeast Idaho Council of Governments to apply for Community Development Block Grants and other funds. Expend portions of these funds on public infrastructure and other improvements with guarantees from local property owners for improvements to their properties.
- d. Apply for Transportation Efficiency Act enhancement and congestion mitigation and air quality funds for state and federal highways to improve the appearance of Yellowstone Avenue and Interstate exchange and create a bicycle/pedestrian path system linked to the transit system.

Goal 2: Encourage new development that is compatible with existing buildings and neighborhoods, and promote and preserve the quality of residential neighborhoods.

Objective 2.1

Use design guidelines, standards, and incentives to ensure that new infill and redevelopment are compatible with established development.

Policy:

- a. Bulk and height of the new residential infill and redevelopment projects shall be similar in scale to surrounding residential development.
- b. Awards for well-designed and/or landscaped homes and businesses, and, in the future, neighborhoods.
- c. Encourage the development of well-landscaped parking lots and buffer strips on major corridors.
- d. Encourage the development of plazas and courtyards by commercial development that encourage public gathering, particularly in the neighborhood and community centers.

Objective 2.2

Encourage infill and redevelopment to be pedestrian-oriented.

Policy:

- a. New infill and redevelopment housing shall be designed so that:
- b. Garages or carports are set back farther from the street than the front of the dwelling, and
- c. Usable front porches or balconies are provided and are oriented to the street.
- d. Create a corridor plan for Yellowstone Avenue with special emphasis and depth at the Chubbuck Road intersection. The corridor plan should emphasize a heavily landscaped, suburban feel with a minimum 15 feet of planting strip separating pedestrians from vehicular traffic.
- e. Coordinate parking space standards and parking lot designs with pedestrian, bicycle and transit systems.

Strategy:

- a. Use infill, redevelopment, and housing compatibility design standards.

Goal 3: In new neighborhoods, provide a better mix of residential and commercial land uses and a more walkable community.

Objective 3.1

Create new pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods within areas identified as New Neighborhoods on the Growth Management Plan Map. **(See Land Use, Chapter 4.)**

Policy:

- a. Establish Neighborhood Plan Districts to guide new development within the areas identified as New Neighborhoods on the Growth Management Plan Map.

Strategy:

- a. Develop and use neighborhood refinement plans for new neighborhoods within neighborhood-refinement-plan overlay areas.

Objective 3.2

Use neighborhood design principles for new development within Neighborhood Plan Districts, as defined on the Growth Management Plan Map.

Policy:

- a. New neighborhoods shall be designed to meet the following design principles:
 - i. Connect streets with other streets to provide a network.
 - ii. Use distinct edges or boundaries to define the neighborhood.
 - iii. Include sidewalks that are safe, convenient, and interesting.
 - iv. Incorporate parks and institutions into neighborhoods.
 - v. Provide a mix of housing choices and types.
 - vi. Design neighborhoods to accommodate bus transit.
 - vii. Require buildings, whether residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional, to be compatible in terms of scale and design.
- b. Assure that future development results in the establishment of recognizable neighborhoods, communities, and districts.

Strategy:

- a. Use new neighborhood design standards.