
Chubbuck Idaho: Gateways to Growth

A ULI-Idaho Technical Assistance
Report

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Introduction

Located in the southern part of Idaho within the Portneuf River Valley, the city of Chubbuck is home to approximately 16,000 residents. Because of its location, including proximity to its larger neighbor Pocatello and Idaho State University, Chubbuck offers its residents access to incredible natural and cultural resources as well as other amenities found in larger cities, while maintaining small-town character. It also benefits from easy access to I-15 and I-86 which connect it to Salt Lake City to the south, Boise to the west, and Idaho Falls and Yellowstone National Park to the north. A young city, which was incorporated in 1979, Chubbuck has experienced strong growth over the past decade. As Chubbuck continues to grow, however, it is recognizing the importance of establishing its own identity.

Demographics

Chubbuck's estimated population in 2023 was 16,632, a 17.5% increase over its 2010 population. This is especially impressive when considering Pocatello's growth during the same period was 7%. This growth propelled it to ranking as the 18th largest city in Idaho per the 2020 census, although the growth rate overall was slightly lower than other cities in Idaho. Median household income is \$69,992 and 8.2% of residents are below the poverty level. The

demographic makeup of Chubbuck's population is similar to the state of Idaho, with 85.4% of its residents identifying as white, 0.3% as Black or African American, 1.4% American Indian and Alaska Native, 1.7% Asian, 0.7% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 12.2% Hispanic or Latino. 29.5% of residents are under 18 years old and 14.1% are over the age of 65.

Study Area in Context

As Chubbuck has grown, so has its interest and effort in establishing an identity as more than a suburb or bedroom community of Pocatello. This interest is manifest in the efforts to create a downtown area. Because of Chubbuck's young history, it does not have a traditional downtown area common to many communities across the country. To achieve this goal, the city has identified a 114-acre area north of the I-86/Yellowstone Avenue interchange it believes is well positioned to develop into a city center. The area has been platted and identified as Chubbuck Village. The area is bounded on the south by I-86, Yellowstone Avenue on the west, a rail line on the east and by Chubbuck road on the north. The following sections will describe the context of the area.

Street Network

Chubbuck Village is adjacent to a high-volume traffic area. As noted above and as

shown on Map 1, it sits just north of the I-86/Yellowstone Avenue interchange. The interchange to the south was recently rebuilt by ITD with a diverging diamond interchange (DVI), which has been nicknamed by local residents as “the diamond of death.” Despite the unfamiliar travel pattern, the interchange directs traffic to Yellowstone Avenue, which is a major, state-controlled arterial roadway running north and south between Chubbuck and Pocatello. Yellowstone Ave is a vital part of the street network in this area and carries nearly 30,000 average daily trips. The area around the interchange has been the commercial and retail epicenter for both Chubbuck and Pocatello for decades. It also connects further north to New Day Parkway, a new roadway constructed in 2022, which travels east to connect with I-15.

The street pattern within Chubbuck Village is a modified grid of several blocks. The only other north/south road that traverses the entire area is Burley Drive, which functions as a collector connecting to Chubbuck Road. There are two east west streets within the area which function as local roads.

Land Use

The Chubbuck Village area has experienced somewhat sporadic development, with several undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels still remaining as opportunities for

change. The main development in the area is the Idaho Central Credit Union corporate office campus on the south side of the study area. Several auto-oriented businesses including fast food restaurants and fuel stations front Yellowstone Avenue. On the east there are storage units and a landscape company.

To the south of the I-86 interchange is the Pine Ridge Mall, the beating heart of retail in the region. The Mall has attracted new investment and attracts shoppers from throughout the region.

The interior of Chubbuck Village is mainly a mix of residential and commercial uses with several vacant parcels, but also includes the newly constructed Chubbuck City Hall, which is an anchor to the area. The relative locations of the two interchanges and Yellowstone Avenue create a triangular area that includes Chubbuck’s existing commercial corridor, the envisioned Chubbuck Village area, existing neighborhoods and vacant developable land.

Chubbuck Village

As noted above, the city has made efforts to create a downtown environment. A public engagement process began several years ago to inform a plan for the area. This effort led to an addition to the comprehensive plan and the adoption of a form-based

zoning code in 2022. The Chubbuck Development Authority (CDA) is also an active participant in the implementation of the vision through acquisition of properties, which have been offered for development through an RFP process. Pending the results of the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) report, the CDA is also considering the creation of a new urban renewal district for the area which would assist in financing important upgrades to the streetscape and sidewalks to create a more pedestrian-oriented atmosphere.

Panel Assignment

The City of Chubbuck and the CDA, as the project sponsors, asked ULI Idaho to assemble a TAP to review the Chubbuck Village area and make recommendations on how to implement the plan to create a downtown. Specifically, the panel was asked to address the following:

- **Review the current downtown ordinance.**
 - As this area looks to support economic growth and encourage development and redevelopment in this area, identify what, if any, potential impediments exist within the ordinance?
 - What specific elements are impacting short-term and long-term development?
 - What are some best practice-rooted solutions or alternatives that could be considered for this area?
- **Consider the identified boundary for corridor redevelopment (downtown and Yellowstone Avenue corridors).** Does this area:
 - Meet the needs of appropriate size and scale to foster the facilitation of a downtown core and successful redevelopment corridor?
 - Are there land areas or nearby parcels that should be included? What should the boundaries for the impact area be?
- **What is the best path forward for improving and enhancing the existing streetscapes/pedestrian facilities in this proposed area?**
- **With a corridor redevelopment in mind, what are the identified needs and desired amenities facing the downtown area?**
- **Given the current resources available (URD, LID, BID, CID) what recommendations can be made to apply those resources to encourage the desired growth?**
 - Are there successful resources or examples to consider that the city may not be aware of?
- **How does Chubbuck attract development and business to the city with this new plan?**

Defining the Area

Introduction

The study area initially submitted by the sponsors is approximately 114\ acres of land bounded by Yellowstone Avenue on the west, Chubbuck Road on the north, the railroad line to the east, and I-86 to the south as shown on **Map X**. As can be seen on the map, most of the land has already been developed with a mix of commercial, office, civic, and residential uses. There are, however, pockets of land which provide opportunities for redevelopment as well as new development opportunities on lands owned by the CDA. One of the tasks for the panel was to consider whether this boundary is adequate for development of a downtown core and civic center or whether other areas should be included.

Challenges to Development

Although the study area is adjacent to an exit from I-86 and a major arterial with heavy traffic, it faces several challenges to its potential to develop. First, the developable areas, as well as the new city hall, are tucked behind existing development along Yellowstone Avenue and the Idaho Central Credit Union (ICCU) campus along I-86. This, along with the lack of any identifying signage or obvious landmark indicating that an individual has entered Chubbuck means there is no sense of arrival to the study area and community.

Visitors do not gain a sense of Chubbuck upon arrival.

A second, related challenge to the area is the lack of access. Despite being adjacent to an interstate exit and major arterial, it is difficult to access the Chubbuck Village area. A common theme amongst interviewees was the difficulty of navigating the DVI for many residents. Although it may be a dream for transportation engineers trying to efficiently move high volumes of traffic, local drivers see it as dangerous and confusing and try to avoid it. This aversion to crossing the interchange becomes problematic for attracting visitors and shoppers from the south side of I-86, however, as it is the only direct access to Chubbuck Village from Pocatello.

A third challenge is the lack of immediately developable areas. As noted above, there are two sites controlled by the CDA that can be developed through an RFP process. One of the sites has already been awarded for a project. But these sites combined represent only 8% of the study area and likely don't provide sufficient space or future tax revenue on their own to create and fund a dynamic, mixed-use area consistent with traditional downtown development.

Finally, while each of the above concerns can translate into projects that will be discussed in more detail in other sections of the report, they combine to create an additional challenge: creating human

interest in the site. If a site is difficult to see, difficult to access, and difficult to find reasons to visit, it is an out-of-sight-out-of-mind area. One of the challenges to developing a downtown area will be not only to create a sense of place, but also to activate it with uses and activities that draw the community in. It will also be a challenge to find funding to make the necessary improvements and investments to achieve these goals.

Opportunities for Change

Although long-term activation through development will take time and strategic investment, the City of Chubbuck has already provided the foundation for a more active space. The new city hall in the core of Chubbuck Village offers two important building blocks. First, the facility is an important monument in establishing an identity for the city in general and the desired downtown specifically. It is an easily recognizable and marketable destination for events and activities in the future. Second is the excess parking and green space constructed around city hall, including the on-street parking. This not only provides ample space for events such as a farmer's market, fall festival, and more, it can also be used to attract future businesses. By providing at least some of the required parking for a new business, this investment reduces the cost of entry for a new business. It can also promote a

higher density of development through parking consolidation.

The ICCU headquarters also represents an important opportunity for future growth. The campus may not provide public access or land for development, but it does bring a high volume of people to Chubbuck Village every weekday. This population has daily needs such as coffee, food, exercise, dry cleaning, and other services. Further, with strategic programming, these employees represent an on-site audience for events that may be programmed around city hall. Chubbuck should work to understand the needs of ICCU and its employees as it considers business and activity development. It should also work with ICCU to determine what ways the campus could be better connected to the greater area, reducing the perception of isolation and increasing the probability that employees will leave the campus and explore the Village.

Although Yellowstone Avenue does present challenges, it is also an opportunity. The current average daily traffic (ADT) counts are approximately 28,000 which is important to national retailers. It is also a building block for creating better signage, wayfinding and branding for the area. Yellowstone Avenue is also important for the area because of its connection to New Day Parkway. New Day is the primary connection to the I-15 interchange and the future development anticipated as part of

the Northgate development. The city has already invested in a high-amenity road profile with significant landscaping and bicycle/pedestrian pathways. This connection to both freeways is an opportunity not only to connect Chubbuck Village with the rest of the city and the east side of Pocatello, but also with other cities in the region located along these corridors.

The vacant sites in the Chubbuck Village area have already been noted in the challenges section as they relate to the overall area. However, they are still opportunities which should be leveraged. Having these sites under the control of the CDA provides a unique opportunity not only to shape the form and use of future development, but also to do so in a way that lowers the initial cost of entry through utilization of urban renewal tools.

An additional opportunity is the economic strength and potential brought to the area by the Pine Ridge Mall and surrounding area. Although not within the study area, it represents the beating heart of retail for the area. While it will be difficult for Chubbuck Village to compete with the mall for similar retail opportunities and vendors, the study area can capitalize on opportunities for supporting business and service opportunities, including hospitality and even residential.

Finally, one of the important opportunities for Chubbuck Village is to regain

momentum on the downtown plan through community engagement and plan refinement. Certainly, this TAP Report is an important step towards that goal, but it also revealed through the interviews that community members were unaware that there is a plan, or they remembered engaging early on but never saw the results. Re-engaging with the community will help build support for future actions and give residents a better sense of ownership.

An Expanded Boundary

The challenges and opportunities discussed above suggest the study area should be expanded. The only realistic way to expand the study area is to the west across Yellowstone Avenue. To the south ICCU and I-86 present barriers. To the east is the railroad and existing development and to the north most of the land is already developed. The area to the west, however, includes over 40 acres of undeveloped land as well as opportunities for redevelopment.

Map X shows a recommended expansion to the study area. It maintains the same northern and southern boundaries but extends as far as Hawthorne Road to the west. This expansion greatly expands the opportunities for development and redevelopment. This is important to consider not only just from a spatial perspective, but in terms of using economic development tools available in Idaho.

One of the main economic development tools Chubbuck and the CDA have considered is Idaho's urban renewal program. This has proven to be effective statewide both for promoting development in new areas as well as redeveloping older, challenging sites. The tool's real strength, however, depends on the ability of projects within an urban renewal district to increase the taxable value and thereby generate revenues to be used for tax increment financing (TIF). In an area like Chubbuck Village where so much of the land has already been developed but that also needs significant investment in infrastructure, it may be difficult to raise sufficient funds through TIF to support the necessary projects. An expanded area with greater development opportunities has greater potential to provide the necessary TIF revenue stream.

Relatedly, an expanded boundary includes both sides of the Yellowstone Avenue right-of-way (ROW) as well as the businesses on either side. As will be discussed in greater detail in other sections, aesthetic and functional improvements to Yellowstone Avenue will be a critical component of branding, creating a sense of place, and improving connectivity. It would be challenging to tackle these projects on only one side of the road and perhaps impossible to be successful in support for them without engaging business and property owners on both sides of the road.

Gateways to Growth

The City of Chubbuck is uniquely positioned with direct access to two interstate highways: I-15 (north/south) and I-86 (east/west). Chubbuck Village is immediately north of the I-86 interchange and accessed via Yellowstone Avenue. Its connection to I-15 is indirect, but still convenient as Yellowstone Avenue connects with New Day Parkway, which then connects with the interchange. These connections can be leveraged as the city works to develop a downtown center, but it must be done strategically, with the right vision in mind.

Land Uses

One of the market realities that Chubbuck Village faces is that it is not large enough to support large-scale retailers or development. Although such uses are usually located close to an interchange like I-86 and Yellowstone Avenue, that scale of development is not likely to be located in the village area. Rather, it will probably gravitate to the established retail center around the Pine Ridge Mall and Wal-Mart. It is important to consider the uses that fit within the Chubbuck Village context and probable market.

One of the immediate land use categories that fits within the Chubbuck Village context and vision are civic uses. Along with the new city hall, a library, public plaza,

entertainment venues and other gathering spaces for events fit well with the area and would represent unique offerings within Chubbuck. These would also drive increased traffic which could potentially support small-scale retail. Additionally, residential uses near public spaces such as parks and plazas will be in demand for certain demographics.

Infrastructure

To support civic use growth and creating an environment conducive to public gatherings with high pedestrian traffic, there are significant investments in infrastructure required. This includes both utility corridors and high-amenity streetscapes. One of the main barriers to creating these changes is that much of the land has already been developed and there are no mechanisms to compel existing land and business owners to improve the streetscapes adjacent to their properties. This could be overcome in two ways.

First, the city should develop an infrastructure master plan for the area. This should include the utility network, sized to support the growth the city wants to see, as well as the above ground streets and sidewalks. This may include a revision to the city's approved typical sections, recognizing this is intended to be a unique area within the city which requires tree-lined streets, wider sidewalks, on-street parking and other pedestrian oriented amenities to

create the urban form reminiscent of a traditional downtown. Indian Creek in Caldwell, Idaho, is a good example of a civic center in a downtown context.

Insert photo for reference of Indian Creek

Once the infrastructure master plan is completed, the city will need to explore ways to build out the infrastructure itself, rather than relying on developers. Although the cost to do this will be high and may take several years to accomplish, it will still be a quicker path to success than waiting for redevelopment to occur. The city should explore using TIF through an urban renewal district, Limited Improvement Districts (LID), supplemental levies, grants and, for small projects, the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID).

One of the keys to making this effort successful is to plan out the potential projects. Many programs, especially for grants and LIDs, require that specific projects already be identified, at least partially designed, and have a cost estimate. Putting in this level of work will improve the chances of successful grant applications. It will also be necessary to accurately evaluate which available tools are most feasible to cover anticipated costs.

In evaluating the known infrastructure needs, improvements to Yellowstone Avenue will be critical. They will also likely be the most expensive. This is a major

reason the panel recommends consideration of a new urban renewal district that covers the expanded study area boundary as well as the Yellowstone Avenue corridor to its connection with New Day Parkway. A successful district could provide a significant portion of the funds required to improve Yellowstone Avenue with the amenities recommended in the *Barriers to Access* section of this report.

Lifestyle Center vs. Civic Village

One of the examples the sponsors used in describing their vision was The Village at Meridian. This style of development, however, rather than a downtown center, might be more accurately described as a lifestyle center. Lifestyle centers have similar elements to a downtown with a mix of uses, pedestrian orientation, and open-air shopping layout. However, they also typically include multiple large-scale national retailers, entertainment venues such as multi-plex theaters, and significant parking on the periphery. Chubbuck Village, even with an expansion to the west, is likely not large enough to accommodate a lifestyle center. In addition, it is too close to the Pine Ridge Mall to realistically compete for the national retailers required for that type of development.

This is not to suggest that Chubbuck cannot support a lifestyle center. But the location most likely to attract this type of development is at the I-15/New Day

Parkway interchange as part of the Northgate development. There is more available land to plan and work with, better visibility, and better separation from the current retail center around the Pine Ridge Mall.

Due to size and market constraints, as noted earlier Chubbuck Village is better suited for the development of a civic village. A civic village may include small, boutique-scale retail, but focuses on social gathering opportunities. This makes it ideal for being near residential and high-traffic areas. Chubbuck Village can realistically provide the civic spaces, entertainment and gathering venues as well as residential near a high traffic area but is also just separated enough from the main roadways that, designed correctly, it wouldn't feel like it was next to a high-speed, noisy arterial. These elements make it ideal for the development of a civic village.

Overcoming Barriers to Access

To create a downtown center, the Chubbuck Village area is at a disadvantage in terms of its connectivity and infrastructure. Unlike traditional downtowns that developed organically as part of a city's foundation and often without the automobile in mind, the rest of the city has developed around the study area, which is now located in an auto-centric area with fragmented connectivity to the rest of the community. The railroad and safety barriers along Yellowstone Avenue hinder the ability to transform the area into a well-connected, pedestrian-oriented town center. These infrastructure challenges must be addressed for Chubbuck Village to realize its full development potential. Improvements should align with the Bannock Transportation Planning Organization (BTPO) Bike and Pedestrian Plan to create a more connected and accessible community.

Existing Conditions

A major challenge in Chubbuck is roads and pathways which are not well-connected, making it difficult for residents to travel efficiently. This network also poses safety risks, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. The comprehensive plan should be updated to address these issues by proposing solutions that enhance connectivity and safety. This includes the development of bike lanes, pedestrian

pathways, and improved street designs that facilitate smoother and safer travel.

While the Chubbuck Village Area boasts new sidewalks and has traffic volumes that are low enough for most individuals to feel comfortable riding a bike, the connectivity from other areas of Chubbuck limits its use. The railroad further complicates connectivity by creating barriers to east-west movement, and existing businesses limit future development opportunity to update road infrastructure as noted in the *Gateways to Growth* section of this report.

Yellowstone Avenue presents significant challenges for east-west and north-south bicycle/pedestrian connectivity within Chubbuck by not supporting efficient movement. One pressing need is for a parallel route that accommodates both bicycle and pedestrian access, providing a thoroughfare that enhances connectivity. Improving crossings across Yellowstone Avenue is also essential to ensure safe and convenient passage for pedestrians and cyclists. Currently, the area is uninviting for pedestrians, lacking adequate wayfinding and amenities that encourage walking.

Outside of the study area, Chubbuck has made investments in bicycle and pedestrian facilities along New Day Parkway. Existing bike lanes are also found along parts of Chubbuck, Hawthorne, and Knudsen which provide key connectivity opportunities into the study area's future expansion and will

be needed to ensure their safety for all road users.

The **BTPO** Bike and Pedestrian Plan provides a framework for achieving these goals. It emphasizes the importance of creating a network of bike lanes and pedestrian pathways that connect key areas within Chubbuck Village. This network should be designed to accommodate all users, including those with disabilities. By implementing this plan, Chubbuck can create a more inclusive and accessible community that supports the needs of all its residents.

Community Recommended Improvements

During the panel's stakeholder interviews, connectivity emerged as a major theme. Residents expressed a strong desire to link various parts of the community through bike lanes, pathways, and improved street design. One of the key proposals was to transform Yellowstone Avenue into a boulevard, which would enhance its appeal, create a positive first impression to visitors, and improve connectivity within the village. This idea aligns with the community's vision of creating a more connected and accessible environment. Another major theme that emerged from the discussions was the desire for plazas, open spaces, and facilities that encourage walking and biking. This fits well with the panel recommendation to consider focusing on

development of civic gathering places in the study area.

Several challenges were identified during the discussions, including funding constraints, permitting issues, and the need for collaboration between Chubbuck and Pocatello. Collaboration between Chubbuck and Pocatello was identified as a critical factor in achieving the community's vision. Residents believe that by working together, the two cities can develop a unified vision that supports the needs of both communities, while maintaining their own unique and separate identities.

Yellowstone Avenue

Transforming Yellowstone Avenue into a partial boulevard through landscaped medians and pedestrian crossings offers a solution to several of the challenges identified by the panel, while aligning with FY25-FY31 Idaho Transportation Investment Program (ITIP) priority in limiting left turns along portions of Yellowstone Avenue. Adding landscaped medians can beautify the corridor, creating a more welcoming and attractive entrance through landscaping, public art, and branded signage. In addition, it greatly contributes to creating a sense of place and a memorable arrival moment to the Chubbuck Village area.

The safety benefits of landscaped medians are also significant. Limiting left turns and

providing pedestrian crossings, pedestrian refuges, and landscaping in medians can reduce the risk of accidents and create a safer environment for all users while maintaining its existing ROW footprint.

The process of transforming Yellowstone Avenue into a boulevard would require careful planning and significant investment. It is essential to engage not only the BTPO and community and business members, but also ITD's District 5 leadership to collaborate on a final design which meets their needs and preferences.

[insert yellowstone streetmix design]

The Chubbuck Bike Way

One of the key recommendations for improving connectivity in Chubbuck is the creation of a dedicated bike route. This route would utilize existing infrastructure and neighborhood streets to connect Chubbuck Village with essential destinations such as schools, the library, parks, grocery stores, and the Bannock County Event Center. By leveraging existing infrastructure, the bike route can be implemented quickly and cost-effectively. There is also an opportunity to improve infrastructure along the way, adding features such as wayfinding signs, bike repair stations, route navigation aids, and bike racks.

The proposed bike route would help mitigate the lack of connectivity in Chubbuck and support future canal pathways. It also aligns with the community's vision of creating a more connected and accessible Village, promoting active transportation and healthier lifestyles. The bike route can be implemented in phases, starting with short-term improvements such as wayfinding signs. Long-term improvements might include the development of separated pathways, updating ordinances to support 5-foot bike lanes, and the installation of speed humps to enhance safety along neighborhood streets that provide safe connections. Below are five key sections to a bike way that will connect Chubbuck Village with the rest of the community:

[insert bikeway draft photo]

1. Chubbuck Rd = Extending Bike Lane, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at key intersections
2. Burley and Evans = 25 MPH limit, sharrow & wayfinding signage, speed humps
3. Knudsen = Update bike lane to 5 ft throughout, wayfinding signage
4. Hawthorne = 5ft bike lane or multi-use path
5. Whitaker = 25 MPH limit, sharrow & wayfinding signage, speed humps

Resources

As noted in the *Defining the Area* section, funding constraints can be a significant barrier to implementing many of the proposed solutions. But strategic partnerships with government agencies and community members can assist in securing funding.

Key federal options include Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants, which support significant local transportation projects, and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grants, which fund community-based projects like pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Additionally, the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) offers Child Pedestrian Safety Grants aimed at enhancing safety for young pedestrians.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) also provide essential funding for community development projects, including those for non-motorized transportation. The Local Highway Safety Improvement Program (LHSIP) targets projects that reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries, encompassing pedestrian and bicycle safety. The Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program from the USDA supports the development of essential community facilities, including those for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Credit Assistance Program offers

financial support for infrastructure projects, including pedestrian and bicycle networks. These diverse funding sources collectively enhance Idaho's ability to develop and maintain safe, accessible, and sustainable bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Identifying key community partnerships is also crucial to support these initiatives. Organizations such as the Idaho Walk Bike Alliance (IWBA) and Safe Routes to School can provide valuable resources and support for projects like hosting a walk-to-school day. Opportunities to partner with other community partners such as Boys and Girls Club, Pocatello Regional Transit, Portneuf Health Trust, can assist in smaller grant opportunities for improvements such as bike repair stations, bike racks, and additional wayfinding projects.

Identity and Branding

As has been noted in nearly every section of this report Chubbuck suffers from a lack of identity. This is especially true at the important entrances to the city, which includes the primary entrance to the envisioned Chubbuck Village. Neither the I-86 or I-15 interchanges provide any indication that a traveler has arrived in Chubbuck. Also, when it comes to Chubbuck Village, there is no established arrival moment or sense of place. These issues can be addressed through an intentional and aggressive branding effort.

Welcome Signs

One recommended place to start is welcoming residents to the City of Chubbuck through signage. The panel learned there used to be such signage at the I-86 interchange, but ITD required it's removal. Chubbuck should reengage with ITD to find an acceptable solution. This may be a monument sign similar to what existed previously or it could be a smaller profile similar to the **Vista Avenue sign shown** below. In addition, light pole-mounted signs can be an effective, low-cost method of branding the city overall. For unique areas such as Chubbuck Village, the signs could be modified to help identify the area.

Yellowstone Avenue

Yellowstone Avenue is the connective tissue that brings together the older core of

Chubbuck with future new developments including the Northgate project. It functions as the main street of the town. It also represents a key opportunity to brand Chubbuck Village by creating an arrival moment and sense of place.

Other sections of this report have recommended infrastructure such as bike lanes or wider sidewalks along the entire ROW. These are important projects and should be pursued. But it is also important to consider how the street can be used to identify Chubbuck Village as the city's core.

One method to create this effect is to increase the landscaping. This could include trees along the sides of the ROW and/or trees in a raised median. As noted in the *Barriers to Access* section, a landscaped median doubles as a safety feature as well as an aesthetic improvement. Ideally, this street profile would extend between the I-86 interchange and the intersection of Yellowstone Avenue and New Day Parkway. However, if this isn't feasible, Chubbuck should at least pursue this improvement between the interchange to the Chubbuck Road intersection.

Both along Yellowstone Avenue as well as the other streets within the study area, additional identifying features that would bring an identity to the area include unique streetlight standards such as historic lamp post styles and bulb-outs at intersections.

These improvements will help identify Yellowstone Avenue as the main street of Chubbuck. There are several examples in other Idaho communities where state highways function as main streets. These include Idaho Falls, Ketchum, Hailey, McCall, Ashton, and even Boise's Broadway Ave. Several of these examples are included in the photos below.

Branding

Because Chubbuck Village is essentially hidden from view to travelers, effective branding and wayfinding is critical to drawing visitors to the area. An important starting point is to develop a brand or logo that can be used on light pole banners, signs, promotional materials, and websites.

Wayfinding is a second key to driving visitors to the village. As more anchor uses such as city hall develop, signs which include the logo should direct motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians to these locations within the Village. Currently there is nothing that notifies a traveler that the city hall building is nearby.

(INSERT DESTINATION CALDWELL LOGO AND EXAMPLE OF WAYFINDING SIGNAGE)

Placemaking

Placemaking is the development of an area that is meant for the public to gather, carries an identity, is well connected, and provides a variety of uses and activities. There are several resources for best practices in creating great places including ULI's 10 Principles for Creative Placemaking¹, and the Project for Public Spaces. For this report, ULI's 10 principles recommends 10 best practices Chubbuck Village has numerous opportunities to create a sense of place and establish itself as the core of Chubbuck.

While there are many potential solutions, one of the most important steps in effective placemaking is robust community engagement. This effort to involve the community gives the city leaders a vision of what place the residents want to create. Jumping to solutions without community support and buy-in not only may miss the mark of creating what residents want to see, but also deteriorates the relationship of trust that needs to exist in order to be successful. Chubbuck needs to re-engage not only with land and business owners within the study area, but with the entire community.

An example of how engagement can lead to a shared vision comes from the panel's interviews with stakeholders. The panel

¹ "10 Best Practices for Creative Placemaking," Urban Land, April 26, 2017,

<https://urbanland.uli.org/planning-design/10-best-practices-creative-placemaking>.

heard from businesses interested in more sponsorship opportunities. These could be in the form of hanging flower baskets in the area, sponsorship of specific events, or inclusion on branding banners. The panel also heard consistent comments about wanting safe, pedestrian friendly areas to visit and bring kids.

While community engagement is vital, it may also help to provide ideas to spark creativity and support. Placemaking opportunities to consider include a public plaza with consistent programming, flower planters, food truck rallies, seasonal festivals, a concert series, and art shows. In short, provide reasons for the community to come to Chubbuck Village and engage with the area. Art is another opportunity to create a sense of place and engage with the area. Ideas include art wraps around traffic control boxes, creative benches, murals on buildings, “pet” walls, and window art.

Resources

Programming, art installations, on-going engagement, managing sponsorships, and other important placemaking activities require resources. The CDA and urban renewal program are important resources for providing funds but are not structured to manage the day-to-day requirements of building place. One recommendation is to consider the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID). A BID provides a consistent revenue stream specifically

dedicated to the area through a self-imposed tax on the property owners.

Although an effective tool, BIDs have to be created thoughtfully and with community support. Before pursuing a BID, Chubbuck should specifically identify what it wants to accomplish through a BID, including whether it should support its own staff, and what projects and events it should fund and then carefully evaluate what property tax levy would be necessary to support these efforts. Without a specific, well-developed plan, it will be difficult to convince property owners to sign-off on the additional tax. However, with the right approach a BID can be a successful resource for bringing these same property owners together to support a common vision.

In addition to a BID, Chubbuck should also explore the Idaho Main Street program and the National Downtown Organization for ideas and funding opportunities. The Main Street program in particular is meant for smaller communities and recommends a more standardized approach to downtown development.

Next Steps and Wrap Up

For the City of Chubbuck to successfully develop a downtown core and strengthen its identity, several key steps must be taken to build momentum, attract investment, and engage the community. These next steps are outlined below and summarized at the end of this section:

Establish a Stronger City Identity

Chubbuck needs to carve out a distinctive identity that separates it from nearby communities, especially Pocatello, and reflects its unique character and potential. A vibrant downtown core would serve as the heart of this identity, providing a focal point for residents and visitors alike. Developing a brand identity that highlights the city's welcoming nature and commitment to growth will be essential. This branding should extend to key physical spaces, including gateways into the city, ensuring that visitors know when they've entered Chubbuck and can immediately feel its distinct charm.

Densify and Activate Underutilized Spaces

A major opportunity for downtown development lies in cleaning up and activating underutilized spaces. Identifying areas that can support increased density is critical to establishing a thriving downtown. Mixed-use development that includes residential, commercial at the appropriate scale, and recreational spaces will create a

vibrant, walkable community center. By focusing on key locations where higher-density development is appropriate, the city can efficiently concentrate resources and build a more lively and economically productive downtown.

Beautify City Gateways

Improving the physical appearance of the city's gateways is another essential step. These entry points are the first impression visitors receive when entering Chubbuck and beautifying them will enhance the city's overall image. Well-designed, aesthetically appealing gateways will not only attract new development but also foster a sense of place and pride among residents.

Identify and Enhance Key Access Points

To make downtown accessible and inviting, it is important to identify the best locations to receive and welcome people. Improving transportation routes, signage, and infrastructure will help visitors and residents easily navigate to and from Chubbuck Village. These access points will serve as the lifeblood of the area, ensuring that people can seamlessly connect with the core.

Regular Programming and Events

Activating the downtown area through consistent programming is crucial to fostering a sense of community and drawing people into the space. Hosting

regular events—such as farmers’ markets, concerts, festivals, and holiday celebrations—will help bring energy and foot traffic downtown. This consistent engagement will build a cultural and social hub that draws repeat visits and stimulates local businesses.

Incentives for Development and Funding Improvements

To encourage private investment and development in the downtown core, Chubbuck may need to offer incentives that make it attractive for developers and businesses. This could include tax incentives, grants, or public-private partnerships. The city must also explore sustainable ways to finance improvements such as infrastructure enhancements and beautification projects. Securing funding is essential to driving the necessary changes and ensuring long-term success. Funding sources to explore include tax increment financing through urban renewal, limited improvement districts, and grants.

The Importance of a Stronger Identity and Downtown’s Role

Establishing a defined downtown core plays a pivotal role in helping Chubbuck craft a stronger identity. Currently, Chubbuck is seen by many as a suburb without a clear center or unique character, often overshadowed by its proximity to Pocatello. A successful downtown would change this

perception, providing Chubbuck with a true "heart" that fosters community interaction, commerce, and cultural events.

A strong downtown is crucial for economic development. It will attract businesses, residents, and visitors, creating a ripple effect of growth throughout the city. Moreover, it will provide a gathering place for the community, where civic pride and local culture can flourish. A well-defined, vibrant downtown will help Chubbuck stand out in the region and project itself as a thriving, independent city with its own identity and appeal.

By focusing on these next steps, Chubbuck can overcome its challenges and build a downtown core that reflects its growth potential, enhances community life, and positions the city for future success. A summary of these recommendations is found on the next page.

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

MONDAY MORNING	2 MONTHS	1-5 YEARS	6 YEARS +
Resolve the assessed value issue to facilitate creation of the Chubbuck Village Center URA	Create redevelopment area (Village, West Village, and Yellowstone Ave.)	Implementation of redevelopment	Yellowstone Boulevard improvements
Identify and start mapping the wayfinding route	Identify development partners for the construction of a convention hotel in the village west area	Plan, design and implement expanded community event space	Complete revised grid and street improvements in Village and West Village
Create public engagement strategy to hone vision and plan	Begin the community branding process	Implement community branding and wayfinding	Bury power lines
Review existing zoning codes for Northgate area to ensure desired development type	Create a wayfinding strategy	Hire staff to implement, program, and maintain improvements	

Chubbuck Report Panelists



CHRISTINE C. RICHMAN
ECONOMIC PLANNING / PRINCIPAL
AICP

CHUBBUCK, IDAHO PANEL CHAIR

Christine Richman is the Director of Planning and Economic Development and Principal in Charge of Planning GSBS Consulting. GSBS use an integrated approach to their projects to ensure they are environmentally and economically sustainable. GSBS Richman services complement and expand on traditional architectural services with the addition of key planning and pre-design elements including Economic Development and Redevelopment Project Planning and Real Estate Market Analysis as well as fiscal planning. Christine specializes in finding creative solutions to difficult economic development, planning and government issues and problems. She and her team provide real estate market analysis, redevelopment project development and economic development strategic planning services. Christine teaches Real Estate Market Analysis as part of the Masters in Real Estate Development program offered jointly by the College of Architecture + Planning and David S. Eccles School of Business. Her case study based course focuses on teaching students the resources and skill needed to identify and quantify real estate market opportunities and develop inputs to their development pro forma. Christine has a BA and MA in English Literature and an MBA from the University of Utah. She worked in the public sector for almost 20 years eventually serving as Director of Community & Economic Development for Midvale City for 9 years. She has been in the private sector serving private and public clients for 11 years.

Notable Projects/Professional Affiliations

- Urban Land Institute, Public Private Partnerships Product Council
- South Salt Lake General Plan Update (AIA Award Winner)
- Ballpark Neighborhood Station Area Plan
- Wasatch County School District Facilities Master Plan



Chris Dwyer

Principal | Architect, AIA, NCARB

Chris Dwyer was born and raised in Boise, Idaho. His childhood home was built in 1909 and almost always was undergoing an extensive restoration, modification, or upgrade. The constant change of the space, in which he lived and played with Legos, led to his interest in architecture, which ultimately inspired him to study at the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design at the University of Arkansas.

After graduating in 2007, Chris moved to Aspen, CO. He joined Poss as an Architectural Draftsperson and was employed there for over eight years. Before moving back to his hometown, Chris decided to take a break and feed his travel bug by exploring Southeast Asia.

Upon his return to Boise, he took a position with a large multistate architecture and engineering firm that specialized in multifamily, commercial, retail, and master planning projects. It is there where he also became involved in the Urban Land Institute (ULI).

In 2022 Chris returned to Poss as a Senior Associate and to open and manage the new Boise office of Poss. He looks forward to helping expand the Poss footprint into the Northwest and to develop new project locations for the firm.

Chris is a board member of the Idaho Chapter of ULI. He is also a founder of the Placemaking and Design Product Council within the Idaho Chapter, and member of Idaho Chapters of AIA, NCARB, and the International Code Council.

When not at work, Chris enjoys spending time with his family, whether in Boise, or at the family cabin in McCall. Chris also loves travelling as well as skiing, curling, bike riding, and playing hockey.



Christopher F. Meyer

Partner, Parkwood Business Properties.

Chris Meyer is a partner at Parkwood Business Properties, North Idaho's leading developer and manager of commercial real estate. In that role he oversees the asset management of almost 1,000,000sf of commercial office, industrial, medical office, tech-flex, and retail properties. He is also responsible for new development lead generation, site selection, financing, and construction execution. Recent developments include [Lake Drive Lofts](#), a 32 unit mixed use urban infill project and [The Timbers](#), a 62 unit luxury waterfront apartment community. Additional new development experience also includes a local distribution center for Builders First Service and the addition of almost 300 self storage units to Budget Storage of Idaho. Prior to joining Parkwood, Chris worked as a Development Manager for Legacy Partners Residential in Seattle where he developed the \$75mm Legacy at Pratt Park urban mixed-use luxury apartment project with 248 units and 6,500sf of street level retail. Legacy at Pratt Park was awarded the 2010 neighborhood impact award at the NAIOP Night of the Stars in 2010.

Chris is active in his community and serves on the Board of Directors of the [Coeur d'Alene Area Economic Development Corporation](#) (Jobs Plus), [igniteCDA](#) Urban Renewal Agency, and is a Director of [Numerica Credit Union](#). He is also the Past Chairman of the [Kootenai Health Foundation](#) and is a member of the [Urban Land Institute Idaho District Council](#) Advisory Committee.

Chris has a BA from the University of Pennsylvania, an MBA from the Foster School of Business at the University of Washington and a Masters in Urban Planning from the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Washington. He and his wife Sara enjoy skiing at Schweitzer and playing on Hayden Lake with their two sons.



Kâren Sander – Area Business Development Leader, HDR - Idaho

Prior to joining HDR Engineering, Kâren spent more than a decade leading the Downtown Boise Association (DBA), where she was deeply involved in the transformation of the urban core through collaborative advocacy, marketing, event planning, and economic development. Following her tenure with the DBA she had the opportunity to work in the commercial real estate world and managed the district council for the Urban Land Institute of Idaho. Her project management mindset was founded in an early career in event creation and management, sports marketing, and public relations in Idaho and South Africa.

Kâren now oversees marketing and business development for HDR, where she uses her experience and relationships to pursue business opportunities and connect HDR to communities throughout Idaho, with the goal of improving the built environment.

Her passion includes a non-profit organization, Girls on the Run, Treasure Valley, which she is a co-founder of. Girls on the Run has served over 14,000+ girls since 2000.

AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 2015 Idaho Business Review CEO of Influence Award, Non-Profit Category
- 2012 Leadership Boise Graduate & Leadership Boise Academy Vice President
- 2006 Idaho Business Review Women of the Year Award
- 2004 Idaho Business Review Accomplished Under Forty Award
- 2002 Small Business Administration's Idaho Women in Business Advocate of the Year Award

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- Idaho Shakespeare Festival Board, 2014 – Present
- Girls on the Run – Idaho, Co-Founder, 1999 – Present
- City Club of Boise Board Member, June 2016 – May 2023
- Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Boise Alumni Board, 2012 – 2018
- Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce, Advisory Board, 2004 – 2015



Nathan Murray
Economic & Community Development
Idaho Power

Bannock, Bingham, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka,
Power and Twin Falls County

Nathan Murray is an Economic and Community Development Advisor for Idaho Power in south central Idaho. In this role, he works with economic development organizations to attract, retain and expand business in Idaho Power's service area.

Nathan previously served as the Director of Economic Development and Urban Renewal for the City of Twin Falls where he oversaw

business recruitment and expansion efforts for the city which had roughly \$2 billion in capital improvements since 2012. He also worked for 15 years in a neighboring state in city planning and economic development. Early career accomplishments include the redevelopment of a 200 acre former U.S. steel site into an industrial park for light manufacturing, recruitment of \$50 million in business investment around a municipal airport, and creation of the city's first Economic Development Strategic Plan.



Nina Schaeffer
Transportation and Land Use Planner at Jacobs

A self proclaimed urban planning nerd, public meeting enthusiast and experimenter in changing how, why, and who we engage in conversations surrounding urban development. Despite how it sounds, my most exciting days involve a mixture of all 3!

My interest in planning stems from an Aha moment I had while walking in Downtown Boise. I found myself looking up, out and around, thinking about how something was put where and why. From this moment, I knew the planning and development industry was where I wanted to be.

I have a BA in Urban Studies and Community Development from Boise State that continues to fuel my interest in city planning, cultural anthropology and how humans interact with one another, and our environment, both built and natural.

I am passionate about what makes a community strong, and this perspective influences my personal and professional experiences. I am an active member in our neighborhood association and sit on Ada County Highway Districts' Bicycle Advisory Committee.

You can find me exploring local businesses in Boise, biking and birding, and traveling through cities to find the best example of bicycle and transit infrastructure.



Ethan Mansfield

Pre-development Manager, Hawkins Companies

Ethan is a Pre-development Manager at Hawkins Companies. Previously, he worked for the City of Boise as a city planner. Prior to this, he worked as a Project and Research Manager at the Boise Valley Economic Partnership and an Economist with the Idaho Department of Labor. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics and environmental studies from Whitman College, and a master's degree in regional planning from the University of Idaho. When Ethan is not working, you can find him enjoying Idaho's backcountry by foot, raft, or skis with his wife, Jordyn, and two dogs, Ruger and Filbert.



Brad Cramer, MPA, AICP
Owner, Perspective Planning and Consulting

CHUBBUCK, IDAHO REPORT WRITER

Brad Cramer, MPA, AICP has nearly 20 years of experience in the planning field. He spent nearly 17 years with the City of Idaho Falls in various planning positions, including 9 years as director of Community Development Services where he oversaw the production of several award-winning plans. In that role he also served as the Executive Director of the Idaho Falls Redevelopment Agency where he had the opportunity to be a part of transformational projects for the downtown and surrounding areas. Brad currently works as the Senior Campus Master Planner for the Idaho National Laboratory and as the owner of Perspective Planning and Consulting as a side business. He started Perspective Planning with the goal of providing access to professional planning services to Idaho’s small and rural communities. He is also pursuing a PhD in Environmental Science through the University of Idaho, with a research interest in how the built environment affects loneliness.



Karlee May, ULI Idaho Executive Director