

TO: Mayor Blad
City Council

FROM: Christine Howe, Grants Manager - Planning & Development Services Department

DATE: Meeting of February 6, 2025

RE: Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health, Inc. – Community Project Grant Application
for Alameda Park

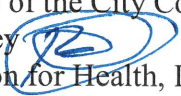
City officials and staff including Mayor Blad, Parks & Recreation Director, Anne Butler, and grants Manager Christine Howe participated in the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health, Inc. Community Health Academy in 2023. As a result of participation in the Health Academy, the City is eligible to apply for Foundation for Health grant opportunities.

The Foundation for Health announced its 2025 Community Project grant opportunity. Staff proposes an application to fund the Alameda Park redesign, which would fund a community-based approach to improving the aging infrastructure and updating the park amenities in accordance with community desires.

The Community Project grant would include an extensive community engagement process which will result in design plans for the Park and implementation activities, such as installation of new amenities, as budget allows. The program requires the commitment of 80 hours of staff time which would be met through in-kind work of the Public Outreach and Grant Coordinator and some Parks & Recreation Department staff time. The project outreach would begin in the Spring or Summer of 2025 and other project elements would be completed in 2026. The total grant funding request is \$85,000.

If you have questions or would like more information about the Community Project grant application, please do not hesitate to contact me at chowe@pocatello.gov or 208-234-6186.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brian C. Blad, Mayor; Members of the City Council
FROM: Rich Diehl, Deputy City Attorney 
RE: Blue Cross of Idaho – Foundation for Health, Inc Grant Application (P & R/PDS)
DATE: January 28, 2025

I have reviewed the above-referenced grant application and it meets with my approval for the City to make the application once the Council has authorized the application and acceptance of the grant. There is not an upfront financial local match, however there will be some in-kind staff time and equipment as part of the Grant.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Grant Information



FAQ: The Community Project

What is The Community Project?

The Community Project is a grant program offered by the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health to cities that have attended Community Health Academy. The Community Project provides the opportunity to unite community leaders and residents to define, design, and create outdoor spaces that bring people together. The Community Project is for new projects and those still being developed with community input.

The Community Project is a three-step process:

1. Identify the outdoor community space
2. Collaborate and engage with community members and groups to cocreate a design and plan for the space
3. The project comes to life through Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health funding

What The Community Project is not?

The Community Project is not a grant for already established projects. It is not a grant for securing funds to finish or start a project where cities don't need or want public input. This grant is for cities interested in uniting their community with thorough engagement around a yet-to-be started project.

Who can apply?

Only staff or elected officials of any incorporated Idaho city that has attended the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health's Community Health Academy are eligible to receive The Community Project grant.

When is the application period?

Details and timeline are provided to Community Health Academy graduates whose cities haven't received The Community Project or Community Transformation Grants in past years.

Why The Community Project?

The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health works to create a healthier Idaho by bringing people together and creating partnerships in communities. We take pride in listening to our partners and hear that cities are looking for ways to bring people together for the community's benefit.

What types of projects have been funded by The Community Project grants?

Our previous grantees have used funding to accessorize a City Hall courtyard, develop a new park, enhance a paved pathway, equip a downtown-area park and create a space for people to gather near City Hall. These projects all resulted from extensive community engagement.

What other type of projects could be funded by The Community Project grant?

Idahoans love the outdoors. We envision outdoor projects that would be accessible to all community members, especially families and children.

That could mean a picnic area, pavilion, splash pad, walking paths, trails, gazebos, community gardens, or something else that a community brainstorms.

The Foundation will contribute up to \$85,000 toward the project. Communities can contribute or seek additional funds for larger projects, but the desire is for the project to be completed in 2025.

What do cities receive if awarded The Community Project grant?

The Foundation will fund the construction of the project (up to \$85,000) and provide a technical assistance contractor to help support community engagement and lead community focus groups. The Foundation will help create communications strategies, including surveys and mailers for communities to distribute, assist with ribbon cutting celebrations and social media support. A focus of this grant is community engagement and cocreating a community space to bring neighbors together, and we'll be there to support cities in that mission.

What should cities expect if selected and what obligations do they have in the grant process?

Awarded communities must allocate staff time or find outside support to help with community engagement, which is expected to be about 80 hours over the entire project. The Foundation will pay a small stipend on top of the grant to help support the workload. It is important that the community allows time for deep and thoughtful community engagement to get a wide variety of voices for this project. The focus should be on voices not typically heard at a city council meeting – youth, seniors, and multilingual community members.

Cities must have allocated space for a project, such as a green space, park, or other site to develop a community project. Concepts need to have some city support already so that the process runs smoothly and can come to fruition in 2025.

What types of community engagement are expected?

School surveys, focus groups, in-person events, social media outreach, and mailers are ways to communicate and reach the community. This outreach will take place in spring/summer to allow time to decide on a project and get it completed in a timely fashion.

The Foundation and its technical assistance support will cocreate material needed for community engagement with the city. The city liaison will help create survey questions and offer ways to get their input on The Community Project.

What types of community engagement are expected?

Cities will be notified in early to mid-March if they have been selected. In late March, the Foundation team will visit your city and launch the formal grant process, which concludes September 30. That's when the city will receive funding to begin creating the outdoor space.

Grant Application

Community Project Application

Download The Community Project application by selecting this link: [2025 The Community Project Application](#)

1. Fill out the form and save as a new document (Word or PDF)
2. Fill out the digital form below
3. Upload the completed application document
4. Submit application

"*" indicates required fields

City name*

City of Pocatello

Name of person filling out this form*

Christine Howe, Grants Manager

Email address* chowe@pocatello.gov

Phone* 208-234-6186

File upload: Completed application (linked above)

Max. file size: 50 MB.

The Community Project 2025 Grant Application

Please answer the questions below and upload this document when submitting the online form.

Q: What is your primary motivation for applying for The Community Project?

A: The City of Pocatello recently completed its [Comprehensive Plan 2040: Our Valley | Our Vision](#) using a community-centric approach to inform this long-range plan. Through extensive community engagement and stakeholder outreach, the Plan came to fruition and was adopted in 2021 by the Pocatello City Council. The Plan identifies seven Vision Elements that guide the City's work over the next 20 years. Several of those elements align with the goals and mission of the Community Project, making this grant opportunity a great fit for the City and in line with the spirit of the residents' vision for Pocatello. Specifically, the Vision Elements of Civic Collaboration and Outdoor Oriented closely align with the Foundation for Health's Community Project. This grant opportunity would allow the City to collaborate with residents on the creation of an outdoor community space that strives toward achieving the goal of creating expanded recreational opportunities that are connected and accessible (Outdoor Oriented) through a process in which the City works closely with neighborhoods and other entities to enhance the health, safety, and welfare of the community (Civic Collaboration). The City has several local Neighborhood Associations that are comprised of residents of area neighborhoods who work together to build community and improve the places they live. This grant would allow for the Alameda Neighborhood to conduct a community-centered project through the review, re-design, and implementation of improvements at the Alameda Park. Alameda Park is a heavily used park located in the core of the Alameda Neighborhood that is in need of a re-design to create ADA-accessible amenities and upgrades to the aging existing play structures and open space areas. The Community Project grant would allow for an inclusive public process to find out from the park users and neighborhood residents what their needs are, allow for input on future design elements, and begin implementation of that vision.

Q: What needs do you see in your community that align with the purpose of The Community Project? Please provide specific examples if applicable.

A: While completing City plans including the Comprehensive Plan and the Parks Recreation Open Space and Trails (PROST) plan that is underway for Pocatello, the need for upkeep and maintenance at existing parks while making them more accessible and usable has been consistently identified as a priority. Several of the community parks are long overdue for re-design and repair due to aging equipment and infrastructure as well as a backlog of maintenance that has not been addressed. This is the case for the Alameda Park. Despite the needs for upgrades, the Park is heavily utilized. The Park has a play structure and picnic benches, volleyball court, half basketball court, pavilion, two baseball diamonds, and a paved walking path around

the perimeter. The perimeter of the park is tree lined providing shaded areas for the picnic benches and path. Because the park has ample amenities and is located in the core of the neighborhood it is heavily utilized and frequented by families, walkers, joggers, and others utilizing the resources. In addition, this park is host to the Pocatello/Chubbuck School District #25 summer food service programs, providing free meals to children throughout the summer months. Due to funding restraints, the Alameda Park resources have not been maintained nor had substantial upkeep. The play equipment has exceeded its useful life, the pathway is not ADA compliant, and the other amenities are aged and in need of replacement. Further, the trees at the park are aged and have suffered from deferred maintenance. They are in need of substantial trimming or removal which would require plans for new landscaping and re-plantings. The Community Project would allow the City to follow its vision for creating an outdoor-oriented community that uses civic collaboration to create an accessible, safe, neighborhood-friendly outdoor space that best serves the users. This grant would ensure community engagement from start to finish for the Alameda Park and result in a park re-design that is reflective of the community needs and desires.

Q: What specific community members, groups or populations would you want to see participate in the grant process?

A: Because the project would be focused in the Alameda Neighborhood, the Alameda Neighborhood Association would be engaged in the process particularly to help recruit feedback and engage participants from the neighborhood. The City would engage with local agency partners that are active in the area such as School District 25 and NeighborWorks Pocatello, a local non-profit organization that organizes the local neighborhood association meetings. In addition to the neighborhood, the City would ensure outreach is conducted with Pocatello as a whole to ensure engagement with users that live outside the neighborhood. Other area stakeholders such as local businesses and nonprofits will also be engaged. The goal will be to solicit as much feedback from users and residents as well as those that will utilize, maintain, or support the park moving forward.

Q: How do you currently engage with residents and community groups? Please give examples. If you don't actively engage, how do you hope to engage with them in The Community Project?

A: The City engages with residents through a myriad of outreach and engagement techniques. The City has a website where press releases and news updates are posted routinely on the main City home page. In addition, the City has several social media sites that it uses to post updates and current activities. When completing a specific project or plan, the City uses other outreach techniques to engage the public including: project specific webpages; surveys; open houses; focus groups and stakeholder meetings; public hearings; and public meetings. The City has ESRI Hub which allows for the creation of interactive engagement on project webpages. The City attends numerous events to promote programs or projects including: the Portneuf Valley Farmer's Market; Portneuf Valley Environmental Fair; Historic Home Tour; Back to School events; and more. The City's Planning and Development Services Department employs an Outreach Coordinator who regularly attends local organization meetings, such as Chamber of Commerce,

Rotary, KIND Community, Coalition of Local Governments, and more. The Outreach Coordinator serves as a main point of contact for residents to contact with questions, to gather information, and learn about City activities, work, and plans. This position would play a key role in assisting with the Community Project outreach.

Q: What do you hope to see happen in your city if you are selected for The Community Project?

A: The City hopes to see a large group of residents and stakeholders come together to create and implement a new vision for the Alameda Park that will not only best serve the community but also see through the long-term vision elements of civic collaboration and creating safe, accessible, and friendly neighborhood outdoor spaces. The City can use this process as a blueprint for other neighborhood parks that are in need of re-design as well. The City's Comprehensive Plan identifies the importance of creating Authentic and Affordable Neighborhoods and a component of that is the support of Neighborhood Associations. The Alameda Neighborhood Association has been engaged with the City, specifically to begin developing a neighborhood plan. The Community Project would catalyze those efforts with a focus on this valuable outdoor resource and serve as a demonstration for how the other existing 6 neighborhood associations and any future established associations could conduct similar work in their communities. The City hopes this will be one of many future efforts and that it can show the value of this type of engagement and community-focused work.

Q: The Community Project requires a grant leader from the city. Who would lead your city's efforts if selected? Please include their name, job title/role and if they have been involved in the application process.

A: The grant leader would be the City's Parks & Recreation Department Supervisor, Brayden Millward with support from the City's Grants Manager, Christine Howe. Both staff have been involved in the grant application process.

Q: Does your city own or control an outdoor space that could be used for the project? Briefly describe any potential outdoor spaces that may be considered for development.

A: The City owns Alameda Park which would be the outdoor space considered for development. As noted, the space has several aging outdoor infrastructure elements as well as numerous large, aging trees that pose potential hazards.

Q: Would the city have the budget/personnel to maintain the outdoor space after the project is completed?

A: Yes. The City's Parks & Recreation Department budget would maintain the outdoor space after completion. The Park is currently included in the maintenance budget for Parks & Recreation and would continue to be included in that.

Q: Does your community have a strong sense of identity? If so, how would you describe it?

A: The City of Pocatello recently undertook a re-branding initiative that sought to identify the City's sense of identity and develop a new logo/brand as well as tagline that evinced this established identity. The City's new logo and tagline "The One and Only" represent Pocatello's identity as follows: We're a little different than our fellow Idahoans. Our unique location, status as a regional hub, and mix of diverse jobs and institutions means we stand out a little. And our name reflects that uniqueness: there is no other City named Pocatello in the entire world. We are truly the one and only." Further, the attributes and emotions that the City identified for the brand included the following: grateful, proud, connected, unified, accessible, hardy, playful, open, supportive. This tagline and brand help guide the City toward its mission to be a vibrant community that promotes a high quality of life through innovation, growth, respect, inclusiveness and pride in who we are. Further, as the Comprehensive Vision elements show, the City identifies strongly with the outdoors.

Q: What is something the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health should know about your city and community?

A: The City of Pocatello has been diligently working to enhance its community planning and strategic goal-setting through a resident and community-focused approach. This has been put in practice during the Comprehensive Plan process as well as the other City plans that are underway such as the PROST, Pocatello's Safe Streets and Roads for All traffic safety plan, a new skatepark design, and more. The Community Project would perfectly align with the City's goals of improving its open and public spaces for residents through a community-driven approach that implements civic collaboration.