Pocatello Regional Transit Master Transit Plan

Market Assessment

September 2017

Bannock Transportation Planning Organization

PRT Pocatello Regional Transit

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Introduction

Bannock Transportation Planning Organization's *Master Transit Plan* is a transit system study that seeks to identify how Pocatello Regional Transit (PRT) can better serve the Pocatello region both today and in the future. The study will provide a roadmap for delivering transit services in the Pocatello Region based on existing and future market conditions, customer needs and expectations, transit service and network performance, and stakeholder input. Recommendations will be focused on using best practice transit strategies to address short-term and long-term mobility needs within the Agency's current and potential financial capacity.

This Market Assessment provides an understanding of the current and projected land use patterns, population and employment characteristics, and planning efforts in the Pocatello Regional Transit service area. These demographic, development, and policy characteristics can significantly impact the effectiveness and attractiveness of transit within the Pocatello Region. Therefore, understanding these factors is key for PRT to efficiently allocate resources to ensure services meet the community's needs. Overall, the following Market Assessment will examine the existing market conditions, challenges, and opportunities for transit within the Pocatello region. These findings will help guide recommendations for PRT's transit network.

The Market Assessment includes the following areas:

- **Land Use and Urban Form:** Provides an overview of the region's urban form, land use patterns, key destinations, and transportation infrastructure.
- **Market Area Profile:** Identifies the community population, demographics, and employment patterns in the PRT service area and greater Bannock County region. In addition, the Market Area Profile reviews growth projections for the PRT service area and indicates transit reliant areas. Areas that can support transit service are also identified.
- **Governing Documents:** Assesses the planning area's overarching transportation and land uses policy frameworks.
- **Market Assessment Conclusions:** Summarizes key findings

Land Use and Urban Form

Location

The Pocatello Region/Portneuf Valley Area, as defined by BTPO's Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ), is located in the southeastern corner of Idaho, between Twin Falls and Idaho Falls. Situated on the northern edge of Bannock County, the area is home to 77,000 people and 35,000 jobs. Pocatello is the largest city within the planning area, with over 54,000 residents, while Chubbuck is the second largest city with 14,000 residents.

MAP 1: POCATELLO AND CHUBBUCK REGIONAL CONTEXT

Historical Context and Urban Form

The City of Pocatello sits at the foot of the Blackfoot Mountains in Southeast Idaho. Founded in 1882, the city began as an outpost for the Union Pacific Railroad and quickly became known as the 'Gateway to the Northwest' due to its position both geographically and as a key transportation junction. As a result, Pocatello's form has largely been shaped by both the railroad and the area's topography.

Within Pocatello the railroad diagonally bisects the town, creating a physical barrier throughout the most walkable, dense areas of the city. The streets throughout these historic neighborhoods were designed with compact blocks in a grid pattern, rotated to follow the railroad's northwest-southeast diagonal orientation. Despite the high connectivity provided by the grid network, accessibility remains an issue in this area due to the limited number of roads that provide connections across the railroad tracks.

FIGURE 1: OLD TOWN AND DOWNTOWN POCATELLO

North of Pocatello's historic downtown the railroad splits, with one branch veering west towards the airport and another running north through the eastern part of Chubbuck. Near the spilt the street grid rotates and assumes a north-south orientation until Alemeda Rd. At this point, and throughout the rest of northern Pocatello and Chubbuck, the street pattern becomes auto-centric and no longer exhibits a compact, pedestrian oriented form.

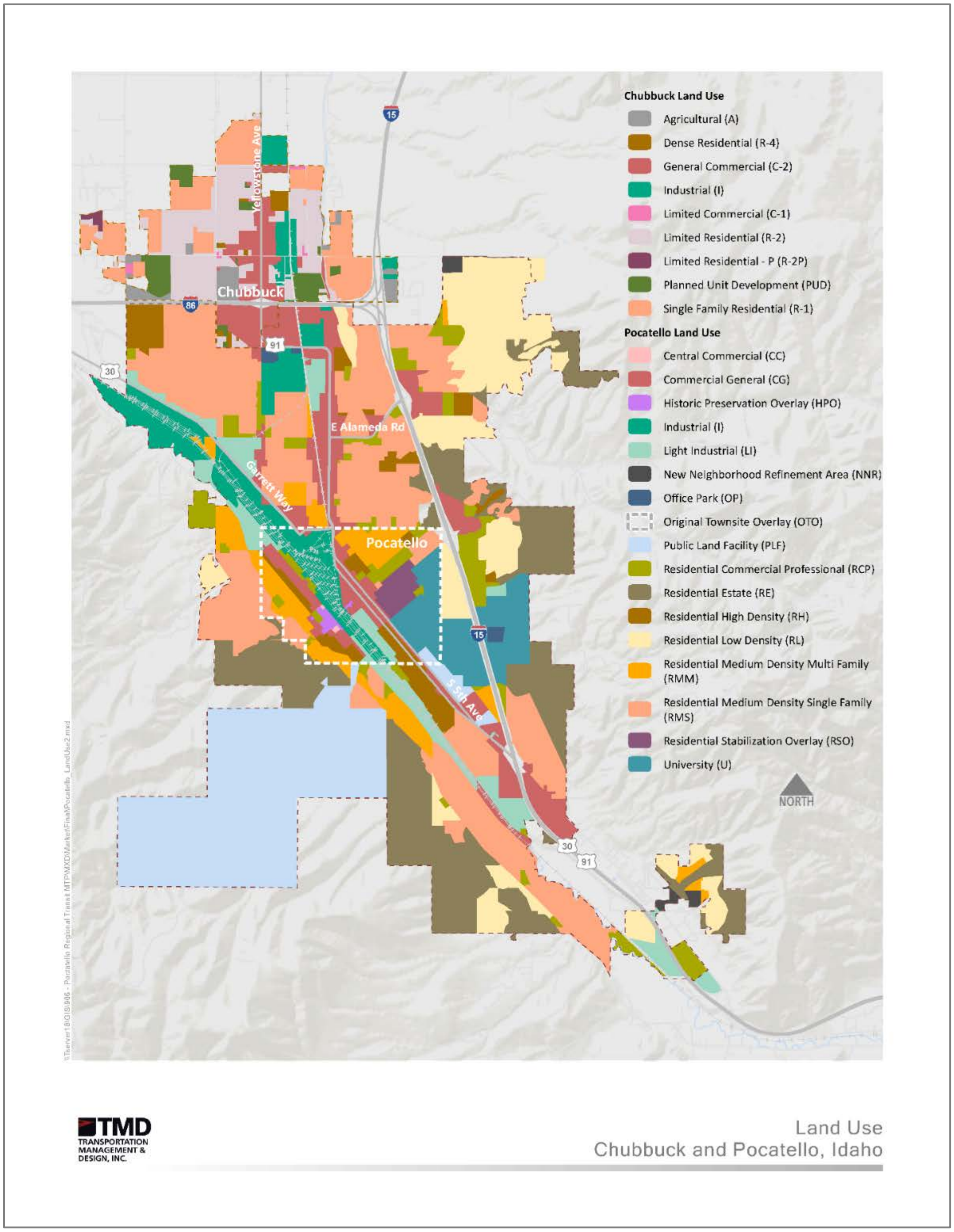
FIGURE 2: NORTHERN POCATELLO AND CHUBBUCK

These patterns have important implications for where transit can effectively and efficiently operate. Areas throughout historic Pocatello that feature compact blocks in a grid pattern are more easily served by transit, due to their walkability and direct routing. However, given the physical barrier created by the railroad in this area, providing connections between neighborhoods presents a challenge for PRT. In areas throughout northern Pocatello and Chubbuck where car-accessibility is prioritized over pedestrians and bicycles, providing efficient transit is also a challenge.

Land Use Patterns

The following section provides an overview of Pocatello and Chubbuck's various land use designations and their locations within the region (Map 2). Supportive development patterns and densities help to encourage transit usage by enabling efficient and effective service. Transit success requires High population and employment densities, integrated, mixed land uses, and high-density land uses focused on continuous corridors and compact centers.

Map 2: Pocatello and Chubbuck Land Use



Residential High-Density Districts

Residential High-Density Districts are sparsely located within the City, however, only a few areas possess high density residential development. These include areas situated off Old Town's Main Street, south of ISU and Mountain View Cemetery, Portneuf Towers (affordable housing), Christensen Courts (affordable housing), and Kirkwood Meadows Apartment Complex. These high density residential districts are typically developed within compact urban block patterns with high numbers of riders and destinations, which supports the efficient operation of transit.

Residential Medium-Density Multi Family Districts

With 8-12 units per acre, Residential Medium-Density Multi Family Districts provide higher residential densities and are considered a transit supportive level of development. These districts are predominantly situated in Pocatello's Downtown and Old Town. The multi-family dwellings are specifically located between Oak Street and E. Center Street, and stretch west of Old Town's Main Street.

Residential Medium-Density Single Family Districts

According to the City of Pocatello's Comprehensive Plan, Residential Medium-Density Single Family Districts (RMS) account for the largest land use designation in Pocatello and incorporate 5-7 dwelling units per acre. These districts are positioned in close proximity to Yellowstone Avenue, the region's major commercial corridor. RMS districts are found in the residential neighborhoods bound by:

- E. Oak Street, E. Alameda Road, Yellowstone Avenue, and I-15
- Trail Creek, west of Portneuf River
- North of E. Alameda Road and west of I-15
- North and south of NOP Park
- North-west of NOP Park and south of I-86

Residential Estate and Residential Low-Density Districts

Residential Estate and Residential Low-Density Districts also account for a large portion of the Pocatello's zoning distribution. These zoning districts are low density and are characterized by large parcel sizes and a sprawling street pattern. Pocatello's Residential Estate Districts are located on the City's peripheral areas by Bannock Highway and Highland Golf Course. The location and density of these residential developments present a challenge when delivering effective and efficient transit service due to the long distances to travel for few, sparsely populated areas. This type of single family residential development is anticipated to continue as the dominant housing typology in the future.

General Commercial Districts

The City's General Commercial Districts are strategically positioned along the region's main corridors and arterials. The highest concentrations of Commercial General Districts are located along the length of Yellowstone Avenue, 5th Avenue (Downtown), and the northern end of Main Street (Old Town). Other commercial centers include the Pine Ridge Mall and Westwood Mall. The Commercial General Districts are centrally located, such that many of the City's commercial developments are positioned within the "core" area of Old Town and Downtown, where transit service can effectively and efficiently be operated.

Light and Regular Industrial

Light and Regular Industrial uses are generally concentrated on the eastern portion of the City, and are centered around the railroad that bisects the City. Industrial uses include manufacturing and processing plants, automotive shops, storage and shipping facilities, as well as construction supply compounds. The placement of the industrial zones disrupts the compact block pattern and creates a further divide between Pocatello's Downtown and Old Town, presenting potential challenges for transit service within these areas.

Mixed-Use Development

Mixed-Use Development Districts are predominantly located within Pocatello's Downtown and Old Town. The Comprehensive plan deems mixed-use development as a mix of residential, commercial, and professional uses. The intensity of Pocatello's mixed-use development is minimal both spatially and in frequency. However, as described in the Comprehensive Plan's guidelines for future growth, increased mixed-use developments are greatly emphasized and encouraged. Increased mixed-use development centered around corridors with transit service is ultimately more supportive for transit operations, as it promotes a balanced level of ridership throughout the day.

Key Destinations

Key destinations, which include retail developments and restaurants, recreational and medical facilities, civic and educational institutions, and green spaces such as parks and trails, are found across both Pocatello and Chubbuck. These destinations will be important to consider when developing service changes and recommendations, as they are considered significant trip generators. Top destinations include:

- Idaho State University
- Pocatello Old Town
- Bannock County Courthouse
- Portneuf Medical Center
- Yellowstone Avenue Commercial Corridor
- Westwood Mall
- Pine Ridge Mall
- Costco
- Walmart Supercenter
- Ross Park Aquatic Complex
- Pocatello Skate Park
- Greenway Trail System
- Pocatello Community Recreation Center
- Portneuf Wellness Complex

Transportation Infrastructure

Overview

Bannock County's transportation system is an interconnected network of roadways, railways, transit services, and facilities for pedestrians and bicycles. The area is connected to several regional centers, such as Idaho Falls and Twin Falls, via two major roadways – I-15 and I-86. Additional regional connections are provided by the Pocatello Regional Airport and by regional buses such as Greyhound bus and the Salt Lake Express.

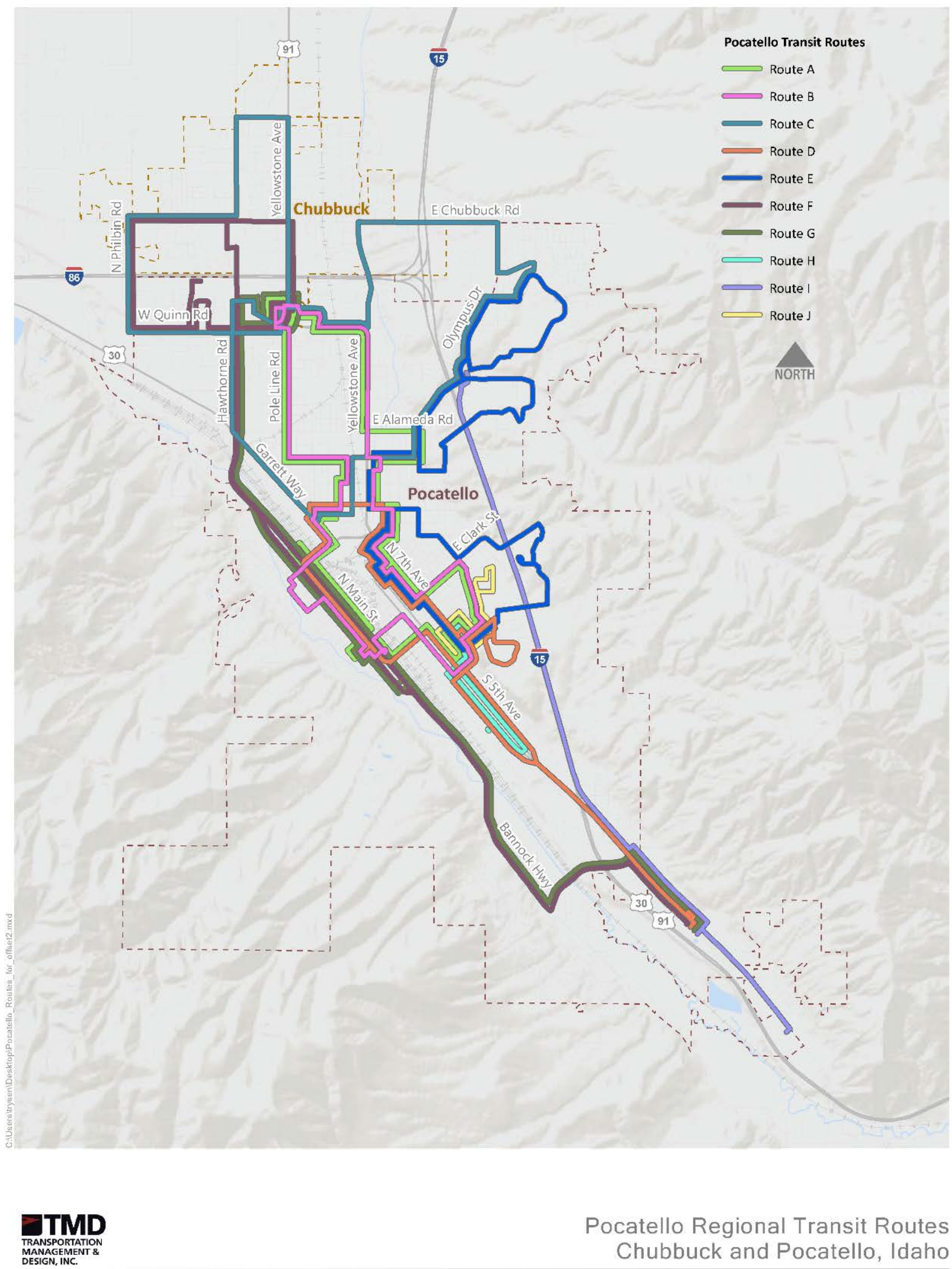
Transit

Within the Cities of Pocatello and Chubbuck, PRT operates ten fixed-routes (five year-round routes, two ISU campus circulators, three school commute fixed routes) and paratransit service. Outside of the cities, the agency also operates two commuter routes and door-to-door rural services. Table 1 summarizes PRT's fixed route services, while Map 3 illustrates where the fixed-routes operate.

TABLE 1: POCATELLO REGIONAL TRANSIT FIXED-ROUTES

Route	Service Type	Description	Service Span	Service Frequency
Route A	Fixed Route	ISU - East Side - Pocatello Square - Pine Ridge Mall - Downtown	6:13am – 6:13pm (M-F) 9:13am – 5:13pm (Sat)	Every 60 minutes
Route B	Fixed Route	Downtown - Pine Ridge Mall - Pocatello Square - East Side - ISU	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 Highschool	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 Highschool - 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 3: POCATELLO REGIONAL TRANSIT FIXED-ROUTES



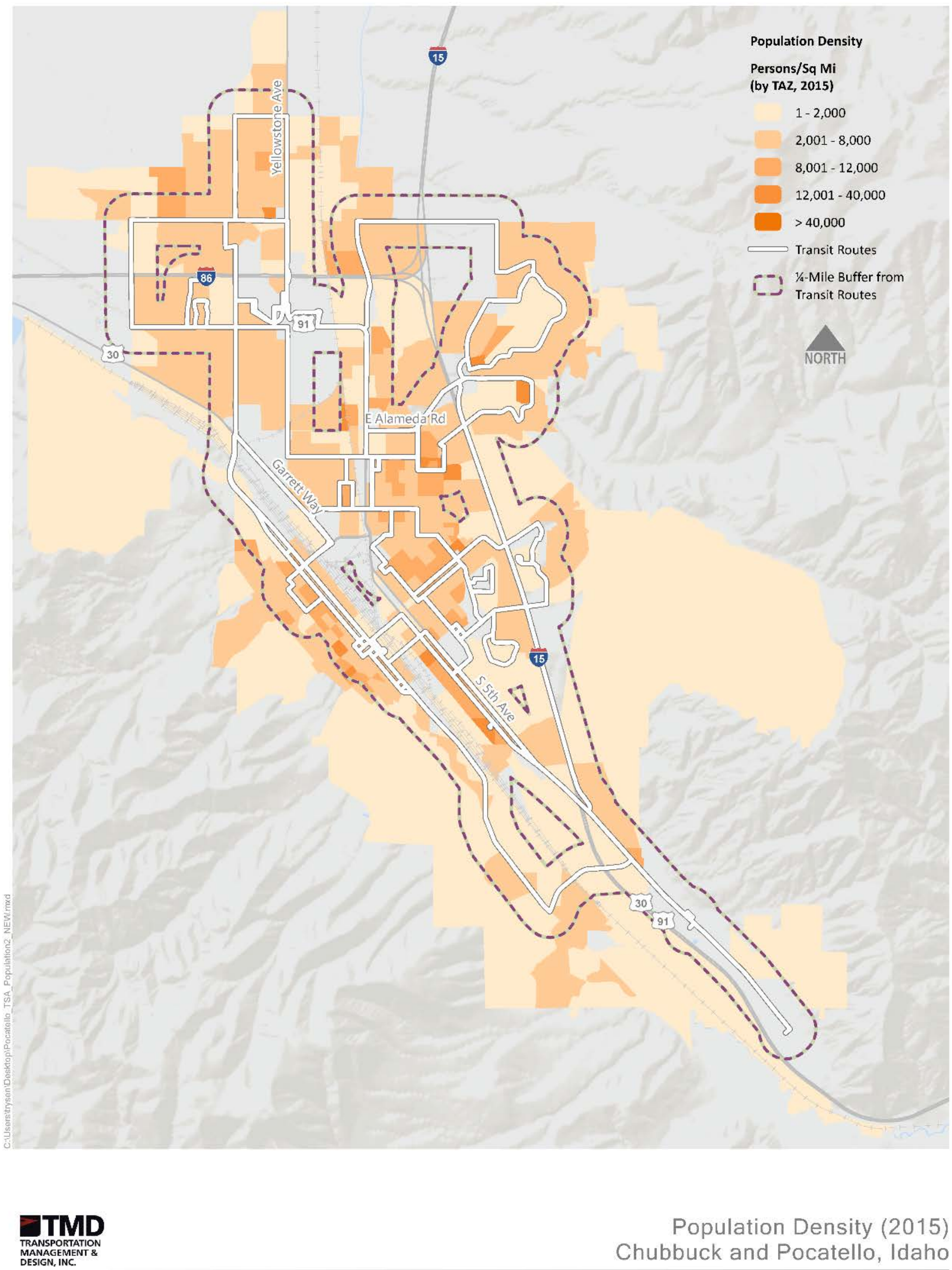
Market Area Profile

The following market area profile analyzes demographic and employment characteristics across Pocatello and Chubbuck to determine areas that are more likely to be supportive of transit. Both existing and projected conditions are considered.

Existing Population

The Portneuf Valley had a population of 77,163 in 2015, a 4.2 percent growth from 2010. High population densities in 2015 centered around Pocatello's Old Town and Downtown areas, specifically in the residential neighborhoods near S. 4th Avenue, Raymond Park, Kirkwood Meadows Apartments, Alameda Park, and Pine Ridge Mall. These residential areas range from 7,001 persons per square mile to over 12,500 persons per square mile. In contrast, low population densities occur in the peripheral areas of Pocatello and Chubbuck's tract housing developments where densities fall below 1,001-3,500 persons per square mile and 0-1,000 persons per square mile. Map 4 displays the Pocatello region's population densities in 2015.

MAP 4: POPULATION DENSITY, 2015



Transit Market Characteristics

Certain segments of the populations rely on transit for basic mobility due to limited access to private vehicles, financial constraints, or physical limitations. A review of US Census and American Community Survey data (2015 5-Year Estimates) identifies where these 'transit reliant' populations are located in the Pocatello/Chubbuck region.

Minority Population

The Bannock County region is home to several minority populations – 8 percent of the county population identifies as Hispanic or Latino, 1 percent identifies as Asian, 3 percent identifies as American Indian, and 1 percent identifies as Black. Within the county's minority population, over half are Hispanic or Latino individuals. Not surprisingly given the areas proximity to Native American land, 18 percent of the minority population consists of individuals who identify as American Indian. Across the county, the minority population density is highest within residential neighborhoods adjacent to Idaho State University, Alameda Park, Pocatello Old Town & Raymond Park, Bonneville Park, and North Chubbuck. Concentrations of minority populations also reside in close proximity (1/3 mile) to Pocatello and Chubbuck's commercial corridors: Yellowstone Avenue, 4th and 5th Avenues, and Main Street. These areas of high density minority populations have access to multiple PRT fixed route bus services (served by Routes A, B, C, D, G, J). Low densities of minority populations occur in the peripheral areas of Pocatello and Chubbuck, which are characterized by sprawling street patterns and are not served well by transit. Map 5 displays the distribution of minority populations across the Pocatello region.

Low Income Households

Nearly 19 percent of residents in Bannock County live in poverty or are designated as low-income households. Low income residents tend to rely on transit as an affordable mobility option due to the high costs associated with personal transportation, and are often also one-or-zero vehicle households. Maps 6 and 7 show the similar geographic distributions of these two populations throughout the Pocatello region. It is particularly important to serve these lower-income communities, as recent studies have shown that length of commute is the most influential factor in an individual's ability to get out of poverty[1]. Having access to fast, direct transit service can reduce commute times and provide a reliable means of getting to work for residents who do not have access to a personal vehicle. Access to transit further contributes to upward mobility by providing affordable access to basic needs such as grocery shopping, medical facilities, and social services.

There are concentrations of Bannock County residents living under the poverty level spread across both Chubbuck and Pocatello (Figure 12). The City of Pocatello has the highest densities of low income individuals, which are concentrated in the City's Downtown and Old Town, as well as in the residential neighborhoods west of the Pine Ridge Mall. Residential neighborhoods in Central Chubbuck also demonstrate high densities of low-income households. Overall, areas with a high density and high total number of low income and in poverty households currently have access to transit. However, low-income households located in North Chubbuck have limited access to transit service that provides a direct route to the Yellowstone Avenue commercial corridor, Downtown Pocatello, or Old Town Pocatello.

Zero Vehicle Households

Zero vehicle households depend on transit or alternative modes of transportation to complete daily tasks, some by choice, but most out of necessity. Map 7 displays the distribution of zero vehicle households across the Pocatello region. Similar to low-income household levels, the highest densities of zero vehicle households are situated within

[1] Chetty, Raj and Nathaniel Hendren, *The Impacts of Neighborhoods on Intergenerational Mobility: Childhood Exposure Effects and County-Level Estimates.* Harvard University, 2015.

Downtown Pocatello, Old Town Pocatello, and neighborhoods in Chubbuck near the Yellowstone corridor (Maps 6 and 7 illustrate this correlation). Within Pocatello, high densities of zero vehicle households are also positioned between the Westwood Mall and Yellowstone Avenue (served by Routes A, B, C, D), as well as the residential neighborhood north of Alameda Park (served by Routes A, B, E). In Chubbuck, high densities of zero vehicle households surround the Pine Ridge Mall (served by Routes B, C, G).

Youth (Ages 10-17)

Youth tend to ride transit in greater proportions than the rest of the population, as they are independent enough to ride transit but not yet old enough to drive. Countywide, youths aged 10 to 17 make up roughly 12 percent of the population. In Pocatello, the areas demonstrating high density of youths are in the residential neighborhoods situated within Downtown (served by Routes A, B, D, E, H) and Old Town (served by Routes A, B, F, G), as well those neighborhoods in close proximity to Raymond Park (served by Routes A, B, F, G), Alameda Park, Highland golf course (served by Routes A, B, D, E, H, I), and Pine Ridge Mall (served by Routes B, C, F, G). In Chubbuck, high densities of youth occur within the residential neighborhood bound by East Chubbuck Road and West Siphon Road to the north and south, and Yellowstone Avenue and Hawthorne Road to the east and west (served by Route C).

PRT's fixed school routes sufficiently cover the areas where youths are densely populated. Routes F, G, and I provide transit opportunities to those communities and schools that are located in Chubbuck and Pocatello's peripheral areas. Map 8 displays the distribution of the youth population across the Pocatello region, while highlighting school locations and their relation to youth densities.

Seniors (Age 65+)

Across Bannock County, 12 percent of the population is comprised of seniors (over the age of 65). This proportion has grown 3.8 percent since the 2000 Census year. The highest densities of senior populations occur in Downtown and Old Town Pocatello's residential neighborhoods, retirement facilities and housing units located across from the Pine Ridge Mall, the residential neighborhood situated between Yellowstone Avenue and Alameda Park, and the residential neighborhood bound by East Chubbuck Road and West Siphon Road to the north and south, and Yellowstone Avenue and Hawthorne Road to the east and west. Access to the region's medical center is fairly limited for those senior populations residing in Chubbuck, Southeast Pocatello, and other peripheral areas. Currently, PRT's E Route provides service to the Portneuf Medical Center. However, Route E's coverage is constrained to Pocatello's core and northwest residential neighborhoods. This limitation can place a greater demand for door-to-door & paratransit services to and from the Portneuf Medical Center. Due to seniors residing in rural-peripheral residential areas, door-to-door and paratransit services may also be in greater demand than fixed routes services. Map 9 displays the distribution of the senior population density across the Pocatello region.

Young Adults (Ages 18-24)

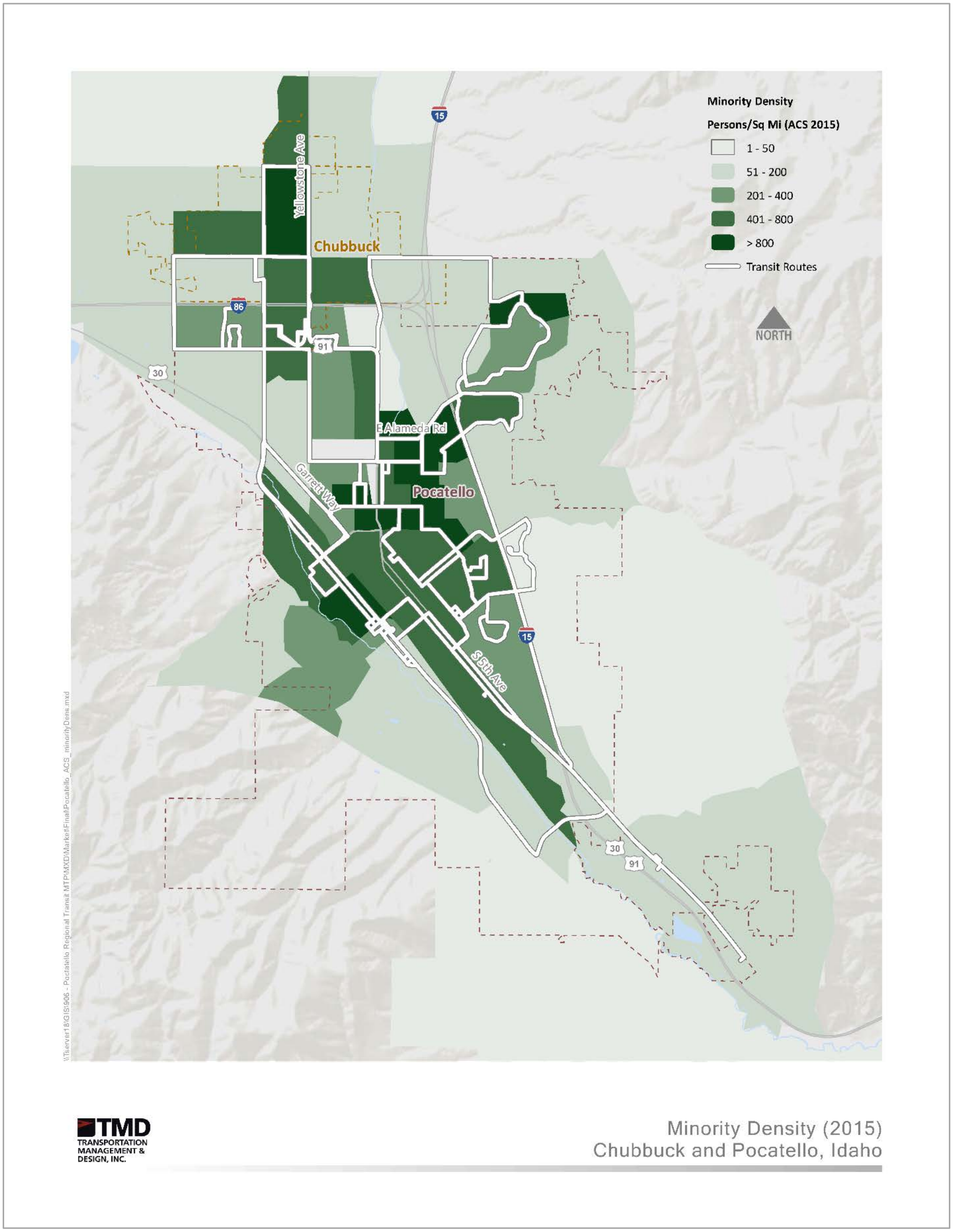
College age adults are also more likely to be transit riders. Within the Pocatello region, college age residents are mostly concentrated in southern Pocatello around Idaho State University, which has a student population of approximately 13,500. Across Bannock County, college age students represent 11 percent of the overall population. The greatest concentration of college students occurs within the ISU campus housing facilities and throughout the mixed-use development area located between 5th Avenue and the Pocatello train tracks, accounting for nearly one-third of this area's total population (served by Routes B, D, E, H, J).

Several campus circulators operate within the heavily concentrated college age population areas. Route H provides frequent transit service to off-campus housing developments located on 4th and 5th Avenues. Route J is an internal circulator that provides transit access for students travelling within the campus grounds. Map 10 displays the distribution of the young adult population across the Pocatello region.

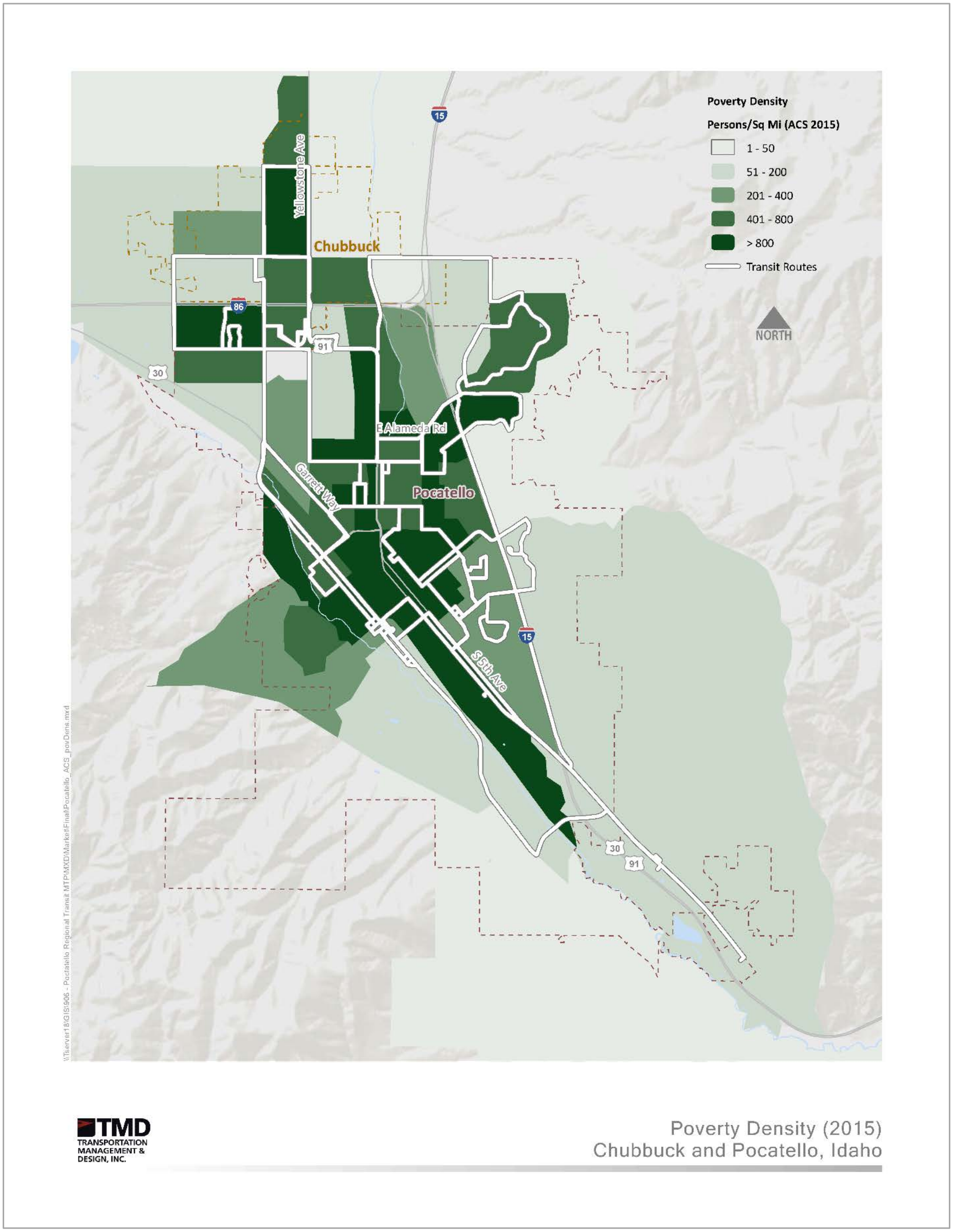
Disabled Population

About fourteen percent (14 percent) of the Bannock County population is disabled. The area with the highest disabled population density, with over 800 people per square mile, is north of Downtown Pocatello, a residential neighborhood bound between E. Center Street and E. Oak Street. This particular residential neighborhood is served by Routes E & D; however, these routes fail to provide direct connections to the heart of the neighborhood. Instead, these route alignments only serve the outer areas of the neighborhood, limiting the access they provide. Additional areas displaying a high density of disabled populations occur in Pocatello's Old Town and in close proximity to Yellowstone Avenue and E. Alameda Road. Map 11 displays the distribution of the disabled population across the Pocatello region.

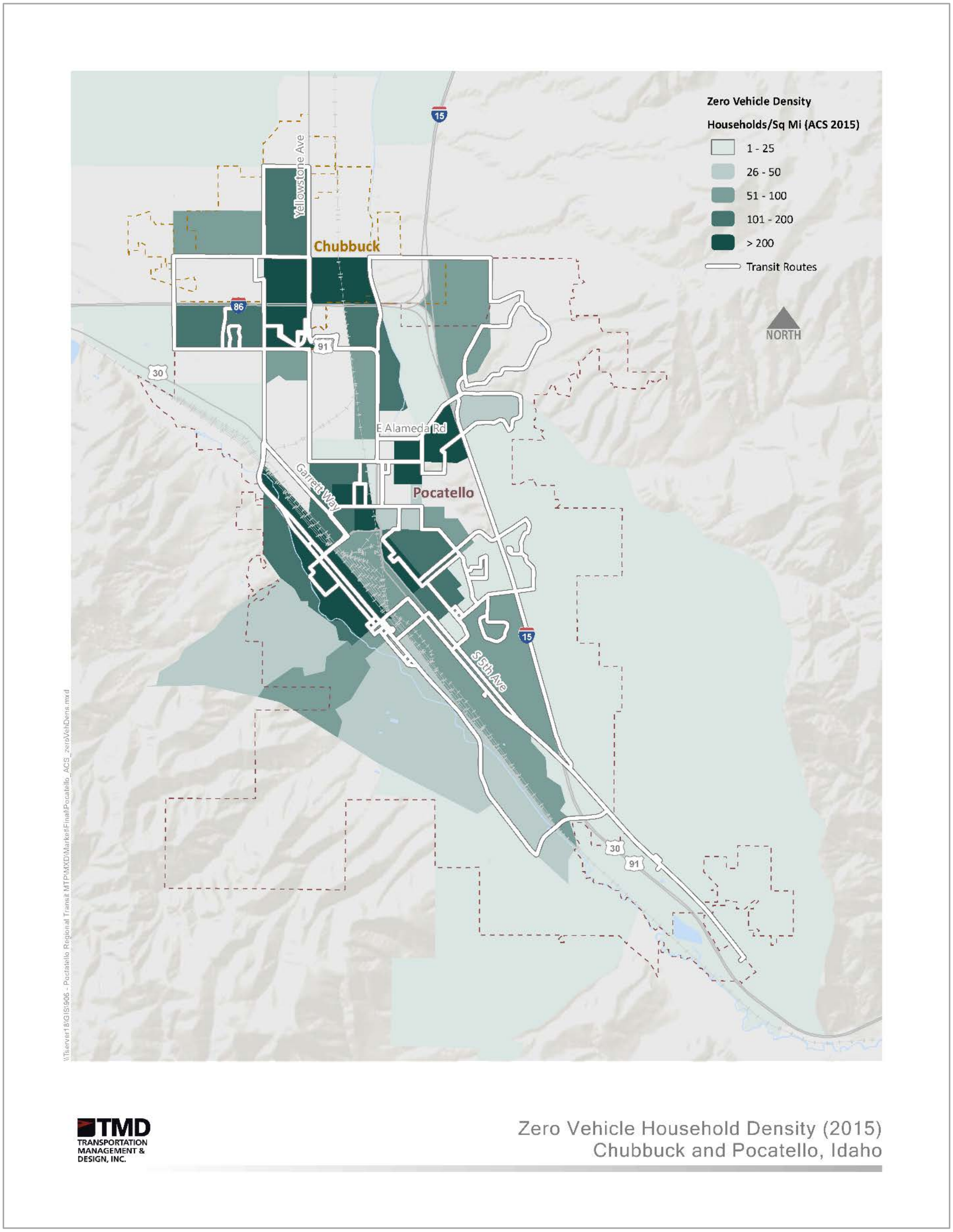
MAP 5: MINORITY POPULATION DENSITIES, 2015



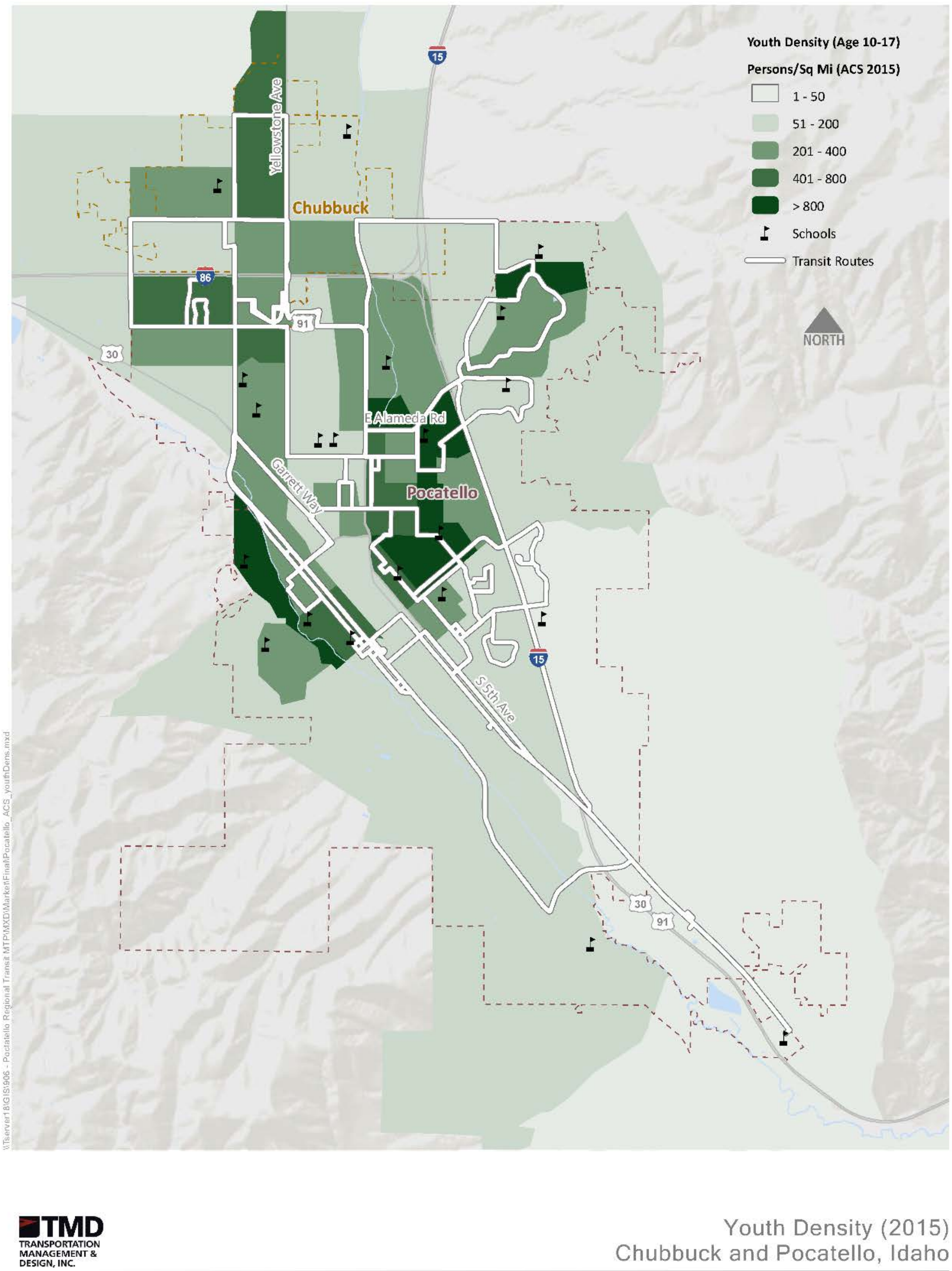
MAP 6: POVERTY POPULATION DENSITIES, 2015



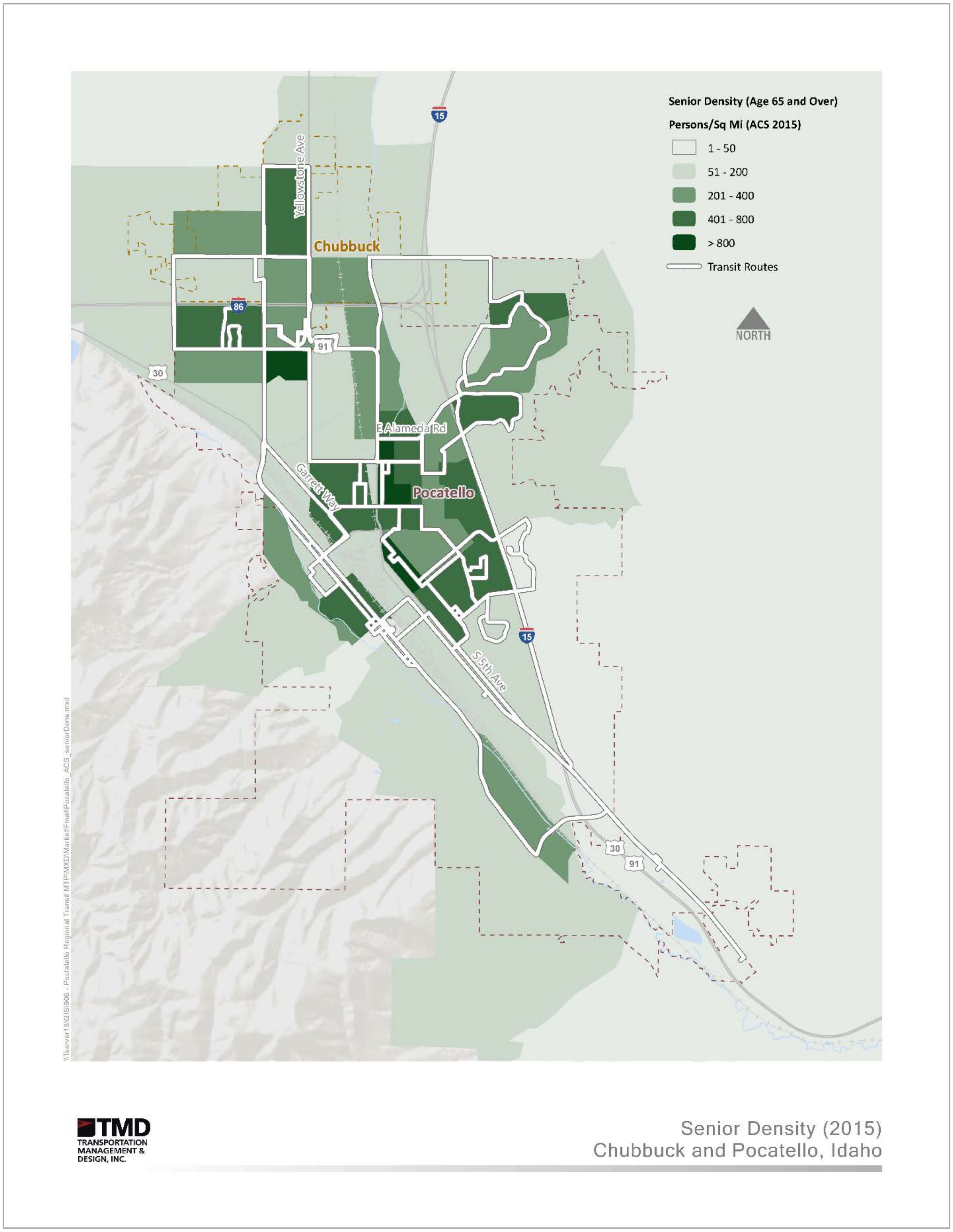
MAP 7: ZERO VEHICLE HOUSEHOLD DENSITIES, 2015



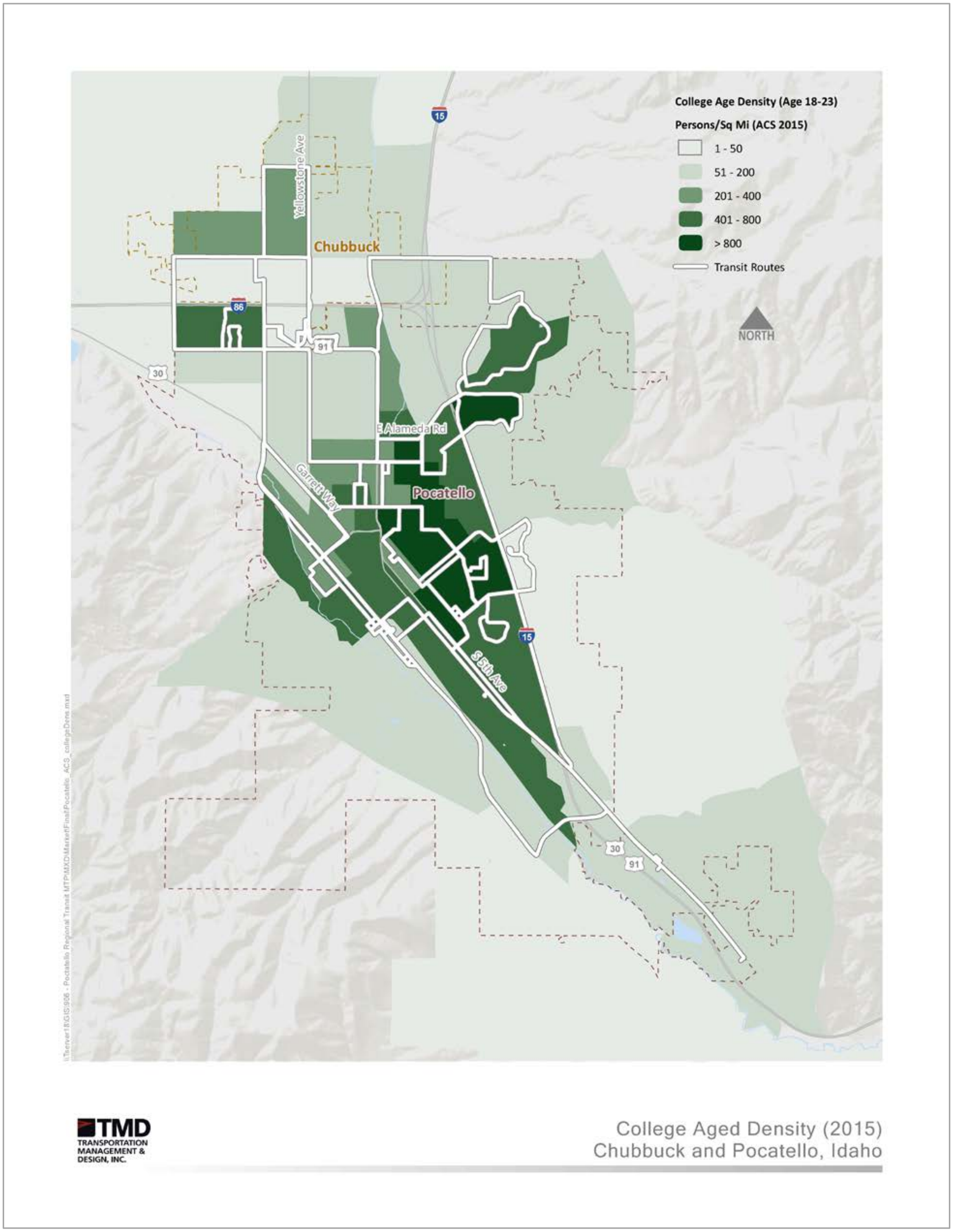
MAP 8: YOUTH POPULATION DENSITIES, 2015



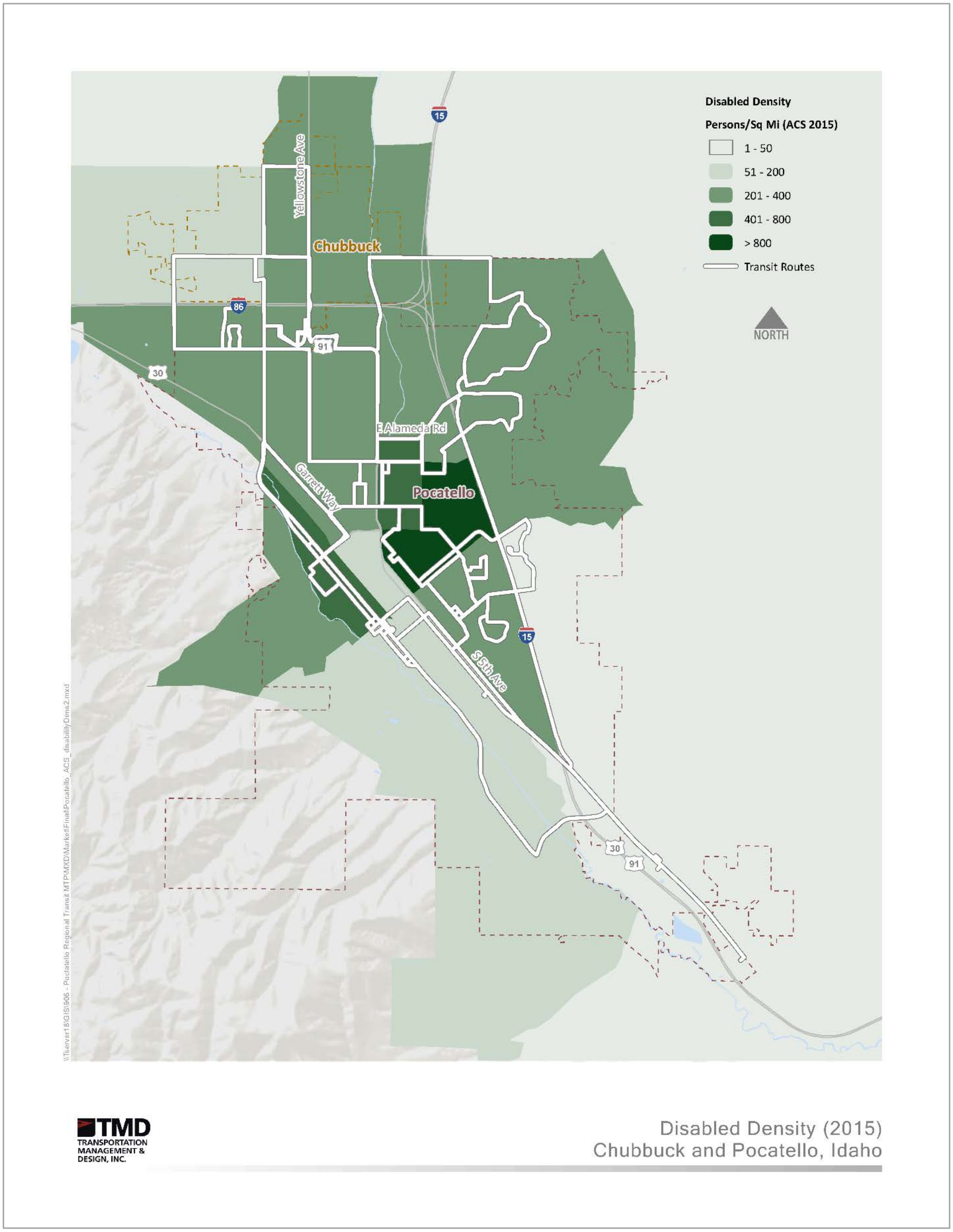
Map 9: Senior Population Densities, 2015



MAP 10: COLLEGE AGE POPULATION DENSITIES, 2015



MAP 11: DISABLED POPULATION DENSITIES, 2015



Transit Reliance Index

The Transit Reliance Index factors several of the previously identified "transit dependent" groups together to effectively demonstrate the overall need for transit service. Four transit dependent groups - seniors, low-income individuals, persons with disabilities, and zero-vehicle households - were used to generate a Pocatello region transit reliance index.

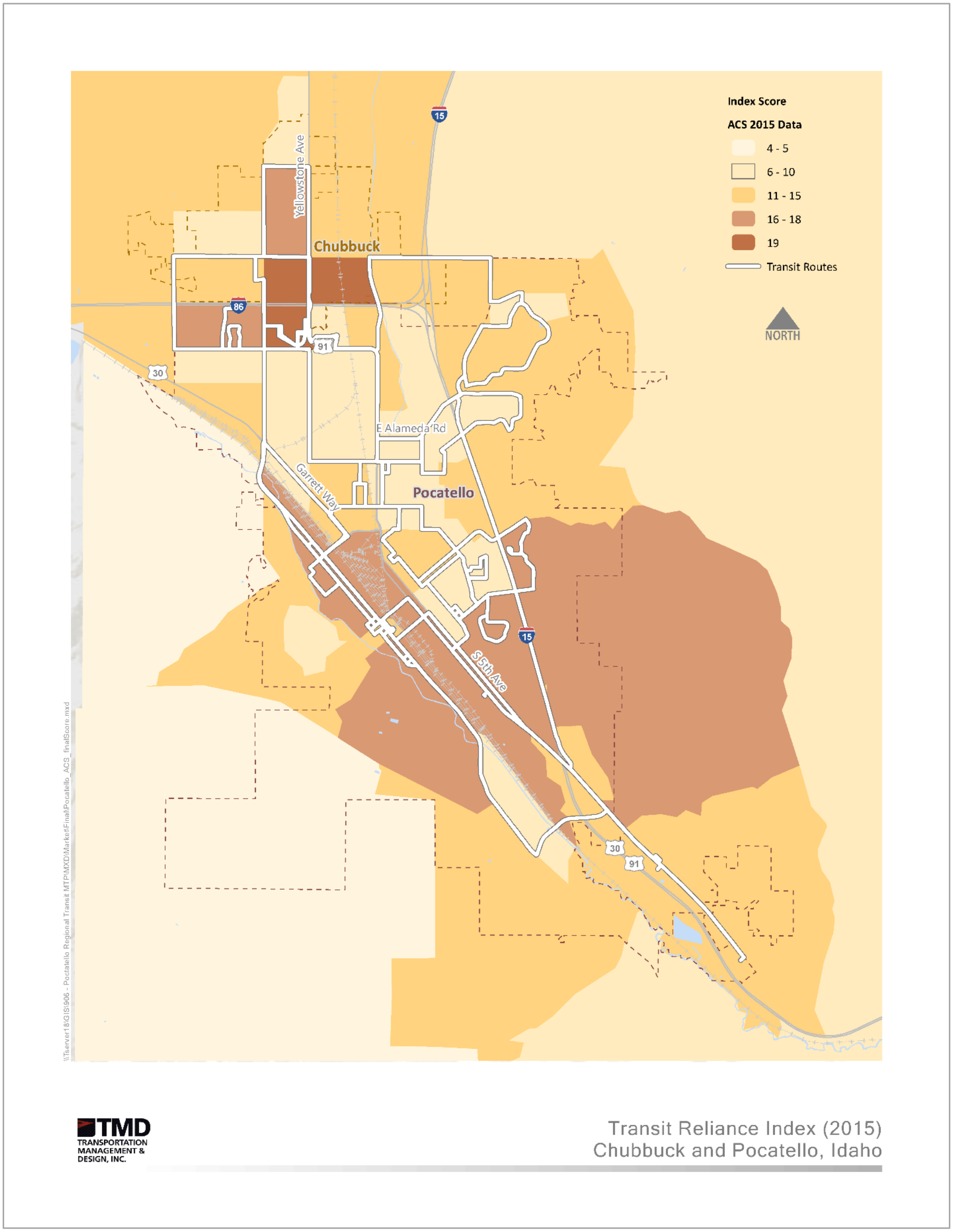
To produce an index score, each group is assigned breakpoint parameters based on their census block group population concentrations. Each block group's score is then calculated together to form an indexed score. Table 2 below outlines the index scoring system and each group's breakpoint. Map 12 visualizes the areas considered to have a higher potential for transit use.

Overall, the areas considered most transit reliant are situated in Pocatello's Downtown and Old Town, and the Chubbuck neighborhoods surrounding Yellowstone Ave and Pine Ridge Mall (Map 12). These are denser, mixed-use areas that can support efficient transit service. These neighborhoods will be key for PRT to consider in any future service recommendations.

TABLE 2: TRANSIT RELIANCE INDEX

Score	Seniors (65 or older)	Low-Income Individuals	Persons with Disabilities	Zero-Vehicle Households
1	0 - 50	0 - 99	0 - 99	0 - 15
2	51 - 100	100 - 149	100 - 185	16 - 30
3	101 - 150	150 - 239	186 - 250	31 - 50
4	151 - 230	240 - 449	250 - 299	51 - 66
5	231 or more	450 or more	300 or more	67 or more

MAP 12: TRANSIT RELIANCE INDEX, 2015

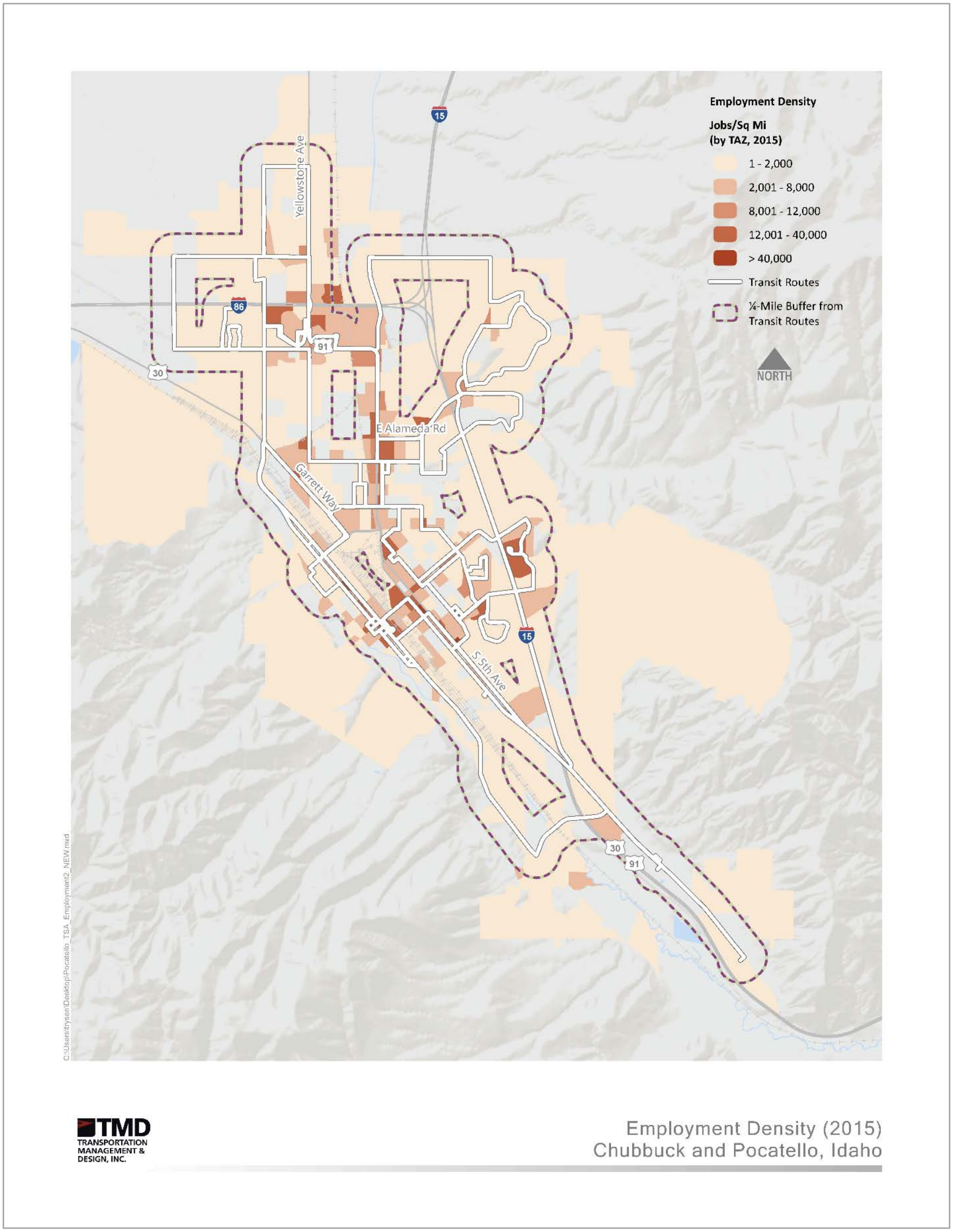


Existing Employment

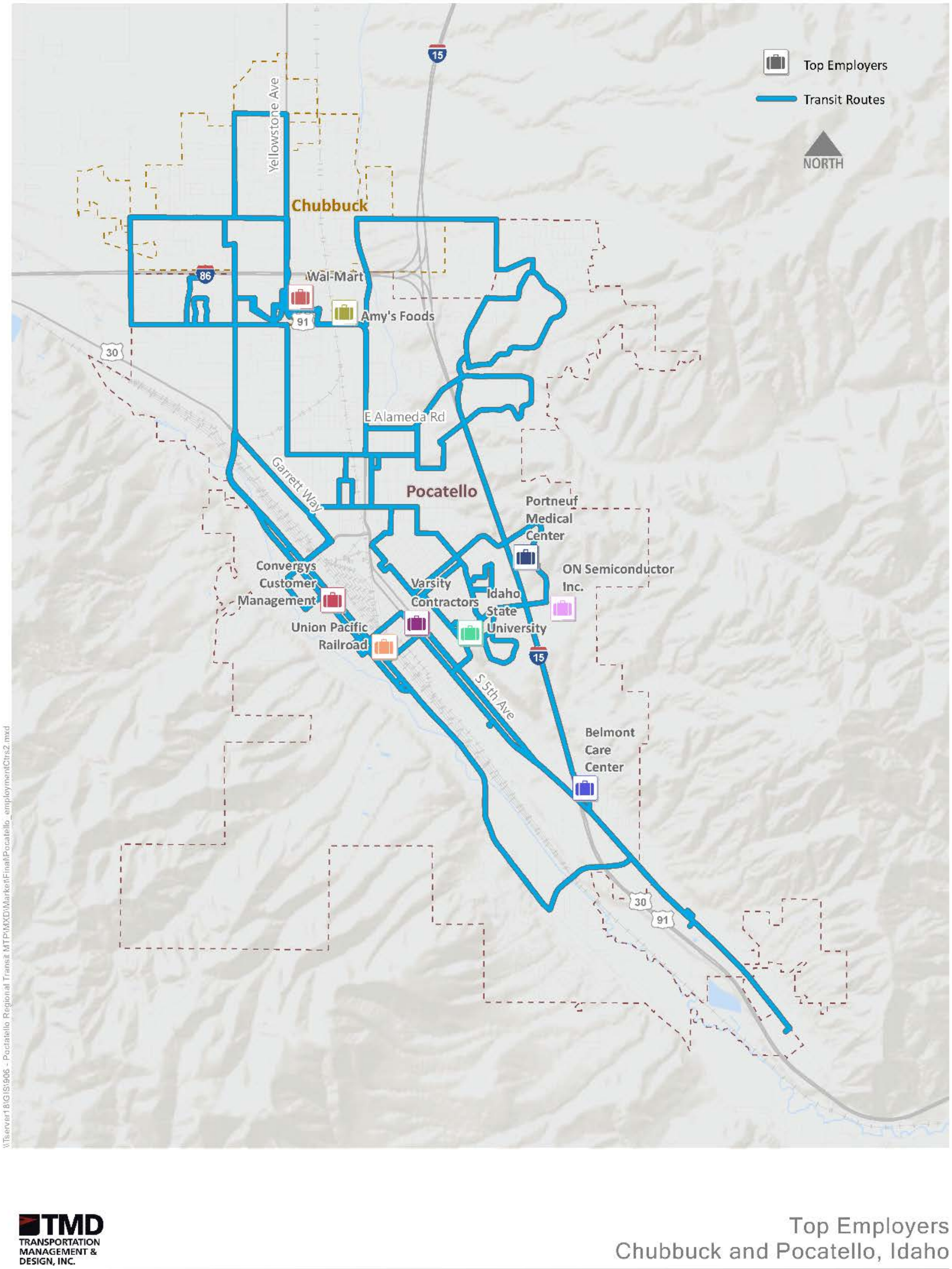
Like population, high employment densities are centered within Pocatello's Old Town and Downtown. The highest densities of employment are concentrated around S. 5th Avenue and Old Town's Main Street. Additional high employment densities are found in Chubbuck near the Pine Ridge Mall and Wal-Mart Supercenter. Medium employment densities exist along the stretch of the Yellowstone Avenue corridor, Idaho State University Campus, and Portneuf Medical Center, while low employment densities are concentrated along the Pocatello rail track and industrial area that bisects Pocatello's Old Town and Downtown. Several large processing and manufacturing facilities, which also act as employment centers, are located throughout the region. These employment sites may not demonstrate high employment densities, but should be considered when developing service recommendations. Map 13 displays the Pocatello region's employment densities and distribution while Map 14 shows the locations of Pocatello Region's major employers[2].

[2] Major Employers Source: Idaho Department of Labor

MAP 13: EMPLOYMENT DENSITY, 2015



Map 14: Top Employers

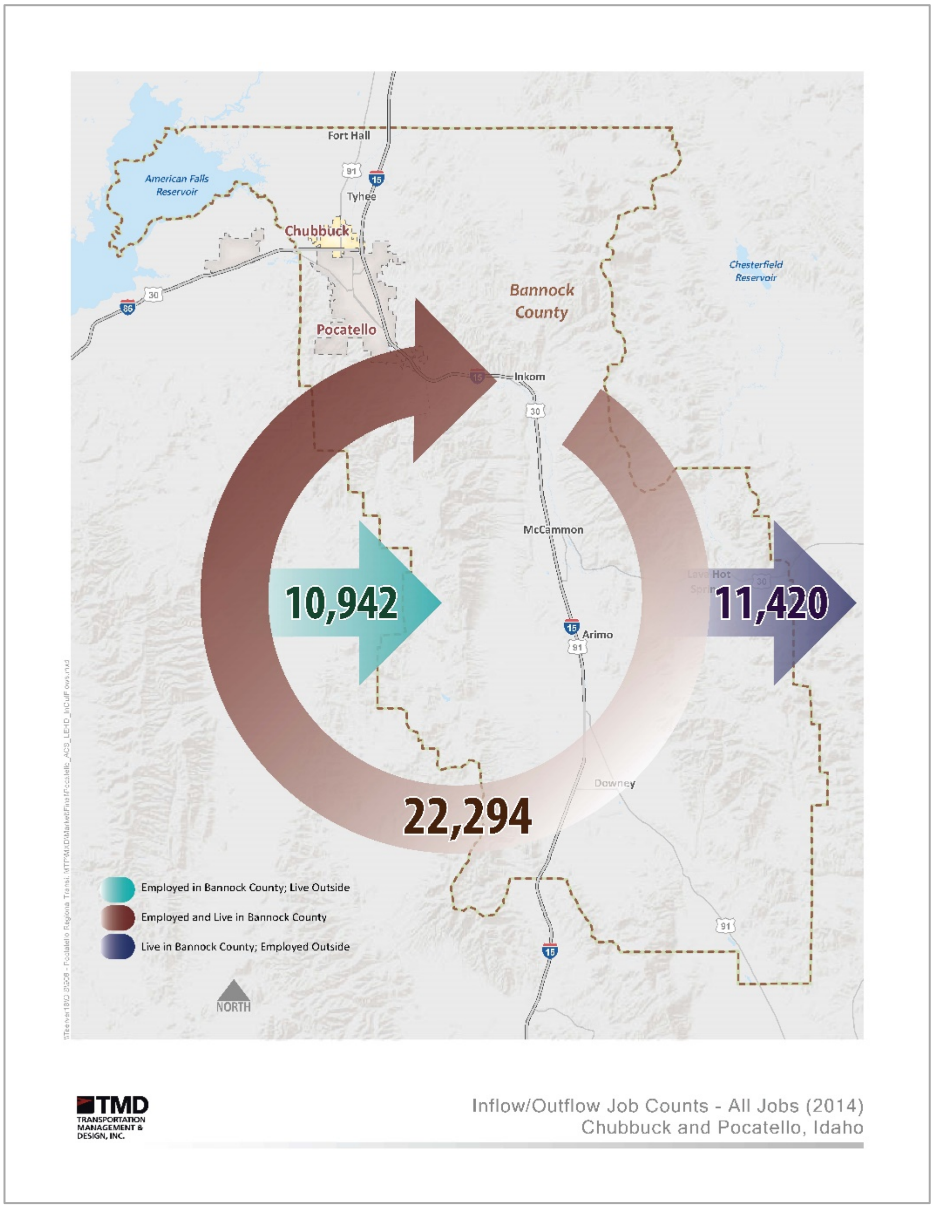


Travel to Work Patterns

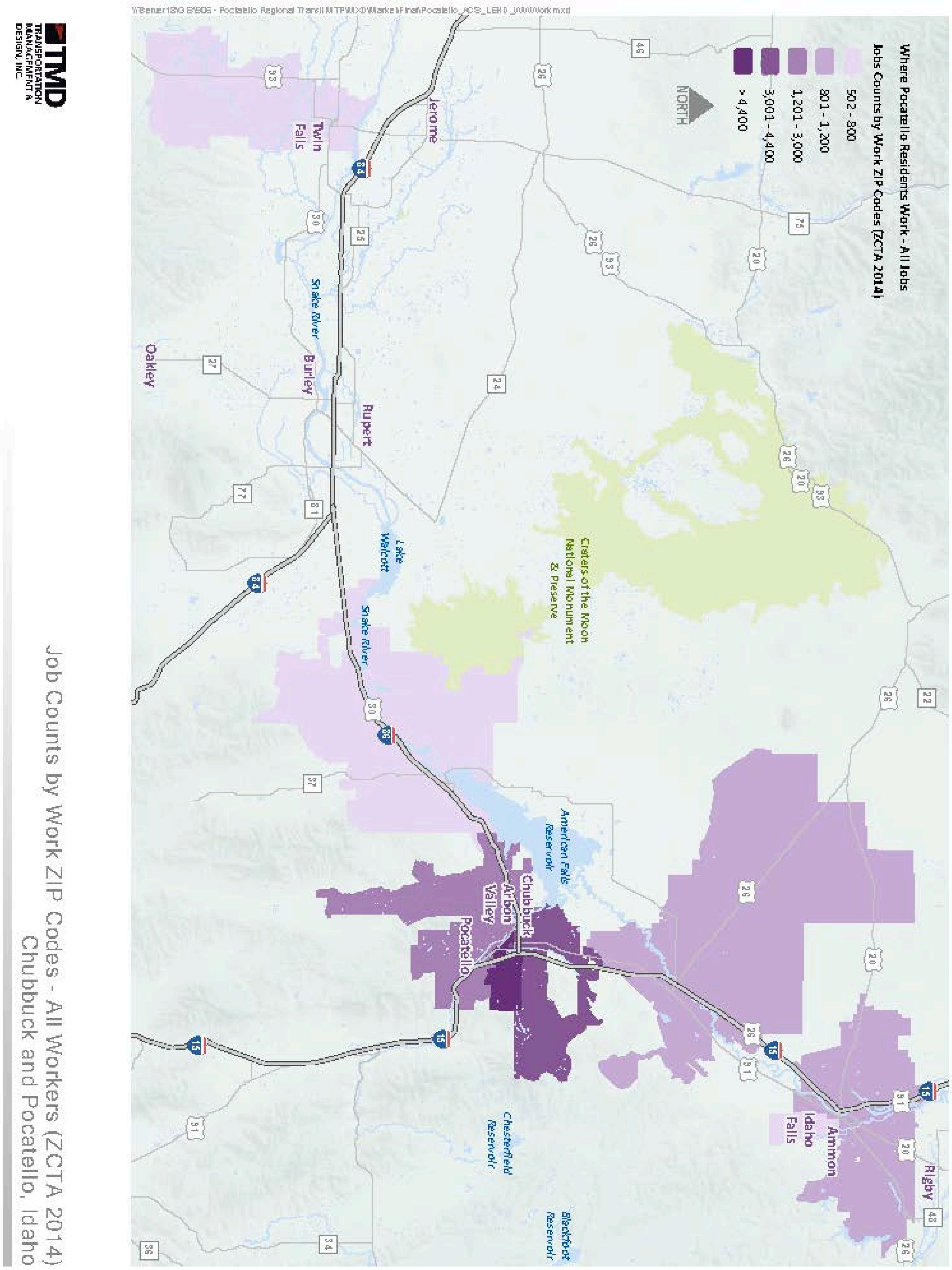
Travel to work patterns show that activity is generally concentrated within the bounds of Bannock County, however there are also significant inflow and outflow travel patterns. Map 15 shows that in 2014, 22,294 individuals lived and worked within the county, 10,942 were employed within Bannock County but resided elsewhere ("in commuters"), and 11,420 lived in Bannock County but were employed outside the county ("out commuters").

Based on the Census' Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics tool, regional employment is heavily concentrated within the Pocatello and Chubbuck zip codes. However, significant employment levels are also found in Twin Falls, Idaho Falls, Ammon, Blackfoot, Fort Hall Reservation, and south of the American Falls Reservoir. As demonstrated in Maps 16 and 17, the relationship between where workers live and are employed is fairly balanced within the region.

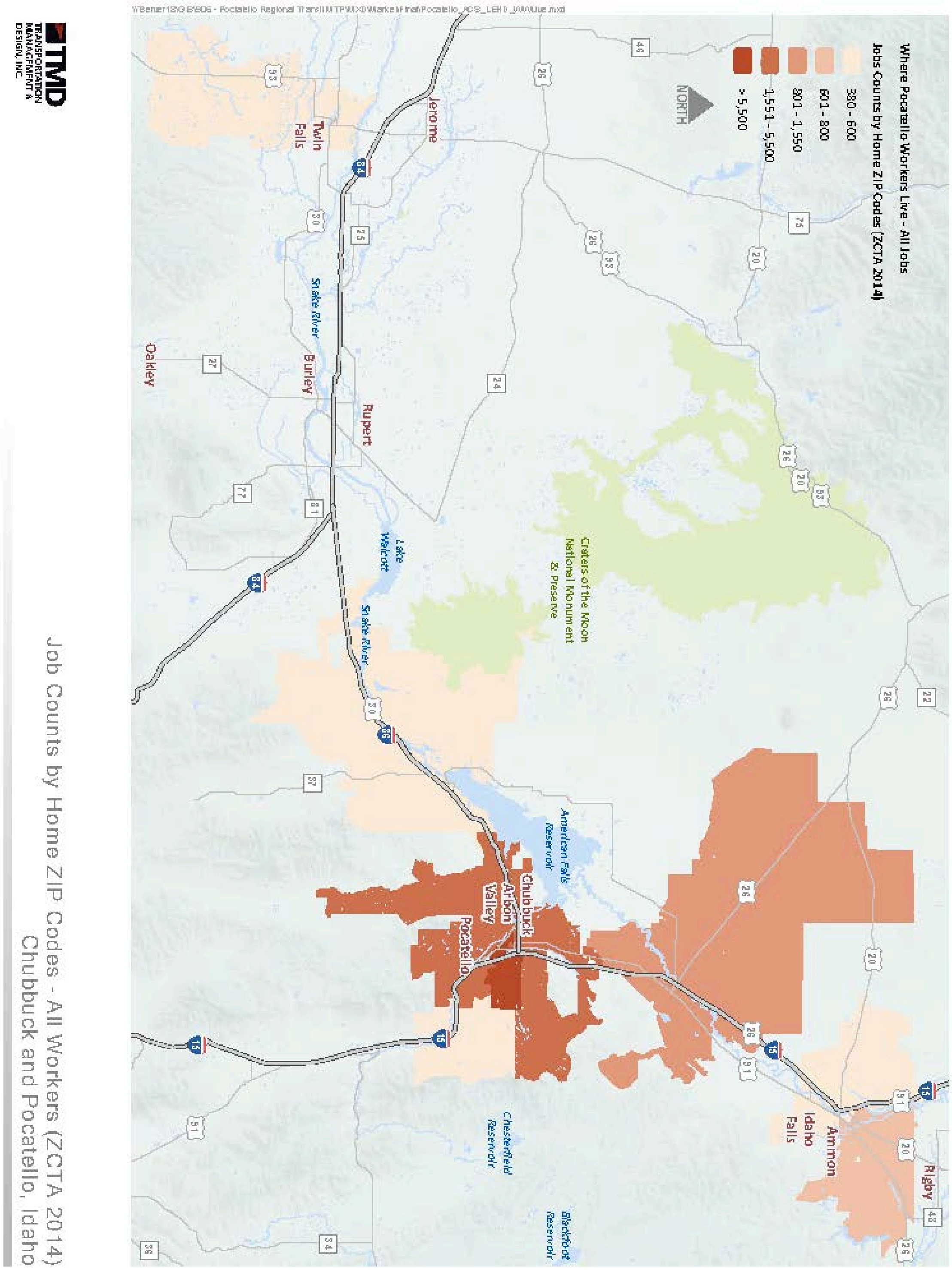
MAP 15: TRAVEL TO WORK PATTERNS



MAP 16: LEHD JOB COUNTS BY WORK ZIP CODE



MAP 17: LEHD JOB COUNTS BY HOME ZIP CODE



Growth Projections

The Pocatello and Chubbuck population (as established by BTPO's TAZs) is anticipated to increase by an average of 4.3 percent over a four-decade period, resulting in a total population of just over 99,000 by 2045. Employment is anticipated to increase at a similar rate. Total employment in 2015 was recorded at 35,347 and is expected to grow to 46,504 in 2045 (5.67 percent average growth rate), with the following sectors anticipated to grow substantially over the three-decade period:

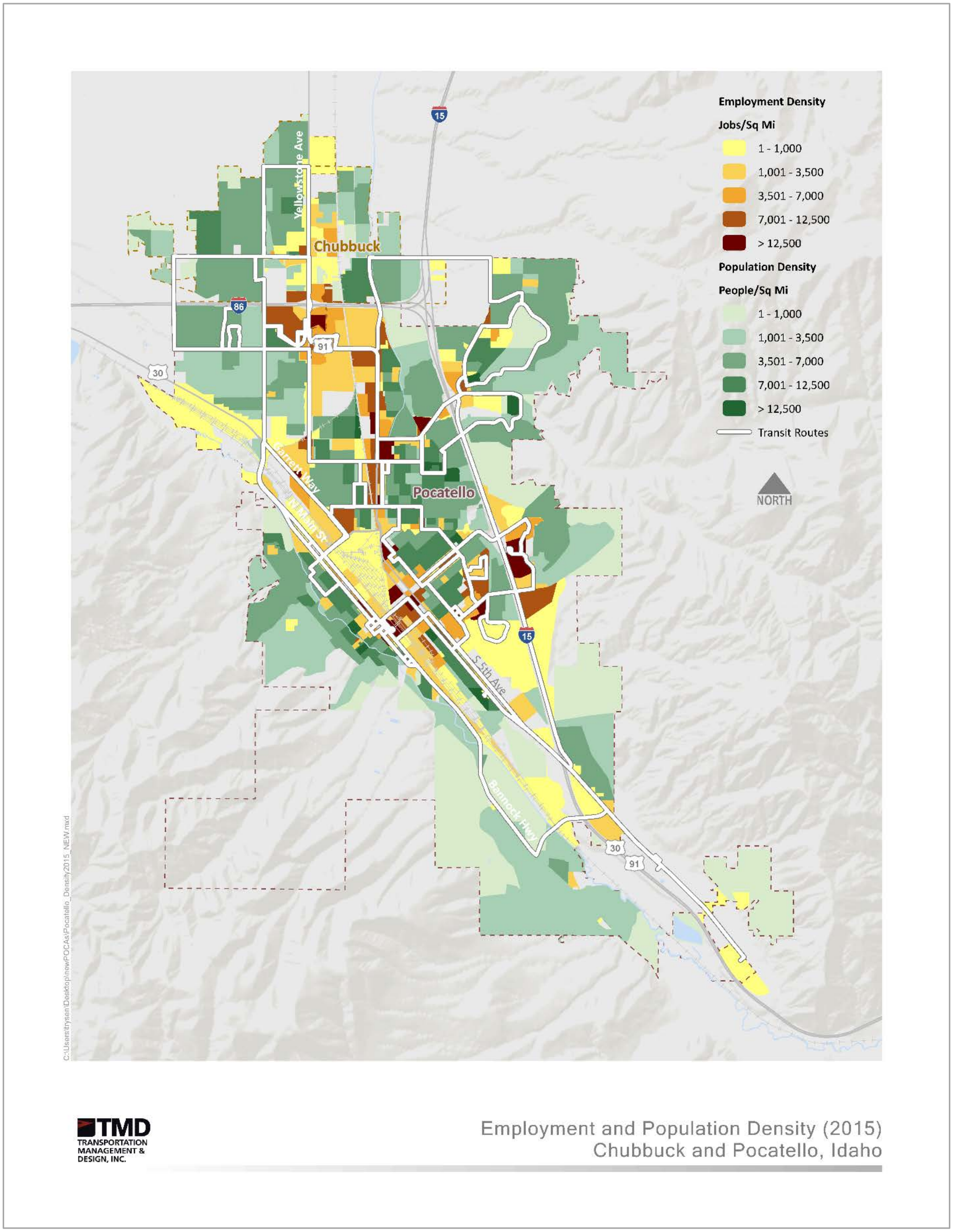
- Retail sector: jobs are projected to grow by 31.9 percent over a four-decade period with an average 4.73 percent increase every five years.
- Education sector: jobs are projected to grow by 56.0 percent over a four-decade period with an average 6.20 percent increase every five years.
- Service sector: jobs are projected to grow by 28.71 percent over a four-decade period with an average 4.2 percent increase every five years.

Most population and job growth is projected to occur in already urbanized areas. Increased population densities are expected to occur in the residential communities surrounding W. Quinn Road & Surry Drive, Raymond Park, S. 5th Avenue & Mountain View Cemetery, as well as the community surrounding Highland Golf Course. Employment is anticipated to continue growing in currently established locations such as Old Town, Downtown, Pine Ridge Mall, Pocatello Creek Road & Hiline Road, Yellowstone Avenue & I-86 freeway. Maps 18 and 19 demonstrate the anticipated growth rates over a thirty-year period, while Table 3 presents the Pocatello region's projected population growth over same thirty-year period.

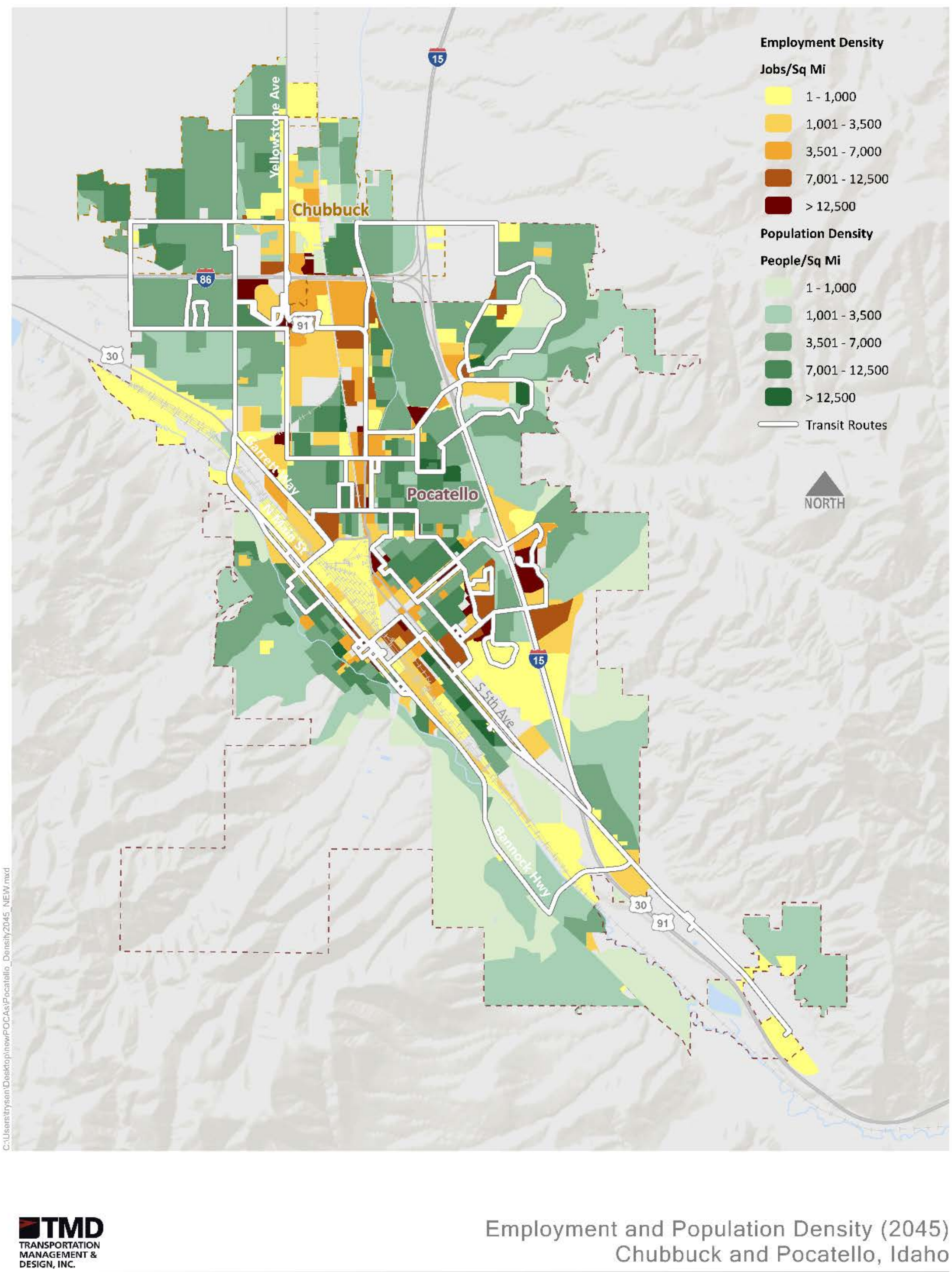
TABLE 3: PROJECTED POPULATION

Year	Population	% Change
2015	77,163	-
2020	81,732	5.92%
2025	86,061	5.30%
2030	90,356	4.99%
2035	95,095	5.25%
2040	99,385	4.51%
2045	99,392	0.01%

MAP 18: POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT DENSITIES, 2015



MAP 19: POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT DENSITIES, 2045

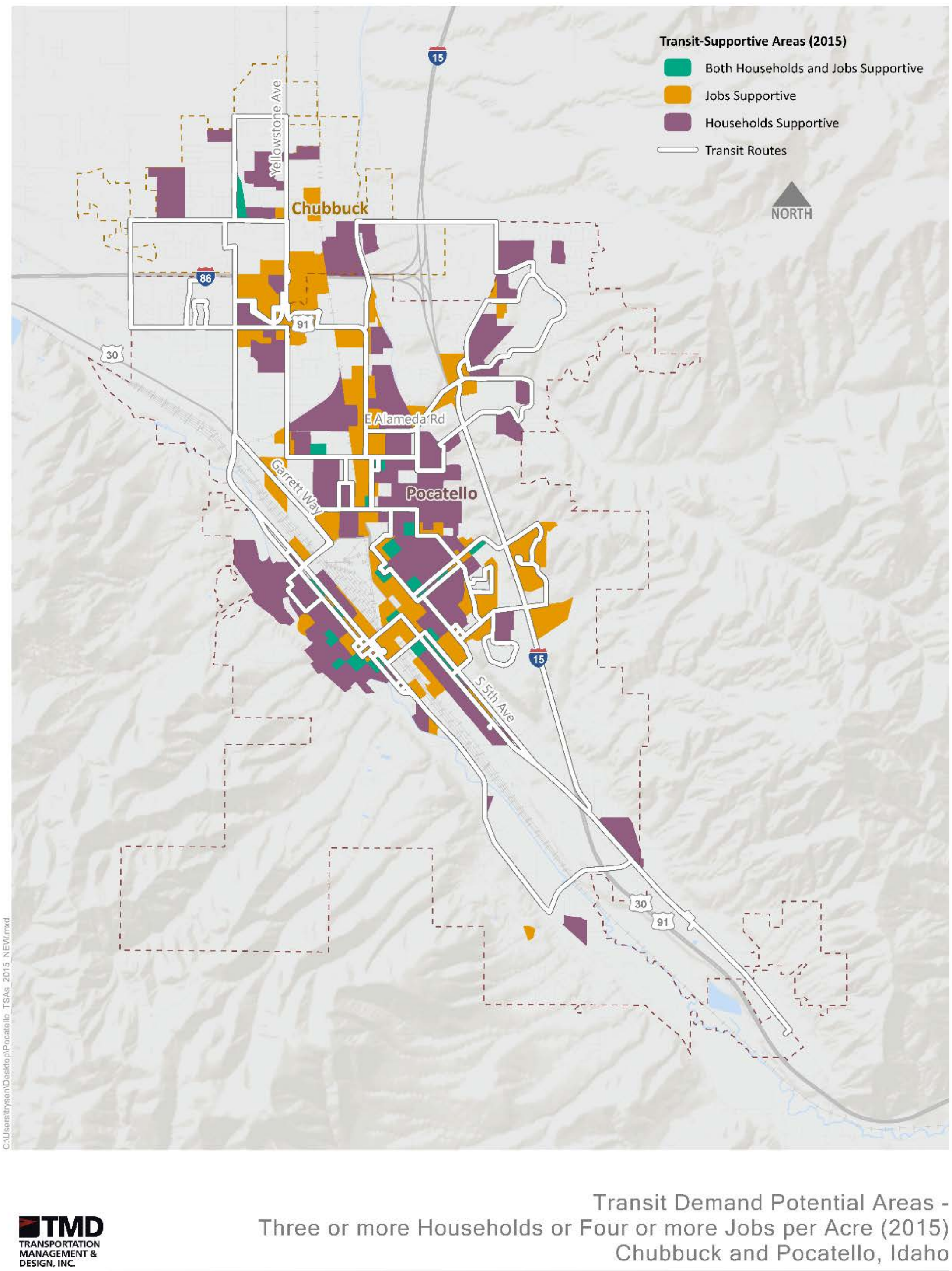


Transit Supportive Areas

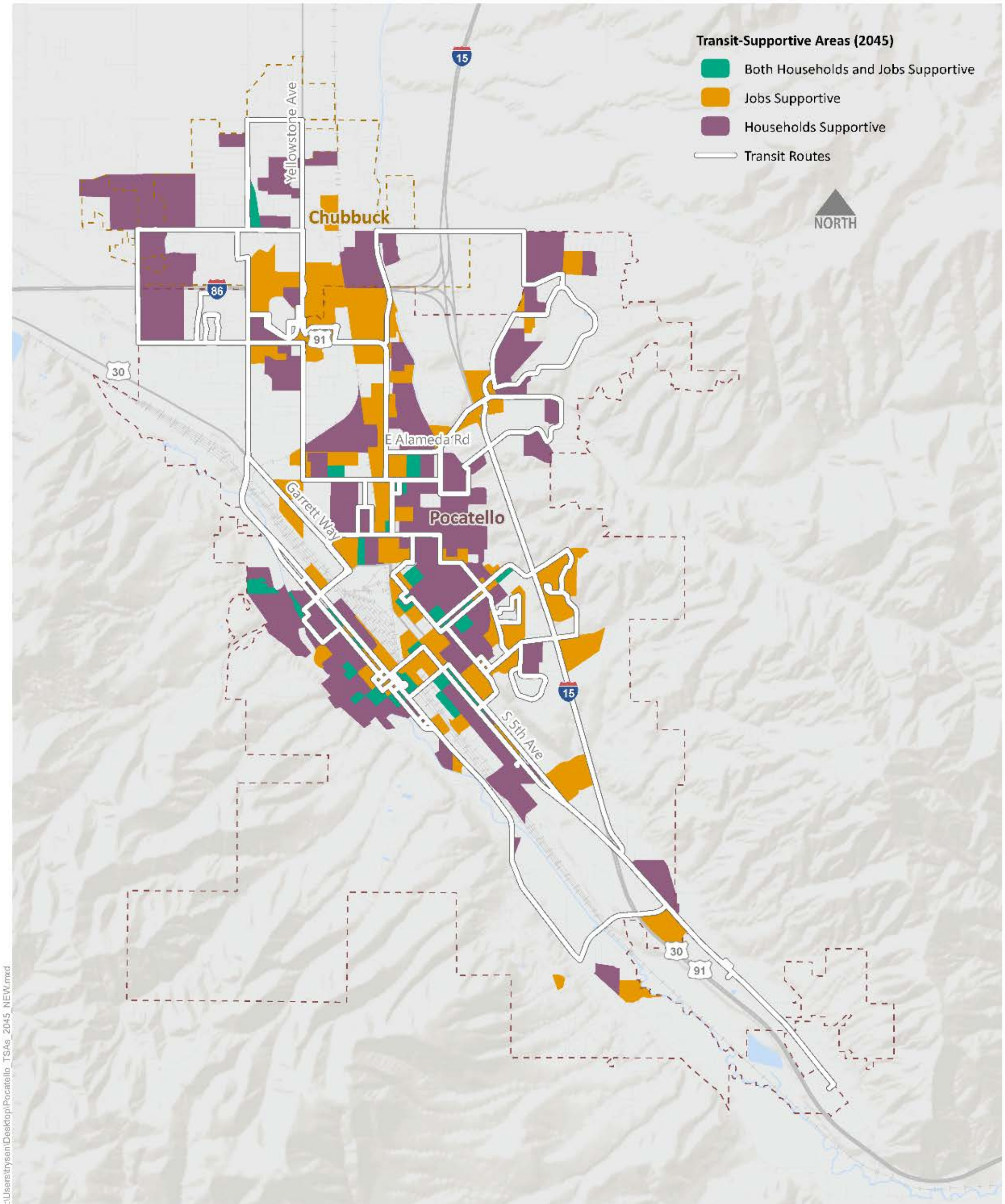
Based on the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)'s *Transit Capacity & Quality of Service Manual,* a household density of 4.5 units per net acre (approximately 3 units per gross acre) is the typical minimum residential density for hourly daytime transit service to be feasible. The TCRP report also suggests that an employment density of 4 jobs per gross acre produces the same level of ridership as a household density of 3 units per gross acre. These minimum density values define transit supportive areas, or areas that are capable of supporting hourly fixed-route transit service.

This market assessment's transit supportive areas analysis evaluates density values within the project area's TAZs (Maps 20 and 21). Utilizing the minimum density standards suggested by the TCRP, the highest transit supportive areas in 2015 are located in Downtown and Old Town Pocatello; Alameda; retail centers and residential communities surrounding the Pine Ridge Mall; Pocatello Creek Road; and Olympus Drive. In 2045, transit supportive areas are projected to expand into residential communities in eastern and south Chubbuck, residential communities northwest of Old Town's Main Street, and areas northwest of Old Town's Main Street and Alameda.

MAP 20: TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE AREAS, 2015



MAP 21: TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE AREAS, 2045



TMD TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT & DESIGN, INC.

Transit Demand Potential Areas -
Three or more Households or Four or more Jobs per Acre (2045)
Chubbuck and Pocatello, Idaho

Governing Policy Documents

Several planning documents govern transportation and land use patterns within Bannock County. Each document sets forth policies and visions for the local and regional area. It is important to review existing governing policy documents when considering regional infrastructure and development.

Bannock Transportation Planning Organization Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is Pocatello and Chubbuck's long-range transportation vision and guide. Updated every four years, the MTP aims to validate and confirm the plan's goals are meeting the wider community's transportation needs. Comprehensively, the plan outlines service standards for transit, highways, bicycle, and pedestrian conditions. In addition to outlining standards, the MTP identifies issues affecting local mobility and strategies that have the potential to improve mobility within the Pocatello and Chubbuck areas.

Issues identified from the plan's community engagement process indicate congestion and travel time on busy arterials as major problems. Additionally, street connectivity was identified as a disconcerting factor affecting local mobility. The historical areas of Pocatello that possess a gridded street system make finding alternative routes and pathways easy. Conversely, newer developments characterized by winding roads and cul-de-sacs were identified as factors that limited access to collectors and arterials. Lastly, increased concentration of commercial activity on the Yellowstone Corridor has presented a new set of challenges for the Pocatello area. The heightened traffic congestion associated with the commercial growth has elevated traffic volumes and worsened travel conditions along the corridor. Emerging from the identified issues, the MTP proposes several transit improvements.

The MTP's proposed transit improvements aim to:

- Strengthen multi-modal transportation investments, and redistribute focus from highway/private vehicular investment
- Expand the use of intelligent transportation systems
- Integrate infrastructure and progressive land use principles with transportation planning efforts
- Further non-motorized mobility through complete streets interventions
- Develop a fixed-route circulator connecting downtown Pocatello with ISU and the Warehouse District
- Update park and ride facilities
- Develop technology improvements to Demand Response Services
- Incentivize active transportation through commute-trip reduction programs
- Coordinated bus pass discounts with retailers in Downtown, Warehouse Districts, and ISU

Essentially, the MTP's proposed transit improvements aim to strengthen transit effectiveness, attractiveness, and coverage within its service area. The long-range planning document also places a large emphasis on developing active transportation programs. Efforts in developing better pedestrian and cycling conditions will improve first and last trips connected to transit. Furthermore, the MTP indicates how street and block design can influence mobility. This finding should go onto inform future development, in that sprawling block patterns hinder transit operations and have been identified by the public as a significant issue. Overall, the MTP effectively presents local issues affecting transit and identifies strategies. These issues and strategies are spatially defined, and should be considered when making further recommendations.

Bannock Transportation Planning Organization Human Service Plan

The Human Service Plan (HSP) identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, and prioritizes strategies for meeting these needs. The Plan organized the gaps in existing transportation services into four categories; spatial, service, knowledge/information, facilities/infrastructure, and coordination.

The HSP found spatial gaps occur when public transportation is not within an acceptable walking distance. While 71 percent of the urban-population lives within a quarter-mile of a transit line, only 36 percent of the urban-population live within a quarter-mile of a transit stop. Spatial gaps notably affect low income populations. Considering the low-income population and stop accessibility separately, the South 5th Street area and Old Town Pocatello are underserved by the fixed route system.

In terms of service gaps, the HSP found riders have problems with mobility at night, and on the weekends. This occurs due to the service's hours of operations. Additionally, transporting passengers in a timely and coordinated manner was identified as a service gap. Survey results found riders felt they could not easily take transit to a specific place by a specific time. Awareness of transit options and the ease of processing transit information were also noted as significant issues. Only seventeen percent of the public are aware of paratransit services, and information concerning paratransit services is considered to be difficult to find online. Information regarding the fixed route service is believed to be sufficient, however, improvements are needed within the system map to better show system connections and transfer opportunities.

Inadequate facilities and infrastructure were identified as potential barriers for current and potential transit riders. The lack of sidewalks and curb ramps in Chubbuck and Pocatello's older neighborhoods are seen as a factor that can prevent access to the system's fixed routes. Moreover, the absence of all-weather transit shelters creates a barrier as all-weather transit shelters can induce riders to utilize transit when weather conditions prove as challenging. Lastly, the HSP found that more bus stop benches could provide aid to the problem of long wait times. It was viewed that riders saw walking to a stop and waiting more than five minutes without a place to sit as a significant barrier. Strategically placing benches could allow riders who currently use paratransit to use fixed route services.

Coordination of the system as a whole was determined as the final gap. The front of line staff's lack of specific knowledge of the system routes and services at all levels of transportation creates a coordination issue. The HSP states; "Some human service agencies lack specific knowledge of transportation routes and hours of services at all levels of the organization. The management team might know about the services available but not everyone in the organization like receptionists and front-line staff have the same knowledge. Program funding requirements hinder coordination. Within each organization the mission, funding, and requirements are a little different. These differences can make coordination of transportation service between agencies more difficult."

To mitigate the issues surrounding the spatial, service, knowledge/information, facilities/infrastructure, and coordination gaps, the HSP proposes the following strategies;

Spatial Gaps

- Evaluate bus stop locations in target population neighborhoods
- Relocate or locate additional bus stop locations to improve accessibility
- Provide Paratransit Feeder service collection locations

Service Gaps

- Decrease fixed route headways
- Improve trip directness to major origin/destination locations
- Improve Intelligent Transportation System Technology to decrease travel times and pickup windows for Paratransit
- Add additional Paratransit vehicles during high demand time
- Provide route specific trip information at each bus stop
- Coordinated special service from major trip origins and destinations
- Improve Intelligent Transportation System Technology or add additional paratransit vehicle to allow for same day service

Knowledge & Information Gaps

- Provide Fixed Route destination information (travel time) on website and printed material
- Provide Paratransit route information (travel time) on website and printed material
- Improve ITS routing software to reduce pickup windows and provide pickup time notification service to passengers
- Provide next bus display (vehicle tracking system) at major bus stops and transfer locations.
- Create a marketing campaign designed to improve information on service provided

Infrastructure & Facilities Gaps

- Provide all weather passenger waiting facilities at all transfer stations and high volume stops
- Develop and implement a bus bench placement program
- Provide accessible routes to transit stops

Coordination Gaps

- Develop transit information guide for human service agencies
- Improve information available on website and mobile devices
- Continue and expand topics at quarterly Public Transportation – Human Service Project Advisory Committee
- Implement mobility management within the urban area

BTPO’s Human Service Plan provides excellent insight into an array of issues surrounding PRT’s service and infrastructure. A key finding of the spatial analysis is the poor stop accessibility, particularly within target population neighborhoods. The concern over stop accessibility is an important issue and will help inform recommendations. Three main issues affecting service were also identified; poor transit options on weekends, long trip lengths, and awkward travel windows. These three aspects provide an understanding from the rider’s perspective of the service levels. Lastly, the HSP outlines the issues concerning gaps in the local infrastructure. Amenities such as sheltered bus stops and benches are relatively straightforward interventions that can improve transit attractiveness.

Pocatello Comprehensive Plan

The City of Pocatello's updated Comprehensive Plan provides guidelines for growth and development within the City. The Comprehensive Plan is supportive of transit in that key elements call for managed growth and smart development, further support for infill development, proactive and localized economic development, and an increased sense of place through mixed use and pedestrian friendly development. Both the Housing and Land Use elements within the Comprehensive Plan are supportive in promoting transit accessibility and effectiveness.

The City's Housing Element expresses support for:

- Concentrated development in medium-density single family homes
- New residential development within infill and mixed-use areas
- Situating the incoming population's accommodation within infill and mixed-use areas

The City's Land Use Element expresses support for:

- Land use patterns that reduce urban sprawl and mitigate impacts on the natural environment
- Greater emphasis on infill development
- Redeveloping and creating new compact neighborhoods
- Developing provisions that support transit oriented development near major transit lines
- Encouraging adaptive re-use in Pocatello's Old Town & Downtown
- Positioning new public facilities in infill development areas
- Continuing employment and commercial development in existing urban and industrial areas
- Increasing residential densities along the Yellowstone Corridor
- Increasing infill and mixed-use development between downtown and the University
- Utilizing form based or performance planning when making inform development decisions
- Exploring other planning tools that promote smart growth and infill development

The plan's circulation element further intends to reduce private vehicle use by encouraging walking, biking, transit, and carpooling through establishing mixed use development, investing in infrastructure and street design improvements, increasing accessibility to transit, and positioning economic development to areas that are served by transit.

The Circulation Element expresses support for:

- Implementing new and upgraded bus stops
- Increasing operation assistance, marketing and coordination support for transportation and mobility services for all groups including, but not limited to, the elderly, disabled, you, low-income and non-drivers
- Expanding PRT ridership to youth and Idaho State University state population
- Developing complete street showcase on Martin Luther King Boulevard
- Improving access to transit services in the ISU, Old Town, Alameda and Bonneville neighborhoods
- Reducing travel time and number of trips through a better mix of land uses.
- Developing a "comprehensive" street corridor linking Idaho State University with the Warehouse District

- Working with Idaho Transportation Department officials to incorporate pedestrian “bulb outs” and improved decorative lighting along the 4th and 5th Avenues corridor from Carter to Humbolt Streets
- Serving future growth areas by expanding the extent and connectivity of the roadway network
- Adopting zoning amendments that allow higher density housing, increased heights, shared parking and on-street parking and mixed-use development near the ISU campus extending west to the Warehouse District. Continue to encourage upper-story housing in Old Town and the Warehouse District
- Promoting a transportation system that supports nodal, compact development patterns and reduces negative environmental impacts
- Considering the density of land uses, the need for parking facilities to provide safe and convenient bicycle parking, the availability and desirability of on-street parking, and special parking needs of persons with disabilities and the impacts on the pedestrians’ environment in future parking planning, management and parking facility design.

The Pocatello Comprehensive Plan is the guiding policy framework that shapes the future of the City. Its elements demonstrate a strong relationship with transit and active transportation. The plan’s emphasis on infill development, mixed-use districts, and residential density ensure that transit effectiveness and accessibility in Pocatello can be improved on in the future. Moreover, the plan identifies emerging districts such as the Warehouse District and calls for increased service to meet the needs of the growth. Economically, the plan intends to coordinate current and future investment in conjunction with land use and transit planning efforts. This coordinated effort can centralize economic development and create denser and more accessible employment sites. The plan’s circulation element proposes a number of planning initiatives that will help improve transit operations. Improving the extent and connectivity of the roadwork mitigates issues outlined within the Human Services Plan. Additionally, the introduction of complete streets interventions could prioritize transit and enhance transit speed and travel time.

Yellowstone Corridor Plan

Serving as the backbone of the region’s transportation system, Yellowstone Avenue connects neighborhoods, businesses, districts, residents and their jobs, and the Cities of Pocatello and Chubbuck. No other thoroughfare in the region is considered to provide as much mobility, connectivity, and accessibility. Given this, it was acknowledged by local stakeholders that the region’s economic health and quality of life are interconnected with the corridor’s function. Increasing congestion and poor economic coordination could disrupt the value, function and efficiency of Yellowstone Avenue. The overall outcomes of the corridor plan are:

- A broader understanding of the transportation needs
- Required solutions to mitigate transportation needs
- Community support for corridor improvements

Across the corridor’s planning area, the corridor plan identifies the following issues and observations:

- Improve accessibility to and from Yellowstone
- Improve visual quality
- Improve and expand public transportation
- Reduce traffic speeds
- Improve pedestrian facilities
- Add bike lanes

- Optimize light signaling
- Reduce congestion

The Yellowstone Corridor Plan is a key transportation planning effort within the region. As stated, Yellowstone Avenue is the backbone of the region's transportation. Ensuring the regional backbone is fully optimized will not only upgrade transportation conditions on the corridor but will also progress transportation conditions in adjoining arterials and collectors. Furthermore, the plan's intentions to overhaul the corridor into an enhanced transit-oriented street could generate several economic benefits and create a furthered sense of community around transit.

Chubbuck Comprehensive Plan

The Chubbuck Comprehensive Plan is a similar planning policy framework to Pocatello's. The wide-ranging planning policy aims to manage Chubbuck's continuing population growth and economic investment on Yellowstone Avenue. The plan's land-use element places an emphasis on centering its commercial and industrial development within existing urbanized areas that are served well by arterials and transit. Furthermore, the land use element intends to develop planned unit development zones that encourage a mix of uses within a singular site. These planned unit developments are positioned within close proximity to the Yellowstone Commercial Corridor.

Due to increased development, the Comprehensive Plan's transportation element has addressed the need to construct more roads. The element calls for an integrated approach of land use and transportation for the road's design. The transportation element recognizes that low density and sprawling street patterns are not supportive of transit. The Comprehensive Plan's overall approach to transit lays a foundation for future transit coverage to operate within an urban grid system that is more supportive of transit connectivity and operation.

Planning Framework Overview

Overall, the governing planning documents within the Pocatello Region provide a strong foundation for transit to operate within a sustainable and growing built environment. BTPO's Metropolitan and Human Services Plan both address the existing issues connected to transit and provide practical solutions to mitigate these issues. The plans call out the spatial and service gaps within the region and encourage transit investment through transit optimization measures and an increased focus on infrastructure improvements.

In terms of land use principles, the Cities of Pocatello and Chubbuck encourage future development strategies that support transit. The response to the region's sprawling suburban development is addressed through smart growth principles, the call for walkability, and protection of the natural environment. The Cities' Comprehensive Plans in conjunction with BTPO's transit plans will work to coordinate the region's population growth and transit efforts. In order for the vision established in these comprehensive and transit oriented plans to be fully realized, it is imperative these planning efforts are followed through by strong policy implementation and professional practice.

Market Assessment Conclusions

Market Strengths

- A foundation of smart growth and mixed-use development policy initiatives is in place to ensure sustainable and transit supportive development.
- Overall the region is fairly compact, which allows for efficient transit service delivery.
- In Old Town and Downtown Pocatello, the street network and development patterns support transit service. Strong corridors, like Yellowstone, present key opportunities for transit.
- 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.

Market Challenges

- The railroad presents a physical barrier through the key transit neighborhoods of Old Town and Downtown, limiting options to provide connections.
- The sprawling street patterns associated with the region's more recently developed areas do not support effective transit service, and population growth is expected to occur in these areas.