

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Introduction

Adopted in April of 2011, the City of Meridian's Comprehensive Plan integrates the concerns and expressions of the community into a document that guides the growth and development of the City over the next 20 years.

Intent

The Meridian Comprehensive Plan is an official policy guide for decisions concerning the physical development of the community. The Plan establishes goals, objectives and action items to implement the City's policies regarding growth. The Plan works in concert with City Code and other planning-related documents. It is also used in conjunction with each City department's strategic plan and action plan. The Plan is not a set of standards or a means to enforce City Code. Instead, it indicates, in a general way, how the community should develop.

Existing Conditions Report

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to work in concert with the City's ordinances, specific area plans, and other documents. One of these, the Existing Conditions Report, includes background information and analysis about the built and natural environment in Meridian today (2014). Together, the Existing Conditions Report and the Comprehensive Plan address all of the elements required in the Local Land Use Planning Act of Idaho.

Local Land Use Planning

Idaho State code requires certain elements to be addressed in a Comprehensive Plan. In addition to the state requirements, the City has also chosen to address other elements critical to realizing a successful community. Elements such as sustainability, quality of life, the arts, and more. In total, there are almost 500 Goals, Objectives, and Action Items in the plan, which address these elements. The following are sample high level goals of the Comprehensive Plan:

Quality of Life

- » Sustain, enhance, promote and protect elements that contribute to the livability and a high quality of life for all Meridian residents.
- » Make Meridian the premier place to live, work and raise a family.

“Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.”

– Peter F. Drucker

Public Services, Facilities, & Utilities

- » Encourage the development of a continuum of services to meet the health care needs of the citizens of Meridian.
- » Provide ample and clean water to the citizens of Meridian in perpetuity.
- » Expand, improve, and maintain the City's infrastructure to meet existing and growing demands in a timely, orderly, and logical manner.
- » Ensure that adequate public services are provided for existing and future residents and businesses.

Population

- » Recognize that Meridian's population will continue to grow and positively influence that growth.

School Facilities

- » Improve long range City and school district planning.

Transportation

- » Facilitate the efficient movement of people and products to and from the Area of City Impact.



Land Use

- » Ensure a variety and balance of land uses to support the Meridian Area of City Impact.
- » Encourage compatible uses to minimize conflicts and maximize use of land.

Housing

- » Offer a diversity of housing types for a greater range of choice.

Economic Development

- » Support existing businesses by creating new opportunities; be more focused on the expansion of existing businesses and create an overall friendly environment in which to do business.
- » Make Meridian the premier location for business in the region by recruiting and attracting new businesses to the area.

Community Design

- » Create a positive environment that supports downtown as the vibrant heart of the community.

Natural Resources

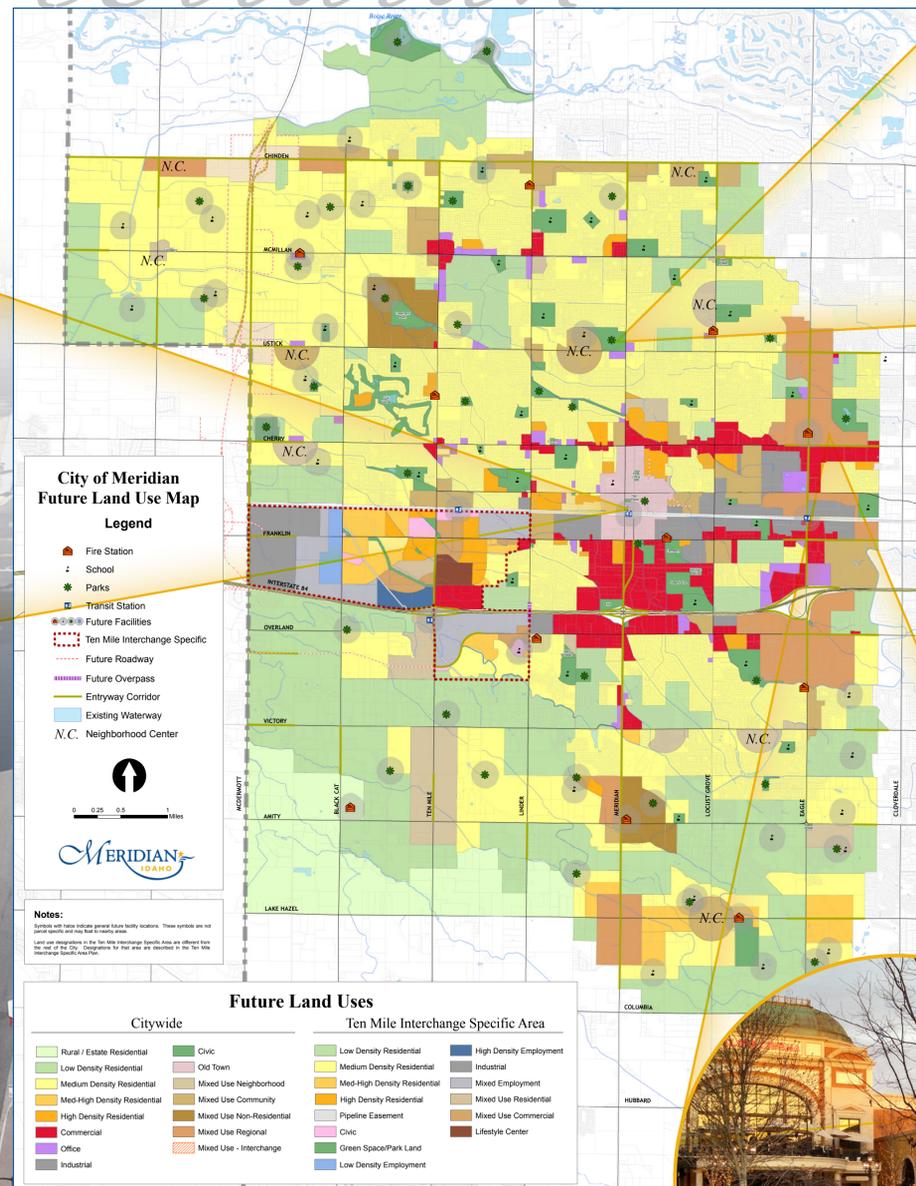
- » Preserve, protect, enhance, and wisely use our natural resources within the Area of City Impact.

Agriculture & Special Areas or Sites

- » Enhance Meridian's historical, cultural and agricultural heritage.

Sustainability

- » Improve air quality and reduce air pollution in the Meridian and Treasure Valley airshed.
- » Reduce energy consumption in municipal facilities and operations; provide leadership in promoting energy conservation in the City.
- » Maximize diversion of the municipal waste stream from disposal to recycling and reduce the amount of solid waste generated in the City.
- » Promote the design, construction and operation of buildings that are environmentally sustainable and healthy places to live, work and learn.
- » Efficiently treat wastewater for current and future users by focusing on financial stewardship and environmental sustainability.



Future Land Uses

One of the key components of the plan is identification of Future Land Uses. The City has a Future Land Use Map (see inset) which depicts where certain land uses exist and are planned. Following is a brief overview of each designation. For additional information, see the City of Meridian Comprehensive Plan or Unified Development Code.

Residential

The purpose of these designations is to provide a variety of housing types. Uses will include a range of densities varying from large estate lots to multi-family homes.

Commercial

This designation will provide a full range of commercial and retail to serve area residents and visitors. Uses may include retail, wholesale, service and office uses, multi-family residential, as well as appropriate public uses such as government offices.

Office

This designation will provide opportunities for low-impact business areas. These would include offices, technology and resource centers; ancillary commercial uses may be considered (particularly within research and development centers or technological parks).

Industrial

This designation allows a range of industrial uses to support industrial and commercial activities and to develop areas with sufficient urban services.

Old Town

This designation includes the historic downtown and the true community center. The boundary of the Old Town district predominantly follows Meridian's historic plat boundaries.

Mixed Use Designations

In general, the purpose of these designations is to provide for a combination of compatible land uses within a close geographic area that allows for easily accessible services for residents and the workers. The intent of these designations is to promote developments that offer functional and physical integration of land uses while allowing developers a greater degree of design and use flexibility.



Recreation

- » Protect Meridian's surface water quality.
- » Provide a broad range of parks, programs, and recreational facilities that meet a variety of needs and uses and that are located geographically throughout Meridian and available to everyone.

The Arts

- » Allow all Meridian residents and visitors an opportunity to experience public art.
- » Provide hands-on experiences in the fine arts, regardless of age, race, ability, or other protected class.

Hazardous Areas

- » Protect public health and safety by guiding growth and development away from hazardous areas that pose a threat to people and property.

Property Rights

- » Ensure that all planning decisions and ordinance implementation balances the interests of the community with the protection of private property rights for owners today and future generations.

Implementation

- » Shape the future of the City by providing citizens and City leaders with a Comprehensive Plan Vision and City ordinances that execute that vision.

Specific Areas

Ten Mile Interchange Specific Area Plan

The Ten Mile Interchange Specific Area Plan (TMISAP), centered along Ten Mile Road and I-84, is a highly visible, easily accessible part of the City that will offer significant employment, enhance housing diversity, and support a strong economy. Unlike other commercial employment districts, with diversity of mixed, adjacent, and nearby housing in a broad spectrum of sizes and costs, the Ten Mile Interchange Specific Area Plan seeks to create a highly accessible community that removes the need to commute to work.

“Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now – Alan Lakein”

Urban Renewal (Downtown)

The Meridian Development Corporation (MDC) is committed to the economic stimulation and expansion of downtown Meridian. Focus areas of the MDC for creating a thriving Downtown Meridian include: pedestrian friendly, transit support, sustainable job creation, public art and beautification, affordable workforce housing, public parking, and a balanced retail environment. As part of its long-term goals, MDC is committed to supporting Destination Downtown, a Vision Plan for downtown Meridian. Destination Downtown is a community-driven initiative, spearheaded by the MDC, to stimulate, vitalize, and establish downtown Meridian as a hub of Treasure Valley enterprise, culture, and social activities.

Helpful Resources

- City Resources**
- Comprehensive Plan & Existing Conditions Report**
<http://www.meridiancity.org/complan/>
- City of Meridian Architectural Standards Manual**
<http://www.meridiancity.org/design>
- City of Meridian Unified Development Code**
http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book_id=306
- City of Meridian Ten Mile Interchange Specific Area Plan**
<http://www.meridiancity.org/TMISAP>
- Meridian Pathways Master Plan**
<http://www.meridiancity.org/pathways>
- Other Resources**
- Meridian Development Corp (MDC)**
<http://www.meridiandevelopmentcorp.com/>
- Ada County Highway District (ACHD)**
<http://www.achdidaho.org/>

