Pocatello Regional Transit Master Transit Plan

March 2018

BANNOCK Transportation Planning ORGANIZATION

PRT Pocatello Regional Transit

Table of Contents

List of Maps

List of Tables

List of Figures

Introduction

Over the past 40 years the Bannock Transportation Planning Organization's (BTPO) Planning area, which includes the communities of Pocatello and Chubbuck, has experienced consistent growth, with the region projected to reach approximately 100,000 people by 2040. During BTPO's last Master Transportation Plan update, the community embraced a vision for its future that is built on transit-supportive livability principles, understanding the importance of growing in a smart and sustainable way.

Unfortunately there is, and has been, a mismatch between the region's desire to further integrate transit into the community and the reality of stagnant budgets. Over the past 10 years General Fund resources for Pocatello Regional Transit (PRT) have remained flat, creating budget shortfalls that have forced the agency to cut services in recent years. If this trend continues, PRT may be forced to make further cuts.

Therefore, BTPO's *Master Transit Plan* is a study that lays out a vision for transit services and identifies how PRT can better serve the Pocatello region both today and in the future, given the financial uncertainties the agency faces. To address both the potential for funding cuts, and residents' desire for a transit friendly community, this plan includes recommendations for three potential financial scenarios: Cost Neutral, 10 Percent Decrease, and Unconstrained. Thus, this plan provides PRT with a framework for making service planning decisions given current funding uncertainties.

Recommendations for each scenario were developed in conjunction with PRT and BTPO staff and were based on an analysis of existing community and transit service conditions and supported by public and stakeholder outreach.

Report Overview

The Pocatello Regional Transit Master Transit Plan includes the following sections:

Key Findings from Existing Conditions

- Overview of existing fixed-route service
- Overview of key findings and takeaways from the Community Assessment
- Overview of key findings and takeaways from the Service Analysis
- Summary of the public outreach efforts and major takeaways from community surveys

Transit Vision and Service Strategies

- Discussion of PRT's transit vision, which provides the overall framework for recommendations
- Overview of the service strategies, which identify the service design priorities used to develop recommendations

Recommendations

- Overview of the three funding scenarios: Cost Neutral, 10 Percent Decrease, and Unconstrained
- Service recommendations for each funding scenario
- Customer experience recommendations
- Proposed capital improvements

Plan Benefits and Impacts

- Explanation of the rider benefits associated with the proposed recommendations
- Analysis of riders impacted by the proposed recommendations

Existing Conditions

The existing conditions analysis included a Community Assessment, Land Use Policy Review, and Service Evaluation, which detailed current conditions in the Pocatello and Chubbuck areas. The Community Assessment and Land Use Policy Review provided an understanding of the current and projected land use patterns, population and employment characteristics, and planning efforts within the Pocatello Regional Transit service area, while the Service Analysis provided a data-driven understanding of both the system's design and performance. Together, these analyses identified the challenges and opportunities for transit within the Pocatello region.

The following section provides an overview of the current services provided by PRT, as well as the key takeaways from the Community Assessment, Land Use Policy Review, and Service Evaluation.

Existing Service Description

Pocatello Regional Transit (PRT) provides transit service to the Pocatello and Chubbuck communities in the Southeast Idaho Region, covering 27 square miles and a population of 81,730.[1] PRT currently operates the following services:

- Five year-round fixed-route services within the boundaries of Pocatello and Chubbuck (Routes A, B, C, D, and E)
- Five school-year only fixed-route services within the boundaries of Pocatello and Chubbuck
    - Three school tripper routes (Routes F, G, and I)
    - Two Idaho State University (ISU) campus circulators (Routes H and J)
- Two regional commuter lines
- Door-to-Door service, including Paratransit, Senior Transportation, and Rural Transportation

While PRT provides all the above services, the focus of this study is on the fixed-route services PRT provides within the cities of Pocatello and Chubbuck. Specifically, recommendations are focused on the year-round fixed-route services provided by PRT.

Fixed Route Overview

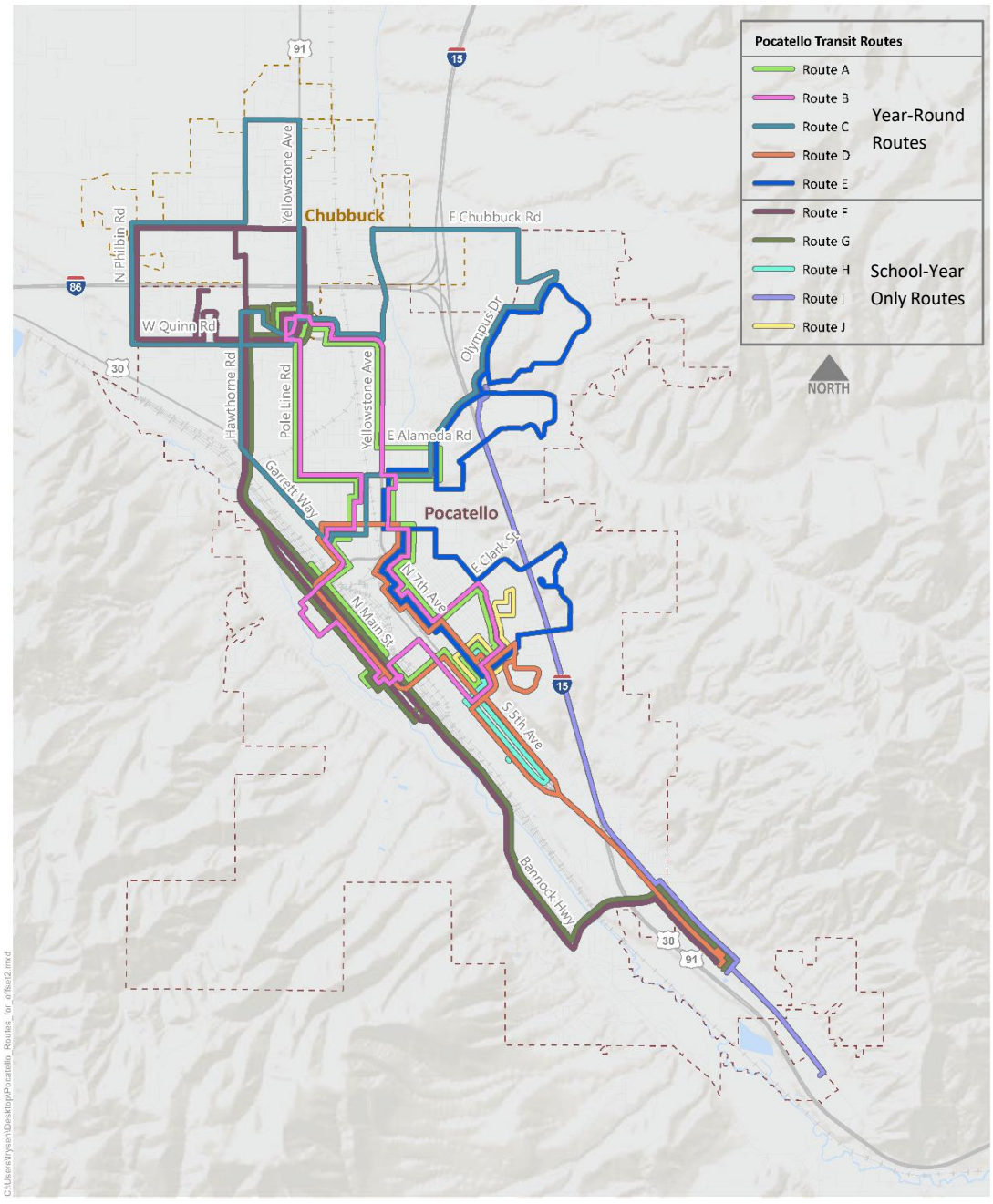
The PRT fixed-route system includes five year-round routes and five school-year only routes, for a total of ten fixed routes. Of the five year-round routes, two operate Monday-Saturday (Routes A and B), and three operate Monday-Friday (Routes C, D, E). No fixed-route service is provided on Sundays. The year-round routes (A-E) operate headways of 60 minutes, the campus circulators operate every 10-15 minutes on weekdays during the school year, and the school-based routes provide specific trips during school commute hours. Table 1 and Map 1 provide an overview of PRT's existing fixed-route services.

[1] NTD 2015: http://www.ftis.org/iNTD-Urban/Reports.aspx

TABLE 1: POCATELLO REGIONAL TRANSIT EXISTING FIXED-ROUTES

Route	Service Type	Description	Service Span	Service Frequency
Route A	Fixed Route	Downtown - Pine Ridge Mall - Pocatello Square - East Side - ISU	6:13am – 6:13pm (M-F) 9:13am – 5:13pm (Sat)	Every 60 minutes
Route B	Fixed Route	ISU - East Side - Pocatello Square - Pine Ridge Mall - Downtown	6:40am – 6:40pm (M-F) 9:40am – 5:40pm (Sat)	Every 60 minutes
Route C	Fixed Route	Westwood Mall – Pine Ridge Mall – Chubbuck - Highland High school	7:11am to 6:00pm (M-F) No Sat Service	Every 60 minutes
Route D	Fixed Route	PRT Transit Center – ISU – Downtown - Westwood Mall - Bannock County Sheriff's Dept.	7:31am – 6:31pm (M-F) No Sat Service	Every 60 minutes
Route D (Summer)	Fixed Route	PRT Transit Center – ISU – Downtown – Westwood Mall – Ross Park Aquatic Complex	7:31am – 6:31pm (M-F) No Sat Service	Every 60 minutes
Route E	Fixed Route	ISU – Highland High School - East Side - Portneuf Medical Center	6:40am – 6:18pm (M-F) No Sat Service	Every 60 minutes
Route F	School Tripper Route	PRT Transit Center - Bannock Hwy - Downtown - Pine Ridge Mall - Connor Academy - Gem Prep School	7:10am to 8:30am (M-F) 2:25pm to 3:45pm (M-F)	One AM Trip, One PM Trip
Route G	School Tripper Route	PRT Transit Center - Bannock Hwy - Downtown - Pine Ridge Mall - Pocatello Charter School	3:15pm to 4:00pm (M, Tu, Th, F) 12:15pm to 1:10pm (Wed Only)	One Trip
Route H	ISU Campus Circulator	Bengal Creek – ISU Student Union - ISU Health Center - ISU Library	7:15am to 5:15pm (M-F) No Sat Service	Every 15 minutes
Route I	School Tripper Route	PRT Transit Center - Century High School - East Side - Pine Ridge Mall	7:00am to 8:18am (M-F) 2:47pm to 3:48pm (Mon Only) 2:45pm to 4:25pm (Tu-F)	One AM Trip, One PM Trip
Route J	ISU Campus Circulator	ISU Student Union - ISU Reed Gym - ISU Life Science - ISU Holt Arena - ISU Library	7:00am to 6:00pm (M-F) No Sat Service	Every 10-12 minutes

MAP 1: POCATELLO REGIONAL TRANSIT EXISTING FIXED-ROUTE SYSTEM



System Design

PRT's year-round fixed route system, consisting of Routes A-E, is designed to provide maximum geographic coverage of the Pocatello/Chubbuck region given limited resources. Individual routes operate as one-way loops, connecting riders from residential areas in Chubbuck and Pocatello to the City's commercial corridors. To provide customers with as many connections as possible, timed transfers are provided at four key locations: Marshall Public Library, Cedar and Warren, Westwood Mall, and ISU Health Center. However, due to the complexity of route alignments and limited information at stops, many customers are not aware of these existing transfer opportunities and therefore focus on using individual routes rather than the system as whole. Additionally, because customers tend to rely on individual routes, which only run in one direction, they often must ride through the entire hour-long loop to complete their trip even if their destination is only five minutes away. Together, these challenges reduce the overall attractiveness and effectiveness of the year-round system for customers.

PRT's five school routes provide more targeted service and include two Idaho State University (ISU) campus circulators and three charter/prep school routes. The campus circulators are small loop routes that provide frequent weekday service on and around the ISU campus. The charter/prep school routes are more linear in their alignments and connect specific neighborhoods with schools throughout the area. These routes only provide service during school commute hours.

Key Findings

Community Assessment

The Community Assessment examined a number of factors that affect demand for transit, including the regional demographics, land use and built environment, and existing policy documents. The market challenges and opportunities for effective and efficient transit are summarized below.

Challenges

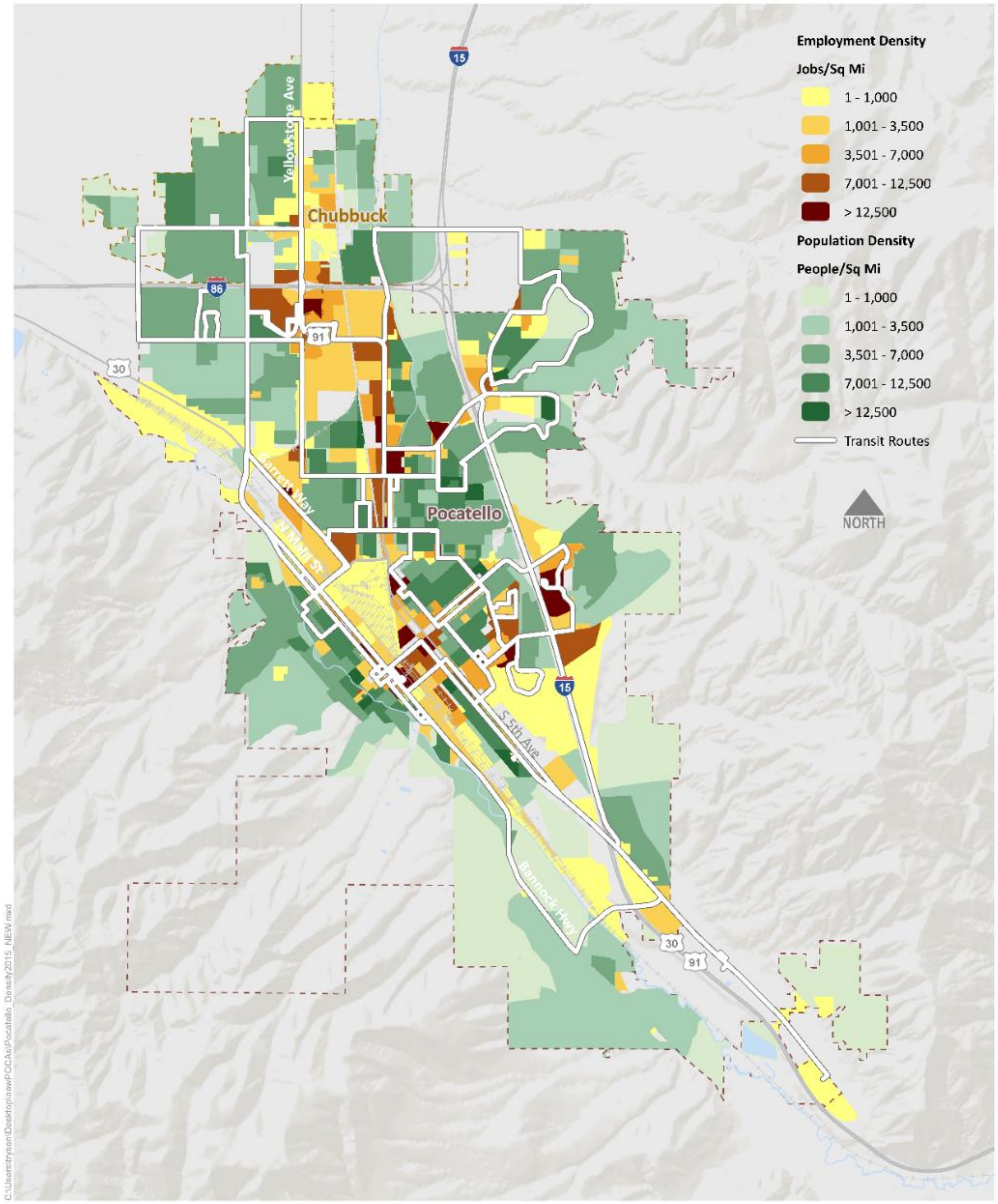
- Minimal incentives for transit
  - Short automobile travel times
  - Low levels of traffic congestion
  - Cheap and available parking
  - High rates of car ownership
  - Inexpensive gas
- Challenging Urban Form
  - Railroad creates a physical barrier through region's most transit friendly neighborhoods, limiting options to provide connections
  - Suburban street patterns outside of Old Town and Downtown do not support efficient transit service
  - Recent commercial and residential development oriented to automobiles

Opportunities

- Overall the region is fairly compact, which allows for efficient transit service delivery (Map 2).
- Transit reliant areas are concentrated in the core mixed-use area of the region, where transit service currently exists and where it can be both effective and efficient (Map 3).

- In Old Town and Downtown Pocatello, the street network and development patterns support transit service. Strong corridors, like Yellowstone, present key opportunities for transit.
- A foundation of smart growth and mixed-use development policy initiatives is in place to encourage sustainable and transit supportive development in the future.

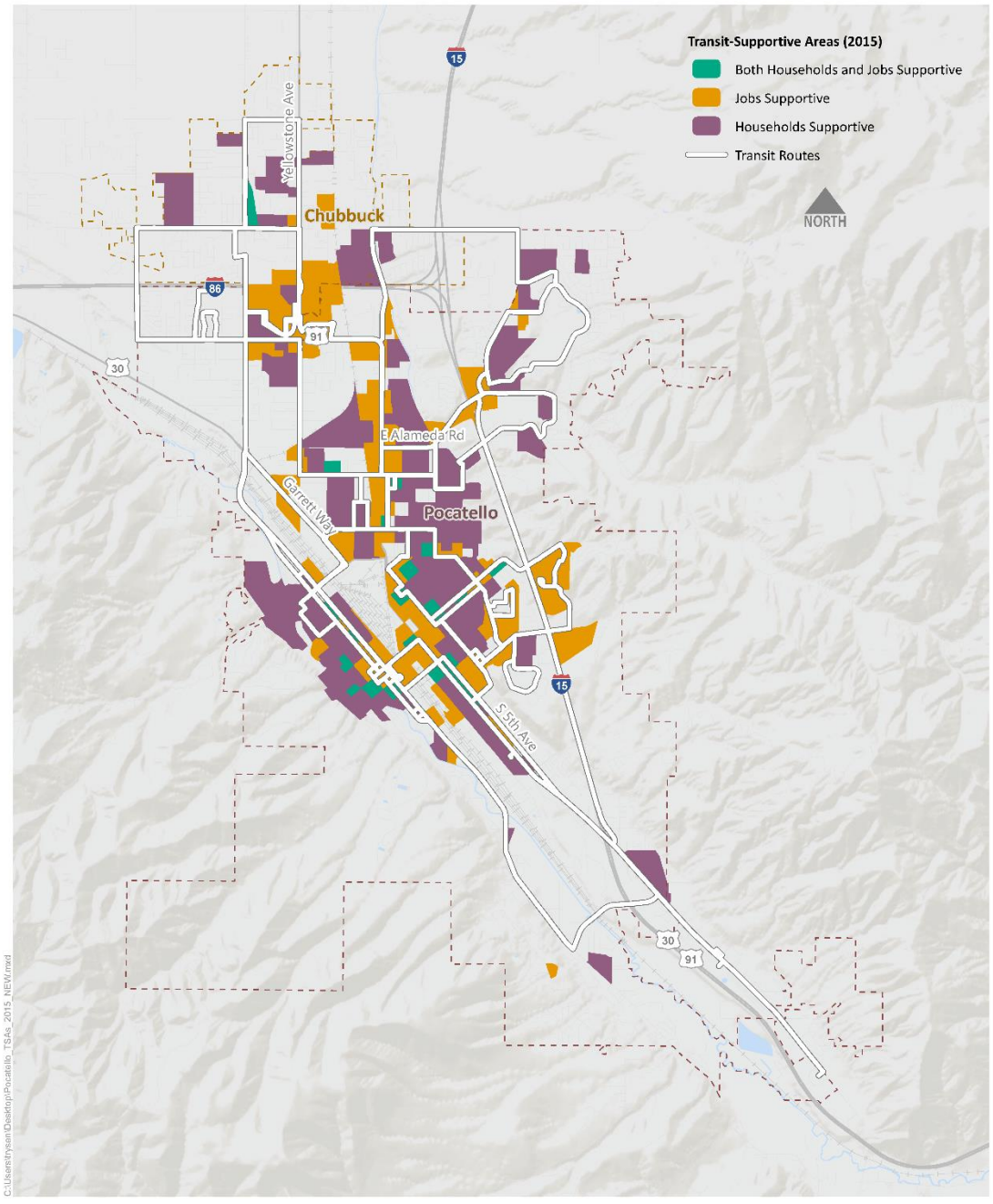
MAP 2: POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT DENSITIES, 2015



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Employment and Population Density (2015)
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

MAP 3: TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE AREAS, 2015



TMD
TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Transit Demand Potential Areas -
Three or more Households or Four or more Jobs per Acre (2015)
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

Land Use Policy Review

Land use decisions play a central role in shaping the long-term success of transit. A review of existing land use and zoning policies identified the strengths and opportunities of each as they relate to transit service delivery (Appendix A). Strategies for each policy were developed that leverage the existing strengths and address current challenges. The key recommendations are listed below.

- Actively involved PRT and BTPO in the land use decision making process (e.g. Preapplication Conferences, Site Plan Review Committee, Comprehensive Plan Updates).
- Ensure 'Coordination with the Master Transit Plan' is included as a requirement in all land use and development plans.
- Ensure zoning and site design criteria encourage transit supportive development (e.g. reduce parking minimums for projects with transit access, increase maximum density thresholds, remove minimum setback requirements in RM, RH, RCP, and NC districts to improve the pedestrian experience).
- Ensure street design standards support transit operations (e.g. adequate turning radii for buses, wider sidewalk minimums, planter strip exemptions).

Service Assessment

Analysis of PRT's existing service provided a data-driven understanding of the system's performance that helped inform the development of recommendations. The analysis identified current successes and challenges within the region, as well as opportunities to improve service quality and grow ridership.

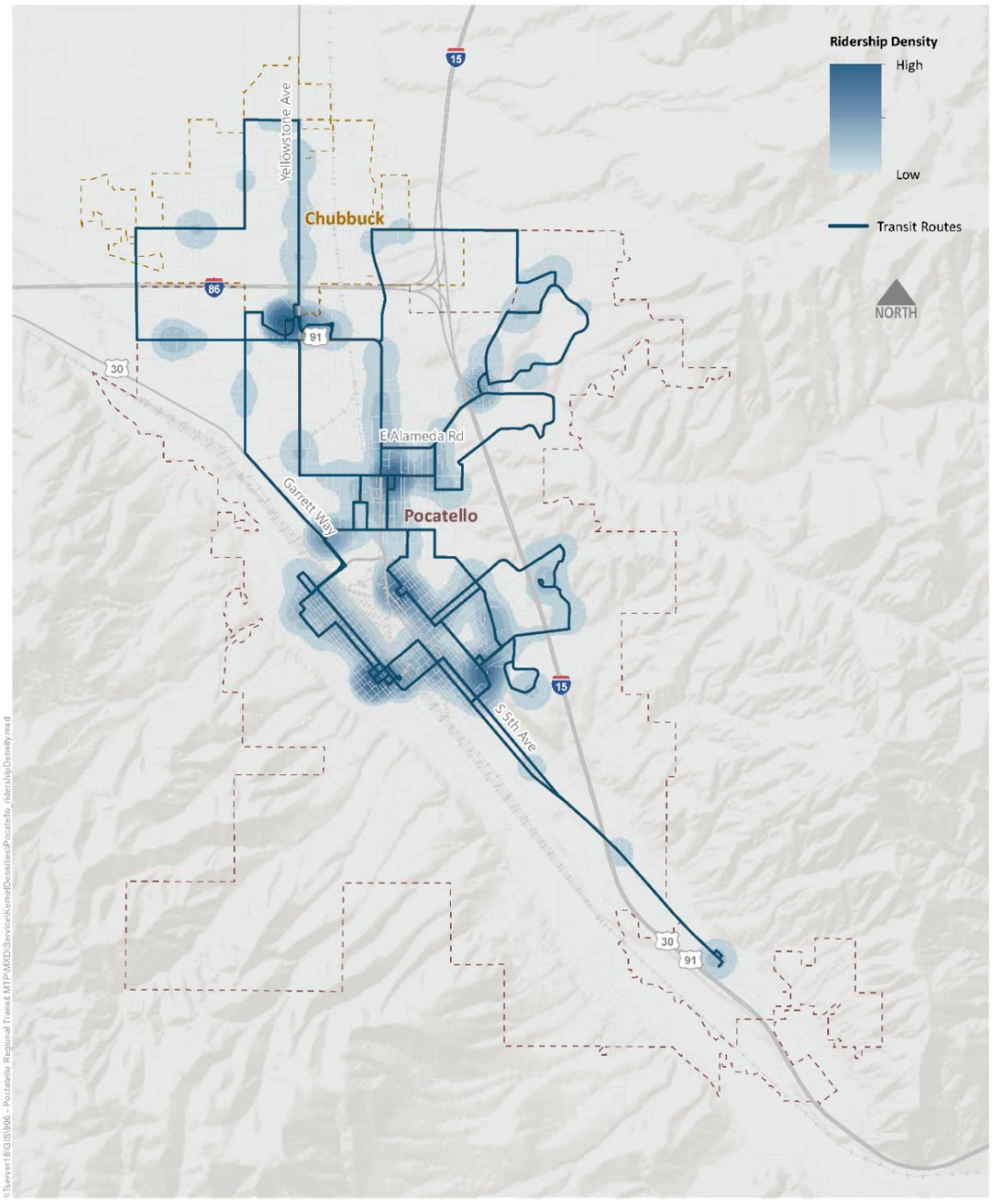
Challenges

- Long travel times
    - Year-round routes operate as one-way loops, forcing riders to either travel out-of-direction in order to arrive back at their trip start location or transfer to a different route.
- System is difficult for customers to understand
    - Riders are not always aware of transfer opportunities, or how routes are intended to work together.
    - Service information can be difficult to find, both at bus stops and online.
- Low frequency and limited service span
    - Five core routes operate with 60-minute frequency.
    - No weekday service past 7:00 pm and limited weekend service (2 routes on Saturdays, no Sunday service).

Opportunities

- Concentrated areas of ridership, shown in Map 4, highlight a core service area that correlates to locations where there are transit-supportive densities and mixed-uses
- Routes A and B have almost identical ridership, indicating they are working together successfully as a bi-directional pair. These routes also have the highest ridership of all the year-round routes. This signifies customers like bi-directional service.
- Routes H and J have the highest frequency and highest ridership of all the routes in the system. This highlights the importance of frequency in attracting ridership.

MAP 4: FIXED ROUTE RIDERSHIP BOARDING DENSITY, ROUTES A-E



Public Outreach Summary

In August 2017, PRT and BTPO conducted five pop-up outreach sessions around the region, one open-house session, and three focus groups to learn more about the current transit challenges and opportunities in the Pocatello and Chubbuck areas. Riders and non-riders were also surveyed online and in-person (Appendix B), providing the community with an opportunity to weigh in on how PRT should prioritize service given limited funding. 153 surveys were collected through both the online and in-person efforts, and approximately 75 people were reached during outreach events, for a total of nearly 230. Key takeaways are shown in Figures 1 and 2, with a full summary of results provided in Appendices B and D.

The key themes that emerged during outreach included:

- Residents value the transit system and think it's an important service the City provides.
- Customers would like shorter travel times on the bus.
- Customers would like the bus to run later and come more often.
- Customers would like more weekend service.
- Customers would like more amenities at stops, including benches, shelters, and service information
- Opportunities exist to build and strengthen community partnerships

FIGURE 1: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS – WHY RESIDENTS DON'T USE PRT MORE

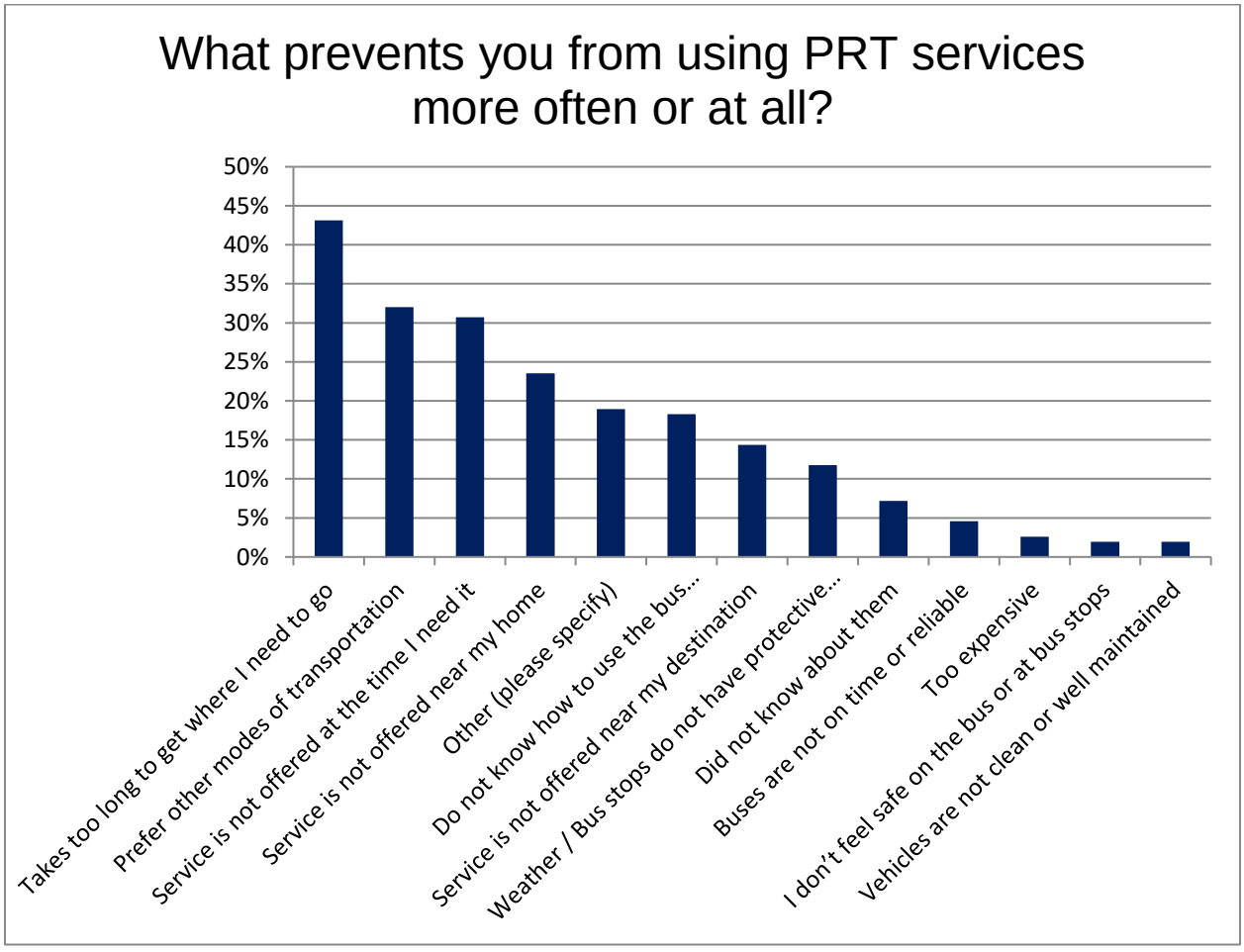
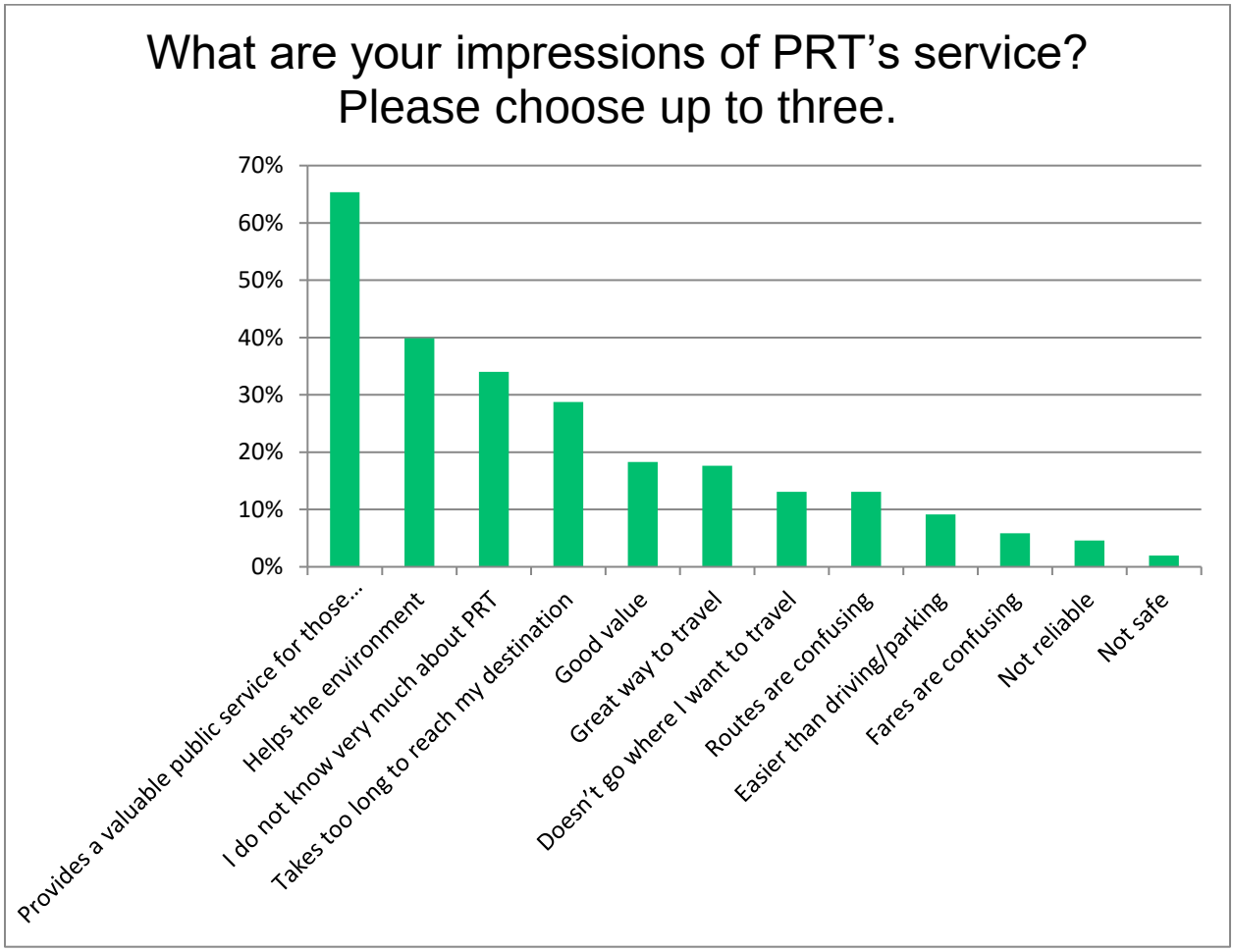


FIGURE 2: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS - IMPRESSIONS OF PRT SERVICES



** First response category is "Provides a valuable public service for those without other transportation options"*

These themes were then used to help develop the transit vision and service strategies for PRT. Once draft recommendations were developed, a second round of public engagement was conducted in January 2018 to solicit feedback from the community on the proposed changes. An open house was held at the Pocatello Senior Center, as well as an online stakeholder webinar and survey. Results from these efforts were used to shape the final recommendations included in this report. A summary of responses from this effort can be found in Appendix D.

Transit Vision and Service Strategies

The transit vision and service strategies were developed based on findings from the existing conditions analysis, best practice strategies, and input from PRT riders, PRT leadership, and local stakeholders. The transit vision outlined below identifies the goals for PRT's service, while the service strategies identify service design actions PRT can take to achieve those goals. Together, these provide a framework for improving PRT's service both today and in the future.

Vision

The following vision identifies the goals for PRT's service and serves as the foundation for recommendations:

The vision for Pocatello Regional Transit is a system that provides safe, cost-effective, and reliable transportation services that support the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the community by providing access to education, employment, public service, healthcare, shopping and recreational opportunities.

Service Strategies

The recommendations in this Master Transit Plan include three different scenarios, which vary in service levels depending on funding availability. However, the core service strategies described below remain the same for each scenario.

Match Transit Service to Market Demand

For PRT to remain financially sustainable, it is key that the agency focuses on providing bus service where it can be most successful. Transit success is directly influenced by surrounding development patterns and density. In order for transit to be truly successful, there must be a strong mix of population and employment densities, as well as a street and sidewalk network that promotes walkability and access. Higher population and employment densities are supportive of transit because they provide a larger potential customer base to draw from. The road and sidewalk networks impact several aspects of transit: how easy it is for pedestrians to access the network; transit travel time; and connectivity between destinations. This means PRT should focus service in areas where the density and design of the surrounding land uses can support efficient and effective transit.

Improve the Customer Experience

Reduce Travel Time on the Bus: The amount of time passengers spend traveling on a bus to their destination influences their experience and impacts how often and for what trips they choose to use transit. One-way routes increase the amount of time passengers have to spend on the bus and makes the service less attractive. Additionally, riders perceive travel delay as twice as long as it actually is, so out-of-direction movements can significantly deter ridership. Transit already struggles to be an attractive choice in an area like Pocatello where travel times are short and there are low levels of traffic congestion. Reducing travel times can help make transit service more competitive with automobile travel. Providing bi-directional service on routes will reduce travel time, improve customer satisfaction, and make the service more attractive to both existing and potential riders.

Increase Service Spans: Service span affects passengers' ability to use transit for all their daily needs. If riders can take a bus to work cannot take the same bus home because the service span is too short, they will likely forego riding the bus altogether. Similarly, for anyone who works on weekends, while they could take transit to work on weekdays, lack of weekend service discourages transit use throughout the rest of

the week. Increasing the hours and days that service is available will improve customer mobility, especially for individuals who work hours outside of the traditional Monday-Friday 9am-5pm period.

Improve Frequency: Out-of-vehicle wait time is the most important factor individuals consider when deciding whether or not to use transit. Improving service frequency (how often the bus comes) can greatly enhance the overall passenger experience and attract more riders to the system.

Improve Information Availability: One potential barrier to transit use is whether or not it is easy for customers to understand how routes operate and where they go. Riders need to feel confident that the bus they board will get them to their destination, and confidence is generated through clear maps, schedules, and signage. Providing more information for riders in the form of maps and clearly marked bus stop signs can help them better understand the system and how to use it.

Recommendations

Service Recommendations

The following service recommendations were developed in close collaboration with PRT staff and reflect the vision and service strategies described above. The service recommendations are presented as a series of three funding scenarios: Cost Neutral, 10 Percent Decrease, and Unconstrained. The cost neutral and 10 percent decrease scenarios have the same number of proposed route alignments, (Maps 5-12) but service levels differ based on funding availability. In the unconstrained scenario, an additional route is included and service levels are significantly increased. A summary of the key elements for each service scenario is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: SERVICE SCENARIO COMPARISON

Service Plan Element	Existing	Cost-Neutral	10 Percent Decrease	Unconstrained
Number of Routes	5 weekday 2 Saturday 0 Sunday	5 weekday 2 Saturday 0 Sunday	5 weekday 0 Saturday 0 Sunday	6 weekday 6 Saturday 6 Sunday
Frequency	60 min weekday 60 min Saturday -	60 min weekday 60 min Saturday -	60 min weekday - -	60 min weekday** 60 min Saturday 60 min Sunday
Availability	6:30am-6:30pm weekday* 9am-5pm Saturday -	7am-7pm weekday 9am-6pm Saturday -	7am-6pm weekday - -	6am-10pm weekday 8am-7pm Saturday 9am-6pm Sunday
Access *within 1/2 mile of service*	90% of population 97% of jobs 100% of current riders	85% of population 93% of jobs 99% of current riders	85% of population 93% of jobs 99% of current riders	87% of population 94% of jobs Over 99% of current riders
Operating Cost	$905,872	$ 906,214	$ 805,016	$ 1,438,890

**Only 3 out of 5 routes currently operate for the full 12-hour span on weekdays.*

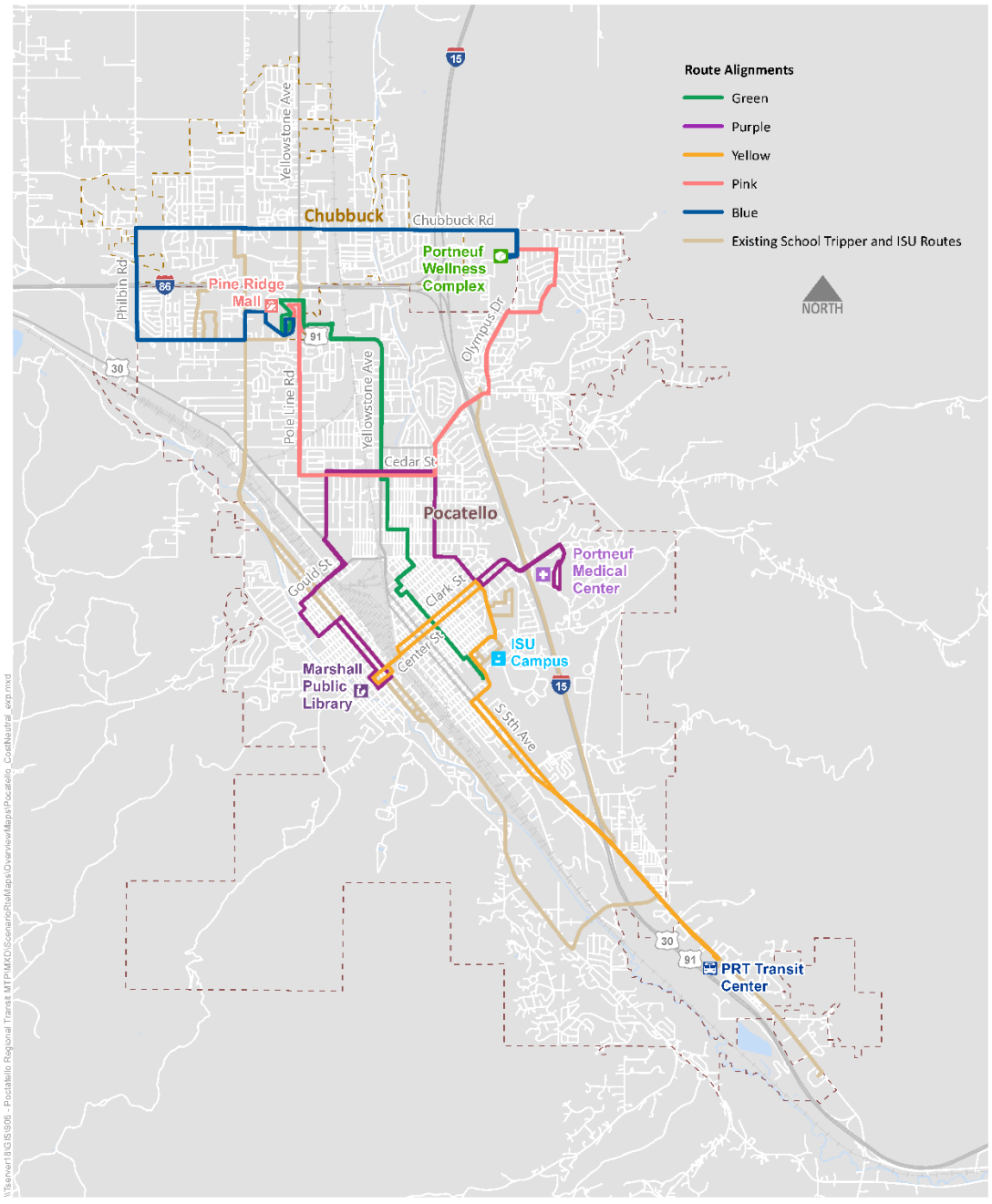
*** The Green route has 30-minute frequency on weekdays between 7am and 7pm*

Proposed Network and Route Alignments

The key difference between the existing and proposed networks is that routes no longer operate as one-way loops. Instead, all routes provide bi-directional service along streamlined alignments. This was done to shorten customer travel times and make the system easier to understand and navigate. To reduce confusion with current bus service, all recommended routes are named after colors instead of letters. The new network deviates far enough away from the existing service that it will be easier to communicate route changes to riders based on an entirely new naming system rather than trying to figure out which route most closely resembles the one they are used to riding. Using colors can also help with branding, as the same color can be used at bus stops and on route maps to help riders navigate the system.

The proposed cost-neutral and 10 percent decrease networks include five year-round routes (Map 5), while the unconstrained plan (Map 6) adds a sixth route to provide additional geographic coverage. In all scenarios the proposed service remains focused on key destinations, such as Pine Ridge Mall and Marshall Public Library, and in residential areas with transit-supportive density and high existing ridership. Individual route descriptions and maps are provided below.

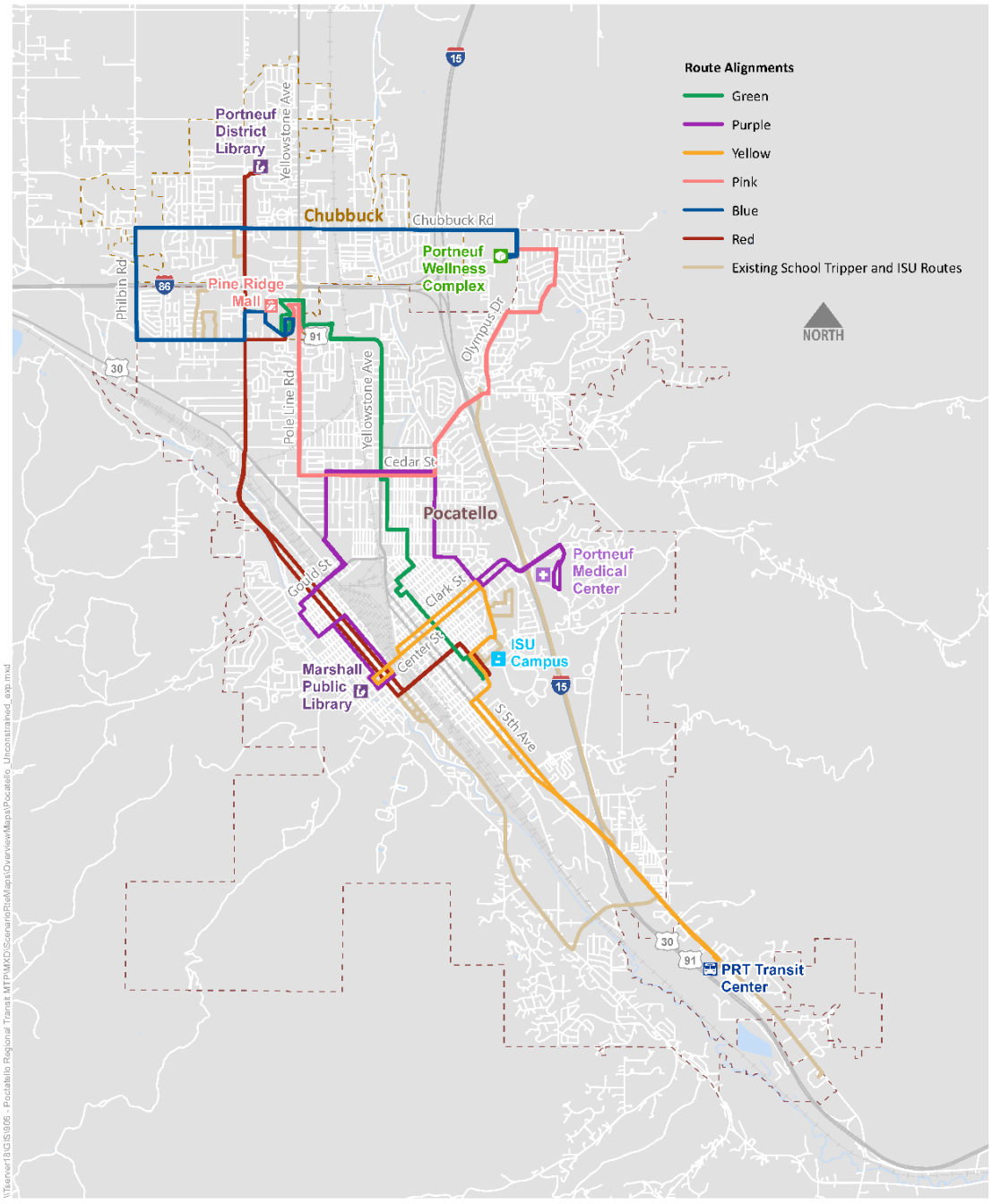
MAP 5: PROPOSED COST NEUTRAL AND 10 PERCENT DECREASE NETWORK



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Cost Neutral + 10 Percent Decrease Scenario
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

MAP 6: PROPOSED UNCONSTRAINED NETWORK



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Unconstrained Scenario
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

Green Route

This route will provide all-day local service along the Yellowstone corridor between Idaho State University and Pine Ridge Mall, connecting residents with employment, educational, and shopping opportunities (Map 7, page 22). The route begins at the ISU Student Union, traveling north to Carter Street where it turns left and then right on S 7th Avenue. The route continues north along 7th Avenue, deviating along E Bridger Street, N 6th Avenue, and E Sublette to provide service to the Pocatello Housing Authority. It then travels along Sherman Street to N 10th Avenue, where it turns left and continues north along Washington Avenue. The route then goes left on Maple Street and right on Pershing Avenue. After serving the Cedar and Warren stop, the route continues north on Yellowstone Avenue until Blandy Street, where it turns right to serve Pocatello Square. The route serves Pocatello Square via Pole Line Road, then crosses Yellowstone Avenue and terminates at Pine Ridge Mall. This core route connects with every other every route in the network, giving all neighborhoods in Pocatello and Chubbuck the opportunity to access to the area's main commercial corridor. In the Cost Neutral service plan, this is one of the two routes that offer Saturday service.

Purple Route

Throughout engagement with both the public and stakeholders, Portneuf Medical Center was consistently cited as a key destination that would benefit from additional connections and service. This route responds to that input by providing weekday and Saturday service to Portneuf Medical Center, with connections to the Cedar and Warren transfer stop, Old Town Pocatello, and Marshall Public Library (Map 8, page 23). The route begins at Portneuf Medical Center and travels west along Clark Street to N 15th Avenue, where it turns right to go north towards Oak Street. It goes left on Oak Street and right on Jefferson Avenue, where it travels north until it reaches Cedar Street. It then travels west along Cedar Street before turning south on Moreland Avenue. The route then takes Garrett Way to Gould Street, where it continues on to Portneuf Towers. After serving Portneuf Towers, it takes Grant Avenue to Custer Street. From there it turns right on to Arthur Avenue, terminating at Marshall Public Library. In the reverse direction, the route uses N Main Street instead of Arthur Avenue and E Center Street instead of Clark Street due to one-way travel restrictions.

Yellow Route

This route connects Old Town and downtown Pocatello with the ISU Campus, ISU housing locations, and PRT's transit center, where regional travel connections are available (Map 9, page 24). Beginning at PRT's Transit Center, the route travels north along 5th Avenue until Humbolt Street, where it turns right to ISU's campus. After serving the Student Union Building, the route continues to Carter Street, where it turns right until Memorial Drive. It turns left on Memorial Drive and then goes left on Clark Street, where it continues until it reaches Marshall Public Library as its final stop. In the southbound direction (Marshall Public Library to PRT Transit Center), the route travels on Center Street instead of Clark Street, and on 4th Avenue instead of 5th Avenue due to one-way travel restrictions.

Pink Route

The proposed Pink Route connects the Portneuf Wellness Complex to the Cedar and Warren transfer stop and Pine Ridge Mall, with service to the Highland neighborhood (Map 10, page 25). Serving these key transfer locations provides greater access to Portneuf Wellness Complex for more neighborhoods. The route begins at the Portneuf Wellness Complex and then serves Gate City Elementary School and Highland High School via Jerome Street, Hiskey Street, and Fairway Drive. The route then travels south along Olympus Drive before going west along Pocatello Creek Road. At Jefferson Avenue, the route turns left, providing service to the Social Security Administration. At Cedar Street it turns right, traveling west until Pole Line Road. At Pole Line Road, the route turns right and goes north until terminating at Pine Ridge Mall.

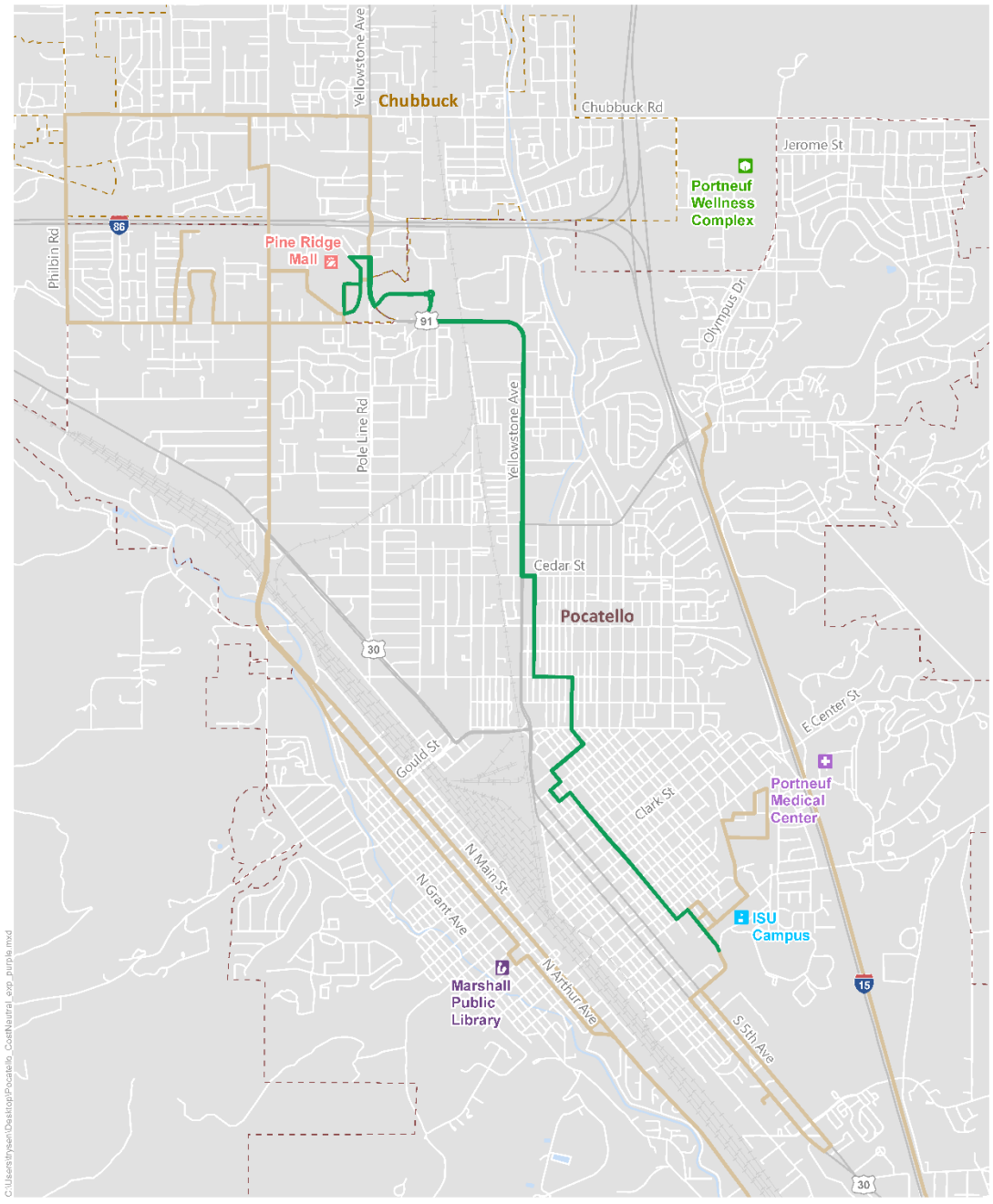
Blue Route

The Blue Route is the main route serving Chubbuck. It provides a crosstown connection along Chubbuck Road between the Portneuf Wellness Center and Philbin Road, connecting to several other routes in the system at Pine Ridge Mall (Map 11, page 26). Starting at the Portneuf Wellness Center, the route travels west along Chubbuck Road until it reaches Philbin Road, where it turns left. It continues south along Philbin Road, providing service to Connor Academy, before turning left on Quinn Road. The route travels east along Quinn Road, turns left onto Hawthorne Road, then enters Pine Ridge Mall where it terminates.

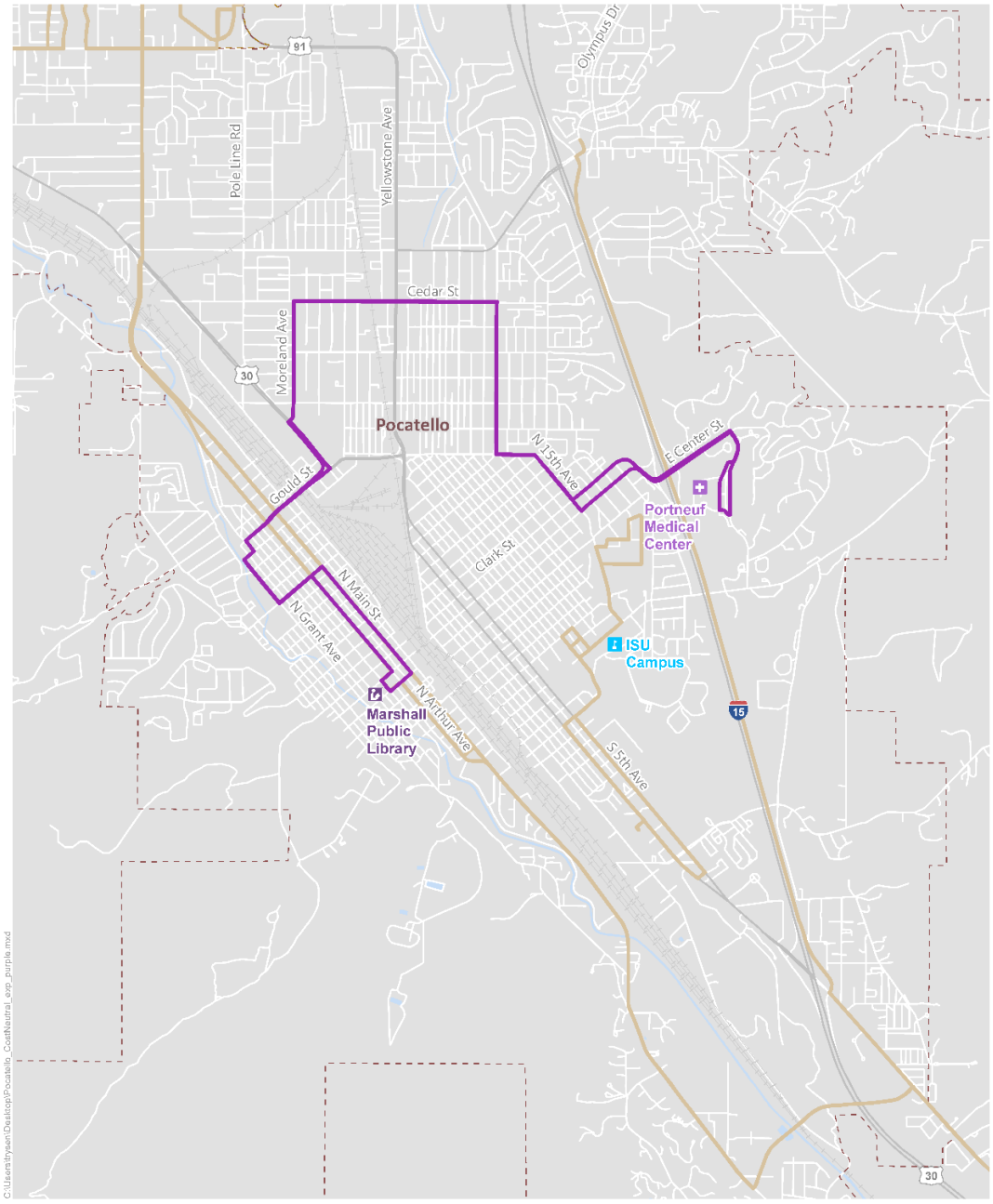
Red Route

The Red Route is only included in the Unconstrained Plan and would provide additional connections and coverage if additional funding becomes available. This route would provide a one-seat ride between Chubbuck and ISU, with connections at Pine Ridge Mall and service to Old Town (Map 12, page 27). The route would begin at Portneuf District Library and then travel south along Hawthorne Road, deviating into Pine Ridge Mall to facilitate transfer opportunities. It would then continue along Hawthorne Road onto N Main Street and then Arthur Avenue. Once it reached Benton Avenue, it would turn left and go east until reaching S 8th Avenue. At that point, it would turn right and continue until reaching the ISU Student Union Building, where it would terminate. In the northbound direction, it would use N Main Street instead of Arthur Avenue due to one-way travel restrictions.

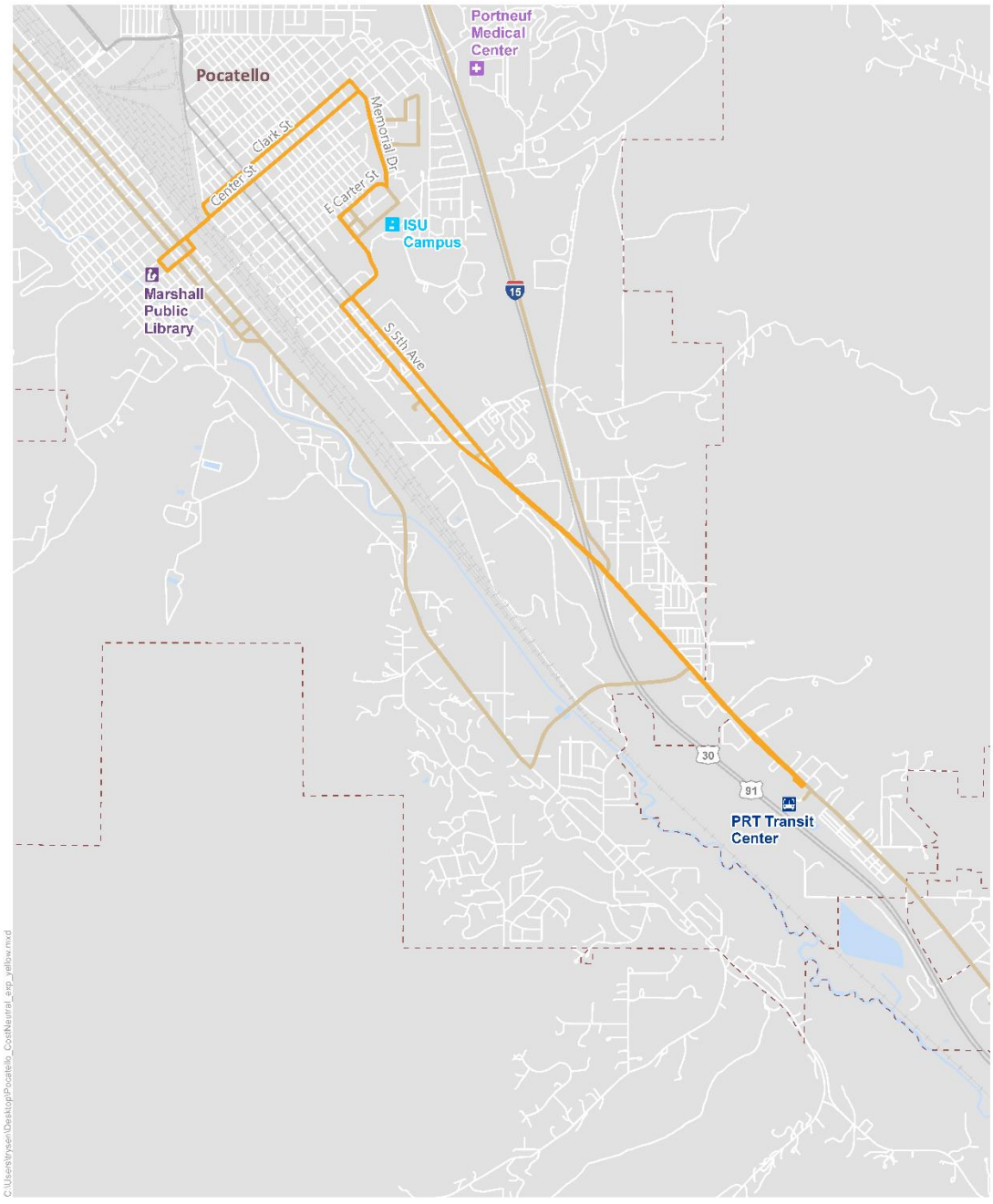
MAP 7: PROPOSED GREEN ROUTE



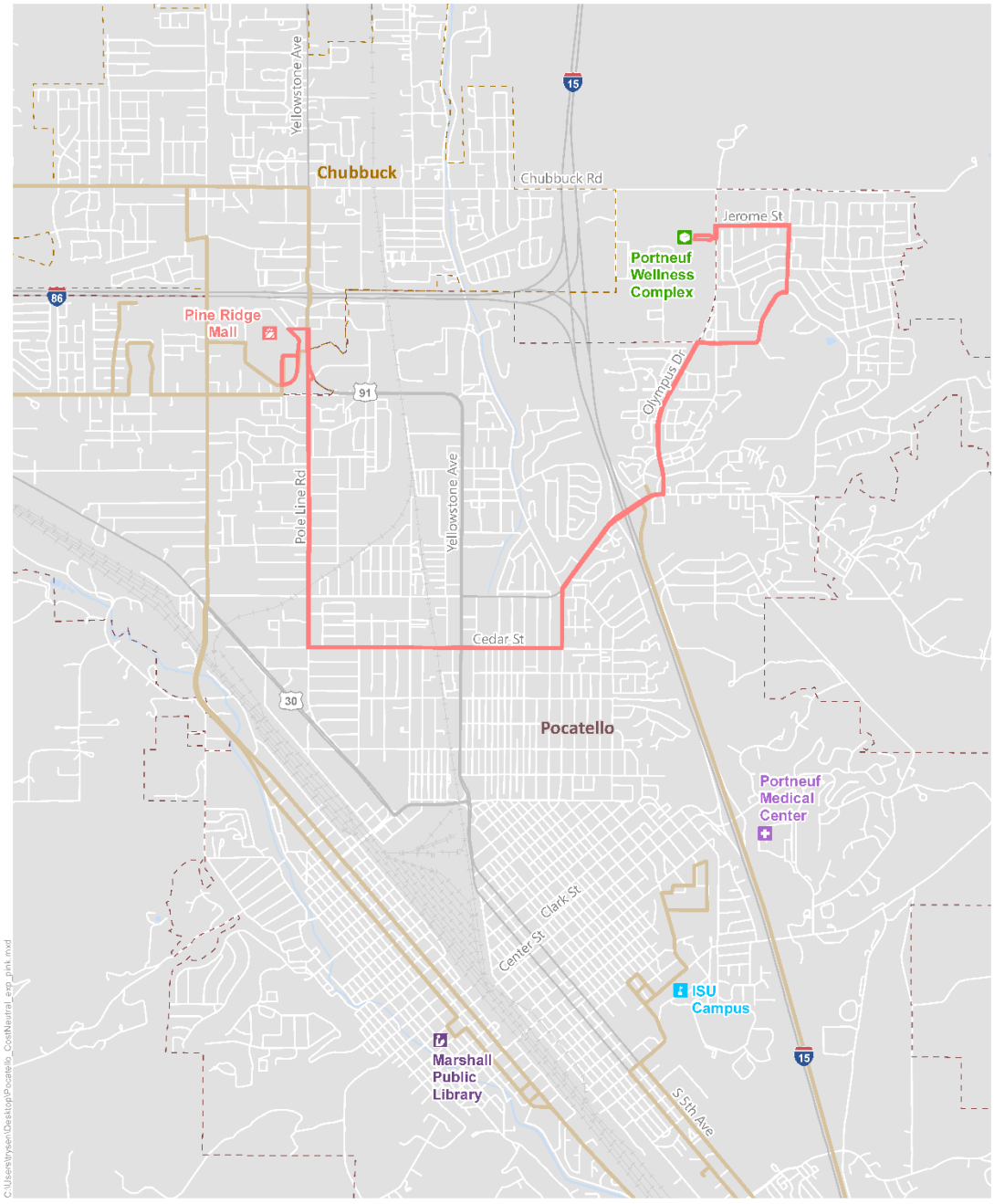
MAP 8: PROPOSED PURPLE ROUTE



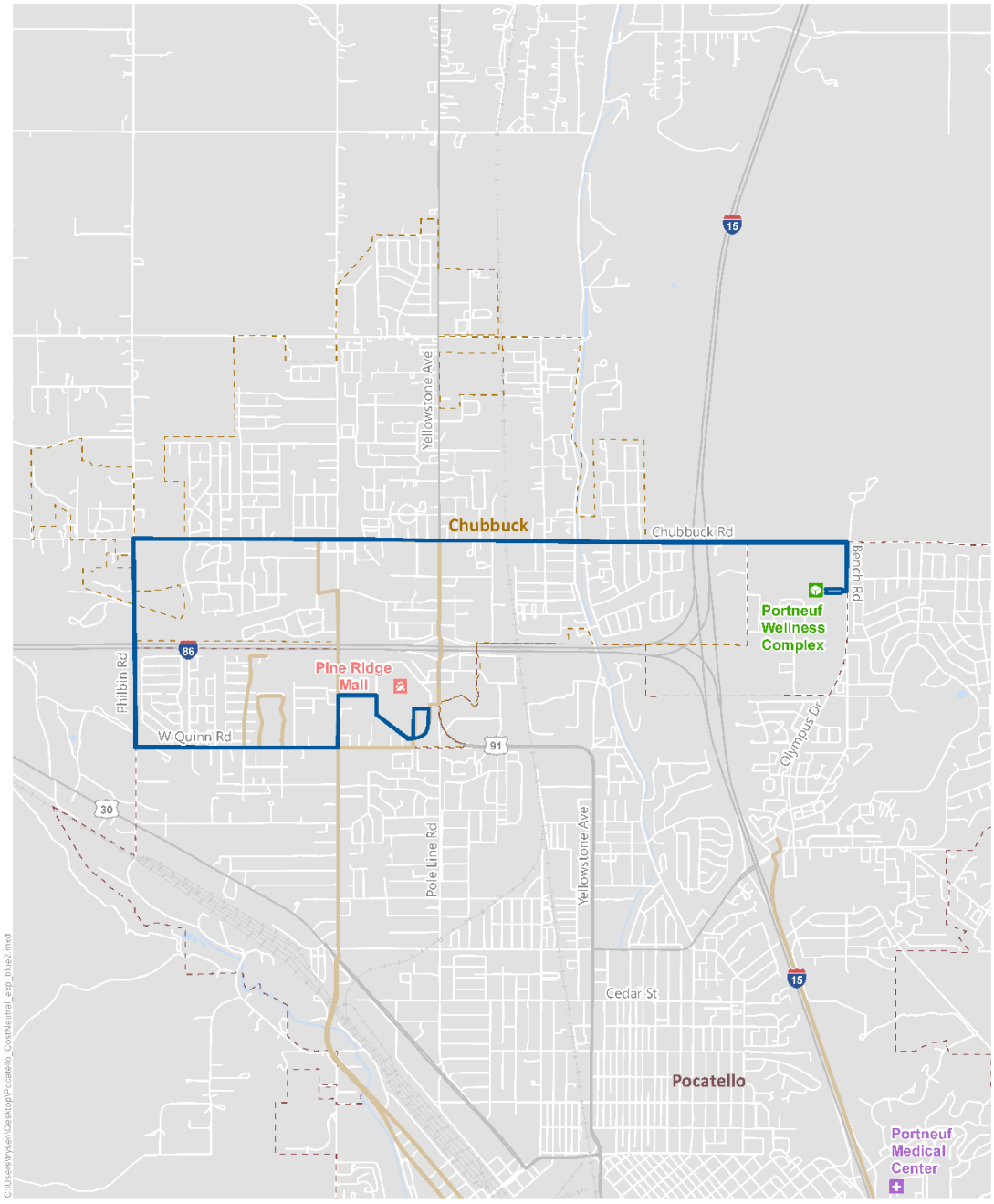
MAP 9: PROPOSED YELLOW ROUTE



MAP 10: PROPOSED PINK ROUTE



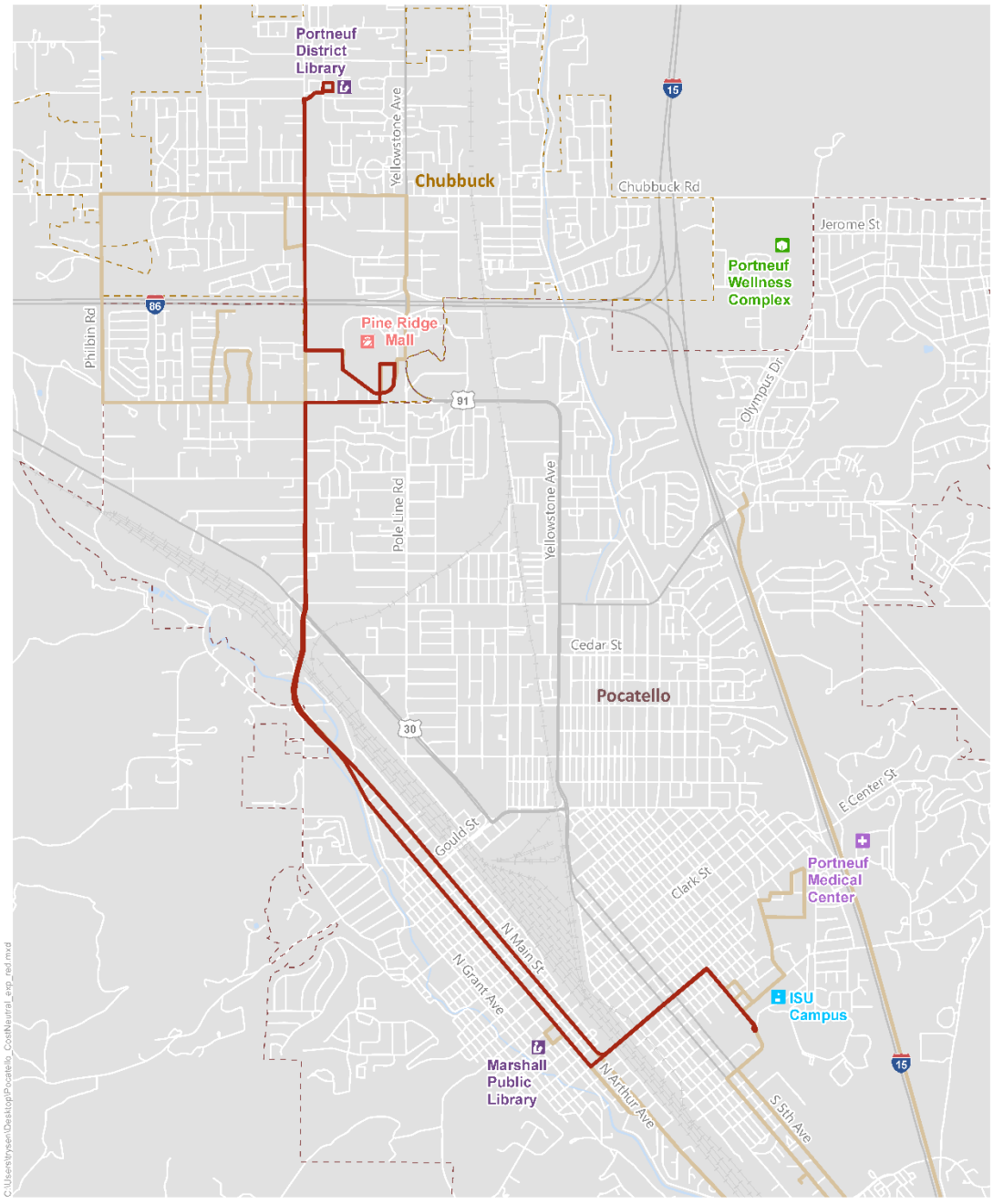
MAP 11: PROPOSED BLUE ROUTE



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Blue Route
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

MAP 12: PROPOSED RED ROUTE



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Red Route
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

Cost Neutral Service Plan

This scenario assumes flat funding and is implementable within PRT's existing funding envelope. The focus of this scenario is to improve the current PRT network by providing bi-directional service on all five year-round routes, with a limited expansion in service hours.

Key elements of the cost neutral plan:

- All five year-round routes run bi-directional service
- Major Transfer Locations:
  - Pine Ridge Mall (Green, Blue, Pink)
  - Cedar/Warren (Green, Pink, Purple)
  - Marshall Public Library (Purple, Yellow)
- Buses arrive once every 60 minutes at each stop
- All five year-round routes run for 12 hours on weekdays (EX: 7am-7pm)
- Green and Purple Routes run for 9 hours on Saturdays (EX: 9am-6pm)
- No Sunday service

TABLE 3: COST NEUTRAL SERVICE SUMMARY

Route	Frequency			Service Span[2]		
	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Green	60	60	-	7am - 7pm	9am - 6pm	-
Purple	60	60	-	7am - 7pm	9am - 6pm	-
Yellow	60	-	-	7am - 7pm	-	-
Pink	60	-	-	7am - 7pm	-	-
Blue	60	-	-	7am - 7pm	-	-

10 Percent Decrease Service Plan

This scenario assumes a 10 percent decrease in funding and requires a reduction in service levels compared to PRT's existing operations. In this scenario all five year-round routes have bi-directional service, but weekday service hours are reduced and weekend service is eliminated.

Key elements of the 10 percent decrease plan:

- All five year-round routes run bi-directional service
- Major Transfer Locations:
  - Pine Ridge Mall (Green, Blue, Pink)
  - Cedar/Warren (Green, Pink, Purple)
  - Marshall Public Library (Purple, Yellow)
- Buses arrive once every 60 minutes at each stop
- All five full-time routes run for 11 hours on weekdays (EX: 7am-6pm)
- No weekend service

[2] Service spans listed are for illustrative purposes only. Schedules have not been developed at this time.

TABLE 4: 10 PERCENT DECREASE SERVICE SUMMARY

Route	Frequency			Service Span[2]		
	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Green	60	-	-	7am - 6pm	-	-
Purple	60	-	-	7am - 6pm	-	-
Yellow	60	-	-	7am - 6pm	-	-
Pink	60	-	-	7am - 6pm	-	-
Blue	60	-	-	7am - 6pm	-	-

Unconstrained Service Plan

This scenario assumes an increase in funding levels that would allow PRT to expand service levels beyond current operations. In this scenario, a sixth year-round route is added to the network and all year-round routes have bi-directional service. Weekday and weekend service hours are significantly increased.

Key elements of the Unconstrained plan:

- All six year-round routes run bi-directional service
- Major Transfer Locations:
  - Pine Ridge Mall (Green, Blue, Pink, Red)
  - Cedar/Warren (Green, Pink, Purple)
  - Marshall Public Library (Purple, Yellow, Red)
- Buses arrive once every 60 minutes at each stop. On the Green Route, buses arrive once every 30 minutes between 7am and 7pm on weekdays.
- All year-round routes run for 16 hours on weekdays (EX: 6am-10pm)
- All year-round routes run for 11 hours on Saturdays (EX: 8am-7pm)
- All year-round routes run for 9 hours on Sundays (EX: 9am-6pm)

TABLE 5: UNCONSTRAINED SERVICE SUMMARY

Route	Frequency			Service Span[2]		
	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Green	30 all day *60 Early AM/Evening*	60	60	6am - 10pm	8am - 7pm	9am - 6pm
Purple	60	60	60	6am - 10pm	8am - 7pm	9am - 6pm
Yellow	60	60	60	6am - 10pm	8am - 7pm	9am - 6pm
Pink	60	60	60	6am - 10pm	8am - 7pm	9am - 6pm
Blue	60	60	60	6am - 10pm	8am - 7pm	9am - 6pm
Red	60	60	60	6am - 10pm	8am - 7pm	9am - 6pm

Customer Experience Recommendations

Many customers and stakeholders indicated a need for more accessible system information, including better information at bus stops, easier to understand route maps and schedules, and a systemwide map depicting all routes together. The proposed service changes provide an opportunity for PRT to adopt a new style of bus stop signs and route/system information that is more user-friendly and accessible.

It is recommended that PRT develop clearly marked bus stop signs that include the following information:

- PRT Logo
- Stop ID Number
- Customer service information, such as website address, help-line phone number, and QR code
- Routes that service the stop

FIGURE 3: BUS STOP SIGN EXAMPLES

In addition to improved bus stop signs and a new systemwide route map, it is also recommended that PRT develop a real-time tracking mobile app. This would allow customers to see next-bus arrival time, access trip planning functions, and see route maps and schedules from their mobile device. This effort could be implemented with the other proposed improvements as part of a coordinated update of PRT's services.

Capital Recommendations

The following capital improvements are intended to support the proposed service changes. These recommendations are aimed at improving system access and making the system more attractive to use for both current and potential customers. These recommendations can be implemented as resources allow and support all three funding scenarios.

Bus Stop Amenities

The proposed recommendations will require both the installation of new stops and upgrades to existing stops. Stop spacing is recommended to be ¼ mile, with stops placed on the farside of intersections where possible. Farside stops eliminate double-stopping at intersections and are safer for pedestrians because they do not have to walk in front of the bus to cross the street. Quarter-mile stop spacing achieves a good balance between speed and access. Stops spaced too close together cause the bus to stop frequently, slowing down service for everyone on-board. However, stops spaced too far apart are difficult for pedestrians to conveniently access. For all new alignment areas (places where existing routes do not currently run), the number of new stops required was calculated based on this ¼ mile spacing standard. In places where existing routes currently operate, new stops will also need to be installed due to the addition of bi-directional service. However not all existing stops were assigned a new bi-directional stop, as it is recommended that PRT consolidate existing stops to better reflect the suggested ¼ mile stop spacing standard. Therefore, the below costs are estimates and do not include costs for upgrades to the existing stops (such as new signs). A full stop audit and consolidation of existing stops is recommended to determine the required number of upgrades for existing stops.

For all new stops, bus stop signs and ADA landing areas with curb ramps are recommended. Shelters are recommended for the following transfer locations and route terminals:

- Cedar and Warren – 2 shelters (each side of the street)
- Pine Ridge Mall – 1 shelter
- Marshall Public Library – 2 shelters (each side of the street)
- Portneuf Wellness Complex – 1 shelter
- Portneuf District Library (unconstrained scenario) – 1 shelter

It is also recommended that benches are installed at stops with more than 15 boardings per day. Ridership levels at a stop should be high enough to justify this investment, and setting a minimum ridership threshold helps to meet this goal. The exact locations can be determined following the implementation of the recommended route alignment changes and subsequent ridership evaluation. The following table shows the capital improvement costs for the cost neutral and 10 percent decrease scenario, as well as the additional improvements that would be necessary if the unconstrained scenario is implemented.

TABLE 6: BUS STOP CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Improvement	Per Unit Cost	Cost Neutral & 10 Percent Decrease		Unconstrained	
		Quantity	Total Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
Bus Stop Sign and Pole	$75	68	$5,100	10	$750
Bus Stop Sign Installation	$50	68	$3,400	10	$500
Bench	$950	20	$19,380	3	$2,850
Bench Installation	$30	20	$612	3	$90
Bus Shelter	$15,000	6	$90,000	1	$15,000
Bus Shelter Installation	$750	6	$4,500	1	$750
5'x8' ADA Landing Area[3]	$2,000	68	$136,000	10	$20,000
Curb Ramps[3]	$3,500	68	$238,000	10	$35,000
		Total:	***$496,992***		***$74,940***

Vehicle and Operating Facilities

The Cost-Neutral and 10 Percent Decrease scenarios use PRT's existing fleet. The Unconstrained scenario requires two additional vehicles – one to operate the new Red Route and one to increase frequency on the Green Route from 60 to 30 minutes. PRT typically pays $125,000 for a new low-floor vehicle, so the Capital Plan includes $250,000 for the purchase of additional vehicles.

Plan Benefits and Impacts

A majority of riders and many members of the general public will experience a positive impact from the recommendations, including more direct trips, shorter travel times, expanded service hours, and a system that is easier to understand. These improvements are intended to generate ridership through additional use by existing customers and by attracting new customers to the system.

Benefits

Bi-directional Service

Bi-directional routes go up and down the same street, so customers can get off the bus on one side of the street and get back on the bus on the other side of the street. This means more direct trips, shorter travel times, and more access to service - riders will now be able to catch the bus twice in one hour (once in each direction).

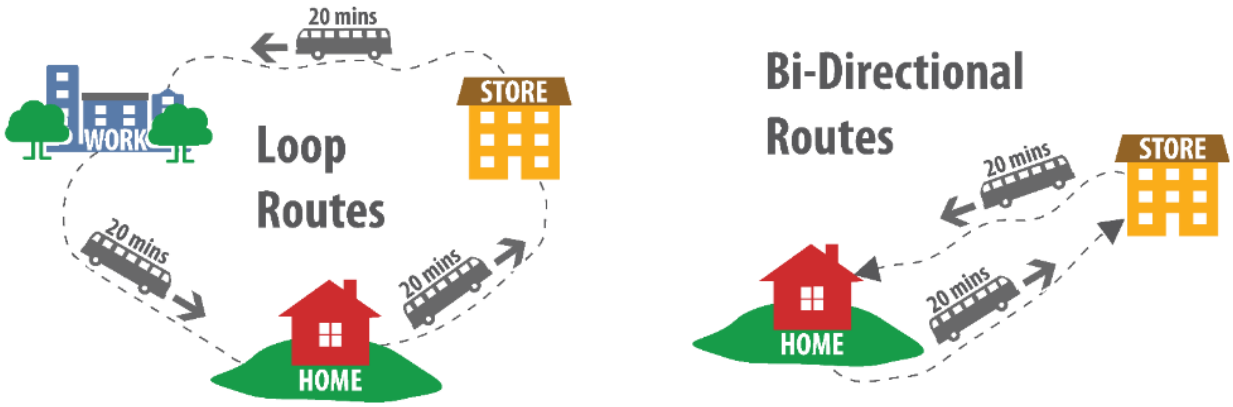
[3] It is assumed that all new stop locations will need ADA landing pads and curb ramps. However, a detailed assessment of stop locations was not conducted. These numbers therefore represent maximum requirements.

Example:

On the existing Route C, it takes approximately 5 minutes to go from Hiline Rd/Chubbuck Rd to Portneuf Wellness Complex, and 55 minutes to go from Portneuf Wellness Complex to Hiline Rd/Chubbuck Rd.

On the proposed Blue Route, it will take approximately 5 minutes to go from Hiline Rd/Chubbuck Rd to Portneuf Wellness Complex, and 5 minutes to go from Portneuf Wellness Complex to Hiline Rd/Chubbuck Rd, reducing overall travel time by 50 minutes

FIGURE 4: BI-DIRECTIONAL ROUTE BENEFITS



Easier to Understand

PRT's existing routes and system are complex. To make service more appealing and easier to understand, the proposed recommendations were designed to be logical and intuitive. Routes were designed to be bi-directional and linear, with minimal deviations. This makes it easier for both current and potential customers to figure out where each of the routes goes, and which bus to take to get to their destination.

Expanded Service Hours

Efficiency savings from the proposed route alignments in the cost-neutral plan allow all five full-time routes to operate for 12 hours per weekday. Currently, only three of the five routes run for 12 hours per day; the remaining 2 operate for 11 hours per day. The savings also allow Saturday service to be extended by one additional hour, for a Saturday service span of 9 hours versus the existing 8. This amounts to an additional 12 hours of service per week. In the unconstrained plan service hours are substantially expanded to include both weekend and evening service, providing current and potential customers with significantly more travel options.

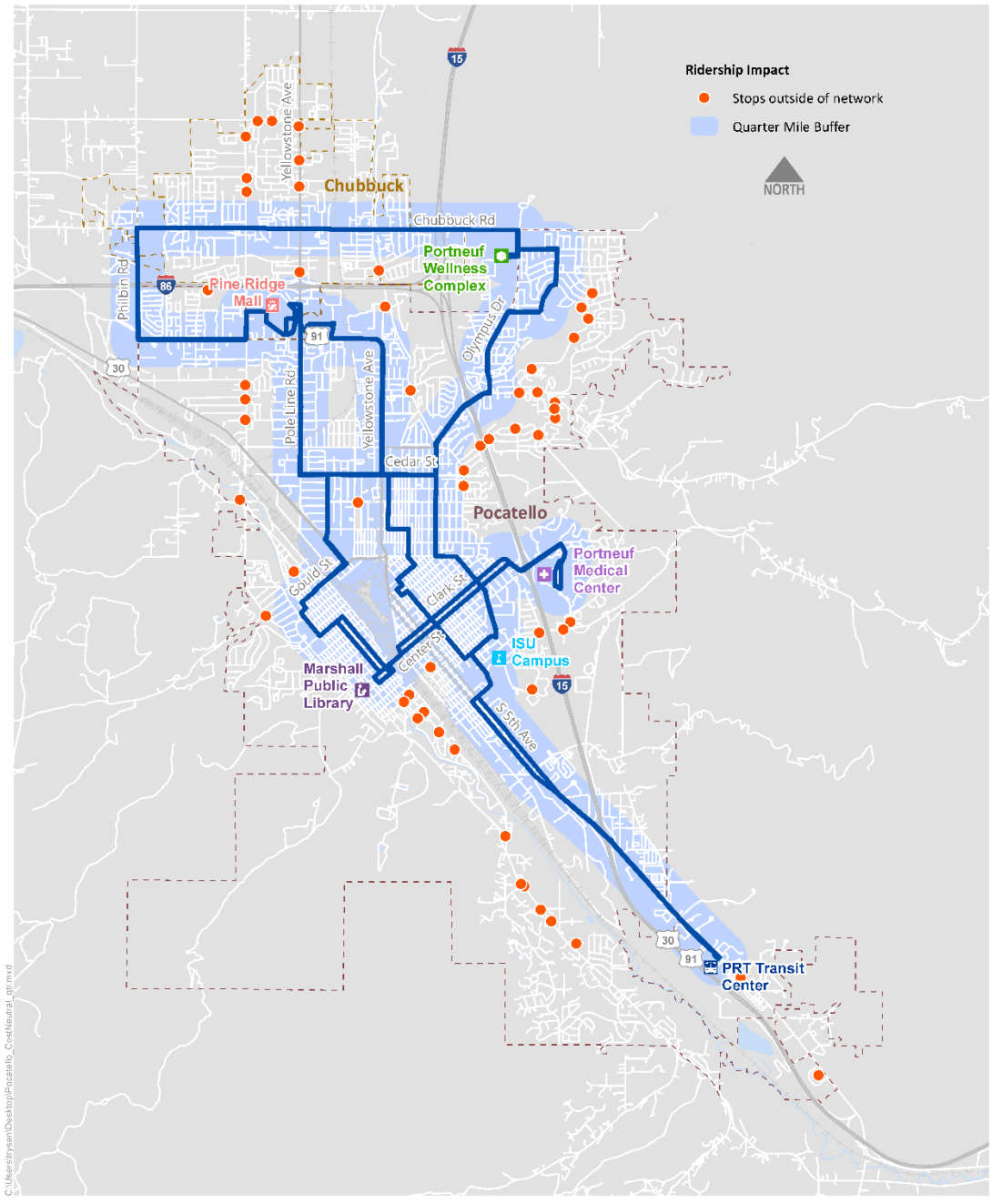
Impacts

In order to achieve the benefits described above, the geographic coverage of the system had to be reduced. In all scenarios, efforts were made to minimize the impact of the proposed changes on existing customers by maintaining service in high ridership areas. Stops that are no longer served showed little to no stop activity during the existing conditions analysis, meaning few, if any, customers use those stops. Existing stops that fall outside of a 5-minute walk (quarter-mile distance) and a 10-minute walk (half-mile distance) are shown below for each scenario (Maps 13-16).

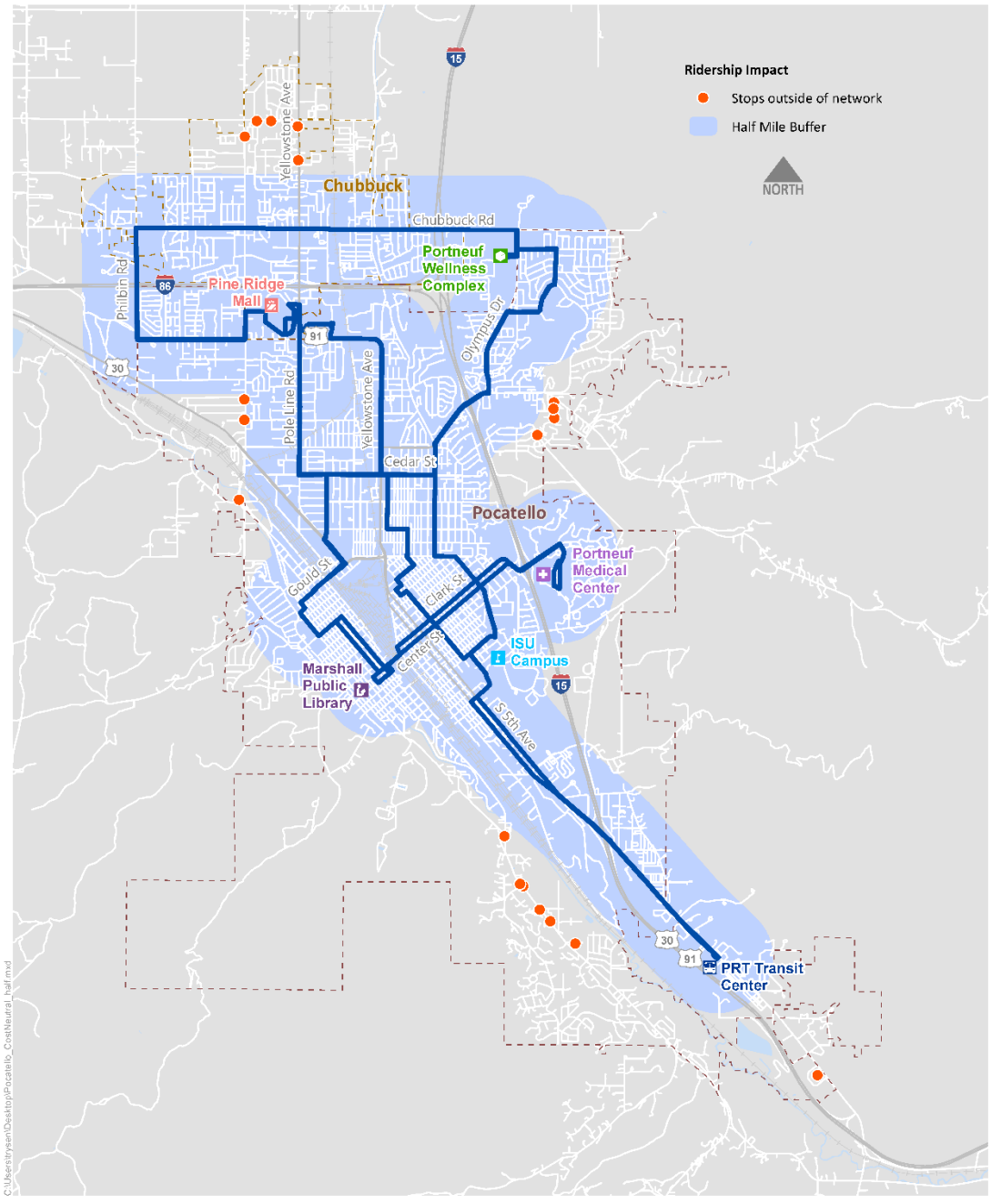
TABLE 7: IMPACT ON EXISTING CUSTOMERS

Impact	Cost Neutral & 10 Percent Decrease		Unconstrained	
	Within 1/4 Mile	Within 1/2 Mile	Within 1/4 Mile	Within 1/2 Mile
Number of Existing Bus Stops Served	200	239	210	246
Percent of Existing Bus Stops Served	77%	92%	81%	95%

MAP 13: COST NEUTRAL AND 10 PERCENT DECREASE - IMPACTED BUS STOPS, QUARTER MILE ZONE



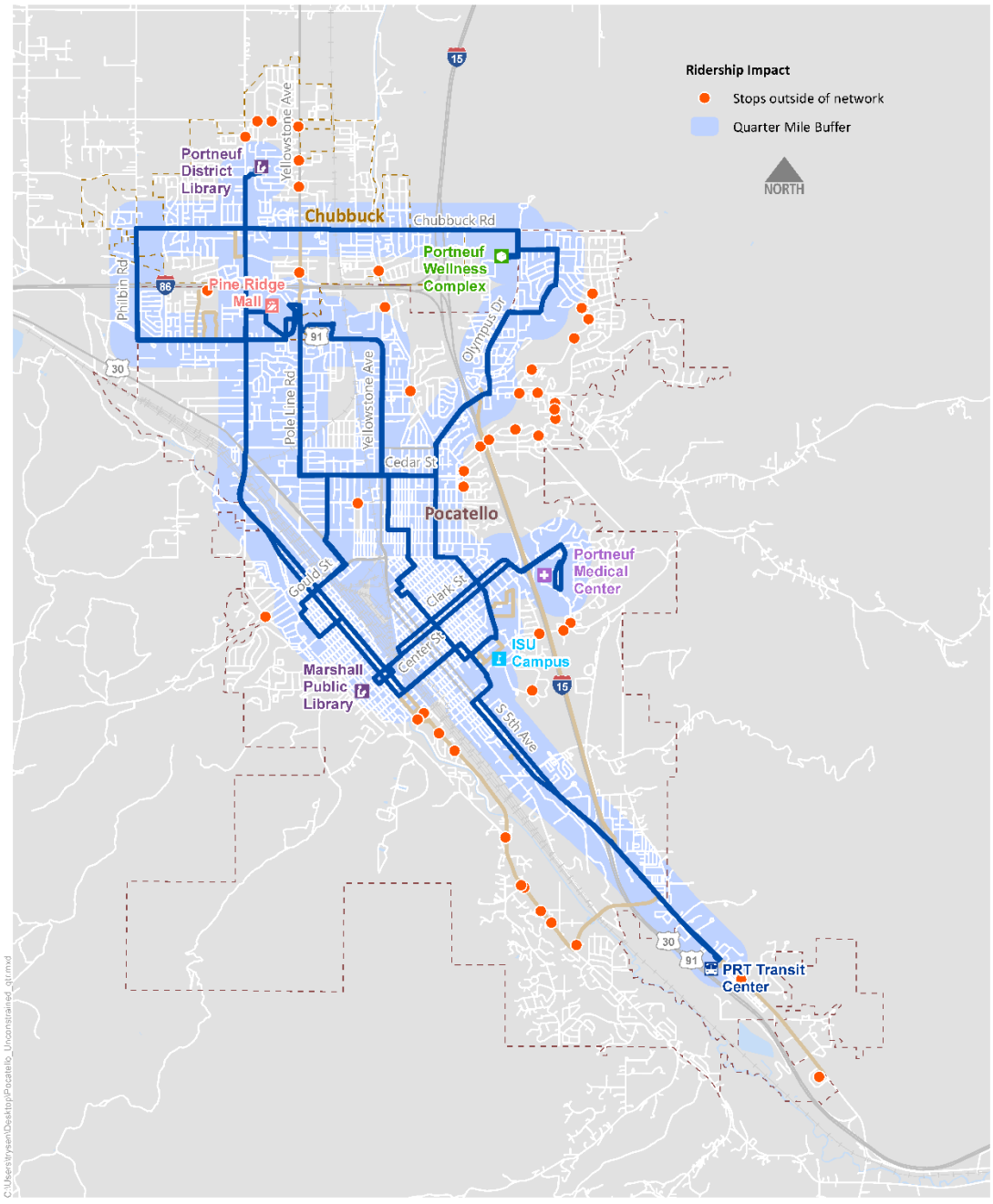
MAP 14: COST NEUTRAL AND 10 PERCENT DECREASE – IMPACTED BUS STOPS, HALF MILE ZONE



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Cost Neutral + 10 Percent Decrease Scenario
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

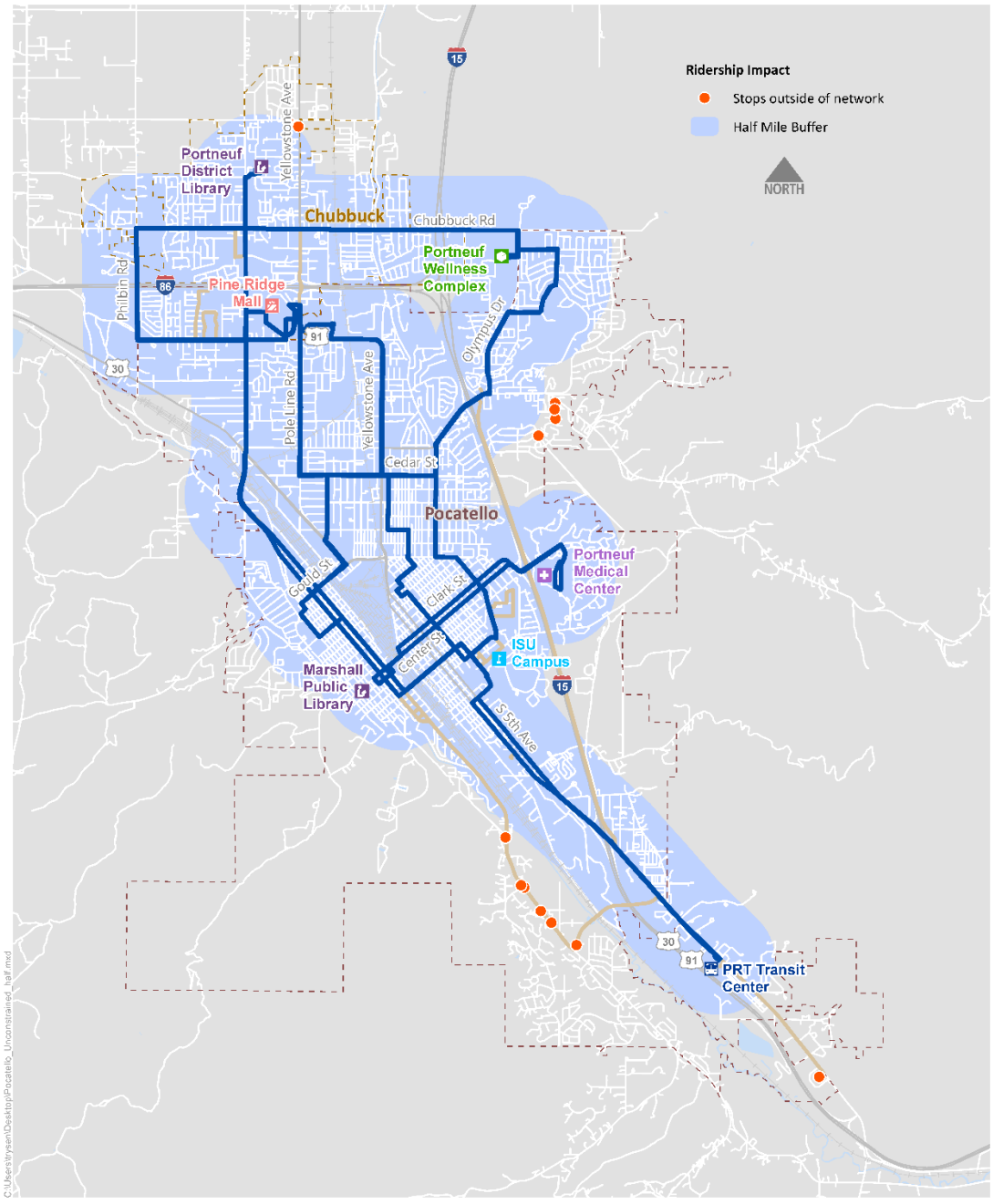
MAP 15: UNCONSTRAINED – IMPACTED BUS STOPS, QUARTER MILE ZONE



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Unconstrained Scenario
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

MAP 16: UNCONSTRAINED – IMPACTED BUS STOPS, HALF MILE ZONE



Next Steps

Upon adoption of the Master Transit Plan, PRT should continue to work with stakeholders and community members to ensure the successful implementation of the service recommendations. Key next steps include the following:

- Develop detailed schedules and maps for each proposed route, as well as a new system map showing all routes together
- Implement cost neutral route alignment changes and new service hours
- Conduct a stop audit and identify stops for consolidation
- Identify capital funding for stop enhancements and customer experience recommendations

It is anticipated that the proposed recommendations will generate additional ridership by encouraging existing riders to take more trips on transit and by attracting new customers. A growth in ridership will result in new farebox revenue, which PRT can reinvest in the system to provide additional service. This will allow PRT to move towards implementation of the Unconstrained Service Plan.